Programme Specification

Illustration [Bower]

Version: 2025-26, v3.0, Validated

Contents

Section 1: Key Programme Details

Part A: Programme Information

Programme title: Illustration [Bower]

Highest award: BA (Hons) Illustration

Interim award: BA Illustration

Interim award: DipHE Illustration

Interim award: CertHE Illustration

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, Part-time

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

For implementation from: 01 September 2025

Programme code: W21400

Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Overview: The broad aims of the BA (Hons) Illustration programme are:

To prepare students for professional creative practice within a chosen field of study;

To provide an experience of higher education in art, media and design that offers students choice and independence in determining their own abilities and ambitions within a subject discipline.

Features of the programme:

Educational Aims: To develop confident, independent and critically-informed illustrators with an understanding of the role and function of illustration, capable of articulating, evaluating and refining their creative intentions with intellectual independence and reflective judgment.

To foster personal creativity, innovation and imagination across traditional and digital media, by cultivating imaginative, experimental and exploratory approaches to illustration, and encouraging risk-taking and iterative creative processes across relevant media.

To equip students with professional, transferable and research skills for industry or further study by developing their capacity to apply appropriate research methods and critical thinking, project management strategies, communication skills and technical competencies.

To support students in locating their practice within social, cultural, historical and a range of professional contexts relevant to illustration, demonstrating cultural, ethical and historical awareness.

To encourage the development of sustainable, research-informed personal practice through the development of structured, research-led methodologies, including

investigation, problematisation, experimentation, development, resolution and dissemination.

To provide opportunities for students to define and pursue their own creative ambitions by supporting self-direction, exploration and the realisation of individual potential.

Programme Learning Outcomes:

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

Programme Learning Outcomes

PO1.   Visual Communication and Expression: Effectively utilise visual languages to investigate, analyse, interpret, articulate, and develop ideas and information.

PO2.   Idea Generation and Development: Independently generate ideas in response to set briefs, workshop or studio challenges and through self-initiated activity. Develop those ideas into tangible outcomes, demonstrating the ability to select, problem solve, and utilise appropriate materials, processes, and environments.

PO3.   Critical and Contextual Understanding: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the critical and contextual dimensions of illustration, including relevant theories, historical and contemporary practices, and ongoing debates.

PO4.   Research and Inquiry: Apply research methods and investigative skills to explore and record source material, effectively using a range of learning resources.

PO5.   Technical Proficiency: Demonstrate mastery of materials, media, techniques, methods, technologies, and tools relevant to illustration while adhering to safe and ethical working practices.

PO6.   Professional Awareness: Understand the role and responsibilities of the illustrator within professional and social contexts, including relationships with audiences, clients, markets, communities and the impact of intellectual property.

PO7.   Presentation and Dissemination: Develop and refine presentation skills, effectively communicating and documenting ideas visually, verbally, and in written formats, considering appropriate methods for dissemination.

PO8.   Technological Integration: Critically engage with and adapt to key subject specific developments and emerging trends in media and technologies related to illustration – through traditional, hybrid, and digital processes.

Assessment strategy: Level 4 summative assessments: students receive a Pass/Fail – with written and/or verbal feedback clearly indicating their levels of achievement and areas for further development.

The Pass/Fail Assessment Strategy for Level 4 has been designed to:

- Establish a more authentic and subject-appropriate approach to the assessment process, placing greater emphasis on assessment as learning, rather than an assessment of learning – which is more aligned to the iterative nature of creative practice.

- Establish a less marks-driven approach to assessment, particularly during the early stages of a student's journey, to provide students with an opportunity to build confidence and develop individual approaches to iterative practice and creative risk-taking without the perceived pressure/punitive nature of a marks-driven culture.

- Remove the emphasis from final marks, making explicit the role of feedback in students' future learning and progression. Greater emphasis on assessment feedback will enable staff and students to establish a broader shared language and understanding of assessment away from the granular detail of marks.

- Signal a more holistic, inclusive approach to assessment that would align with the University's wider priorities of inclusivity and accessibility.

Levels 5 and 6 summative assessments: students receive a numerical grading mark for each module – with written and/or verbal feedback clearly indicating their levels of achievement and areas for further development.

Feedback at formative and summative assessment points (verbal and/or in writing) is regarded as a positive learning tool that provides students with a clear understanding

of the level of their achievement, their progress and advice about how this can be improved.

Formative and summative assessments are designed to provide the opportunity for students to understand and reflect upon their achievements, and to support the monitoring of progress by tutors and students. Assessment methods used are varied, are relevant in demonstrating achievement to both academic and industry stakeholders, and form a coherent programme of assessment which is designed to offer students the maximum opportunity to demonstrate the skills, knowledge and experience that they have gained through the course of study, as well as to support ongoing and continuous improvement in their individual creative practice and development as practitioner-researchers.

At assessment, therefore, students are expected to present evidence of work which demonstrates engagement with the minimum number of learning hours for the module (contact and independent study hours).

Forms of assessment used as part of the overall programme include:

Portfolio of work including:
Designed outcomes and supporting work
Designed evaluative Process Document
For assessment, students are required to present their outcomes for the briefs, a body of developmental work and an evaluative Process Document/s (Module File), which will include reflective evaluation of the work, detailing their process and decision-making, in relation to the outcomes produced and related contemporary design practice/practitioner research.

Resit assessments will match the first-sit.

Formative feedback and summative assessments are designed to provide the opportunity for students to understand and reflect upon their achievements, and to support the monitoring of progress by tutors and students.

Forms of assessment used as part of the overall programme include:

Weekly ongoing tutorials

Presentation and participation in studio-critique

Group and individual visual presentations

Group and individual verbal presentations

Group critiques

Peer and self-assessment

Evaluative and reflective outcomes, including visual, verbal and written.

Assessment methods used are varied and focused on feeding forwards.

Formative feedback and summative assessment activities that involve students participating in the evaluation of presented work (their own and others') take place throughout the programme. Participation in and attendance at these sessions therefore forms part of the assessed content of the module.

Feedback (verbal and/or in writing) at regular points throughout the module provides students with a clear understanding of their progress and advice about how this can be improved.

Student support: Programme and Module leaders

Student support for overarching academic and professional concerns is provided by Programme Leaders; all issues relating to the content, delivery and assessment of modules is provided by Module Leaders.

Academic Personal Tutors

The Academic Personal Tutor is an academic member of staff who will have access to information on the performance and profile of the student, allowing them to effectively support students' personal and academic development. This embedded relational approach to student support enables wellbeing to be addressed through the curriculum, and students' direct academic personal support at the individual and group level.

Careers support

Careers support is integrated throughout the programme and works to the UWE career framework with direct input from the UWE Careers team. The UWE Careers team work with programme teams to develop bespoke professional practice activities (Professional Practice Week) alongside offering support on developing the skills, experience and knowledge necessary for improving our students' employability prospects. The service provides high-quality professional advice and guidance focusing on enabling students to take control of and responsibility for their own career planning and progression/development. Students can access support around finding vacancies for work experience, volunteering, part-time work and internships, as well as events and workshops. UWE Careers provides recruiter-facing services including advertising graduate job vacancies, work experience and volunteering opportunities, and running both undergraduate and graduate internship schemes. There are also part-time jobs advertised by the Student Union JobShop. There is specialist support for international students, including specific resources developed for a range of countries. Students are introduced to the service during the induction to the course and are encouraged to use the service all through their undergraduate programme and for three years after graduation.

Study Facilities

In our specialist library and learning hub our librarians manage specialist collections to support students' research. Students can attend workshops and engage with online workshops to develop their academic skills. Students also have access to bespoke study skills sessions and Bower Ashton Campus offers spaces for silent and group study and bookable rooms. Students have access to recommended books, periodicals, academic journals, special collections and industry databases.

Student Advisors

For concerns of a personal nature, students can access help from Student Advisors. Student Advisors provide timely, accurate and confidential advice where necessary on all aspects of the provision, for example coursework and examination arrangements, personal circumstance procedures, progression counselling, as well as personal issues such as problems with studying or meeting deadlines, financial matters, ill health, and so on, including, when relevant, how to access the wider

support provided by the University. This service is supplemented by extensive online resources.

School Student Experience Coach

The School Student Experience Coach provides friendly, non-judgemental support to students as they progress through the course and act as a connect point to inform students about the ecosystem of support available at UWE. Staff can coach you on many areas of your life and studies:

Academic

Engage further with your course

Manage deadlines and grow your confidence

Develop goals to ensure progression on your course

Self-development

Grow your confidence and self-esteem

Increase your motivation

Shape your skills in working with others in groups or team

Wellbeing and self-care

Develop strategies to manage your feelings and thoughts whilst at university

Feel supported in understanding your gender identity

Develop a set of skills to succeed in your life as a student

Student Union and Course Representatives

An important part of the programme is the involvement of students. Student representatives are elected to serve on the Student Representatives and Staff Forum and the Programme Management Committee meetings that are held each term to discuss issues raised by students in relation to their experience of studying at UWE and on the programme. These meetings feed directly into the governance structures at the university. The School also has a number of Lead Student Representatives who represent the student voice in the School Board of Studies.

Disability Services

Support for students with learning adjustments is coordinated centrally through Disability Services. This acts as a holistic service for students and applicants to the University and also supports the academic and administrative staff.

In addition to the above, the University's Student Services offer a range of services to support students during their time at university and beyond:

University Health Centre and general advice on Staying Healthy;

Careers and employability, advice on choosing a career, and finding student and graduate vacancies;

UWE volunteering, opportunities for students to get involved in the local community through the Community Volunteer Programme;

Student Advisors and Counselling for anything from exam stress to homesickness and depression;

The Living Centre, for support with faith and spiritual matters;

Global student support, to help international students to make the most of living and studying in the UK;

Managing disability and dyslexia, to get help with all disability-related support needs;

Money and Visas, for financial check-ups, or help with UK visas.

Part B: Programme Structure

Year 1
Part Time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Year 1.
Full Time students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 1.

Year 1 Compulsory Modules (Full-time)
Full-time students must take 120 credits from the modules in the group Compulsory Modules (Full-time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UA1B9S-30-1	Design Contexts 2025-26	30
UADAWA-30-1	Introduction to Illustration 2025-26	30

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UADAWE-30-1	Narrative and Sequence for Illustration 2025-26	30
UADAWF-30-1	Visual Essay in Illustration 2025-26	30

Year 1 Compulsory Modules (Part-time)

Part-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in group Compulsory Modules (Part-time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UADAWE-30-1	Narrative and Sequence for Illustration 2025-26	30
UADAWA-30-1	Introduction to Illustration 2025-26	30

Year 2

Part Time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Year 2.
Full Time students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 2.

Year 2 Compulsory Modules (Full-time)

Full-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in the group Compulsory Modules (Full-time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UADAWB-30-2	Process and Practice in Illustration 2026-27	30
UADAWC-30-2	Word and Image in Illustration 2026-27	30

Year 2 Compulsory Modules (Part-time)

Part-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in group Compulsory Modules (Part-time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UA1B9S-30-1	Design Contexts 2026-27	30
UADAWF-30-1	Visual Essay in Illustration 2026-27	30

Year 2 Optional Modules (Full-time)

Students must take 60 credits from the modules in Optional Modules (Full-time).

Students studying abroad must take the 60-credit exchange module. All other students must take the two 30-credit modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UA1B9T-30-2	Design Futures 2026-27	30
UA1B9N-60-2	International Exchange 2026-27	60
UADAWD-30-2	Developing Visual Narratives in Illustration 2026-27	30

Year 3

Part Time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Year 3.
Full Time students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 3.

Year 3 Compulsory Modules (Part-time)

Part-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in group Compulsory Modules (Part-time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UADAWB-30-2	Process and Practice in Illustration 2027-28	30
UA1B9T-30-2	Design Futures 2027-28	30

Year 3 Compulsory Modules (Full-time)

Full-time students must take 120 credits from the modules in the group Compulsory Modules (Full-time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UA1B9U-30-3	Design Research Project 2027-28	30
UADAQ4-60-3	Independent Study in Illustration 2027-28	60
UADBCA-30-3	Professional Practice in Illustration 2027-28	30

Year 4

Part time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Year 4.

Year 4 Compulsory Modules (Part-time)

Part-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in group Compulsory Modules (Part-time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UADAWD-30-2	Developing Visual Narratives in Illustration 2028-29	30
UADAWC-30-2	Word and Image in Illustration 2028-29	30

Year 5

Part time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Year 5.

Year 5 Compulsory Modules (Part-time)

Part-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in group Compulsory Modules (Part-time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UADBCA-30-3	Professional Practice in Illustration 2029-30	30
UA1B9U-30-3	Design Research Project 2029-30	30

Year 6

Part time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Year 6.

Year 6 Compulsory Modules (Part-time)

Part-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in group Compulsory Modules (Part-time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UADAQ4-60-3	Independent Study in Illustration 2030-31	60

Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis

The course will enable students to explore the changing nature of illustration within the creative industries. Aimed at students with high levels of drawing ability and an interest in narrative, editorial and screen-based work, this course focuses on students understanding and developing a personal visual language. Through experimentation, exploration and continual practice students are encouraged to develop their individual voice, methods and language in preparation for the professional arena.

Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks

QAA UK Quality Code for HE:

Framework for higher education qualifications (FHEQ)

Subject benchmark statements

Qualification characteristics for Foundation degrees

Strategy 2020

University policies

The programme structure, curriculum content, professional skills and industry engagements have been successfully scrutinised by professionally engaged external examiners and HE Teaching, Learning and Assessment in Creative Practices specialists.

This scrutiny has been further enhanced by the regular professional engagement of industry practitioners, the success of the course in national and international open professional awards including the V and A, Folio Society, Ligatura, Macmillan, D and AD, Lloyds Bank, The National Student Illustration Awards and Penguin publishers. The course continually reassesses its professional currency via outward engagement, live commissions and industry events.

Part E: Regulations

Approved to University Regulations and Procedures.