

Programme Specification

1.	Programme title	MA Animation MA Animation with Professional Placement
2.	Awarding institution	Middlesex University
3a	Teaching institution	Middlesex University: London
3b	Language of study	English
4a	Valid intake dates	Sept
4b	Mode and duration of study	FT – 1 Year PT – 2 Years FT with Professional Placement – 2 Years PT with Professional Placement – 3 Years
4c	Delivery method	On-campus
5.	Professional/Statutory/Regulatory body (if applicable)	n/a
6.	Apprenticeship Standard (if applicable)	n/a
7.	Final qualification(s) available	MA Animation MA Animation with Professional Placement PGDip Animation PGDip Animation with Professional Placement PGCert Creative Technologies
8.	Academic year effective from	2026/27

9.	Criteria for admission to the programme
	<p>Appropriate qualifications or experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We celebrate inclusivity and diversity and welcome applicants without the normal qualifications but who have extensive and substantial work experience in appropriate fields. • A good undergraduate degree (normally a 2:2 or better) in a subject-specific or related design subject, or a recognised, equivalent professional qualification. • Applicants with a good undergraduate degree in an unrelated subject but with substantial professional experience within the field of animation, VFX, game art, film

or illustration, and able to demonstrate an aptitude for working in the subject at postgraduate level.

- In all cases, admission to the programme is dependent on:
 - evidence of subject-related knowledge and skills, and of critical subject engagement, demonstrated through an annotated digital portfolio of relevant academic and professional work submitted in a suitable format.
 - sufficient command of the English language. Applicants for whom English is not their first language must provide evidence of attainment to an IELTS overall score of 6.5 (with 6.0 in each component), or equivalent qualification.
 - at least 1 supportive academic, and/or where relevant, professional reference.

The University aims to ensure that its admissions processes are fair, open and transparent and aims to admit students who, regardless of their background, demonstrate potential to successfully complete their chosen programme of study where a suitable place exists and where entry criteria are met. The University values diversity and is committed to equality in education and students are selected on the basis of their individual merits, abilities and aptitudes. The University ensures that the operation of admissions processes and application of entry criteria are undertaken in compliance with the Equality Act.

We take a personalised but fair approach to how we make offers. We feel it's important that our applicants continue to aspire to achieving great results and make offers which take into account pieces of information provided to us on the application form. This includes recognition of previous learning and experience. If you have been working, or you have other learning experience that is relevant to your course, then we can count this towards your entry requirements and even certain modules once you start studying.

10. Aims of the programme

The programme aims to:

- Develop high-level creative and technical competencies in animation, including the technical execution of animation and the creative development of animated products, enabling students to make or contribute to technically advanced and contextually aware animated projects.
- Foster the ability to plan, manage and deliver complex, large-scale projects, preparing students to work effectively with multidisciplinary teams, manage budgets and schedules, and contribute to the successful realisation of complex film and media productions
- Equip students with advanced theoretical, ethical, and contextual frameworks for critically evaluating their own and others' animated outputs.
- Enable students to critically explore the impact of artificial intelligence, automation, and emerging technologies on their own and others' animation practice.
- Prepare graduates for sustainable international careers in animation and related industries, supporting their professional development, industry engagement, and capacity to contribute creatively and ethically within global production contexts.

11. Programme learning outcomes

A. Knowledge and understanding

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

1. Animation workflows, content formats, distribution models and production pipelines
2. Specialist theoretical and methodological approaches to the critical evaluation of animation productions, formats and techniques
3. The complex interrelationships between animation and other related disciplines as well as the broader media landscape
4. The ethical and creative application of artificial intelligence in the context of animation practice

B. Skills

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

1. Collaborate with the varied practitioners involved in the animation production pipeline, as well as industry partners and stakeholders
2. Systematically organise and execute the production of animated materials, including the pitching, market research, and professional communication
3. Utilise artificial intelligence tools in order to inform, facilitate and inspire the animation production process
4. Skillfully execute a range of animation techniques in the service of productions fulfilling a variety of functions and briefs
5. Apply an array of advanced critical principles and theoretical frameworks to the evaluation and understanding of animated media in its social, cultural and industrial context
6. Apply inclusive, ethical, and sustainable practices in film production, informed by critical frameworks and industry codes of practice

12. Teaching/learning methods

Students learn skills through a combination of interactive seminars, experiential activities, work in progress crits, and practical workshop activities. In term 3 project supervision is used as part of the teaching and learning practice.

The process of work in progress crits and weekly planning meetings with individuals and groups are used to work with students to set priorities and work plans for each week that help structure and show case students independent study in the classroom.

¹ Approx. number of timetabled hours per week (at each level of study, as appropriate), including on-campus and online hours	FT 12	PT 6
Approx. number of hours of independent study per week (at each level of study, as appropriate)	FT 38	PT 19
Approx. number of hours on placement (including placement, work-based learning or year abroad, as appropriate).	FT	PT

¹ This information will be used as part of our submission to Discover Uni (previously Unistats).

13. Employability

13a Development of graduate competencies

Leadership and Influence: When working on their Final Major Project, students are encouraged to direct a team of collaborators including fellow animators as well as actors, composers and production designers, allowing them to gain experience assembling and leading a large and diverse team of practitioners. The shared core module on business skills provides students with the skills needed to run their own business.

Entrepreneurship: Students engage in scaffolded pitching exercises, focussed on selling their ideas to particular audiences, including their peers, employers and external clients. In the shared core module on business skills, they are taught to take account of market dynamics, and consider the practicalities of operating as a freelancer and forming their own business

Communication, Empathy, and Inclusion: Group presentations, pitches and crits foster empathic, inclusive, and assertive soft skills essential for effective communication and collaboration. Seminars place an emphasis on understanding the unique potentials of animation to create and communicate meaning, as well as its representative properties as they pertain to categories of identity like gender, sexuality, race and ethnicity, fostering a sense of empathy and inclusion which extends beyond their interpersonal soft skills and directly impacts their approach to their practice.

Curiosity and Learning: Modules stimulate curiosity by exposing students to a wide array of forms, genres and traditions of animation from around the world and throughout the medium's history. They are also asked to question the received orthodoxies and hegemonic discourses pertaining to animation, and discover how animation itself challenges the orthodoxies of conventional photographic representation.

Collaborative Innovation: Students are encouraged collaborate on mixed-media animation projects encouraging them to innovate in service of producing experimental animation to a set brief. In the Major Project module and the shared core modules, students are given opportunities to collaborate with those on other programmes, augmenting their practice via the participation of specialised practitioners and exposing them to the working practices of separate but complimentary disciplines.

Resilience and Adaptability: Resilience and adaptability are explicitly addressed in all of our specialist modules, each of which asks students to present pitches and works-in-progress in group crits, in which all students must participate in the assessment of one another's work. This emphasises the importance of constructive feedback and fostering trust in the learning environment. Students are encouraged to embrace challenges and iterate on their creative outputs, understanding that setbacks are part of the creative process.

Technological Agility: Students are supported throughout their studies to develop technological agility through a combination of practice and conceptualisation across various industry standard software tools like Photoshop, After Effects, Blender, Dragonframe, Toon Boom and TV Paint. This equips them to navigate different tools comfortably and adapt to new ones efficiently. Students will be asked to critically assess the suitability of different software for confronting different tasks, problems and desired effects

Problem Solving and Delivery: Right from the outset, students engage in problem-solving, learning to adapt and seek creative solutions to effectively communicate design ideas. Throughout their studies they learn and develop project management methodologies and tools to deconstruct tasks, prioritize, and schedule effectively, facilitating project delivery. Students are exposed to timekeeping and scheduling strategies used in industry, and through our robust feedback process and scheduled one-to-one tutorials with staff, they will be provided with the technological and intellectual toolkits necessary to solve practical and creative problems that arise throughout their creative projects.

13b Employability development

The students are able to take one of three work experience modules (either 15 or 30 credits) and will have the opportunity to be placed on active productions through the MDX Studios scheme. Modules on business skills and AI also teach the students about the realities of working in the industry. Production pipelines on the pre-production and major project modules mimic real-world industry workflows.

13c Placement and work experience opportunities (if applicable)

Students must choose one of three credit-bearing work experience modules (ranging from 15 to 30 credits). On the extended version of the programme, they also have the opportunity to take two additional non-credit-bearing work experience modules.

Throughout this course, students have access to various optional opportunities to enhance their professional experience and industry connections. These include:

- Taking on freelance projects
- Responding to competition briefs
- Building connections with alumni and research groups associated with the course.

13d Future careers / progression

Graduates may pursue roles such as 2D or 3D Animator, Character Animator, or Motion Graphics Designer, creating visual storytelling for film, television, advertising, and online platforms. Students may also choose to specialise as Concept Artists or Storyboard Artists, or Visual Development Artists. These opportunities exist in the film, television, advertising and video game industries. Students may also choose to pursue careers as freelance animators or independent filmmakers.

14. Assessment methods

15. Programme structure (level of study, modules, credits and progression requirements)

15a Structure of the programme.

Full time structure

	Semester 1		Semester 2		Semester 3	
Level 7 (Year 1)	Weeks 1-6 Storytelling and Worldbuilding 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 7-12 Business Skills for Creative Practice 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 13-18 Creative Practice and AI 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 19-24 Major Project Pre-Production 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 25-36 Major Project 60 credits Compulsory	
Level 7 (Year 1)	Exploratory Animation Practice 15 credits Compulsory	Advanced Character Animation 15 credits Compulsory	<p>30 credits total from:</p> <p>Representing Reality: Documentary Animation and Film 15 credits Optional</p> <p>Directing for Drama 15 credits Optional</p> <p>Post-Production Mixing & Sound Design 15 credits Optional</p> <p>Model-Making: Fabrication & Realisation 15 credits Optional</p> <p>Work Experience 1 15 credits Optional</p> <p>Work Experience 3 15 credits Optional</p>			

Full time structure with Professional Placement

	Semester 1		Semester 2		Semester 3	
Level 7 (Year 1)	Weeks 1-6 Storytelling and Worldbuilding 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 7-12 Business Skills for Creative Practice 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 13-18 Creative Practice and AI 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 19-24 Major Project Pre-Production 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 25-36 Preparing for the Professional Placement 0 credits Compulsory	

	Exploratory Animation Practice 15 credits Compulsory	Advanced Character Animation 15 credits Compulsory	30 credits total from: Representing Reality: Documentary Animation and Film 15 credits Optional Directing for Drama 15 credits Optional Post-Production Mixing & Sound Design 15 credits Optional Model-Making: Fabrication & Realisation 15 credits Optional Work Experience 1 15 credits Optional Work Experience 3 15 credits Optional		
--	---	---	--	--	--

	Semester 1 Weeks 1-6 / Weeks 7-12	Semester 2 Weeks 13-18 / Weeks 19-24	Semester 3 Weeks 25-36
Level 7 (Year 2)	Work Experience 5 0 credits Optional		Major Project 60 credits Compulsory
	Work Experience 4 0 credits Optional	Work Experience 4 0 credits Optional	

Indicative Part time structure

	Semester 1		Semester 2		Semester 3
	Weeks 1-6	Weeks 7-12	Weeks 13-18	Weeks 19-24	Weeks 25-36
Level 7 (Year 1)	Exploratory Animation Practice 15 credits Compulsory	Business Skills for Creative Practice 15 credits Compulsory	Representing Reality: Documentary Animation and Film 15 credits Optional	Work Experience 1 15 credits Optional	

	Semester 1		Semester 2		Semester 3
Level 7 (Year 2)	Weeks 1-6 Storytelling and Worldbuilding 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 7-12 Advanced Character Animation 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 13-18 Creative Practice and AI 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 19-24 Major Project Pre-Production 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 25-36 Major Project 60 credits Compulsory

Indicative Part time structure with Professional Placement

	Semester 1		Semester 2		Semester 3
Level 7 (Year 1)	Weeks 1-6 Exploratory Animation Practice 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 7-12 Business Skills for Creative Practice 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 13-18 Representing Reality: Documentary Animation and Film 15 credits Optional	Weeks 19-24 Work Experience 1 15 credits Optional	Weeks 25-36

	Semester 1		Semester 2		Semester 3
Level 7 (Year 2)	Weeks 1-6 Storytelling and Worldbuilding 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 7-12 Advanced Character Animation 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 13-18 Creative Practice and AI 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 19-24 Major Project Pre-Production 15 credits Compulsory	Weeks 25-36 Preparing for the Professional Placement 0 credits Compulsory

	Semester 1		Semester 2		Semester 3
Level 7 (Year 3)	Weeks 1-6	Weeks 7-12	Weeks 13-18	Weeks 19-24	Weeks 25-36

Work Experience 5 0 credits Optional					Major Project 60 credits Compulsory
---	--	--	--	--	--

Work Experience 4 0 credits Optional			Work Experience 4 0 credits Optional		
---	--	--	---	--	--

15b Levels and modules

Level 7

Compulsory (Core)	Optional (Elective)*	Progression requirements
Storytelling & Worldbuilding	Representing Reality: Documentary Animation & Film	Students must pass at least 90 credits before progressing to the Major Project module.
Exploratory Animation Practice	Directing For Drama	Students on the Professional Placement (2 year) version of the programme must pass at least 90 credits before progressing onto the Professional Placement module(s) (ACI4421 or ACI4422).
Advanced Character Animation	Post-Production Mixing and Sound Design	
Business Skills For Creative Practice	Model-Making: Fabrication & Realisation	
AI For Creative Practice	Work Experience 1	
Major Project Pre-Production	Work Experience 2	
Major Project		

*Please refer to your programme page on the website re availability of option modules

15c Non-compensatory modules

Module level	Module code
Major Project	

16. Programme-specific support for learning

- Academic advising
- Induction/orientation programmes for facilities
- Programme-dedicated resource rooms: 1 dedicated animation studio, 1 shared studio and 6 stop motion studios, multiple digital media workshops
- Direct communication with tutors and technicians via E-mail and multimedia platforms (e.g., Discord)
- Access to virtual learning environment & learning support platform (My Learning) to support tutor/learner interaction
- Technical staff
- Programmes of visiting external speakers from global animation industry
- MDX Studios initiative providing access to industry professionals and real-world productions

In addition to the academic and technical staff within the programme, students are supported in their learning by staff in Library Resources.

- Library Resources, e.g., specialist books, journals, videos, DVDs, slides, special collections (including electronic versions)
- Online reading lists for each module accessible via My Learning
- Subject-dedicated librarian
- Special induction sessions provided by the Library Resources

17. HECos code(s)

100057

18. Relevant QAA subject benchmark(s)

QAA HE Benchmark for Art & Design

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/sbs-art-and-design-17.pdf>

19. University Regulations

This programme will run in line with general University Regulations: [Policies | Middlesex University](#)

20. Reference points

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 they take 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.

22. Curriculum map for MA Animation

22a Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding	
A1	Animation workflows, content formats, distribution models and production pipelines
A2	Specialist theoretical and methodological approaches to the critical evaluation of animation productions, formats and techniques
A3	The complex interrelationships between animation and other related disciplines as well as the broader media landscape
A4	The ethical and creative application of artificial intelligence in the context of animation practice
Skills	
B1	Collaborate with the varied practitioners involved in the animation production pipeline, as well as industry partners and stakeholders
B2	Systematically organise and execute the production of animated materials, including the pitching, market research, and professional communication
B3	Utilise artificial intelligence tools in order to inform, facilitate and inspire the animation production process
B4	Skillfully execute a range of animation techniques in the service of productions fulfilling a variety of functions and briefs
B5	Apply an array of advanced critical principles and theoretical frameworks to the evaluation and understanding of animated media in its social, cultural and industrial context
B6	Apply inclusive, ethical, and sustainable practices in film production, informed by critical frameworks and industry codes of practice

Programme learning outcomes										
A1	A2	A3	A4		B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6
Highest level achieved by all graduates										
7	7	7	7		7	7	7	7	7	7

22b Mapping by level of study and module

Module Title	Module Code by Level of study	A1	A2	A3	A4		B1	B2	B3	B4	B5
Level of study (year 7)											
Compulsory											
Storytelling & Worldbuilding	ACI4401		X					X			
Exploratory Animation Practice	ACI4402	X	X	X				X		X	X
Advanced Character Animation	ANI4010	X	X					X		X	X
Business Skills For Creative Practice	ACI4403	X					X	X			X
Creative Practice and AI	ACI4402	X	X	X	X			X	X		
Major Project Pre-Production	SOF4020	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X
Major Project	ANI4050	X			X		X	X	X	X	
Optional											
Directing For Drama	FLM4010	X		X			X				
Post-Production Mixing and Sound Design	MUS4101	X		X			X				
Representing Reality: Documentary Animation & Film	SOF4010	X	X	X			X	X		X	
Model-Making: Fabrication & Realisation	PRO4003	X		X			X				
Work Experience 1	ACI4410	X					X	X		X	
Work Experience 2	ACI4411	X					X	X		X	