

# Programme Specification

Awarding Body	University of the Arts London (UAL)
Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB)	None.
Teaching Institution	Chelsea College of Arts
Final Award	BA (Honours) Graphic Design Communication
Length of Course	3 years full-time
UCAS Code	W216
Date of production/revision	October 2017 – Rev 2, 2017/18 Entry

## Course Introduction

Graphic designers are creative practitioners specialising in the visual communication of messages, meaning and ideas. The practice of graphic design can include typography, illustration, photography, advertising, animation, moving image and interaction design. Graphic designers have a critical role in identifying and addressing complex communication needs across changing and challenging commercial, social, cultural and environmental contexts. UAL alumni are leaders in this field; they have revolutionised design for print, digital and physical environments and experiences, systems and services for business, the arts, government and communities.

Our students are motivated individuals learning through experimentation, critical thinking, making and practice. They work within the diverse creative communities of their college and the economic, cultural and global resource of London, one of the world's leading design capitals. UAL graphic design courses inform and are informed by the creative industries; our staff and alumni are among the initiators and innovators continually expanding and redefining this dynamic and vital discipline.

Staff and students work together on the programme to promote and adhere to a core philosophy, that graphics at Chelsea is all 'about the big idea that challenge the brief and is beautifully made'. Students are encouraged to stimulate a passion for generating dynamic ideas and are supported in their development of core skills and in creating innovative concepts that require the development of professional digital, technical and presentation flair. With a high emphasis on live projects in collaboration with industry, the course offers a comprehensive grounding in the key principles of graphic design and critical awareness.

Students have the opportunity to work in design for print and moving image, benefiting from innovative use of online resources and creative blogs, which support self-directed study, in college and off-campus. Creative work in online platforms constitutes the basis for staff and students' ongoing research and innovation in our teaching and learning practice.

Our strong links with industry are evidenced by the opportunity for engagement in bespoke briefs, most exclusive to the course and introduced by practitioners and clients across a range of specialist areas. In addition, participation in internationally recognised professional design award schemes includes the Association of Design and Art Directors, (D&AD) Student Design Awards, with success from our students annually recognised by the subjects lead body. An emphasis on projects dealing with youth-orientated issues, brands, products and services constitute a key element a contemporary curriculum.

Project outcomes are published online, through e-commerce, as live broadcast and in print. Our client, collaborators have recently included: ASOS, Talenthouse, The Great Britain Campaign, Monotype, JTI Future Lab Milan, Adidas, MTV, The London Press, Umbro, Graphic Thought Facility, Nike, BBC, SAS London, MTV, DCM Cinema, Ministry of Sound, Showstudio, Conde Nast, Alexander McQueen, Why Not Associates, Spring Studio, XL Recordings and Wallpaper magazines among others.

Students interact at all levels with a wide range of innovative and dynamic visiting lecturers who are appointed as leaders in their field, to work alongside our core staff on tailored units. A scheduled professional speaker programme invites all students to participate in illustrated talks where a diverse range of leading professionals share their career stories, philosophies and professional practices. This engagement provides students with opportunities to network, build vital contacts and gain crucial experience. Professional speakers and lecturers working with the course include creatives from IDEO, Ridley Scott Associates, Creative Review, SAS London, Spring Studio, Graphic Thought Facility, Vogue, Wonderland, Twin and USED magazines.

Critical enquiry informs student's studio work and encourages design activity within a broader context. Active connectivity between graphic design practice and contextual theory underpins creative practice and enhancement of critical writing skills. Dissertations are typically themed around innovations in technology, social interaction and emerging public information distribution platforms and dissertation abstracts are commonly published alongside practical work in graduate catalogues.

## Course Aims

This course aims to offer our students:

- A supportive atmosphere that advances your knowledge and understanding of graphic design communication concepts, techniques and debates.
- An open and culturally diverse environment that fosters experimentation, dialogue and collaborations.
- A variety of learning opportunities that foster the integration of theory and practice through engagement with established research methods, current practice-based research and collaborations with the University's research centres.
- A dynamic learning environment that enables the development of focused practice and the development of a personal identity as a graphic designer, by networking with a wide range of practitioners and by undertaking live projects.
- Opportunities to engage with current and emerging professional practices through practitioner-led teaching teams, collaborations, design award submission and simulated work-based learning opportunities with organisations at the forefront of the communication industry.
- Opportunities for the development of transferable and professional skills relevant to employment and/or further study.

## Course Outcomes

The outcomes that you will have demonstrated upon completion of the course, are:

- Demonstrate a broad and systematic critical understanding of historical, contextual and contemporary debates related to Graphic Design Communication, together with the ability to evaluate and interpret them.
- Carry out sustained, systematic critical and practical research, using relevant resources and appropriate methods of analysis, enquiry and experimentation.
- Apply established and emerging graphic design techniques effectively, including a range of practice-based two and three-dimensional skills in both print (analogue) and digital media, including e-commerce.
- Manage personal learning and continuing development, through independent planning and organisation, critical reflection and self-evaluation.
- Use graphic design, communication and presentation skills in order to articulate complex ideas and respond effectively to a range of industry and self-initiated briefs, using specialist language effectively.
- Demonstrate personal ambition and a responsibility in decision making in order to respond to complex scenarios towards a focussed professional context or towards further study.

### **Learning and Teaching Methods**

The learning and teaching methods for this course are:

Academic skills/production/presentation/technical workshops; analogue and digital demonstrations; exhibition/studio/other visits/trips; focussed research; group/individual critiques, feedback and tutorials; group/team work; inductions, as appropriate; lectures and seminars; live projects; online learning; portfolio surgeries; project briefings; project presentations to clients and peers; research methods and analysis exercises; self-directed learning; simulated work-based learning; studio group teaching; subject lectures and seminars; team projects.

### **Scheduled Learning and Teaching**

Scheduled learning and teaching is the percentage of your time spent in timetabled learning and teaching. In each level (year) you are expected to study for 1200 hours over 30 weeks; below is the amount of time which is timetabled activity. The rest of your learning time will be self-directed, independent study.

- FHEQ Level 4 (Year 1) – 21%
- FHEQ Level 5 (Year 2) – 19%
- FHEQ Level 6 (Year 3) – 13%

### **Assessment Methods:**

The relevant assessment methods for this course may include:

Critical essays, reports and final dissertation; formative assessment: tutorial reviews and mid-year, interim reviews; peer assessment, seminars and project blogs; presentations; self-initiated project and individual portfolio submissions; student self-evaluations.

### **Reference Points**

The following reference points were used in designing the course:

- The University of the Arts London Credit and Course Structures Framework.
- The University of the Arts London Learning and Teaching policies.
- CCW (Camberwell, Chelsea and Wimbledon) policies and initiatives.

- The UK Quality Code for Higher Education Subject Benchmark Statements <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements>.
- The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Framework-Higher-Education-Qualifications-08.pdf>.
- The UK Quality Assurance Agency's relevant HE framework, subject benchmarks, and academic infrastructure ([www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)).

## Programme Summary

### Programme structures, features, units, credit and award requirements:

Course units are credit weighted in multiples of 20 and 1 credit is equivalent to 10 notional learning hours. The balance of how learning time is divided between taught time, access to supervised facilities and independent study will differ according to the particular focus of the unit and its level. In order to be awarded a BA (Hons) Graphic Design Communication, students must accumulate 360 credits in total.

### Distinctive features of the course:

- **A curriculum that maintains breadth, in response to rapidly advancing cultural and technical changes within subject** whilst supporting students in the development of a distinctive personal identity that engenders creative confidence. Students are enabled to create and develop visual response to a wide range of communication problems.
- **Students are supported** in their understanding of hierarchy, typography, aesthetics, composition and construction of meaningful images. This focus leads to evidence of high employability statistics following graduation.
- **A three-level (year) programme:** Level 4 (Year 1) - Breadth of experience; Level 5 (Year 2) - Investigation, depth and professional practice; Level 6 (Year 3) - Claiming professional recognition and employment or postgraduate progression. Graduates produce innovative portfolios that demonstrate high levels of craft and the ability to solve communication problems including identifying problems through research, analysis, solution generating and prototyping.
- **Delivers a 'tool kit'** of transferable and adaptable core professional technical and crafts. Accelerated skills are implemented by the delivery of beginner, intermediary and advanced principles across levels within typography, analogue and digital skills and an understanding of contemporary professional presentation.

- **Addresses contemporary skills and predicts future competences.** In order to fulfil the expectations placed upon designers in the future, students are encouraged to employ skills including those beyond today's typical scope. This ambition informs the ongoing development of our contemporary curriculum.
- **The curriculum includes high-level live (bespoke) projects;** design awards and simulated work-based learning opportunities and aspires to achieve the seamless integration of the professional design studio delivered within the classroom. This engagement is a major contributor towards the development of students that are independent strategists and subject innovators and aware of a broad understanding of issues related to the cognitive, social, cultural, technological and economic contexts for design.
- A high emphasis on **contextual theory informing studio practice**, resulting in evidence of a strong synergy between research methodology, writing and articulation informing conceptual depth and the directional ambition of student projects and graduate portfolios.
- **Size of cohort**, relatively small compared with comparable courses, supporting development of a close community of practice; demonstrated through a series of cross-level initiatives including a lecture series and social and networking events.
- **Students are engaged in wide range of teaching and learning methods**, including online learning tools with an emphasis on e-commerce and student blogs for recording and developing progression and self-reflection.
- **A core academic team with an extensive range of skills**, both professional and contextual supported by associate lecturers and specialist speakers from industry and alumni. This ensures the facilitation of student development both cognitively and practically.
- **Industry networking** and student self-promotion towards employability are encouraged and supported culminating in a prestigious degree show.
- **Our graduates** are professionally engaged in a wide range of posts within graphic design and communication practices which currently include: Deputy Art Director-Vogue Magazine, Print Designer-Oasis, Designer-Wilsdon Design Associates, Art Director-Meri Media, Director-Useful Studio, Communication Designer-IDEO, Director-Skin Flicks, Creative Director-Spring Studio New York, Graphic Designer-Barton Bogle Hagerty, Founder, Director Drop Dead Music, Designer-Virgin Media, Director-Generator Films, Creative Lead-Generator Films, Graphic Designer-View, Art Director-Ogilvy & Mather Paris, Director-Lukecharles, Senior Designer-ASOS, Communication Strategist-Brightgreen, Graphic Designer-Antidote, Account Director-Leo Burnett, Operations Director-Corkscrew, Designer-Puma Germany, Designer City & Law, At Director-My Studio, Design Consultant-Caribou.

### **Additional Course Costs**

Please note that additional costs may be incurred on this course, for such things as printing and photocopying, some materials, optional trips within the UK and overseas and final degree shows.

### **Recruitment and Admissions**

#### **Selection Criteria**

- 1 Evidence of a critical engagement with visual communication concepts and products.
- 2 An aptitude for developing communication propositions based on a rigorously constructed argument from extensive research.
- 3 Evidence that the applicant can communicate serious intent for graphic design inquiry.

#### **Portfolio advice**

- A concise portfolio indicating self-censorship and critical ability.
- Use of words, type and image, realised in a variety of media and formats including still and moving image.
- Evidence of an understanding of the broad range of the subject.
- Clear documentation of work that's unavailable or too large to bring.
- Self-initiated as well as project or course work.
- Evidence of research and development of ideas.
- Evidence of recent written work.

#### **Entry Requirements**

We select students based on the quality of their applications, looking primarily at their portfolio of work and personal statements.

Applicants will have, or are expected to achieve, either:

- A Foundation Diploma in Art and Design
  - 1 GCE A Level
  - 3 GCSEs grade C or above
- or
- BTEC Extended Diploma or NVQ Level 3
  - 3 GCSEs grade C or above
- or

- University of the Arts London level 3 Pre-University Diploma and Extended Diploma in Art and Design
  - 4 GCSEs grade C or above
- or
- International Baccalaureate Diploma pass achieved at 28 points or above
  - An equivalent level of performance in other internationally recognised national school leaving or university entrance qualifications
- or
- Other evidence of prior learning and experience via Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning - AP(E)L and / or alternative qualifications assessed as offering the same level as the above requirements

In exceptional circumstances, applicants may be considered if they present a portfolio of equivalent standard to a Foundation Diploma in Art and Design and have:

- 2 GCE A Levels
- 3 GCSEs grade C or above

Where conditional offers are made to GCE A Level applicants these will normally be at grade C or above. We select students based on the quality of their applications, looking primarily at their portfolio of work and personal statements.

The standard minimum entry requirements for this course are:

- A Level - 2 A levels grade C or above.
- or
- Pass at Foundation Diploma in Art and Design (Level 3 or 4).
- or
- Pass, Pass, Pass at BTEC Extended Diploma.
- or
- Pass at UAL Extended Diploma.
- or
- Access to Higher Education Diploma.
- or
- Equivalent EU or non-EU qualifications. For example - International Baccalaureate Diploma pass achieved at 28 points or above.
  - And 3 GCSE passes grade C or above.

We will also consider other evidence of prior learning and experience via Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning - AP(E)L and/or alternative qualifications assessed as offering the same level as the above requirements.

**If English is not your first language**

All classes are taught in English. If English is not your first language you must provide evidence at enrolment of the following:

IELTS level 6.0 or above, with at least 5.5 in reading, writing, listening and speaking (please check our [English Language requirements](#)).

## Course Diagram

Insert a course diagram which includes; units and their credit values, plus credit values per year/level, category of units (i.e. core or specialist), progression routes, years/levels of the course, any other relevant characteristics that distinguishes the course

Week	Autumn Term										Spring Term										Summer Term										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Year 1 Level 4	UAL FRESHERS' WEEK	Unit 1 Introduction to Graphic Design Communication - 20 Credits										Unit 3 Concept and Narrative – 40 Credits																			
		B														S	B														S
		Unit 2 Analogue and Digital Visualisation – 40 Credits																													
		B														S															
Unit 4 Creativity and Context – 20 Credits																															
B																														S	
Unit 5 Expanded Practice – 20 Credits										Unit 7 Developing a Personal Language – 40 Credits																					
B																S	B														S
Unit 6 Exploring the Professional Brief – 40 Credits																															
B															S																
Unit 8 Culture and Context – 20 Credits																															
B																													S		
Unit 9 Professional and Personal Practice – 80 Credits																															
B																												S			
Unit 10 Dissertation and Project Blog – 40 Credits																															
B																												S			

B = Unit Briefing

S = Summative Assessment Point

F = Formative Assessment Point

T = Tutorial