



UNDERGRADUATE COURSE ACCREDITATION

ANIMATION

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATION AND ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

This document is designed to provide general guidance to undergraduate animation courses on how to apply for Skillset Accreditation and outlines in full the accreditation criteria which courses need to demonstrate they meet in order to achieve accreditation. The guidelines and the criteria include background information on Skillset and the accreditation process, details on how to apply and information on how your application will be assessed, as well as an explanation of the accreditation criteria and how to demonstrate that your course meets them. If you are interested in accreditation for postgraduate animation courses please refer to the separate guidelines for postgraduate applications.

Please use these guidelines in conjunction with the [Undergraduate Course Accreditation Application Form](#)

GETTING ADVICE

For information and advice on accreditation, please contact The Development Team at Skillset:

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E: developmenttick@skillset.org



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BACKGROUND

SKILLSET

Skillset exists to influence, lead and develop skills, training and education policy for the UK Creative Industries. This includes encouraging the delivery of informed training and vocational education provision so that the UK's Creative Industries maintain and enhance their creativity, productivity and competitiveness. In the context of this document, Skillset raises skill levels to ensure the future success of the industries it represents.

Skillset is the only UK-wide organisation involved in promoting and developing quality standards and training for our highly diverse and creative sectors. Skillset is backed by industry, trade associations, unions, and learning and training providers and is awarded Sector Skills Council status by Government.

AIM AND PURPOSE OF ACCREDITATION

Skillset accreditation kitemarks and endorses courses within higher education that represent best practice in the provision of graduates with appropriate skills, knowledge and abilities to work in the industry they are studying. The aim of Skillset accreditation is to:

- **Signpost** prospective students to the courses that will provide them with industry relevant skills and good links with companies and potential employers.
- **Assure** employers that students graduating from Skillset Accredited courses have the levels of knowledge and skills they are seeking from new employees and can perform to the standard they expect.
- **Enable** employers to prioritise recruitment activities on courses that have been identified as having an industry-facing ethos.

The purpose of accreditation is to facilitate strong and organised links between course providers, the industry and Skillset to ensure that the industry gets graduates with the talent it needs. The Skillset accreditation process:

- **Informs** higher education institutions (HEIs) and other providers of the skills needs of industry by defining what employers expect graduates to know, what skills they expect them to possess and the standards of performance that they expect them to be able to reach in new entrant roles.
- **Enables** students to develop the appropriate knowledge and skills that the industry requires, providing them with an understanding of the industry and its working practices, thus improving their employability and contribution to industry.

The Skillset accreditation approach is to set down benchmarks to ensure that courses provide the best opportunity for the professional development of students in their chosen career. The benchmarks, wherever possible, do not seek to stipulate particular forms of pedagogy or methods of delivery. In other words, we don't dictate how courses impart the skills, as long as the outcomes of learning meet the criteria.

BENEFITS OF ACCREDITATION

The main benefit of accreditation is the quality mark of the Skillset 'Tick' which symbolises industry recognition and raises the profile of the course. Skillset will help promote courses with its integrated **Pick the Tick** marketing campaign and list courses in a special section of the Skillset website: www.skillset.org/pickthetick

In addition, through the accreditation process, courses receive industry input and evaluation of their curriculum.

Where funding is available, Skillset offers accredited courses access to industry speakers, organises industry mentors, provides graduate showcases, organises networking events and provides student bursaries. We also lobby the Government for increased funding for accredited courses.

OVERVIEW OF THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

ACCREDITATION PROCESS

COURSE LEADER DOWNLOADS APPLICATION GUIDANCE, THEN SUBMITS APPLICATION FORM AND ACCOMPANYING MATERIALS

0 WEEKS

(estimated 50 hours work)

STAGE ONE: DESK BASED CRITERIA CHECK

Industry Evaluators review all documentation, screen based evidence and student work in detail, benchmarking the information against the accreditation criteria then produce a Stage One report which indicates whether the application is strong enough to proceed to a Stage Two accreditation visit. Declined applicants are offered feedback and advice on course development and are encouraged to reapply after standards have been raised.

6-14 WEEKS

STAGE TWO: THE VISIT

An Industry Evaluator chairs a team of up to three additional industry representatives who visit the course department for a day. The agenda includes viewing examples of student work, interviews with staff and students, tours of facilities and meetings with senior management.

18-22 WEEKS

INDUSTRY ACCREDITATION PANEL

The Industry Evaluator presents the findings of the visit to an industry accreditation panel who will make a final accreditation decision.

24-30 WEEKS

AFTER SUCCESSFUL BID

THREE TO FIVE YEAR CYCLE

Exact length of cycle determined by ongoing review and to align with the HEI's own monitoring activities e.g. quinquennial review.

COURSE ACCREDITED

The accreditation report will set the monitoring agenda for the following three to five years. Monitoring will be dependent on whether there are any recommendations or conditions, progress against areas for development/or any major course changes during the three year licence.

ANNUAL MONITORING IN YEARS ONE AND TWO

Courses are monitored through desk based monitoring or through visits with an Industry Evaluator. Courses report any major staffing, resource or curriculum changes on an annual basis. More specific and detailed monitoring may also take place.

REACCREDITATION END OF YEAR THREE TO FIVE

Courses submit a Stage One reaccreditation application which is assessed by the Industry Evaluator. The Industry Evaluators then revisit the course and a recommendation is made to the relevant industry accreditation panel on whether the course should be reaccredited.

PROCESS REPEATED

ACCREDITATION GUIDELINES

GENERAL INFORMATION ON UNDERGRADUATE ANIMATION ACCREDITATION

COURSES ELIGIBLE FOR ACCREDITATION

- Full or part-time undergraduate courses that meet a high proportion of the accreditation criteria.
- Courses that are already in operation and that have produced one cohort of graduates, a proportion of which will have gained employment in the animation industry.

There is a separate scheme for postgraduate animation courses as well as accreditation in other areas (e.g. computer games, VFX, screenwriting and film production). For further information on these separate schemes contact the Development Team at Skillset on developmenttick@skillset.org or visit www.skillset.org/accreditation

WHICH TYPES OF COURSES ARE INELIGIBLE FOR ACCREDITATION?

Accreditation is not intended for those courses that only offer specialised training in a particular peripheral area of animation such as, model making. Nor is it intended for courses that might offer incidental animation training or some module options to students, such as courses in digital imaging.

COURSE FOCUS AND RANGE

Courses can teach animation in 2D drawn and digital, 3D CGI, and stop frame in various proportions and mixes. A course might concentrate in a particular area and therefore some of the criteria might not be relevant. This does not preclude the course from being accredited, as long as the criteria specific to the focus of the course are met. As an example, if your course does not teach stop motion,

you will not be assessed on those criteria, nor will your application be prejudiced. However if your course has a focus on 3D CGI all, or a majority of these criteria will need to be met.

HOW LONG DOES ACCREDITATION LAST FOR?

Accreditation will normally last for a period of three to five years and Skillset will endeavour to align the accreditation cycle with your HEI's own monitoring activities. Variations in the length of cycle may occur if a significant change is made in the course content or structure, or if the Industry Evaluator team regard it as appropriate to accredit the course for a shorter period of time. This may be due to a forecasted change or revalidation being planned which requires a reaccreditation to take place, or because of concerns about some aspect of the course. In such cases accreditation may be provisional and subject to further evidence that criteria are still being met.

ACCREDITATION CHARGE

Please contact Skillset with regards to the planned introduction of accreditation charges – developmenttick@skillset.org

WHEN CAN INSTITUTIONS APPLY FOR COURSE ACCREDITATION?

The call for applications is open with no fixed deadline. Applications will be assessed as and when they are made.

ACCREDITATION APPROACH AND CRITERIA

Skillset's accreditation process is industry-led with Skillset facilitating the process. At the heart of the undergraduate accreditation system are the accreditation criteria which are listed in full in this document.

ACCREDITATION GUIDELINES

For undergraduate accreditation in animation there are two groups of criteria. Firstly, the [general criteria](#) relating to how the course provides professional preparation and a significant involvement of industry in course design, curriculum and delivery. The second group is the [subject specific criteria](#) which provide an industry specified list of skills, knowledge and capabilities students should possess upon graduation.

Accreditation does not aim to dictate to HEIs how to run their courses. The focus of the accreditation criteria is on the outcomes of the course and only specifies delivery requirements where absolutely necessary (e.g. group work and collaboration).

THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

The outline of this process is in the diagram on page 4.

BEFORE SUBMISSION

We recommend that you contact Skillset for informal advice and guidance prior to submission of your application form and supporting documentation. The Development Team is also available for ongoing advice on putting the application submission together - developmenttick@skillset.org. We emphasise conversation and dialogue as key components of the accreditation process.

SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

There are two parts to the application; the [application form](#) and accompanying [supporting materials](#) such as CVs, course handbooks, external examiner's reports, etc. (see the full suggested list on page 8). The application form should primarily act as a reference to your supporting materials.

STAGE ONE ASSESSMENT: OUR DESK BASED CRITERIA CHECK

The first stage of the accreditation process is desk based, analysing paper and screen materials. Industry Evaluators use the information provided in the application form and supporting materials to

benchmark the course against the accreditation criteria and produce a Stage One report.

Along with detailed feedback against the criteria the report makes a recommendation whether to progress to Stage Two or not.

If a good proportion of the criteria are met, the application will progress to the second stage of the process, a visit to the department. Applicants are provided with a summary of the Stage One report which will highlight the areas in the criteria to be explored during the visit.

If a good proportion of the criteria are clearly not met, the application is halted and detailed Stage One feedback report provided to the course.

STAGE TWO ASSESSMENT: THE PANEL VISIT

The purpose of the accreditation visit is to follow up on any of the subject specific criteria highlighted in the Stage One report and to explore all of the general criteria around industry engagement.

Visits typically last a day and Skillset will liaise with the course team to choose a suitable date and time. The date will take into account various factors such as the availability of course teams and Industry Evaluators; curriculum clashes; availability of specific visiting tutors and a period when a good representation of students and graduates are available.

A typical visit agenda will include:

- An initial meeting with course management.
- Tour of facilities and resources.
- Private panel sessions to view student work.
- Meeting with a randomly selected cross section of students and graduates.
- Meeting with course staff (not including the course leader or senior management).
- A final meeting with course management.

ACCREDITATION GUIDELINES

In addition, classroom observations or meetings with specific individuals may be scheduled as needed.

ACCREDITATION DECISION

At the end of the visit, the Industry Evaluators may provide informal feedback and an indication of the accreditation recommendation.

Following the visit, the Industry Evaluators complete a Stage Two report which provides detailed feedback against the criteria as well as a formal accreditation recommendation. The purpose of the report is also to highlight any particularly innovative areas of the course as best practice.

If the Industry Evaluators judge that a good majority of the accreditation criteria have been met, the report will recommend accreditation. This accreditation can be conditional; subject to formal recommendations or subject to satisfactory monitoring against any areas for development.

If the Industry Evaluators judge that critical areas of the accreditation criteria have not been met the report will not recommend accreditation but will provide feedback on areas that need to be addressed in order to better align with the criteria in future.

All accreditation recommendations are presented to an impartial Industry Accreditation Panel who will make the final accreditation decision. We invite and encourage courses to try again.

WHAT HAPPENS IF A COURSE IS TURNED DOWN FOR ACCREDITATION?

If an application for accreditation is unsuccessful at any stage in the process, Skillset will provide detailed feedback on the criteria that were not met and advice on how to meet them in the future. It is then strongly recommended that the applicant speaks to Skillset about working together towards a successful new attempt.

When assessing a reapplication, our Industry Evaluators will need to see evidence that any changes that have been implemented are having an impact on the students' learning experience, the work they produce and the jobs they move into after graduation. Reapplication is therefore likely to be at least one calendar year after the initial application.

The aim of accreditation is to initiate a dialogue between higher education and industry. We only make successful accreditation decisions public. Until then accreditation is confidential and failure to reach standards is never made public.

SUMMARY OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS

LEAD INDUSTRY EVALUATORS

Lead Evaluators are always industry practitioners and are contracted by Skillset to play a leadership role in the assessment, evidence collection and feedback process. Their duties cover assessing applications, leading course visits and making accreditation recommendations.

SKILLSET REPRESENTATIVES

The role of the Skillset representatives is to ensure that all accreditation procedures and criteria are adhered to, that evidence leading to decisions is gathered in a robust and measurable way and that the assessment visits are valid, fair and consistent. They provide advice, guidance and support to the Industry Evaluators and to the applicant.

INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES

Industry representatives are also practitioners and are brought in to provide an objective professional perspective on the accreditation application. Unlike Lead Industry Evaluators they are not formally

ACCREDITATION GUIDELINES

trained in the accreditation process and do not need an in depth knowledge of Skillset practices. Their role is to provide a professional view on whether or not the course equips the students with the skills, knowledge and experience needed for them to confidently enter the animation industry.

SKILLSET ACCREDITATION PANELS

The Skillset Accreditation Panels are made up entirely of members of industry. The membership of the panels will include all Industry Evaluators along with members of the Skillset Animation Skills Council¹ and independent professionals to ensure fairness and transparency. Their main role is to receive feedback and recommendations in order to make informed final decisions. In addition, they will address any arising issues, provide input and advice on accreditation guidelines, contribute to development plans for courses and ensure that criteria are regularly updated in line with industry need. Typically they will meet three to four times a year.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS - MORE ABOUT THE INFORMATION WE NEED

For the Stage One criteria check, courses are asked to submit the application form along with supporting materials in order to demonstrate how their course and the students' work meets both the [general](#) and the [subject specific](#) accreditation criteria.

The purpose of the application form is not to provide a lengthy narrative on how various modules meet each criteria point. Space has been provided for narrative where needed, but as far as possible the form should simply contain references to where in the supporting materials evidence for meeting the criteria can be found.

Outlined overleaf is a suggested list of supporting documentation to evidence the criteria but applicants are free to submit any additional information necessary to represent the course adequately.

¹The Skillset Animation Skills Council is chaired by Marion Edwards, Hit Entertainment. For more information and for full membership go to: www.skillset.org/animation/council

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

SUGGESTED SUPPORTING MATERIAL	CRITERIA CHECK
<p>Student work</p> <p>Industry Evaluators need to see a range of the work students complete whilst on the course. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sample of showreels for the past two or three cohorts of students and/or student blogs/websites. • A range of outputs from major projects in 2nd/3rd/4th years of the course, e.g. a first, a pass and a borderline fail for each major project. 	<p>Subject specific and general criteria</p>
<p>Graduate employment information</p> <p>HESA data can be provided but preferably as supplementary information. Industry Evaluators need an idea of the proportion of graduates entering relevant employment as well as names of the companies and roles they are filling where possible. The most useful evidence includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of all graduates from the past three years along with details of their employment history where known. For data protection purposes applicants may want to simply list anonymous student numbers. 	<p>Subject specific and general criteria</p>
<p>Information on industry input into curriculum design and content and additional information on input and feedback from industry partners</p> <p>This information might be pre-existing however this is a crucial area of the application and the following detail should be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of all guest/visiting lecturers over the past two years including which modules they regularly deliver. • A list of all industry visitors, when/how often they visit and in what capacity, e.g. masterclass, mentor, live brief, project feedback, pitching sessions, industry talk, etc. • Details on any industry input into curriculum development including membership, attendance and scheduling of any advisory boards. • Up-to-date staff CVs for all core staff including details of recent professional development. • Staff professional development policies and procedures. • List of work placements undertaken throughout the course. • Professional animation work carried out by staff. 	<p>General criteria</p>

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

<p>Details of course content and structure including intended outcomes per module. This information is likely to be contained in pre-existing documentation e.g:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course handbook • Student handbook • Module descriptors • Course diagrams • Web profiles • Programme specifications 	<p>Subject specific criteria</p>
<p>General course information to enable Industry Evaluators to know how students are selected, who teaches on the course and to how many students. Again this is likely to be pre-existing and may be contained in documents listed above and below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of all core staff and visiting staff and their allocation of taught hours. • Details of staff to student ratios. • Student selection procedures. • Equal opportunities and access arrangements. 	<p>General criteria</p>
<p>Any pre-existing documentation on course monitoring and development procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant validation and course monitoring reports. • External examiners' reports from the past two years. • Student feedback. 	<p>Subject specific and general criteria</p>
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of relevant equipment, ratio of equipment to student, details of student access time as well as technical support. • Details of the learning materials and technical resources available to the course, e.g. equipment/studio/library or shared facilities. 	<p>Subject specific and general criteria</p>

GENERAL ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

These general criteria are designed to enable courses to demonstrate how they have a specific focus towards professional preparation and significant involvement of industry in course design, curriculum and delivery.

1. DEMONSTRATE CLOSE LINKS WITH THE ANIMATION INDUSTRY INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE FOLLOWING:

- Curriculum design should have regular input from the industry. This should include a mixture of industry advisory boards, external examiners with appropriate professional backgrounds, documented email dialogues with industry professionals, regular refreshing of seminar and course lecture content and live briefs for project work.
- Appropriate visiting and guest lecturers should be regularly scheduled and provide talks, seminars, workshops, visits.
- Work placements and/or internships.
- Staff should have recent, relevant professional experience and professional development procedures should be in place to enable them to regularly refresh their professional practice.

2. ENSURE PRE-COURSE INFORMATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURES IDENTIFY STUDENTS FROM AS WIDE A RANGE OF BACKGROUNDS AS POSSIBLE.

- Where possible all student applicants should be interviewed and/or provide demonstrations of their eligibility for the course.
- Pre-course information should clearly state what student expectations of the course should be, its outcomes and their likely progression into employment.
- Evidence of providing outreach work and proactive recruitment practices to encourage wider access and diversity.

3. PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF SUCCESSFUL PROGRESSION OF STUDENTS INTO THE ANIMATION INDUSTRY.

- Courses should provide information on the career destinations of the majority of their graduates over at least a one year period. It is expected that a good proportion of graduates will have gained employment in the animation industry and/or have transferred the skills to relevant alternative careers.

4. ENCOURAGEMENT OF PEER GROUP LEARNING AND TEAMWORK.

- Courses need to show they are communicating to students the benefit of teamwork as a desirable quality that will accelerate their entry and progression in the world of work. Where teamwork and peer learning are optional, courses need to demonstrate methods of assessing teamwork which give confidence to students that their contributions are as well rewarded as if they had embarked on their own personal project.
- Courses should be able to point to explicit guidance or documentation that encourages students to work in teams, not for academic convenience but rather as a representation of professional practice.

5. QUALITY TEACHING PRACTICE.

- Evidence of how qualitative and imaginative tuition, advice and feedback mechanisms are in place to inform students developing practice.
- Documentation of a programme of face-to-face crits, both group and individual.
- How written feedback is delivered to students.
- Details of staff/student ratios.
- How online and distance learning elements are managed.
- How tutors continually update knowledge and skills, what staff development opportunities and training there might be.

SUBJECT SPECIFIC CRITERIA

As well as demonstrating how they meet the general criteria, courses are asked to meet animation specific criteria which are an outline list of industry specified skills and knowledge students should possess when they graduate. Different courses will teach variants of the list below with different emphases. Courses should demonstrate significant strengths in most but not all of these:

1. Drawing as a basis for 2D and 3D animation
2. Design: character, background and concept
3. Animation production workflows
4. Compositing
5. Sound recording and breakdown: voice, music and effects
6. Film language
7. History and context of animation
8. Studio practice, teamwork and structure
9. Career planning and guidance

These subject specific criteria are each divided into three sections:

LEARNING OUTCOMES

What students are expected to be able to do as a result of the course. These might be evidenced as artifacts such as storyboards or particular layouts.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

What the course contains in order to deliver these outcomes, in terms of activities or procedures.

RESOURCE AND TEACHING REQUIREMENTS

What needs to be in place in order to attain the appropriate level of student learning outcomes.

1. DRAWING AS A BASIS FOR 2D AND 3D ANIMATION*

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students' portfolios should demonstrate that they can prepare industry standard storyboards, layouts and good quality drawings for camera, scanning or for concept, using a range of different media for life and observational drawing (such as pencil, charcoal, watercolour, etc).

Drawings in the students' portfolios should demonstrate:

LIFE DRAWING

Application of the principles of good draughtsmanship in [life drawing](#) (of both human and animal forms) pertinent to the animated medium, from a variety of different angles and in a range of poses, in relation to:

- composition
- perspective
- anatomy
- volume and weight
- proportion
- appropriate economy of line and form ready for future animation

STORYBOARD/VISUALISATION

Application of the principles of composition, perspective, use of camera angles, narrative and technical proficiency in [storyboard samples](#).

Strong drawing skills, composition, perspective, notation of camera moves and correct portrayal of screen aspect ratio.

LAYOUTS

Technical proficiency in layouts.

THE ABILITY TO PRODUCE A RANGE OF DRAWINGS

Such as:

- movement and gestures
- weight
- balance
- a range of expressions and musculature studies
- analysis of facial construction and expression, illustrations of body language, poses and gestures

There should also be assessment procedures in place to determine that students are able to articulate:

- the role and importance of drawing in animation
- the role of storyboarding and other pre-visualisation tools in translating a narrative script into an animation
- the ability to prepare storyboards that can be translated into layouts by other artists
- the ability to prepare layouts that can be translated into animation by other artists

*This section is considered essential and should have greater emphasis in courses specialising in 2D animation.

1. DRAWING AS A BASIS FOR 2D AND 3D ANIMATION

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

LIFE DRAWING

ALL students should attend regular scheduled life drawing classes for at least the first two thirds of their course and have access to this facility for the entire course*.

EXPRESSION

ALL students should undertake a range of drawn exercises that will allow them to develop skills in expressing movement, motive, emotion and gestures competently*.

Where colleges have the necessary facilities, they may want to consider allowing students to undertake additional exercises in performance and expression in 3D CGI and/or stop frame, including 'turntabling' digital sculptures.

Where colleges have an associated drama course, they may want to consider encouraging animation students to attend theatre workshops in acting.

STORYBOARDING

ALL students should understand that storyboarding is one of the essential first processes in translating a narrative script into a film. They should be instructed in the preparation of industry standard storyboards.

LAYOUT

ALL students should understand how layout, blocking and composition are vital for the production of a successful sequence or film. They should be instructed in the preparation of industry standard layouts.

* It is essential that all students should undertake drawing exercises throughout the duration of their course, regardless of their preferred medium for animation. However, where students have already opted to pursue 3D CGI or stop frame animation, the proportion of drawn exercises they undertake may be reduced and replaced by specific skills for their chosen medium.

RESOURCE AND TEACHING REQUIREMENTS

STUDIO SPACE

During life classes, students should have sufficient studio space to be able to work in comfort around a model, using a variety of media. Easels and drawing boards should be supplied where appropriate. For all other drawing exercises, there should be adequate studio space with sufficient working surfaces for all students to work in comfort.

REFERENCE WORKS

Students should be introduced to standard reference works on drawn animation, and relevant online resources should be signposted. Copies of books and periodicals, should be retained for reference and loan in the college library, or in the department.

TEACHING SUPPORT

There should be a lead tutor responsible for drawing and composition teaching. Life classes can be taught by a skilled and experienced life drawing tutor provided they have been briefed on, and have an appreciation of, the different needs of animation students.

Courses should use part-time and sessional staff with experience in the animation industry to supplement teaching of drawing exercises for performance and expression, layout and storyboarding. Where appropriate, tutors with experience of composition for 3D and stop frame should also be used.

2. DESIGN: CHARACTER, BACKGROUND & CONCEPT

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The drawings, digital images, films and other products in the students' portfolios should demonstrate that they can respond to a design brief.

Depending on the animation format the students have chosen to specialise in, the drawings, films and other products in their portfolios should demonstrate their ability to:

- Design characters appropriate for animation, in response to a design brief, demonstrating that the designs are suitable to be drawn or created in three dimensions using different expressions and gestures and including full turnaround and model sheets.
- Design key backgrounds for use in layout and/or CGI environments paying particular attention to perspective and complementing or mirroring the stylisation of other elements to be used. This should be in response to a design brief.
- Design props, and present drawings/images/models as if responding to a design brief.

- Specify colour palettes as part of a design brief and conform to such specifications when preparing imagery.
- Apply a variety of lighting and texturing techniques used in CGI and stop frame animation, according to a design brief.
- Light a set for stop frame or 3D CGI animation.

There should also be assessment procedures in place to determine that students are able to:

- Articulate the importance of design for animation, and how it contributes to the meaning of the final animation, and justify the design choices they make.
- Professionally respond to a design brief.

2. DESIGN: CHARACTER, BACKGROUND & CONCEPT

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

CHARACTER DESIGN

Students should undertake a range of exercises in character design demonstrating that the designs are suitable to be drawn or modeled in three dimensions or CGI, demonstrating different expressions, gestures and poses, and to include full turnaround and model sheets.

Students should undertake at least one exercise where they are required to work from a design brief and present drawings/designs/CGI maquettes showing their ability to fulfil a brief.

BACKGROUND DESIGN

Students should undertake a range of exercises on background and/or environment design and how to design key backgrounds for use in layout and for finished painted backgrounds, paying particular attention to perspective.

Students should undertake at least one exercise where they are required to work from a design brief and prepare background designs showing their ability to fulfil a brief.

PROPS

As with character designs, students should undertake exercises in prop design and present drawings as if responding to a design brief.

COLOURING/PAINT SYSTEMS

Students should undertake exercises in colouring designed to help them develop an understanding and appreciation of different colouring techniques and effects used in both 2D and 3D animation. This may include different Look Up Tables within CGI, or examination of rendering and grading possibilities.

LIGHTING

ALL students should undertake exercises that will show the differing effects lighting affords an image. This can be illusory as in the case of 2D ('baked' or drawn in), or optics based as in stop frame or 3D CGI. Students should develop an understanding of a variety of lighting techniques and conventions for use in CGI and/or stop frame and how to apply them in an animated film.

Ideally, students should undertake at least one exercise where they are required to show different lighting effects according to a design brief. Students who opt to do stop frame animation should also be instructed in the techniques of lighting of a set, and be given detailed instructions on the use of lighting equipment.

RESOURCE AND TEACHING REQUIREMENTS

The resources required for design will be largely the same as for *1. Drawing as a basis for 2D and 3D animation on page 13.*

REFERENCE WORKS

Students should be introduced to standard reference works on design for animation and relevant online resources should be signposted.

Copies of books and periodicals should be retained for reference and loan by college libraries or the department.

There should be a lead tutor responsible for all design teaching, but not necessarily teaching the whole element. Part-time and sessional teachers with experience of design for animation should be used to supplement teaching.

3. ANIMATION PRODUCTION WORKFLOWS

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The drawings, films and other products in the students' portfolios should demonstrate that they can make or contribute to a variety of simple films/sequences of good quality (which should include line tests/pre-visualisation/earlier iterations as well as the finished example), in one or a range of 2D or 3D animated media.

These drawings, films and other products in the students' portfolios will reflect their area(s) of specialist study.

2D animation portfolios should demonstrate that students can:

- Prepare drawings/digital images for 2D animation that express weight, volume, timing and acting; or pacing, legibility and impact in the case of motion graphics.
- Operate equipment/software to produce 2D animation, including line testing equipment (if drawn), relevant software, scanners (rostrum cameras where necessary) and editing and/or compositing technology.

3D animation portfolios should demonstrate that students can:

- Operate technology to produce 3D animation that expresses weight, volume, timing and acting, using at least one contemporary software package, as well as editing/compositing software and appropriate file management.

Stop frame portfolios should demonstrate that students can:

- Employ basic techniques and operate equipment to produce stop frame animation that express weight, volume, timing and acting.

There should also be assessment procedures in place to determine that students are able to:

- Demonstrate the importance of appropriate timing in animation.
- Explain the purpose of line testing/blocking or other pre-visualisation methods to confirm the quality of drawings/models and attain correct timing and pacing.
- Explain the qualitative and practical differences between the different types of animation – 2D, 3D, stop frame; maybe procedural and keyframe in CGI.
- Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of the different methods of producing animation.
- Explain fully the different production processes involved in CGI, 2D, 3D, stop frame.
- Observe appropriate health and safety precautions for the hazards of materials employed.
- Make an informed choice about which processes they wish to pursue throughout their remaining studies and future careers.
- Critically evaluate a range of animations in their chosen format (2D, 3D, stop frame) to identify different techniques and approaches.

3. ANIMATION PRODUCTION WORKFLOWS

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

2D (DRAWN AND CGI)

Students should understand how to prepare drawings for 2D animation and should complete basic exercises in 2D while learning the techniques of animation.

ALL students should be introduced to, and instructed in the use of, the technology to produce 2D animation, including light boxes, line testing equipment, (scanners and rostrum cameras where necessary), animation and editing/image manipulation software.

Students should have the opportunity to study a range of 2D films illustrating different techniques and approaches in drawn animation.

Students who opt to pursue 2D throughout their course should receive instruction that is more detailed and undertake extensive practice in expressing weight, volume, timing, pacing and acting.

3D (CGI)

Students should complete basic exercises in 3D animation in order to gain a full appreciation of the qualitative and practical differences between 2D and 3D animation.

ALL students should be introduced to, and instructed in the use of, the technologies to produce 3D animation, including at least one contemporary 3D software package and editing/image manipulation software. There should be suitable computer suites furnished with sufficient scanners, computer monitors and adequate rendering capability and disk space.

Students should have the opportunity to study a range of 3D films illustrating different techniques and approaches in 3D animation.

Students who opt to pursue 3D throughout their course should receive more detailed instruction in using appropriate software to express weight, volume, pace and acting.

Students may also be able to specialise in technical applications including scripting and programming tools, creating procedural effects,

particle systems, dynamics, etc.

STOP FRAME (MODEL ANIMATION)

Students should complete basic exercises in stop frame animation in order to gain a full appreciation of the qualitative and practical differences between stop frame and other animated forms.

Students should have the opportunity to study a range of works illustrating different techniques and approaches in stop frame.

Students who opt to pursue stop frame animation throughout their course should receive more detailed instruction in expressing weight, volume, pacing and acting. They should also have full instruction in the processes of model making, set design and construction, lighting and camera work, and receive additional health and safety training covering the hazards of materials used in producing models. There should be sufficient workshop space for the preparation of models and sets and the requisite lighting, camera and recording equipment.

Students should also be able to further study the technical aspects of the hardware (e.g. cameras/rigs/armatures) and develop specialist skills in these areas.

MOTION CAPTURE

ALL students should have a basic understanding of the techniques and equipment used in motion capture. They should understand the qualitative differences between the use of motion capture and traditional animation (whether 2D, CGI or stop frame) and should have the opportunity to study works featuring motion capture. Whilst animation courses do not need to have access to Mo-Cap facilities, students should have the opportunity to use Mo-Cap data and understand processes of clean-up, manipulation and the purpose of variants of this process eg performance capture, facial capture and emerging new applications such as Cameron's Simulcam.



3. ANIMATION PRODUCTION WORKFLOWS

RESOURCE AND TEACHING REQUIREMENTS

STUDIO SPACE

Courses must have adequate studio space to allow students to work comfortably without them needing to compete with each other. Studios should be equipped with an adequate number of light boxes and have sufficient scanning equipment and computers.

LINE TESTING OR PREVISUALISATION

If appropriate to course content, there must be sufficient facilities for students to undertake line testing close to studio space. Facilities must be sufficient to allow students to undertake line testing without unreasonable delay. As a guideline, any student wanting to line test work should be able to do so on the same day.

COMPUTER SUITES

Courses must have adequate space to provide computer suites with sufficient licenses and access points to allow students to work comfortably in 3D animation without needing to compete with each other. Computers should run at least one contemporary 3D software package with adequate disk space and network capabilities for rendering. The ability to render over multiple machines, within the constraints of time and resources, should be made available. The larger file sizes and bandwidth issues of 3D need to be addressed through higher specification computers being available for 3D animators.

EDITING FACILITIES

There must be a sufficient number of editing suites or software licenses to allow students to edit work without unreasonable delay and transfer work to personal hard drives, tape or DVD as appropriate. As a guideline, no student should have to wait more than three days for access to an editing facility.

LECTURE AND TUTORIAL SPACE

There should be separate lecture facilities and tutorial space allowing films to be viewed in a range of media (traditional film, video, DVD, internet, etc.) and with projection facilities for computers. There must be space for personal study as well as group lectures.

3D STUDIO SPACE

All courses that practice it must have some space and facilities for the production of stop frame 3D animation, including workshop space for the design and construction of models and sets and properly equipped studios for film making. There should be adequate cameras, tripods, lighting gear and monitors to allow students to successfully produce films in stop frame.

Courses that specialise in stop frame must have sufficient space and facilities to allow all students who opt to do stop frame to work comfortably and without unnecessary competition for facilities.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Students must have ready access to technical support for all equipment used in the production processes. Courses should have sufficient technical staff to provide such support and keep all equipment, licenses and networks in good working order. In the case of software, technical staff should normally have attended a professional training course in the use of such software. Except in the case of serious equipment failure or breakdown, students should expect technical problems to be resolved on the same day. In the case of software packages, students should have ready access to technical and instructional manuals, online or at hand in the department.

3. ANIMATION PRODUCTION WORKFLOWS

RESOURCE AND TEACHING REQUIREMENTS

REFERENCE WORKS

Students should be introduced to standard reference works on animation production, and relevant online resources should be signposted. Copies of books and periodicals should be retained for reference and loan by college libraries or the department.

TEACHING

There should be a lead tutor responsible for all animation production teaching. Full-time staff should have a sufficient knowledge and understanding of the different production methods and equipment for animation to be able to give proper advice and guidance to students. Each of the 2D, 3D and stop frame areas should have a lead tutor with experience of working in the requisite area. Tutors involved in teaching of software should normally have completed a professional training course in the use of such software, or have used it in a professional context. Part-time and sessional teachers with industry experience should be used to supplement teaching provision wherever possible.

4. DIGITAL COMPOSITING

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Films and breakdowns in the students' portfolios should demonstrate that they can composite to an appropriate level for the animation format they are using.

Films by students pursuing a 2D animation course should demonstrate their ability to composite scenes from individual elements.

There should also be assessment procedures in place to determine that students are able to demonstrate an understanding of the main compositing processes in their chosen area.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- An explanation of compositing tools and how they may be used in specific animation processes and workflows.
- Introduction to digital compositing in a commercial context. This might mean a visit to a VFX house or a motion graphics company, or a lecture on a compositing case study.
- 2D animation students should have knowledge of at least one digital compositing system and should be able to composite scenes under direction from a client/director/team member/collaborator.

RESOURCE AND TEACHING REQUIREMENTS

There should be a tutor who is charged with responsibility for teaching compositing. There are many DVD and online resources in various aspects of compositing and VFX. It is recommended that staff look into purchasing relevant training DVDs for their software.

5. SOUND RECORDING AND BREAKDOWN: VOICE, MUSIC AND EFFECTS*

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Dope sheets, voice and other sound tracks and short animations in students' portfolios should demonstrate that they are able to prepare dope sheets, produce breakdowns, record voice and other sound tracks, and interpret dope sheets to combine sound tracks with pictures.

The films and other products in the students' portfolios should demonstrate they can:

- Appreciate the function of dope sheets, both how to prepare them and how to work with them.
- Record voice tracks and other sounds at correct specifications.
- Break sound down and reassemble it for the process of film making.
- Break down voice tracks phonetically to facilitate accurate lip-sync, and transfer this information to a dope sheet.
- Lip-sync characters to fit to broken down voice tracks.
- Combine voice tracks with other sound effects to complete a soundtrack.
- Edit sound with professional software.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

BREAKDOWN OF SOUND

Students should understand how sound is broken down, reassembled and layered for the process of filmmaking.

They should appreciate how voice tracks are combined with other sound effects to complete a soundtrack, how voice tracks are phonetically broken down to facilitate accurate lip-sync and how this information is transferred to a dope sheet.

SPEECH AND PHONETICS

Character animation students should undertake exercises on how to lip-sync characters to fit to broken down voice tracks.

USING DOPE SHEETS

Students should be taught the function of dope sheets and how to record the way sound should synchronise with images throughout the recording process, and how to read and interpret dope sheets. Some exercises should be set so that students appreciate how sound requirements are communicated to others during the production process.

*This section is considered essential and should be given greater emphasis for any course specialising in character animation.

N.B. This section is not essential to students not pursuing character animation.



5. SOUND RECORDING AND BREAKDOWN: VOICE, MUSIC AND EFFECTS

RESOURCE AND TEACHING REQUIREMENTS

RECORDING STUDIOS

Colleges should have adequate facilities with suitable recording equipment to allow students to record voice overs and other sound effects. Students should be given full instruction in the use of recording facilities.

EDITING SUITES

Colleges should have adequate editing suites to allow students to work easily in manipulating and layering soundtracks and combine them successfully within a film. Students should receive full instruction in the use of any sound editing software. This should include professional monitoring equipment.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Students must have ready access to technical support for all equipment used in the sound production process. Courses should have sufficient technical staff to provide such support and keep all

equipment in good working order. In the case of software, technical staff should normally have attended a training course in the use of such software. Except in the case of serious equipment failure or breakdown, students should expect technical problems to be resolved on the same day. In the case of software packages, students should have ready access to technical and instructional manuals, online or off.

REFERENCE WORKS

Students should be introduced to standard reference works on sound and film. Copies should be retained for reference and loan by college libraries or the department.

There should be a lead tutor identified with the responsibility for the teaching of sound. Where appropriate that tutor should have completed relevant professional training in the use of recording and sound editing equipment. Part-time and sessional staff with expertise in using sound equipment should be used to supplement teaching.

6. FILM LANGUAGE

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students should be able to employ film language to engage in critical discussions about animated films and describe their own experience of producing them using the appropriate vocabulary.

Students should employ film language in such a way as to demonstrate their knowledge of the medium and the methodology of production, in discussion and critical evaluation of:

- Their own experience of constructing and relating different scenes and editing work.
- Historical and contemporary animated forms, including commercial and experimental films.

- Different approaches to narrative and different techniques in filmmaking.

There should also be assessment procedures in place to determine that students are able to articulate:

- How narratives and concepts from other media are translated and interpreted for animated film.
- The different narrative requirements and conventions for short and long form films.
- The interrelationship of the animated image and the processes of production. How does the medium of animation restrict or liberate the filmmaker?

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

SCRIPT WRITING

Students should be introduced to the basic principles of script writing, with particular reference to animation.

FILM LANGUAGE

Throughout their course, students should be introduced to a range of films, both in live action and animation, which will help to promote their understanding of film language and how it may be utilised in animation.

Those works should include historical, contemporary, commercial and experimental films, illustrating a variety of approaches to narrative and technique.

Scheduled screenings and lectures should be arranged for students throughout their course. Programmes of lectures should also include input from professional animators and other filmmakers of repute. In addition, students should have access to a range of film works available for personal study.

RESOURCE AND TEACHING REQUIREMENTS

LECTURE AND TUTORIAL SPACE

There should be separate lecture facilities and tutorial space allowing films to be viewed in a range of media (traditional film, video, DVD, internet, etc.) and with projection facilities for computers. There must be space for personal study as well as group lectures.

REFERENCE WORKS

Students should be introduced to standard reference works on film language and animation, the history of animation and film theory and

copies should be retained for reference and loan in the college library. Libraries should also provide access to a range of properly licensed recorded film works for personal study.

There should be a lead tutor identified with responsibility for providing a programme of critical and theoretical studies in animation and animation history. A range of part-time and sessional teachers should also supplement lectures and tutorials on film language in order to provide students with a rich and diverse programme.

7. HISTORY OF ANIMATION

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Written critiques in students' portfolios should cover films originating in different countries, from a range of periods and employing different techniques.

Students should demonstrate, in their critiques of films, their ability to:

- Compare and contrast different animation processes and techniques, from the first animated film to today.
- Critically evaluate the work of the most influential animation filmmakers and their contribution to the development of animation.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- A general understanding and knowledge of the different animation processes and techniques, from the first animated film to today, and the evolution of animation techniques.
- A general knowledge of the most influential animation filmmakers and their breakthroughs (or how they have innovated).
- Students should be able to present, talk through and explain samples of the studied films.

- Students should learn about animation filmmakers worldwide, not just focus on the UK and America.
- Course content should cover a wide variety of forms; traditional 2D animation, stop motion animation, CGI animation, games and VFX.

Students should have access to an extended filmography of films they could screen in their space, and addresses of useful websites.

RESOURCE AND TEACHING REQUIREMENTS

LECTURE AND TUTORIAL SPACE

There should be separate lecture facilities and tutorial space allowing films to be viewed in a range of media (traditional film, video, DVD, internet, etc.) and with projection facilities for computers. There must be space for personal study as well as group lectures.

REFERENCE WORKS

Students should be introduced to both standard and challenging reference works on animation, the history of animation and film theory,

and copies should be retained for reference and loan in the college library. Libraries should also provide access to a range of properly licensed recorded film works for personal study.

There should be a lead tutor identified with responsibility for providing a programme of critical and theoretical studies in animation and animation history. A range of part-time and sessional teachers should also supplement lectures and tutorials on animation history in order to provide students with a rich and diverse programme.

8. WORKPLACE PRACTICE AND TEAMWORK

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Student work should contain examples of draft budgets, plans and schedules for collaborative film projects that students have engaged in. Students need to show they understand the commercial constraints within which animation studios work.

The draft budgets, plans and schedules in student portfolios should attempt to simulate aspects of commercial production and demonstrate the student's ability to:

- Identify and operate within the resources and time available.
- Recognise the commercial requirement to utilise resources efficiently.
- Keep proper control of resources and account for their utilisation.
- Show an appreciation of the advantages of teamwork and clear demarcation of functions within the modern animation studio.
- Demonstrate an ability to work in a specific role within a team on at least one project.

There should also be assessment procedures in place to determine that students are able to:

- Work as part of a team in a collaborative process of filmmaking.
- Describe how animated films are produced in industry, including:
 - how ideas are pitched and marketed to clients
 - how ideas are adapted and marketed for different territories
 - how films are financed or commissioned
- Explain the normal breakdown of labour in production and the roles and responsibilities of members of the production team, particularly the roles of:
 - script writer
 - character designer
 - prop designer

- background designer

- colour stylist

- storyboard artist

- layouts artist

- rigger

- modeller

- assistant animator

- key animator

- production assistant

- technical director

- compositor

- production manager

- director

- editor

- producer

- Explain post production processes such as editing, soundtracks, compositing, and transferring work to film, tape or DVD.
- Understand how motion graphics, games and VFX work may differ in workflow.
- Undertake a risk assessment in order to determine the hazards and risks in studios and other animation production environments, and the associated legal implications.
- Identify the intellectual property rights associated with any character designs or filming they undertake, and the need to obtain necessary clearances for any soundtracks or images they may use in their own work.

8. WORKPLACE PRACTICE AND TEAMWORK

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

UNDERSTANDING THE ANIMATION BUSINESS

Students should have some appreciation about how the animation industry works, including how ideas are pitched and marketed to clients, how ideas are adapted and marketed for different territories, and how films are commissioned and financed.

BUDGETING, PRODUCTION PLANNING AND SCHEDULING

Every film, whether it is experimental or commercial, has some limit on the resources available to make it. Students should learn how to budget, plan and schedule the production process within the resources available. They should also understand how this process is handled in industry. Colleges that use final major projects as part of their degree assessment should also assess how the student has approached the budgeting and planning process during production.

UNDERSTANDING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS PART OF A TEAM

Students should have an understanding of the division of responsibilities within commercial animation studios, and other employers such as games and VFX. In particular, they should understand the roles of script writers, character designers, prop designers, background designers, colour stylists, storyboard artists, layouts artists, assistant animators, riggers, modellers, technical directors, key animators, production assistants, production managers, directors, editors compositors and producers.

POST PRODUCTION

Students should have a full understanding of post production processes such as editing, compositing, soundtracks and transferring work to film, tape or DVD. Student work should demonstrate the ability to submit work in the required format.

TEAMWORK

Students need to have available the option to work in teams, especially

as the course progresses. This should be promoted as having equal standing as individual work and as holding equal weighting in marking. Students must be informed that teamwork and demarcation of roles is of prime importance for large animation, VFX, games and graphics companies, and that if they wish to gravitate towards work in these, they need to evidence experience of having worked successfully in teams. It is important that assessment procedures are in place to accommodate teamwork and that students feel confident that if they embark on team projects they will be assessed fairly.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Most animation studios are medium risk premises, but some engaged in complex model making may be of a higher risk. Students should have a general understanding of health and safety requirements and their own responsibilities under the law. Health and safety should be emphasised in the college environment as part of preparation for students moving into industry.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Everybody working within the arts should have an understanding of intellectual property (IP) rights and how it affects them. Students should be advised of any intellectual property rights that apply to their work during the course of their studies.

They should be apprised of the arrangements that apply if they take part in external competitions or work to any briefs set by an external organisation.

They should also be taught the basics of IP rights as it might apply to animation creation, particularly with regard to any character designs or filming they undertake.

Students should also be given an appreciation of Creative Commons licences and usage of imagery sourced from libraries and the internet generally.

Students should appreciate the need to obtain necessary clearances for any soundtracks or images they may use in their own work and for any study materials they might record or copy during the course of their studies.



8. WORKPLACE PRACTICE AND TEAMWORK

RESOURCE AND TEACHING REQUIREMENTS

The resources required for studio practice exercises will be largely the same as for *1. Drawing as a basis for 2D and 3D animation* on page 13 and *3. Animation production workflows* on page 17. However, colleges can promote a better understanding of studio practice by including occasional visits to studios within their teaching programme, and inviting practitioners to attend colleges as visiting lecturers, part-time lecturers or sessional teachers.

Courses will need to show they have spaces and arrangements whereby teams can be encouraged to meet and work for extended periods.

REFERENCE WORKS

College policies on health and safety and intellectual property rights should be included in documents given to students such as student rulebooks or course handbooks. They should also be kept for reference by the college library.

There should be a lead tutor identified with responsibility for teaching studio practice. Colleges can promote a better understanding of studio practice by including practitioners from commercial animation studios within their programme of visiting lecturers and by arranging occasional visits by small groups of students to working studios. Additionally, colleges may want to consider involving outside studios in helping to devise some of the practical exercises students will undertake during the course of their studies.

9. CAREER PLANNING AND GUIDANCE

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The CV, career and personal development plans, drawings, films and other products in the students' portfolios should demonstrate that they are able to present themselves effectively to potential employers.

Student CV should identify clearly their personal, educational and industrial experiences and outcomes as well as their strengths and abilities in animation.

There should also be personal guidance and assessment procedures in place to determine that students:

- Have realistic expectations as to their future careers.
- Are aware of the employment and other opportunities available to them in the animation, VFX and/or games industry nationally and internationally.
- Have career and development plans to help them to identify what they need to do to secure further opportunities.
- Can identify the legal, financial, taxation and practical implications of employment and freelance situations.
- Have prepared a:
 - portfolio of suitable drawings, sketchbooks or other artwork; (including an online version).
 - CV.
 - industry standard showreel, consisting of extracts from different projects, usually of no more than 3 minutes length and including breakdowns or pre-rendered animation.

9. CAREER PLANNING AND GUIDANCE

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

PURSUIING POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Students should be given proper guidance about whether to pursue postgraduate studies, what courses are available and whether they are likely to meet entry requirements. These needn't be animation courses. Talented students with an ambition to become directors or producers might be guided towards appropriate postgraduate courses, and students with exceptional abilities in CGI might be guided towards an appropriate postgraduate computer course.

Other students might want to consider specialist courses that enhance their abilities at drawn animation, model making, compositing, editing, or working with sound, etc. Courses should encourage students to be realistic in their expectations and focus honestly on their talents.

UNDERSTANDING THE ENTRY POINTS TO INDUSTRY

Not all students will want to pursue a career in the animation industry. Some will seek employment in the games or VFX industries; others might go into motion graphic design or other areas of filmmaking such as post production work. Students should be encouraged to have realistic expectations about their employability and how to prepare themselves for the world of work.

EXHIBITING A KNOWLEDGE OF THE 'ANIMATION ECOSYSTEM'

Although many students enter courses wanting to work only at Aardman or Pixar, students need to have acquired a knowledge of the wider range of animation companies, across different media and industries, and what their current output and specialism is. There should be clear evidence of independent research into the multitude of jobs that might be out there, and which companies might particularly suit the students skill set.

PREPARATION OF PORTFOLIO, CV AND SHOWREEL

Most employers will not employ students based solely on a final single film. Most will want to see a showreel consisting of extracts from different projects, usually of no more than three minutes length.

Also useful is an online portfolio consisting of a CV, a series of suitable drawings, sketches or other artwork that demonstrates a student's abilities. Preparation of a portfolio and showreel should not be left to the last minute, especially where there may be pressures on students to complete a final film and dissertation for degree assessment. Consideration should be given to preparing such materials at a point two-thirds through the duration of the course. This material can then be easily updated once a student has completed their studies.

It is recommended that all student work is kept and documented since early work might be useful to construct a narrative of how the student's talent has progressed, or certain earlier exercises may suddenly grow in importance as the student chooses a specialism.



9. CAREER PLANNING AND GUIDANCE

RESOURCE AND TEACHING REQUIREMENTS

TUTORIALS

Student ambitions should be identified at an early stage in their studies and some focus on future careers should be introduced in tutorials about one-third through the duration of the course. Career planning and guidance should become a regular feature of tutorials thereafter.

REFERENCE WORKS

Colleges should retain details of suitable postgraduate courses for students and a range of careers advice and guidance materials and information about self-employment.

There should be a tutor identified as responsible for career planning and guidance. Colleges may want to consider asking practising animators to assist in advising students on preparing portfolios, and give one to one advice on portfolios. A freelancer should assist in teaching students about the realities of working freelance. Tutors should have a firm understanding of the animation industry, the opportunities for graduates and employment trends.

NEXT STEPS

WHAT DO COURSES NEED TO DO?

To apply for undergraduate course accreditation in animation you need to:

- Read these course accreditation guidelines.
- Contact Skillset for any further advice and guidance on how to fill in the application form.
- Complete an application form (applications will only be accepted on the official form).
- Include your supporting evidence in support of your application.

You will be assessed under Stage One using the information you provide in your application form and the evidence you submit.

We appreciate the Stage One applications can be time consuming and will gladly support any requests to your management for dispensation in order for lecturers/tutors to engage with this task'.

WHERE SHOULD YOU SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION?

Please send two copies of your application on discs as well as three hard copies to:

The Development Team
Skillset
Focus Point
21 Caledonian Road
London
N1 9GB

E: developmenttick@skillset.org

We are unable to accept faxed applications.

There is no current funding available for this.

ENGAGE WITH US THROUGH THE SKILLSET SURGERY - A COURSE MOT

In order to help programme heads and tutors make modifications to their courses on a macro level, and help them start to align their course with animation industry relevant teaching, we offer a face-to-face meeting between an industry professional, Skillset accreditation staff and HE experts.

The idea is to enable swift changes to courses that may not require lengthy internal HE validation. The Skillset Surgery can advise on single modules or holistic curriculum structural change.

We recognise that some courses might be a few years away from the prospect of an accreditation application, so the Skillset Surgery allows them to gain advice that could change their course in a positive way in the short term.

Sessions are typically an hour or two long and confidential, with a short report of possible changes to course structure, modules or pedagogy released to the academic to consider.

It is important to appreciate these sessions are in confidence and courses cannot publicise or announce these sessions as evidence of any kind of Skillset approval.

THANK YOU

SKILLSET WISHES TO THANK THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS FOR THEIR INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ANIMATION ACCREDITATION CRITERIA, AND MAINTAINING UPDATES:

- Marion Edwards, VP Programming, HIT Entertainment
www.hitentertainment.com
- Catherine Elliott, Tiger Aspect Productions
www.tigeraspect.co.uk
- Ginger Gibbons, Grand Slamm Childrens Films
www.gscfilms.com
- Hugo Sands, Passion Pictures
www.passion-pictures.com
- Leonie Sharrock, Welsh Animation Group (WAG) representative
- Louise Hussey, Rushes
www.rushes.co.uk
- Mark Vale, Andy Guest, The Character Shop
www.thecharactershop.co.uk
- Michael Foley, Sumo Dojo Productions
www.sumo-dojo.com
- Paula Newport, Aardman Animation
www.aardman.co.uk
- Richard Scott, Axis Animation
www.axisanimation.com
- Liz Whitaker, Hot Animation
www.hotanimation.com
- Vici King, Blue Zoo
www.bluezoo.co.uk
- Tim Searle, Baby Cow
www.babycow.tv
- Steve Smith, Beakus
www.beakus.com
- Charlotte Loynes, Animation Producer
- Ben Cowell, Nexus Productions
www.nexusproductions.com
- Ben Owen, MPC
www.moving-picture.co.uk



Awarding funds from
The National Lottery®

Production of guidelines funded by BFI lottery funding.