

SQA Advanced Unit specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Graphic Design Techniques: Advanced

Unit code: HT62 48

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to enable candidates to understand the role and function of the graphic design industry. By analysing the professional practices of this discipline, the candidate will gain an appreciation of the processes and communication routes which are necessary to take a job through to completion. They will be required to take these into consideration, while following their own project from research through to client visual stage.

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

- 1 Understand and analyse commercial graphic design practice.
- 2 Plan the design and development of a graphic design item.
- 3 Develop and produce a graphic design item.
- 4 Present and evaluate the final design.

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

**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. Candidates should have an understanding of design process having completed SQA Advanced Units in introductory graphic design techniques, or have similar 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.

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Assessment: Outcomes 1 and 2 may be assessed separately. Outcomes 3 and 4 should be assessed together. 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

Understand and analyse commercial graphic design practice

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Analysis
- ◆ Professional practice
- ◆ Construction of questions
- ◆ Project planning and development
- ◆ Design processes
- ◆ Project team roles
- ◆ Professional design skills

Evidence Requirements:

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

- ◆ Analyse the way in which a commercial graphic design team may work through a project
- ◆ Construct a series of focused questions to be directed to member/s of a graphic design team
- ◆ Analyse responses from questioning

Evidence should be presented as a candidate-directed analysis of the responses received.

Assessment guidelines

Questions and answers could be recorded in written, audio or digital form with a brief analysis.

Areas for questioning could include: project scheduling; role of team members; market/audience; design processes; analysis and problem solving; required design skills; relationship with client.

The assessment of this Outcome can be combined with Outcome 2 or as part of a holistic assessment for the Unit.

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Outcome 2

Plan the design and development of a graphic design item.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Design process
- ◆ Design brief
- ◆ Time management
- ◆ Project planning
- ◆ Scheduling
- ◆ Problem solving

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ Use findings from Outcome 1 to inform the development of a realistic time plan
- ◆ Produce a time plan that schedules all stages of the design process
- ◆ For a given brief, produce a time plan that meets specified time restrictions and takes into consideration access to resources

Evidence should be presented as a time plan in any suitable format.

Assessment guidelines

The assessment of this Outcome could be combined with Outcome 1, but should be assessed before candidates progress to Outcomes 3 and 4.

The schedule or time plan should detail the time allowed for the idea stage of the design process: research and exploration of initial ideas, design development, completion and presentation of final designs. The structure and sequencing of design development may vary, depending on the item that is being designed.

Outcome 3

Develop and produce a graphic design item

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Time management
- ◆ Working to a design brief
- ◆ Design development
- ◆ Production of ideas
- ◆ Problem solving
- ◆ Design elements
- ◆ Applied use of media
- ◆ Evaluation
- ◆ Finishing techniques

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Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ Interpret a graphic design brief
- ◆ Produce a series of ideas
- ◆ Develop selected ideas through the production of roughs
- ◆ Experiment with media then select media for final designs
- ◆ Experiment with design elements
- ◆ Use appropriate finishing techniques
- ◆ Select a final design for a client visual
- ◆ Create client visual/s

Evidence of the design development and media usage should be presented as a series of roughs in paper/digital format. The final design should be finished to client visual standard.

Assessment guidelines

In order to ensure that the design style has been interpreted, a mood board could be created. The candidate could create a range of ideas in sketch or thumbnail form and from these select ideas to develop to rough stage. It is envisaged that the variation of visual content of ideas and concepts in the sketches/thumbnails would include differentiated visual lines of enquiry in addition to changes in the composition of the visual elements.

On completion of the rough stage the candidate should discuss with their tutor/s which design has the strongest potential and follow this through to completion making any necessary changes.

Continuous assessment should be used to assess the candidate's progress with this Outcome; the final submission of work could be assessed with Outcome 4.

Outcome 4

Present and evaluate the final design

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Planning and organisation
- ◆ Display techniques
- ◆ Visual presentation
- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Justification and evaluation 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 the final client visual
- ◆ Display and present final design
- ◆ Justify and evaluate the design in relation to the design brief

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Evidence should take the form of a presentation of the client visual, with accompanying evaluative commentary that justifies the design development and selection of final design for presentation.

Assessment guidelines

Justification of design could be in the form of a presentation pitch, made to a candidate 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: HT62 48

Unit title: Graphic Design Techniques: Advanced

Superclass category: JC

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SQA Advanced Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Graphic Design Techniques: Advanced

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 question and explore the role of a working graphic designer/graphic design team. The knowledge gained from this will be used to plan the design and development of a graphic design item. 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 The purpose of this Outcome is to allow candidates to gain an understanding of the working processes in a graphic design practice and specifically to gather information in relation to a brief for the design task that candidates will undertake in Outcome 2.

Candidates' understanding of professional practice would be facilitated by tutor-led group investigation and discussion of the working practices of graphic designers in a variety of contexts.

Candidates' prepared questions could be directed to either a graphic design team or a graphic designer who has a key role. It is recommended that candidates meet with a graphic design team or designer and have the opportunity to pose questions face-to-face, although questions could be responded to by e-mail or other recorded means. Questioning could also be carried out using electronic media or in response to a written questionnaire, for example.

Potential areas for questioning could include:

- ◆ Specific design brief/client requirements
- ◆ Methods of developing an idea
- ◆ Sources of inspiration
- ◆ The stages of design development used in the workplace
- ◆ Time given to various development stages of the design
- ◆ Other professionals involved in the project, for example copywriter, photographer, illustrator, printmaker, calligrapher, animator, web designer, printer
- ◆ Markets/audiences
- ◆ The professional relationship with a client
- ◆ The skills and knowledge required of a designer in that particular work environment

The term 'graphic design practice' could also be interpreted as the multimedia workplace such as a group of designers using web and animation media.

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Outcome 2

The size and quantity of content within the 'item' would be dependent on factors such as the choice of media, and the complexity of process.

Candidates should be provided with a brief. There is an opportunity to gain this from a variety of sources, for example a competition brief, a live brief, a brief created by the designer/team visited, or it may be written by the tutor. The item to be produced and the design style required should be clearly stated in the given brief, while also specifying the market audience and the design specification such as single or full colour, the level of interactivity of a website.

Potential subject areas within the graphic design discipline could incorporate: editorial, corporate design, packaging, information design, advertising/promotions, animation, exhibition display, web design, screen graphics.

Exemplar project planning/timetables should be given to candidates so that they can see the design processes planned, the time given to tasks and the depth of written detail required.

Outcome 3

The development of the candidates' ideas should show an awareness of the design style of the market audience and show a clear progression to the final design. Evidence of experimentation with media and design elements must be shown either electronically or in hardcopy format. The finished design item should be produced using appropriate finishing methods and materials.

Emphasis should be placed on the process used in industry and the individual's interpretation of their ideas. Candidates should be encouraged to reflect on work in progress and make judgements evaluating possible solutions and approaches. Selection of the design for final production should be made in conjunction with the tutor.

Outcome 4

Presentation of the final design should be made to a group. This may be carried out orally, via electronic device or in written form depending on accessibility of the design item to the audience. The final design should be analysed and fully explored. Candidates should justify the choices made in relation to the requirements of the brief. Issues may include, for example, format, size, colours, composition, relationship and integration of text and imagery, choice of media and production materials used, selection of text and imagery if under the candidates' control.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This Unit has been developed as part of the SQA Advanced Diploma Art and Design Group 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 within the group, 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: Guidance should be given to candidates on the formation of questions in order to gain strong and constructive answers. Candidates could work individually or in groups and explore the direction and context of questions.

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Outcome 2: Guidance should be given to candidates on the structure and detail given for each stage of the schedule. The tutor should provide examples of similar work so that the candidate can judge the standard and quantity of input required. The schedule must be professionally presented and submitted either electronically or as hardcopy. The candidate should retain a copy of the original so that they can practise the skill of time management noting any alterations that have to be made to the original planning process.

Outcome 3: Outcome 3 involves four design elements: producing idea sketches per design item; create two rough visuals which explore media; experimentation with design elements to meet the requirements of the brief and the specified market audience; selection of one of the rough visuals to the final client visual stage. Evidence for the first two stages should be shown in sketchbook or display sheet format. The last two stages should be submitted via electronic files or other appropriate format. Assessment of Outcome 3 should be by continuous assessment of sketchbook, electronic files and through the observation of design development.

Outcome 4: 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. Constructive criticism should be given during the presentation allowing the candidate the opportunity to justify their design work.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

Candidates are working in a context which requires that they design, develop and effectively present a graphic design item from an original concept. Understanding and analysing examples of commercial design practice will provide opportunities to develop critical and creative thinking and access to online information and examples of current practice would be useful. Discussions with the class group and/or assessor would reinforce analytical evaluation of a range of graphic design techniques and support problem solving skills development. Candidates should consider a wide range of factors in producing a time plan that meets specified time restrictions and takes into consideration access to resources. In developing their own graphic designs, adherence to planning will be subject to on going reflective and constructive review which could be noted in work books. Constructive comment from others as they present their work should reinforce analytical and evaluative approaches to problem solving in a working environment.

Effectiveness in the interpretation and communication of graphic techniques is an aspect of competence. 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. Evidence may be presented digitally or online, which will strengthen skills in the use of technology.

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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

Unit title: Graphic Design Techniques: Advanced

This Unit will allow you to explore the potential for a future career in graphic design. While putting creative thinking into practice you will learn how to:

- ◆ plan a graphic design project
- ◆ develop and experiment with a range of ideas
- ◆ analyse which design is the most appropriate to meet the requirements of a given brief
- ◆ prepare and present the final design to an audience where you must justify your work and the design decisions made

In **Outcome 1** you will prepare and ask questions of a practising graphic designer or a team of graphic designers about their work practice. Through this you will acquire knowledge of how a graphic designer/team operates professionally and you will also gain an appreciation of the range of industrial skills required by the industry.

In **Outcome 2** you will plan and prepare for the development of a graphic design project working from a brief.

In **Outcome 3** you will create a series of ideas by producing a range of sketches/thumbnails. You will select concepts or ideas to carry through to rough visual stage where you will explore various media and experiment with design elements.

In **Outcome 4** you will present your design/s. In your presentation you will justify your design decisions.

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