

UNIVERSITY FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION FOR:

BA (HONS) GRAPHIC DESIGN¹

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION [ACADEMIC YEAR 2021/22]

This Programme Specification is designed for prospective students, current students, academic staff and potential employers. It provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the intended learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the teaching, learning and assessment methods, learning outcomes and content of each unit can be found in the Unit Descriptors.

¹ Formerly known as BA (Hons) Graphic Communication

Section A – Material Course Information

Validating Body	University for the Creative Arts ²		
Teaching Body	University for the Creative Arts		
Final Award Title and Type	BA (Hons)		
Course Title	Graphic Design		
Course Location and Length	Campus: Farnham	Length: Full-time - 3 years	
Mode of Study	Full-time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Part-time
Period of Validation	2019/20 to 2023/24		
Name of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body	Not Applicable		
Type of Accreditation	Not Applicable		
Accreditation due for renewal	Not Applicable		
Entry criteria and requirements ³			
<p>As the UK's highest-ranking creative arts university, we want to attract the best and most creative minds in the country – so we take a balanced approach to candidate assessment, taking both individual portfolios and exam results into account.</p> <p>That's why your portfolio is an especially important part of your application to study with us – and we can help. Our academics can offer you expert advice on how to showcase your creative work and build a portfolio that will make your application stand out.</p> <p>More advice on how to create an exceptional portfolio is also available here, along with specific portfolio requirements for this course.</p> <p>Along with your portfolio, the standard entry requirements** for this course are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 112 UCAS tariff points from accepted qualifications*, or • Pass at Foundation Diploma in Art & Design (Level 3 or 4), or • Distinction, Merit, Merit at BTEC Extended Diploma, or • Merit at UAL Extended Diploma, or • 112 UCAS tariff points from an accredited Access to Higher Education Diploma in appropriate subject or • 27 points in the International Baccalaureate, see more information about IB entry requirements <p>And four GCSE passes at grade A*-C and/or grade 4-9 including English Language.</p> <p>Other relevant and equivalent level 3 UK and international qualifications are considered on an individual basis, and we encourage students from diverse educational backgrounds</p>			

² Regulated by the Office for Students

³ This should be the standard University Criteria unless otherwise approved by the Academic Board and include UCAS entry profile for undergraduate courses.

apply.

If your first language is not English, you will need an IELTS score of 6.0 or equivalent. If you require a visa to study in the UK, you will also need a minimum score of 5.5 in each individual component.

**To see the accepted QCF qualifications, visit: <http://uca.ac.uk/study/accepted-qualifications/>*

*** We occasionally make offers which are lower than the standard entry criteria, to students who have faced difficulties that have affected their performance and who were expected to achieve higher results. In these cases, a strong portfolio is especially helpful.*

Overall methods of assessment ⁴	Written exams:	Practical exams:	Coursework:
Stage 1	0.0%	0.0%	100%
Stage 2	0.0%	0.0%	100%
Stage 3	0.0%	12.5%	87.5%
Overall Learning & Teaching hours ⁵	Scheduled:	Independent:	Placement:
Stage 1	34.2%	65.8%	0.0%
	410 hours	790 hours	0 hours
Stage 2	29.0%	71.0%	0.0%
	348 hours	852 hours	0 hours
Stage 3	25.2%	74.8%	0.0%
	302 hours	898 hours	0 hours
General level of staff delivering the course ⁶	The University's current recruitment policy for Lecturers and Senior Lecturers states that they must have either an MA or equivalent professional practice in a relevant discipline or field. All lecturing staff are encouraged to work towards a teaching qualification or professional Recognition by the Higher Education Academy and this is a requirement for Senior Lecturers. Senior Lecturers are required to be professionally active or engaged in research in their discipline. All Lecturers and Senior Lecturers undertake scholarship in their disciplines. There are also Sessional Staff to link courses with professional practice and Technicians to provide technical support.		
Language of Study	English		
Subject/Qualification Benchmark Statement: Art & Design			
Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)			

The course structure

⁴ As generated by the most popular unit descriptors and calculated for the overall course stage data.

⁵ As generated by the most popular unit descriptors and calculated for the overall course stage data.

⁶ Include general information about the experience or status of the staff involved in delivering the course, for example Professor, Course Leader, Senior Lecturer

The structure of all of the University's awards complies with the University's [Common Credit Framework](#). The Common Credit Framework includes information about the:

- Rules for progression between the stages of a course;
- Consequences of failure for reassessment, compensation and exit awards;
- Calculation and classification of awards;

Unit codes and titles	Level	Credit value	Elective/ Core	Most popular student choice of optional elective units or elective options in core units?
Year/Stage 1				
FGRD4001 Principles in Practice 01	4	30	Core	
FGRD4002 Typographic Studies	4	30	Core	
FGRD4003 Visual Communications: Context and Theory	4	30	Core	
FGRD4004 Principles in Practice 02	4	30	Core	
Year/Stage 2				
FGRD5001 Specialist Ways of Working	5	60	Core	
FGRD5002 Contextual and Theoretical Perspectives	5	30	Core	
FGRD5003 External Context	5	30	Core	
FGRD5004 Specialist Ways of Working - Incoming Study Abroad	5	60	Elective	No
FGRD5005 Specialist Ways of Working – Outgoing Study Abroad	5	30	Elective	No
FGRD5006 Contextual and Theoretical Perspectives - Outgoing Study Abroad	5	30	Elective	No
XXXX5060 Study Abroad Exchange	5	60	Elective	No
Year/Stage 3				
FGRD6001 Professional Practice	6	30	Core	
FGRD6002 Contextual Research and Critical Reflection	6	30	Core	
FGRD6003 Final Major Project	6	60	Core	

Section B - Course Overview

The BA (Hons) Graphic Design course at UCA Farnham introduces you to the exciting avenues within graphic design with a business focus – from branding, typography and UI/UX design to print media and digital publishing.

You'll put your learning into practice with challenging live projects, competitions, and support to find extra-curricular industry placements during your summer break. By the time you become a Graphic Design graduate, you'll be a design expert in your specialist field with impressive industry experience.

Through a unique mix of creative discovery and business development, you'll specialise in your area of interest while also building a strong entrepreneurial skillset. You'll be perfectly equipped to achieve outstanding success in a highly competitive industry.

Graduates from this course have achieved high-profile roles with leading names such as Apple, Design Studio, Bulletproof, Harrods, Lego and Saatchi & Saatchi, working in a vast array of graphic design roles within the sector in areas such as branding, type design, editorial design, UI/UX design, retail design, app design and brand strategy.

Recent Graphic Design students have designed window displays for Benetton's flagship stores, worked with Sky on the creation of a new television channel, undertaken live projects for Bestival in conjunction with JDO Raw, and have also had the opportunity to take part in competitions held by D&AD and YCA.

You'll be encouraged to collaborate, socialise and share ideas within our unique community of creative students, as well as utilise the industry knowledge of our experienced design professionals and tutors.

Graphic Design in Farnham seeks to be a practical, vocationally focused, studio led course that mimics design industry practice. Its main focus is that of business and commerce regardless of communication channel. The course team have extensive experience in the design industry.

As a consumer research and practice based course with an inherent stance on monetizing creativity we offer a range of subject choices within the remit of commercial graphic design. Our studio spaces encourage students to work collaboratively to reflect industry best practice. We encourage students to be career minded throughout the course and support a thriving freelance community lead by the graphics society.

BA (Hons) Graphic Design in Farnham is biased towards commercial orientated graphic design (but not exclusive to this), it recognises that this side of the industry requires a narrow/deep skill-set and requires specialist input (provided by the technical resources dept). The course is ideally located to the design hub of London and increasingly the Home Counties.

The course is studio-based with design projects set and critiqued in a manner replicating the design process. Students receive feedback on their work in a range of ways from both staff and peers, and delivery primarily consists of group critiques, individual tutorials, workshops and lectures.

An awareness of changes to technologies and the role of technology within Graphic Design is central to course delivery and content. The course is designed to be as future-proof as possible, in that the unit titles and the purpose of the units does not constrain content. Also central to the course is the need to be responsive to ethical, cultural and economic considerations in communication media.

Course content and structure is geared towards delivering a broad array of opportunity to specialise and develop a personal and professional approach to the discipline. First year units complement one another but are not pre or co-requisites. Stage two of the course affords depth and/or breadth of enquiry and action. Here, students presented with units that contain creative briefs written specifically to encourage depth of enquiry and focus upon specialist methodologies or potential careers. Specialist areas include packaging, brand identity and brand management, editorial design, narrative and publishing, graphics for promotion and advertising, specialist information design, typography and finally an investigation into craft and technologies where the media itself becomes a carrier of meaning

and information.

Stage three is the culmination of all that came before it; providing the opportunity for students to demonstrate their subject focus, cultural engagement, awareness of current design practice and their status as autonomous practitioners.

Students are prepared for employment throughout their degree. Year 01 students are encouraged to engage in freelance work by the end of term one. Year 02 students are supported to engage with internships of up to 3 months over the summer break before Year 03. All three years have the opportunity to work with or enter into live briefs with industry and clients. Recent collaborations have included Farnborough Air Show, Krush Creative input into 'what is Research' in Year 01, Green Room (Amsterdam) Live brief for branding a new sunglasses range.

The employability of our students and our reputation in the communication industries has helped inform design and development of student briefs and contemporary curriculum delivery. Our students also benefit from a highly regarded series of lectures and portfolio surgeries from industry figures that represent the breadth of specialist areas explored in stage two. Recent visits have been from practitioners as diverse as digital user interface designers, typographers and way-finding information specialists. Briefs and creative content are written in consultation with leading figures in graphics, branding, typography, advertising, publishing and television.

Section C - Course Aims

- A1 Provide opportunities within the curriculum for students to develop a specialist focus and application to direct their work in preparation for career progression within the communication industries closely aligned to graphic design/visual communication practice or post-graduate further study.
- A2 Provide a diverse and supportive programme of study that encourages the development of individual technical and conceptual potential and a passion for graphic design as a communication strategy and problem solving tool.
- A3 Develop critical, practical, professional and social perspectives in which to work and to contextualise the Graphic Design subject area.
- A4 Enhance the employability of graduates by providing a range of direct industry experience, knowledge and skills that are applicable to a wide range of graduate careers in the communication industries.

Section D - Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course students are able to:

- LO1 Apply a systematic and detailed knowledge of Graphic Design principles and technical skills in relation to associated industries and environments.

- LO2 Respond technically and conceptually to a diverse array of communication needs and produce outcomes that demonstrate technical and conceptual problem solving skills.
- LO3 Engage in sustained research, reflection and critical analysis of complex problems and contexts that inform creative practice.
- LO4 Exercise initiative, personal responsibility, autonomy, engage in teamwork and other attributes in the context of employability and continuous learning and development.

Section E - Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Learning and Teaching Strategy

Assessment Strategy

A key strength of the programme is the way in which tutors and students work together to assess work in progress. A series of regular formative critique sessions allow you to present work in progress and discuss concept development. This ensures that units, briefs and tasks are monitored and assessed regularly which supports student success and greatly reduces the likelihood of under achievement. The critique sessions take place in small groups and aims to provide a safe working space to improve presentation skills and to increase your ability to critically appraise and test work in progress for suitability and controlled experimental ways of working.

Delivery across the course varies within each unit, accommodating a broad range of learning styles and students studying in English as their second language. Learning activities consist of demonstrations, workshops, tutorials, seminars, lectures, and studio sessions. The staff team work closely with the Learning Support team, and are experienced in working with students with a broad range of learning support requirements which include mental health, dyslexia and physical disabilities.

For each unit, a timetable for assessment will be published, together with a clear statement of assessment requirements, criteria and methods.

Experience of the world of work plays a vital role in demonstrating the need to work towards being 'industry ready'. Work experience over the summer break between year 2 and year 3 may include internships, placements and live briefs in negotiation with and support by your tutors.

The teaching of technical processes is also a core element of the course, particularly in stage one to facilitate as many means of creative problem solving as possible, broadening the students' creative methodologies. These include industry standard digital design software and an array of other associated processes including print media, litho printing, laser cutting and time based media software.

You will use information technologies for research to assist in the production of creative outcomes. The role of the library is reiterated as being key to your independent enquiry and study. In addition, throughout the course there is a strong emphasis placed upon self reflection with students required to produce a design journal that visually and textually demonstrates their methodologies, experimentation, concept development and reflection upon the unit as a whole.

Your course is founded on the principle that the most effective education experience combines structured teaching and independent study. The course is designed to give you the maximum responsibility for the direction of your learning. In general, you will find that the level of structured teaching is greater in the earlier stages with increasing self-directed study and project work as you develop technical and conceptual skills and design methodologies.

You will undertake a number of projects that combine guided learning and independent study. The outcomes of projects vary depending on the purpose of the unit. Many projects are set in practical workshop situations, using materials, processes and techniques to generate research and an understanding of theoretical principles in practice.

Some projects require you to write a rationale or statement of intent whereby we negotiate your proposed outcomes and work schedules. These must relate directly to the aims and outcomes of the unit. This allows you to focus on a particular area that reflects your specialist areas of interest and career aspirations.

Self-managed independent study forms an essential part of the course. Independent study includes preparation for assessment or work on projects outside of formal timetabled studio time but also supplementary activities such as visiting galleries and museums and primary and secondary research.

A unit or creative brief may require you to work in groups, facilitating an understanding of the need to work with others. This is carefully managed to ensure that all feedback and grades are reflective of your work undertaken including a reflection or summary of the practice of working in teams with defined roles and responsibilities.

The use of information technologies is a core element of delivery and communication including communicating via blogs, forums and virtual learning environments. These are increasingly being seen as essential modes not just for communication of learning materials but also as a means of sharing relevant cultural and professional stimuli.

The formal teaching of the course is further supplemented by organised off-site activities including visits to creative agencies, particularly those where live briefs are involved. The guest lecture programme is a core strength of the course that demonstrates that it is not simply the course tutors that provide valuable input into their learning but other industry practitioners, academics from other institutions.

Throughout the course you are supported through personal tutorials to ascertain progress and intellectual satisfaction. Tutorials are also used to help students choose appropriate specialist ways of working from stage two onwards.

Whilst assessment is the way that the University measures performance and determines suitability for progression to the next stage, it is also used to provide feedback to students to enable you to reflect upon your progress, to identify strengths and areas for improvement and hence, how to improve performance. Written formative and summative assessment provides evidence of critical feedback from tutors.

The specific course outcomes are delivered through the full range of assessment requirements. The work of the first two years is consolidated in the Honours year. Within this final year an important vehicle for the assessing of intellectual understanding is the Contextual Research and Critical Reflection unit which encompasses a structured narrative demonstrating the knowledge of concepts, critical theory and crucially in relation to your own practice.

Section F - Enhancing the Quality of Learning and Teaching

The course is subject to the University's rigorous quality assurance procedures which involve subject specialist and internal peer review of the course at periodic intervals, normally of 5 years. This process ensures that the course engages with the applicable national Subject Benchmarks and references the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

All courses are monitored on an annual basis where consideration is given to:

- External Examiner's Reports
- Key statistics including data on retention and achievement
- Results of the Student Satisfaction Surveys
- Feedback from Student Course Representatives