How to curate your work
Curation guidelines for students

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Introduction

For the Graduate Showcase, we’re asking you to upload either:

- a selected project, e.g. your Final Major Project or an outcome of a particular unit.
- a series of smaller projects that form a cohesive narrative and make a clear statement about your creative practice.

You can upload documentation of your ongoing exploration of a certain subject. For example, if you are a photographer and several of your course projects are focused around one particular theme or topic, you could present these as a series to create a clear narrative that connects and communicates the overarching theme of your work.

Keep in mind that this opportunity is about showcasing the work you are most proud of and excited by to the public, industry and press, not about creating an online portfolio. You will be able to link out to your personal website from your page.

How much work can you include?

You will be able to use a maximum of 5 pages to present your work. This doesn’t mean that you must use all 5 pages, or that using 5 pages will result in your presentation having the highest impact. Your project might be best showcased across just 3 pages, particularly if the assets you are presenting require more time and attention from the viewer (for example, watching a film or viewing a PDF). Don’t try to create additional pages just to reach a maximum of 5.

Be selective about the work you include - it’s better to show work you are proud of over pieces you are unsure of. Editing your work can be difficult - ask for advice from your course leader, the curatorial team or friends from your course. They will be able to give you objective advice about which pieces to include.

Consider your audience

Be mindful of the attention span of your audience when selecting work and deciding how to format it. We are used to browsing and scanning content online, rather than engaging with it in-depth, so ensure your project is clear and memorable.

Structuring your presentation

Within the 5 pages, you will be given a selection of different templates to choose from for presenting images, video, text and 3D objects. Before you start uploading work, consider the journey of the viewer across these pages.
Use the first page to capture the audience’s attention, provide the viewer with a clear idea of your project and show the strongest visual output. Don’t include too much detail – this should be a teaser / introduction to your work.

After the first page, you can dive into more detail. You can show different outcomes created as part of your project, or your references, research and development. Make sure that each page presents a new aspect or element of your project. Repeating the same message will not increase the impact of your work.

**Showing research and development**

For the graduate showcase, you can choose to show some of the inspiration, experimentation and process behind your work, or you can just show the outcome.

Your research and development can be presented in the form of documentation, including photography, film, sketches or any other format that best captures the work. Make sure that the assets documenting your inspiration and process are of high resolution and match the style of your overall presentation. Read our top tips for photography, video and audio best practice (PDF 588KB).

Consider the order in which you are presenting content across the five pages. Viewers will be more engaged with your work if you show them the outcome first, and then reveal the process behind it. If you are including process in your presentation, this should take a maximum of 2 pages from your 5-page total.

**How to present your work**

**Selecting a template**

When uploading work to the showcase, you will be able to select from a variety of flexible templates. The templates are developed in two distinct styles – full-screen visual media and visual media against a selected background. The template styles will support the full range of media outputs – still image, video, 3D object and text.

We recommend using one style of template to achieve a clean and considered look for your pages, e.g. showcasing your text, video and images against a chosen background. You can use several different layouts within one style of template to create a more engaging presentation while maintaining a consistent look.

These two styles of templates have been created to cater for different types of work. If your work is less visually-focused, it might benefit from a consistent background that will give it a strong sense of graphic identity. If your work is focused on high-impact visuals – e.g. illustration or photography, it is likely to work better presented as full-screen images.

**Creating your own style within the templates**

The page templates will give you an option of selecting functionality – e.g. video or image – but they will not define the design and aesthetic of your presentation. Font style and sizes will be predefined for digital accessibility, but you will be able to alter other elements. You can create your style by selecting a distinct colour palette for image and text backgrounds, adding typographic elements to the images or creating an image treatment
for all your visuals. Some of this can be done in the template, while the rest can be achieved by preparing your assets in advance.

Make sure that all your visual outputs are cohesive in terms of look and feel - the visuals should flow into each other and be linked through a shared style and mood. When you are planning the layout of your work, use mock-ups and test layouts to ensure that they work together as one cohesive whole.

In creating your style, be mindful of digital accessibility guidelines. Ensure that your text is legible by selecting a contrasting background. If your presentation isn’t legible, it will be flagged during our checks before the graduate showcase goes live. Read our Digital Accessibility guidelines (PDF 325KB).

**Using your own layouts**

Within the templated pages, you will be able to upload a single image jpg or png to effectively be able to create your own layout. This DIY solution can work well for image-based work if you want to present your images in a format or grid - e.g. having 3 portrait images next to each other. To ensure legibility, use the existing text templates for presenting written work.

**Presenting text-based work**

If your work is predominantly text, consider laying it out as magazine spreads and focus on holding your readers’ attention using visual elements.

There are two main templates allowing for presenting text - ‘double spread’ image + text and a central text box against a selected background. The ‘double spread’ is useful for long-form text.

It’s great if you have images to go alongside your written work and can use them to bring the text to life. Make sure you have permission for using the images in a public context - either by gaining the author’s approval via email or ensuring they can be used freely for non-commercial purposes. Read our Intellectual Property guidelines (PDF 482KB).

Always credit images with the full title of work and name of the author, adding year and location where relevant. Crediting images that you used as references, inspiration or visual examples is part of ethical creative practice.

If you don’t have images to use alongside your written work, consider creating text-based visual assets e.g. a portrait image featuring a poignant quote or point from your text, presented against a colour background and typed in a large font. You can use the same font you have for your main body copy or use something more striking - e.g. a decorative serif font to distinguish from sans serif text. You can create a number of these assets and use them on every page alongside your text to highlight the key points of your work and bring up interesting perspectives.

**Presenting image-based work**

You have the option to upload your work as full-screen landscape or portrait. You could also work with overlaying images, using coloured backgrounds and creating GIFs to show
short sequences of work. Consider the five pages as a visual essay. Make sure there is a clear connection between the visuals you are showing - even the most impactful work will get lost if the viewer is confused about what they are seeing.

The images you upload should be optimised for web use.

**Presenting film-based work**

If the final output of your project is a film, consider how you can use the multiple pages available. You could open with a question to the viewer or an introduction that contextualises the project before watching the film. If your film is a chaptered narrative, you could play with the edit and present the different chapters of your film on consecutive pages.

Consider the length of your film. If it is longer than 10 minutes, you may wish to create a shorter edit for the graduate showcase.

**Presenting object-based work**

Consider showcasing object-based work through a variety of media, e.g. a full view image, a series of close-ups, video documentation or 3D object view. By using a variety of approaches you will be able to provide a detail and varied view of the object. Read our guidelines on photography and video best practice (PDF 588KB).

**Getting started**

Before you start uploading your work, create mock-ups of the pages in InDesign, or another application you are familiar with, so that you can test out different ideas and experiment with the formatting of your work.

1. Select the order in which you want the viewer to see the different elements of your work. Make sure you are creating a clear and engaging narrative and that your message is clear.
2. Select your strongest visual assets and map them against that narrative. Make sure you are not compromising the clarity of your story by including too many assets - be your own editor.
3. Looking at your assets, select the template that will work best for each of your pages.
4. If you don’t think any of the existing templates work, consider creating your own layouts. Be mindful that this will only work for image-based outputs and not for video, 3D objects or longform text.
5. Experiment with colours, fonts and styles until you find the right visual language for your presentation. Make sure that it is representative of your overarching aesthetic as an artist / designer.
6. Finalise the design and save the individual assets you will use for your pages. Make sure they are optimised for web use.