

Unit Title	How to Design Characters for Games
FHEQ Level	Level 5 (Game Art Pathway)
Unit Code	GMD18203
Credit Value	15 Credits
Unit Type	Subject

Learning Hours			
Staff – Student Contact Hours		Independent Study Hours	
Classes	30	Independent Study	50
Supervised access to resources	7.5	Preparation for Assessment	12.5
		Unsupervised Access to Resources	50
Total			150

Unit Description

This unit focuses on the creative and technology processes for creating original and engaging game characters.

The unit will introduce students to principles of character design from initial concepts and reference gathering to digital sculpting, texturing and lighting and on to preparing characters for animation.

The unit will look at the creative processes behind effective character design, reviewing art style, personality and physiological aspects and how to express them.

Human and creature anatomy will be reviewed to see how they influence design decisions.

Additionally, it will cover the digital pipeline to bring characters to life, introducing the principle technologies for sculpting, topology, texturing, lighting, rigging, optimisation and digital pattern cutting for character clothing.

The Five Principles underpin the Mindsets and Skillsets Manifesto and are the foundation upon which all course curriculum frameworks and unit specifications are based. The relevant Principles as stated below have been mapped against the Learning Outcomes relevant to each course unit and at each level (see Programme Specifications for full description of the Five Principles):

1. Cultivate / Where the individual thrives.
2. Collaborate / Where disciplines combine and evolve.
3. Integrate / Where education engages industry.
4. Advocate / Where purpose meets practice.
5. Originate / Where enquiry informs creativity.

Unit Indicative Content

- Introduction to character design as a creative and technology process.
- Introducing human and animal anatomy and its relevance to character design.
- Understanding how to achieve personality through changes to morphology.
- Life drawing for character.
- Introducing the current principle technologies.
- Create a character portfolio or blog.

Unit Aims

Within the context of the Honours Degree credit framework, the aims of the course are to:

- Develop understanding of how characters are designed to specific briefs and art styles.
- Appreciate how understanding anatomy is fundamental to character design through analysis and life drawing.
- Encourage students' engagement with evolving 2D and 3D pipelines.
- Encourage students' to experiment with art style and execution of their designs
- Promote diversity, inclusivity, ethical, social and environmental awareness and provide opportunities for study and progression to all students.

The curriculum design and units will *“facilitate acquisition of appropriate knowledge and understanding, development of the necessary personal attributes, and application of the skills which equip and prepare students for continuing personal development and professional practice.”* (Subject Benchmark Statements, 2017).

Unit Learning Outcomes (Items in bold are the main focus within each LO for the unit)

LO1 Cultivate

- **Technical Competence**
- **Subject Knowledge**
- **Resilience**

Evidence capacity for evolving discipline specific knowledge and technical competencies, supporting academic & practical self-efficacy and evolving employability skills.

LO4 Advocate

- **Critical Reflection**
- Professional Identity

Evidence ability to engage with Critical Reflection, to review, analyse and interpret personal and professional development.

Evidence developing working process that identifies consideration and interpretation of social and ethically responsible working methods and how this guides personal professional practice.

LO5 Originate

- **Research**
- **Experimentation**
- **Ideation**

Evidence capacity for considered and aligned enquiry processes to inform practical and theoretical development in physical, written and oral forms.

Evidence capacity to combine ideas, materials, tests and outcomes into solutions that inform and guide practical and theoretical development in physical, written and oral forms.

Learning and Teaching Methods

Learning will be developed through: lectures, practical demonstrations, and online courses provided by 3rd parties. It will also feature seminars, tutorials, master classes, critical self and peer appraisal and collaborative working.

Where appropriate external guest speakers will further support delivery on the unit. Students will also need to undertake self-directed independent study to support learning.

The following methods play a significant role in learning and teaching on the course:

- Aligned Workshops, Lectures and Seminar sessions support the core teaching delivery (online and physical classes)
- Research led projects are used to embed an understanding of research and research methods from the beginning to ensure students develop the skill to explore the contexts and conditions of their practice.
- Reflective journals are used throughout the course to promote the development of autonomous, confident and critically reflective, self-directed learners.
- Self-evaluative writing is used to enable students to take responsibility for their own learning by identifying needs and prioritising and planning their learning.
- Self-assessment encourages students to take responsibility for monitoring and making judgments about aspects of their own learning.
- Peer assessment is used to promote assessment as part of learning.
- Live projects and student exhibitions and /or pop up events, support an outward facing ethos and encourage students to develop their practice in relevant professional contexts.

Assessment methods and tasks

Brief description of assessment methods

- *Formative Assessment: You will be given the opportunity for formative feedback/feedforward. This will be given midway through the unit or at an appropriate time.*
- *Summative assessment: Is the completion of the main unit tasks – typically a finished outcome together with associated research and reflective elements and the completion of a digital workbook and accompanying treatments or presentations.*
- *Presentations to peers are usually within a small group environment where at least two tutors are present.*
- *Playable builds should be self-contained and not the editor project files unless stated by the brief*
- *In some cases digital files will be required to assess technical skill.*
- *Students will be notified of their grades within 3 weeks of the hand in date and feedback is usually via an audio file in which at least two tutors contribute to feedback and feedforward.*

Assessment tasks	Weighting (%) (one grade or multi-grade unit)
Character Portfolio and Reflective Blog	100%

Indicative Assessment Criteria

- **The ability to demonstrate technical competence producing character assets. (LO1)**
- **The ability to research and create creative solutions to specific style requirements. (LO4, LO5)**
- **Evidence reflection of current understanding and work to improve ideation and executions. (LO4, LO5)**

Assessment criteria are the basis on which the judgment of the adequacy of the work is made. A more

detailed assessment criteria will be specified in the brief.

Essential Reading list

1. Crossley, K (2014). Character Design from the Ground Up. Ilex Press
2. Mattessi, M (2008). Force Character Design from Life Drawing. Focal Press.
3. Lewis, M(ed) (2017). Sketching from the Imagination: Characters. 3D Total Publishing
4. Holmes, M (2016). Designing Creatures and Characters, North Light Books.
5. Goldfinger, Elliot (1991). Human Anatomy for Artists. Oxford University Press.

Detailed further reading and online resources will be provided in the brief and through the unit via AULA.