

BA (Hons) Illustration & Animation

2025/26

Full-Time

L4 Entry

DE L5

Top Up

About this document: This Key Information Document gives you a summary of the core characteristics of the BA (Hons) Illustration & Animation degree at HCA. Students may have learnt about this course from multiple sources: the college website, the college prospectus, and from conversations with staff and students for example, but we want to ensure that students have this overview for reference at any time during their studies with us as a record of the service we are agreeing to provide when a student accepts our offer of a place.

Award: The qualification that a student will receive upon successful completion of the programme is a BA (Hons) Illustration & Animation. This means that the award will be a Bachelor of Arts 'with honours'.

If a student does not complete the course, they may be eligible for a Certificate or Diploma of Higher Education.

Validating Body: The BA (Hons) Illustration & Animation Degree is validated by the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. However, the course is designed and delivered by Hereford College of Arts.

Regulatory Body: Hereford College of Arts is registered with the Office for Students (OfS) to deliver Higher Education. The OfS is an independent public body which reports to Parliament through the Department for Education <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk>. (Their aim is to ensure that every student, whatever their background, has a fulfilling experience of higher education that enriches their lives and careers.)

Length of Course: The standard and minimum length of this course is as follows:

Course	Standard/Minimum Length of the Course
BA (Hons) Illustration & Animation <i>Full-time</i>	3 years
BA (Hons) Illustration & Animation Top Up <i>Full-time</i>	1 year

Students will need to complete the course to gain the award.

Entry Requirements

All students need to be at least 18 years of age at the start of the course.

Applicants will submit a portfolio and may be invited for a further interview. The interview can be conducted in person or remotely. This will be a supportive process where guidance will be provided on the strengths and areas for improvement.

We usually expect applicants to have achieved a minimum of 96 UCAS points at entry. Whilst qualifications are important, our offers are not solely based on academic results. We may make offers based on other evidence of talent or suitability for the course.

Applicants who do not satisfy the standard entry requirement but offer other qualifications and or relevant experience will be considered on an individual basis.

Applicants whose first language is not English and require a student visa must achieve Level B2 in an approved Secure English Language Test (SELT) prior to enrolment. For further guidance, please visit the UK Visa and Immigration website <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa>

Your offer letter will outline any specific requirements associated with your offer.

Our Admissions Policy can be found [here](#)

Core Modules

All programmes of study are made up of modules. Some modules comprise two or more assignments. Modules have a credit value that contributes to the achievement of the qualification. Each module has its own syllabus, handbook and assessment. To pass each year, you need to achieve 120 credits. Modules vary in size from 20 credits to 60 credits.

Programme Structure

From your first day at HCA, you will work as a creative, developing your skills and your own voice through a series of projects. You will develop your creative practice, practical skills, alongside your critical awareness and theoretical knowledge. You will study a range of modules that build your knowledge and confidence, totalling 120 credits each year.

Over the course of your studies, you will work towards emerging as a creative, agile, resilient and adaptable graduate with excellent problem-solving and transferable skills who can confidently apply research skills to keep themselves up-to-date with emerging developments and technologies in the field.

BA (Hons) Illustration & Animation Level 4 (Year 1) Full Time

Module Title	Credits	Module Description
Practice in Context 1	20	The module provides an introduction to the work of key practitioners in Illustration and Animation, both past and present, across various genres of practice, to give students a broad overview of the historical development of the discipline and of the contexts which enable the work to be understood and assessed. The range of contexts examined in this module might include: • Biographical: artist's intentions and personal factors relevant to understanding the work; • Historical: political, social and cultural issues being addressed, direct and indirect influences of the historical environment; • Technological: factors related to development of the technology of creative production; • Art historical: precedents, influences, and relationships with contemporaries working in the same field; • Social: relationships, both individual and general, relevant to understanding the work; • Ethical factors relevant to understanding and evaluating the work; • Cultural: values and beliefs implicit in the work derived from the cultural environment, intentionally or unintentionally included. Students will be introduced to the context and genres within which Illustrator/Animators operate and the cultural and social significance of their practice. When appropriate students will be encouraged to relate past work to current issues and practices.
Practice 1	40	PART1 - 'Understanding the Creative Process' What does it do? What sort of problems do we have to overcome? What is a target audience and why do they matter? How do we adapt our thinking to these identified groups? How do deadlines affect our working process? What works for you? What is a journal, a scrapbook, a sketchbook, reflective feedback, annotation? Why note-taking matters... From concept to completion. Why do we need problem solvers? Ideas generation. Divergent and lateral thinking techniques. Brainstorming, mind-mapping, what-iffing and PLAY. Where to place emphasis. The usefulness of feedback and client/maker relationships. What is success? How do we define success? How do we measure learning? 'Visual Communication Principles'

		Focal point, contrast, balance, movement, rhythm, perspective and unity. Rule of thirds, golden section, materials choices. Print processes ‘Elements of Visual Communication’ Space, line, shape, size, patterns, texture and value. Mark making. Drawing, painting (including digital), Print processes Contemporary context Case studies including examples and inspirational content. A series of visiting practitioners that support elements of the above. What do contemporary illustrators do? Who commissions them? Authorial illustration and animation. PART 2 - ‘Drawing’ As well as the above, the module will include a substantial drawing course that will be delivered in order to accommodate expected differing levels of existing skills and according to preferred individual ambitions. The activities will be ‘broad’ in the sense that workshops will be designed as ‘core’ activity relevant to a practitioner with a general interest in visual communication especially illustration and animation. Drawing activities will include: Life drawing – looking at aspects of figure drawing, including, sketching, proportion, colour, mark making, foreshortening, tone, form and spatial awareness. All students will look at body movement, action, pose, poise and animation through movement. Landscape drawing – looking at aspects of drawing the landscape from the point of view of a visual communicator. This will include perspective (all forms), weather and atmospheric conditions, urban, rural and imaginary. The short course will include aspects of ‘staging’ where illustrators and animators use landscape as ‘settings’ for action in a variety of contexts (publishing and broadcast). PART 3 - ‘Animation’ There will be workshops in technical aspects of animation. Workshops will include basic knowledge leading to more complex exercises exploring the principles of animation in both a 2d and 3d context.
Foundations for Learning	20	Foundations for Learning serves as an introduction to the entire Arts School and its approaches to learning and community. Through a variety of workshops and taught sessions across multiple disciplines, it provides opportunities to collaborate with peers from different courses. This module is designed to foster exploration, inspiration, and personal growth, while building meaningful connections to support you throughout your studies.

Practice 2	40	This module will be primarily concerned with storytelling and students will receive introductions to aspects of the following: Picture Books This aspect of the module will look at illustration and how it is used to supplement reading 'Illustration is encouragement to read' Quentin Blake -Hay Festival 2016 The module will include the study of children's illustrated literature in a historical, contemporary and global context including (for example) classic texts, successful book series, character design, setting, motive (educational, moral based, instructive, cautionary folk tales etc), authorial, collaborative and innovative practice. Graphic novels and comics This aspect of the module will explore the extended visual narrative and interactive narratives (gaming etc). The module will include respect to genre and target audience in a global context with an emphasis on minority interests including both factual and fictional storylines as well as adaptations from classic texts. Reportage illustration and animation (reporting) Students will report visually on an external event that records an alternative view to the norm. this could be a sporting, political, specific location/place or activity that has universal interest. Animation This aspect will introduce students to the 'invisible' (not studio-based feature films) practice of animation (authorial, title sequences, music video, advertising and children's and adults tv series) including short animations in a historical, contemporary and global context. Creative writing Students will have the opportunity to write their own original scripts in a variety of workshop and directed study contexts. This will include character design, character interaction, context, genre, location etc. Collaboration. Students will form occasional writing partnerships and explore their own specialist skills and how to form useful and creative partnerships. Storyboarding and Editing Student will explore the impact of editing film and scripts in a historical, contemporary and global context. They will be introduced to Aristotle's Poetics, editing techniques and narrative structure in a variety of contexts and explore through storyboarding the effective and dramatic use of planning and editing to complete professional standard work. Students will complete a series of short workshop-based tasks regarding the above and will eventually decide on a specific major outcome in the second half of the module. This will be defined by their course and individual choice through discussion and dialogue with their tutor.
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BA (Hons) Illustration & Animation Level 5 (Year 2) Full Time

Module Title	Credits	Module Description
Practice in Context 2	20	The teaching programme will introduce a number of theoretical approaches which will help students extend their understanding of how creative practice can be critically understood (meaning) and evaluated (value). Topics to be covered might include: • Critical reading, writing and thinking • Reading Illustration as text: semiotics, context, culture and myth • Meaning, critical perspective, voice and reflexivity • Image and text: relationship, balance of power, mutual influence • Theories of style: What is a style? Does style matter? • Illustration and experience: pleasure, style and the enhancement of life • Internet culture: social and cultural impacts of screen-based design • Illustration and craftsmanship • Illustration Animation and art: what is Illustration and Animation? What are its limits?
Practice 3	40	Part 1 - Illustration applications Students will explore as series of projects that will test their abilities to utilise their core skills (gained in Level 4) and a variety of contexts. These may include: Editorial Illustration Short deadlines will reflect the profession world of editorial illustration in newspapers, periodicals and online platforms. Students will be directed through an imaginary Art Director and occasionally take on this role themselves when working in pairs. Outcomes will reflect current contemporary practice by including animated elements (gifs) and other online innovations. Software workshops will be designed and included to build students autonomy in all aspects of professional practice including communication, design, developmental work, production and delivery of content. Book publishing Similar to the above but looking at book cover design in historical, contemporary and global context Branding Students will explore how their characterisation and visualisation skills could be deployed in arrange of scenarios such as creating visual assets for Festivals or related events. This may include set design, branding, model making, mural design and other related outputs. This aspect of the module may draw on external project briefs and initiatives depending on availability Part2 - Animation applications Students following the animation pathway will occasionally deviate in

		order to explore how animation is used creatively to produce music video, advertising products and services, educational contexts with a particular aim at the small interactive screen, although not exclusively. Students will explore the innovative potential of using digital and non-digital processes to produce expressive and specific outcomes, some of which may be sourced externally from client or competition.
Practice 4	40	Part 1 - Competition & Commission To work either individually or collaboratively on a single or multiple projects generated from external sources. The actual outcomes cannot be anticipated with certainty, but they are likely to be sourced locally and according to specific events such as Festivals, both online and location based, plus partnerships with funded community-based initiatives or from clients in the commercial sector. Engagement with content will, where possible, relate to real world values and problems with particular attention placed on sustainability and equality and diversity. In addition, it is hoped that there will be opportunities to test existing skills in the public domain by creating and producing workshop activities aimed at children and or progression partner institutions, in order to improve confidence, knowledge sharing, teaching skills, planning and working to a budget with specific deadlines. It is anticipated that these sorts of activities will supplement content in the accompanying module Professional Practice 1. Part 2 - Personal Project To create a portfolio/showreel content that is self-generated, culminating in a screening or exhibition of final outcomes in the public domain (if possible). In partnership with the teaching team and peer group, individuals will generate ideas for personal projects based on a suitable starting point. This may be: • a personal collection of objects or one found in a named museum or archive; • an individual's response to a contemporary local, national or even international issue that could be explored through an aspect of visual communication. All work undertaken in this module will be accompanied by a digital archive/ journal that will describe and archive the creative process. This document will include the original brief(s), primary and secondary research findings, idea development work, discussion and feedback, amendments and improvements and production of final outcomes.
Professional Practice 1	20	During this module, students will develop professional skills. Opportunities for professional experience may include, live briefs, individual and group exhibitions, participating in national or international conferences, competitions, curation, commissions, designing and

		delivering a socially engaged community or schools project or undertaking placements in arts organisations such as arts workshops, art co-operatives, galleries etc. A series of visiting speakers, ranging from artist to professionals from creative organisations and education, will provide insightful advice into areas such as: • How to approach individual creative or organisations. • What different creative professions entail. • Expectations in the workplace. • How to plan content for and deliver education / community-based art projects. • Working to client commission/competition briefs. • Collectives/Collaboration/Networking Working with other people, How, why, what and when? Students will document and reflect on their professional work experience(s) and create a multi-media Personal Development Plan with supporting material for summative assessment.
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BA (Hons) Illustration & Animation Level 6 (Year 3) Full Time		
Module Title	Credits	Module Description
Practice in Context 3	20	The content of this module differs for each student, as each undertakes a research project into a self-selected topic designed to help them make sense of their own specialist area of studio practice in terms of culture, context and critical theory. Working closely with an individual supervisor, students are guided to select a research topic that is both manageable and appropriate to their studio interests and are helped both to locate and organise relevant sources and to construct a critical position informed by theory. The project is an exercise in largely self-directed academic research, but students receive tailored individual support and are given a series of target dates for reaching set stages of the project (e.g., delivery of title and synopsis, first draft, and so on) to ensure they stay on track as they progress towards the final deadline.
Practice 5	30	Students will be able to select from a range of externally sourced competitions and project briefs according to availability. The options will provide enough choice for students with differing aspirations and specialisms to make informed and relevant decisions, the final outcomes of which will form part of their emerging portfolios/showreels. In addition to the above, students will source personally generated project briefs with external clients and complete them in possible collaborations with internal partners from their peer group. These 'personally negotiated tasks/assignments' will be approved in agreement with the module leader and teaching team. Choice of outcome (Illustration or Animation or a combination of both) will be at the discretion of the individual and in negotiation with the Module Leader and teaching team All students will be expected to submit their work to competition if directly requested. All work undertaken in this module will be accompanied by a Blog or similar online platform that will describe and archive the creative process. The Blog will include the original brief, primary and secondary research findings, idea development work, discussion and feedback, amendments and improvements and production of final outcomes.

Professional Practice 2	10	Students will revisit and refine their Professional Development aspirations and produce additional material to support the generation of their graduate portfolio/showreel and artefacts that will supplement their main specialism and may contribute to end of year retail events such as CMYK and/or the Graduation Show. Other facets may include the development of social media and/or web presences, business identity (where appropriate) contributing to their exit strategy and launch of their professional careers. Students will reflect on and refine their knowledge of: • The employment landscape. • Copyright Law, licensing, contracts, T&C's, insurance, taxation, NI How, why, what and when? • The differences between Self-employment and permanent employment Proactive/Reactive/business ownership/entrepreneurship • Ethics, Morality and their career, an overview of how the Media operates censorship & self-censorship/audience/working ethically/sustainable choices • Representation online/ Social Media networking How, why, what and when? Consistency of brand, Effective and appropriate copy, quality of images • CV writing skills/Letter of introduction writing/application writing skills • Costing work/funding- writing applications and bids/budgeting Evaluating projects and clients/managing clients and employers • Further study Postgraduate courses, Teaching courses
Practice 6	60	This final module is designed to provide students with an opportunity to complete their undergraduate studies with a substantial project or projects that will define their practice. This work is expected to form the basis of an exit level exhibition to celebrate their work and provide an opportunity to place their work in the public domain and attract potential clients and employers. The students will continue to review their progress to date and in negotiation with their tutors create a series of project proposals from which to explore suitable solutions. By the end of the module each student should have produced the following: • Written Brief(s) • A Schedule • Evidence of appropriate primary and secondary research activity • Concept drawings, experiments/, tests, developmental work • A digital archive/journal • Completed artwork/prints in a physical and/or digital portfolio or a completed showreel of work • Other (to be specified by student)

		Students may request specialist materials and specific enrichment opportunities (site visits and visiting teachers/practitioners) to support and compliment their study. There is no limit on the number of projects that may be attempted, but the programme should reflect the study hours assigned to this module and a schedule be created in agreement with the personal tutor. The tasks should include a description of the deliverable content and be based on the proposal document and skills audit created at the end of level 5. All work undertaken in this module will be accompanied by a digital archive/journal that will describe and archive the creative process. This document will include the original brief(s), primary and secondary research findings, idea development work, discussion and feedback, amendments and improvements and production of final outcomes.
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Course Composition & Delivery:

The course is modular and is managed on a two-semester schedule totalling 31 weeks of tuition. The academic year begins in September and ends in June.

Level 4: the course defines Level 4 as induction and core generic skills acquisition

Level 5: applies the new skills gained at Level 4 in a range of appropriate contexts

Level 6: students specialise through individual learning programmes

The total length of the academic year is 33 weeks (including enrolment, induction and a research week), with breaks for Christmas, Easter and Summer.

Students will have access to college resources (studios, library, workshops, social areas) on weekdays during normal working hours and later on some days and at certain times of the year. Students may also have access to some resources during vacations, and current information on this is available upon request.

Students are awarded 'credits' for the successful completion of a module, totalling 120 in each academic year. A single credit is defined as ten hours of study, so a 20-credit module requires a total of 200 hours of study. A student must successfully achieve 120 credits. 1200 hours of study in total.

The percentage of contact time devoted to differing learning environments depends on the individual module content, but the course seeks to use a wide variety of teaching methods wherever possible. Examples of teaching methods include process inductions and workshops, demonstrations, lectures, presentations, master-classes, online learning activities, tutorials and seminar discussion groups.

Assessment is almost exclusively made by submission of coursework in the form of a portfolio, although written essays and reviews, plus presentations, are also used. There are no timed, written examinations.

Blended Learning

Hereford College of Arts is completely committed to face-to-face learning and the vast majority of our education takes place on campus in our workshops, studios, library, lecture rooms.

We do use online learning when it's the best mode of delivery, for example an international artist delivering a live stream from their studio or where a student has an agreed exceptional circumstance that warrants online learning in that instance.

Typical Delivery Plan

The tables below indicate the typical delivery schedules for the programme for each pattern of attendance. The team reserves the right to re-organise the delivery of modules per semester, in accord with resource availability and student requests (which will be accommodated where feasible).

Full-time study

Level 4

Semester 1	Practice in Context 1 20 Credits	Practice 1 40 credits	Foundations for Learning 20 credits
Semester 2		Practice 2 40 credits	

Level 5

Semester 1	Practice in Context 2 20 Credits	Practice 3 40 credits	Professional Practice 1 20 credits
Semester 2		Practice 4 40 credits	

Level 6/Top Up

Semester 1	Practice in Context 3 20 Credits	Practice 5 30 credits	Professional Practice 2 10 credits
Semester 2	Practice 6 60 credits		

Tuition Fees

The tuition fees for 2025/26 are outlined in the table below. For more information about applying for a tuition fee loan, please visit www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance.

Please note that this annual fee will remain unchanged for the 3-year duration of your course. However, following enrolment, students transferring to an alternative mode of study, repeating or retaking modules or suspending their studies, will need to confirm fees with the Finance Department.

Course	Level	Year	Fees
BA (Hons) Illustration & Animation full-time (Home students)	4	Year 1	£9275
BA (Hons) Illustration & Animation full-time (Home students)	5 (Direct entrants)	Year 2	£9000
BA (Hons) Illustration & Animation Top Up full-time (Home students)	6	Year 1	£9000
BA (Hons) Illustration & Animation full-time (Overseas students)	4	Year 1	£14,150

EU students who have pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme will be eligible for a tuition fee loan only. Please note that the Higher Education Student Finance portal normally opens in mid-February. The College would encourage students to submit their student finance application as soon as possible so funding is in place for when they start their course

All students need to ensure that the funding is in place for their tuition fees and living costs prior to enrolment.

Payment, Service Delivery & Performance Arrangements:

- If the tuition fee is paid to the College via the Student Loans Company, it will be paid in 3 instalments – 25% in term 1, 25% in term 2 and 50% in term 3.
- If a student is paying their own tuition fees, students can pay in instalments by direct debit only. Students will be required to pay 1/3 of their annual tuition fees each term.
- Overseas students are required to pay their tuition fees in full by June prior to the commencement of their course.
- Any of the additional costs (see additional costs section) are collected via an online secure payment system.

Additional Costs

Additional costs are directly related to your study but exclude accommodation and student's personal living costs. Further information about halls of residence and other accommodation available in Hereford is available on our website.

The courses at HCA have been designed to minimise the impact of additional costs; some trips and materials will be fully funded by the college or heavily subsidised. However, typically, a student will choose to spend around an additional £270-£1600 in the first year, £270-£1300 in the second year and £360-£1400 in their final year, depending on scale of work and materials chosen or other related costs.

Students spend different amounts depending on the areas in which they specialise and individual choices. We appreciate that not all students will be able to invest the same money in their work, and staff assessing it will not judge work by the cost of materials or other resources.

The college shop stocks specialist materials at competitive prices and digital equipment can be loaned from the media stores at no extra cost to students.

Students on all courses will also have the chance to take part in optional trips that require additional payment. Non – attendance on the trips will not incur assessment penalties, though trips are designed to help students develop their practice. There is an optional annual cross-course overseas residential trip. In the 2023-24 academic year, the trip was a four-day visit to Paris at a cost to students of £425. This fee included a shared dorm room and all travel costs from Hereford to Paris including Eurostar tickets.

Places on the optional trips are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

On completion of Level 6 (the final level of study), some students also choose to take part in an optional residential trip to London for one of the various graduate showcases (for instance New Designers). Decisions about these showcases are made by the college with students on an annual basis and costed according to differing showcase fees, numbers of students taking part and ambition of display. Students are required to contribute to financing this activity and are encouraged to take part in fundraising events and grant applications.

The College is committed to ensuring that students considering studying at HCA are fully aware of the possible additional costs.

Following enrolment, students that face genuine financial hardship may apply to the College Hardship Fund.

Average Cost Breakdown

This table is an estimate of the minimum costs a typical student may face during the course.

The nature of creative study means it is difficult to be precise with material costs. We encourage students to source sustainable materials and recycle where they can however students are free to invest in additional resources pertinent to their emerging practice.

Unless specified the cost listed refers to the whole three-years of study.

Item	Minimum Cost	Notes
Adobe	£16.24 per month	Adobe CC subscription for use outside of college hours (discounted by 70%) NB Adobe CC is free to use for any student working within the college. Adobe often runs a Black Friday deal for a year's subscription for only £13.15 per month.
Microsoft Office 365	£0	The College provides a free subscription to Microsoft 365 with all Office applications and 1TB of cloud storage upon enrolment.
Laptop/Tablet & Stylus	£400+	There are tablets available to borrow from the stores but many students do invest in them
Print Charges for course Work	£130	The College charges 4p per page for A4 B&W printing, 20p for colour. A3 is 6p per page for standard B&W printing and 40p for colour.
Print charges for exhibition display work	£100	HCA offers a selection of specialised high-quality printing at various rates.
Transport costs on city visits	£60	Reduced ticket pricing is available through 16-25 National Rail card. Most local/countywide trips are funded through the course budget. This example considers self-directed research trips by train to Birmingham and/or London etc
Course Specific Field Trips (Please Specify)	£200 - £550 yearly	Day trips are usually paid for by the course. Overnight trips are 'optional' and are paid by the student. A two-day London trip currently costs £200. A three-day overseas trip would cost around £550 plus expenses.
Promoting own art practice (Webhosting, Domain name registration, business cards etc)	£50	
Academic texts, books, magazines & subscriptions	£100	As well as subscribing to a wide range of magazines and journals HCA's Library is home to an extensive back catalogue of printed material. So, while students are encouraged to subscribe to course-related material it is likely that it will be freely available in our library.
Level 6: External Exhibition for example Free Range, London inc exhibition contribution & accommodation	£300	Students are encouraged to undertake fundraising activities & commissions to cover level 6 exhibition costs.
Portfolio cases	N/A	Many students already have portfolios from previous education route; these don't become a course 'requirement' until L6 in preparation for industry interviews
Drawing & painting materials (pens, ink, paper etc)	£150	The Illustration area has a keeps a wide selection of paper free for course use.
Specialist Software		All Apps recommended for production of illustration and/or animation are free. Occasionally students seek more specialist ones that sometimes charge, but the costs are variable.

Location of Study

Our degree courses are all based at our College Road Campus but several specialist workshops and performing spaces are located nearby on our Folly Lane Campus and degree level students often work between both sites. Much of a student's study will also involve working in different locations in the city and surrounding area.

Locations & Contact Details

- **College Road Campus:** Hereford College of Arts, College Road, Hereford. HR1 1EB.
- **Folly Lane Campus:** Hereford College of Arts, Folly Lane, Hereford. HR1 1LT.
- **Telephone:** 01432 273359

If you have any enquiries, please contact our registry department: registry@hca.ac.uk

Complaint Handling Process

Our full complaints policy can be found here; Our full complaints policy can be found [here](#).

Information relating to all academic regulations, including complaints procedures can be found via the UWTSD public website [here](#).