

# **MA Graphic Branding and Identity**

Programme Specification 2020/21

<b>Awarding Body</b>	University of the Arts London
<b>College</b>	London College of Communication
<b>School</b>	University of the Arts London
<b>Programme</b>	Branding and Design Innovation (L064)
<b>FHEQ Level</b>	Level 7 Masters
<b>Course Credits</b>	180
<b>Mode</b>	Full Time
<b>Duration of Course</b>	1 year
<b>Valid From</b>	September 1st 2020
<b>Course Entry Requirements</b>	<p>The course team welcomes applicants from a broad range of backgrounds, from all over the world. MA Graphic Branding and Identity attracts students who apply direct from an Honours degree course in a field relevant to graphic design, product design or architecture, or those with other, equivalent qualifications.</p> <p>The course team also welcomes students with relevant experience or those who may have previously worked in industry.</p> <p>Educational level may be demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honours degree (named above);</li> <li>• Possession of equivalent qualifications;</li> <li>• Prior experiential learning, the outcome of which can be demonstrated to be equivalent to formal qualifications otherwise required;</li> <li>• Or a combination of formal qualifications and experiential learning which, taken together, can be demonstrated to be equivalent to formal qualifications otherwise required.</li> </ul> <p><b>APEL (Accreditation of Prior Learning)</b></p>

	<p>Applicants who do not meet these course entry requirements may still be considered in exceptional cases. The course team will consider each application that demonstrates additional strengths and alternative evidence. This might, for example, be demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Related academic or work experience</li> <li>• The quality of the personal statement</li> <li>• A strong academic or other professional reference</li> <li>• OR a combination of these factors</li> </ul> <p>Each application will be considered on its own merit but we cannot guarantee an offer in each case.</p> <p><b>Language requirements</b></p> <p>All classes are conducted in English. If English is not your first language, we strongly recommend you let us know your English language test score in your application. If you have booked a test or are awaiting your results, please indicate this in your application. When asked to upload a CV as part of your application, please include any information about your English test score.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IELTS 6.5 (or equivalent) is required, with a minimum of 5.5 in each of the four skills.</li> <li>• If your first language is not English, you can check you have achieved the correct IELTS level in English on the <a href="#">Language Requirements page</a>.</li> </ul> <p>For further details regarding international admissions and advice please visit the <a href="#">International Applications page</a>.</p>
<b>Selection Criteria</b>	<p>Offers will be made based on the following selection criteria, which applicants are expected to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient prior knowledge and experience of and/or potential in a specialist subject area to be able to successfully complete the programme of study and have an academic or professional background in a relevant subject.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Willingness to work as a team player, good language skills in reading, writing and speaking, the ability to work independently and be self-motivated.</li><li>• Critical knowledge of and enthusiasm for the subject area and capacity for research-led design, intellectual inquiry and reflective thought through: contextual awareness (professional, cultural, social, historical); evidence of research, analysis, development and evaluation (from previous academic study and employment) and a grounded understanding of the world of sonic, visual and networked culture as well as the ability to engage with and contribute to critical discussion.</li><li>• In the project proposal a description of the area of interest, field of study and the particular focus of their intended project. This should include an overview of how you intend to go about producing the project and the methodology.</li><li>• Portfolio should be conceptual and research-based, you must show your thinking and making process and a curious nature to explore, test and experiment</li></ul>
<b>Scheduled Learning and Teaching</b>	<p>During your course you will engage with learning and teaching that includes both online and face-to-face modes. The advertised scheduled activity for the course will be delivered through a combination of live, synchronous and asynchronous on-line learning. This is often described as blended learning.</p> <p>Definitions of our learning and teaching modes can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</p>

# Awards and Percentage of Scheduled Learning

## Year 1

<b>Percentage of Scheduled Learning</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Awards</b>	<b>Credits</b>
Postgraduate Certificate	60
Postgraduate Diploma	120

# Course Aims and Outcomes

The Aims and Outcomes of this Course are as follows:

<b>Aim/Outcome</b>	<b>Description</b>
Aim	Equip you – the designer with the necessary skills to interpret strategy and brand stratagems into brand expression and visual communication.
Aim	Enable you – the designer to explore and enhance your own practice with traditional craft and diverse technologies and techniques e.g. letterpress, screen-printing, bookbinding, lithographic and digital printing, photography, 3D workshop.
Aim	Provides the opportunity to study brand expression and brand/visual communication techniques. The course will equip you with a wider understanding of creating brand solutions for diverse markets and cultures. The course enables you to look at brand impact in a wider, more diverse context.
Aim	Provide students with industry-focused experience and practice through the Collaboration Unit and industry in-course talks/lectures and workshops.
Aim	Provide a framework for academic discussion, personal practice and personal development, allowing you to speculate on new and effective approaches to the subject and to engage with problems and insights at the forefront of branding and identity design practice
Aim	Enable you to develop a critical, analytical, systematic and comprehensive knowledge and understanding of branding and identity design practice and to study the theoretical, ethical and professional contexts in which your practice is situated.
Aim	Equip you with the knowledge, abilities and methods – creative, conceptual, theoretical, analytical, technical and organisational – that enable you to propose, research, develop and complete a self-directed practice-led project.
Aim	As a visual communicator your practice will appreciate, explore, interrogate, even challenge the existing forms of the subject through independent and collaborative enquiry. And communicate this learning and insight through a series of smaller practice-led projects and the Final Major Project.

Aim	Equip you with the necessary transferable skills to assist you in determining your professional and/or academic future.
Outcome	Develop and create research proposals to a professional standard and speculate on new and effective approaches to the subject (Enquiry); (Process); (Knowledge); (Realisation);
Outcome	Critically apply theoretical knowledge of Graphic Branding and Identity and evaluate contemporary discourse on the subject of visual communication (Enquiry); (Knowledge); (Process); (Realisation); (Communication);
Outcome	Apply design research methodologies in formulating concepts and ideas (Enquiry); (Process); (Knowledge); (Realisation); (Communication);
Outcome	Utilise a broad range of research and analytical strategies to practical and theoretical work in a range of media and formats (Enquiry); (Knowledge); (Process); (Realisation); (Communication)
Outcome	Present a portfolio of research and a self-directed final major practical project or thesis which has been rigorously planned, is academically informed, and offers outcomes and applications that meet professional standards. (Enquiry); (Process); (Realisation); (Knowledge); (Communication)

	<b>Distinctive Features</b>
1	The course itself has benefitted from its far-reaching international appeal. The MA GB&I course encourages the diverse cultural and personal experience of its students and alumni and relays this experience directly to the study of branding and how brand communication may differ from country to country, culture to culture.
2	The course is branding focused but from the perspective of the designer not the marketer or brand manager. This is the only MA course in the UK that is fully committed to MA branding study from the practice-led approach over theory or science approach.
3	The course acknowledges previous experience and will have a practice-led approach to branding design; this enables students to prepare for future employment or to engage in the extension of study to MPhil/Doctoral level. This unique way of working has helped to broaden the recognition for students globally and has positioned the course and LCC nationally as a distinctly specialist centre where learning is promoted through the focus of design.
4	It will benefit students who have identified a particular area of graphic branding on which to base their focus for study at 'M' level and who need to develop and enhance their critical ability and research methods in specific subject-related areas.
5	Curriculum development, learning and teaching within this single subject. The Design School is informed by established staff research, professional practice and strong industry links.
6	Students are able to participate in the MA Lecture Programme alongside students from other graduate courses in the Design School.
7	LCC Graduate School Community: The course is part of the wider LCC graduate school community that offers access to cross-disciplinary visiting speakers and Graduate community events
8	The course forms part of an established MA community in the school that utilises staff expertise within the school. Where possible synergies are found within the courses such as the MA lecture series.
9	Situated in the Design School at London College of Communication, this MA Graphic Branding & Identity (MAGB&I) course resides within the Graphic Communication programme. This will offer opportunities for discourse across both undergraduate and postgraduate amongst staff and students



10	The Design School at LCC is well placed both in terms of its industry links and geographically to extend its subject and practice links for the benefit of all its students.
11	The opportunity of collaboration with professional and industry practice or diverse academic courses as a 'live' project experience within specific collaborative units will enrich the student experience and help understand theory in practice.
12	Individually tailored and additional lecture and workshop series focused for the student studying Branding. The following are an example of past speakers at LCC: Pentagram Wolff Olins Wieden + Kennedy Hat-Trick Design Our Design Agency FutureBrand Mint Digital Bartle Bogle Hegarty Williams Murray Hamm Elmwood Mother Poke Blue Marlin Interbrand Recently appointed practitioners in residence – UAL Chair for Communication Design Nick Bell, Founder and Creative Director at Nick Bell Design; Alex Bec & Will Hudson, Directors at It's Nice That and Visiting Fellow at London College of Communication; Matt Rice, Creative Director at Sennep; Fred Deakin, Professor of Interactive Digital Arts UAL; and Scott King, UAL Chair of Communication – will contribute to the Design School's rich discursive landscape – with opportunities for participants to make contact, seek guidance, build a rapport, etc

## Course Detail

MA Graphic Branding and Identity is a course for designers, by designers. Together, we'll explore the capacity of the graphic designer to construct and deconstruct powerful brand narratives through design research, visual experimentation and written evaluation.

MA Graphic Branding and Identity encourages you to challenge what is understood about the meaning of graphic branding.

You'll have a graphic design or visual communication background, and will be looking to develop a wider range of skills, build a research profile and enhance your capabilities and offer to potential employers.

This MA course focuses on the role of visual identity within branding, with the aim to produce versatile and creative practitioners who understand design within a business, social and cultural context.

### **What can you expect?**

MA Graphic Branding and Identity will challenge you to deconstruct your experience and design education in new and unexpected ways. You'll develop a brand from the ground-up, using old and new strategies to push your design practice in new directions.

You'll take part in a weekly lecture or workshop series on the principles of design and branding, learn new research techniques and connect these to rigorous methods of design exploration.

Your study will be based on personal project work, augmented with critical and contextual debate, culminating in an industry-focused portfolio of graphic brand expressions.

You'll integrate visual practice with written evaluation critical discourse, which will be embedded into your weekly seminars and tutorial contact.

You'll meet a personal tutor on a regular basis, who will help guide you through a challenging, highly-satisfying period of personal and professional development.

You'll work with a wide range of designers and practitioners, as well as an experienced core team of tutors and researchers.

You'll collaborate with other students, staff and external clients in a guided collaborative unit, allowing you to develop new approaches to design and brand projects.

You'll be welcomed into one of University of the Arts London's most diverse communities of practice, meeting designers and thinkers from a wide range of cultural backgrounds, and from this will develop a globalised, sustainable design practice that should position you as an engaged, thoughtful, intelligent and highly-skilled design-thinker.

Learning at this level will be about intellectual engagement, discovery, interaction and change. The final product, for us, is not in itself the goal - it is the research, evaluation and understanding of branding and identity that makes this MA distinctive.

This course is taught within the Branding and Design Innovation programme of the Design School.

### **Mode of Study**

MA Graphic Branding and Identity is in Full Time mode which runs for 45 weeks over 15 months. You will be expected to commit 40 hours per week to study.

### **Course Units**

In 2019 UAL declared a Climate Emergency and pledged to 'make sustainability a required part of the student learning experience'. In response to the climate and ecological crisis the Design School set in place an ambitious Sustainability Action Plan to fully embed responsible practices within the curriculum and in everything we do. As part of this initiative we have updated our course handbooks against a set of social and environmental sustainability principles to ensure that learning outcomes reflect the urgent need to equip students with the understanding, skills and values to foster a more sustainable planet. Our aim is to change the way students think and to empower them to work towards a sustainable future.

MA Graphic Branding and Identity consists of 5 core Units. Units 1 and 2 and 3 and 4 run concurrently, whilst Unit 5 (your major project) runs independently. The course is split into 4 terms with a summer break of 8 weeks.

### **Autumn, Term 1**

#### **Brand and Design Principles (40 credits)**

You'll work on identifying your own practice in relation to common approaches and develop a deeper understanding of the techniques required to produce effective graphic, brand and design communication.

A series of lectures, workshops and seminars will be available covering research methodologies in theory and practice and the wider contextual framework for contemporary graphic branding.

This culminates with a substantial visual summary (a process book of your design experiments) and a designed brand output.

### **Field of Study Report (20 credits)**

You'll undertake a scoping and profiling project called the Field of Study Report. This will help you to develop an appreciation of current debates that are shaping the future of the subject and gain an informed view of your own practice.

This will culminate with a piece of design writing of 2500 words.

## **Spring, Term 2**

### **Collaborative Unit (20 credits)**

The Collaborative Unit encourages you to seek opportunities to work as graphic brand designers with external clients and organisations, form small design teams and report on the process of working with a diverse community of designers and thinkers.

The Collaborative Unit allows you to be directly in touch with the realities of a professional branding practice, and to examine these techniques, approaches and theories in a professional context.

This will culminate with a piece of critical writing of 2500 words and a portfolio of designed brand assets for your chosen client / project.

### **Major Project Proposal Part 1**

## **Summer, Term 3**

### **Major Project Proposal Part 2**

### **Major Project Part 1**

## **Autumn, Term 4**

### **Major Project Part 2**

### **Major Project Proposal (Part 1 and Part 2) (40 credits)**

Your Major Project Proposal builds on the work conducted in both Units 1 and 2 to move your study proposal forwards through a series of practical and contextual stages to plan a clearly defined and evaluated research inquiry.

This process focuses on an experimental exploring through design and research methodology, testing and designing new approaches to your intended brand and design project work.

This Unit will culminate in a critically- and design-focused written proposal of 3500 words and a substantial body of visual experiments and brand design strategies. This unit positions the direction of your Major Project.

Major Project: Practical and Report / Thesis – (Part 1 and Part 2) (60 credits)

Your major project develops from the rationale stated in the Major Project Proposal. These elements are then tested and applied in the creation of an original brand design-research project.

Your Major Project will be based on extensive research and a rigorous methodological approach, drawing together your learning from across the previous four units. You will develop a programme of investigation and analysis that supports you in the further development of your personal research project.

This will culminate with either:

A practical design resolution, supporting visual process work and a 5000-7000 word written report

or:

A designed MA thesis of 12000 – 15000 words.

### **Learning and Teaching Methods**

- Lectures/large group learning
- Workshop and seminars
- Academic tutorials
- Self directed learning
- Outside speakers and visits
- Assessed assignments

### **Assessment Methods**

- Practical project work and computer based activities

- Prepared writing
- Responses to case studies
- Oral presentation
- Personal presentations of prepared work
- Simulations and role plays
- Workshop based activities
- Written research projects
- A portfolio of work
- Thesis

### **Reference Points**

The following reference points were used in designing the course:

- The Learning and Teaching policies of the University of the Arts London
- The College policies and initiatives
- Level descriptors
- Benchmark statements



*The University will use all reasonable endeavours to provide the Course and the services described in this Output. There may be occasions whereby the University needs to add, remove or alter content in relation to your Course as may be appropriate for example the latest requirements of a commissioning or accrediting body, or in response to student feedback, or to comply with applicable law or due to circumstances beyond its control. The University aim to inform you of any changes as soon as is reasonably practicable*

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