

MA Character and Creature Animation

100% Online | Part-Time

Shape the Future
of Animation



Part-Time & 100% Online

For more information on the online **MA Character and Creature Animation** programme contact an Enrolment Consultant by email at online@herts.ac.uk



MA Character and Creature Animation Programme Introduction

The University of Hertfordshire's MA Character and Creature Animation is a flexible online programme designed to equip you with advanced skills for a successful career in 3D animation. This course offers a comprehensive understanding of the critical, reflective, and conceptual foundations of animation studies at master's level. You'll develop the technical expertise and creative vision required for roles in visual effects, games, and film and television. The programme gives you the freedom to balance your study with personal commitments, with multiple entry points throughout the year.



Global Leader
in Digital
Creative
Education

1st
in the UK

Our School of Creative Arts is ranked best UK creative school in the Rookies Global School Rankings (2024)

Study with a Modern UK University Rooted in Industry

At the University of Hertfordshire, we champion a practical and forward-thinking approach to higher education. Home to a dynamic community of 32,000 students from over 140 countries, the University excels in bridging academic study with real-world application. You'll benefit from high-calibre instruction delivered by experts actively engaged in research that resonates beyond academia. With an impressive history of over 70 years, we've established robust industry connections that facilitate a wealth of professional networking opportunities.



Herts Beats Faster

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Develop Your **Character and Creature Animation Expertise**

The MA Character and Creature Animation is designed to equip anyone with a passion for art and design with the advanced skills necessary to excel in 3D animation. By joining this course, you will:

- Master the art of bringing characters and creatures to life through industry-standard software.
- Develop a deep understanding of character performance, animation principles, and storytelling.
- Explore the creative and technical aspects of character and creature animation for film, television, and games.
- Build a strong portfolio to showcase your skills and enhance your career prospects.

Who is the **MA Character and Creature Animation Programme** for?

This programme is designed for a diverse range of students with an interest in animation. It is ideal for you if you are:

- ✓ A graduate seeking to specialise in character and creature animation.
- ✓ A professional looking to upskill and advance your career in the animation industry.
- ✓ Somebody with a strong interest in animation and a desire to develop a professional skillset.

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Skills
Development

2nd in the UK

Herts is ranked 2nd
for skills development
in the Postgraduate
Taught Experience
Survey (PTES) 2024

Your Career Path

After completing the MA Character and Creature Animation programme, you will be equipped with a comprehensive skill set, including advanced animation techniques, storytelling abilities, and a comprehensive understanding of character development. You'll be all set to pursue a wide range of exciting career paths within the creative industries:

Character Animator

Bring characters to life through realistic and engaging movement.

Creature Animator

Create believable and captivating creatures for film, television, and games.

3D Modeler

Design and construct detailed 3D models for animation, visual effects, and games.

Rigger

Develop the skeletal structure and controls for animated characters and creatures.

Animator for Film and Television

Work on animated feature films, television series, and commercials.

Game Animator

Create animations for video games, including character movements, cutscenes, and user interfaces.

Visual Effects Animator

Contribute to the creation of stunning visual effects for film and television.

Motion Graphics Designer

Design animated graphics for television, advertising, and digital media.

Freelance Animator

Work independently on various animation projects.

Animator Educator

Share your knowledge and passion for animation by teaching at educational institutions.

Animation Pipeline Developer

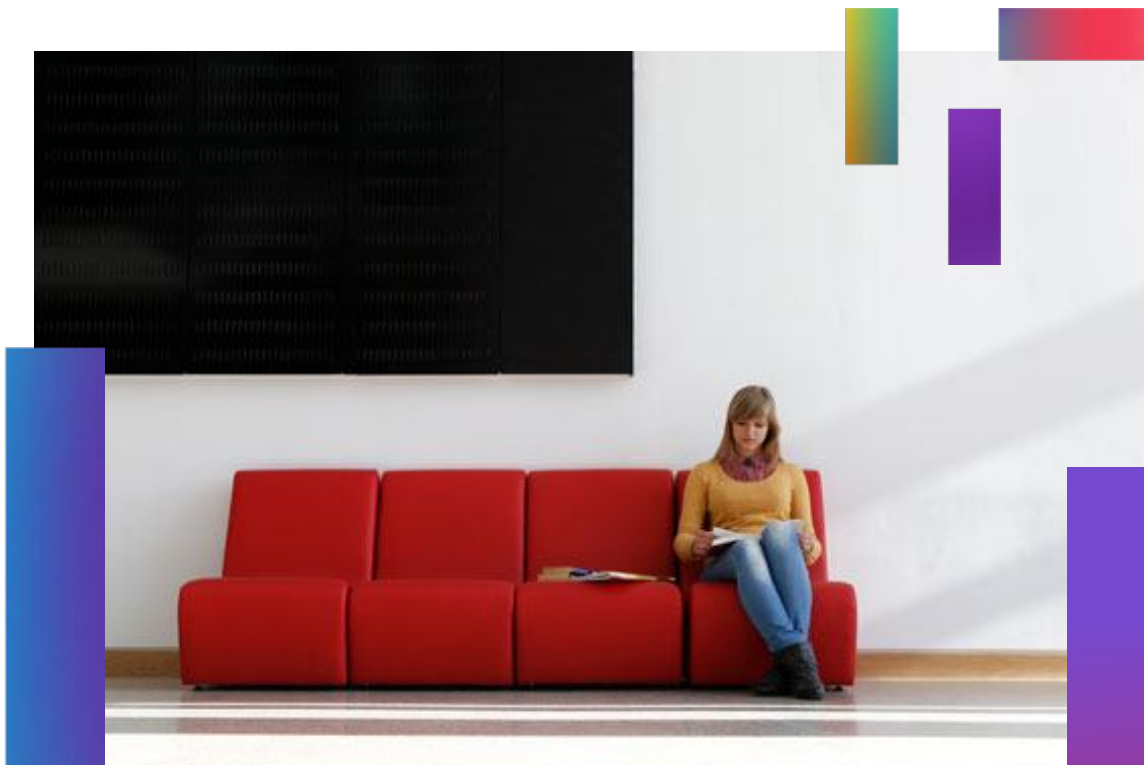
Optimise animation workflows and create tools to enhance the animation process.

Animation Researcher

Explore new animation techniques and technologies through research and development.

Study with a **World-Leading** Creative Arts Department

This programme is designed with your career in mind. Herts is ranked 2nd in the UK for postgraduate employability (PTES 2024), and our graduates enjoy strong career outcomes. Instead of a traditional dissertation, your final module culminates in a professional portfolio to showcase your skills. Our global recognition, including a top ranking from The Rookies, highlights our commitment to producing employable graduates through industry-focused training assessed by professionals.



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Core Modules

To achieve the MA in Character and Creature Animation, you will complete a comprehensive 180-credit curriculum designed to provide you with the advanced skills and knowledge required for a successful career in the animation industry. The core modules are as follows:



1. Introduction to Animation Skills

This foundational module serves as an introduction to the world of animation. It provides baseline training that includes software, animation basics, modelling, lighting, rendering and an introduction to sound and compression issues.



2. Animal & Creature Animation (30 credits)

This module explores the intricacies of animating animals and creatures. You will learn about animal anatomy, physiology, and movement patterns, and explore the creation of fantasy creatures, combining scientific accuracy with creative expression. You'll study a range of animation genres, aesthetics and techniques and consider live action reference for analysis in animal and creature work.



3. Character Performance (30 credits)

This module focuses on bringing characters to life through animation. You'll explore principles of acting such as voice, emotional expression, lip synch and body posing as informed by theatre, live action, mime and dance traditions. The module will teach you how to create believable and engaging performances, considering factors such as character motivation, emotion, and personality. You'll gain an understanding of the importance of storytelling and character development in animation.



4. Locomotion and Mechanics in Animation (30 credits)

This module examines the physics of animation, focusing on how weight, balance, and gravity impact character movement. You will learn about the mechanics of locomotion, including walking, running, jumping, and falling, and explore the use of skeletal systems and muscle structures to create realistic and dynamic character animations. This module provides a strong foundation for creating physically accurate and visually compelling animated characters.



5. The Animation Industry: Preparing For a Career (30 credits)

The focus of this module is on preparing a personal career plan for employability within the animation industry. It offers insights into the various career paths available in the animation industry, including film, television, gaming, and visual effects. You will learn about portfolio development, networking strategies, and industry trends. The module also covers business and legal aspects of the animation industry, preparing you for the challenges and opportunities of professional life.



6. Graduation Portfolio (60 credits)

Culminating what you have learned throughout the course, this module requires you to create a series of longer, in-depth animation sequences presenting simple narratives with a level of finish and polish at a professional level. You'll undertake a major animation project, producing a portfolio that will be assessed based on its technical proficiency, creativity, storytelling, and overall industry standard. The portfolio production process also prompts you to develop key industry skills for employability in terms of project planning, management and collaborator negotiation.

Assessments

Each module on the course consists of 12 weeks of teaching and formative (non-graded or low stakes) assessments followed by 4 weeks of graded assessments that must be completed within set deadlines. You will be assessed using a diverse range of assessment methods to evaluate your understanding and skills. These may include:

- ✓ Coursework combining practical application with a sound theoretical foundation
- ✓ Production of tangible, animated artefacts that demonstrate technical skills and stylistic adaptability
- ✓ Critical analyses and written assignments, such as blog posts or discussion forum contributions, showcasing theoretical understanding
- ✓ Presentations and class debates to engage with differing narrative and stylistic aims
- ✓ Exercises in critical self-reflection, career planning, and professional portfolio development

Duration

The programme is delivered in a part-time mode allowing you to combine your studies with other work and life commitments. The total duration of the course is a minimum of 24 months or 2 years for the 180-credit full MA programme.

Exit Options

While the full MA requires 2 years to complete, you have the option to exit the programme early with a:

1. Postgraduate Certificate after achieving 60 credits within 8 months.
2. Postgraduate Diploma after completing 120 credits over 16 months.

The programme's structure is flexible. Please refer to the Programme Specification Document for your intended intake for the order of modules.

Entry Dates

You can commence your studies when it is convenient to you with multiple entry dates throughout the year.

For the 2025/2026 academic year:

2025 — 15th September

2026 — 19th January, 25th May



Your Online Learning Experience

The University of Hertfordshire's MA Character and Creature Animation (Online) course delivers a fully online and asynchronous learning experience through Canvas, the University's virtual learning environment. Canvas is your personalised portal, providing you with access to study materials, enabling interactions with tutors and peers, facilitating online discussions, and hosting assessments. It also offers you a wealth of online resources including eBooks and eJournals.

While the course offers a great deal of flexibility, it is not self-paced. Each module has set start and end dates and includes fixed deadlines for assignment submissions. This permits for a collaborative learning environment where everyone progresses along the course at the same pace. Modules follow directly one after the other with no scheduled breaks in between. This structure balances the flexibility of online learning with the structure needed to successfully navigate your course and complete it in just 2 years.

Technical Requirements

Students will require a good internet connection (suitable for video conferencing) and a computer powerful enough to run the standard software used in professional animation (Maya, Blender). We recommend that students have dual monitors.

Recommended Study Time Per Week

While we don't expect you to be online all the time, we recommend dedicating approximately 15-20 hours per week to your studies and managing that time flexibly according to your own schedule.

Dedicated Student Support Online

As an online student at the University of Hertfordshire, you will receive multi-tier support tailored to the unique requirements of distance learning and postgraduate study. You will have access to:

- **A programme leader** for overarching course guidance and assistance.
- **Module leaders** who provide guidance on assessment queries and clarifying learning points.
- **A student support team** who will assist you with managing your schedule and pastoral support.
- **Online events**, meet and greets, Q&A sessions, study skills orientation, and continuous Canvas platform support.
- **Student Wellbeing** units, University Disability Advisors & Hertfordshire Student's Union.



Student
Experience

**5th
in the UK**

Herts is ranked 5th
of all UK
universities in the
Postgraduate
Taught Experience
Survey (PTES 2024)

Career Service

As an online student at the University of Hertfordshire, you will have access to the dedicated Careers and Employment and Enterprise service online, supported by their outstanding jobs portal, HandShake.

They are here to help you to develop your skills and make the best decisions for your future, offering assistance in:

- Searching for work experience opportunities
- Advice and tips on how to create the perfect CV
- Applying for jobs
- Undertaking further study
- Starting your own business

Entry Requirements

Standard Application Requirements:

- **Academic Qualification:** A bachelor's degree, equivalent to a UK second-class Honours degree in any field.
- **English Language Proficiency:** For international applicants whose first language is not English, an IELTS score of 6.0 (no less than 5.5 in any band), or equivalent is required.
- **A portfolio** showcasing an appropriate animation skill set. Applicants should show experience with both animation and 3D modelling and ideally include some short 2D or stop motion animations. The portfolio should evidence a familiarity with basic animation concepts such as walk cycles, key framing and time-line management.

We offer multiple exemptions from the Proof of English Language Proficiency requirement for those who have worked or studied in an English-speaking country or who have passed an English language test other than IELTS. Please speak to an Enrolment Consultant or complete the [online application form](#) to find out if you qualify for an exemption.

Fees

For the 2025/2026 academic year, the total fee for the MA Character and Creature Animation programme at the University of Hertfordshire is £10,980. To accommodate different financial situations, the University offers several flexible payment plans:

- **Full Payment:** Pay the entire fee.
- **Per Module Payment:** Pay £1,830 per 30 credit module and £3,660 for the 60 credit Graduation Portfolio.
- **Instalment Options** to break down the module fee further:
 - Two monthly instalments (75% and 25% of the module's fee)
 - Three monthly instalments (50%, 25% and 25% of the module's fee)
 - Four equal monthly instalments (25% of the module's fee each)

There are no upfront costs related to applying and starting your course. We don't charge an application fee or a deposit. You will get your first notification of fees a few weeks into your first module. You will receive free university access to any required software and learning materials (if applicable). A student license for Autodesk Maya software is provided free of charge.

Other Funding Options

All our master's programmes are eligible for government funding in the following countries and territories:

England

You might qualify for a Postgraduate Master's Loan of up to £12,858 provided by the UK Government. For further information, kindly visit [Student Finance England](#).

United States of America

If you are located in the USA, you might be eligible to apply online for a private [Sallie Mae student loan](#).

Wales

For residents of Wales pursuing a part-time, online master's degree, you might be eligible for Postgraduate Master's Finance, which offers up to £19,255 as a combination of grant and loan. For additional information, please visit [Student Finance Wales](#).

Northern Ireland

Should you be pursuing a part-time, online postgraduate master's degree from Northern Ireland, you might qualify for a Tuition Fee Loan of up to £6,500 to assist with tuition fee expenses. For more information, please visit [Student Finance Northern Ireland](#).

Application Process

Applications for all University of Hertfordshire online degrees are completed online through the dedicated portal <https://applyonline.herts.ac.uk>. The application form is simple and intuitive, and it typically takes an hour or so to complete the basic Profile, Education, Employment, English and Essay sections.

The supporting documents required are:

- Your final degree certificate (or highest academic qualification)
- The official transcripts or full statement of results
- A copy of your passport or ID
- For non-standard applicants applying without a UK-equivalent Honours degree 2:2 or above: a letter of recommendation (professional or academic)
- A portfolio of animation work

International education documents will need to be translated into English by an official translator before submission. You can also attach a copy of your CV or a link to your LinkedIn profile.

Personal Statement

As part of your application, you will be requested to submit a 300-500-word essay detailing:

- why you want to study this course
- how it fits with your goals and aspirations
- what your strengths are as a candidate
- how you plan to cope with the demands of the programme

Once submitted, your application will be assessed by our admissions team and a decision will usually be made within five working days.

Please speak to an Enrolment Consultant for additional assistance. They will be able to offer personalised support tailored to your unique background and circumstances.

[Book a meeting](#)



[Apply now!](#)

Regulating Body

University of Hertfordshire programmes are regulated by the Office for Students (OfS) established as the regulator of the English higher education under the provisions of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA).

It's Time to Master Animation

Your future in the world of character and creature animation starts here. The MA Character and Creature Animation (Online) programme at the University of Hertfordshire offers you the opportunity to develop the creative vision, technical skills, and expertise needed to make a lasting impact in the animation industry. Whether you aim to work in film, television, games, or visual effects, this programme is designed to help you achieve your ambitions.

Don't wait to unlock your potential. Apply today and join a global community of passionate learners and professionals who are shaping the future of animation. Your journey towards intellectual growth and career success begins with a single step – **take it now**.

Bet on yourself >>>>

Apply now!

This brochure was reviewed in July 2025. It contains information on the MA Character and Creature Animation programme online that the University of Hertfordshire ("Herts") intends to run for students who are planning to start their course in 2025-2026. Herts has made every effort to ensure that this information is both helpful and accurate but some changes, for example to courses, facilities or fees, may become necessary due to legitimate staffing, financial, regulatory or academic reasons.

Herts will endeavour to keep changes to a minimum, and to keep applicants informed appropriately. For this reason, it is important that you regularly check the website (<https://online.herts.ac.uk>) for updates or contact Herts using the contact details contained within this document.



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