

GRAPHIC DESIGN



Course information

Studying graphic design requires developing an understanding of how visual information is communicated within different contexts, for different audiences and through the use of a variety of media, technologies and styles. This course has been structured to enable students to experience a broad range of design and communication theory and practice and to help them to comprehend the relationship between designing, materials, processes and manufacture.

Students are required to work in one or more areas of Graphic Design, such as those listed below. The boundaries are porous and a typical design brief will often require the exploration of multiple techniques.

- Illustration
- Advertising & Packaging
- Film & Animation
- Digital media
- Print based media
- Photography

Assessment

The first year of the course is aimed at developing new, and existing, analytical, technical and conceptual skills as well as an independent approach to problem solving, in preparation for the assessed units in the final year.

The first of these externally assessed units is the Personal Investigation, which provides students with the opportunity to devise and organize a design project or inquiry, that is of particular interest to them.

The second unit is set by the exam board and requires the student to respond to one of seven broad starting points or design briefs, and will culminate in 15 hours of supervised time.

Both units are assessed internally, and moderated by the exam board (AQA). The first unit is worth 60% of the marks at A level and the second unit is worth 40%.



Why study Graphic Design?

Visual communication is ubiquitous. Consciously or otherwise, we engage with it every day through a combination of still and moving images, typography and symbols. The means by which this communication is achieved is a fascinating area to study and the interdisciplinary skills required to produce such work is highly sought after. This course is suitable for students who want to study design at a higher level as well as for those who simply want to broaden their A level choices with a subject that deals in creative visual communication.

Progression Opportunities

Graphic Design utilizes and develops lateral thought, practical skills, problem solving and the fluent use of visual language. The course provides the opportunity to work with a range of media and techniques, to study diverse topics and concepts through project work and to gain a contextual understanding of visual communication within industry and society. Students who have studied graphic communication have gone on to study a wide range of subjects at university; in addition to the purely visual language and design orientated courses they have also pursued careers in medicine, law, dentistry, geography, business, advertising and philosophy.

Additional information

In the first year, the department sets a variety of projects covering photography, print media, film & animation and digital media. These are often supported by skills based workshops, educational visits and live project links with working design agencies. Students are expected to generate independently their own ideas.



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