

# Graphic Communication A Level

Graphic Communication is concerned with conveying messages using images and text. This course gives you a rounded exposure to different aspects of graphic communication and will allow you to display your abilities in a variety of disciplines and demonstrate your understanding of these contexts.

The Graphics course is defined as work which is produced towards a specific design outcome. The advanced level course is extensive and is designed to develop skills in many areas of graphics, project work is underpinned by drawing techniques, photography and computer work. Visual imagery will be explored from direct observation and there will be opportunity to develop ideas in an expressive and imaginative way.

## What does the course involve?

You will work to themes or briefs to generate designs including illustrations for books or magazines, film or television posters, DVD or CD covers. You will explore typography and its relationship to images and develop an understanding of how graphic design can sell a product or service. You will study surface decoration in relation to packaging and create your own designs to demonstrate an understanding of commercial and practical requirements. Your ideas and designs will be produced using a combination of traditional and modern methods. You will use everything from a pen or pencil to sophisticated software packages such as Photoshop.

You will be introduced to a range of techniques, approaches and media and you will work from a range of topics or themes. The key aspects that will be covered will be illustration, advertising and packaging and your work must show your ability to explore ideas and approaches, conduct relevant research and demonstrate your ability with new techniques and skills.

## The Second Year

During your second year you will focus in a personal way, on an aspect of graphic communication that particularly interests you, such as illustration, campaign graphics, typography, packaging or marketing. The assessed units are:

- **Personal Investigation (worth 60% of the overall grade)**
- **Controlled Assignment (worth 40% of the overall grade)**

The personal investigation requires you to work to a negotiated theme allowing you to develop areas of personal interest and give you the opportunity to explore and develop new approaches to media, methods and materials that you may have met in year 1. Within your theme you will work to two or three design briefs to show a range of skills and approaches. In addition to your own creative work you will write a related personal study of about 3000 words. Your project work will consist of detailed planning leading to in depth research, experimental and developmental work. You will produce a series of professionally presented final pieces demonstrating your considered personal response. The examining board will publish a question paper in February for the controlled assignment and you will have a number of weeks to prepare. Your preliminary work will consist of investigations, research studies and the development of ideas, skills and techniques. The final piece or pieces will be created during a strictly controlled 15 hour period.

Awarding Body : OCR

## Frequently Asked Questions

**What GCSE subjects should I have?:** You should have a higher grade in at least one creative subject, this could be Art and Design, Graphics, etc.

**Do I need to be able to draw?:** Initial ideas are generally explored by drawing and the illustration elements require drawing skills.

**Will there be any written work?:** Any written work is integrated into the projects you undertake. You will need to annotate, analyse and evaluate your work and the work of others. In the 2nd year you will be required to write a 3000 word personal study.

**How much time will be spent on computers?:** You will be expected to use Photoshop and other software to generate some of your final pieces but a high level of manual skills is also expected. This is not a Photoshop training course but a broad based introduction to graphic communication.

**What software is available to use?:** We have a number of machines with the CS6 suite which includes Photoshop, Illustrator and In Design.

**Will I get help planning my projects?:** Yes, your teachers will guide you and help plan what to do to ensure that you have a range of exciting and interesting directions to develop and will be able to access all the marks.

## What can this course lead on to?

The graphics industry is a multimillion pound industry and offers lots of exciting careers for the ambitious and hardworking. Most companies recruit graduates, this course is an excellent preparation for a degree in Graphics. If you wish to carry on studying Graphic Communication or a related course at Degree level you will probably need to complete an Art foundation course and then apply for your choice of Degree. Some Degree courses accept people directly from A levels but typically these are either computer based/ICT graphics courses or Media communications courses with a higher written content and less creative work.

## How is this course assessed?

The coursework portfolio is worth 60% of your overall grade and the controlled assignment is worth 40%.

## Specific Entry Requirements for this Course

You will need either a GCSE grade C in an Art or Design subject.

### What should I do if I don't meet the entry requirements?

If you feel that you have the ability and determination to undertake this course but for some reason do not meet the entry requirements then please contact us to discuss your position.

## General Entry Requirements

GCSE Grade Cs in any 5 of the following subjects (inc. short GCSEs):

- Business Studies
- English Language
- English Literature
- Foreign Language

- Maths
- Computer Science
- Humanities:
  - History
  - Geography
  - Psychology
- Science (double, triple or BTEC Merit)

If a student does not have a grade C in English Language or Maths it is a legal requirement to resit either a GCSE or Level 2 in Functional Skills whilst at the college.

Students must achieve a grade C in any GCSE which is directly related to their AS-level choice.

Universities will require most applicants to be qualified at this level.

Lead member of staff:

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