

Information for offer holders: MA Graphic Communication Design

This document contains important information from your course team about what to expect from your studies, including what kit you'll need to participate in your course.

We recommend visiting our [Coronavirus information](#) pages regularly for the latest advice and support to help you study safely.

We are looking forward to welcoming you to MA Graphic Communication Design in September. We want to tell you a little more about our plans for the 2021/22 academic year.

Covid-19 has presented challenges for everyone over the last year, but it has also presented opportunities to develop and reflect on our teaching and learning in relation to our disciplines in art, design and performance. We intend to use an informed learning approach that is led by pedagogic best practice.

Using student and staff feedback from this year we have developed our teaching principles to achieve the best blend of online and on-campus learning experiences appropriate to your subject discipline. We're really looking forward to working with you on campus. We know that the opportunity to learn face-to-face in groups is important to you and is also a great way to teach your subject discipline. You will be expected to attend these sessions on campus. Where possible, your on-campus teaching sessions will be timetabled on no more than two days to minimise your travel. Whilst you are on campus, there will be study areas—including our library—for you to book space to work in.

Course and programme lectures, as well as course briefings, will be delivered online but will always be recorded and available for you to watch again later at your own pace. Hosting lectures online facilitates the widest possible access to the different approaches and practices of our subject and allows you to access these sessions in your own time.

Each course unit is designed to be a blend of learning experiences for the subject discipline.

Course units

Unit name	Credits	Delivery mode
Unit 1: Graphic Communication Design as Research	60	Blended. Online lectures and briefings, on-campus tutorials and workshops.
Unit 2: Situated Practice in Graphic Communication Design	60	Blended. Online lectures and briefings, on-campus tutorials and workshops.

Unit name	Credits	Delivery mode
Unit 3: Graphic Communication Design Project	60	Blended. Online lectures and briefings, on-campus tutorials and workshops.

The table includes all units for this course. However, as the course is delivered over two academic years, you will not be undertaking all units listed in 2021/22. Therefore, there may be some changes in delivery for 2022/23 (the second year of your course). Any changes to delivery for 2022/23 will be communicated to you over the next twelve months.

There will be a programme of online and on-campus induction events called Big Welcome, so look out for emails telling you more about these. There will also be course induction events in your first week.

We know from experience that things can change very rapidly, so we have plans in place just in case we have to adapt to further restrictions or other events, and we have designed our timetables to make this possible. Your timetable will be published in early September. We are looking forward to welcoming you when term begins.

Course modifications

This course has undergone course reapproval in 2020-21. This is the process by which we ensure the course continues to provide a high quality academic experience. All UAL courses are expected to complete the process every five years.

- The course overview, course detail, learning and teaching methods and assessment methods sections (as detailed on the course webpage) have been edited. These changes provide greater clarity of coursework expectations and highlight the cumulative nature of the curriculum. They also reflect an emphasis on supporting students' development of an independently driven practice that engages critically with the media and contexts of graphic communication design.
- Change to unit titles:
 - Unit 1: Graphic Communication Design as Research to Unit 1: Methods;
 - Unit 2: Situated Practice in Graphic Communication Design to Unit 2: Methods Positions;
 - Unit 3: Graphic Communication Design Project to Unit 3: Methods, Positions, Projections.

There have not been any changes to the course structure as part of the course reapproval.

All updated information can be found in the course's [Programme Specification \(PDF file, 1.8 MB\)](#).

Key contacts

More details about your curriculum can be found on our [MA Graphic Communication Design course page](#).



Course Leader: Matthew Chrislip (m.chrislip@csm.arts.ac.uk), is your main point of contact for any questions you may have about your course curriculum.

Programme administration team: (gcdadmin@arts.ac.uk) will be able to help with any other matters.

Your course kit list

We recommend waiting until you're notified you're eligible to enrol before purchasing your course kit.

Digital kit

Graphic communication design encompasses a broad range of media and practices, so the equipment and materials required for study will vary from student to student based on their individual interests. However, all students will need regular access to a computer that can support online learning (including video chat) and operate industry-standard creative software. Most computers less than five years old should be able to do this. If you anticipate using specialty software that requires greater processing speed or storage space, you may want to invest in a higher-spec—but higher cost—computer.

There are also some high-spec and specialized computers that you will have access to on campus. More information can be found on our [facilities page](#) on our website.

The following recommendations should help you anticipate whether your computer (whether you have one already or will be buying one), software, internet connectivity, and other equipment are sufficient for your studies.

Recommended computer specifications

Based on summer 2021 [Adobe CC Premiere and After Effects requirements](#):

Computer	Minimum spec	Recommended spec
Mac Laptop	MacBook Air configured to 16GB RAM with an SSD hard drive of at least 256GB	MacBook Pro 13"/15" configured to 32GB RAM w 512GB+ SSD hard drive
Mac Desktop	iMac 21.5" configured to 16GB RAM with an SSD hard drive of at least 256GB	iMac 21.5"/27" configured to 32GB RAM
Windows 10 (1803 or later) Desktop or Laptop	Multicore Intel processor with 64-bit support 16 GB RAM, 2GB GPU VRAM At least 256GB+ hard drive ASIO compatible or Windows driver model sound card 1280x1080 screen resolution 1 Gigabit Ethernet	Multicore Intel processor with 64-bit support 32 GB RAM, 4GB GPU VRAM At least 256GB+ SSD hard drive, additional high speed drives for media

Computer	Minimum spec	Recommended spec
		ASIO compatible or Windows driver model sound card 1920x1080 or greater monitor 10 Gigabit Ethernet
Software	<ul style="list-style-type: none">You will need to install the Office 365 suite, which is provided by the university, particularly, Word, Outlook and Teams.You will also need an Adobe Creative Cloud subscription—Adobe offer a student subscription and UAL students are eligible for a further discount.You will need to install the Google Chrome browser and keep it up to date, though there is no need to create a Google account if you don't want to.More information about UAL student software subscriptions and discounts.	
Internet connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">We recommend at least a stable 10Mbps internet connection (including at least 5Mbps upload).If you share your connection with others, you may need a higher speed.	
Mac or Windows PC?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Macs continue to be a standard for the graphic design industry, but PCs offer more power for your money and can be upgraded over time more easily.There can be complications around typefaces, but this should not put you off using a PC.	
Laptop or desktop?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In terms of money, a desktop is always better value and easier to upgrade.Laptops obviously offer greater flexibility in terms of mobility, which can be important depending on your personal situation.The UK's National Union of Students has negotiated a significant discount on Mac hardware and AppleCare extended service agreements.	
Additional equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">We recommend all students use a headset (headphones with a built-in mic).Depending on your projects, you are likely to need additional external storage (an external hard drive or memory sticks), at a minimum to be able to back up your coursework.A camera (a decent camera phone is fine)	

Purchasing with longevity in mind

- Our recommendations will last for the duration of your course, but keep in mind that you may need to update your equipment following graduation or need additional equipment depending on choices you make through your coursework.
 - If you want to make significant video-based or 3D work, more RAM will be a benefit (and is harder to upgrade to later on a Mac).
 - Hard drive storage can more easily be expanded later, if required.
 - Larger external monitors can be surprisingly affordable—look for high resolution.
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Discounts and benefits

As a UAL student you have access to a range of educational discounts to assist with your studies. Read our [IT software and discounts](#) page to find out more.

Adobe Creative Cloud UAL student deal

You can access Adobe Creative Cloud programmes for free whilst on site, however you may want flexibility and guaranteed access at other times.

The UAL student deal gives you a subscription to the full Adobe Creative Cloud suite, plus 100GB of cloud storage until Saturday 13 August 2022 for a single £48 payment.

You should check your course requirements and [information on alternative software](#) before purchasing. If you need access to more than two Adobe Creative Cloud applications or want to access them remotely, it's worth considering this offer.

The deal will be available on the [UAL eStore](#) from 14 August 2021 for all UAL students. Read our [Get Adobe Creative Cloud for £48](#) story for details.

University Equipment Hardship Fund

If you think you may need financial support to purchase equipment to access online learning, the [University Equipment Hardship Fund](#) may be able to help.

Other information

Many of you have expressed interest in the [Typography Intensive short course](#) that we offer during the three weeks before the normal academic year, from 6 – 24 September 2021.

This is an optional course designed to help you become more sensitive to typographic and visual detail as well as gain an in-depth practical facility for organising and structuring information. It's particularly useful for students who haven't previously studied graphic design.

This course is taught by a member of the MA Graphic Communication Design academic team and is offered to offer holders at a significantly reduced cost by using the discount code **F000000395**.

We recommend you book as soon as possible by visiting the [Typography Intensive Short Course webpage](#).

Please note that UAL Short Courses require a minimum number of students to be enrolled for the course to go ahead.