

Course Specification MA Creature Design



1. General information

Course Title	MA Creature Design
Awarding University	Leeds Arts University
University at which course is delivered	Leeds Arts University
Relevant QAA benchmark(s)	UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Master's Degree Characteristics (2020)
Date of most recent review	N/A
Date of next review	2023-24

Awards	Credits	Duration	Mode of study
MA Creature Design	180 (90 ECT)	1 year 2 years	Full time Part time
PGDip in Creature Design*	120		Full time Part time
PGCert in Creature Design*	60		Full time Part time
*Exit Award only			

2. Course Aims

This course aims to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish diverse and experimental approaches to the practical and theoretical nature of designing creatures, both real and imagined.• Embed a systematic and conceptual understanding of creature anatomy.• Develop a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights regarding methods informed by the art and science of creature design within professional contexts.• Develop a comprehensive understanding of techniques appropriate to creature design believability.• Promote environmentally, culturally, and globally aware design-led practices.• Explore ethical, sustainable, and independent approaches to creature design practice in production and representation.• Encourage collaborative practice and interdisciplinary approaches to research and practice.• Demonstrate advanced specialist skills in creature design and related disciplines.• Enable self-directed, original, and autonomous approaches to planning, problem-solving, and implementing creature design at a professional level.• Promote systematic and creative resolutions to complex creature design problems and encourage their dissemination to specialist and non-specialist audiences.• Advance creature design as a distinct discipline and challenge the human-animal binary.• Further develop transferable skills enabling the progression to individual professional practice within the creative industries, STEM industries, or PhD study.

3. Distinctive Features of the Course

This course explores creature design through animal anatomy, speculative Zoology, and believability across a range of professional contexts, production methods, and industries.

You will investigate approaches to developing creature designs inspired by existing animals. There is a focus on experimentation to create imaginative creature designs as well as ensuring believability through considering skeletal, muscular and surface anatomies. You will develop creatures and their life cycles, behaviours, relationships with other characters/creatures and interaction with the environment. There may be opportunities for cross-disciplinary influences from science to help inform creature design.

You will be encouraged to critically evaluate current advanced scholarship within creature design. Approaches to creature design will be evaluated, facilitating dynamic critique and creating development of potential novel methods.

You will investigate practical techniques to create original creature designs that interpret and challenge ethical and global themes, bringing together art and science contemporary discourses.

You will have the opportunity to demonstrate advanced knowledge, understanding, and high-level practical skills. Exercising initiative and personal responsibility, the project will facilitate complex decision-making and the independent learning required for continuing professional development.

You are encouraged to position your work within a professional context to help inform the visual output and production method. There are opportunities for creature designers within entertainment design and beyond, such as paleo reconstruction (visualising prehistoric life) or speculative biology (visualising possible future evolution or life on other planets).

Developing a body of negotiated and self-directed work, you will be supported by a team with diverse research and practical interests within creature design and work closely with visiting industry professionals. You will have the opportunity to source briefs, work collaboratively and apply your contextual and industry informed knowledge and understanding to question what makes a creature design believable. The aim is to create believable creatures that engage with their environment and have a past, present and future.

4. Course Structure

4a. Module Framework

Level 7	Credit points	ECTS	Learning hours
LAUMACD701 - Creature Anatomy	30	15	300
LAUMACD702 - Research for Professional Context	30	15	300
LAUMACD703 - Speculative Zoology	30	15	300
LAUMACD704 - Contextualising your Practice	30	15	300
LAUMACD705 - Animals Real and Imagined	60	30	600

4b. Course Map / Structure

Full Time Mode			
LAUMACD701 Creature Anatomy (30 Credits)	LAUMACD703 Speculative Zoology (30 Credits)	LAUMACD705 Animals Real and Imagined (60 Credits)	180 Credits
LAUMACD702 Research for Professional Context (30 Credits)	LAUMACD704 Contextualising your Practice (30 Credits)		

Part Time Mode			
Year 1	LAUMACD701 Creature Anatomy (30 Credits)	LAUMACD704 Contextualising your Practice (30 Credits)	90 Credits
	LAUMACD702 Research for Professional Context (30 Credits)		
Year 2	LAUMACD703 Speculative Zoology (30 Credits)	LAUMACD705 Animals Real and Imagined (60 Credits)	90 Credits

5. Course Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the following learning outcomes, you will be eligible for the award of MA Creature Design.

Category		Module
Experimentation and Resolution		
7A1	Deal with complex issues systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete information, and communicate your creative conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.	705 Animals Real and Imagined
7A2	Demonstrate the application of a comprehensive range of material techniques and processes appropriate to your creative arts discipline and practice.	703 Speculative Zoology
7A3	Deploy a sophisticated approach to the recording and presentation of information from a range of relevant sources.	701 Creature Anatomy
Project Management		
7B1	Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and resolving creative arts challenges, and act autonomously in planning and implementing your practice at a professional or equivalent level.	705 Animals Real and Imagined
7B2	Demonstrate initiative, independence and professionalism in managing workloads, meeting deadlines and setting realistic goals and schedules.	701 Creature Anatomy 703 Speculative Zoology
7B3	The ability to act autonomously in the application of relevant critical perspectives as a means of analysis in the planning for, and execution of, resolved verbal and/or written work.	702 Research for Professional Context
7B4	The management of own learning and the self-directed identification of appropriate sources of information.	704 Contextualising Your Practice
Research		
7C1	Evidence a comprehensive understanding of the techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship within their practice or discipline.	701 Creature Anatomy
7C2	Analyse, evaluate and reflect on your personal practice through appropriate methods of research and reflection	703 Speculative Zoology

	that allow for critique and development of that practice.	
7C3	A critically informed understanding of the value and role of subject specialist contact and discussion in ideas generation that is relevant to recent advances in the chosen field of study.	705 Animals Real and Imagined
7C4	Research skills and research activity (e.g. action research and reflective practice) leading to sophisticated verbal presentations and written work/presentation that informs practice.	702 Research for Professional Context
7C5	Research methods and their appropriate application to the production of resolved work.	704 Contextualising Your Practice
Evaluation and Critical Analysis		
7D1	Demonstrate a systematic knowledge, understanding and critical awareness of contemporary debates within their discipline and professional practice, much of which is at or informed by the forefront of the field.	705 Animals Real and Imagined
7D2	Demonstrate a critical understanding of appropriate areas of your discipline and practice and locate them within the creative industries and cultural environment both nationally and internationally.	703 Speculative Zoology
7D3	The ability to summarise, document, report on, and reflect meaningfully upon one's own practice-based research.	702 Research for Professional Context
7D4	The evaluation of self-directed research.	701 Creature Anatomy
7D5	The complex relationships between theoretical understanding, critical analysis and practice.	704 Contextualising Your Practice
Subject Knowledge		
7E1	Demonstrate originality in applying knowledge to your specialist practice, together with a deep understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret and creatively articulate/promote/perform that knowledge.	705 Animals Real and Imagined
7E2	The continuing advancement and development of your specialist knowledge and understanding.	701 Creature Anatomy 703 Speculative Zoology
7E3	A critically informed understanding of the diverse policies and activities of organisations supporting and promoting the creative industries in local, national, intercultural and global contexts.	702 Research for Professional Context
7E4	A systematic understanding of theoretical perspectives that relate to complex issues.	702 Research for Professional Context
7E5	An in-depth and systematic understanding of current theoretical perspectives that relate to specific creative specialist practice.	704 Contextualising Your Practice

6. Learning and Teaching Strategies

Throughout your course of study, the following methods of learning and teaching may be employed both online and in-person (blended). The Module Specifications detail the particular learning and teaching strategy appropriate to the module and content.

- Negotiated assignment submissions that are generated from your research interests. You will initiate investigations and sustain the development of a project supported by staff.
- Peer group support and, where appropriate, collaborative practice fostered through structured student-initiated encounters with theoretical material and primary sources which can be applied to generate concepts that are explored through discussion leading to individual creative practice.
- One-to-one tutorial support during which, you will develop negotiated assignment activities with tutors focusing upon practice development and/or career planning through the evaluation and critical analysis of your own work.
- Opportunities for considered, exploratory and pro-active links with external contexts and communities of practice that lead to original integrated, resolved, conceptual visual/object-based/oral/aural/written work with relevance to the market(s) and/or audiences you have identified and investigated.