

Nottingham Trent University Course Specification

Basic Course Information		
1.	Awarding Institution:	Nottingham Trent University
2.	School/Campus:	Confetti Institute of Creative Technologies
3.	Final Award, Course Title and Modes of Study:	FdSc VFX Production Technology Full time
4.	Normal Duration:	2 years
5.	UCAS Code:	I700

6. **Overview and general educational aims of the course**

Visual Effects (VFX) has become an integral part of the production process for films, television productions, and commercials. The UK's VFX industry is world renowned for its cutting edge work attracting studios to shoot their films here and in 2010 was a significant reason for the \$920 million of inward investment, making VFX one of the highest earning areas of the filmmaking process. The increased demand on the UK's VFX industry has led to a need for a greater pool of new talent. However, VFX companies are increasingly turning their attention abroad as there has not been a growth in the number of UK graduates to feed it. Therefore, the infrastructure of the FdSc in VFX Production Technology has been designed to provide graduates with the core skills required to work in the VFX industry.

VFX employees are required to have advanced computer skills working with specific software combined with a detailed understanding of the mathematical and scientific principles that underpin this subject area. Therefore, the FdSc in Visual Effects Production Technology will have these key skills and abilities at its core providing a creative education whilst developing skills in VFX production to ensure the course will produce graduates ideally placed to work within the Visual Effects industry.

The FdSc in Visual Effects Production course aims to create ambitious graduates who are equipped with the relevant skillset for entry in the VFX industry by ensuring the industry's voice is embedded at the heart of the curriculum.

7. **Core modules**

The course comprises of a range of modules achieved over two years of study. The following modules make up the programme of study.

Level Four (120 Credits)

- Asset Production for VFX Sequences (20 Credits)
- Creating 3D Content for VFX (40 Credits)
- Foundation in VFX Compositing and Matte Production (40 Credits)
- Matte Painting and Environments (20 Credits)

Level Five (120 Credits)

- 3D Matchmoving and Rig Removal (20 Credits)
- Rigging, Digital Sculpture and Creature Effects (40 Credits)
- Effects Animation for VFX (40 Credits)
- Industry Practice (20 Credits)

8. **Optional modules** There are no optional modules on this course.

9. **Course outcomes**

Course outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of your course if you take advantage of the opportunities for learning that we provide.

Knowledge and understanding

By the end of the course you should be able to:

- Identify and apply the scientific principles that underpin Visual Effects technologies and practice.
- Evaluate the impact of technology on working practices within Visual Effects production within a historical, commercial and economic context.
- Apply Visual Effects technologies creatively and innovatively during the production, postproduction and distribution of Visual Effects products.
- Utilise complex analytical tools to identify and resolve problems during Visual Effects production management and workflow.
- Create authentic Visual Effects products that apply the language of film (narrative, genre, technical codes and conventions) used to make meaning within Visual Effects sequences.
- Monitor and evaluate the performance of a range of technologies used within Visual Effects, production and post production.
- Develop and realise creative ideas in a range of Visual Effects outputs working within different production and post production environments.
- Evaluate and assess work within the context of Visual Effects adapting and responding to current industry practice.

Skills, qualities and attributes

By the end of the course you should be able to demonstrate:

- Apply sustainable practice within production environments including health and safety, manual handling and risk assessment.
- Use a range of computer software applications within post production to create, manipulate, and output audio-visual content across a range of visual effects disciplines.
- Demonstrate competency in a range of Visual Effects production roles and responsibilities.
- Interpret, use and apply information from technical literature concerning Visual Effects production and post production technology.
- Apply appropriate research techniques in the academic, creative and production environment.
- Develop proposals and treatments for a range of Visual Effects output.

8. Teaching and learning methods

Within individual modules the delivery of the material encourages increasing levels of skill development and student participation, ensuring that, as you progress through the course, you become more confident and able independent learners. We aim to include a range of methods of delivery that may include;

- Lectures
- Seminars
- Workshop
- Group tutorials
- Academic Tutorials (ATs)
- Presentations and Pitches
- Team working
- Independent learning
- Visiting industry professionals

All the modes of delivery are structured to develop on-going abilities and skills through exploring ideas, problem solving.

The course will be delivered with a wide range of teaching and learning styles whilst offering a broad range of assessment methods. Lectures, seminars, tutorials, peer-to-peer teaching, technical workshops, collaborative and individual teaching and learning methods will be adopted.

9. **Assessment methods**

Assessments include design, planning and execution of visual effects sequences, portfolio building, lab report, reflective journal, formal essay, case study and a negotiated 'Live' professional experience project brief. Each assessment undertaken for each module will enable you to experience a variety of roles within the VFX industry whilst enabling you to find your own specialism within the VFX spectrum.

Assessment is clearly defined in module specifications and module guides and each module summative assessment at the end of each module but is also supported with specific formative assessments during the course of the modules. Lecture, tutorial and seminar dialogue allow you to own and understand the assessment process.

Informal formative feedback is provided in tutorials, seminars and individual surgery sessions or via online methods. Recorded formal formative feedback is provided against the learning outcomes of the module at appropriate points, i.e. when you are best placed to be able to act on that feedback. Formative feedback is completed within the 21-day time frame and is returned to you via the NOW.

Summative feedback occurs at the conclusion of each module and is completed in line with University regulations.

10. **Course structure and curriculum**

This is a two year course FdSc Visual Effects Production Technology worth 240 Credit Points.

You will study towards 120 credit points in each year of study. The first year of study focusses on introductory material to establish a base level understanding of theoretical principles and practical processes. Your second year of study will expand your technical understanding of the core subject disciplines, whilst also introducing you to new contexts and working practices.

During the second year of study you will participate in an 'Industry' based module, designed to introduce you to the Visual Effects workplace, through a 'live' client brief. This provides you with an opportunity to put into practice the skills acquired in your other modules within an industry setting.

The assignments completed across all modules of the course are designed so that you will have developed a core set of skills by the end of your studies that will prepare you for work in industry. Additionally, the work you complete as part of your studies will form an ongoing collection of work that demonstrates your developing professionalism in the subject area, thus helping support your entry into industry or further study after graduation.

In year 1 you will have 12 hours of contact time and be expected to undertake a minimum of 16 hours of self-directed study.

In year 2 you will have 11 hours of contact time and be expected to undertake a minimum of 20 hours of self-directed study.

Higher Certificate

Interim Award

The interim award for this foundation degree is a Higher Certificate in Music Performance. 120 credits at level 4 FHEQ (Framework for Higher Education Qualifications) are required to achieve this award.

Progression routes

The formal automatic progression route for students on the foundation degree, who have succeeded at level 5, is to progress to the BSc (Hons) VFX Production Technology.

11. **Admission to the course**

Application is through UCAS. Minimum entry requirements follow the University's Code of Practice for Admissions.

The target groups for the course are:

- Applicants who have gained a BTEC Extended Diploma
- Students with A-Level award qualifications
- Mature students looking for career development or change.

For admission to the course students will need to have achieved 160 UCAS points from one of the following:

- at least 2 A levels or equivalent + 5 GCSEs grade A – C including maths and English
- Applications from mature students will also be considered in terms of their skills, aptitude and experience

Mature students with relevant experience and/or qualifications within a relevant subject area, are welcome to apply.

It is yet to be determined whether under the new ownership arrangement CICT will accept International students; however, should they do the following admissions criteria will need to be met:

International applicants will require an equivalent Level 3 qualification and will also require an IELTS score of at least 6.0, in addition to the standard entry criteria. Equivalent scores from other English language tests will be considered.

Non-UK qualifications will be assessed in comparison to their UK equivalents.

Additional support for speakers of languages other than English is provided within the University.

Though the entry requirements outlined are such as to encourage applications from a wide range of potential students the course has no part-time route.

APEL

In exceptional circumstances students with APL will be considered for admission to the course.

Widening Participation

The course will consider applicants with non-standard entry qualifications on demonstration of potential to undertake and benefit from the course.

12. **Support for learning**

You will be assigned a named personal tutor at the start of your 1st year who can act as a guide in more personal matters.

Your Course Handbook will contain details of the support available to you should there be an interruption in your studies, due to circumstances outside of your control, or through other factors affecting your academic performance. The School provides three options for requesting consideration and these are found in the section on Special Situations.

The School is committed to assisting you to achieve the best results possible during your studies with us, providing a wide range of academic help and advice. A comprehensive learner support system is adopted by the School, which also can include input from the university and student union, and can be tailored to meet your needs.

The University provides resources such as open access computers and the course provides specialised computer facilities, mixing suites, recording studios and a

commercial live event venue.

13. **Graduate destinations / employability**

Academic Tutorials are designed to help focus your individual career plan. These sessions, designed by your tutors are supported by the Careers Service. VFX Industry Practice module will help align your own exit trajectory with the assignment work you will be completing during the course.

Employability will be an integral element of the course with graduates being trained on the latest industry standard software and hardware combined with ample opportunities throughout the programme to undertake appropriate work based learning. The integration of problem solving and diagnostic testing and intensive tuition in increasingly complex software will increase students experience of creating and experimenting with a range of different pipelines and production processes so a confident, creative, innovative, technically savvy graduate is prepared with the new entrant skills demanded by the VFX industry.

Typical job roles in industry might include:

- Composer
- Concept Artist
- Layout Artist (3D computer animation)
- Lighting Technical Director
- Match move artist
- Roto Artist
- VFX Supervisor
- Digital Effects Supervisor:

Many roles in industry operate on a freelance or self-employed basis and the course aims to equip students for these working models through professional industry based projects and specific business skills workshops and seminars. Graduates seeking to enter the industry in a freelance capacity are well placed to successfully do so.

14. **Course standards and quality**

There are well-established systems for managing the quality of the curriculum within the School. External examiners are appointed to each course and report on the appropriateness of the curriculum, the quality of student work and the assessment process.

The School reviews, defines and updates its courses and modules with dialogue between staff and students an important part of this process. Whilst there are good informal relationships between staff and students, the School and University, we also have formal channels for student feedback which comprise:

- Student/Staff Liaison Committee
- Formal module evaluation, undertaken by questionnaire
- Course Student Representatives, elected by the student group, represent students.

At the end of each year the course team write an evaluative Course Standards and Quality Report (CSQR) which is discussed by the School Academic Standards and Quality Committee (SASQC) for actions recommended. Your contribution to this process is important.

15. **Assessment regulations**

This course is subject to the University's Common Assessment Regulations (located in Section 16 of the NTU Quality Handbook). Any course specific assessment features are described below:

There are no course specific assessment features

16. **Additional Information**

Collaborative partner(s):	Confetti Institute of Creative Technologies and Nottingham Trent University Engineering.
Course referenced to national QAA Benchmark Statements:	
Course recognised by:	N/A
Date implemented:	March 2015
Any additional information:	

Key features of the course:

- Designed to provide graduates with the core skills required to work in VFX industry.
- Teaches advanced computer skills working with industry standard post production software combined with a detailed understanding of the mathematical and scientific principles that underpin this subject area.
- Programme is designed around employability – students develop industry facing skills combined with creativity, good communications and organisational skills.
- Integration of problem solving and diagnostic testing and intensive tuition in increasingly complex software will increase student's experience of creating and experimenting with a range of different pipelines and production processes.