

SQA Advanced Unit specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Graphic Design Techniques

Unit code: HT50 47

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to offer candidates the opportunity to explore the potential uses and applications of areas of graphic design. While putting creative thinking into practice they will learn how to use graphic-related media. Candidates will acquire an appreciation of graphic design practice, from understanding the requirements of a brief to producing a concept and presenting this to a potential client.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Develop ideas for a given brief
- 2 Experiment with media to communicate concepts
- 3 Present a concept

Credit points and level: 1 SQA credit at SCQF level 7 (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*).

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from National 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, it would be beneficial if candidates have completed Higher Art and Information Technology or have a similar level of qualifications or experience.

Core Skills: There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Problem Solving and Information Technology at SCQF level 6 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

Assessment: Outcomes 1 and 2 could be assessed together. Outcome 3 may be assessed separately. The Unit can be delivered and assessed through more than one brief, which would require candidates to investigate and produce creative concepts and or to present ideas to a client or market audience.

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SQA Advanced Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Develop ideas for a given brief

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Interpretation of brief
- ◆ Research skills
- ◆ Initial ideas and concepts
- ◆ Graphic design applications
- ◆ Issues and constraints

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Understand the requirements of a given brief and identify issues and constraints
- ◆ Gather research material from a variety of sources to assist in the development of concepts
- ◆ Explore approaches for initial ideas and development of first concepts
- ◆ Produce initial ideas in response to the given brief

Evidence should be presented as a sketchbook/folder/folio in any suitable format, either paper or digital, that contains source material and initial concepts, accompanied by commentary (either written or oral), that demonstrates the candidate's understanding of the brief.

Assessment guidelines

Outcomes 1 and 2 could be assessed together.

To understand the potential of graphic design the candidate could visually explore the subject area by collecting and displaying examples of professional work. This would form part of the research and source material presented for assessment.

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Outcome 2

Experiment with media to communicate concepts

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Market/audience
- ◆ Visual communication
- ◆ Design styles
- ◆ Graphic design media and techniques
- ◆ Design principles
- ◆ Concept development

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can, in response to the brief:

- ◆ Collect visual examples of styles that appeal to the intended market/audience
- ◆ Experiment with concepts using selected media and techniques
- ◆ Experiment with different design principles
- ◆ Present initial concepts

Evidence should be presented as a sketchbook/folder/folio in any suitable format, either paper or digital, that contains visual examples of graphic styles and content that are suitable for the intended market/audience.

This should be supported by visuals that show development of a range of ideas and concepts that thoroughly explore the design issues identified in the brief.

Assessment guidelines

A mood board could be used to display examples of typefaces, layout and graphic styling suitable for the intended market or audience.

Depending on the selected subject area of graphic design, visuals could be in the form of electronic media, hard copy, or two and/or three-dimensional mock-ups.

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Outcome 3

Present a concept

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Planning and organisation
- ◆ Visual presentation
- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Justification of concepts

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and /or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Plan and organise the presentation of a graphic design concept
- ◆ Present concepts to a selected audience
- ◆ Communicate visual ideas to the selected audience
- ◆ Justify concepts in relation to the design brief

Evidence should take the form of a presentation of visuals, either paper or digital with accompanying commentary (either written or oral), justifying the concept that they have developed in Outcome 2.

Assessment guidelines

Justification of concepts could be in the form of a presentation pitch, made to a student group, lecturing staff, sample group representing the market audience, or to the actual client.

Alternatively, assessment may take the form of a critique-based discussion.

To ensure there are no barriers to assessment, evidence of the presentation could be provided digitally, online or as written evidence.

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Administrative Information

Unit code: HT50 47

Unit title: Graphic Design Techniques

Superclass category: JC

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SQA Advanced Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Graphic Design Techniques

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit is designed to offer candidates the opportunity to explore the potential uses and applications of areas of graphic design.

While putting creative thinking into practice candidates will learn how to use graphic related media. Candidates will acquire an appreciation of graphic design practice, from understanding the requirements of a brief producing a concept and presenting this to a potential client.

Outcome 1

Areas of graphic design and related topics for inclusion in a brief may include:

- ◆ Editorial: analysis of professionally-created layouts, grid layouts, grid methods such as the golden section, composition of type and imagery, typography elements; use of imagery
- ◆ Advertising/promotional: ideas based upon psychological persuasion through the use of copywriting and imagery
- ◆ Corporate identity: colour psychology; diversity and flexibility of identity
- ◆ Animation: brainstorming scenarios; reference to life, historical, contemporary, fantasy, mythological
- ◆ Packaging: the optical illusion of shape, colour psychology, market styling devices
- ◆ Typography: exploring the visual communication and significance of type, referring to examples of experimental typography

The following devices are suggested approaches to help generate ideas:

- ◆ Visual ‘thought-showering’ sheets
- ◆ Mood boards
- ◆ Scenarios and storyboarding
- ◆ Analysis of professionally produced graphic design /artwork
- ◆ Mind mapping (individually or in teams)
- ◆ Creating ideas journals that record banal every day things in sketches, original photos, collected ephemera etcetera. It is advisable that this method has been previously initiated so that there is something to build upon.
- ◆ Sketchbooks, sketches and thumbnails

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Outcome 2

Research should identify typefaces, layout, graphic styling and examples of professional design work that have previously been used to market products to a similar audience/group to the one described in the brief. To support this, candidates could also research the lifestyle and product use of the market/audience.

Candidates would use this research as a basis for the development of ideas and concepts for presentation in Outcome 3.

Concepts produced should be of sufficient finish to clearly illustrate the candidate's design intentions. It is expected ideas would be presented as finished roughs or visuals, rather than as finished artwork that might be ready to go to for print.

Outcome 3

'Pitch' is an industry standard term that describes the situation where there are several designers working on the same given brief and creating their own individual concepts. These are then presented to the client in a 'pitch' to gain the final job. The pitch will include a presentation by the designer who will describe his concept, highlighting its benefits to the client. Candidates should be encouraged to present their work in a similar situation or take place in a group critique of work.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This Unit has been developed as part of the SQA Advanced Certificate/Diploma Art and Design Award. It is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes. Opportunities may be taken to link or integrate with other aspects of the course and a thematic approach adopted for both delivery and assessment.

There are opportunities in the Unit delivery for candidates to work in teams, generating ideas and media experiments. In this situation the quantity and quality of work produced should reflect the number of candidates. Tutors should ensure all candidates are actively engaged in this process. Checklists should be used to monitor and assess the contribution of individual candidates.

Outcome 1: Several graphic design areas and approaches should be demonstrated. Candidates could work in groups and explore approaches on trial briefs before they choose which particular area they could explore in response to the brief.

Outcome 2: Exploration of the use of design principles within a graphic design context could be integrated with investigation and experimentation of media.

Outcome 3: Presentation of work may coincide with an exhibition or presentation event. Otherwise, presentation could take place in a studio situation, or to a client. Candidates must demonstrate their ability to clearly communicate and justify their ideas and design intentions. Where possible, the opportunity should be taken to provide the candidate with immediate feedback at the time of the presentation.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

Candidates are working in a context which requires that they effectively present visuals developed from an original concept. They should be able experiment in the selection of appropriate software and applications to meet the identified needs of the concept selected.

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They will analyse and seek solutions to a range of theoretical and practical problems, and identify specific objectives as they complete the Unit. Identifying and considering layout, graphic styling and examples of professional design work used to market products to target users will provide opportunities to develop critical and creative thinking. Discussions with the class group and/or assessor to reinforce analytical evaluation of a range of graphic design techniques would support skills development. Candidates will also benefit from reflective and constructive review by others as they present experimental work in order to reinforce analytical and evaluative approaches to problem solving in working practice.

Effectiveness in the interpretation and communication of graphic techniques will underpin the competencies developed. Some candidates may benefit from formative opportunities to further develop skills in the analysis and application of graphic data, using professional software packages or online tutorials.

Open learning

The practical nature of parts of this Unit would make it difficult to deliver via open learning. Although parts of this Unit could be delivered by distance learning, it would require a considerable degree of planning by the centre to ensure the sufficiency and authenticity of candidate evidence.

For further information and advice please refer to the SQA document *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning* which is available on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk.

Equality and inclusion

This unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

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General information for candidates

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This Unit will offer you the opportunity to explore the potential uses and applications of areas of graphic design. While putting creative thinking into practice you will learn how to use graphic-related media.

In Outcome 1 you will look at and explore various approaches to creative thinking and how ideas can evolve. You may choose to work as part of a group to help enhance creative thinking and to remain open to different perspectives.

In Outcome 2 you will experiment with areas of graphic design and develop ideas and concepts in response to a brief for a graphic design application.

Outcome 3 you will develop your ideas to a stage where you can present them. You will be required to use visual presentation skills to show your ideas to their best advantage. In addition, you will have to justify that your idea meets the objectives set out in the brief.

The Unit may also provide you with opportunities to develop a number of Core Skills, which could include Problem Solving (Planning and Organising, Critical Thinking), oral/written Communication, and IT skills.