

# Programme Specification for *BA (Hons) Visual Effects*



<b>1. Programme title</b>	BA (Hons) Visual Effects
<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>	Middlesex University
<b>5. Final qualification</b>	BA (Hons) Visual Effects
<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

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

We welcome applications from those who are able to demonstrate prior learning in the areas of Film, Photography, Art and Design, Computing or Digital Media.

The normal UCAS requirement will be 280 points. Shortlisted applicants will be asked to submit a portfolio of work in support of their application. Further to this, applicants will be called for interview. Guidance will be given following application.

Students whose first language is not English must have an overall IELTS score of 6.0, and not less than 5.5 in any element. Where they do not meet this criteria they should attend and successfully complete a Middlesex University pre-session course.

Applications from mature students, over 21 years of age at the time of admission, without formal qualifications or with relevant professional experience or non-standard qualifications are welcomed.

## **10. Aims of the programme**

The programme aims to:

- develop the creativity, professionalism and employability of each student in the area of Visual Effects production;
- produce graduates who possess a thorough understanding of all aspects of Visual Effects production;
- develop an exploratory approach to students' work – to be confident in engaging with new ideas and technologies;
- foster collaborative work by integrating group-based projects, and where appropriate, engagement in multidisciplinary work with students from other programmes;
- help graduates identify and develop specialist interests, skills and knowledge in specific aspects of Visual Effects and prepare them for employment in a suitable role.

## 11. Programme outcomes

### A. Knowledge and understanding

On completion of this programme the successful student will have knowledge and understanding of :

1. First principles of digital image generation and computer graphics.
2. Aspects of form, colour and composition within digital media and the wider visual arts.
3. Specialisms and roles within Visual Effects practice.
4. Proven and efficient working practices and procedures.
5. Visual Effects contexts, historical or contemporary and the role VFX plays in cinematic story-telling.

### Teaching/learning methods

Students gain knowledge and understanding through:

- framing their studies within module outlines, each of which includes specialist reading and viewing lists;
- through self-directed study of specialist topics through a variety of modes of delivery including e-learning;
- practical Visual Effects workshops developing professional-level skills in the use of digital technologies;
- working to briefs which require the demonstration of skills and their application;
- lectures and workshops delivered by industry professionals;
- practical demonstrations of specialist techniques and best working practices;
- regular review and critique of work-in-progress by tutors and peers encouraging reflectivity.

### Assessment methods

	<p>Students' knowledge and understanding is assessed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• short and long written assignments;</li> <li>• oral presentations;</li> <li>• portfolios of preparatory work;</li> <li>• self-reflective blogs;</li> <li>• domain specific quizzes;</li> <li>• practical production work.</li> </ul>
<p><b>B. Cognitive (thinking) 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. Work iteratively and methodically through continuous assessment of the work at hand.</li> <li>2. Be adaptable with respect to technologies and working practices.</li> <li>3. Work procedurally by applying fundamental processes and operations in combination to achieve complex outcomes.</li> <li>4. Apply first principles and fundamental knowledge to derive new and effective solutions to the problems inherent in Visual Effects production.</li> <li>5. Think analytically and acquire new knowledge through focussed research.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods</b></p> <p>Students learn cognitive skills through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• being challenged with both practical and theoretical problems in the form of briefs, technical and artistic exercises;</li> <li>• exploring digital creative technologies in workshops, seminars and practical activities;</li> <li>• engaging in oral and written activities requiring analysis and reflection on their own work and that of others;</li> <li>• learning through their own practice and through collaborative engagement with other practitioners;</li> <li>• sharing knowledge gained through self-directed study with peers and tutors.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessment methods</b></p> <p>Students' cognitive skills are assessed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the quality of argument and critical engagement in short and long written assignments;</li> <li>• the quality of thinking in oral presentations;</li> <li>• evidence of process and experimentation in response to technical and artistic exercises;</li> <li>• evidence of the embodiment of cognitive skills in achieved practical</li> </ul>

	work.
<p><b>C. Practical skills</b></p> <p>On completion of the programme the successful student will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate competence with all stages of the Visual Effects production pipeline.</li> <li>• Show specific, in-depth specialist artistic skills appropriate to fulfilling a brief.</li> <li>• Show specific, in-depth specialist skills in computer generated effects.</li> <li>• Show specific in-depth specialist skills in integrating visual effects with moving images.</li> <li>• Prepare and process digital artefacts for consumption by other practitioners showing sensitivity to and understanding of the quality standards required of their work.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods</b></p> <p>Students learn practical skills through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• practical workshops, developing professional-level skills in the use of digital media technologies;</li> <li>• working to briefs which require the demonstration of skills and their application;</li> <li>• self-directed study scaffolded by various learning resources including e-learning.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessment methods</b></p> <p>Students' practical skills are assessed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• practical technical and artistic exercises and visual effects artefacts produced in response to briefs;</li> <li>• portfolios of preparatory work;</li> <li>• self-reflective blogs;</li> <li>• peer assessment of work-in-progress and critical engagement with other practitioners.</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. Relate studies to career and personal development.</li> <li>2. Function as an effective self-directed life-long learner and act ethically.</li> <li>3. Communicate effectively in written and oral work.</li> <li>4. Demonstrate effective team-playing skills.</li> <li>5. Show commitment to continuous</li> </ol>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods</b></p> <p>Students acquire graduate skills through their embedding in teaching and learning methods listed in A – C above.</p> <p><b>Assessment methods</b></p> <p>Students' graduate skills are assessed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• placement at recognised professional practitioners;</li> <li>• written and Practical Work listed in A – C above.</li> </ul>

professional development of specialist expertise.  6. Proactively engage with issues of professionalism and efficiency.	
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<b>12. Programme structure (levels, modules, credits and progression requirements)</b>
<b>12. 1 Overall structure of the programme</b>

<b>12.2 Levels and modules</b>		
Level 4 (1)		
COMPULSORY	OPTIONAL	PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS
Students must take all of the following:  <b>VFX1010</b> <i>30 credits</i>  <b>VFX1020</b> <i>30 credits</i>  <b>VFX1030</b> <i>30 credits</i>  <b>VFX1040</b> <i>30 credits</i>		120 credits at Level 4.
Level 5 (2)		
COMPULSORY	OPTIONAL	PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS

<p>Students must take all of the following:</p> <p><b>VFX2010</b> <i>30 credits</i></p> <p><b>VFX2020</b> <i>30 credits</i></p> <p><b>VFX2030</b> <i>30 credits</i></p> <p><b>VFX2040</b> <i>30 credits</i></p>		120 credits at Level 5.
Level 6 (3)		
COMPULSORY	OPTIONAL	PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS
<p>Students must take all of the following:</p> <p><b>VFX3010</b> <i>30 credits</i></p> <p><b>VFX3020</b> <i>30 credits</i></p> <p><b>VFX3030</b> <i>30 credits</i></p> <p><b>VFX3040</b> <i>30 credits</i></p>		120 credits at Level 6.

### 12.3 Non-compensatable modules (note statement in 12.2 regarding FHEQ levels)

Module level	Module code
Level 6	VFX3040

### 13. Curriculum map

See attached.

#### **14. Information about assessment regulations**

Middlesex University Regulations apply.

All modules are assessed through coursework. Students are directed to read module narratives carefully in relation to any compensation that may be possible for 'minor' assessment components.

Students are not allowed to self-defer on any module. Students wishing to defer should consult with the module tutor and with the Assessment Officer.

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

All students on the BA Visual Effects Programme are encouraged to seek work placement opportunities during their period of study. Formally, a work placement specifically forms part of the Professional Portfolio in Year 3 (Level 6).

The Middlesex University Employability Service will contribute to the taught programme to offer advice on managing work placements responsibly and safely.

#### **16. Future careers (if applicable)**

This degree programme has been designed to bring together a cohort of students with the variety of skills and backgrounds necessary for the wide range of roles involved in Visual Effects production. One of the intentions of the programme is to provide a thorough and comprehensive education to equip students for such a broad ranging industry. This emphasis on first principles ensures that students will have a deep understanding of their field.

Not only does the programme provide comprehensive coverage of the fundamentals, it also allows for in-depth exploration of some of the specialist roles and skills the industry needs. The BA Visual Effects programme is designed with the aim of creating generalist practitioners who are on the path to specialist expertise.

As such they are ideally placed to find employment in this exciting industry or, if they wish to specialize further there will be the opportunity to continue their studies at postgraduate level.

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

All students are provided with an induction to the programme and specific induction in the use of specialist equipment.

In association with the Learning Enhancement Team diagnostic testing of all students take place in the first week of the course. Students in need of learning support are identified and invited to attend sessions organised by LET.

Media Arts degree programmes have always worked closely with both Technical Resources (the Digital Media Workshop) and Learning Resources (the Library). This will continue with technicians and librarians working in collaboration with academic staff in supporting students.

There is no restriction to the programme based on disability – as stated in 9 (above). Candidates are invited to discuss their needs and abilities.

Specialist support will be made available by the University for students as required by the Equality Act (2010). A needs assessor will work with a student to establish the precise support required. There may be some situations in which students with specific physical disabilities may not be able to use film equipment but all ‘reasonable adjustments’ will be made to accommodate students across the full range of learning and teaching activities included within the programme.

**18. JACS code (or other relevant coding system)**

W614

**19. Relevant QAA subject benchmark group(s)**

Benchmark statements, 2008 for:

- QAA Subject Benchmark Statements for Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies
- QAA Subject Benchmark Statements for Art and Design
- QAA Subject Benchmark Statements for Computer Science


**20. Reference points**

This Programme Specification has been written with reference to the following:

- QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
- QAA Code of Practice
- SkillSet The Core Skills of VFX, 2011
- Middlesex University Quality Enhancement Handbook

**21. Other information**





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 *[title of Programme]*

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		C1	
A2		C2	
A3		C3	
A4		C4	
A5		C5	
A6		C6	
A7		C7	
Cognitive skills		Graduate Skills	
B1		D1	
B2		D2	
B3		D3	
B4		D4	
B5		D5	
B6		D6	
B7		D7	

