Course Specification

Course Summary Information		
1	**Course Title**	BA (Hons) Illustration
2	**Course Code**	US0789
3	**Awarding Institution**	Birmingham City University
4	**Teaching Institution(s)** (if different from point 3)	Not Applicable
5	**Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation** (if applicable)	Not Applicable

6	**Course Description**
	Illustration is a powerful tool for storytelling, whether it is through children's books, editorial pieces, visual narratives, or moving image. On the BA (Hons) Illustration course you will learn how to convey authentic, innovative, ideas and messages that are impactful, thought-provoking, and publishable. Staying ahead in the field requires embracing technological advances. You will learn the essential knowledge and skills needed for industry, and will explore, experiment, and be encouraged to push the boundaries of traditional and digital illustration. We celebrate the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of our students through the exploration of different cultures and the effective use of interdisciplinary collaborations. This enriches creativity and will help you to become a well-rounded illustrator. We will also teach you to consider the ethical implications of your work and how to use your skills to raise awareness, advocate for positive change, and contribute to the betterment of our global community. Located in the culturally diverse city of Birmingham in the West Midlands, the curriculum design and live industry briefs will reflect the needs and opportunities for our graduates to gain employment after university. By encouraging active learning and innovation, we prepare you for an exciting future, equipping you with essential creative skills and knowledge. Rooted in a student-centred approach, the course prioritises personalised support and transformative learning experiences as part of a vibrant creative community. Within a dynamic studio teaching environment, you will focus on commercial application and transferrable skills, ensuring adept and employable graduates.

7	Course Awards		
7a	**Name of Final Award**	**Level**	**Credits Awarded**
	Bachelor of Arts with Honours Illustration Bachelor of Arts with Honours Illustration with Professional Placement Year	Level 6 Level 6	360 credits 480 credits
7b	Exit Awards and Credits Awarded		
	Certificate of Higher Education Illustration Diploma of Higher Education Illustration Batchelor of Art Illustration	Level 4 Level 5 Level 6	120 credits 240 credits 300 credits

8	Variation from the University Regulations
	Not Applicable

9	Delivery Patterns			
Mode(s) of Study	**Location(s) of Study**	**Duration of Study**	**Code(s)**
Full Time	City Centre	3 years	US0789
Full time with Professional Placement year	City Centre	4 years	US1348

10	Entry Requirements
	The admission requirements for this course are stated on the course page of the BCU website at https://www.bcu.ac.uk , or may be found by searching for the course entry profile located on the UCAS website.

11	Course Aims
	• To provide you with a specialist education in illustrative practice via a dynamic curriculum that blends practical skills and theoretical knowledge. • To explore the historical, cultural, and contextual theories shaping contemporary illustration practice. • To supply you with the tools and knowledge to proficiently use the latest digital technologies. • To support you to master the use of illustration as a storytelling tool to effectively communicate messages across diverse mediums. • To create an environment for you to explore and embrace diverse cultural perspectives and foster interdisciplinary collaborations. • To equip you with an understanding of ethical implications, using your skills to raise awareness and advocate for positive change. • To design a curriculum and live industry briefs that align with the current demands of the illustration industry. • To enable you to progress with the skills needed for diverse and creative employment opportunities post-graduation.

12	Course Learning Outcomes
	Knowledge and Understanding
1	Evaluate the critical, contextual and historical dimensions of illustration practice.
2	Evaluate the ethical, environmental and societal impact associated with contemporary and evolving technologies within the field of illustration.
3	Research and articulate ideas set within local, national, and global contexts of contemporary illustration practice.
4	Engage with creative industry professionals and strategies of future employment.
5	Adapt your practice in alignment with audience characteristics and preferences across diverse contexts.
6	Demonstrate the impact of applying advanced problem-solving techniques to create innovative illustrative outcomes.
	Skills and other attributes
7	Synthesise advanced technical competencies to generate sophisticated creative outputs.
8	Use visual narrative techniques to communicate imaginative concepts effectively across varied audiences and contextual settings.
9	Execute self-directed projects to comprehensively resolve creative endeavours.
10	Demonstrate professional collaborative engagement, effectively contributing toward collective objectives through constructive participation and teamwork.
11	Analyse relevant professional environments to articulate and assess your expertise, competencies, and their impact on career aspirations and advancement.

13	**Level Learning Outcomes**
	Upon completion of Level 4 / the Certificate of Higher Education, students will be able to:
1	Describe key contextual influences and basic illustration theories, in visual, written, and oral forms.
2	Define key current and emerging techniques and technologies relevant to illustration practice.
3	Identify relevant contemporary industry practice and fundamental professional skills.
4	Identify an appropriate audience and context for your work.
5	Recognise the value of risk taking, problem solving, and creative testing of processes and materials.
6	Visually investigate ideas through testing and experimentation with a range of practical and digital approaches.
7	Describe how to convey ideas and information using visual narrative techniques.
8	Reflect on your individual learning and creative problem-solving.
9	Define the key themes of collaborative working, recording the main challenges and benefits of group work.
10	Discuss your ideas and practice using simple and effective presentation techniques.
	Upon completion of Level 5 / the Diploma of Higher Education, students will be able to:
1	Articulate the concerns and debates of diversity, inclusivity, and ethics within current illustrative practice.
2	Analyse the appropriate application of technologies in illustration practice.
3	Apply industry knowledge in practical settings that mirror professional environments.
4	Analyse the characteristics and preferences of target audiences within diverse contexts.
5	Implement risk taking and creative testing across a range of illustrative briefs, to explore effective problem-solving strategies.
6	Identify and develop practical skills and technical competencies that are appropriate to your individual practice.
7	Apply a variety of visual narrative techniques.
8	Demonstrate selection and progression of ideas, through clear analysis, reflection and creative problem-solving techniques.
9	Collaborate effectively, integrating diverse perspectives for innovative outcomes.
10	Communicate and document your emerging individual practice through appropriate methods of presentation.
	Upon completion of 60 credits at Level 6 / the Bachelors Degree, students will be able to:
1	Critically analyse theoretical and historical concepts, and well-established principles and practical approaches related to illustration in practical, written and verbal forms.
2	Critically assess the ethical, environmental, and societal implications of adopting current and emerging technologies in illustration practice.
3	Develop your professional networks through events, social media and online platforms to promote an industry ready portfolio.
4	Refine your works in response to nuanced audience characteristics and preferences across varied contexts, demonstrating a sophisticated understanding of audience dynamics.
5	Explore advanced problem-solving techniques to create innovative design solutions.

6	Apply advanced technical skills to the production of refined creative outcomes.
7	Effectively use visual storytelling to articulate imaginative concepts to diverse audiences and contexts.
8	Fully resolve self-determined projects to a professional level.
9	Engage and collaborate effectively in a professional context, contributing constructively toward shared goals and tasks.
10	Critically evaluate your knowledge, skills and their influence on your career aspirations, progression, and creative practice through analysis of appropriate professional contexts.

14	**Course Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy**

Learning and Teaching:

Knowledge and understanding are acquired through formal lectures, seminars, group and personal tutorials, work checks, critiques, demonstrations, individual and collaborative projects. You will develop skills in the practical workshops and will use the studio to develop your practice through creative problem-based learning. Critical studies provide you with a knowledge and understanding of historical, cultural, theoretical and social contexts.

The teaching programme is supported by lectures about both theory and practice, and specialist talks and speakers. Seminars allow discussion connections with past students and industry professionals. They also allow for cross-course interaction, and connections across student year groups.

Within most modules you will work individually on your projects, but this will involve a mix of group and individual critiques and tutorials. There are opportunities to collaborate within certain modules on the course where you will develop and submit work as part of a group. Each module is supported by a series of relevant workshops, covering both practical and digital skills.

Each week you will have self-directed study tasks that will need to be completed, usually before your next teaching session. This ensures that you come prepared and the sessions are highly active and engaging.

Your course will be supported by Moodle and Microsoft Teams. Moodle will contain all the information you need to complete each module

Assessment:

Assessment on the course is both formative and summative. Knowledge is assessed by several methods including display of project work, and visual and written presentations. Grades are awarded for problem analysis, research, development, exploration, creativity, student discussion, technical skills, project resolution, and critical evaluation.

Each project has its own written brief outlining aims and objectives, and the specific marking criteria for assessment.

Formative assessment is used throughout each module, to monitor student learning, and provide ongoing feedback. This is carried out via tutorials and work-checks.

Summative assessment evaluates your learning against the brief the learning outcomes. This is the assessment you are awarded your grade for the module.

	Assessment criteria for each module are specified and align directly with the module learning outcomes. The assessment of individual project work, topics and modules is carried out by staff teaching on the modules. All Illustration modules focus on intellectual, cognitive, and practical skills and these are reflected in module assessment criteria. The Course team maintains continuous evaluation. This is achieved via direct studio teaching, one-to-one teaching, collaborative practice, tutorial contact, discussion of recorded details, work checks, student centred design forums, seminars, and tutorials. A feature of assessment and teaching is peer group evaluation. This consists of group discussion of individual work of visual/verbal presentations.

15	Course Requirements

15a

Level 4:

In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 120 credits):

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
ART4246	Fundamental Practice: Illustration	40-credits
ART4249	Professional Futures: Communication (Illustration)	20-credits
ART4247	Moving Stories	20-credits
ART4248	Discuss and Distribute	40-credits

Level 5:

In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 120 credits):

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
ART5150	Audience & Context	40-credits
ART5154	Professional Futures: Collaboration (Illustration)	20-credits
ART5152	Defining Practice: Illustration	40-credits

In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete at least 20 credits from the following indicative list of OPTIONAL modules.

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
ADM5000	Work Placement	20-credits
ADM5001	Industry Project	20-credits
ADM5009	Independent Creative Entrepreneur	20-cedits

Level 6:

In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 120 credits):

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
VIS6041	Advancing Practice	40-credits
VIS6042	Independent Enquiry	20-credits
ART6148	Professional Futures: Presentation	20-credits
ART6146	Major Project	40-credits

15b	**Structure Diagram**

Level 4

SEMESTER ONE	SEMESTER TWO
Fundamental Practice: Illustration 40-credits (Core Module)	Moving Stories 20-credits (Core Module)
Professional Futures: Communication 20-credits (Core Module)	Discuss and Distribute 40-credits (Core Module)

Level 5

SEMESTER ONE	SEMESTER TWO
Audience and Context 40-credits (Core Module)	Work Experience/ Industry Project/ Independent Creative Entrepreneurship 20-credits (Option Module)
Professional Futures: Collaboration 20-credits (Core Module)	Defining Practice: Illustration 40-credits (Core Module)

Level 6

SEMESTER ONE	SEMESTER TWO
Advancing Practice 40 credits (Core Module)	Professional Futures: Presentation 20 credits (Core Module)
Independent Enquiry 20 credits (Core Module)	Major Project 40 credits (Core Module)

16	Overall Student Workload and Balance of Assessment

Overall student *workload* consists of class contact hours, independent learning and assessment activity, with each credit taken equating to a total study time of around 10 hours. While actual contact hours may depend on the optional modules selected, the following information gives an indication of how much time students will need to allocate to different activities at each level of the course.

- *Scheduled Learning* includes lectures, practical classes and workshops, contact time specified in timetable
- *Directed Learning* includes placements, work-based learning, external visits, on-line activity, Graduate+, peer learning
- *Private Study* includes preparation for exams

The *balance of assessment* by mode of assessment (e.g. coursework, exam and in-person) depends to some extent on the optional modules chosen by students. The approximate percentage of the course assessed by coursework, exam and in-person is shown below.

Level 4

Workload

19% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	230
Directed Learning	730
Private Study	240
Total Hours	1200

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	95%
Exam	0%
In-Person	5%

Level 5

Workload

18% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	219
Directed Learning	741
Private Study	240
Total Hours	1200

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	80%
Exam	0%
In-Person	20%

Level 6

Workload

15% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	156
Directed Learning	804
Private Study	240
Total Hours	1200

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	95%
Exam	0%
In-Person	5%