

# **MA Visual Communication: Illustration & Animation**

**Award Document 2018/19**

# Course Map - MA Visual Communication: Illustration & Animation

Stage 1		
Study Block 1	Study Block 2	Study Block 3
<p><b>ILA710</b>  <b>Visual Storytelling</b>                      Compulsory                      (40 credits)</p>	<p><b>ILA730</b>  <b>Visual Practice</b>                      Compulsory                      (40 credits)</p>	<p><b>AD750</b>  <b>Independent Major Project</b>                      Compulsory                      (60 credits)</p>
<p><b>AD720</b>  <b>Research Practice</b>                      Compulsory                      (20 credits)</p>	<p><b>AD740</b>  <b>Creative Futures</b>                      Compulsory                      (20 credits)</p>	

## General Course Information

<b>Status</b>	Approved
<b>Qualification (course type)</b>	Postgraduate Course
<b>Course Title</b>	MA Visual Communication: Illustration & Animation
<b>Intermediate Qualification(s)</b>	PG Cert, PG Dip
<b>Awarding Institution</b>	
<b>Location of Delivery</b>	OFF CAMPUS (DISTANCE OR BLENDED LEARNING)
<b>Duration of course</b>	1 years
<b>Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body Accreditation</b>	
<b>Accreditation Renewal Date</b>	
<b>UCAS Code</b>	
<b>Relevant External Benchmarking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art &amp; Design (2017) - QAA</li> <li>• Master's Degree Characteristics Statement (2015) - QAA</li> <li>• Enterprise and entrepreneurship education: Guidance for UK Higher Education providers (2012) - QAA</li> </ul>

## Course Aims

### Entry requirements

For entry onto our Master's programmes at CSVPA we recognise a wide variety of qualifications and/or relevant experience. We encourage applications from people of all ages, backgrounds and cultures, with demonstrable experience and interest in their subject whom we believe will benefit from study at postgraduate level.

The minimum entry qualifications for our MA programmes are:

- A good BA (Hons) degree or equivalent qualification in art or design or a closely related subject.
- A portfolio demonstrating appropriate skills, research and prior experience of the subject.
- A Personal Statement that tells us about you, your approach to practice, and your ambitions and aspirations for the future.

All portfolios and applications will be approved by the Head of Department or relevant Course Leader. Where possible, we will invite you to meet us through an informal interview online or in person.

Applications without the qualifications or disciplinary background identified above but who demonstrate relevant experience, necessary skills and intellectual achievement needed to succeed on the course will be considered on an individual basis. Equivalent experience should be evidenced with a professional CV. In some cases students may be required to complete a Graduate Diploma or Pre-Master's before progressing onto MA programmes.

The minimum level of attainment required for admission onto a programme in the Postgraduate regulations is a score of 6.5 overall with a minimum of 5.5 in each component of the British Council IELTS Academic English Test, or equivalent.

Please follow the links below for additional information on our entry requirements along with the specific requirements of the course as well as information on fees and funding.

<http://www.csvpa.com/art-and-design/ma-art-design/course-details/entry-requirements.htm#menu>

<http://www.csvpa.com/art-and-design/ma-art-design/course-details/about.htm#menu>

<http://www.csvpa.com/art-and-design/ma-art-design/course-details/fees.htm#menu>

<http://www.csvpa.com/art-and-design/ma-art-design/course-details/student-finance.htm#menu>

MA Visual Communication: Illustration & Animation is an intensive, studio-based programme in a supportive and encouraging learning environment that empowers our graduates to fulfil their individual potential as creative, ethical and innovative individuals with the skills, knowledge and confidence to take the next steps into creative careers or further study.

All postgraduate programmes at CSVPA share the following common aims:

- To encourage our graduates to recognise their individual strengths by building confidence in their ability to communicate their own creative thinking, originality and vision.
- To enable students to master the subject specific, technical and digital skills necessary for careers in the creative industries
- To advance research and enquiry as a driver for creative practice.
- To engage students with opportunities for collaboration that models the 'real life' cross-cultural and multi-disciplinary nature of the creative industries worldwide.
- To provide students with the opportunity to complete an informed and intelligent research project that joins up theory and practice, reflects their originality and ambition, and is built upon independent research, critical thinking, technical competence, and advanced scholarship.
- To develop our graduates as responsible future professionals with an informed understanding of the critical, ethical, technological and professional contexts of global creative practice.
- To build professional behaviours and approaches through industry projects and live briefs, work placements and professionally oriented projects and exhibitions.
- To develop students as reflective practitioners engaged with lifelong learning and continuing professional development in the world of work or ongoing postgraduate study.

### Educational Aims

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## Course specific employability skills

## Career/future study opportunities

### Future Career/Education

The course provides students with the technical skills and subject knowledge to pursue career possibilities in the expanding sector in the UK and worldwide across the field of animation and illustration, either in freelance practice or studio employment.

Career advice is embedded throughout the programme. Teaching and Learning is provided by a team of experienced HE staff and supported by Visiting Lecturers in practice and/or industry, working in the fields of graphic design, editorial, fashion, book and political illustration, branding and web design, animation, motion graphics, and digital content production.

Industry briefs give students experience of responding to live briefs, and have included briefs set by a fashion brand, digital design/branding agency, a motion graphics/tv company, and magazine and media organisation.

1:1s provide students with advice on preparing for careers, while visiting speakers share their own career histories and advice on getting into relevant industries. Workshops enable students to develop professional skills necessary for their chosen careers. Visiting Lecturers have included political cartoon illustrator; motion graphics designer; animator for TV industry; an Art Director from *ELLE* magazine; graphic designers and branding experts, interactive media and digital app designer; digital illustrator; digital content producer.

Our embedded work placements encourage students to research and identify a variety of opportunities in the creative industries across the field of visual communication.

The programme's emphasis on self-directed learning, research-informed practice, and the development of advanced research skills and methodologies prepares students for the pursuit of further study and research degrees at postgraduate level.

## Structure of Course Delivery

### Distinctive Features

**MA Visual Communication: Illustration & Animation** at CSVPA is a flexible studio-based and student-centred programme that gives you the freedom to develop your own visual language and strong creative voice alongside the technical skills necessary to pursue a professional career in the expanding fields of illustration and animation today.

Throughout the 12-month programme based in our central Cambridge studios you will develop a strong grounding in research and enquiry as you advance your specialist knowledge. You will be encouraged to experiment with techniques and styles, in sequence or stand-alone form. Regular workshops will support you to embrace current industry-standard software, giving you the practical and digital tools you need for the creative workplace worldwide today—and tomorrow.

You will develop the research skills at the heart of the design process and be introduced to current thinking in critical design practice to help you develop your own approach and locate your practice within relevant theoretical, ethical, technological and global contexts. Practical knowledge is enriched through lectures and seminars that explore questions of design authorship, and historical and theoretical positions on graphic communication and visual storytelling as an essential sites of meaning and social engagement in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

If you focus on **Illustration** you will develop understanding and mastery of the design process and work to set briefs, at the same time as developing your own authorial style and interests through independent projects. You will be encouraged to experiment with moving image to develop the increasingly essential animation skills needed across both specialisms. If you focus on **Animation**, you will develop understanding of traditional animation techniques and principles, and combine this knowledge with new digital technology in order to build a showreel that highlights your skills as an animator and presents you as a rounded professional.

All students will have opportunities to respond to a range of short-form projects. You will explore key software such as TV Paint, Cinema 4D, After Effects and Premiere, building your confidence with industry standard tools that allows you to mix expert technical knowledge with creative freedom and become an innovator in the field.

Together, you will engage with theories and practices of visual storytelling at the heart of both practices and apply this knowledge through projects that explore the expanded field of illustration and animation in the digital and post-digital world. You will consider the sites, spaces and situations in which both are produced and displayed, and develop your understanding of the importance of social engagement with audiences and readers in print, digital or experiential platforms.

Recognition of the field's hybrid nature is central to the course ethos. As well as building the confidence for traditional freelance practice, the course introduces new commercial and career opportunities for working across digital, web, branding and print. This is reflected in our Visiting Lecturer programme, where we have invited in-house digital and commercial illustrators and motion graphics designers working in branding and TV. Workshops and live briefs have in the past been led by Rebecca Hendin, political cartoonist and in-house *Buzzfeed* illustrator; digital branding and video agency The District; and David Tang, lead motion graphics and branding designer at NBC Universal.

Opportunities for internships, work placements and mentoring help you make industry contacts, build your CV and give you the experience of working within a professional creative environment to prepare you for future work. Professional practice workshops and Visiting Lecturer talks give you industry insight and advice on how to create and nurture productive and supportive networks, build a professional presence online, identify opportunities for freelance work, and refine an impressive and distinctive portfolio to secure professional opportunities.

Past illustration students have worked on diverse projects including murals and public illustration; fashion illustration; and an educational book for young people with SEN and OCD. Animation projects have included corporate branding and communication; fashion film; and an educational video for children with autism.

#### Local-Global

We celebrate the 'local', encouraging our students to engage with Cambridge's historic surroundings, home to one of the most dynamic student communities in the world. Located in one of the UK's top ten hotspots for technology and creative entrepreneurship, our students take advantage of opportunities offered by expertise in the city's universities and the region's Silicon Fen, forging collaborations that link creative arts practice to the design and technology industries on their doorstep—as evidenced in previous MA projects in interactive digital design and holographic experience, education, and fashion technology and materials.

At the same time we are an international community with staff and students from all over the world: we work together to develop both our home and international students as the informed and responsible graduates that will be tomorrow's global citizens. Induction activities and cross-disciplinary collaborative projects embed our shared values, professional responsibilities and ethical behaviours from the start. Throughout our postgraduate programmes we work together to build the foundations of a solid and supportive community of practice, actively sharing the diversity of our experience and knowledge while building lasting international networks for the future.

#### Resources:

All students on our MA programmes have access to a wide range of resources to support the hybrid nature of contemporary practice across art and design. Resources include wood and metal 3D workshops; wet dark room and digital suites; drawing studio; live performance studio; studio facilities for product, fashion and portrait photography; industrial sewing machines and Gerber technology; industry-standard software including Adobe Creative Suite and Maxon Cinema 4D.

In addition to facilities and expertise offered at CSVPA, students have been supported to collaborate with experts and engineers from the local creative technology industry and University of Cambridge and gain access to leading-edge technology and equipment through Cambridge Makespace.

#### **Course Structure**

**MA Visual Communication: Illustration & Animation** is delivered over one calendar year for full-time students. You will study for three Study Blocks. Each block consists of 12 teaching weeks plus 3/4 assessment weeks.

Study Block 1 invites you to build your knowledge of essential principles, skills and methods and advance your understanding of narrative theory and strategies. After a diagnostic and exploratory induction, in the module **Visual**

**Storytelling** you will undertake a series of individual and collaborative projects that help you explore fundamental principles of illustration and animation, explore technical and conceptual approaches and experiment with both hand-drawn techniques and mobile digital technology. You will build your understanding of narrative, sequence, storyboarding, character design and concept development as you begin to articulate your authorial voice. You will make connections to the history and theory of illustrative practices and reflect on the critical contexts in which it sits today. Your enquiry is supported by **Research Practice**, in which you will develop the advanced research skills necessary for postgraduate study, and apply them in practical projects that explore the historical and contemporary landscape of design and help you to build a critical framework in which to locate yourself and your developing practice.

Study Block 2 looks ahead, and is designed to prepare you for your future in professional practice. In **Visual Practice** you will be supported to respond to professional briefs and/or relevant competitions to gain public exposure for your work, as well as develop your own short-form and self-initiated project that map and test an area of sustained focus and future interest for your final project. Building on collaborative and social engagement projects and the advanced understanding of visual storytelling and narrative strategies set up in SB1, in SB2 you will be supported to respond to the various spaces, contexts and platforms (print and digital, spatial and experiential) in which illustration and animation is produced, displayed and encountered by its various contemporary audiences. Your position as an emerging practitioner will be strengthened through **Creative Futures**, in which you will work with other MA students to explore the critical, technological, environmental, geo-political and ethical issues that impact on contemporary creative practice—and the ways in which artists and designers today are responding to the challenges we face today, while speculating about what tomorrow may bring.

As part of this module you will have the opportunity apply for an internship (including competitive internships offered by our partner Hearst Magazines UK). Alternatively, you will identify and approach an industry mentor, or design and develop a professional or industry-facing project around your own emerging practice.

By building on your engagement with the contemporary professional practice of your discipline and the exploratory projects you have completed, you will have the confidence to develop a proposal for your final **Independent Major Project**, to be realised in Study Block 3.

Over the summer term you will focus on an independent research-based project that gives you the freedom to take your practice in your own individual direction. You will lead the project—but you will be guided and supported every step of the journey, with regular group seminars, 1:1 tutorials and technical support to deliver your final outcome. You will continue to chart your progress in your ongoing Critical Reflection Journal, and your final project will be supported by an analytical and critical report that puts it into relevant critical context. You will also be supported in perfecting a professional portfolio.

The MA culminates in a group show where you will consider the professional and public presentation of your **Independent Major Project**, working together to design and promote an event that celebrates the end of your studies—and marks the next step into an exciting creative future.

## Course Assessment Strategy

### Assessment Strategy

Our MA programmes at CSVPA use both formative assessment and summative assessment to support students' success.

**Formative assessment** (assessment for learning) provides opportunities for students to identify their strengths and weakness, and focus on areas to work on. Formative assessment is carried out throughout the programme, and is an integral part of weekly seminars, tutorials and review of portfolio and reflective journals. Formative feedback and developmental 'feedforward' is delivered through regular peer review, group crits and 1:1s, as well as more formally at the end of projects. Key skills of self-reflection, communication and interpersonal abilities are developed through these sessions that are both tutor and progressively student-led. All students are required to present, listen and feed back to their peers. Formative assessment within each module provides guidance, direction and support as individual approaches to project work are developed towards the submission for summative assessment at the completion of each module. Feedback provided is designed to guide deep understanding of student's individual progress against the aims of each module—and the course in general. All students are required to keep an ongoing log of all feedback as part of the reflective journals, and submit this in support of project work at assessment points.

**Summative assessment** is carried out at the end of each module and is based on the extent to which the student has met the module Learning Outcomes; comments, indicative grades mapped against assessment criteria and developmental feedback is provided alongside the numerical grade. Summative assessment is intended to identify what has been learned (assessment of learning) and therefore assessed marks count toward the module grade awarded. The assessment strategy and criteria are clearly described in every written brief and mapped appropriately to the module Learning Outcomes. Assessment criteria are additionally communicated at each project briefing and mid-point review.

Assessment for the MA takes many forms. For all modules, a portfolio of assessment is required, that may consist of a number of different elements that record and measure student engagement with teaching and learning activities. Portfolio assessments are designed to be holistic in order to encourage deep learning and in recognition of the independent learning necessary at MA-level.

**Portfolio of assessments.** A portfolio of assessment is a body of work created in response to the learning activities undertaken throughout a module, and demonstrates engagement with, and fulfilment of module and course Learning Outcomes. As a body of work it records and reflects a wide variety of skills, tasks and abilities that present a holistic view of student engagement, offering a developmental record of learning, and a platform for further study.

A portfolio of assessment may include:

- Practical creative project outputs and visual summaries
- Evidence of exhibitions or presentations
- Proposals for future research
- Evidence of primary and secondary research
- Concept, mood and research boards
- Technical dossiers
- Reflective journals
- Design development work
- Sketchbooks
- Written context or project reports
- Oral presentations
- Critical essays

## Legacy TPA table

Module Code	Level	Module Name	Credit	Semester	Compulsory (C) Option (O)	Assessment methods*	Contributing towards the Learning Outcomes (Taught (T), Practised (P) and/or Assessed (A))						
				1/2/3			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ILA710	7	Visual Storytelling	40	1	C	PO	TPA	TPA	TP	TPA	TP	TP	TP
AD720	7	Research Practice	20	1	C	PO, ES	TPA		TPA	TP	TPA	TP	TP
ILA730	7	Visual Practice	40	2	C	PO	TPA	TPA	TP	TPA		TPA	
AD740	7	Creative Futures	20	2	C	PO, RE	TPA		TPA	TPA	TPA	TPA	TP
AD750	7	Independent Major Project	60	3	C	PO, ES	TPA	TPA	TPA	TPA	TPA	TPA	TPA

## Assessment Criteria

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### ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

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#### Learning Outcome

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1. Conduct independent research and apply critical methodologies and scholarship to advance your practice

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2. Master and deploy the necessary specialist and technical skills to realise and present outputs in an appropriate format and to professional standards

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3. Develop a critical framework for your creative activity informed by current issues and debates shaping the practice of art and design.

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4. Critically appraise information, methods, practices or arguments as the basis for innovative approaches to complex problem-solving and speculation

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5. Communicate complex information, persuasive argument and clear intention in appropriate visual, material, oral and written forms.

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6. Articulate a high level of individual ambition, originality and entrepreneurial vision within your own subject/discipline and in dialogue with wider contexts

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7. Locate yourself and your practice within appropriate critical, historical, global, ethical, industry and/or professional contexts.

