

**Programme Specification for**  
***MA Children’s Book Illustration***  
***and Graphic Novels***



<b>1. Programme title</b>	MA Children’s Book Illustration and Graphic Novels
<b>2. Awarding institution</b>	Middlesex University
<b>3. Teaching institution</b>	Middlesex University
<b>4. Details of accreditation by professional/statutory/regulatory body</b>	
<b>5. Final qualification</b>	MA Children’s Book Illustration and Graphic Novels
<b>6. Year of validation</b> <b>Year of amendment</b>	
<b>7. Language of study</b>	English
<b>8. Mode of study</b>	Full-time/ Part-time

**9. Criteria for admission to the programme**

**Appropriate qualifications or experience:**

- a good honours degree in Illustration or a relevant art and design subject, or a recognized equivalent professional qualification;
- applicants with a good honours degree in a non-art and design subject and substantial experience working within the field, or able to demonstrate an aptitude for working in art and design at this level, may be considered;
- applicants without the normal qualifications but who have extensive and substantial work experience in appropriate areas may be considered through accreditation of prior learning (APEL).

**In all cases, admission is dependent on:**

- Evidence of subject-related skills (through submission of a portfolio of work or equivalent, as hard copy and/or PDF or PowerPoint files).
- Sufficient command of the English language – those applicants for whom English is

not the first language must demonstrate evidence of attainment by an IELTS overall score of 6.5 or higher (with no component achieving less than 6), or equivalent. Applicants with less than six in any component score are strongly recommended to undertake the University's pre-sessional English Language Course.

- Supportive academic/professional references.
- An appropriate personal statement which outlines in general terms an area of interest that would provide the focus of study and with reference to the following guideline headings:
  - a) an area of interest or a provisional title;
  - b) background experience directly or indirectly relevant to the proposed area of study;
  - c) consideration about how your research might be done (even though this may change later) and any possible outcome(s);
  - d) an indication of the resources considered necessary to undertake a successful investigation;
  - e) evidence of an initial exploration in the area of the project and reference to research and practice that has already been carried out by the applicant and/or others.

*Please note that applicants with visual impairment may find aspects of the programme excessively challenging.*

## 10. Aims of the programme

The programme aims to:

- provide an advanced academic environment that encourages and promotes a reflective approach to Masters level narrative illustration practice and research;
- enable MA Children's Book Illustration and Graphic Novels students to produce an advanced, articulate and coherent body of work that will include a publishing dummy completed to professional presentation standards;
- establish a systematic investigative approach to creative practice, research and methodologies, and one that explores the critical interrelationship between theory and practice in Narrative Illustration;
- examine, critically evaluate and develop the language(s) used to articulate research in the field of Narrative Illustration;
- create knowledge about the implementation of particular strategies for learning central to the foundation of scholarship in practice, research and professional capacity in Narrative Illustration.

## 11. Programme outcomes

### A. Knowledge and understanding

On completion of this programme the successful student will have knowledge

### Teaching/learning methods

Students gain knowledge and understanding through:

and understanding of :

1. Key concepts and ideas in creative thinking and narrative illustration research methodologies.
2. The range, social significance and history of contemporary narrative and sequential illustration and the social role of the creative practitioner.
3. Current, individually related practice at the forefront of the contemporary narrative and sequential illustration and the interrelationship between theory and practice.
4. The processes of individually relevant creativity and their role in investigating and testing the validity of supposition.

- workshops, lectures, seminars and tutorials;
- self-directed study.

**Assessment methods**

Students' knowledge and understanding is assessed by:

- coursework, including reports, presentations and dissertation.
- the criteria for assessment are both generic across Level 7 as well as specific to the module.

**B. Cognitive (thinking) skills**

On completion of this programme the successful student will be able to:

1. Articulate relevant questions and present complex concepts and ideas in research and contemporary practice of individual relevance.
2. Assess the validity of evidence through rational disputation and the application of advanced research skills.
3. Demonstrate a capacity for critical reflection, identifying appropriate narrative illustration research needs and considering the means and methodologies for meeting them.
4. Synthesise and implement advanced knowledge regarding the utilisation of particular strategies for learning when developing their own practice.

**Teaching/learning methods**

Students learn cognitive skills through:

- workshops and weekly seminars;
- presentations and coursework;
- self-directed study.

**Assessment methods**

Students' cognitive skills are assessed by:

- coursework, including participation in weekly seminars, project work, reports and dissertation.
- The criteria for assessment are both generic across Level 7 as well as specific to the module.

<p><b>C. Practical skills</b></p> <p>On completion of the programme the successful student will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Manage (plan, organise, monitor, progress and complete) a complex creative or research project.</li> <li>2. Apply dedicated conceptual and technical skills necessary in producing a finished publishing dummy at an advanced professional level.</li> <li>3. Implement appropriate, effective and creative technological practice and research knowledge resources.</li> <li>4. Follow principles and conventions of communication in research and practice appropriate to individual needs.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods</b></p> <p>Students learn practical skills through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• workshops and weekly seminars;</li> <li>• coursework;</li> <li>• self-directed study.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessment methods</b></p> <p>Students' practical skills are assessed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• coursework, including participation in weekly seminars, project work, reports and dissertation.</li> <li>• The criteria for assessment are both generic across Level 7 as well as specific to the module.</li> </ul>
<p><b>D. Graduate skills</b></p> <p>On completion of this programme the successful student will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apply reflective practice strategies in developing advanced self-managed learning and professional practice.</li> <li>2. Make use of a group as a creative resource in collaborative learning practices and team endeavours.</li> <li>3. Carry out advanced work by connecting individually relevant theory with practice.</li> <li>4. Communicate effectively utilising a variety of methods, applicable to individual needs and future professional context.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods</b></p> <p>Students acquire transferable postgraduate skills through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• weekly seminars;</li> <li>• coursework;</li> <li>• self-directed study.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessment methods</b></p> <p>Students' postgraduate skills are assessed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• coursework, including participation in weekly seminars, project work, reports, and presentations.</li> <li>• The criteria for assessment are both generic across Level 7 as well as specific to the module.</li> </ul>

5. Plan for effective career development.	
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## **12. Programme structure (levels, modules, credits and progression requirements)**

### **12. 1 Overall structure of the programme**

The MA Children's Book Illustration and Graphic Novels programme is undertaken full-time in one calendar year (October to November) of three consecutive 15-week stages (twelve teaching weeks + three assessment weeks), taught on two days a week, the part-time route is over two years. At present, there is a single entry point in September.

Each 30-credit module requires a total of 18 hours of study per week (comprising taught sessions, independent study, the use of studios, workshops and the print room, as well as presentations by visiting professional practitioners). Full-time students undertaking 60 credits per stage should expect to commit 36 hours per week to their studies, while the study time of part-time students is pro-rata to the amount of credits taken at each stage. (Please see programme diagram).

Students take four 30-credit modules and one 60-credit module all at Level 7. There is an exit award after 60 credits (Postgraduate Certificate) and after 120 credits (Post Graduate Diploma). On completion of the PgDip stage, students then take one 60-credit module, making a total of 180 credits for their final award.

The Developing Practice module (30-credits), Critical Debates module (30-credits) and Advanced Research module (30-credits), are taken by all cohorts, assisting in the development of an active and engaged postgraduate culture and community. The modules provide students with the skills, knowledge and critical approaches necessary for the initiation and development of a self-directed photography project. These modules consist of regular subject seminars, tutorials and workshops.

The narrative and sequential illustration (30 credits) module is taken by the MA Children's Book Illustration and Graphic Novels cohort only and concentrates on furthering a specific narrative illustration project. The Major Project (60 credits) module allows for a major in-depth narrative project.

Contact teaching is front-loaded in the first two terms, progressing towards an increasingly self-directed mode of study through periodic individual and group supervision. Students attend a series of illustrated lectures and moving image presentations from visiting professionals, which take place throughout Stages I and II.

The final submission for the MA Children's Book Illustration and Graphic Novels programme, module ART4004, is a completed major narrative illustration project and a report supported by a verbal presentation.

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12.2 Levels and modules		
Level 7		
COMPULSORY	OPTIONAL	PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS
Full-time students must take all of the following:  <b>Term 1</b> <b>ART4000</b> <i>30 credits</i>  <b>ART4001</b> <i>30 credits</i>  <b>Term 2</b> <b>ART4115</b> <i>30 credits</i>  <b>Term 3</b> <b>ART4004</b> <i>60 credits</i>		Successful completion of:  <b>Term 1 - PGCert.</b> <b>ART4000</b> <i>30 credits</i>  <b>ART4001</b> <i>30 credits</i>  <b>Term 2 - PGDip.</b> <b>ART4002</b> <i>30 credits</i>  <b>ART4115</b> <i>30 credits</i>

12.3 Non-compensatable modules (note statement in 12.2 regarding FHEQ levels)	
Module level	Module code
Level 7	ART4000
Level 7	ART4001
Level 7	ART4002
Level 7	ART4115
Level 7	ART4004

### 13. Curriculum map

See attached.

### 14. Information about assessment regulations

Please refer to the Middlesex University Regulations at <http://www.mdx.ac.uk/regulations> or the Your Study pages on UniHub: <http://www.unihub.mdx.ac.uk>

The modules **ART4000**, **ART4001**, **ART4002**, **ART4115** are graded on Pass/Fail. The final module **ART4004** Major Project is graded on the University 1–20 marking scale, which determines the level of the Award (Pass, Merit or Distinction).

For complete assessment regulation details, please refer to the University Regulations. Self-deferral is not allowed on any of the modules – students seeking to defer must consult the Assessment Administrator.

### 15. Placement opportunities, requirements and support (if applicable)

N/A

### 16. Future careers (if applicable)

The MA Children's Book Illustration and Graphic Novels programme provides an insight into the benefits of reflective practice, aiding postgraduates to develop as autonomous learners. It offers the opportunity to work in depth on a major self-directed project that could lead to publication or to commissioned work. The nature of the programme, also offers a fundamental skill at an advanced level for progression to a higher academic qualification such as doctoral research.

### 17. Particular support for learning (if applicable)

- Dedicated studio (with access for disabled students) and computer facilities.
- A range of workshops and technical staff and facilities provide the technical input for the realization of any studio-based materials required for the research projects.
- Extensive Print room facilities covering all usual printing processes.
- Access to Life drawing with free drop in life class availability.
- Loan store with an extensive range of equipment: film cameras from 35mm through medium format (645, 67) to large format (5x4), full frame digital cameras with a

wide range of lenses, flashguns, location lighting kits, light modifiers etc. This is a free service.

- Library facilities and resources, including specialist books, journals, videos, DVDs, slides, special collections, and computer programmes. There is a fine collection of picture books, graphic novels, journals and videos/DVDs of recorded programmes on the work of illustrators and writers.

<b>18. JACS code (or other relevant coding system)</b>	(Route A) W640 (Route B) E640
<b>19. Relevant QAA subject benchmark group(s)</b>	Art and Design History of Art Architecture and Design

<b>20. Reference points</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relevant University Regulations <a href="http://www.mdx.ac.uk/regulations/">http://www.mdx.ac.uk/regulations/</a></li><li>• QAA Subject Benchmark Statements for Art and Design</li><li>• QAA Subject Review Report 9Q231/99 (Art and Design)</li><li>• QAA Subject Overview Report Q013/2000 (Art and Design)</li><li>• Middlesex University Corporate Plan</li><li>• School of Art and Design Plan</li><li>• Learning and Teaching Policy and Strategy Students', External Examiners', Graduates' and Staff feedback and comments</li></ul>

<b>21. Other information</b>

Please note programme specifications provide a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information about the programme can be found in the rest of your programme handbook and the university regulations.

## Appendix 2: Curriculum Map

### Curriculum map for MA Children's Book Illustration and Graphic Novels

This section shows the highest level at which programme outcomes are to be achieved by all graduates, and maps programme learning outcomes against the modules in which they are assessed.

#### Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding		Practical skills	
A1	Key concepts and ideas in creative thinking and different art and illustrative research methodologies.	C1	Manage (plan, organise, monitor, progress and complete) a complex creative or research project.
A2	The range, social significance and history of contemporary narrative illustration practice and the social role of the creative practitioner.	C2	Apply dedicated illustrative, conceptual and technical skills at an advanced professional level.
A3	Current, individually related practice at the forefront of the contemporary narrative illustration field and the interrelationship between theory and practice.	C3	Implement appropriate, effective and creative technological practice and research knowledge resources.
A4	The processes of individually relevant creativity and their role in investigating and testing the validity of supposition.	C4	Follow principles and conventions of communication in research and practice appropriate individual needs.
Cognitive skills		Graduate Skills	
B1	Articulate relevant questions and present complex concepts and ideas in research and contemporary practice of individual relevance.	D1	Apply reflective practice strategies towards self-managed learning and professional practice.
B2	Assess the validity of evidence through rational disputation and the application of advanced research skills.	D2	Make use of a group as a creative resource in collaborative learning practices and team endeavours.
B3	Demonstrate a capacity for critical reflection, identifying appropriate photographic research needs and considering the means and methodologies for meeting them.	D3	Carry out advanced work by connecting individually relevant theory with practice.
B4	Synthesise and implement knowledge regarding the utilisation of particular strategies for learning when developing their own practice.	D4	Communicate effectively utilising a variety of methods, applicable to individual needs and future professional context.

