Higher National Unit specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Animation**:** Character Design

Unit code: F1D7 35

Unit purpose: This Unit designed to enable the candidate to gain an understanding of games genre and the attributes of character design, coupled with knowledge and understanding of the function of a character in a game and the properties that the character must embody to comply with the character criteria. Candidates will also develop skills in observation of movement, emotion, and character personality; they will gain knowledge and skills in building and animating a character that can function in a range of mediums.

On completion of the Unit the candidate will be able to:

1   Evaluate expression and movement of character styles as directed by a brief.
2   Produce observational artwork/developmental drawings of character movement and emotions.
3   Produce storyboard sequences for 2D or 3D character animation sequences.
4   Create a series of short character animations.

Credit points and level: 2 HN credits at SCQF level 8: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8*)

SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. Candidates should have an understanding of the computer art and design process having completed HN Units DW9G 34 3D *Animation Motion Studies*, DW9J 34 *Animation: An Introduction*, DW9H 34 *3D Computer Visualisation* or have similar qualifications or experience.

A knowledge and understanding of film language, computer graphics, drama, psychology, or literature, would be advantageous. It would be beneficial if the candidate could demonstrate basic drawing skills and also had knowledge of techniques used in the creation of simple animations found across a range of traditional, experimental and digital domains.

Core Skills: There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Information Technology, Problem Solving and Communication at SCQF level 6 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

General information for centres (cont)

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

Assessment: This Unit can be assessed as four independent instruments of assessment, however holistic assessment should be strongly encouraged in relation to Outcome 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Outcome 1 requires candidates to evaluate a selection of animation and character styles from a range of appropriate material as directed by a brief. The candidate will produce an illustrated report or commentary on the major milestones in character design and development from the material supplied.

Outcome 2 requires candidates to produce a series of developmental drawings of the character movement, expression and emotion.

Outcome 3 requires the creation of storyboards, which assign characterisation and functionality to a character.

Outcome 4 requires the candidates to create a series of short animations.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Animation: Character Design

Unit code: F1D7 35

The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Evaluate expression and movement of character styles as directed by a brief

Knowledge and/or Skills

♦   Selection and evaluation
♦   Presentation skills
♦   Report writing
♦   Animation styles
♦   Historic genre conventions
♦   Character analysis
♦   Knowledge of dramatic personae

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

♦   produce an illustrated written report or oral presentation highlighting major milestones in character design and development from a range of animation and character styles
♦   incorporate in the report a reflective commentary on the dramatic personae
♦   reflect the terms of the brief supplied or negotiated

Assessment Guidelines

The candidate should provide sufficient evidence in the form of a written report that they have responded to all of the Evidence Requirements above. Alternative means of providing evidence, for example oral evidence, supported by pictorial portfolio submission would also be appropriate.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Animation**:** Character Design

Outcome 2

Produce observational artwork/developmental drawings of character movement and emotions

Knowledge and/or Skills

- Physiology of character
- Psychology of the dramatic personae
- Drawing and illustrative techniques
- Drawings of observed movement
- Drawings of character expression
- Observation and recording of movement and emotion

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- observe and record movement and emotion using illustrative techniques
- develop drawings that reflect a range of movements and emotions based on one or more characters
- produce developmental representations of a character or characters that clearly allude to appropriate genre conventions

Developmental drawings or illustrative techniques should show a character or characters displaying at least two emotions and two types of movement.

Assessment Guidelines

Developmental drawings or illustrative techniques showing emotions and types of movement could be, for example, laughter/fear, tiptoe and running.

The developmental work may be the basis of ideas for a final animation sequence featuring for example models, puppets, claymation, collage or 2D or 3D characters.

Drawings can be used for any animated sequence or they can be used within the context of Outcomes 3 and 4 of this Unit. Candidates could produce rough work in the form of sketches, photographs or film records and this material can also be incorporated into a journal used for reflection at the conclusion of Outcome 4.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Animation**:** Character Design

Outcome 3

Produce storyboard sequences for 2D or 3D character animation sequences

Knowledge and/or Skills

- Selecting and organising material
- Digital animation systems
- Animation techniques
- Timing principles for animation
- Storyboarding formats

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- select and organise images collected and developed into a series of drawings or storyboards that can be used to produce a range of animated sequences
- generate storyboards to demonstrate emotion and movement of a character or characters
- represent movement and emotion consistent with character design and genre conventions
- create sufficient key frames within the storyboards to allow articulation, movement, emotion and character design for a specific genre

Assessment Guidelines

Candidates would produce reference drawings in Outcome 2, which are then used to generate storyboards for this Outcome 3.

Storyboards could be generated independently of previous Outcomes within this Unit, however if this option is chosen, the candidate should work to a given brief supplied by the tutor.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Animation**:** Character Design

Outcome 4

Create a series of short character animations

Knowledge and/or Skills

♦ Using a 2D/3D digital animation systems
♦ File formats for 2D and 3D Animations
♦ Animation techniques
♦ Evaluation
♦ Reflective practice

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

♦ produce short animated sequences
♦ produce animations that express a range of movements, personality and emotion, appropriate to the narrative and genre conventions
♦ produce a journal, which articulates the candidate assessment of their progress in this Unit, their assessment of their response to the brief and the quality of the final animated sequence/s
♦ save the animated work using appropriate formats to the medium chosen for recording each sequence

Assessment Guidelines

The assessment of this Outcome can be combined with Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 as part of a single holistic assessment for the Unit. It would be possible, if desired, to break assessment down into four separate assessments, based on a brief provided/agreed with the candidate, appropriate to the subject specialism.

Administrative Information

Unit code: F1D7 35

Unit title: Animation**:** Character Design

Superclass category: JA

Original date of publication: March 2007

Version: 01

History of changes:

Version	Description of change	Date

Source: SQA

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Animation: Character Design

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

Computer animation is relatively accessible discipline where software deals with many issues including automated movement sequences. Production of characters reflecting real/accurate physiology and psychology requires more than software intervention. This Unit is designed to encourage creative and practical activities that will cause the candidates to reflect on the strengths of well-observed drawings of the human form.

The Unit is designed to provide candidates with a clear progression route from HN Units at level 7 in computer animation and drawing. The intention is to develop upon the knowledge and skills of the candidate within the context of character design. The Unit should challenge the candidate to both create and develop characters, which display emotion and movement commensurate with specific narrative and genre conventions.

The content of the Unit has intentionally been kept non-subject specific to encourage experimentation in character design whether centres elect to work with digital or conventional animation techniques but which nevertheless encourage creative and technical solutions to a design brief. This Unit is primarily intended to introduce candidates to character design and functionality in a range of milieu.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This Unit has been developed as part of the HND Computer Art and Design Award. It is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

Opportunities may be taken to link or integrate with other aspects of the course and a thematic approach adopted for both delivery and assessment.

It would be helpful if candidates could observe and experience a wide range of animation techniques delivered by professionals within a commercial setting.

Assessment guidance has been referenced under each Outcome. Opportunity for centre elected, individual, Outcome-by-Outcome assessment is acceptable but holistic assessment of all four Outcomes is advised.

Outcome 1 should be assessed on a given brief which will direct the candidate according to Centre preference in animation mediums. The candidate should be provided with a range of animation experiences, crossing genre, and mediums; for example computer animated films, the work of the Quay brothers, Melies etc. The written report and or presentation should be of a realistic length and quality; a ten minute presentation or a written report of at least 1,000 words is a reasonable guideline. The presentation or fully illustrated report should identify salient elements of character design within a given medium. Genre conventions and narrative structures should be articulated within the candidate submission.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Animation**:** Character Design

Outcome 2 should be assessed on the basis of a series of drawings supplied by the candidate who should be given the opportunity to observe movement and emotion in human or other natural form.

Drawings may be supported by use of film or photographs used as reference for final drawings, but students should be encouraged to develop drawing skills with a series of pre-defined exercises prior to assessment. This material can be used as part of Evidence Requirements in the form of rough work or included in a journal which can be used as evidence of reflective activity in Outcome 4.

Outcome 3 should be assessed as a single assessment with candidates providing storyboard sequences which reflect at least two emotions and two distinct movements from a character or characters. It is suggested that this assessment is based on the drawings created for Outcome 2 but it can stand as a set of storyboards, prepared to a given brief. Particular attention should be paid to the various storyboard formats appropriate to the medium being used by the Centre ie computer games or film.

Outcome 4 should encourage candidates to be creative as possible, with particular attention being paid to the construction, of characters embodied with real emotion and where movement conforms to the appropriate physiology and psychology. The final animation will be presented and saved to appropriate file type. A journal which includes a reflection on the completed material should be used to encourage the development journey.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

Candidates will enhance skills in the practical use of Information Technology naturally, and to a sophisticated level, as they manage the practical aspects of creating character within an animation sequence. Accessing sources which provide a broad range of examples of computer animation and discussion with the group and assessor would reinforce analytical and evaluative approaches to methods and techniques in the interpretation and communication of character within the animation process. Skills in using 2D/3D digital animation systems and file formats for 2D and 3D Animations are assessed. The effective and responsible use of equipment and appropriate software would be integral to achievement.

In planning the production of developmental drawings and storyboards candidates will undertake extensive research. Appropriate resources and media will be identified and the effects of each examined and analysed before design approaches are selected. Developing and implementing initial design concepts should further provide opportunities for enhancing creative problem solving skills to an advanced level. Evaluation which examines all stages of proposed design solutions and their potential and actual impact will be assessed in Outcome 4.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Animation**:** Character Design

Candidates must research, analyse, and evaluate complex information on the techniques for conveying character from a range of sources. Communication techniques identified will underpin their ability to convey emotion and ideas in graphic and oral form. They would need to produce and present materials to standards acceptable in industry, and express essential ideas, effectively, to meet the identified needs of purpose. Reporting may be oral or written, and supported by a range of media. Presentations should demonstrate that candidates are able to:

♦ collate, organise and structure accurate information effectively
♦ signpost key points
♦ produce storyboards with impact
♦ use appropriate non-verbal communication techniques
♦ respond to questions in a way that progresses communication

Open learning

This Unit could be delivered by distance learning provided opportunities to attend workshops and demonstrations could be incorporated, ensuring candidates are exposed to specific animation disciplines and the provision of appropriate mentoring.

It may be appropriate under the circumstances that distance-learning candidates engage in the single assessment option rather than the Outcome-by-Outcome assessment.

For information on normal open learning arrangements, please refer to the SQA guide *Assessment and Quality Assurance of Open and Distance Learning* (SQA 2000) which is available on SQA's website: **www.sqa.org.uk**.

Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (**www.sqa.org.uk**).

General information for candidates

Unit title: Animation: Character Design

This Unit will introduce you to the production of animated sequences based on movement and emotion of organic forms. It will allow you to explore a range of software, hardware and techniques used to create animation.

In **Outcome 1** you will be given or you will negotiate a 'brief' with your tutor that will help direct your research. You will carry out research to help you gain an overview of conventions associated with character design in a range of milieu (computer games, film animation both 2D and 3D etc). You will then produce a report that will put into context the type of characters you propose to design.

In **Outcome 2** you will produce artwork and drawings of character movement and emotions. You will observe movement associated with animals or people and you will then record these movements using illustrative techniques such as photographs, film or short observational drawings.

In **Outcome 3** you will produce storyboards for an animated sequence of the material contained in the report you generated for Outcomes 1 and 2 the essence of the storyboards should be the clear articulation of movement and emotion of the character/s and should observe genre conventions.

In **Outcomes 4** you will create, render and save a series of animations demonstrating character design, psychology and movement conventions within an appropriate genre.

You will also consider inclusion of sound within your final animation although this may be simply material you have obtained during the research phase of the Unit.

You will then reflect upon and critically evaluate the success of your final animation.