PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. Key Information

Programme Title:	BA (Hons) SFX Props and Modelmaking for Film and TV
Awarding Institution:	Buckinghamshire New University
Teaching Institution(s):	Buckinghamshire New University
Subject Cluster:	Visual Arts
Award Title (including separate Pathway Award Titles where offered):	BA (Hons) SFX Props and Modelmaking for Film and TV
Pathways (if applicable)	N/A
FHEQ level of final award:	Level 6
Other award titles available (exit qualifications):	CertHE in SFX Props and Modelmaking for Film and TV DipHE in SFX Props and Modelmaking for Film and TV BA in SFX Props and Modelmaking for Film and TV
Accreditation details:	
Length of programme:	2 Years
Mode(s) of Study:	Full Time
Mode of Delivery:	In person (on-site) delivery
Language of study:	English
QAA Subject Benchmark(s):	Art and Design
Other external reference points (e.g. Apprenticeship Standard):	N/A
Course Code(s):	BASFXPFT
UCAS Code(s):	
Approval date:	August 2023
Date of last update:	April 2025

2. Programme Summary

Special Effects companies need multi-skilled, all rounded and highly creative individuals to work as both freelancers and employees as part of their creative team. The course aims to recruit school leavers and mature students who are interested in pursuing entry-level employment in the props and modelmaking departments for special effects film & TV industries. This accelerated fast track 2 years degree course focuses primarily on props and modelmaking with particular emphasis on special effects film and television.

The BA(Hons) SFX Props & Modelmaking for Film and TV course aims to produce versatile, creative, imaginative and broad-based SFX designers, fabricators, design engineers and operators for the SFX film, television and entertainments industry using a range of tools and

techniques. The course will offer a broad range of specialised modules and will enable students to experience a more focused perspective within the field of props & modelmaking and its associated artefacts.

The key aim of the programme is the emphasis on developing an understanding of SFX props & modelmaking processes, applications, design and production for character and object creation using 2D drawings, visual references such as CAD/ technical drawings, 3D prints and SFX physical models, artifacts and prosthetics appliances required for the SFX film, television and entertainment projects.

The broadcast, corporate, creative and entertainment industries are continually changing as new products, services and technologies are evolving. Successful graduates in SFX Props & Modelmaking for Film & TV will acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to develop innovative solutions to visual problems. They will be able to apply 2D visualization, 3D print, model-making, casting & mould-making, character creation, prosthetics and make-up, stop-motion, materials behaviour/ properties & technological applications as well as advanced props & modelmaking required to realise the briefs envisaged in SFX film and television projects. The curriculum for this course is ‘specialist’ and focused on the conceptualisation, design and the realising of life-like and fantasy characters, creatures and 3D objects/ artefacts within special effects using industry standard materials, tools and techniques. Students will be expected to focus on one area by their Level 6 studies. This specialised degree will prepare students to work within the SFX film and television networks and SFX companies as well as modelmaking companies who not only require a broad set of technical knowledge and skills but can show talent in the creation of distinctive, realistic charismatic characters/ creatures and special effects props that ‘jump off the screen’ and appear life-like to audiences.

Workshop practice will be underpinned by modules in the theory of SFX Props & modelmaking, 3D design, material science and technological applications. The practical modules include CAD, sculpting and 3Dmodelling/ printing, casting & mould-making, engineering, advance prosthetics fabrication& make-up effects, set within the wider context of SFX Props & Modelmaking for film and television production. The BA(Hons) Props and Modelmaking for Film & TV course will be based in the School of Art, Design and Performance and students will be part of the dynamic thriving creative community, working alongside students from the other complementary courses in Animatronics Design, Production Design, Hair & Make Up for Performance, Product Design courses.

The SFX Props & Modelmaking course will be capable of recruiting new students from within the working population as well as college and school leavers. SFX Props & Modelmaking, as a subject, is attractive to students from undergraduate study through to postgraduate Master’s level and MPhil/PhD study. The BA(Hons) in Props & Modelmaking for Film & TV course will exploit existing expertise, technical resources and staff within the School of Art, Design and Performance and will continue to offer a broad student experience in the special effects props & modelmaking field. The proposed modules build upon our experience of running this subject in past in different institute with 10 out of 16 modules shared with the other proposed specialist degree in BSc (Hons) Animatronics Design. The course will be taught mainly at High Wycombe, with some access to the BNU base at Pinewood Studios.

3. Programme Aims and Learning Outcomes

Programme Aims

This programme aims to:

1. Equip students with subject specific, generic and transferable knowledge, skills and attitudes to enter the Special Effects and/or related props industries.
2. Generate a holistic understanding of the Special Effects processes and practice to enable students to work effectively within a team or in any role in the pipeline.
3. Enable students to investigate, research and critically engage with props & modelmaking design and fabrication applied to the special effects industry.
4. Develop an understanding of relevant materials and applications and gain grounding in the essential artistic, scientific and technological principles underpinning the process and production of special effects props.
5. Offer a breath of experience across a range of technologically based mixed-media (animation, visual effects production for film and TV, animatronics, prosthetics and make-up effects, control and signal writing, model making) which enables students to focus on special effects applications.

Programme Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding (K)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
K1	Demonstrate critical and conceptual understanding of the theories and practices involved with creating physical artefacts, such as SFX props models.
K2	Identify the creative and industry factors, processes and practice, operation, applications and techniques involved for the production of special effects models.
K3	Research and discuss the social, cultural, ethical, aesthetic and organisational contexts of special effects design and production.
K4	Understanding the core principles of complex system design and related skills required for the design and fabrication of special effects props and models.
K5	

Analysis and Criticality (C)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
C1	Evaluate information derived from drawing, conceptual 3D models and associated visual content, e.g. storyboards, treatments and film and television scripts.
C2	Appreciate the relationship between theory and practice and be able to relate your work to the social, cultural and historical concepts of special effects props disciplines.
C3	Manipulate the imaginative involvement of the audience through the analysis, synthesis and interpretation of a brief for props design and production.

C4	Demonstrate a working knowledge of ethical and sustainable concepts within props and modelmaking practice for special effect screen.
C5	

Application and Practice (P)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
P1	Demonstrate knowledge of contemporary issues relating to the sfx props & model design and fabrication.
P2	Effectively conceive, draw, conceptually design, construct, problem solve and apply the necessary tools and skills through the design and production processes to fabricate a finished sfx props/ models/ prototype.
P3	Understand and demonstrate a knowledge of the various SFX/ creative industry job roles and critically reflect upon the processes of physical models and props production.
P4	Apply, experiment and adapt the acquired skills in computer applications and the process and practice of designing props & physical models to fulfil a wide range of special effects film & television requirements.

Transferable skills and other attributes (T)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
T1	Demonstrate the ability to undertake research in a specific area of sfx props & model production related to the professional framework.
T2	Time management, prioritise workload, manage pressure and adapt production pipelines as required to meet deadlines and develop a high level of interpersonal communication and conceptualising skills to manage a dynamic teamwork environment.
T3	Apply knowledge of the professional practice of commercial production to continuously develop a broad set of transferable skills.
T4	Demonstrate the ability to design, develop and problem solving CAD drawing and 3D modelling for an accurate and complex system design.
T5	Demonstrate an ability to manage a project through effective independent study and embed a sound-working ethos.

Graduate Attributes

The BNU Graduate Attributes of: Knowledge and its application; Creativity; Social and ethical awareness and responsibility; and Leadership and self-development focus on the development of innovative leaders in professional and creative capacities, who are equipped to operate in the 21st Century labour market and make a positive impact as global citizens.

On this programme, attributes are developed through the designing of theoretical and practice-based modules which develop the students' advanced specialised skills, tailored to cater for the needs of the Animatroncs Design sector within the creative industry. Throughout the

programme both analogue/traditional and digital skills are embedded within module design and provide an in-depth knowledge of the students', covering the process and practice of special effects (K1- 4).

- When designing an Animatronics model for the special effects film and television, critical evaluation skills and an exploration of appropriate research methods are further developed to be able to design, analyse, synthesise, pre-visualise and manage a animatronics broefs brief covering script to screen (C1-3).

- Actively engages the student with the industry requirements and needs, i.e. time management, health & safety, prioritising workloads, manage pressure, adapt production pipelines as required to meet deadlines and develop a high level of interpersonal communication skills to manage a dynamic teamwork environment (T2-3,4,5 P1-2,3).

- Design, concept development and problem solving to be able to construct effective and a convincing finished artefact using appropriate analogue, digital technology and tools related to animatroenics design and production disciplines. The programme will also facilitate opportunities to further study and research within the field of special effects, pursued at mater level (P1-2, 3,4).

4. Entry Requirements

The University's general entry requirements will apply to admission to this programme with the following additions / exceptions:

As the key aim of this programme is to provide knowledge and skills in all related areas of animatronics design and fabrication for film & television, the course will be recruiting applicants with a broad base of appropriate skills within the field of engineering arts & system design and enable them to focus on an area relevant to their career aspirations. Applicant must have A' levels in a relevant subject such as DT, art & design and modelmaking is required. Alternatively, a BTEC National Diploma qualification in relevant subject such.

In addition, applicants will need to have a suitably appropriate portfolio of work in areas such as, Animation, Model-making, Sculptor making, Product/ industrial Design, and Manufacturing Design.

International, and EU applicants for whom English is not a first language are expected to hold an IELTS qualification, with a score of 6.0, and no individual element lower than 5.5, or an equivalent qualification as listed on the University website. However, as part of the selection process, all applicants are required to attend an interview to demonstrate their strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements.

If you do not meet the entry requirements you may, if you have relevant professional experience, still be invited for interview, where you will be required to demonstrate the necessary knowledge and understanding for entry onto the course.

Previous study, professional and / or vocational experiences may be recognised as the equivalent learning experience and permit exemption from studying certain modules in accordance with our accreditation of prior learning (APL) process.

5. Programme Structure

Level	Modules (Code, Title and Credits)	Exit Awards
Level 4	**Core modules:** CAD4066, 2D Visualization, 20 Credits CAD4067, Computer Aided Design, 20 Credits CAD4069, Chemical Studies and Technological Applications, 20 Credits CAD4070, SFX Character Design 1, 20 Credits CAD4090, History of Special Effects, 20 Credits CAD4073, SFX Props and Model Production 1, 20 Credits	**Certificate of Higher Education**, awarded on achievement of 120 credits at Level 4
Level 5	**Core modules:** CAD5084, 3D Modelling & Simulation, 20 Credits CAD5086, SFX Character Design 2, 20 Credits CAD5087, SFX Rigging & Manufacturing, 20 Credits CAD5089, Advanced Prosthetics Production, 20 Credits CAD5090, SFX Props and Model Production 2, 20 Credits CAD5091, Analysing SFX Film & TV, 20 Credits **Option modules:** As this a fast-track specialist 2-years degree programme, no option modules are available at this level.	**Diploma of Higher Education**, awarded on achievement of 240 credits, including a minimum of 120 credits at Level 5
Level 6	**Core modules:** CAD6043, Professional Practice & Business Management, 20 Credits CAD6041, Dissertation, 20 Credits CAD6042, Pre-production, 20 Credits CAD6044, Final Major Project, 60 Credits **Option modules:** As this a fast-track specialist 2-years degree programme, no option modules are available at this level.	**Ordinary Degree**, awarded on achievement of 300 credits, including 60 credits at Level 6 and 120 credits at each of Levels 4 and 5 **Honours Degree**, awarded on achievement of 360 credits, including 120 credits at each of Levels, 4, 5 and 6

6. Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Learning and teaching

The style of teaching and learning methods will vary according to whether the module is theoretically based, or skills based.

Teaching sessions will consist of a variety of methods and approaches from lectures, demonstrations in workshops, exercises applying technology and software, step-by-step worksheets, self-study, one-to-one tutorials, group work and criticism sessions, presentations in class and tutorial guidance via the internet and online resources.

Students will learn how to use and safely apply the relevant technologies and techniques within workshops guided by the tutor and technical demonstrator. All students will be expected to use open-access time to investigate, experiment and explore the available technology before they begin assignment work.

Students will have regular telephone and email access to academic tutors and will increasingly use ‘Blackboard’, the University’s virtual learning environment. Students will be required to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in SFX pops and modelmaking via presentations, demonstrations and the artefacts they produce, e.g. 2/3D CAD drawing, CGI model design & simulation, structure rigging & construction, manufacturing and structure engineering and SFX character design & fabrication as well as prosthetics production.

Students will be encouraged to reflect on how they apply their knowledge and understanding of a wide range of SFX props & model design applied within special effects film and television. Lectures and seminars will reinforce the need for 'personal reflection' to enable the student to understand how the artefact is being received by the client/audience and assess the ‘believability’ or ‘realism’ of selected scenes or sequences. Working in groups within tutorials, students will be encouraged to research a topic and present a solution to their peers in class.

Assessment

As per the teaching and learning activities, assessments are also comprised by a range of different methods. The following assessment activities are used on this programme:

- **Written work/Dissertation** – This will be mainly in the form of written documents, where students are requested to present research material in specific subjects and analyse, edit and reference to fit the desired outcomes.

- **Blogs/Reports** – Students are encouraged to document their entire learning progress throughout the programme, and some of that documentation will be asked to be delivered in the form of reflective blogs and critically evaluative reports and will be assessed (applies to formative and summative assessments) and marked (applies to summative assessments only).

- **Portfolio/Showreel** – As well as the written documentation on the different activities, visual portfolios are essential when presenting their work to prospective employers. Students are taught on the different processes involved in producing an industry-standard portfolio and will be assessed on the outcomes.

- **Presentation** – Presentation skills are a key element when working in teams and presenting ideas. Throughout the degree, students are expected to produce coursework and may present it to a range of audiences.

- **Practical Skills via Timed assessments** - One of the most important elements of the programme, is the standard of practical skills students are achieving, and the ability to accomplish practical tasks within a given duration, mirroring industry practice and expectations.

- **Group-based work** – This mode of assessment develops transferable skills in the areas of oral communication, negotiation and interpersonal skills. Working in a group can also promote the sharing of ideas and practical problem-solving skills. Students will have the opportunity to undertake team-based projects; where they are assessed, the grade for the assignment will be a combination of a shared grade as a group (70%) based on specific assessment criteria, and peer assessment (30%).

Assessment strategies support students' understanding of their learning processes and are designed to foster a deep approach to learning. Strategies also promote autonomous learning and self-evaluation as vital elements within the overall learning process.

Formative feedback and feed-forward are considered a vital part of the assessment process. More formal oral and/or written formative feedback is given at key identified points, usually during student-led presentations of work in progress. At these points, a formative grade based upon performance up to that stage is applied, to help students establish action planning and critical awareness. Grades given at this stage are only indicative and can go down as well as up at the summative assessment point.

Self and peer-evaluation constitute an important part of formative assessment and, on occasion, of the formal summative assessment process.

Summative assessment will take place at the end of the module. Submitted work will be assessed on the achievement of the module Learning Outcomes and awarded a grade based upon the Assessment Criteria. The assessments will take place with a full review of the briefs and all the supporting development work, which should clearly document the breadth and depth of research and the development of conceptual ideas for each project undertaken.

All assessments that contribute to final grades will be assessed against clear assessment criteria stated in assignment briefs; these assessment criteria are directly linked to grading descriptors, and they will be used to evaluate the submitted work and produce written feedback. Marks will be produced following rigorous quality mechanisms that ensure academic judgement remains fair and consistent and comparable with the wider educational sector.

Contact Hours: 1200 Approximately

7. Programme Regulations

This programme will be subject to the following assessment regulations:

- Regulations for Taught Degree Programmes (2023)

8. Support for learners

The following systems are in place to support you to be successful with your studies:

- The appointment of a personal tutor to support you through your programme
- A programme handbook and induction at the beginning of your studies
- Library resources, include access to books, journals and databases - many of which are available in electronic format – and support from trained library staff
- Access to Blackboard, our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), which is accessible via PC/ Mac, laptop, tablet or mobile device
- Access to the MyBNU portal where you can access all University systems, information and news, record your attendance at sessions, and access your personalised timetable
- Academic Registry staff providing general guidance on University regulations, exams, and other aspects of students and course administration
- Central student services, including teams supporting academic skills development, career success, student finance, accommodation, chaplaincy, disability and counselling
- Support from the Bucks Students' Union, including the Students' Union Advice Centre which offers free and confidential advice on University processes.

9. Programme monitoring and review

BNU has a number of ways for monitoring and reviewing the quality of learning and teaching on your programme. You will be able to comment on the content of their programme via the following feedback mechanisms:

- Formal feedback questionnaires and anonymous module 'check-ins'
- Participation in external surveys
- Programme Committees, via appointed student representatives
- Informal feedback to your programme leader

Quality and standards on each programme are assured via the following mechanisms:

- An initial event to approve the programme for delivery
- An annual report submitted by the External Examiner following a process of external moderation of work submitted for assessment
- The Annual Monitoring process, which is overseen by the University's Education Committee
- Review by the relevant PSRB(s)
- Periodic Subject Review events held every five years
- Other sector compliance and review mechanisms

10. Internal and external reference points

Design and development of this programme has been informed by the following internal and external reference points:

- The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- The QAA Subject Benchmark Statement – see detailed mapping below
- The QAA Art & Design Characteristics Statement
- The BNU Qualifications and Credit Framework
- The BNU Grading Descriptors
- The University Strategy, Impact 2022

Mapping of Subject Benchmark Statement and any relevant Apprenticeship Standard to Programme Learning Outcomes

Mapping of Subject Benchmark Statement and any relevant Apprenticeship Standard to Programme Learning Outcomes

Subject Benchmark Statement / Apprenticeship Standard:	**Knowledge and understanding (K)**					**Analysis and Criticality (C)**					**Application and Practice (P)**					**Transferable skills and other attributes (T)**				
Benchmark / Standard requirement	**K1**	**K2**	**K3**	**K4**	**K5**	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**C5**	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**T1**	**T2**	**T3**	**T4**	**T5**
Art and Design 6.4,i present evidence that demonstrates some ability to generate ideas independently and/or as self-initiated activity and/or in response to set briefs	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
6.4.iii demonstrate proficiency in observation, investigation, enquiry, visualisation and/or making	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓
6.4.iv make connections between intention, process, outcome, context	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓

Subject Benchmark Statement / Apprenticeship Standard:	**Knowledge and understanding (K)**					**Analysis and Criticality (C)**					**Application and Practice (P)**					**Transferable skills and other attributes (T)**				
Benchmark / Standard requirement	**K1**	**K2**	**K3**	**K4**	**K5**	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**C5**	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**T1**	**T2**	**T3**	**T4**	**T5**
and methods of dissemination..																				
6.5.ii the broad critical and contextual dimensions of the student's discipline(s);	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
6.5.ii the issues which arise from the artist's or designer's relationship with audiences, clients, markets, users, consumers, and/or participants; major developments in current and emerging media and technologies in their discipline(s);	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓
6.5.iii major developments in current and emerging media and technologies in their discipline(s);	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	
6.5.iv the significance of the work of other		✓		✓				✓	✓				✓	✓				✓		

Subject Benchmark Statement / Apprenticeship Standard:	**Knowledge and understanding (K)**					**Analysis and Criticality (C)**					**Application and Practice (P)**					**Transferable skills and other attributes (T)**				
Benchmark / Standard requirement	**K1**	**K2**	**K3**	**K4**	**K5**	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**C5**	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**T1**	**T2**	**T3**	**T4**	**T5**
practitioners in their discipline(s).																				

Mapping of Programme Learning Outcomes to Modules

Programme Learning Outcome	**Knowledge and understanding (K)**					**Analysis and Criticality (C)**					**Application and Practice (P)**					**Transferable skills and other attributes (T)**				
Module Code (Core)	**K1**	**K2**	**K3**	**K4**	**K5**	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**C5**	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**T1**	**T2**	**T3**	**T4**	**T5**
Level 4																				
History of Special Effects	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Computer Aided Design	✓	✓	✓				✓						✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
2D Visualization	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓					✓		✓	✓	✓
SFX Props Model Production 1	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓						✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
SFX Character Design 1	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓					✓			✓	✓
Chemical Studies and Technological Applications	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓				✓
Level 5																				
SFX Character Design 2	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓						✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
3D Modelling & Simulation	✓	✓		✓			✓							✓						✓
SFX Props Model Production 2	✓	✓						✓		✓				✓					✓	✓
Analysing SFX Film & TV	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓				✓						✓	✓

Programme Learning Outcome	Knowledge and understanding (K)					Analysis and Criticality (C)					Application and Practice (P)					Transferable skills and other attributes (T)				
Module Code (Core)	**K1**	**K2**	**K3**	**K4**	**K5**	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**C5**	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**T1**	**T2**	**T3**	**T4**	**T5**
Advanced Prosthetics Production	✓		✓				✓		✓	✓			✓						✓	✓
SFX Rigging & Manufacturing	✓	✓						✓	✓		✓	✓					✓		✓	✓
Level 6																				
Professional Practice & Business Management	✓						✓	✓				✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓
Pre-production	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓						✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Creative and Professional Development	✓		✓				✓					✓					✓		✓	✓
Dissertation	✓		✓			✓		✓					✓				✓		✓	✓
Final Major Project	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓						✓	✓		✓		✓	✓