Dr Umran Ali-CV: 2024

1. PERSONAL DETAILS/QUALIFICATIONS

Surname:	Ali
Forename(s):	Umran
Title:	Dr
Qualifications:	1. BSc Computer & Video Games **(1st Class) (2004)** 2. M.A Creative Technology **(Distinction) (2005))** 3. Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education Research & Practice **(Distinction) (2008)** 4. Ph.D: *A Practice Based Exploration of Natural Environment Design in Computer & Video Games **(2016)*** • Fellow of Higher Education Academy, FHEA (2008) • Senior Fellow of Higher Education Academy, SFHEA, (2016)
Present appointment:	SAMCT, Grade 9, 2006-Present
Previous appointments:	• 2013-Present Senior Lecturer in Arts Media & Creative Technologies (UoS) • 2011- 2013 Director Of Creative Media (UoS) • July 2009-August 2011 Senior Lecturer in Creative Media (UoS) • July 2006-July 2009 Lecturer in Multimedia (UoS) • Sept 2004-July 2006 Visiting Lecturer in Arts & Media (UoS) • Sept 1998-2001 Freelance 3D Artist &Designer

2. EDUCATION AND SCHOLARSHIP

2.1 Innovation and impact in Education and Scholarship

a) Designed and written a range of undergraduate and postgraduates courses: integrating an industry and research informed approach to curriculum design, many of these programmes are still running today, and were relaunched during the portfolio/curriculum review in 2010.
   a. *B.Sc Computer & Video Games programme* (taken through two periodic programme reviews (5 year), written 30 new modules L4-L7, amended further 20, taken through internal outline & externally assessed detailed approval stages)
   b. *M.A/MSc Animation*: Outline & detailed approval including writing 7 new PG modules)
   c. Wrote the first UG dissertation module in SAMCT based around *Practice as Research (Practice Based Dissertation) (2019)*

b) Executive member of the Universities Digital Cluster (2009-2014)
c) Skillset Academy Panel Member, School of Media, Music & Performance (2010)

Module Design & Leadership	
L4	L5
- Design Practice Frameworks - Visual Arts - Entertainment Technologies - Creative Media Analysis - Design Theory Frameworks - Digital Graphics - Programming for Artists and Designers - Creative Sound and Music	- Games Design Planning - Agile Production Management - Creative Sound and Music Production - Digital Character Art - Tools Programming for Games - Games Design Prototyping - Digital Narrative Technologies - Digital Asset Management - Digital Environment Art - Engine Programming for Games
L6	L7
- Creative Artefact Production Planning - Business and Legal Practice - Creative Portfolio Development - Practice-Based Dissertation	- Practice Based Dissertation (research) - Narrative & Storyboarding - Advanced Character Creation and Production - Animation Production Pipelines - Collaborative Animation Portfolio Project

2.2 CPD Record

1. Effective Negotiating & Bargaining (2022)
2. H&S For Rep 1 (2020)
3. Workplace- Reps 1 (2019)
4. PGR Supervisor Training (2017)
5. Independent Viva Chair Training (2017)
6. PMC Panel Training (2017)
7. SFHEA Writing Guidance Workshop (2016)
8. Senior Lecturer Roles & Responsibilities Workshop (2015)
9. Personal Tutor (Roles & Responsibilities) (2013)
10. Blackboard VLE & Gradeboard Training (2012)
11. Personal Development Appraisals for Managers (2012)
12. Media Assessment Management Training (2012)
13. Microsoft Train the Trainer Silverlight (2010)
14. Programme Leader Management Training (2010)
15. E&D Training (chair & policy development) (2009)
16. Recruitment/Interview Assessment Training (2009)
17. Exam Board Chairing (2009,2012.2013)
18. Postgraduate Certificate in higher education research & practice (2008)

2.3 Leadership in Education and Scholarship

2.31 Academic Leadership

BSc CVG Programme Leader (2006-2012)

- Responsible for the academic and programme management for over 120 UG students covering 31 modules cross faculty, cross school (2 colleges/3 schools.) interdisciplinary programme (Schools of Arts, Media, Music & Performance, and School of Science & Engineering)
- Line management of 10 HPL/academic staff members.

- Led the programme that was under a serious internal QA review to upper quartile (top 10 in the UK, and a £25,000 award BAFTA nomination within 5 years

- Increased student satisfaction (2006 35% NSS to 2011 95% satisfaction)

- Successfully led the BSc CVG through two 5 year reviews (inc internal and external QA assessment), took the programme through three major rewrites due to internal curriculum & portfolio reviews.

Director of Creative Media (2011-2013)

- Providing academic leadership ~800 students, and ~80 academic staff members.
- Responsible for Directorate programmes (5 UG and 6 PGT) meet all academic and professional standards and conform to the requirements of the University's quality assurance processes
- Line management responsibility for 20 FT academic staff & ~60 part time staff.
- Building the Inter-organisational Media network; with BC/ITV, Adobe, Nvidia.
- Co-lead, BBC Fusion Games (MediaCity UK, United Kingdom, December 2012).
    - Organized & managed involvement from 7 national media companies in the expo area(live play & create space)
    - Organised & created UG students as ambassadors/'Game Champions' for a launch event with Peter Salmon (director of BBC North)
    - Negotiated with an external partner to provide free(~£5000) entertainment for event.

- Led BBC Fast Train North (MediaCity UK, United Kingdom, November 2012).
    - Securing 45 placements for student as guides, hosts and runners and Technical Assistants for the event.
    - Students working with a BBC Producer to deliver the Fast Train TV Live Magazine Show.
    - Securing 220 UG/PG students attending BBC master classes
    - Securing & managing the delivery of a Master classes on 'Opportunities in Children's TV', " Jointly wrote the Games Design for Broadcast" delivered by the M.D of SmashMouth Games
    - Securing & manning a recruitment stand in the Careers Corner of Fast Train North promoting primarily MA Creative Media Courses at UoS, MCUK.

- Lead Organizer/presenter UoS/University of Bergen; Showcase Event (2012)
- Lead Organizer UoS/University of Bergen; MCUK Development Consultancy Day (2012)

2.32 Teaching Collaboration

1. Led the BSc CVG Programme (Internal) collaboration across two faculties/three schools(2006-2012)
2. Co-lead with Dr Zeljka Kreptic(SEE) for *MSc Drug Design* students; Pitching & Presentation, Missing elements projects funded by the RSC. (2023/2034) School of SAMCT/SEE
3. Co-led a Joint Collaboration with Mr Eddy Fox (Manchester School of Architecture) & Mark Jackson (2018-2023) for M.A Architecture programme; using game engines for teaching architecture.
4. Co-led a Joint Collaboration Zuby Ahmed BCU, Gamercamp) on Landscape Design & Games Design (2015-2019)

2.33 Additional Leadership Roles

<u>UCU Trade Union Vice President/Branch President/Equality Officer</u> (2017-present)

- Led the negotiation and signing of the recognition agreement between UCU/UoS(2017)
- Co-chair JAC (Joint Academic Consultation Committee);(2017-present) includes institutional level focus on teaching, learning & research policies/practice.
- Elected Co-chair for JNCC/Joint Academic Committee: for over 7 years led on various formation, planning and implementation of T&L, research, enterprise, organisational & operational policies/processes including
  - o Workload, Shape of the year, Observation of teaching, Lecturer to. SL (Inc proposal of additional posts), Research Strategy inc REF COP2021, Mental Health Strategy., Observation of Teaching, Academic Consultancy

1. **Lead union representative UoS COVID Planning Group(2020-2022)**
   - o Weekly meeting with CEO/Dir Of HR managing institutional covid shutdown/lockdown response
   - o Led the Negotiations for additional 5x0.5 FTE trade union H&S officers to support plans.
   - o Led on the University of Salford Collective Agreement – Furloughing Staff on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme
   - o Led the 'Return to Campus' workstream on behalf of both TU's to ensure successful return to campus for all staff and students.
   - o Wrote the '5 Tests' Analysis inc proposal/development of risk assessments for staff with protected characteristics (i.e based on sex, age, ethnicity) this was in conjunction with medical professionals from outside the UoS,

Outcome: Enabled UoS to move to online teaching delivery across all school safely, UoS had the lowest number of infections/no outbreak of covid across the region (inc comparator HEI''s), no BAME staff put at serious risk of illness/death, complete buy-in from staff without escalation or a formal dispute, joint comms from TU's and employer. The UoS plan was noted by the Department of Education as a model plan and used in it's recommendations to all HEI's for covid planning.

2. **Academic & professional workloads Institutional Review (2018-present)**
   - Wrote, deployed, an institutional wide survey for PS & Academic staff across 400 staff members;, inc full analysis for VCET(ULT group)
   - Led to the formation of a ULT led workload review group (led by PVC research) where I acted as co-chair.
   - Wrote the jointly agreed principles on institution academic workload management.
   - Co-lead Workload Task & Finish group with PVC KD; inc writing of the workload Operational Plan
   - Current lead the workload steering group as joint TU lead.

Outcome: led to introduction of a new workload system (2021); sit on the UoS workload committee, radical change to the workload management at the University including a new system, principles, appeals process and agreed notional hours.

3. **REF2021 Code of Practice Lead Negotiator:** Named contributor on *REF2021 COP* Led on equality impact/measures; This involved significant local/regional and national negotiations to secure a written letter of support based on negotiations to write an agreed COP. The UoS COP was the only HEI in the UK to receive a signed letter of support from UCU.

Outcome: led to the UoS one of a few HEI's that passed Research England's 1st round due to EDI/stakeholder support due to signed letter of support from UCU . Formal recognition for work from Director of HR(Nominated VC event 2019)

9, **Co-led the creation of the institutional UoS Lecture Capture policy.**

- Secured Institutional Lecture Capture Agreement (full operational guide) without dispute and full support of academic staff membership enabling several T&L

Outcome: Agreed policy that was rolled out to support an enhanced T&L across the institution, enabling hybrid T&L practices whilst protecting University I.P rights as well as staff moral and performance rights. The model agreement served as best practice with other institutions adopting elements from UoS model agreement.

4. **Lead branch negotiator & staff representative (2017-present)**
   Management of serious grievances and disciplinaries inc negotiating settlement agreements, NDA's due to confidentiality.

Outcome: I have negotiated and led secure a significant number of agreements (inc formal legal) between the employer and employee's over several years, maintaining strict employer and staff confidentiality. These have been secured directly with senior members of University (Director of HR x2) and employee's as well as third part legal representatives, confidentiality to date has been maintained and has involved the spectrum of employment issues inc significant EDI dimensions.

5. **Lead: Cost-of-Living Support Measures Initiative**
   o Wrote and led on a TU paper highlighting financial pressures on staff; proposing cost of living measures inc free/discounted food on camps,(reconsideration of food catering contract),

Outcome: Enhanced and easier eye care prescription system, Secured cost of living payments for all staff for 2 consecutive years (23/24), measures for discounted/free food on campus for all staff

School of Music, Media & Performance Equality & Diversity Co-Ordinator (2006-2010)

- Responsible for E&D policy review, planning & delivery for 2000 students/200 Staff(School of MMP)
- University wide Project lead on identifying causes of plagiarism in BME student populations
- BME Forum member (2006-2012)

UoS BAME Network Chair (2019-2021)

- Organized staff meetings quarterly and engaged regularly to support institutional EMI staff, in order to share best practice, provide a safe space and identify workplace EDI challenges.
- Member of Workplace Inclusion Action Group/I&D committee

2.4 Esteem in Education and Scholarship

1. Senior fellow of the Higher Education Academy (2016)

2.5 Consultancy & External Examiner (QA) Experience

Internal QA Experience

1. Chair of the board of examiners, School of MMP/SAMCT (2009 onwards)
2. Chair of Directorate module/programme boards(2011 onwards)
3. External QAA UoS Audit 2008 : School executive Committee Member
4. Internal School Portfolio review (2009): Panel member MMP
5. Periodic Programme Review Lead Reader (2009/2010) School of MMP
6. BSc CVG Programme leader: responsible for quality enhancement, monitoring & evaluation over 6 years, with each successive external examiners report showing significant improvement in the quality(teaching, content, engagement) of the programme

External QA

1. BA (Hons) Digital Graphics for Games Production, External Examiner, Open University, (2024-)
2. FdSc Virtual Reality + 3D Modelling, External Examiner University of Plymouth (2022-)
3. M.Sc. Games Production, External Examiner, Birmingham City University, (2021-2023)
4. B.A Concept Art for Games & Film. Staffordshire University, External Examiner (2021-2023)
5. M.A Games/Animation, University of Teesside, External Examiner (2016-2022)
6. B.A Media, Hong Kong Design Institute & University of Coventry, External Advisor, 2016
7. B.Sc. Interactive Entertainment (Games Development), B.A Interactive Entertainment (Digital Art), External Examiner Birmingham City University, (2014-present)
8. Fd.D Interactive Media, Northern Region College, Ireland, External Advisor (2014)
9. Edexcel/Pearson ; A-Level Design & Technology/Product Design Specifications Redevelopment Consultant (2012)
10. Edexcel/Pearson ; A-Level Art & Design Specifications Redevelopment Consultant (2012)
11. Salford City College Games Design (Foundation Degree) External Advisor (2012)
12. Manchester College, BTEC Media Production (Games Development) External Verifier (2012)

3.0 RESEARCH

(i) Books	A) • O'Hare, J. J., Fairchild, A., & Ali, U. (2022). Money & Trust in Digital Society: Bitcoin, Nostr, Stablecoins, Digital Objects and Generative AI in B2B Spatial Mixed Reality. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2207.09460*. (*33%) • Ali, U (2012) ' Virtual Landscapes: The Embryonic Era (1980-1989)' ISBN(978-0-9574086-0-9) Zayn Creative • Ali, U (2012) ' Virtual Landscapes: The Transition Era (1990-1999)' ISBN 978-0-9574086-1-6 Zayn Creative • Ali, U (2012) ' Virtual Landscapes: The Modern Era (2000-2012)' ISBN 978-0-9574086-2-3 ,Zayn Creative (a) Ali, U (2024/5) Scenism: *A practice based guide to Virtual Environment & Landscape Design*, TBC
(ii) Chapters in books	a) Ali, U & Totten, C. W. (2019). *An architectural approach to level design*. AK Peters/CRC Press.
(iii) Articles in refereed journals and conference contributions	(a) Ali, U (2018) ' Review - An Architectural Approach to Level Design, The Computer Games Journal, SpingerLink (b) Virtual Ecosystem & Video Games, (CIEEM Annual Conference 2018, Scotland, Nov 2018) (c) Virtual landscapes: A practice-based exploration of natural environment design (Royal Geographical Society IBG, Annual conference, Wales, United Kingdom, Aug 2018)
(iv) Articles in non-refereed journals, reports, conference contributions	(a) Red Dead Redemption 2 : Virtual ecology is making game worlds eerily like our own (The Conversation, Nov 2018 b) • Ali, U (2024) A Practice based exploration of Rapid 2D game prototyping using generative A.I technologies (TBC) • Ali, U (2023) Landvættir; An exploration of AI, landscape and place (TBC)

(v) Other published output	1. Lead Story Consultant iphone/ IOS app Quran Stories with HudHud , Interactive Storytelling/Animation (2022) 2. Virtual Amazon Rainforest , Voice for Nature/Planet Parliament Now! (2019) 3. Beyond Aesthetic Reference: An interactive natural landforms reference tool.(2014) 4. ShadowMoss Memory: An exploration of Gameplace; made in CryEngine 3. (2014) 5. MindFlow: A Collaborative creative project tool (2013) 6. ShadowMoss Island; A Practice based exploration of Virtual Landscape Design, in CryEngine 3 (2012) 7. Virtual Landscapes Interactive Database: An interactive database of the landscapes in over 100 games across 30 years in UltraHD panoramic form (Microsoft PivotViewer) 8. Virtual Jean-Claude Risset:, Marseille, Paris/ F and Manchester/ UK, Fuchs, Ali & Ward (3D Artist & Character Animator) (2003/ 2004) 9. Virtually FACTicious Ali, Fuchs , Eckermann with Darkhorse Venture and BT Exact (2004) 10. Heretic Kingdoms: The Inquisition), 3D People, Project Three Interactive BV, PC Game(DesignCredit) (2004) 11. PlastiCity: Bradford and Manchester/ UK , Fuchs, Ali & Ward (3D Artist, Character Animator) (2004 – 2006)
(vii) Other media, innovative or creative activities and evidence of peer review	Exhibitions 1. Virtual Landscapes, Manchester Science Festival, October 2017 2. Virtual Landscapes (2014) 3. AnimGame Festival, MediaCity UK, (June 2012) 4. Virtual Landscapes @ BBC Fusion, MediaCity UK, (Nov 2012)

4.0 ENGAGEMENT

4.0 External recognition

1. Winner: Best Educational Event*, Remembering Srebrenica UK*, Community Champion awards (2021)

4.1 Invited Participation

1. Invited Chair for **Excellence in Visualization and Digital Practice Award** panel, Landscape Institute 2021,
2. Invited Panel member Judge for **Landscape Innovation Award** , Landscape Institute (2019)

4.2 Media/Press Interviews

1. BBC News; Character representation & diversity in games *(Interview, BBC News, United Kingdom, June 2021).*
2. ITV Special Report: Gaming Addiction *(Interview, ITV News, United Kingdom, June 2018).* https://www.itv.com/news/granada/2018-07-13/special-report-harmless-pastime-or-potential-addiction-is-gaming-harming-our-children/
3. Gaming Addiction Fortnite: *(Interview, Manchester Evening News, United Kingdom, June 2018).*

https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/whats-on/family-kids-news/gaming-disorder-addiction-fortnite-nhs-14799101

4. Co-organiser of BBC Fusion (2012) Expo/Conference: UK's first Broadcast & Video Games conference,

5. WarCraft Movie: Expert Opinion (BBC Radio Live 5, United Kingdom, June 2016).

6. Ruskin inspires Salford academic to improve virtual landscapes (The Times Education Higher, United Kingdom, January 2016). www.timeshighereducation.com/news/ruskin-inspires-academic-improve-virtual-landscapes

7. George Osborne's tax credits for video games producers (Mancunianmatters, United Kingdom, June 2012). www.mancunianmatters.co.uk/content/090666431-george-osbornes-tax-credits-video-g... more >>.

8. Salford students create commercial computer game (Gamasutra, United Kingdom, December 2010).
www.gamasutra.com/view/pressreleases/146756/Salford_students_create_commercial_computer_game.php

9. In The Night Garden (BBC Radio Live 5, United Kingdom, September 2010).

10. Children & Violent Video Games: Discussion (BBC Radio Live 5, United Kingdom, July 2010).

11. May the Dark Force triumph! (Manchester Evening News, United Kingdom, August 2004). www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/may-the-dark-force-triumph-1147868

12. The Virtual Adventurers (Manchester Evening News, United Kingdom, July 2004). http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/uk-news/the-virtual-adventurers-1118670

13. The Games Collector (interview) (BBC North West Tonight, United Kingdom, August 2003).

14. Sci-fi Channel Ultimate Gamer Finalist (Sci-fi Channel, United Kingdom, June 2003). www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/sci-fi-teams-ang-lees-hulk-find-top-uk-gamer/177229

4.3 Community Engagement

1. APPSUK: Association of Pakistani Physicians and Surgeons of the United Kingdom; Media, AI and Technology collaborations inc workshops/seminars/outreach work. 2017-2024
2. *Remembering Srebrenica* (National Chairty) Symposium organisation/Tackling Hate
3. *Remembering Karachi:* A practice based Virtual installation for British South Asian Dementia Patients; Together Dementia Support (CryEngine 2022-)
4. Biora Ltd: Partnership with Biodiversity; Game Design/AI and Landscape Planning/Ecology Solutions: CPD/Workshops, 2019-2024.
5. Director/Producer/Creative Lead Remembering Srebrenica 25th Anniversary Event: The Courage of Ramiza Gurdić, Video Memorial/Testimony
6. Chair & Organiser: Remembering Srebrenica Symposium (2022) Tackling hate using 3D & immersive storytelling/ technologies (Best Education Event Winner 2021)
7. Co-lead/Judge for '*Young Professionals Society'* Creative Storytelling event (9-16yr BAME students) (2020/2021)

4.4 Professional Activities

4.41 Academic Outreach/Visits

1. Islamic High School for Girls Guest Lecture/Workshop (2015-2022)
2. Levenshulme High School Guest Lecture/Workshop (2015-2021)

3. Xaverian College Guest Lecture/Workshop (2015-2017)
4. Salford City College Widening Access & Raising Inspirations Workshops (2009-2015)
5. Ashton College Widening Access & Raising Inspirations Workshops (2012-2015)
6. Burnage Media College Guest Lecture/Workshop (Nov /2012/May 2015)
7. Little Level School Guest Lecture/Workshop (2013/2014)
8. South Cheshire College Guest Lecture/Workshop (2012-2015)

4.42 Conference Organization

1. Remembering Srebrenica Symposium (Manchester, United Kingdom, Oct 2021)
2. Chair: *Regulating eSports,* eSports Symposium; University of Salford (2016)
3. BBC Fusion Games (MediaCity UK, United Kingdom, December 2012)
4. BBC Fast Train North (MediaCity UK, United Kingdom, November 2012).

4.43 Conference Presentations

1. Virtual Ecosystem & Video Games, (CIEEM Annual Conference 2018, Scotland, Nov 2018)
2. Gamification of Landscape Architecture (Landscape Institute CPD, Manchester, United Kingdom, Oct 2018)
3. Virtual landscapes: A practice-based exploration of natural environment design (Royal Geographical Society IBG, Annual conference, Wales, United Kingdom, Aug 2018)
4. Games Design & Landscape Architecture (MSA Workshop, United Kingdom June 2018-2023)
5. Managing the Ph.D Viva, (PG Research Week, University Of Salford Manchester, United Kingdom, Jan 2018)
6. Diversity in Arts & Media (University Of Salford Manchester, United Kingdom, Dec 2017)
7. Virtual Landscapes: A Practice-Based Exploration of Natural Environment Design (Digra UK, Manchester, United Kingdom, 2017)
8. Ruskin, Geology and Mountains: The Future of Game Design (University Of Salford Manchester, United Kingdom, 2013)
9. Serious Games: Games Design & Landscape Architecture (Ludotopia II Conference and Workshop Series, Manchester, United Kingdom, 2011)
10. Games Design & Virtual Landscapes (A&D forum, Manchester, United Kingdom, 2010- 2012)
11. Anti-Piracy Countermeasures (IGDA, London, United Kingdom, GDCE 2003)