

APPRENTICESHIP STANDARD – Animator Level 7

OCCUPATION: Animation

An animator produces the motions, gestures, expressions and performance of two or three-dimensional characters and inanimate objects. This work services the British and International Film, television and Commercial industries. They are a highly creative individual who must be able to focus on their own work for long periods, but must also be able to work in collaboration with a team.

The animator works closely with the Animation Lead, Supervisor and Director to produce high quality animation. They must be able to take direction, and feedback, in order to create the actions of a given character according to the story and the director's wishes. To support this, they must also be able to interpret a storyboard and any character layout/ scene planning that has been done in advance.

In order to animate complex scenes, the animator should have an excellent knowledge of timing and spacing, and have excellent drawing skills. Using model sheets, and any given reference material, they will be able to visualise the character in any number of poses, and stage the character effectively according to the layout/ scene plan. The animator should know their place within the production workflow process, and be able to organise their files and filing system accordingly. They should be able to use the equipment required of a given project, learn and keep up to date with animation software, and be able to use traditional techniques as required. They should be able to export their work for review, and to work within a given schedule. On completion of the apprenticeship and with further experience, they may progress to senior, lead and potentially an animation supervisor or director.

Requirements: Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours- Animator, Level 7

CORE KNOWLEDGE An Animator understands:	CORE SKILLS: An Animator will be able to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The creative style, overall concept and level of animation required for the production• How to observe the world around you and find appropriate visual, written, empirical and physical references in order to create credible animation• Technical and production parameters for the project, such as the schedule, timelines, animation medium, frame count, field size, aspect ratio and format• How to read and interpret the relevant sources of information for the production, such as the script, animatic, x-sheet or dope-sheet, character, colour and model references, soundtrack• The context within the production of the scene you are working on• The context within the production of the department you are working in, and the subsequent stages of the process• The need to work methodically in an organised and concentrated manner paying particular attention to detail• Animation conventions, techniques and technologies• Traditional and digital methods for producing animated sequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research information and ideas• Generate the correct output of animation required for assistant animators to use at next stage of process• Animate primary and secondary characters and elements• Understand the logic of physical motion, weight, balance, texture and form• Understand movement and lip sync• Use model sheets and stage the character effectively according to the layout• Adapt to any given style or genre• Interpret the personality and traits of the character, conveying the emotions, behaviours and actions within a scene• Review output with relevant people, offering suggestions to assist others with the production• Create animation in line with the production demands

<p>Project and Data Organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relevant graphics, animation and compositing software to select for a project • How to maintain record systems of drawings and associated information • How to use industry-standard animation software • The possibilities and constraints offered by the software you are using • The importance of organising and naming files • The importance of maintaining data security and following your organisation’s guidelines and file structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select and use the industry standard software package required by the particular production • Continue to update your skills with new tools, software, data and other related technology • Prepare and store files in line with production requirements to enable the next stage of production to run efficiently
<p>Self management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to recognise the difference between creative and business decisions • How to manage your continuous professional development to ensure your skills and knowledge are kept up-to-date • How to develop your own animation knowledge • How to seek constructive feedback from relevant people about your performance and evaluate feedback so as to identify development needs • The benefits of a professional online presence and the options to achieve this including promotional websites, blogs and use of social media • Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice that are applicable to studio safety 	<p>Self management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek constructive feedback from relevant people about your performance and evaluate feedback so as to identify development needs • Maintain your own continuous professional development to ensure you refresh, update and add to your skills and knowledge • Manage and market yourself as a freelancer • Have the capacity to to manage relevant aspects of production • Ensure Health & Safety procedures and policies are adhered to
<p>Optional knowledge and skills depending on role</p>	
<p>2D Animation knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any performance guidelines for the characters you are working on, such as how they might react and behave in different situations • Movement and timing • How live action reference can influence your ability to animate characters • The concepts of key animation and in-between animation • Shot breakdown and continuity • The drawing skills that are needed for the artwork being produced 	<p>2D Animation skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a series of key frames to structure the animation that are appropriate to the production and agree them with the director • Create the movement and performance required by the production to in-between the animation, adding frames or cleaning up as required • Adapt to the various styles, techniques and procedures and software that may be required by the production • Test animated sequences to confirm the effects and continuity meet requirements

3D Animation

- The principles of 3D animation
- The principles of anatomy and how these affect movement
- The physics of motion and resistance
- How live action reference can influence your ability to animate characters
- The techniques, issues, costs and output of motion-capture, and when it is appropriate to use it
- Shot breakdown and continuity
- How to use industry-standard 3D animation software

3D Animation

- Block your animation using stepped or spline techniques, structuring the animation appropriately for the production and in agreement with the director
- Create animation layers that work on top of existing motion capture data and polish captured performances to meet production requirements
- Create the movement and performance required by the production to in-between the animation, adjusting the curves and adding extras keys as appropriate
- Ensure rigging techniques and references create credible animation with movements that are realistic for the type of object being modelled and the style of animation required
- Ensure that animations are in sync with the soundtrack
- Ensure that animations maintain continuity of character/performance with other shots in the sequence and/or other animators work
- Create animations using given camera angles or make adjustments to camera animations according to the production demands and schedule

CGI Animation

- Animation conventions and techniques for the type of production
- The principles and techniques of digital animation, such as hi and low resolution modelling, meshing, colouring, matte making, digital sculpting
- The physical properties and mechanics of particle systems, structures, cloths, fluids and crowds and how they react and respond to different stimuli
- How to create renditions of naturalistic physical or magical phenomena such as fire, water, clouds, smoke and physical destruction
- How the computer generated assets interact with their environment

CGI Animation

- Determine what is required for your work by analysing briefs, specifications, visual references and technical and production parameters
- Create the assets that meet the requirements of the animation department
- Script rigs when required
- Determine the look of computer generated assets in line with production requirements

Stop Motion Animation

- Any performance guidelines for the characters you are working on, such as how they might react and behave in different situations
- How live action reference can influence your ability to animate characters
- Character development and your role in that development
- Movement and timing
- The principles of anatomy and how these affect movement
- Shot construction and composition
- Shot breakdown and continuity
- How to improvise rigging and when it is appropriate for you to do so
- The media and techniques used in stop motion animation

Stop Motion Animation

- Plan and block through shots under direction, where appropriate recording real life videos to try out the performance as a reference
- Ensure you understand the capabilities and limitations of models
- Create pop through or rehearsal movie and agree with the director an appropriate series of key frames to structure the animation and time out each shot
- Prepare for and re-animate individual shots according to the director's notes
- Develop an animated character through its movement and timing
- Move characters on set in whatever style is required to meet the creative, narrative and technical demands of the production
- Contribute ideas to aid the creative development of the character, shot and overall production
- Ensure that animations are in sync with the soundtrack

Behaviours

An Animator will be expected to demonstrate:

- Reliability, with good time keeping and the ability to meet deadlines
- The capacity to work both independently and as part of a team
- An appreciation of accuracy and with excellent attention to detail
- Presentational and communication skills
- The capacity to to manage relevant aspects of production
- Adaptability and the willingness to learn new processes and technical skills

Entry requirements

Individual employers will set the selection criteria, but this is likely to include A Levels in a moving picture related subject and an appropriate subject at degree level.

Qualifications

Apprentices without level 2 English and Maths will need to achieve this level prior to taking the end-point assessment.

Duration - The apprenticeship will typically take 12 months to complete.

Level - This apprenticeship is set at level 7.

Link to professional recognition

Review date

This standard will be reviewed in three years, however, due to the fast pace of change in the industry this may be required sooner.