# Programme Specification

## Award and title: BSc (Hons) Creative Digital Design

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|---|---|
| *School:* | School of the Arts |
| *Subject area:* | Design |
| *Entry from academic year:* | 2026-27 |
| *in the month(s) of* | September |
| *Awarding institution:* | York St John University |
| *Teaching institution:* | York St John University |
| *Delivery location:* | York St John University |
| *Programme/s accredited by:* | |
| *Exit awards:* | Certificate of Higher Education Creative Digital Design<br>Diploma of Higher Education Creative Digital Design<br>BSc (Ord) Creative Digital Design |
| *UCAS code / GTTR / other:* | |
| *Joint Honours combinations:* | |
| *QAA subject benchmark statement(s):* | https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/sbs-art-and-design-17.pdf?sfvrsn=71eef781_22 |
| *Mode/s of study:* | Full-time (3 years plus max 6 months for End-Point Assessment) • No less than 20% of the training will take place away from the normal working environment • On job working hours 37.5 per week |
| *Language of study:* | English |
| *Paired with Foundation Year* | No |
| *Study abroad opportunities:* | No |
| *Opt-in YSJU Placement Year opportunity:* | No |
| *Excluding a year-long placement/professional experience, are there placement/field trip/work experience(s) totalling 20 days or more?* | No |

## Introduction and special features

The BSc (Hons) Creative Digital Design is an integrated degree apprenticeship combining academic study with occupational activity. This apprenticeship offers you the opportunity to gain hands-on experience while earning a full Bachelor's degree, all while employed in a relevant digital or creative role.

The programme provides you with fundamental knowledge across key areas of the creative digital sector, including digital media, emerging technologies, marketing, and UI and UX design. In addition to gaining technical proficiency, apprentices will cultivate essential soft skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, and creativity, all of which are highly sought after in the rapidly changing digital environment.

This programme is delivered, by a core team of industry expert lecturers and technicians, and professional

designers to set live briefs, provide feedback and present guest talks embracing the combined role of the designer, including researching, writing, making, and communicating.

The programme sits alongside a suite of design disciplines including Animation, Games Design, Graphic Design, Interior Design, Product Design and User Experience Design (UX). This creates a creative community of practice which encourages collaboration and shared experience.

We aim for you to graduate as a confident 'citizen designer' with critical, empathetic skills in mind and ensuring your status as a future communicator in an ever complex and challenging world.

**Special Features include:**

- Interdisciplinary Approach: The programme integrates a broad range of creative digital techniques and disciplines, enabling apprentices to work collaboratively with various stakeholders, including copywriters, account managers, technical developers, market researchers, and user experience professionals.
- Real-World Projects: Apprentices will engage in industry-based projects that mimic real-world challenges, providing them with practical experience and a portfolio that showcases their skills and creativity.
- Focus on Emerging Technologies: The curriculum includes dedicated modules on emerging technologies such as AR, VR, and AI, ensuring apprentices are at the forefront of innovation in digital design.

The apprenticeship has been carefully designed through extensive consultation with industry professionals, ensuring that its content is directly aligned with the latest trends, technologies, and skills required in the field. By collaborating with key stakeholders from leading organisations and sector experts, the programme is tailored to meet the evolving demands of the marketplace, equipping apprentices with the practical knowledge and technical expertise needed to excel in their roles. This approach guarantees that apprentices are not only prepared to address the current challenges faced by employers but are also well-positioned to contribute to the future growth and innovation within their industry, making them highly attractive candidates to potential employers.

## Admissions criteria

You must meet the minimum entry requirements which are published on the programme specific webpage. In addition, you must:
- Be 18 years or older, and ideally to have achieved a Level 3 qualification (or equivalent) and Level 2 in English and Mathematics (or equivalents) prior to entry.
- have support from your employer and meet the course entry requirements. You must be employed in a relevant job role to undertake this apprenticeship and have agreement from your employer, including the commitment to a minimum of 6 hours per week off-the-job training.

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.yorksj.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)**

- Provide a specialised and personalised education relevant to employment in the subject area of Creative Digital Design and related industries

- Develop a comprehensive knowledge of contemporary Creative Practice theory and related creative processes, and industry practice

- Provide skills and knowledge necessary to experiment with, test and prototype, and make creative use of contemporary and emerging immersive technologies

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of creative digital practice in its broader industry context, enabling you to apply critical, analytical, and reflective approaches in the creation of a professional portfolio of work

**Programme learning outcomes**

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

**Level 4**

4.1 Demonstrate awareness of the practical and contextual understanding of creative digital practice to create impactful and eye-catching creative designs

4.2 Demonstrate judgement and self-critique in the development of end-to-end creative design projects

4.3 Demonstrate understanding and application of the design process including but not limited to; interpretation, observation, investigation, enquiry, ideation, experimentation, production, and evaluation

4.4 Create prototypes of design concepts and communicate these through structured and coherent pitches and presentations

4.5 Interpret client briefs to create and deliver powerful ideas through evaluation of the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems, including consideration of the ethical and moral contexts and frameworks that apply to creative digital practice

4.6 Identify and engage with relevant academic literature to inform understanding of principles of digital strategy, including business objectives, goals, KPIs, targets and Return on Investment (ROI)

**Level 5**

5.1 Demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of the established principles of UX Design including the Disability Discrimination Act and best practice surrounding accessibility and inclusion

5.2 Define and apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context and environments in which they were first studied

5.3 Construct and apply knowledge of fundamental methods of enquiry in user experience design, and evaluate critically the roles of users and stakeholders

5.4 Interact and collaborate effectively with others, for example, through collaboration, collective endeavour and negotiation

5.5 Construct convincing ideas, concepts, proposals, solutions or arguments independently and/or collaboratively as self-initiated activity and/or in response to set briefs

5.6 Source, evaluate, and analyse relevant academic literature to inform understanding

## Level 6

6.1 Demonstrate an independent and critical understanding of the creative digital profession, including an awareness of the professional and contextual location of their emerging practice

6.2 Evidence the synthesis of their knowledge and understanding informed by research, practice, and theory in their discipline, including: the critical, contextual, historical, conceptual, economic, social, environmental, and ethical dimensions of their emerging practice

6.3 Critically evaluate and analyse information, experiences, arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data, to make judgments, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution – or identify a range of solutions – to a problem

6.4 Professionally and appropriately communicate and present complex information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences

6.5 Demonstrate effective self-management skills and methods by managing workloads and meeting deadlines and where needed adapting to change in professional and creative contexts

6.6 Construct relevant research methods and methodologies, and present fluent oral and written communication that adheres to academic conventions

## Programme structure

| Code | Level | Semester | Title | Credits | Compulsory (C) or optional (O) | non-compensatable (NC) or compensatable (X) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | Module status | |
| DES4023M | 4 | 1 | Introduction to Creative Digital Design | 20 | C | NC |
| DES4024M | 4 | 1 | Visual Communication and Design Techniques | 40 | C | NC |
| DES4025M | 4 | 2 | Digital Media Production | 60 | C | NC |
| DES5026M | 5 | 1 | Advanced Digital Design and Prototyping | 40 | C | NC |
| DES5027M | 5 | 1&2 | User Experience and Market Research | 40 | C | NC |
| DES5028M | 5 | 2 | Creative Digital Project Management | 40 | C | NC |
| DES6025M | 6 | 1 | Digital Strategy and Creative Direction | 40 | C | NC |
| DES6026M | 6 | 1&2 | Emerging Technologies and Innovation | 60 | C | NC |
| DES6027M | 6 | 2* | Professional Practice and Portfolio Development (End Point Assessment) | 20 | C | NC |

* plus 6 months to complete the EPA assessment

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the table above as non-compensatable. A non-compensatable module is one that must be passed at the relevant level (with a mark of 40 in order to progress).

## Learning, teaching and assessment

The programme is divided into three distinct, but related phases of learning. This begins at level 4. At this level you will be introduced to the fundamental principles of creative digital practice via a range of short, engaging projects which foster visual literacy and critical awareness. You will also learn how contexts of practice and theory exist together by examining key principles, methods, and techniques, both practical and digital. The programme will encourage and support you to evaluate, interpret, argue, and present to relevant audiences undertaken in an open minded, experimental, and individual way.

In level 5 you will apply, critically evaluate, and analyse by communicating to specialist and non-specialist audiences. You are encouraged to do this through diverse and complex projects, either with a live client presented by industry professionals, or by undertaking professional competition briefs.

In level 6, you will undertake an autonomous approach to your studies, through the identification of a range of self-initiated briefs and projects, supervised by academics and industry professionals. You will independently apply knowledge and skills specific to your interests and insights in order to develop a professionally constructed portfolio. This is further strengthened by theoretical writing and the presentation of your work to an external audience.

You will be expected to commit around 1 day per week (on average) to your studies although this could vary at points throughout the programme. There is a strong emphasis on independent study, you will be expected to engage with self-directed study, research, and creative experimentation outside formal teaching. This includes researching design trends, exploring new tools and techniques, and developing personal projects. As you work through each module and associated briefs you will undertake a variety of tasks and exercises which contribute towards the summative assessment points with regular opportunities for formative feedback to inform your work and help you prepare for the summative assessment.

Level 4 is split into two 15-week teaching blocks, semester one covering a 20 credit and 40 credit module which includes a full day of taught content per week over 12 weeks in the form of lectures, seminars, and critiques across both modules plus 3 weeks in studio and workshop access one day per week. Semester two includes a full day of taught content and feedback per week across 12 weeks, 3 weeks of studio and workshop access one day per week for the 60-credit module across the 15-week teaching block. Level 5 includes three 40 credit modules, one in each semester and one which runs across both semesters. This allows time within the one-day campus contact for independent learning and access to specialist facilities including VR, AR, and rapid prototyping. Level 6 is again split into two 15-week teaching blocks with a semester one 40-credit module, alongside a year-long 60 credit module, which is predominantly taught throughout semester 2. Similar to Level 5, this approach allows for engagement with wider facilities and resources throughout the one day on campus delivery. You will also be expected to undertake independent study to support the production of your practical work portfolio. The final 20 credits are completed within a 6-month period to form the End Point Assessment (EPA), within which you are supported through supervisory support throughout semester 2 to prepare for the summative assessment points as part of the EPA. You will spend 36 months on-programme (before the gateway) working towards the occupational standard, with a minimum of 20% off-the-job training. The EPA module commences, once the employer is satisfied that you are consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard, all of the pre-requisite gateway requirements for EPA have been met and that they can be evidenced to an End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO).

Alongside your academic studies, you will be learning in the workplace, undertaking continuous professional development, observing practice and taking part in mentoring sessions and performance reviews. You will utilise knowledge gained in the academic environment along with practical workplace experience to develop a detailed understanding of all aspects of design management and production. Work-based learning is crucial for developing competencies in line with your employer needs and industry standards. Your employer plays a key role in mentoring and supporting learners in the workplace. Work-Based Learning

Tutors act as key facilitators between the academic institution and the employer. They ensure that apprentices' workplace experiences are aligned with the learning outcomes of the degree programme and meet industry standards. Tutors work with apprentices and employers to develop personalised learning plans that integrate academic and workplace learning. These plans will outline key tasks, objectives, and competencies to be developed throughout the apprenticeship. Tutors will help you contextualise your academic studies within real-world tasks, ensuring that theoretical knowledge is applied practically in the workplace.

Throughout the duration of your studies you will also capture work-based artefacts to compile a portfolio that demonstrates your competence in each of the relevant Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs) as specified by the Creative Digital Design Professional (Integrated Degree) apprenticeship standard (ST0625) to form your portfolio as part of your End-point Assessment (EPA).

Campus-based sessions and workshops are organised within a one-day teaching block each week. These include lectures, seminars, critiques, and workshops that employ a variety of student-centred, active learning approaches. These methods are interactive, designed to reinforce prior knowledge, foster connections, and enhance comprehension and application of both module and programme content. Sessions will offer diverse learning experiences, ranging from presenting complex ideas to exploring professional case studies, alongside practical demonstrations and problem-solving exercises. You will engage actively in critiques, collaborating with both peers and staff to give and receive constructive feedback.

Professional Practice is embedded throughout the programme through a diverse range of formats and work-related learning including live briefs, competition briefs, professional portfolio reviews, simulated projects, studio visits, alumni talks, and professional talks. The design process mirrors the heuristic nature of the profession including identifying and analysing case studies, trial and error testing, design sprints, iterative prototyping, empathy testing and more.

You will have access to academic writing support throughout the programme.

**Assessment and Feedback**

The assessment strategy for the degree apprenticeship programme is designed to ensure that you acquire the relevant knowledge and skills at each stage of your learning journey. It combines academic rigour with real-world application to ensure you can demonstrate both theoretical understanding and practical competence in your professional environments. The strategy incorporates assessment methods that are closely aligned with industry standards and norms, reflecting the demands of the workplace.

In-module assignments are crafted to mirror real-world industry challenges and scenarios, enabling you to apply your learning immediately to your professional roles. This practical approach ensures that you are well-equipped to handle the evolving demands of their sector.

Portfolios are the primary method of assessment throughout the programme, serving as key tools for demonstrating ongoing learning in both academic and professional contexts. These portfolios are particularly valuable in the creative industries, where they function as essential methods of presentation, reflection, and communication.

Formative feedback and feed-forward are integrated throughout the programme to support continuous development. Group critiques and individual tutorials offer valuable insights into apprentices' practical and written work, ensuring they are guided in refining and evolving their digital creative practice. Feed-forward allows you to reflect on feedback from tutors and peers, applying this input to improve performance in concurrent and future modules and assignments.

This assessment strategy is carefully structured to ensure that you are well-prepared for both formative and summative assessments, providing opportunities for improvement at every stage and ensuring readiness for professional practice.

**End-point Assessment (EPA)**

The end-point assessment (EPA) is delivered and assessed across a 20-credit module, Professional Practice and Portfolio Development. This assessment consists of two key components: a Project with Presentation and a Professional Discussion, both of which address the knowledge, skills, and behaviours (KSBs) for a Creative Digital Designer as set out in the degree standard.

Assessment Method 1: Project with Presentation and Supplementary Questioning
The presentation is based on your learning throughout the programme and should typically last 20 minutes, followed by 40 minutes of supplementary questioning. During the presentation, you will present your project, demonstrating how you have applied your learning and developed the relevant KSBs. The supplementary questioning will test your depth of understanding, providing further evidence of your competence in the role of a creative digital designer.

Assessment Method 2: Professional Discussion (Informed by Portfolio)
The professional discussion is informed by your portfolio, which consists of evidence gathered throughout the apprenticeship. While the portfolio itself is not directly assessed, it serves as the basis for the professional discussion, showcasing your work and achievements. The professional discussion will last 60 minutes, during which you will discuss your portfolio and the KSBs you have developed throughout your programme. The independent assessor may, at their discretion, extend the professional discussion by up to 10% (an additional 6 minutes) to allow you to fully complete your final answer.

Both assessment components must be successfully completed within 6 months of the completion of the taught content.

As a gateway requirement and prior to taking the EPA, apprentices must meet the following gateway requirements:

- Achieve 340 credits of the BSc (Hons) in Creative Digital Design from the on-programme apprenticeship, formally confirmed prior to the gateway. The final 20 credits of the degree will be attributed to the end-point assessment.

- Meet the knowledge, skills, and behaviours as set out in the Creative Digital Design Professional (Integrated Degree) Apprenticeship Standard.

- Portfolio Submission: The format and structure of the portfolio must be agreed upon by the employer, the apprentice, and the EPAO (End-Point Assessment Organisation). The portfolio should contain sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the apprentice can apply the knowledge, skills, and behaviours required, as mapped to the Professional Discussion.

- Evidence Requirements: There must be at least one piece of evidence relating to each knowledge, skill, and behaviour mapped to the Professional Discussion. A single piece of evidence can be referenced against more than one knowledge, skill, or behaviour.

- Portfolio Content: The portfolio is expected to typically contain six creative digital design projects, with each project containing at least 12 pieces of evidence. This evidence should reflect a range of activities and demonstrate the apprentice's capability in a professional context.

- English and Maths Requirements: Apprentices must meet the English and Maths requirements as per the apprenticeship standard prior to the gateway. This may include achieving a minimum of Level 2 in both English and Maths, or equivalent qualifications as outlined by the apprenticeship framework.

- Project Proposal: The project proposal to be presented during the end-point assessment must be agreed upon by the gateway point. This ensures that the apprentice's final project is aligned with the requirements of the apprenticeship standard and the expectations of the employer and the EPAO.

## Progression and graduation requirements

The University's regulations for undergraduate awards apply to this programme.

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

This programme does not permit the option to study part time to redeem progression failure in Level 4 and 5.

This programme does not have the option for an automatic programme restart to redeem progression failure in level 4.

### In addition, for Degree Apprenticeships

Eligibility for intended University awards – apprentices must complete all the requirements set out in the apprenticeship standard and assessment plan (off-the-job learning (the academic qualification), on-the-job learning and end-point assessment (EPA).

Further information on eligibility for University awards and graduation is available in Section 8 of The Code of Practice for assessment.

## Late result modules

This programme contains the following modules, where the result of the first attempt is not known in time for the June School Assessment Panels (or equivalent level progression point for non-standard entry points). This may delay progression to the next level of study.
- *DES6017M Professional Practice and Portfolio Development (EPA)*

## 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

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*Date written / revised:*
*Programme originally approved:*