



Programme Specification

Virtual and Extended Realities [Arnolfini]

Version: 2024-25, v1.0, 25 Sep 2023

Contents

Programme Specification.....	1
Section 1: Key Programme Details.....	2
Part A: Programme Information	2
Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes	2
Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes	2
Part B: Programme Structure.....	8
Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis	8
Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks	9
Part E: Regulations	9

Section 1: Key Programme Details

Part A: Programme Information

Programme title: Virtual and Extended Realities [Arnolfini]

Highest award: MA Virtual and Extended Realities

Interim award: PGCert Virtual and Extended Realities

Interim award: PGDip Virtual and Extended Realities

Awarding institution: UWE Bristol

Teaching institutions: UWE Bristol

Study abroad: No

Year abroad: No

Sandwich year: No

Credit recognition: No

School responsible for the programme: CATE School of Arts, College of Arts, Technology and Environment

Professional, statutory or regulatory bodies: Not applicable

Modes of delivery: Full-time

Entry requirements: For the current entry requirements see the UWE public website.

For implementation from: 01 January 2022

Programme code: I71A12

Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Overview: The programme fuses critical and professional approaches, enabling students to explore the dynamic creative and commercial forces shaping contemporary Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, and Mixed Reality and its accompanying culture.

Features of the programme: The MA course is practical and production-based: students will conceive of, research, plan, implement and deliver a series of projects, which will introduce and develop key understandings and frameworks, practices and skills. It combines research, practice and industrial relevance in a group and individual project orientated structure. Engagement with external communities of researchers and practitioners as well as a range of academic and student support makes this programme stand out as a vehicle for post graduate learners to engage and refine their skills and practice in a real world context.

Educational Aims: The intention of this course is to develop in students the following:

A broad understanding of storytelling and experience design across media formats, with a specific focus on learning through making to create new forms of immersive storytelling.

A platform for experimenting with new forms of immersive storytelling using emerging technologies like Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, and Mixed Reality [VR/AR/MR]

A technical competence in both hardware and software for VR/AR/MR

A professional and experimental groundwork to become creative leaders and thought leaders in these emerging media forms.

More specifically this programme will:

Shape the nascent field of immersive storytelling in virtual, augmented, and mixed reality by providing a content creation-driven curriculum supported by a broad

understanding of the technical skills required to be a VR/AR/MR creative leader rather than a technical-based programme.

Define new genres of immersive storytelling and experiences through research and experimentation at graduate level.

Educate a new generation of storytellers from interdisciplinary backgrounds who will become leaders in immersive storytelling and emerging media platforms.

Though Virtual Reality has been a field of research and development in laboratories for the past three decades, new technologies that are smaller, faster, and cheaper have made Virtual and Augmented Reality a practical and commercially viable technology.

To become leaders and content creators in this field, students will come away with the vocabulary and skills necessary to build project teams, direct, produce, and provide a strong creative vision for their project. Due to the evolving nature of this field of research and creative practice, the aim is to attract students from different disciplines and backgrounds, technical and creative, to participate in a curriculum focused on learning through making. This includes recruiting students with backgrounds in: filmmaking, theatre, sound design, game design, experience design, animation, software development, studio/media arts, writing, and journalism.

The course explores the complex forces shaping VR/AR/MR, immersive storytelling, combining professional, critical and cultural approaches. Students gain in-depth understanding of the industry's organisation of distribution, exhibition and production, from regional, national and international perspectives. Successful completion depends upon self-directed learning, creative problem-solving, and the ability to develop innovative projects in specialist areas. Graduates have advanced professional and academic research skills and the ability to communicate complex ideas effectively to diverse audiences, through diverse media.

Programme Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this programme graduates will achieve the following learning outcomes.

Knowledge and Understanding

- A1. Theoretical frameworks and historical and contemporary context relevant for their VR/AR/MR practice.
- A2. A range of research, information literacy and interpretative and analytical sources and methods appropriate to the study and practice of VR/AR/MR.
- A3. Historical and contemporary practices in VR/AR/MR and wider media production.
- A4. Key creative processes and practices employed in the development and production of VR/AR/MR.
- A5. Key methodologies for disseminating VR/AR/MR work, including the devising, execution and evaluation of commissions, exhibitions and other means of distribution including online platforms.
- A6. Contemporary VR/AR/MR business, roles and requirements in professional practice, including editorial, production and technical skills relevant to the medium.
- A7. The role and potential of new technological, social and cultural developments in disseminating media practices.
- A8. Fields of interdisciplinary practice related to subject specific knowledge and understanding.

Intellectual Skills

- B1. Critically assess, evaluate and contextualize their own and others' practice, demonstrating awareness of appropriate specialist and advanced technical, professional and/or research skills.
- B2. Demonstrate through clear, fluent writing and verbal presentation, how subject knowledge and understanding has informed the approach, development and formulation of projects.
- B3. Identify and contextualize key questions, issues and theoretical debates in relation to practice.

- B4. Critically analyse and develop frameworks for understanding and responding to ever changing situations and contexts in practice of VR/AR/MR media.
- B5. Demonstrate innovative skills that enable enhancement of a practice-led VR/AR/MR project, including the ability to identify and review relevant texts and resources and to organize, consolidate, critically evaluate and synthesis a range of information, knowledge and evidence.
- B6. (ESD) Evaluate the cultural value of media production in promoting change for good and social justice.

Subject/Professional Practice Skills

- C1. Research and develop innovative VR/AR/MR projects that demonstrate clarity of intention, rigor and inventiveness.
- C2. Design and create VR/AR/MR projects demonstrating acquisition of appropriate technical skills, skillful execution and visual impact.
- C3. Present VR/AR/MR projects through appropriate modes of dissemination, demonstrating a critically informed understanding of audience and context.
- C4. Work both autonomously and as part of a team in the production and dissemination of VR/AR/MR projects.
- C5. Production skills, methods and processes that relate to industry production practice.
- C6. Access and utilize a wide range of resources and facilities necessary for the successful completion of project work.

Transferable Skills and other attributes

- D1. Ability to research topics of interest, making use of a wide range of academic and non-academic resources across a range of disciplines.
- D2. Engage confidently in debate and discussion with peers, stakeholders, clients and potential employers, and negotiate and network effectively.
- D3. Work effectively and collaboratively with peers on student-initiated tasks and demonstrate innovative approaches to production and problem-solving within a team.
- D4. Manage time and work effectively within given, agreed and self-developed limits.

- D5. Flexible and adaptable skills to deal with challenging and unpredictable situations, demonstrating problem solving, ingenuity and resourcefulness.
- D6. The ability to reflect upon and offer criticism in a professional context.
- D7. The ability to develop and implement strategies for personal and professional progression.
- D8. The use and development of appropriate hardware, software, IT skills and new technologies.
- D9. Increased autonomy and self-motivation with regard to academic study and professional practice, and improved ability to organize, self-direct and sustain the management of projects.
- D10. (ESD) Awareness of concepts and over-arching concerns of sustainable development, including global citizenship, environmental stewardship, social justice and equality, ecological and economic factors, a future facing outlook on consequences of actions and ensuring sustainable futures in systems and societies.

Assessment strategy: Teaching includes lectures, seminars and practical workshops. In addition, students engage in a range of activities, such as local and regional network events, festivals, research activities, live briefs, presentations to industry partners, the creation of a range appropriate self-promotion material including either a portfolio or and website. This enables students to be more globally aware and be able to access and engage in the international community networks. The course is assessed via portfolios, verbal presentations, writing for different audiences and group projects.

Students are prepared for professional careers through a syllabus that offers a unique mixture of editorial, creative, technical and transferable skills that can be immediately applied in this rapidly expanding, cutting-edge industry. On graduation, students will be prepared to enter into professional Virtual Reality development for media companies or evolving media platforms; develop an art practice that explores Virtual Reality within the context of installation art, immersive or emerging forms of theatre; or to continue cutting edge research at the PhD level.

Student support: Students have full access to comprehensive computer labs, open workshops, specialist audio and video facilities. In addition there will be a range of additional technologies and equipment available ranging from audio and video equipment to experimental digital hardware. Students also have access to the full learning resources from the Library. Individual modules provide teaching materials as appropriate including online and printed texts, reading lists, example code and design materials, video recordings and presentations in addition to online resources.

Part B: Programme Structure

Year 1

The student must take 180 credits from the modules in Year 1.

Year 1 Compulsory Modules

The student must take 180 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UALAWH-30-M	Historical and Emerging Concepts in Storytelling 2024-25	30
UALAWG-30-M	Practical Experiments in Interactivity and Immersion 2024-25	30
UALAWK-60-M	Virtual Reality Collaborative Project 2024-25	60
UALAWJ-60-M	Virtual Reality Story Lab 2024-25	60

Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis

This innovative Masters programme enables postgraduate students to apply intellectual, critical, editorial, technical and key transferable skills necessary to work in interactive and immersive content creation and design. Students will develop particular expertise across Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, and Mixed Reality through practice-based project work developed in a research and industry context. A successful graduate will be highly analytical and strategic with advanced

communications skills enabling them to articulate their knowledge in the context of new media technology and storytelling. On completion, graduates will be effective, independent life-long learners with a collaborative approach that makes them an active and productive creative team member.

Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks

Set out which reference points and benchmarks have been used in the design of the programme:

QAA UK Quality Code for HE

Framework for higher education qualifications (FHEQ)

Subject benchmark statements: QAA Art and Design and Communication 2008,
QAA Media, Film and Cultural Studies 2016

Qualification characteristics for Foundation degrees and Master's degrees

SEEC Southern England Consortium for Credit Accumulation and Transfer Credit -
Level

Descriptors www.seec.org.uk/.../seec-credit-level-descriptors-2010-revised-2004

Strategy 2020

University policies

Staff industry practice and research projects, such as those generated through the Faculty's Research Centres and Groups

Creative Skillset National Occupational Standards.

Part E: Regulations

Approved to University Regulations and Procedures.

