

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR COURSE

BA (HONS) ANIMATION WITH ILLUSTRATION

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Our Animation with Illustration degree is a practical skills-based course tailored directly to the needs of the animation and illustration industries. All our staff are active within the industry and teach you the skills that you'll need to gain employment after graduating. The course utilises a mix of lectures, hands-on workshops, tutorial classes, and practical exercises such as life drawing, to give you a rounded education in the animated and illustrative arts.

We fuse cutting-edge industry-standard software skills with lessons learned from over a hundred years of animated tradition: lessons summed up in the core 12 principles. The course is designed to take you from a solid grounding in fundamentals through to developing your own personal specialism and getting you ready for the industry.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

To be considered for this course, you will require 104-120 UCAS points. This could be gained via a number of qualifications, for example:

- BCC or above at A2 Level
- DMM or above at Extended Diploma Level
- M or above at UAL Level 3 Extended Diploma Level
- A proven interest in this area

If you're unsure how many points you have you can use the UCAS tariff calculator.

Remember that qualifications such as Graded Examinations in Music Performance and Arts Award (Gold) can also count towards your UCAS points – check the [tariff calculator](#).

Applicants who do not have the required qualifications, but do have the industry experience and/or proven interest in the subject will also be considered.



All applicants are expected to have at least a grade 4 in GCSEs Maths and English Language. Non-UK applicants will need to have an English Language qualification at International Level B2 or higher, such as an IELTS of 6.0 or better (with no component below 5.5). Students with equivalent qualifications will also be accepted.

If you are from a country classified as [English-Speaking](#) by the UK government or have studied a degree or postgraduate diploma (taught in English) you may not be required to present other evidence of English language ability.

Applications from individuals with non-standard qualifications, relevant work or life experience will be equally considered.

If your application is successful you will be asked to provide a portfolio of your work. The portfolio should consist of 8-10 pieces of work, and must include some observational drawing, ideally life drawings.

MODULES (CREDITS)

YEAR 1

Fundamentals of 2D Animation (20 credits) – Working in 2D (both traditional and digital) you will put together a portfolio of very short, animated clips demonstrating the 12 principles in action

Year 1 Animation Project (20 credits) – Combine the lessons learned in Fundamentals of 2D and create your first original short film, animated in 2D and roughly 30 seconds in length

Pre-Production (20 credits) – Scriptwriting, character design, expression sheets, turnarounds, backgrounds, and layouts, storyboarding and animatics: everything needed for animation minus the animation, in other words

History of Animation and Illustration (20 credits) – Lectures focusing on the history of animation and illustration, giving context to the skills learned in other modules and how these emerged historically

Fundamentals of Illustration (40 credits) – The first semester focuses on technical drawing skills (anatomy, proportion, line of action, perspective, colour theory, etc) and the second on creating a portfolio of creative works

YEAR 2

Fundamentals of 3D Animation (20 credits) – An introduction to Maya, focusing on how to utilise the 12 principles within a 3D animation environment



Year 2 Animation Project (20 credits) – Draw on the lessons learned in Fundamentals of 3D to create a movement-oriented short film; an obstacle course animated in 3D, roughly 30 seconds in length

3D Modelling (20 credits) – Learn the fundamentals of 3D modelling in Maya, allowing you to build basic 3D environments in which to set your 3D animations

Motion Graphics (20 credits) – You will work on a client-set brief, learning motion graphics techniques using After Effects and Premier Pro, within a commercial environment.

Rigging Fundamentals (20 credits) – Take your 3D models and make them animatable. This module will lead you step by step through the rigging process, introducing all the tools you'll need to make your own custom rigs.

Applied Illustration (20 credits) – Construct a portfolio of illustrations in response to weekly briefs in semester 1, with a storybook/comic project in semester 2 introducing long-form illustration

YEAR 3

Final Year Project (40 credits) – Your chance to develop your specialism, working on a project you design in collaboration with the module tutor.

Year 3 Animation Project (40 credits) – Your final year film is based around a piece of audio found by you, of roughly 30 seconds length, that can be animated in either 2D or 3D

Research Project (20 credits) – Engage with high level media and cultural theory, conducting a research project in an area of your choosing and producing a piece of creative work responding to what you've learned.

Professional Development (20 credits) – A module focusing on getting you a job: everything from CVs, websites, showreels and portfolios, to how and where to network, interview practice and how to find work as a freelancer.

WHAT ARE CREDITS?

As a guide, 20 credits typically represents around 52 hours of tutor contact time (e.g. lectures/workshops/feedback) and 148 hours of self-study time (usually over the course of a semester). These numbers may increase or decrease depending on the nature, length and level of the module, especially towards the end of the course.

LOCATION OF DELIVERY

Your primary location of study will be at our Riverside Campus, which is located on New Bailey Street in Manchester.



TEACHING STAFF

Everyone who teaches on this degree is active in the industry. Whether that's animating, storyboarding, illustrating, designing, or writing for animation or illustration; when your tutors aren't busy teaching you, they're busy honing their craft. As a result, we are always working and teaching the most current industry workflows. We practice what we teach. We also have an extensive network of industry contacts that we can draw on for guest lectures and workshops, industry-set briefs, and as guests for our degree shows.

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

We don't believe in exams. All assessment takes the form of coursework, portfolios, presentations, and essays. If you are being taught animation, you will submit a portfolio of completed animations. If you are being taught how to pitch a show, you will do a presentation pitching a show. If you are studying the history of animation, you will synthesise that research into an essay on the history of animation. In other words, all assessment is directly related to the skills being taught. You will often have the opportunity to receive feedback along the way, via formative submission points, with official summative submissions falling at the ends of first and second semesters.

COURSE DETAILS

Award to be received on successful completion: BA (Hons) Animation with Illustration

Length of course: 3 YEARS (FULL TIME)

Regulator: Office for Students ([OfS](#))

Awarding Institution: to be confirmed April 2026

FEES / COSTS

TUITION FEES

Home Students: £9,535 per year

International Students: £17,000 per year

You may be eligible to apply for a student loan from Student Finance. Please see our [Tuition Fees](#) page for more information.

EQUIPMENT & ACTIVITIES

Ahead of the start of your programme please purchase:

- Animation paper: £30



- Pens, pencils and notebooks: around £50

You may find it beneficial to invest in additional equipment and/or study resources to support your learning. Example costs are:

- Adobe Creative Suite license (for home use): £16.24 per month (with student discount)
- Richard Williams' Animators Survival Kit: £30

We provide PCs to work on onsite, with Cintiqs, Wacom tablets, digital camera capture stations and lightboxes; all of which can be signed out from facilities. We have onsite licenses for Toonboom Storyboard Pro, Adobe Creative Cloud and TV Paint that means you can use them at Riverside.

There may be the option of attending events outside of Futureworks which would further enhance your studies. Example costs are:

- Manchester Art Gallery Trip (Level 4): no additional cost
- Manchester Museum Trip (Level 4): no additional cost
- Trip to Animation Studio (Level 5): no additional cost

