

Programme Specification

Award and title: MA Animation

<i>School:</i>	School of the Arts
<i>Subject area:</i>	Design
<i>Entry from academic year:</i>	2026-27
<i>in the month(s) of</i>	September
<i>Awarding institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Teaching institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Delivery location:</i>	Lord Mayors Walk Campus
<i>Programme/s accredited by:</i>	
<i>Exit awards:</i>	Postgraduate Certificate Animation Postgraduate Diploma Animation MA Animation
<i>UCAS code / GTTR / other:</i>	
<i>Joint Honours combinations:</i>	
<i>QAA subject benchmark statement(s):</i>	Art and Design – December 2019 QAA Characteristics Statement Master's Degree – February 2020
<i>Mode/s of study:</i>	Postgraduate periods of study ¹ for full time
<i>Language of study:</i>	English
<i>Paired with Foundation Year</i>	No
<i>Study abroad opportunities:</i>	No
<i>Opt-in YSJU Placement Year opportunity:</i>	No
<i>Excluding a year-long placement/professional experience, are there placement/field trip/work experience(s) totalling 20 days or more?</i>	No

Introduction and special features

Animation is a rapidly growing industry driven by increasing demand for entertainment content across platforms like streaming services, television, and film. Additionally, the expansion of digital media and advertising has created new opportunities for animated content in marketing and branding campaigns. The versatility of animation allows for diverse storytelling and artistic expression, appealing to audiences of all ages and interests. Furthermore, technological advancements have made animation production more accessible and cost-effective, contributing to its continued growth and innovation.

The programme helps you to develop a unique perspective and personal voice through investigating a range of design methodologies, approaches, and strategies to inform your own practice. You will study the latest developments in design thinking to establish a core design approach and acknowledge a greater appreciation for how animation is transforming the way we learn and communicate. It offers you the opportunity to embrace animation production methods and enhance your own creativity.

¹ The standard period of study will apply unless otherwise stated; please refer to the Regulations for Undergraduate/Taught Postgraduate/Professional Doctorate Awards <https://www.yorks.ac.uk/policies-and-documents/regulations/> for information on standard periods of study

MA Animation differentiates itself through a unique set of modules that interconnect through design thinking, entrepreneurship, circular economy and fourth revolution, enabling you to make well-informed decisions and apply these to your own design outcome. The programme works closely with industry partners who offer networking opportunities, professional talks, project feedback and live projects where available. There is also the potential for you to establish your own business venture through a Kick Start scheme at York St John University.

This programme aims to recruit a broad spectrum of diverse applicants from a variety of background areas such as graphics, fine art, television, games, animation, who would like to hone and refine their skills, knowledge, and competencies in this specialist field. Furthermore, we do encourage applicants from other disciplines who are creative thinkers to apply, as we do promote collaborative and interdisciplinary practices for innovative outcomes.

Special features include:

- Become an active part of our creative community of practice and research active staff and post-graduate students with expertise in diverse disciplines including Animation, Virtual & Augmented Reality and Immersive design.
- Industry Partnerships and Internships - Forge partnerships with our network of animation studios, production companies, and creative agencies who offer internship opportunities, industry projects, and networking opportunities. Industry partnerships include among others Kerrupt Animation, Fettle, Lupus Films, and Digifish.
- Guest Lectures and Workshops – Our industry partners including professionals, animators, directors, and producers conduct guest lectures, workshops, and portfolio reviews to provide insights into industry practices and trends.
- Ethical and Cultural Considerations – Explore projects informed by ethical and cultural considerations in animation, including intellectual property, representation, diversity, inclusivity, and the impact of animated media on society.

Admissions criteria

You must meet the minimum entry requirements which are published on the programme specific webpage. In addition, you must:

- Demonstrate examples of your personal animation practice.
- Be interviewed, either in person or online.

To demonstrate you have adequate practical skills for this programme, you will be interviewed to show examples of your own practice. Non-traditional entrants, who may have a successful professional career but may not have UG qualifications, will also be interviewed

If your first language is not English, you need to take an IELTS test or an equivalent qualification accepted by the University (see <https://www.yorks.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply/english-language-requirements/>).

If you do not have traditional qualifications, you may be eligible for entry on the basis of [Recognition of prior learning \(RPL\)](#). We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing.

Programme aim(s)

The MA Animation programme aims to:

1. Strengthen the necessary design and technical skills to understand, interpret and design digital and real-life experiences.
2. Promote opportunities that encourage the application of broad methodologies and techniques for diverse audiences.
3. Foster industry-focused experiences in multi-disciplinary practices through talks, lectures, workshops and live-briefs.
4. Create a framework for academic discussion, personal practice and development, allowing you to engage with problems and insights at the forefront of digital technologies.
5. Enhance a comprehensive understanding of animation production and to study the theoretical, ethical, and professional contexts in which your practice is situated.
6. Empower you with critical knowledge, abilities, and methods to become an autonomous and self-directed practitioner.

Programme learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of the programme students will be able to:

Level 7

- 7.1 Recognise ethical considerations and the social impact of emerging technologies.
- 7.2 Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of theoretical research and methodological models associated with animation.
- 7.3 Critically appraise animation projects to make modifications and propose improvements.
- 7.4 Investigate and critically evaluate processes to create animation projects showing imagination and innovation.
- 7.5 Analyse, evaluate and test appropriate visual tools to demonstrate originality and creativity in the use of materials, technologies and processes.
- 7.6 Demonstrate originality and self-direction in problem solving, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks in a professional/industry context.

Programme structure

Code	Level	Semester	Title	Credits	Module status	
					Compulsory (C) or optional (O)	non-compensable (NC) or compensable (X)
DES7025M	7	1	Design Thinking	30	C	x
DES7040M	7	1	Technological Revolution	30	C	x
DES7041M	7	2	Animation Proposal	30	C	x
DES7042M	7	2	Innovation Project: Animation	30	C	x
DES7043M	7	3	Major Project: Animation	60	C	NC

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the table above as non-compensable. A non-compensable module is one that must be passed at the relevant level with a mark of 50 to progress.

Learning, teaching and assessment

In semester one, you will undertake a taught 30-credit module in *Design Thinking*. Design Thinking encourages you to consider human needs and problem solving; it establishes a position that you work for and through other people. You will be expected to pursue a range of design methodologies and research investigations. It is worth noting, this is an opportune period for all Postgraduate disciplines to cohesively interact, share experiences and primarily build a community for knowledge exchange.

Also, in semester one you will undertake the *Technological Revolution* module that promotes areas in advanced technology, addressing how the creative industries are reacting to shape their own futures. This combination of modules in semester one, enable you to reflect upon well-informed user centred design choices to help establish your own personal direction.

Within semester two, you will undertake a taught 30-credit module, *Animation Proposal* exploring how to communicate your animation pitch and visually use storytelling to articulate your ideas that underpin your own practice. You will be introduced to industry speakers to enhance your own professional experience. These types of activities will be subsidised, but you may need to make a financial contribution, especially when trips are residential. Ultimately, by the end of this module you will reflect upon your overall research findings to construct a comprehensive design proposal to take forward. Alongside this module in semester two, you will complete a supervised 30-credit module *Innovation Project: Animation* that encourages you to adopt your proposal and researching findings, forming a blueprint to explore conceptual ideas around a practical or virtual prototype. The module may form a foundation for your Major Project, or you may wish to choose a different line of enquiry. This is an opportunity to explore collaborations with industry professionals and, in some cases, to pursue work related learning to help benefit your own studies.

In your final semester, you will undertake a supervised 60-credit module *Major Project: Animation* over a twelve-week period. The module offers you the opportunity to build upon your previous development work or pursue a different route of investigation through a theoretical or practical outcome. You will be encouraged to engage with industry professionals, wherever necessary, and produce a rigorous and meaningful body of work that expresses your own personal voice. You will be supported to protect your creative output through intellectual property rights, exploring National and International IP laws, including the Berne Convention.

The teaching methodology is informed by an in-depth knowledge of design pedagogy, and it incorporates a broad range of practices. We understand design as a practice-based discipline that also reflects upon itself, and we believe that this is true regardless of whether students of Design have a visual practice. We want you to understand the interactive relationship between media and processes, between ideas and issues, and between designer and consumer with attention to critical and contextual discourse. You will be introduced to a range of historical and emerging challenges within the Animation industry including cultural appropriation, gender representation, and uses of AI and automation. Recognition and understanding of these and other challenges will help ensure your practice is relevant, sensitive and well-informed ensuring you can navigate the evolving creative landscape of the Animation profession.

The programme has been designed to meet the needs of students who have just finished undergraduate programmes in the UK/EU and internationally, and returners to learning. It is concerned with ensuring that you can experience a variety of teaching and learning strategies across the modules offered. The modules are structured to facilitate successful achievement of the programme learning outcomes.

You will be provided with a range of teaching and learning strategies across the modules, which include reflective, independent, collaborative, and facilitated learning. This process is achieved through workshops, visiting speakers, field visits; work related learning, seminar discussions, supervised projects and supported VLE learning. You will receive technical supervision through a variety of different workshops to help support your academic project work.

Module feedback will be undertaken at timely points to enable effective progression into the next project, usually at the same time as a portfolio review to enable ongoing holistic assessment. Formative assessment will be employed throughout the programme through a range of tasks, projects, and presentations. Summative assessment will take a variety of forms including portfolio work, creating artefacts, presentation of visual works, research reports and case studies.

Progression and graduation requirements

The University's [regulations](#) for taught postgraduate awards apply to this programme.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the Programme Structure section as non-compensable.

Internal and external reference points

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- [University Mission, Culture and Values](#)
- [University 2026 Strategy](#)
- [QAA subject benchmark statements](#)
- [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications](#)

Date written / revised:

Programme originally approved: