

Course Information Sheet

BA (Hons) Illustration

Mode and course length – Full-Time (4 years)

Location – ARU Cambridge Campus

Awarding Body – Anglia Ruskin University. As a registered Higher Education provider Anglia Ruskin University is regulated by the Office for Students.

Overview

Why study illustration?

Being an illustrator is a great way to find your own creative voice, and one that allows you to share your creativity with the world through many different projects. UK creative industries have never been so vibrant, global and high profile, and illustration is involved across many different aspects of them. You might illustrate books; become a satirical cartoonist; design film sets, product labels or community murals; or even work on animated films.

Also, drawing is not only a lot of fun, but is widely considered to be good for your health.

What will you do on the course?

Most of your work will be practise-based coursework, giving you the necessary time to develop your artistic skills, then stand back and consider them critically, as a professional would. The emphasis of the course is on ideas and visual problem solving: finding the best media to suit your work, whether it's a Victorian printing press or a digital notebook.

Our group discussions, critiques, and tutorials - as well as your own visual and textual research – will help you discover more unique ways to express yourself creatively and develop your own visual language – a crucial asset in today's competitive marketplace.

You'll also have the opportunity to go on group drawing/reportage trips in the UK and overseas, as well as visits to museums and galleries. These will assist your own visual research as well as helping you understand how illustration intersects with cultural, environmental and ethical issues, which play an important role in editorial illustration.

We will encourage and support you to enter national and international competitions, undertake live industry briefs (recent briefs have been set by Doc Martens, Stansted Airport and Cambridge Corn Exchange), take up internships and attend professional practice talks and discussions, giving you an awareness of what it takes to work as a professional illustrator, as well as a chance to make important contacts for your career.

You'll work in our dedicated natural light illustration studios, right next door to Ruskin Gallery, with the opportunity for training in all our other industry-standard art facilities as well, including a traditional printmaking room, 3D workshops, animation suites, and life drawing studios.

At the end of the course, you'll display your work to the public and professional commissioners at our Cambridge School of Art Degree Show and, optionally, New Designers in London. You'll also find opportunities throughout the course to exhibit at local venues in Cambridge and further afield, as well as discovering many inspirational areas of natural and architectural beauty around the city to inspire your work, such as the Botanic Gardens and historic city centre.

Why study on our course?

Our BA (Hons) Illustration continues a 150-year tradition of drawing at Cambridge School of Art. You'll follow in the footsteps of acclaimed illustrators such as designer and war artist Edward Bawden, satirist and illustrator Ronald Searle; founders of TV

phenomenon Spitting Image Roger Law and Peter Fluck; and more recently, Bethan Woollvin, winner of the Macmillan Prize 2014 and author of picturebooks Little Red and Rapunzel.

Your studies will be supported by our team of staff who are all recognised illustrators in their own fields.

You'll also work with nationally-recognised practising visiting lecturers, who will give you their perspectives on modern-day illustration, and valuable advice for your future career. Our recent visitors have included Mellissa Castrillon, Angus Greig, Jonny Hannah, Olivier Kugler, Laura Carlin, George Butler and Graham Rawle.

Course Delivery

Our courses are delivered through teaching and learning methods which provide students with the widest possible exposure to a modern and innovative higher education experience.

These methods vary and could include attendance at lectures and seminars, undertaking laboratory exercises or work-based activities, practical work, performances, presentations, field trips, other relevant visits and e-learning through Canvas, our online learning management system.

Each course is divided into a number of 'modules' which focus on particular areas, each of which has a specific approach to its delivery. This information is published to students for each module they take via the Module Definition Form (MDF) and Canvas.

Assessment

You'll demonstrate your progress through a combination of written and practical work.

As well as verbal feedback in taught sessions and tutorials, you'll be given thorough personal written feedback that both highlights your successes and indicates areas of improvement for future submissions.

Fees

Information about your course fee including any annual fee increases or deposits (if required) can be found in your offer letter.

Additional Costs

Materials- Estimated £250 (over three years).

Optional field trip- £250-280.

Optional Participation in London Show -New Designers. Approximate cost £260 depending on the number of students taking part.

Modules

Core Modules

Year 1: Foundation in Art and Design

This module will provide students with the necessary skills to begin studying at level 4 in Art, Design and related courses.

Students will be introduced to the core skills necessary to succeed in higher education, including researching and referencing appropriately, demonstrating appropriate ICT skills, and communicating effectively verbally and in writing.

Students will be introduced to practical art and design skills including developing skills of visual storytelling, image-making both in traditional and digital media, visual language and communication, formulating an independent creative response to a broad range of subject matter.

Students will also be introduced to the fundamentals of design from a creative perspective, and to some of the key ideas/movements dominating art, design and culture, during the past few centuries.

Students will work extensively in groups and collaboratively, with students from art and design, architecture and engineering

pathways.

The module is made up of the following 8 constituent elements:

- Interactive Learning Skills and Communication (ILSC)
- Information Communication Technology (ICT)
- Composition and Style
- Creative Workshops 1
- Approach to Design
- Critical and Contextual Studies
- Creative Workshops 2
- Specialist Project

Year 2: Illustration Practice 1

This module introduces and examines approaches, media and processes specific to illustrative image making. Drawing is the fundamental language of the animator and the illustrator. You will be encouraged to look closely at the visual world through studio and location based observational drawing, using sketchbooks and notebooks to develop and explore a personal, individual visual vocabulary. In the early stages of the module, numerous location based drawing trips take place in a variety of destinations, such as museums, markets and town centres. The module will include life-drawing classes in the drawing studio. From a basis in observational drawing, you will begin to explore imaginative drawing, sequential and interpretative drawing through a range of project briefs. Processes of graphic reproduction are introduced including printmaking and letterpress. In trimester 2, you will explore issues of design and colour, the interplay of text and image and explore elements of the narrative imagery and sequence, both in terms of the illustration as a designed form and the broader design contexts in which illustrations are used. These issues are examined with reference to the ongoing development of your own visual language through studio and location based project work that emphasises a balance between personal creative language and applied practice. The module will include a Personal Development Planning element.

Year 2: Image Manipulation

This module introduces you to a range of methods of image generation and manipulation in the context of the wider field of illustration. You will be encouraged to experiment with the deconstruction of the photographic image, arrangement and manipulation of found material and production of imagery through various combinations of traditional and contemporary media. The module aims to break down barriers and preconceptions about what constitutes creative 'ownership' of an image. Project briefs will invite responses that demand an experimental approach to image manipulation. Workshops on digital and photographic processes will support studio teaching that focuses on both the technical and conceptual aspects of image manipulation. You may explore the possibilities of photography in illustration, the areas where photography and drawing collide or overlap.

Year 2: Print and Process

This module deals with the relationship between print processes and the specialist area of Illustration. You are invited to explore the application of graphic processes and media both through your own creative practice and through exposure to contemporary and historical examples. Seminars on reprographic processes and possibilities are augmented by studio projects and demonstrations, with a particular emphasis on the historical and contemporary relationships between print as a method of mass reproduction, and printmaking as a contemporary medium for illustration. The module is delivered in the illustration studio and print workshops and students are encouraged to make use of open access time in the print workshops. A basic introduction to hand bookbinding is included.

Year 3: Illustration Practice 2

This module encourages exploration of the range of creative possibilities and conceptual challenges within areas of applied illustration practice. The relationship between observational/ location drawing and individual creative visual problem solving continues to be emphasised and developed. A group drawing trip normally takes place at the beginning of this module (depending on continuation of Sky Trust funding). You are encouraged to build upon your experience of visual information gathering by applying personal research methods to visual communication project briefs. These briefs cover a range of conceptual challenges including narrative/sequential contexts, visual interpretation for editorial design, type/ image relationships.

The module also introduces you to 'The Book' as an object, as a personal visual statement and as a fundamental vehicle for illustration. You undertake a major practical project in trimester 2 to create your own 'book' which may be anything from an experimental 'artist's book' to a traditional children's picture book. This section of the module includes bookbinding workshops and demonstrations. You are encouraged to explore a range of graphic media and processes both traditional and digital, with particular emphasis on reprographic processes- printmaking and digital printing. The module includes an element of Personal Development Planning.

Year 3: Debates and Practices

This module's purpose is to explore the links between critical studies and practice. It is intended to enable you to enrich your knowledge and develop your articulacy about your specialism and draw on wider perspectives in relation to your own work. It will be especially attentive to debates about contemporary practice. The module will be seminar based and may be held in the studio, when appropriate and possible. Discussions will engage theory and history with your own developing ideas about contemporary production. The agenda will be open and respond to current events, work and interests.

Year 3: Ideas Through Design

This studio module gives you an opportunity to examine and experiment with applied visual communication. At the fore, throughout the delivery of this module, is the importance of the visual idea. Through group project briefs, seminars and presentations, students will take a look at the way complex concepts can be articulated visually, in the context of, for example, editorial illustration and design, and illustration and design for advertising, covering concepts such as the visual metaphor and 'closure' in visual sequence. Seminars will examine the work of leading practitioners in the field, including Peter Till, Peter Brookes and Paul Rand. Practical project briefs will involve visual problem solving, the translation of arcane subject matter into coherent visual form. You will be invited to concentrate on and develop your personal methodology for developing visual ideas.

Year 4: Portfolio Development

This module aims to extend and deepen your personal creative practice, thereby extending the range and breadth of visual work evident in your portfolio. To this end you engage with a mixture of group and individually negotiated illustration projects that aim to provide an appropriate balance between continued personal creative experimentation and ongoing skills in applied visual problem solving. Individual negotiated projects are devised in consultation with staff and are arrived at through a review of portfolio work to date. These projects may aim to consolidate and/or expand areas of strength in your developing visual vocabulary. Group project briefs are designed to allow for maximum flexibility of interpretation given the expected range of student working identities at level six. The module includes a Personal Development Planning element.

Year 4: Major Project: Illustration

The Major Project is the culmination of the Art and Design undergraduate practice courses. Depending upon your course, you will pursue the Major Project individually or as member of a group. At the outset, you will prepare a demanding proposal for an independent creative project, to be approved by your supervising tutor. In this final project, you will need to demonstrate your capacity to work to a planned schedule, research your options imaginatively, take account of current thinking on the issues your project raises, develop your work in convergent and divergent ways, respond positively to criticism and arrive at creative solutions. You will be expected to display, in both preparatory and finished work, an advanced understanding of the methods, techniques, materials and processes appropriate to your chosen media. Your developmental work will be subject to peer and tutor review and assessed with your finished work.

This module is exempt from the full ethical approval process in accordance with section 6 of the Academic Regulations (www.anglia.ac.uk/academicregs).

Optional Modules

(Subject to availability)

Year 2: Illustration: Contextual Studies

In this module you will be introduced to the academic study of illustration, animation and computer games art. In a series of practical 'workshop' style sessions you will examine the work of a selection of significant and influential illustrators, animators, games designers and other artists, both contemporary and historical, in order to gain an appreciation and knowledge of the

historical, cultural and intellectual context within which they were working. You will be taught through weekly seminars, which will give you the opportunity to discuss the works and the events and ideas underpinning them. As well as this subject-specific content, you will also undertake a series of workshops and exercises which introduce the skills of library research, critical analysis of visual imagery, essay writing and academic referencing, which will provide a foundation for your studies later in the course.

This module must be taken by all students, except in the specific circumstances where an international student may be required to take an additional English for Study module instead, in order to improve their English Language level.

Year 2: English for Study 1

This is the first in a series of English for Study modules. It aims to support those students who are at or below IELTS 6.0, or equivalent, in their academic writing/discussion abilities. It develops both students' grammatical accuracy and their ability to extract key points from a variety of spoken texts. It further requires students to demonstrate increasing awareness of essay planning and the importance of summary writing and referencing skills in academic essays. Discussion skills are also developed to ensure students are able to contribute in both seminar and tutorial discussions. The module, taught over two hours per week will consist of a variety of activities including group debates, and discussions, presentations, listening and comprehension exercises from authentic audio, and audio-visual material of academic lectures. Students will also be guided in independent learning, via the Language Centre and Library and the Language Laboratories through a wide range of media resources including newspapers and academic journals, videos, and internet.

Year 2: English for Study 2

This is the second in a series of English for Study modules. It aims to further develop students' essay writing skills and reading techniques. It concentrates on advanced writing and organisational skills: planning essays, writing introductions, paragraph development and writing conclusions as well as looking at style and the development of argument. Emphasis is also put on the importance of relevant and accurate referencing and paraphrasing and issues surrounding plagiarism and collusion. The module also focuses in on text referencing such as tables and charts etc., and bibliography structure and appendices. Problematic areas of grammar are also looked at including the passive voice, conditionals and inversion to enhance style. The module, taught over two hours per week will consist of a variety of activities including group debates, and discussions, reading comprehension exercises from authentic texts, and academic journals. Students will also be guided in independent learning, via the Language Centre and Library and the Language Laboratories through a wide range of media resources including books, academic journals, videos, and internet.

Year 2: Understanding Images

The module is designed to introduce the ways in which images are constructed, and the critical theories and tools which can be used to analyse and interpret both images and texts. Critical ideas and theories are explored through practical 'workshop' style sessions centered on close readings of selected images - illustrations, illustrative and narrative paintings, animations, and works which combine text and image in a variety of ways. The module is taught through weekly seminars, which will give the opportunity both to discuss a range of critical approaches and ideas, and to practice critical skills in class and small group discussion. The module also helps develop the skills of critical writing, through undertaking a series of short written assignments in a variety of modes from which the student makes a selection for assessment.

This module must be taken by all students, except in the specific circumstances where an international student may be required to take an additional English for Study module instead, in order to improve their English Language level.

Year 3: Business for the Creative Arts

This module introduces you to the practical tools you will need to set yourself up in business in the creative arts, either as a company, a partnership, a freelancer or an employee. It also asks you to explore, imaginatively and creatively, a sector of the creative industries, and your own potential opportunities within it. The outcome of the module is a basic business plan or employment strategy developed from your ideas. Emphasis is placed on self-reflection, innovative thinking and communication skills.

Subjects covered include: the Creative Industries; analysing business ideas; types of business model; assessing your market; ideas behind marketing; basic accounts; tax and legal issues; and planning for start-up. You will be asked to translate these into

practice by applying them to your own ideas, which will then become part of your own business plan or employment strategy.

The module is delivered by lectures, seminars, student presentations, critiques and workshops.

Year 3: Moving Illustration

New platforms and methods of delivery and dissemination mean that more and more content is being delivered via screens. The potential liberation of image making from the static printed page offers new possibilities and challenges for the creative image maker. This module develops your awareness of the potential for digital, moving illustration and imagery, to prepare you to enter the rapidly evolving and changing professional environment. Digital means of production need to work hand in hand with ideas' generation, so whilst you are introduced to industry standard software, the "concept" and its communication is placed at the core of the briefs that are set. This module is not an animation-based module, but shares some of the characteristics of animation, including narrative, sequence, pace, the "reveal" and closure. The intellectual discourse around current technological developments and how they may impact on future employment and employability is also introduced.

Year 3: Writing for Sequential Images

This module will give you an insight into common and alternative story structures and will enable you to build and create stories for sequential media, in particular picture books, graphic novels, animation and games. Central to this understanding and creation of a picture-based story is the combination of the handmade image and other modes of expression such as written text, sound, movement and interaction. You will gain insight into story structures and story development, character development, plotting and story-worlds. You will learn skills such as story development, adaptation, scripting, creative writing, dialogue and you will learn how to translate and adapt original material and existing texts into story treatments, scripts and storyboards for a range of visual media.

The insight into story structures and story development and the linked creative and practical processes are addressed in a series of classes and seminars, where both traditional and alternative forms of visual narration and image-text relationships are explored. In workshops, exercises and set briefs you will be challenged to apply this knowledge and create story texts, scripts and storyboards. This will include the creation of work based on your own ideas.

Ongoing critiques will formatively assess, analyse and evaluate your development; including the narrative quality, technical competency and appropriateness for purpose, within the given briefs requirements.

Year 3: Narrative Printmaking

This module encourages students to explore printmaking materials and processes as a creative means of developing visual narrative or sequential imagery. Students are expected to treat printmaking processes experimentally rather than reproductively. Students will be expected to develop a suite of images which explores sequential composition, the use of a coherent visual language, the relationship between printed text and image, the physical qualities of the materials used and the means by which the viewer interacts with the finished work.

Year 3: Text and Image

This module is specifically designed to encourage you to explore interactions between text and images, alongside the development of a range of creative outcomes.

Harnessing writing as a purposeful act relevant to your own practice, the indicative content is addressed through a series of seminars and workshops. As well as developing a specific visual project, you will have the opportunity to engage in experimental writing approaches, which are intended to provide you with starting points for your creative practice.

In the contemporary world of art and design, the practitioner is often called upon to accompany creative outcomes with a variety of textual elements, and this module will help you enhance these creative and critical writing skills.

Assessment involves the development of a visual project combining text and image, which may be relevant to your studio specialism. In addition to this, you will write of a critical rationale, relating to the text and image interactions evidenced in your visual project, as well as shorter pieces of experimental writing developed alongside the visual project.

Year 4: Research Project

The Research Project is intended to foster your independent study with the guidance of a tutor. You will devise your own project which will reflect on /co-ordinate with / enhance your own studio work and interests. Self-reflexivity and a critical distance will be encouraged. The seminars provide a forum for students to learn from each other's research. There will be opportunities for individual tutorials with a member of staff. The Research Project may include a variety of relevant topics, including reporting on work experience. It may be illustrated with photographs, drawings, video. The approach is to be discussed with the tutor concerned.

Year 4: Research Assignment

The Research Assignment is intended to foster your independent study with the guidance of a Supervisor. On the Research Assignment module, you will devise your own project which will reflect on / co-ordinate with / enhance your own studio work and interests. Self-reflexivity and a critical distance will be encouraged. The classes provide a forum for students to learn from each other's research. There will be opportunities for individual tutorials with a member of staff. The Research Assignment may include a variety of relevant topics, and the topic will be negotiated with your supervisor. It may be illustrated with photographs, drawings, video. The approach is to be discussed with the supervisor concerned.

Year 4: Working in the Creative Industries

Gaining work experience enhances employability, and work based learning offers you the chance to gain industry knowledge, skills, contacts and networking opportunities.

This module is designed to give you the opportunity to explore a working environment in the industry that they have identified as relevant to their present or future needs. The module will encourage self-managed learning, and serves to increase employability by developing personal organisation, team-working, and networking skills - thereby increasing self-reliance and confidence. The experience can be used as a basis for directing and focussing your career plans, and can influence your final year projects.

You are required to identify, negotiate and agree with an employer (or employers) the terms of the placement in association with a module tutor, to ensure that the module learning outcomes can be achieved. You will create a reflective report on your work experience. This will include: the application procedure you have conducted (CV, letter and portfolio); market and background information on the employer; your role(s) on the placement(s); academic and vocational analysis; skills and experiences (opportunities, advantages, constraints, aptitudes and interests). You will also be asked to include a workplace diary that logs activity and supports an analysis of the learning achieved. The employer will be asked to complete a Student Feedback package on completion of the placement. The work placements may be carried out in a variety of settings depending upon your requirements, areas of interest and availability of opportunities. The minimum period will be 100 hours, and you can undertake more than one placement for the module.