Planning for Learning

Games, Animation and VFX – Key Stage 5

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THE STUDIO

Table of Contents

[1.Sequencing Statement 1](#_Toc34766513)

[2.Specialism Statement 1](#_Toc34766514)

[3.Curriculum on a Page 2](#_Toc34766515)

[4.Knowledge Acquisition 3](#_Toc34766516)

[5.Routines 4](#_Toc34766517)

[6.Literacy 5](#_Toc34766518)

[7.Resources 6](#_Toc34766519)

[8.Subject (KS3/4/5) 6](#_Toc34766520)

[9.Syllabus 6](#_Toc34766521)

[10.What Will I Learn? 7](#_Toc34766522)

[11.How Will I Be Assessed? 8](#_Toc34766523)

[12.How Will This Prepare Me For My Next Steps? 8](#_Toc34766524)

[13.Contribution to UTC & Studio Aims 9](#_Toc34766525)

[14.Career Planning 9](#_Toc34766526)

# 1.Sequencing Statement

The current curriculum addresses the intention and the challenges of modern-life by allowing learners to be successful through developing an industry-centric approach to classwork, project work, and working processes. This allows learners to continue to build on pre-existing skill sets, and over a two-year development programme, work toward a much higher aspirational goal of being industry ready, enabling our Alumni to choose the next stage of life for them e.g. Work, University, Degree Apprenticeships.

# 2.Specialism Statement

The Games, Animation and VFX course prides its self on supporting the specialist nature of The Studio and is exemplified by curriculum which provides learners access to a leading cutting-edge qualification that works with industry to provide the necessary skills required by the digital industries on a local, national and international scale, as well as an industry recognised qualification.

# 3.Curriculum on a Page

The Extended Diploma in Games, Animation and VFX is the equivalent of three A-levels and comprises of six units.

Yr.1

Core Principles of Games Design Exam (20%) – Maths, Programming and Games Design

Asset Development Portfolio (20%) – Art, 3D, VFX, Animation, Game Design, Project Management

Written Assignment: Art Theory in Context (10%) - Art

Yr.2  
Case Study Exam (20%)

Research Report (10%)

Synoptic Project (20%)

# 4.Knowledge Acquisition

The course has been developed to use a variety of resources and techniques that will be used over the two years of study in order to help you with your knowledge acquisition. With weekly submissions, the types of work you’ll be asked to do, will mostly be one of the following types:

Practical tasks - Practical tasks play an important role in this qualification, as your portfolio of work in year 1 is worth 20% of your overall grade. Practical skills are developed, repeated, and improved over the duration of your first year, creating the maximum opportunity for improvement in the quality of final piece submission for each criterion. Your portfolio is also constantly updated and is often used as part of the interview process for Summer Internships, Apprenticeships, University or Work.

Written tasks – Written tasks often accompany practical tasks, usually detailing the production of a practical product, justifying design decisions, commenting on problem solving, whilst comparing work created with professional products. Other written tasks include writing professional level journalism in context of published industry writing.

Reading Tasks – Reading tasks often are involved within the context of industrial updating, analytical reviews, and industrial guidance. It is quite common to find yourself reading academic articles beyond the level you are studying at (Level 3) often at Degree, Masters and Doctoral levels (6, 7, & 8).

Research Tasks - Research tasks usually focus on the history surrounding the Games, Animation and VFX industries, influential techniques and methodologies, business practices, as well as key people and industry leaders.

# 5.Routines

Yr.12 and 13 hold a stand-up/SCRUM every morning 9.00 and 9:15 am even if the learners are in a timetabled class or achieve session. This allows the learners to put a focus to their day, practice industry methodologies and gets them to work together as a team, helping and teaching each other.

All work for the week is posted on google classroom, and available at 08:00 Monday.

Most classroom tasks are designed so that the students have a ‘takeaway’ to use in the next session of the course/unit/component, or portfolio.

1:1s each week to catch up with each student and talk over any issues to do with their work, and to flag up any issues that their coach and tutor maybe able to offer support. General feedback is offered at this point.

**How are your weekly lessons organized?**

In yr. 1 and yr. 2 there are 15 timetabled sessions p/w

3 x Exam focused  
4 x Games focused  
3 x Animation focused   
3 x VFX focused

There are also an additional,

11 x Achieve sessions each week (which are run in classroom)

* 6 have directed tasks assigned,
* 5 for project work.

Yr.12 and 13 have alternating classes and achieve sessions every day within the same classroom as this allows for cross pollination of ideas, techniques, methodologies and industry practices between yr.13 and yr.12.

**What are the routines that are in place with regards to marked work?**

The Games, Animation and VFX course operates on a 5 x 7 week marking and feedback process.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Marking | Feedback | Evidence |
| Wk. 1 | Classwork | Written Verbal (1:1) | Google Classroom  Tutor Comments |
| Wk. 2 | Achieve Work | Peer Verbal (1:1) | Peer Comments  Sticky Notes Audio File |
| Wk. 3 | Portfolio | Verbal (1:1) | Student Progress Sheet |
| Wk. 4 | Classwork | Written Verbal (1:1) | Google Classroom  Tutor Comments |
| Wk. 5 | Achieve Work | Peer Verbal (1:1) | Peer Comments  Sticky Notes Audio File |
| Wk. 6 | Portfolio | Verbal (1:1) | Student Progress Sheet |
| Wk. 7 |  | Student Review | Written/Video/Audio Reflection |

All classwork tasks that are submitted are given a grade 0-5 into an online marksheet, which allows the learner and tutor to identify the level that the learners are working at, where their areas of strengths are, and which areas need developing further. A printout is given to the learners each cycle (or more often if wanted) and provides a visual overview of their academic progress.

# 6.Literacy

Throughout the Games, Animation and VFX course there are several opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills. To become (and continue) to be a cutting edge and trailblazing member of the interactive digital community the learners need to be able to:

* Develop complex paragraphs.
* Read material which includes (but not limited to) academic sources, academic research, articles, industry event materials.
* Write production logs, games design documents, pre-production documents, articles.
* Use academic referencing (Harvard).
* Analyse professional products.
* Evaluate examples, sources.
* Compare own work to professional products and identify similarities and differences.

# 7.Resources

The Games, Animation and VFX course has two main Google Classrooms one for each year of the course (yr.1 and yr.2).

It is separated by Learning Outcome and every task for each week will be made at 08:00 each Monday of the course.

Each Learning Outcome contains links, resources, and assets, to use as reference for the tasks given.

Additional links to industry videos, materials, resources are made available through Google Classroom,

A course YouTube Channel is accessible to all students in order to ‘curate’ useful talks, tutorials, discussions that are had by other sectors that involve, effect, and/or influence Games, Animation and VFX industries.

A course podcast is currently in development.

# 8.Subject (KS5)

Games, Animation and VFX is an opportunity for you to develop a set of skills that will prepare you well for university and the world of employment.

The students will develop a clear understanding of how the Games, Animation and VFX industries work in practice and gain experience of working to a specific industry brief in a way that replicates industry methods and project management.

The learners will also be able to demonstrate abilities and knowledge in the basic concepts of Animation, VFX, Games, Art, Maths and Programming, through a digital portfolio, and this will be of great support to learners when moving on to their next professional milestone.   
  
Professional opportunities present themselves throughout the year and often can’t be used to evidence criteria from the course or be used a supportive evidence for each criterion.

# 9.Syllabus

The Level 3 Extended Diploma in Games, Animation and VFX syllabus can be found here.

<https://www.aim-group.org.uk/services/aim-qualifications/qualifications/qualification-search/creative/games-animation-and-vfx-skills-extended-diploma/>

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# 10.What Will I Learn?

Each of the 6 units are comprised of the following different Components

**Year 1**

**Core Principles Exam**

* Core Principles of Game Design
* Maths and Logic Fundamentals
* Fundamental Product programming

**Asset Development Portfolio**

* Core Principles of Game Design
* 3D Tools: Creative and Technical 3D Modelling
* Art Fundamentals for the Games, Animation and VFX Industries
* Fundamental Animation Skills for the Games, Animation and VFX Industries
* VFX Fundamentals for the Games, Animation and VFX Industries

**Written Assignment: Art Theory in Context**

* Art Fundamentals for the Games, Animation and VFX Industries

**Year 2**

* **Research Report**
* Emerging Technologies/Trends in the Games, Animation and VFX Industries
* **Case Study Exam**
* **Synoptic Project**
* Images and Sounds for Imagined Worlds
* Production Management for the Games, Animation and VFX Industries
* Story / Playboarding
* Working in the Games, Animation and VFX Industries

# 11.How Will I Be Assessed?

The Games, Animation and VFX course is continually assessed throughout the year through internally assessed tasks and/or project for each learning outcome. To evidence the work produced, learners have several options (video, observations, screen capture, presentations, written, and screenshots). All types of evidence are usable and can be used as both supportive and final evidence, depending on the requirements of the brief.

Each Component and Unit of the course is Internally Verified and then Externally Verified at the end of years 1 and 2. Once marks are achieved and verified at the end of year 1 they cannot be improved in year 2.

Yr.1

Core Principles of Games Design Exam (20%) - Externally Assessed and Verified

Asset Development Portfolio (20%) – Internally Assessed, Internally and Externally Verified.

Written Assignment: Art Theory in Context (10%) - Internally Assed, Internally and Externally Verified.

Yr.2  
Case Study Exam (20%) – Externally Assessed and Verified

Research Report (10%) – Internally Assessed, Internally and Externally Verified.

Synoptic Project (20%) – Internally Assessed, Internally and Externally Verified.

# 12.How Will This Prepare Me For My Next Steps?

University, Degree Apprenticeships, and/or Employment are the three main routes the Games, Animation and VFX learners progress onto.

* Progress on to university   
  (100% first choice, 30% reduced offer, 30% unconditional based on Portfolio and Interview)

Whilst all students don’t necessarily continue in the chosen specialism they pursue during their time at The Studio, all of the skills they learn on the course are transferable within most sectors, and often give learners that wish to change sectors a more rounded skillset, improving future opportunities,

# 13.Contribution to UTC & Studio Aims

**The Studio:**

“Our purpose is to prepare you for success in a fast-moving digital world and, in particular, help create opportunities to work or launch businesses in the creative and digital industries. We’ve created an environment to inspire creativity and critical thinking, fed by the industry knowledge of our partners, that lead the sector across the region.”

The Games, Animation and VFX course prides itself on being able to support the ethos of both The Studio through a variety of means. Firstly, our course takes an academic approach through researching of latest trends, scientific discoveries, opportunities. We have strong links with a variety of academic partners including University of Abertay (No.1 in Europe for Games Design).

We believe in providing Games, Animation and VFX with experiential learning. Whilst studying the course, we offer opportunities to watch industry events, take part in industry activities e.g. QA process such as Games Testing (often resulting in professional credits on published products).

The Games, Animation and VFX course has been chosen with leading exam-board AIM Awards for its industry relevant course content and we have partnered with Next Gen Skills Academy to provide further national and international industry alignment, with industry approved project briefs, master classes, and workshops.

At the moment we are building links with an academic partner in Northern Ireland which has a booming Film and Media industry (along with Republic of Ireland) with such TV Shows such as Game of Thrones, and films such as Braveheart, Saving Private Ryan, Star Wars being filmed there. So watch the credits, your name might be there one day…

# 14.Career Planning

Programmers are highly in demand in nearly every sector, along with project managers and 3D modellers.

Typical employers of graduates in this sector are tv and film production companies, broadcasters, games design companies, app developers, web design companies, law firms, graphic designers, printers.