UNIVERSITY OF KENT

Course Specification

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she passes the course. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the course handbook. The accuracy of the information contained in this specification is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

MA Character & Creature Creation

1. **Awarding Institution/Body**	University of Kent
2. **Teaching Institution**	Pearson College London
3. **School/Division responsible for management of the course**	School of Engineering and Digital Arts
4. **Teaching Site**	Escape Studios, Pearson College London
5. **Mode of Delivery**	Full-time (in-class/online)
6. **KentVision Academic Model**	*To be completed in due course, once approved by the University*
7. **Course accredited by**	N/A
8. **a) Final Award**	MA Character & Creature Creation
8. **b) Alternative Exit Awards**	PG Diploma in Character & Creature Creation PG Certificate Character & Creature Creation
9. **Course**	MA Character & Creature Creation
10. **UCAS Code (or other code)**	
11. **Credits/ECTS value**	MA 180 credits (90 ECTS) PG Dip 120 credits (60 ECTS) PG Cert 60 credits (30 ECTS)
12. **Study Level**	Level 7
13. **Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s)**	Due to the nature of this course, there are no relevant benchmarking statements for this subject.
14. **Date of creation/revision** *(note that dates are necessary for version control)*	February 2020
15. **Intended Start Date of Delivery of this Course**	From September 2021

16. Educational Aims of the Course The course aims to:
● Provide a supportive, structured environment in which students are encouraged to further develop independent learning skills in a studio environment;

- Develop deep level subject knowledge and understanding, discipline skills and personal transferable skills;
- Enhance employability by developing a skill set focused on industry and with support to develop their personal portfolio.

This postgraduate course aims to enable students to develop, at an advanced level, knowledge, skill and understanding within the field of Character and Creature Creation, and to equip them to become a well-qualified professional able to take a lead in developing and exploiting existing and emerging character design and creation techniques.

The overarching aim of the course is to provide opportunities for students to gain and apply specialist skills and knowledge across specific areas of character and creature creation, and to demonstrate critical judgment, research ability and proficiency in project management.

17 Course Outcomes

The course provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas.

A. Systematic Knowledge and Understanding of: (Subject-specific knowledge and understanding)
A1: the theory and concepts behind the use of 3D software tools for character and creature creation
A2: emerging theory, techniques and approaches for character and creature creation
A3: the relationships between character and creature creation and the production pipeline
A4: the history and conventions of character and creature creation
A5: the potential advancements in character and creature creation and their impact on the production process
A6: the legal, ethical and practical requirements of a practicing professional artist

B. Intellectual Skills: (Subject-specific intellectual skills)
B1: critically evaluate and select 3D software tools and techniques for character and creature production
B2: critically evaluate and select character and creature creation techniques needed to complete a complex production project
B3: research and critical evaluation of emerging theory and practice in the field of character and creature creation
B4: technically and critically analyse and solve problems in the absence of full information and under conditions of uncertainty

C. Subject-specific Skills: (Practise and professional skills)
C1: create 3D content for use in an animation, VFX project or game using professional tools and techniques
C2: understand and apply the character design principles translating to full 3D characters
C3: apply high-level skills to deliver a complex character and present to a professional standard
C4: organise and manage a project within a professional production pipeline, and critically evaluate its success

D. Transferable Skills: (Non-subject specific key skills)
D1: manage complex processes and tasks to deliver a project to a defined brief
D2: communicate complex creative and technical information to a variety of audiences
D3: demonstrate advanced practical abilities in the implementation of a collaborative project
D4: organise and schedule resources effectively to a high standard

D5: communicate complex technical and creative information in a structured and effective way to a variety of audiences

D6: manage their own development and identify learning requirements and take independent action to address these

Teaching/learning and assessment methods and strategies used to enable the course learning outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated

Concepts, principles and practice are explored within a working environment and under the supervision of tutors with industrial experience. Professional and personal skills are developed through discussion and project work which involves problem solving and design exercises.

A particular strength of this course is the contribution made to the teaching course by successful practising industry professionals. Each section of the course will be delivered by a subject-specific artist who will be able to demonstrate these skills to an advanced level. This will be overseen by a managing tutor.

Each 30-credit module on the course requires students to commit 300 hours of study, with one 60 credit module which requires 600 hours of study. Some of these hours will be formally supervised in the learning environment and others will involve students carrying out private study.

Assessment is based on practical project work and a written record of this work, along with documentation and presentation of research and investigation. These methods are chosen so that students may demonstrate the learning outcomes of each module which are focused on the research skills, decision making and process implementation involved in successful project completion.

The unique nature of this course means that students will study under the supervision of tutors with industrial experience and with industry standard tools and technology. Their major projects will involve professional briefs and assets set in consultation with industry partners.

An Online variant of this course may also be offered. Online students attend synchronous and interactive online classes. With VPN and Remote Access, Escape Studios is equipped for students to be able to get the same 'high-touch' experience regardless of physical presence. In these cases, students would be responsible for Hardware considerations (e.g. Wifi/Internet Connection, Graphics Tablets etc.).

Learning Resources

Teaching will take place in an environment with up-to-date hardware and software with regular update and replacement cycles and other industry-standard facilities. When studying remotely, it will be possible to connect to remote workstations. This will require good internet connection. The involvement of key companies in the post-production and visual effects area assures the quality of the learning environment and resources.

E-learning will be a central element in the delivery of modules within the framework on-line using forums, blogs (industry and academic) and industry publications. Where necessary, students will be supplied with links to relevant on-line sources either via our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), social bookmarking software or other web-based collaborative software. Use of external resources and technology, such social networks and instant messaging systems will feature in modules as appropriate

> For more information on the skills developed by individual modules and on the specific learning outcomes associated with any alternative exit award relating to this course of study, see the module mapping table, located at the end of this specification.

18 Course Structures and Requirements, Levels, Modules, Credits and Awards

The course covers a range of specialist topics, leading to the qualification of a Master's degree. This includes three classroom-based modules, a collaborative project and a 3-month production project. As all sessions are software/project based, there are no additional requirements necessary when studying online/in-person.

This course is studied over one year full-time.

The course is divided into two stages. Stage 1 comprises modules to a total of 120 credits and Stage 2 comprises a 60 credit Character and Creature Creation Production Project module. Students must successfully complete each module in order to be awarded the specified number of credits for that module. One credit corresponds to approximately ten hours of 'learning time' (including all classes and all private study and research). Thus obtaining 180 credits in an academic year requires 1,800 hours of overall learning time. For further information on modules and credits refer to the Credit Framework.

Stage 1 has a single pathway. Compulsory modules are core to the course and must be taken by all students studying the course. The modules of Stage 1 are delivered sequentially, with the contact time of each module being completed before the next module begins. Each module builds upon the lessons learned from the previous module. This can also be delivered out of order as for a technical standpoint, there are no modules that depend on software or tools from previous modules. E.g. Character and Creature Design theory will aid in the Character and Creature Modelling/Presentation, but the two are separate disciplines and skills. In this way, none of the modules have formal prerequisites. However, due to the nature of Stage 2 drawing on the knowledge and skill attained Stage 1 it is expected that students will have completed Stage 1 modules to move on to Stage 2 and so this is a formal progression point.

Each module and course is designed to be at level 7. For the descriptors of levels, refer to Annex 2 of the Credit Framework.

To be eligible for the award of a Master's degree students must obtain 180 credits, at least 150 of which must be Level 7. Students who obtain 60 credits (excluding the Production Project) will be eligible for an alternative exit award of Postgraduate Certificate in Character & Creature Creation. Students who obtain 120 credits, but excluding the Production Project, will be eligible for the alternative exit award of Postgraduate Diploma Character & Creature Creation.

The following modules may not be condoned or compensated:
Character and Creature Design, Character and Creature Modelling/Presentation, Character and Creature Technical Direction, Studio Project, and Character and Creature Production Project.

This course has flexible start dates which may vary from year to year. There will typically be one start date in the Autumn, which will be in August, September or October and another at the start of the calendar year, which will be in January or February

KV Code	SDS Code	Title	Level	Credits	Term(s)
Stage 1					
Compulsory Modules					
PRSN7035	CC7001	Character and Creature Design	7	30	1
PRSN7036	CC7002	Character and Creature Modelling/ Presentation	7	30	1

PRSN7037	CC7003	Character and Creature Technical Direction	7	30	2
PRSN7038	CC7004	Studio Project	7	30	2
Stage 2					
Compulsory Modules					
PRSN7039	CC7005	Character and Creature Production Project	7	60	3

19 Work-Based Learning
Work-based learning is not structurally part of the course, but learning takes place in an environment that replicates that of a typical creative industries studio. This is particularly relevant to project work, where students work in teams to industry practices and procedures, ensuring that they have experience of the workplace environment during their studies.

20 Support for Students and their Learning
- Escape Studios / Pearson College London induction programme   - Course/module handbooks   - Learning resources & support- https://www.pearsoncollegelondon.ac.uk/for-students/future-students/learning-support.html   - Student Support & Wellbeing https://www.pearsoncollegelondon.ac.uk/for-students/future-students/student-experience.html

21 Entry Profile
The minimum age to study a degree course at the university is normally at least 17 years old by 20 September in the year the course begins. There is no upper age limit.
21.1 Entry Route
For current information, please refer to the University prospectus
All applicants are expected to have:
an Honours Degree in a related discipline to character and creature creation or relevant industry experience (e.g. Computer Graphics, Fine Art, Graphic Design etc.)   OR   equivalent industrial experience in the field of character and creature creation or a related area.   Applicants will be expected to submit a portfolio of work to be assessed and attend an   interview that will be carried out by members of the teaching team. Drawing skills in particular, will be looked upon favourably.   **Non-native English Speakers**   Students who do not have English as a first language will need to demonstrate their proficiency with appropriate qualifications or evidence of having been taught English previously. Typical English Language Level: average 6.5 IELTs, minimum 6.0 reading and writing.

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Diversity

Pearson College London welcomes applications from people of all backgrounds and abilities. Those with a disability are encouraged to discuss the nature of their disability with the College during the application process. The College has a process to assess additional learning needs, providing support and where appropriate 'reasonable adjustments' in assessment.

RPL

Students may be admitted on to the course, or may gain exemptions from particular modules, based on RPL. Such cases are subject to prior approval by the University of Kent according to its RPL process. See Annex R of the Code of Practice.

21.2 What does this course have to offer?

This course has been designed through close consultation with industry professionals and is based on many years' experience of delivering highly focused educational courses for the character and creature creation industry.

The course has been devised to ensure that student projects feel like real industry projects. Pearson College London / Escape Studios' existing pedagogy was adapted to incorporate elements of project-based delivery. Escape Studios' connection with the industry, combined with the expert instruction from existing tutors provides a powerful and practical student learning experience.

This course has been developed through engagement with industry partners such as Rocksteady, Framestore, Cinesite, Pixar, Blue Zoo, and Jellyfish. Every effort has been made to ensure that the course content is relevant to the current state of the industry, with ongoing consultation and support. Students will benefit from industry mentors, to ensure a continuing dialogue with industry, both in terms of course content and the changing shape of the job market.

Cross-disciplinary collaboration

Escape Studios offers MA courses in Games, Animation, Storyboarding and Visual Effects, and it may be possible for character and creature creation students to collaborate with students from these other disciplines. Such cross-course collaborations are strongly encouraged, as they help to replicate the real-world experience of a character-based production. However, collaborations of this kind will likely depend on ad-hoc arrangements between students as and when opportunities arise.

Assessment and Industry

The assessment methods employed in this course have been developed to mirror industry practice as far as possible. We balance feedback from tutors and industry experts. It is crucial that students learn how to accept and work with feedback from their superiors and peers, as this will be the norm when they work in industry. They also need to develop a keen self-critical eye. To be able to step back from their work and see what they could improve, and to have the ability to look at themselves and their working practices, and make changes where necessary.

Graduates of the course will be ready for work. They will have a deep technical knowledge of their craft and will have the ability to work collaboratively with people in adjacent roles and fields.

21.3 Personal Profile

Applicants should exhibit:
● A passion for the character and creature creation industry

- An intellectual interest in the history, theory and practice the character and creature creation industry
- The ability to adapt and change with varying circumstances
- A thirst for knowledge and a desire to solve complex problems
- Enthusiasm for collaborative and team working
- A desire to shape the future of character and creature creation

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22 Methods for Evaluating and Enhancing the Quality and Standards of Teaching and Learning

22.1 Mechanisms for review and evaluation of teaching, learning, assessment, the curriculum and outcome standards

- Student module evaluations and feedback questionnaires
- University of Kent Annual course and module monitoring reports (Annex E)
- PCL Annual Course Monitoring Reports
- External Examiners system (Annex K)
- Periodic course review (Annex F)
- Annual staff appraisal
- Peer observation
- University of Kent Quality Assurance Framework
- Regular Monitoring of feedback and data on retention, attainment, engagement and graduate outcomes

22.2 Committees with responsibility for monitoring and evaluating quality and standards

Committees at the University of Kent include:
- Board of Studies
- Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee
- Graduate and Researcher College Board
- Board of Examiners

Committees at Pearson College London include:
- Student Voice Forum
- School Board
- Admissions, Progression, Retention and Attainment Committee (APRAC)
- Review and Enhancement Committee
- Academic Board

22.3 Mechanisms for gaining student feedback on the quality of teaching and their learning experience

- Staff-Student Liaison Committee
- Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)
- Student module and end of year evaluations

22.4 Staff Development priorities include:

- Annual Appraisals
- Institutional Level Staff Development Programme
- Study Leave
- Industry contact and experience

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- Academic Practice Provision (PGCHE and other development opportunities)
- PGCHE requirements
- Advance HE Fellowship
- Professional body membership and requirements
- Course team meetings
- Research seminars

23 Indicators of Quality and Standards

- Registration with the OfS
- PCL QAA Higher Education Review Plus Report May 2014
  (https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/reports/pearson-college-her-plus-14.pdf)
- QAA Educational Oversight: Monitoring Visit Report, May 2019
  (https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/reports/pearson-college-eo-am-19.pdf)

Future indicators after the commencement of the course will include:

- Annual External Examiner reports
- Annual course and module monitoring reports (UoK and PCL)
- Result of PCL periodic review
- Result of University of Kent Periodic Review

23.1 The following reference points were used in creating these specifications:

- QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- Staff research activities
- Pearson College Additional Learning Needs Policy

24 Inclusive Course Design

Pearson College London recognises and has embedded the expectations of current equality legislation, by ensuring that the course is as accessible as possible by design. Additional alternative arrangements for students with Additional alternative arrangements for students with additional learning needs/declared disabilities will be made on an individual basis, in consultation with the relevant policies and support services.

Module Mapping: MA Character & Creature Creation

		Character and Creature Design	Character and Creature Modelling/ Presentation	Character and Creature Technical Direction	Studio Project	Character and Creature Production Project
Knowledge and	A1	X	X	X		

understanding	A2		X		X	
	A3	X				
	A4	X			X	X
Intellectual skills	B1	X	X	X	X	
	B2		X	X	X	X
Subject- specific skills:	C1	X	X	X		
	C2		X	X	X	
Transferable skills	D1	X	X	X	X	
	D2	X	X			
	D3				X	
Knowledge and understanding	A5					X
	A6					X
Intellectual skills	B3					X
	B4					X
Subject- specific skills	C3				X	X
	C4				X	X
Transferable skills	D4				X	X
	D5			X	X	X
	D6					X

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