



Higher National Unit specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Film Studies for Animators

Unit code: F4B5 34

Unit purpose: This Unit enables candidates to gain an understanding of film language, thus enhancing the narrative and emotional impact of the animation experience. Candidates will study a combination of practical and theoretical areas including history and aesthetics of animation films, filmic language, narrative construction and visual narrative, whilst gaining practical production skills.

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

- 1 Describe the history and aesthetics of animation films and associated film language.
- 2 Analyse how meaning is constructed in contemporary media.
- 3 Evaluate effective character performance.
- 4 Evaluate the relationship between ideological and sociological influences on animated features.

Credit points and level: 2 HN credits at SCQF level 7: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**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: While access to the Unit is at the discretion of the centre, a knowledge and understanding of computer graphics, computer games, 2D or 3D animation production would be advantageous. This could be evidenced by HN Units *Animation: an Introduction* DW9J 34 and *2D Computer Animation* DV5N 35 or equivalent.

Core Skills: There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Problem Solving* at SCQF level, *Information Technology* at SCQF level 5 and *Communication* at SCQF level 6 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

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. This Unit may be integrated with other Units from the Filmcraft and Animation HNC/HND, particularly the animation Units, although it may be delivered on a standalone basis.

Assessment: This Unit should be assessed using four independent instruments of assessment, however much of the research evidence undertaken for Outcome 1 provides referencing material for the other three Outcomes.

In Outcome One the candidate will research and investigate the history and aesthetics of animation including genre categorisation, narrative principles and identification of specific evidence of film language. The material selected will then be compiled into a report.

General information for centres (cont)

In Outcome Two the candidate will research how meaning is constructed in contemporary media by considering advertising, two and three-dimensional material and film information, portfolios and creative and commercial computer generated work. The material selected will then be compiled into a report and may be collated with the material generated for Outcome One, although given the sheer volume of material liable to be available it is recommended that each Outcome should produce a standalone report.

In Outcome Three the candidate will explore and evaluate effective character performance, review and explore examples of method acting, character design and development, motion analysis and interpretation and characterisation through expression. The material selected will then be compiled into a report and may be collated with the material generated for Outcomes One and Two, although again it is recommended that each Outcome should produce a standalone report.

In Outcome Four the candidates must demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between ideological and sociological influences on animated features and other audio-visual material, from conception to production and consumption. The material selected will then be compiled into a report and may be collated with the material generated for the other three Outcomes, although again it is recommended that each Outcome should produce a standalone report. This assessment also differs from the other three in so far as an extended response is required.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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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

Describe the history and aesthetics of animation films and associated film language

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Film language
- ◆ History of animation
- ◆ Genre and associated conventions

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ describe the history and principal aesthetic elements associated with animated film. Descriptions must cover camera techniques, mise-en-scene, and editing techniques with the associated conventions of film language.
- ◆ provide audio-visual evidence to demonstrate a clear understanding of film language, genre classifications and characteristics and conventions by referencing, in a recognised format, examples from the animated history material.

Assessment Guidelines

The candidate could provide sufficient audio-visual evidence for all of the knowledge and skills elements in the form of an illustrated report or portfolio. A specific date for submission should be agreed by the candidate and the lecturer, allowing the candidate sufficient time to gather all evidence required by the Outcome. Outcomes 1 and 2 could be integrated in a form of an illustrated report but it is strongly recommended that each Outcome produces an independent report/portfolio given the amount of material generated by each Outcome.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Film Studies for Animators

Outcome 2

Analyse how meaning is constructed in contemporary media

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Narrative principles and codes
- ◆ Storytelling
- ◆ Common models

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ identify narrative principles and codes contributing to film language. The candidate must make reference to storytelling: structure, plot, story arc, character, pace, voice, timing, and setting, at least one common model and conventional Hollywood narrative.

This assessment will draw on the evidence obtained when candidates described genre and narrative conventions associated with the animated material produced for Outcome 1.

Assessment Guidelines

Assessment methodology is at the discretion of each centre. It is possible to allow candidates to respond to the requirements of this Outcome of the Unit in an open-book assessment. It would be equally acceptable to assess candidates in a closed, formal examination. If the former it is suggested that the candidate is given sufficient time to complete the research before the assessment is undertaken with a recommended three hours for completion of the Outcome. For the latter a similar timeframe is acceptable.

As an alternative the candidate may demonstrate the necessary knowledge and skills by undertaking research into how meaning is constructed in contemporary media. Their findings should contain sufficient audio-visual evidence for all of the knowledge and skills elements in the form of an illustrated report or portfolio. A specific date for submission must be agreed by the candidate and the lecturer, allowing the candidate sufficient time to gather all evidence required by the Outcome. Outcomes 1 and 2 could be integrated in a single illustrated report.

Outcomes 1 and 2 could be integrated in a form of an audio-visual illustrated report or portfolio but it is strongly recommended that each Outcome produces an independent response given the amount of material generated by each Outcome.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Film Studies for Animators

Outcome 3

Evaluate effective character performance

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Script analysis
- ◆ Character design

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ clearly identify the elements of character design and evaluate their contribution to complexity and performance

The evaluation must include: character actions and objectives, round versus flat characterisation, dynamic versus static characterisation, character as symbol or representative, icons and archetypes and should include reference to the psychological profile of the character.

This assessment will draw on the evidence of evaluating genre and narrative conventions associated with the animated material produced for Outcome 1.

Assessment Guidelines

Centres may nominate the appropriate assessment methodology based on the vocational area studies. For example it is possible to allow candidates to respond to the requirements of this Outcome in an open-book assessment. It would be equally acceptable to assess candidates in a closed, formal examination. If the former it is suggested that the candidate is given sufficient time to complete the research before the assessment is undertaken with a recommended three hours for completion of the Outcome. For the latter a similar timeframe is acceptable.

As an alternative to either the candidate may demonstrate the necessary knowledge and skills by undertaking research and evaluation of the elements of character design and their contribution to complexity and performance. Their findings should contain sufficient audio-visual evidence for all of the knowledge and skills elements in the form of a report or portfolio. A specific date for submission must be agreed by the candidate and the lecturer, allowing the candidate sufficient time to gather all evidence required by the Outcome. Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 could be integrated in a single illustrated report; however as with previous Outcomes it is recommended that each Outcome produces an independent response given the amount of material generated.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Film Studies for Animators

Outcome 4

Evaluate the relationship between ideological and sociological influences on animated features.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Ideological frameworks
- ◆ Social theory
- ◆ Communication in film/animation

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ evaluate how ideological frameworks and social theory can be used to interpret why people choose to organise themselves in society either as individuals, as members of associations, groups or institutions and how these relationships manifest themselves in the communications process with particular reference to film and animation
- ◆ evaluations must recognise and reflect on: ethical ideals and principles, myths, symbols and social movements, institutions, class, social stratification, class structure, sociology of race and gender and how these issues are represented in film and animation, audio-visual material or other forms of mass communication
- ◆ all work should be referenced using a bibliography or annotated references

Assessment Guidelines

Centres may nominate the appropriate assessment methodology based on the vocational area studies. For example it is possible to allow candidates to respond to the requirements of this Outcome in the form of an open-book extended response assessment. It would be equally acceptable to assess candidates in a closed, formal examination. If the former it is suggested that the candidate is given sufficient time to complete the research before the assessment is undertaken with a recommended 3 hours for completion of the Outcome. For the latter a similar timeframe is acceptable.

The candidate submission should contain sufficient audio-visual evidence for all of the knowledge and skills elements in the form of a report or portfolio.

Administrative Information

Unit code: F4B5 34
Unit title: Film Studies for Animators
Superclass category: KA
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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Film Studies for Animators

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

Animation has a very specific vocabulary of motion including such things as timing, arcs, anticipation, overshoot, secondary action, follow-through, overlap, and moving holds, among others. The successful animator must also understand that animation has an aesthetic language underpinned by the language of film.

The current growth in animation and available training for people interested in working in this area has resulted in a significant growth in the teaching of animation skills. The purpose of this Unit is to ensure that practical training in animation techniques is supported by the attendant underpinning theoretical knowledge. Issues to be considered may include film language, character development, sociological and ideological frameworks that may be embedded in audio-visual material, editing techniques, camera placement, genre conventions which enhance and are fundamental to narrative development, and good storytelling. Following from Walt Disney's comment that all animators are frustrated actors, this Unit gives candidates guidance and experience as animators, in creating believable narrative and characterisation.

In Outcome 1, the candidate will describe the history and aesthetics of animation films and associated film language. It is suggested that candidates identify a reasonable point in history from which to begin, eg George Miele, extending their responses to contemporary animation studios.

In Outcome 2 the candidate will analyse how meaning is constructed in contemporary media.

In Outcome 3 the candidate will evaluate effective character performance. In animations and puppetry, different aspects of a given character are rendered separately using different modalities. In animation, for example, mannerisms and behaviour are rendered by animators, while voices are rendered by voice talent. It is intended that the candidate can recognise and reflect on a range of issues and conventions associated with character development and performance. The assessment task may address character actions and objectives, round versus flat characterisation, dynamic versus static characterisation, character as symbol or representative, icons and archetypes and finally should include reference to the psychological profile of the character.

In Outcome 4 the candidate will evaluate the relationship between ideological and sociological influences on animated features. Reference could be made to the work of George Walford, Harold Walsby and David Minar for example.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

Outcome 1 requires the candidate to produce research evidence to highlighting the history and principal aesthetic elements associated with animated film from George Miele to contemporary animation studios ie, Pixar or other relevant animation provider. The evidence should refer to camera techniques, mise-en-scene, and editing techniques with the associated conventions of film language.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Film Studies for Animators

The candidate should provide audio-visual evidence to demonstrate a clear understanding of film language, genre classifications and characteristics and conventions by referencing, in a recognised format. Any sample material used should be of a sufficient length and quality to demonstrate evidence of the vocational knowledge and skills elements required by the Outcome.

Outcome 2 requires the candidate to clearly identify a range of narrative principles and codes contributing to film language as evidenced by evaluating genre and narrative conventions associated with the animated evidence produced for Outcome 1.

Common models which could be considered by candidates in this Outcome include Freytag's model, Walter Fisher's Narrative Paradigm or other suitable models as directed by the tutor.

In **Outcome 3** the candidate must clearly identify the elements of character design which contribute to complexity and performance as evidenced by references to examples produced or associated with the animated material produced for Outcome 1. It is intended that the candidate can both recognise and reflect on a range of issues and conventions associated with character development and performance. The questions should address character actions and objectives, round versus flat characterisation, dynamic versus static characterisation, character as symbol or representative, icons and archetypes and finally should include reference to psychological profile of the character. With this understanding, the candidate should be able to use this type of character development and profile within their own animations. To this end it is desirable that the candidate should be given the opportunity to view and participate in at least some elements of character design, development and performance. It may be possible, for example, to engage candidates in reviews or participate in classes associated with method acting, motion analysis and interpretation and characterisation through expression.

For Outcome 4, evidence must be provided of the candidate's ability to demonstrate their understanding of how social theory and ideological frameworks can be used to evaluate why people are organised in society. This may be as individuals or as members of associations, groups and institutions and candidates must evaluate how these relationships manifest themselves in the communications process with particular reference to film and animation. It is intended that the candidate can recognise and reflect on ideological and sociological relationships by answering questions on ethical ideals and principal, myths, symbols and social movement, institutions and class as represented in audio-visual material. Reference could be made to the work of George Walford, Harold Walsby and David Minar, for example. Candidates should also understand concepts such as social stratification, class structure, sociology of race and gender and how these issues are represented in film and animation or other forms of mass communication.

Opportunities for Developing Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 5, *Information Technology* at SCQF level 5 and *Communication* at SCQF level 6 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Film Studies for Animators

Open learning

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

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: Film Studies for Animators

This Unit will provide you with an understanding of film language, and how it can be used to enhance the narrative and emotional impact of the animation experience. You will study a combination of practical and theoretical areas including history and aesthetics of animation films, filmic language, narrative construction and visual narrative as you acquire and develop practical production skills. The Unit concentrates on four areas:

- ◆ describe the history and aesthetics of animation films and associated film language
- ◆ analyse how meaning is constructed in contemporary media
- ◆ evaluate effective character performance
- ◆ evaluate the relationship between ideological and sociological influences on animated features

In **Outcome 1** you will provide evidence to highlight the history and principal aesthetic elements associated with animated film from past to contemporary animation studios. The evidence should contain references camera techniques, mise-en-scene, and editing techniques with the associated conventions of film language. You will provide audio-visual evidence to demonstrate a clear understanding of film language, genre classifications and characteristics and conventions.

In **Outcome 2** you will be introduced to a range of narrative principles and codes contributing to film language. Film language including storytelling: structure, plot, story arc, character, pace, voice, timing, and setting, common models such as Freytag's model or Walter Fisher's Narrative Paradigm and conventional Hollywood narrative form the main knowledge and skills for this Outcome.

Outcome 3 looks at characterisation including character actions and objectives, round versus flat characterisation, dynamic versus static characterisation, character as symbol or representative, icons and archetypes and the psychological profile of the character. In order to understand and relate to these concepts you may be given the opportunity to view and participate (where possible) in classes associated with method acting, motion analysis and interpretation and characterisation through expression. You will be asked to provide evidence to demonstrate that you are able to recognise and reflect on a range of issues and conventions associated with character development and performance.

In **Outcome 4** ideological and sociological relationships and how these concepts can be found in audio-visual materials is discussed. You will demonstrate your understanding of how social theory and ideological frameworks can be used to evaluate why people are organised in society, as individuals or as members of associations or as groups and institutions. How these relationships manifest themselves in the communications process with particular reference to film and animation will also be examined.