BA (Hons) Comic & Concept Art Course Specification

1. General information

Title	BA (Hons) Comic & Concept Art
UCAS code	W223
Awarding Institution	Leeds Arts University
Institution at which course is delivered	Leeds Arts University
Professional Accreditation (if applicable)	N/A
Relevant QAA Benchmark(s)	Art & Design (2017)
Date of most recent review/approval (for new courses)	2017-18
Date of next review	2021-22

Awards	Credits	Duration	Mode of study
BA (Hons) Comic & Concept Art	360 (180 ECTS)	3 years	FT
BA Comic & Concept Art*	300 (150 ECTS)	3 years	FT
DipHE in Comic & Concept Art*	240 (120 ECTS)	2 years	FT
CertHE in Comic & Concept Art*	120 (60 ECTS)	1 year	FT
*Exit award only			

2. Course Aims

This course aims to provide you with:

- A specialised course of study in comic and concept art.
- The opportunity to develop creatively and professionally relevant practical and conceptual skills in the application of comic and concept art.
- An honours level experience of the practical, conceptual and theoretical aspects of studio-based practice.
- A high quality and challenging creative education in a stimulating and appropriately resourced creative environment.
- An academically rigorous course of study that encourages critical and reflective approaches to comic and concept art as an applied design practice.
- The opportunity to develop a professional understanding of the role of a comic artist and concept artist in relation to the broader creative industries through professional research, live projects and industrial links.
- The ability to use intellectual and practical skills for independent, professional creative practice in comic and concept art and higher study at postgraduate level in a related discipline.
- The ability to develop a focused, specialist and professionally relevant practice of comic and concept art through individual and collaborative engagement.
- The skills and knowledge to apply, consolidate and extend their learning in different professional frameworks, situations and communities of creative practice in comic art, concept art and beyond.

On successful completion of the course, you will be able to:

- Employ appropriate materials, media, techniques, methods, tools, technologies and strategies associated with contemporary comic and concept art, with skill and imagination whilst establishing effective, professionally relevant working practices.
- Generate concepts, ideas, proposals and solutions to problems of communication through the application of visual languages, materials and processes which are common to contemporary creative practices in the fields of comic art and concept art.
- Demonstrate an understanding of contemporary comic and concept art, technical innovation and research methodologies through individual practice, contextual references and academic research.
- Appreciate, question and respond positively, creatively, individually and/or collaboratively to the inherent limitations, conventions and established professional practices of the creative industries.
- Employ a range of appropriate practical and conceptual research methods to investigate aspects of the creative, critical, aesthetic, historical, technological, cultural, social and ethical contexts of contemporary comic and concept art.
- Apply knowledge, skills and understanding in order to initiate, plan and develop creative visual solutions in response to a range of brief led and self-initiated projects.
- Develop a body of work and studio practice that demonstrates an individually appropriate understanding of professional contexts, vocational ambitions and/or academic progression opportunities.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the professional needs and expectations of the creative industries with regards to employment, self-employment, entrepreneurial activity and broader career awareness.
- Demonstrate awareness and understanding of intellectual property, self-promotion, career development and employability skills/behaviours.

3. Distinctive Features

Distinctive features of the course:

- This course is aimed at individuals who have already decided that they want to study comic and concept art as an applied and combined specialism within broader creative disciplines.
- It focuses from day one on developing the skills needed to respond individually, creatively and professionally to problem-focused, client-centred briefs.
- It encourages the development of an increasingly specialist and deep understanding of fundamental research, image making and communication skills, including visual literacy, visual language, visual thinking and visual research.
- It engenders a flexible approach to the application of specialist practical and intellectual skills within a range of possible contexts.
- It explores the role of the comic artist and concept artist in designer/client relationships through a specialist course of visual investigation, creative problem solving, industry standard skills development and the inclusion of professional development modules.
- It establishes exploratory approaches to the professional nature of comic and concept art and in doing so aims to develop an awareness and understanding of collaboration, negotiation, appropriateness and constructive compromise, in response to a range of brief led problems and individual practice.
- It aims to produce commercially active and culturally sensitive independent thinkers and comic/concept artists, who can engage with a range of professional, ethical and philosophical debates and contexts.
- It provides an opportunity for you to identify specific roles/skills within the pre-production, production and post-production of comic and concept art to form the basis of specialist disciplinary practices.

- Through its integration of critical debate and professional awareness, it aims to challenge and look beyond current trends, dogmas and stylistic approaches, in order to prepare you for a lifelong engagement with comic and concept art as an applied and combined creative practice.

4. Course Structure

4a. Module Framework

Level 4	Credit Points	ECTS	Learning Hours
LAUCCA401 Studio Practice: Drawing, Enquiry, & Ideation	60	30	600
LAUCCA402 Studio Practice: Iteration & Sequence	40	20	400
LAUCCA403 Professional Practice 1	20	10	200
Level 5	Credit Points	ECTS	Learning Hours
LAUCCA501 Studio Practice: World-building, Culture, & Believability	60	30	600
LAUCCA502 Studio Practice: Specialised Versatility	40	20	400
LAUCCA503 Professional Practice 2	20	10	200
Level 6	Credit Points	ECTS	Learning Hours
LAUCCA601 Professional Studio Practice 1	60	30	600
LAUCCA602 Professional Studio Practice 2	60	30	600

4b. Course Map / Structure

Level 4		
Semester One	**Studio Practice: Drawing, Enquiry, & Ideation (LAUCCA401)** *60 credits*	
Semester Two	**Studio Practice: Iteration & Sequence (LAUCCA402)** *40 credits*	**Professional Practice 1 (LAUCCA403)** *20 credits*
120 credits (60 ECTS credits)		Certificate of Higher Education (Exit Award)

Level 5		
Semester One	**Studio Practice: World-building, Culture, & Believability (LAUCCA501)** *60 credits*	
Semester Two	**Studio Practice: Specialised Versatility (LAUCCA502)** *40 credits*	**Professional Practice 2 (LAUCCA503)** *20 credits*
120 credits (60 ECTS credits)		Diploma of Higher Education (Exit Award)

Level 6	
Semester One	**Professional Studio Practice 1** **(LAUCCA601)** *60 credits*
Semester Two	**Professional Studio Practice 2** **(LAUCCA602)** *60 credits*
120 credits (60 ECTS credits)	BA (Hons) Comic & Concept Art (Exit Award)
*Students who fail to complete 360 credits but have accumulated no fewer than 300 credits will be awarded an Ordinary degree.	

5. Course Learning Outcomes

Learning is assessed at each level of the course. This develops from introductory work within the specialism of the course at level 4, through the development of skills and ideas at level 5, progressing to application and synthesis of skills, originality, and theory in practice at level 6 as indicated by the FHEQ qualification descriptors.

Course Level Outcomes (CLOs) define what you are expected to be able to do on completion of each level. These values are defined as 'expectations' within each module.

Level 4

Level Learning Outcomes
By the end of Level 4, you will be expected to: • Demonstrate knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with your creative practice, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of contemporary comic and concept art. • Demonstrate an ability to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative source material, in order to develop lines of enquiry and make sound judgements in accordance with basic principles and concepts of contemporary comic and concept art. • Evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to contemporary comic and concept art. • Communicate the results of your creative practice accurately and reliably, with structured and coherent arguments. • Undertake the development of new skills appropriate to comic and concept art within a structured and managed environment. • Demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment in comic and concept art requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility.

Level 5

Level Learning Outcomes
By the end of Level 5, you will be expected to: • Demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of comic and concept art, and of the way in which those principles have developed.

- Demonstrate the ability to apply underlying creative concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in comic and concept art, and the ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in comic and concept art.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the limits of your knowledge of comic and concept art, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge.
- Use a range of established comic and concept art techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis.
- Effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the comic art and concept art disciplines effectively.
- Further develop existing skills and acquire new competencies that will enable you to engage with the opportunities and expectations of external organisations.
- Demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment in the comic and concept art industries requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.

Level 6

Level Learning Outcomes

By the end of Level 6, you will be expected to:

- Demonstrate a detailed subject knowledge and a systematic understanding of key aspects of comic and concept art, some of which has been informed by practices at the forefront of comic and concept art specialisms.
- Demonstrate an ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within comic and concept art.
- Demonstrate an ability to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of comic and concept art.
- Demonstrate an ability to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current trends, developments and research in comic and concept art.
- Demonstrate an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge within comic and concept art.
- Demonstrate the ability to manage your own learning, and to make use of primary and secondary sources of information appropriate to comic and concept art.
- Apply the methods and techniques that you have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply your knowledge and understanding in order to initiate and carry out comic and concept art projects.
- Critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, concepts and source material (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, frame appropriate questions and achieve a solution - or identify a range of solutions - to a problem within comic and concept art.
- Communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions within comic and concept art to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment within comic and concept art.
- Demonstrate initiative and personal responsibility within comic and concept art practice.
- Demonstrate decision-making in complex and unpredictable comic and concept art contexts.

> - Demonstrate the learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature within comic and concept art.

6. Module Expectations

Module Expectations are expressed within the course modules as 'what you are expected to do'. Module Expectations are defined in subject-relevant language and aligned with the Dearing Report recommendations (1997) commonly used in the UK HE sector, normally articulated in terms of:

- knowledge and understanding (KU)
- intellectual or cognitive skills (IC)
- practical and professional skills (P)
- key/transferable skills (T)

To fulfil course-level learning outcomes, you will be expected to demonstrate:

	Knowledge and Understanding
KU1	Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the theoretical and practical contexts of your creative practice.
KU2	Demonstrate an awareness of the historical, aesthetic, cultural and social dimensions of comic and concept art and wider creative industries.
KU3	Demonstrate an appreciation of the implications and potential of contemporary comic and concept art through emerging technologies and trans-disciplinary approaches.
KU4	Demonstrate an understanding of commercial and ethical expectations of contemporary comic and concept art in relation to themes such as professional relationships and intellectual property.
	Intellectual and Cognitive Skills
IC1	Investigate, question and integrate a range of source materials to inform your own creative practice.
IC2	Evidence your ability to generate, develop and document ideas to solve creative problems in response to set briefs.
IC3	Critically evaluate and employ both convergent and divergent thinking in the process of creative enquiry.
IC4	Analyse, evaluate and reflect on your personal strengths and areas for improvement as a learner within the context of your peer group and contemporary comic and concept art.
	Practical and Professional Skills
P1	Evidence the ability to manage your own creative enquiry underpinned by appropriate practical, theoretical, critical and contextual processes.
P2	Select, experiment with and apply a range of practical methods and techniques appropriate to comic and concept art to extend your own creative practice.
P3	Show judgement and self-critique in the development of a creatively and professionally relevant workflow appropriate to your creative practice.
P4	Demonstrate comic and concept art practices that are informed by the interaction between intention, process, outcome, context and methods of production.
	Key Transferrable Skills
T1	Select and employ appropriate presentation methods to effectively communicate ideas and work to a range of audiences.

T2	Demonstrate the capacity to interact effectively with others through opportunities such as peer-review or collaborative practice.
T3	Document and articulate information, ideas, processes and outcomes coherently in visual, written, oral and/or other appropriate forms.
T4	Demonstrate initiative, independence and an awareness of professional expectations through self-directed learning, the management of goals, workloads and negotiated deadlines.

7. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies

7a. Teaching and Learning

Level 4

Semester One – Experimentation & Delineation
Studio Practice: Drawing, Enquiry, & Ideation (LAUCCA401) reintroduces drawing as 'design drawing'. This module provides you with the opportunity to explore drawing in a technical, dynamic and analytical way across a number of subjects including anatomy and perspective; architecture and mechanical assets; and urban and natural environments. You will also develop skills in ideas-development through various drawing techniques and exercises.. This module is unique to this course because it allows a whole semester for you to build upon and prioritise your traditional drawing skills before introducing digital software.

Alongside your practical studies, this module focuses on introducing research methods and a range of approaches to academic documentation through exploring the history of Comic Art and Concept Art. This will also support you in investigating and developing an awareness of the historical, aesthetic and technological contexts of comic and concept art and the relationship to your own creative practice. You learn through a series of lectures, seminars and related workshops alongside a set brief to embed the skills acquired.

Semester Two – Workflow & Reflection
Studio Practice: Iteration & Sequence (LAUCCA402) explores iterative design and sequential techniques. The process and workflow are investigated from initial character design to creating design options and alternate views; developing narrative through storyboards and comic panel layout; and software selection and digital workflow. Your work will be informed by practical sessions and appropriate software workshops. There is a focus on investigating traditional and digital techniques and methods. You will continue to develop your drawing practice as a device for communicating composition, sequence and unity within visual variety.

Professional Practice 1 (LAUCCA403) is introduced to develop professional contexts, reflective practice and career awareness. At this stage, the focus is on investigating the scope and scale of contemporary comic and concept art. You will be supported in developing an awareness of career opportunities available to you, how to be a reflective practitioner and how to identify and plan engagement with external professional research activities and events.

Level 5

Semester One – Storytelling & Contextualisation
The focus of *Studio Practice: Word-building, Culture, & Believability (LAUCCA501)* is on developing the advanced visual skills needed to fully develop a convincing and well-rounded world. The module will provide opportunities to explore such practices as art/story direction; character development and costume design; advanced visual storytelling; advanced rendering and speed painting; matte painting and 3D modelling for environment design; and digital sculpting for creature design. You will investigate drawing as a method of creating engaging, believable, and globally aware concepts and visual narratives.

Additionally, you will build on your academic skills and explore the social, cultural and ethical contexts of comic and concept art. You will be supported in developing approaches to communicating practical and theoretical research through a variety of methods beyond academic writing. Engagement with current sociocultural issues will be encouraged, such as the representation of gender and cultural identity in the media and entertainment industry.

<u>Semester Two – Specialisation & Collaboration</u>
Studio Practice: Specialised Versatility (LAUCCA502) focuses on the research, production and professional communication skills needed for commercial comic and concept art and develops strong specialisations within specific industry roles. The module will provide opportunities and access to a number of competition/live briefs for you to explore increasingly individual and industry-focused approaches to comic and concept art. You will work on a variety of briefs with the opportunity to collaborate. Depending on your individual practice, there may be opportunities for negotiated bespoke workshops such as comic writing, printmaking, bookbinding, 3D printing or VR painting. You will further develop your drawing practice by evaluating a variety of efficient and appropriate approaches to drawing in response to set briefs.

Professional Practice 2 (LAUCCA503) will further develop professional contexts, reflective practice and career awareness. This time the focus will be on engaging with comic and concept art as a collaborative practice. A series of lectures will introduce key professional skills, such as pitching and networking. You will begin to develop a professional identity and engage with course level, cross-University and/or external collaborations.

Level 6

<u>Semester One – Research & Negotiated Study</u>
Here the areas of Studio Practice, Practice-based Research and Professional Practice are combined to create *Professional Studio Practice 1 (LAUCCA601)*. Through one holistic module per semester, you will be supported in researching, investigating and strategizing a creatively satisfying and professionally relevant project. You will deepen your drawing practice as a responsive process of enquiry, and a core facet of comic and concept art practice.

This course will encourage and celebrate a broader range of outcomes to communicate your research interests. For example, if you are interested in researching the technical contexts of comic and concept art, you could conduct practice-based research into a new technology while conducting professional and theoretical research into the topic to contextualize your practice. This could culminate in a detailed project proposal for the next semester, strategically aligned with a specific career opportunity and underpinned by professional, theoretical and practical research. The flexible approach to the outcome also allows for a spectrum of career aspirations such as proposals for collaborative projects, organising external opportunities or writing research/funding applications.

This integrated approach would allow a period of in-depth, self-directed investigation that is directly related to self-identified progression opportunities and in preparation for production and presentation in the next semester.

<u>Semester Two – Professionalism & Presentation</u>
Professional Studio Practice 2 (LAUCCA601) is devoted to the execution of the proposed project from the previous semester. External engagement is expected through selecting opportunities identified in the proposal. Collaboration is encouraged where appropriate. There will also be a focus on professional presentation skills through further development of a professional identity/presence and application of the professional communication skills expected in industry across a range of appropriate methods. This module will provide a framework for demonstrating a systematic, professional and sustainable drawing practice.

7b. Engagement Strategy

Methods for engaging with teaching and learning will typically include (without being limited to):

LECTURES / PRESENTATIONS: To introduce and explore key practices, principles and theories relating to module content, study tasks and the broader concerns of the discipline.

SEMINARS: To introduce, discuss and embed key practices, principles and theories relating to module content, study tasks and the broader concerns of the discipline.

BRIEFINGS: To provide key information, approaches and expectations relating to module content, specific briefs, study tasks and assessment requirements.

WORKSHOPS: To provide a structured approach to practical, conceptual and professional skills development in response to set module content, set briefs and study tasks.

CENTRAL RESOURCE INDUCTIONS/WORKSHOPS: To introduce, develop and support individual technical skills, practical knowledge and production skills.

PEER REVIEWS: To introduce, develop and support peer-led formative feedback, reflective practice and communication skills relating to module content, individual practice and assessment requirements.

GROUP CRITIQUES / TUTORIALS: To provide Tutor-led group discussions, critical reflection and formative feedback at key stages within the module and in response to module content, set briefs and study tasks.

INDIVIDUAL TUTORIALS: To provide an opportunity for individual discussion, formative feedback, workload management and action planning in response to module content, set briefs and study tasks.

STUDIO / WORKSHOP DEVELOPMENT: To provide timetabled opportunities for independent practical development, studio/workshop access, collaboration and individual research activities in response to set briefs and study tasks.

INDEPENDENT STUDY: To individual and autonomous approaches to research, development and the professional understanding of individual creative concerns, technical skills and module content.

7c. Assessment

The assessment of the modules is holistic. All material presented for assessment is taken as a whole and a single mark is given. Undertaking the staged studio briefs and study tasks in the learning & teaching will encourage the acquisition of the skills and attributes expected for your graduate progress.

The aim of assessment is to inform you of your individual progress as you work through the course. Feedback is an essential element of assessment. You will be provided with written summative feedback on all of your module assessments at the end of each module. You will partake in continuous evaluation within the teaching and learning on the course, developing skills in reflection and dialogue and receive continuous formative feedback from the teaching staff and peers. Both summative and formative feedback approaches are designed to meet the 'assessment for learning' and 'feedforward' values espoused in the UK Quality Code. All the modules on this course contain formal formative feedback sessions using the assessment 'fields' where you will

receive written feedback on your progress to meet this developmental aim. Assessment also continually ensures that you are meeting the required academic standards for the award.

The performance of what you have learnt as creative comic and concept artist, thinker, researcher and learner is expressed through the creative work you produce with any investigations, transcripts, research studies and test pieces you undertake in support of this. The University regards 'Performance' as the key term for the diverse creative outputs submitted in assessment across our provision. Your creative output/performance will demonstrate the extent to which you have learned, developed, assimilated and mediated your knowledge, understanding and skills into appropriate forms for your submission requirements. You will evidence module expectations expressed as 'what you are expected to learn' in your submission requirements and then your work will be assessed as follows, through five assessment 'fields'. These are:

Field	Descriptor
Presentation	That which is seen by exhibition, portfolio, transcript, performance, relevant to tasks set.
Process	Evidence of the learning journey through method in haptic, physical practice based and textual applications.
Idea	Thought, concept or aim relevant to task, student centred and with clarity of vision.
Documentation	That which evidences the student's journey in and through research, technical experimentation, and/or creative endeavour. Could include: data; reflection; analysis; planning.
Technical	Quality and/or utility of the technical features employed; demonstration of skill / competence in media relevant to task.

7d. Feedback

Formative
You will receive formative feedback on your progress throughout each module, in a number of ways. These will include (without being limited to):   ● Peer Reviews;   ● Group Tutorials;   ● Individual Progress Tutorials;   ● Formative Assessment Points (identified on eStudio).

Summative
At the end of each module, you will receive summative feedback represented by a grade with tutor comments on your work. This feedback will help you to understand your how you performed on the module, clarify your strengths and identify areas for further consideration.