



MA CHARACTER ANIMATION



MA Character Animation

Awarding Body	University of the Arts London
College	Central Saint Martins
School	C School
Programme	CSM Performance (L035)
Course AOS Code	CSMMACHAX01
FHEQ Level	Level 7 Masters
Course Credits	180
Mode	Extended Full Time
Method	Face to Face
Duration of Course	2 years
Teaching Weeks	60 weeks
Valid From	2025/26
Collaboration	N/A
UAL Subject Classification	Animation, Interactive Film and Sound
PSRB	N/A
Work placement offered	N/A
Course Entry Requirements	<p>The standard entry requirements for this course are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An honours degree • Or an equivalent EU/international qualification.

	<p>AP(E)L – Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning</p> <p>Exceptionally applicants who do not meet these course entry requirements may still be considered. The course team will consider each application that demonstrates additional strengths and alternative evidence. This might, for example, be demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Related academic or work experience • The quality of the personal statement • A strong academic or other professional reference <p>Or a combination of these factors.</p> <p>Each application will be considered on its own merit but we cannot guarantee an offer in each case.</p> <p>English language requirements</p> <p>IELTS level 6.5 or above, with at least 5.5 in reading, writing, listening and speaking (please check our main English language requirements webpage).</p>
<p>Selection Criteria</p>	<p>We select applicants according to potential and current ability in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of your observation • Visualisation skills as evidenced in the portfolio • The commitment and potential to realise your objectives within the timeframe of the postgraduate course. <p>What we are looking for</p> <p>We are seeking imaginative, resourceful individuals who are committed to exploring and developing a strong individual visual language.</p>

Awards and Percentage of Scheduled Learning

Year 1

Awards	Credits
Postgraduate Certificate (Exit Only)	60

Year 2

Awards	Credits
Postgraduate Diploma (Exit Only)	120
Master of Arts	180

Scheduled Learning Split by Level	Credits
Level 7	30%
Total Scheduled Learning Split	30%

Course Aims and Outcomes

The Aims and Outcomes of this Course are as follows:

Aim/Outcome	Description
Aim	This course aims to prepare you for professional practice across an expanding context and reach for animation nationally and internationally.
Aim	During the course you will develop your ability to instigate and author work that is creatively and technically innovative and centred around 'Character Animation'.
Aim	The course will position your work within international animation contexts for animation and supports you in understanding your practice in relation to other contemporary practitioners.
Aim	The course fosters and strengthens your understanding of visual culture, animation history and theory supporting informed decision-making to improve cultural awareness, promote diversity in character representation and adopt sustainable methods.
Outcome	A comprehensive understanding and advanced application of technical knowledge in the field of character animation, both in terms of artistic production and academic context. For example high level skills of observation, analysis and representation of the structure, mechanics and characteristics of human and animal movement.
Outcome	Apply knowledge and skills relating to character performance methodologies, with the ability to animate personality, emotions and interaction between characters at a professional standard.
Outcome	Critically locate your social, cultural and political agency within the context of associated professions for animation and develop the capability to innovate through practice-based research methods.
Outcome	The ability to research, critically analyse and present aspects of animation history and theory through both written and verbal means.
Outcome	Independent, critically challenging and informed decision making evidenced through instigating, managing and realising creative solutions, working both autonomously and as a team.

	Distinctive Features
1	Performance focus: Unlike other animation courses, MA Character Animation specialises in animated character performance rather than the operation of specific software packages. The course is designed for a broad cohort who want to specialise in figurative work and apply movement psychology in a performance-led approach to animation.
2	Industry connection: You will work on live projects with external clients as well as experiencing crits with animation professionals offering unique viewpoints on professional practice.
3	Practical skills: Through this course you will acquire and develop high-level core animation skills. You don't need previous animation experience as you will develop a deep understanding of creative and technical approaches to character performance.
4	Life drawing for animation: You will study life drawing with a professional tutor and animator to improve your understanding of anatomy, form and gesture. These movement studies will form the basis of your character animations.
5	Collaboration: You will be encouraged to work both individually and co-operatively, preparing you for professional practice. There are opportunities for students from across the Performance programme to work together on projects.

Course Detail

MA Character Animation at Central Saint Martins is a practical course that also encourages research and contextual thinking. We will teach you how to make your characters do much more than move – we will teach you to make them perform. You will learn timing, software, storytelling, character design, film language and take life drawing lessons. Alongside this, you will also explore historical and critical approaches to animation.

Animation is a powerful medium used extensively across a wide variety of fields. Increasingly, it is being used to amplify marginalized voices and engage with diverse social and cultural contexts, empowering meaningful communication and change. At the same time, the expanding range of media and platforms present fresh ethical challenges for animators. Animators must critically engage with issues of representation, equity and environmental responsibility, ensuring their work respects and celebrates cultural diversity while addressing urgent global changes.

The technologies used to create animation are evolving at a rapid rate – programmes dominate the market one year and then are obsolete the next. Rather than encouraging dependency on specific software, MA Character Animation fosters universal techniques and sustainable application through practice-based knowledge. You will learn skills which can be applied to different software packages, technical processes, creative approaches and distribution technologies in the future.

Animation is a universal medium. It can communicate concepts and narratives without the use of spoken language. Reflecting multi-cultural visual and storytelling traditions, MA Character Animation attracts applicants from a wide range of practices and cultural backgrounds. Studying on the course offers an exciting opportunity for you to learn about other cultures and develop international diverse networks. You will be encouraged to investigate, experiment and apply a range of different visual and performance approaches to your own work.

MA Character Animation enjoys close links with the industry. Teaching includes lectures by working professionals as well as opportunities for live projects with external agencies. The course is committed to ensuring it remains commercially and artistically relevant in a fluctuating field. The staff team consists of experienced professionals, who continue to work as consultants and freelancers in the animation and creative industries. The course also encourages a networking community by maintaining links with graduates, many of whom are now in high profile employment.

Course Units

MA Character Animation develops both creative and technical skills. Learning to animate is about much more than software. At the core of effective animation is an understanding of motion, characterisation and the portrayal of performance. On the course, we specialise in a hands-on, practical approach. We will encourage you to create innovative, animated characters which can move convincingly and perform with emotion and psychological nuance.

Through lectures and critiques, you will examine key areas of the theory and context of character animation. MA Character Animation works closely with the other courses in the Performance programme, offering an unparalleled application of performance methodologies to the practice of animation. The course team believe that since animation is the representation of performance, all animators benefit from studying movement and acting. Consequently, the course emphasises the analysis of characterisation through acting and motion through observational drawing. Animation classes are supplemented by life drawing sessions and you will also have workshops in relevant software techniques.

Throughout the course, you will apply your knowledge to new areas of professional practice. You will be expected to keep a personal animation journal from the start of your studies, in which you document your work and reflect on your evolving practice. You will also be encouraged to develop your skills in problem solving, project management, planning and communication. We promote a networking environment through collaborative team projects, group critiques and peer-to-peer and alumni support. Our aim is to help you become a reflective, innovative practitioner able to locate yourself within the animation industry.

Unit 1: Character and Movement Analysis

Unit 1 will provide you with a set of practical tools for critical and creative exploration. You will be able to orientate your direction and your work within the field of animation. We will cover life drawing, character design and development, anatomy, locomotion, motion analysis and performative approaches to animation.

Unit 2: Character Performance Studies

Unit 2 encourages you to become a self-sufficient, critical practitioner, confident to pursue your own goals. The unit focuses on two in-depth performance-driven pieces. These are designed to consolidate and expand your individual and collaborative animation practice.

Unit 3: Character Animation

In Unit 3, you will devise your own character animation portfolio. You will develop a proposal for either a self-directed short film or an animated character portfolio,

which you can complete as an individual or in a team.

Important note concerning academic progression through your course: If you are required to retake a unit you will need to cease further study on the course until you have passed the unit concerned. Once you have successfully passed this unit, you will be able to proceed onto the next unit. Retaking a unit might require you to take time out of study, which could affect other things such as student loans or the visa status for international students.

CSM Academic Support is delivered by a team of academics and practitioners working alongside your course to help you progress and achieve your maximum potential as a student. Academic Support can help you to develop your skills in different areas, including critical thinking, research and writing, time management, presentations and working independently and collaboratively. These may be offered as part of your timetabled classes or as bookable tutorials and workshops.

Mode of study

MA Character Animation is offered in extended full-time mode which runs for 60 weeks over two academic years. You will be expected to commit 30 hours per week to study, which includes teaching time and independent study.

The course has been designed in this way to enable you to pursue studies, while also undertaking part-time employment, internships or care responsibilities.

Credit and award requirements

The course is credit-rated at 180 credits. On successfully completing the course, you will gain a Master of Arts (MA degree).

Under the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, an MA is Level 7. All units must be passed in order to achieve the MA but the classification of the award is derived from the mark for the final unit only.

If you are unable to continue on the course, a Postgraduate Certificate (PG Cert) will normally be offered following the successful completion of 60 credits, or a Postgraduate Diploma (PG Dip) following the successful completion of 120 credits.

Learning and Teaching Methods

The learning and teaching methods devised for this course include:

- Guest Speakers
- Workshops in movement and character performance
- Discussions and critiques
- Year 1 Simulated work experience
- Individual and group tutorials, participation in group critiques
- Assignment guidance and assessment arrangements
- Self-initiated research and development of projects
- Life drawing for animators
- 2D digital animation technical lessons
- CGI technical classes
- Colour theory lectures
- Film analysis and film language seminars
- Pitching for animation classes
- Storytelling and storyboarding
- Sustainable filmmaking practices
- Animation and diversity lectures

Assessment Methods

- The production of Character animation work
- Verbal and visual work, presentations and pitches
- Written work
- Peer and critical self-evaluation
- Portfolio of development and publicity material

Reference Points

The following reference points were used in designing the course:

- The Learning and Teaching policies of the University of the Arts London
- College policies and initiatives
- HE Level 7 Descriptors
- Art and Design Benchmark statement
- External and professional individuals
- UAL Framework for Embedding the Principles for Climate, Racial and Social Justice

Course Diagram

MA Character Animation – PLEASE NOTE DUE TO VACATION DATES, SPECIFIC DELIVERY WEEKS MAY CHANGE.

S=summative assessment

LEVEL 7 - Year 1																														
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
Unit 1: Character and Movement Analysis (60 credits)																				S	Unit 2: Character Performance Studies (60 credits)									
LEVEL 7 - Year 2																														
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
Unit 2 continued										S	Unit 3: Character Animation (60 credits)																			S

The University will use all reasonable endeavours to provide the Course and the services described in this Output. There may be occasions whereby the University needs to add, remove or alter content in relation to your Course as may be appropriate for example the latest requirements of a commissioning or accrediting body, or in response to student feedback, or to comply with applicable law or due to circumstances beyond its control. The University aim to inform you of any changes as soon as is reasonably practicable