

BA Design for Graphic Communication

UCAS code: W213, E213

Awarding Institution:
Teaching Institution:
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s):
Faculty of Arts and Humanities
For students entering Part 1 in 2002
Programme Director: Professor Paul Luna
Programme Adviser: Professor Paul Luna
Board of Studies: Typography & Graphic Communication
Accreditation: Not appropriate

The University of Reading
The University of Reading
Art & design
Programme length: 3 years
Date of specification: October 2001

Summary of programme aims

The programme aims to provide an integrated education in design for students who wish to obtain a grounding in the practice of the subject, informed by theory and history. It provides a supporting learning environment where students are stimulated to develop their own interests within the broad field of enquiry offered by the subject, and to develop a range of intellectual, visual, technical and social skills.

Transferable skills

The University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning has identified a number of generic transferable skills which all students are expected to have developed by the end of their degree programme. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to enhance their skills relating to problem-solving, information handling, communication (both written and oral), numeracy, team working, use of information technology and career management.

The practical modules of the programme contribute directly to the development of key skills. By the end of the programme, students are expected to have developed the skills of problem solving; effective communication in speech and writing; undertaking self-directed and independent work; commercial awareness; understanding of the role of technology in the workplace.

Programme content

The following profile lists the compulsory and optional modules. Each Part comprises 120 credits. In Part 1 the remaining 60 credits can be made up from modules elsewhere in the University. In Parts 2 and 3, up to 20 credits can be taken from modules available elsewhere in the University, in consultation with an adviser.

Part 1 introduces the history, theory and practice of typography and graphic communication, provides direction on the use of relevant digital technology, and forms a basis for structured and analytical approaches to design. In Part 2 there is opportunity to engage with practical design and this is supported by core modules in theory and history. In Part 3 practical skills can be further developed and specialisation is possible through choice of dissertation topic and options, which may be theoretical, historical or practical.

Part 1 (three terms)	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
<i>Compulsory modules (60 credits)</i>		
TY1HG <i>Introduction to the history of graphic communication</i>	20	C
TY1TP <i>Introduction to typographic theory and practice</i>	20	C
TY1DM <i>Introduction to digital design methods and design issues</i>	20	C

Part 2 (three terms)	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
<i>Compulsory modules (100 credits)</i>		
TY2GC <i>History of graphic communication</i>	20	I
TY2TT <i>Theory of typographic and graphic language</i>	20	I
TY2PT <i>Development of practical design</i>	60	I

Optional module (20 credits)

TY2TD <i>Typographic detailing</i>	20	I
------------------------------------	----	---

This module may be replaced by 20 credits taken from elsewhere in the University.

Of the 120 credits in Part 2, 5 are taken up by Career Management Skills.

Part 3 (three terms)	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
<i>Compulsory modules (100 credits)</i>		
TY3DS <i>Dissertation</i>	40	H
TY3PT <i>Practice of typography and graphic communication</i>	40	H
TY3PS <i>Skills for design practice</i>	20	H

Optional modules (20 credits)

Not all optional modules will necessarily be available in any year. Admission to optional modules will be at the discretion of the Programme Director.

TY3DI <i>Designing to inform</i>	10	H
TY3SD <i>Screen design</i>	10	H
TY3TI <i>Image and text</i>	10	H
TY3DR <i>Design for reading</i>	10	H
TY3LF <i>History of letterforms and typography</i>	10	H
TY3TL <i>Typography and language</i>	10	H
TY3ET <i>Empirical approaches to typography</i>	10	H
TY3BD <i>Book design in the fifteenth century</i>	10	H
TY3TB <i>Twentieth-century book design</i>	10	H
TY3CL <i>Use of colour in documents</i>	10	H

One or both of these modules may be replaced by up to 20 credits taken from elsewhere in the University.

Progression requirements

To proceed to Part 2, students require 60 credits within the Department of Typography & Graphic Communication. They must obtain at least 40% in TY1HG, TY1TP and TY1DM; achieve an overall average of 40% in 120 credits taken in the examination; achieve not less than 30% in any module except that marks of less than 30% in a total of 20 credits may be condoned, provided that

the candidate has pursued the course for the module(s) with reasonable diligence and has not been absent from the examination without reasonable cause.

To proceed from Part 2 to Part 3, all students should have acquired 120 credits with an overall average of 40%. 100 of these credits should be within the Department of Typography & Graphic Communication. They must obtain 40% in TY2PT and an average of 40% across TY2TT and TY2GC. They must achieve not less than 30% in any module except that marks of less than 30% in a total of 20 credits may be condoned, provided that the candidate has pursued the course for the module(s) with reasonable diligence and has not been absent from the examination without reasonable cause.

Initial applications can be made to the 3-year BA or the 4-year MDes programme. If you subsequently wish to transfer from one to the other you must do so at the end of the first year. A higher level of achievement at the end of Part 2 is necessary to be able to continue with the MDes programme, as described in the MDes programme specification.

Summary of teaching and assessment

There are formal lectures in some modules and a large part of the teaching takes the form of seminars or practical work in studios and workshops.

Modules are assessed by a mixture of essays, reports, seminar presentations, formal examinations (with seen and unseen papers), a dissertation, and projects. All compulsory practical modules are globally assessed through submission of a body of practical work. At the end of Part 2 this is based on TY2PT. At the end of Part 3, this is based on TY3PT and TY3PS.

The conventions for classification are included in the Programme Handbook but you should note that weighting between Part 2 and Part 3 for classification purposes is 33% and 67%.

Admission requirements

All applicants are considered on their individual merits and the Department may vary these requirements if it sees fit. Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained:

Grade C or better in English in GCSE; and achieved

UCAS Tariff: 260 points from 3 A levels (preferably not all practical subjects); 280 points from 4 subjects (e.g. 3 A levels and 1 AS level); 280 points from 2 subjects (if a 12 unit AGNVQ is taken, the additional A level should be in a non-practical subject). The AGNVQ should also be in a subject that is relevant to Typography & Graphic Communication (e.g. Art and Design, Media Studies, Business Studies)

International Baccalaureat: 30 points

Irish Highers: BBBBC

Mature applicants

Applications from mature candidates are welcomed. A mature applicant is more likely to receive an offer of a place if he or she has undertaken recent study, for example 2 or more A levels or an Access course but each case is assessed on its individual merits. We recommend you contact an admissions tutor as soon as possible to discuss your individual circumstances.

International applicants

Applications from international candidates are welcomed. If you are not offering A levels we advise you to contact either an admissions tutor before applying in order to discuss the acceptability of your qualifications. IELTS Band 7 (or equivalent) will be required for those whose education has not been undertaken in English.

Admissions Tutor: Mr Eric Kindel

Support for students and their learning

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@IL) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union.

Induction includes meetings during 'Freshers' Week' with introductions at University, Faculty and Department levels. The Department handbook provides extensive information about the programme and the Department. Support for students in their studies is provided through the University's Personal Academic Record (PAR) scheme, in which students meet their personal tutors regularly to review their progress. The Department's year tutor system enhances the personal tutor system, with year tutors available to offer advice on the choice of modules within the programme. The emphasis throughout the programme is on individual and small-group learning rather than class teaching.

The Design & Print Unit within the Department supports students' learning experience in many ways, playing a key role in our work experience scheme, part of some practical modules. Within the University and the Department there are several important collections which form the bases for seminar presentations, and potential resources for dissertations. The Department has its own computers (Apple Macintoshes) and related hardware (e.g. scanners, laser printers, digital cameras) with a range of professional software relevant to the subject.

Career prospects

Our graduates have found work as designers with journal and magazine publishers, university presses, academic publishers, charities, design studios, computer companies, and museums and galleries. Others work freelance and set up their own business.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

There are no formal arrangements.

Educational aims of the programme

The programme aims to provide an integrated education in design for students who wish to obtain a grounding in the practice of the subject, informed by theory and history. It provides a supporting learning environment where students are stimulated to develop their own interests within the broad field of enquiry offered by the subject, and to develop a range of intellectual, visual, technical and social skills.

Programme Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes in the following areas:

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

1. Principles of typographic design
2. Elements of graphic language and their interrelationships
3. History of typography and graphic communication
4. One particular area of the subject in detail
5. The design process and relevant working methods and tools

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The teaching of the subject has three aspects: theory, history and practice. Theory and history inform practice and practical experience enables discussion of theoretical issues and historical examples. Theory and history are mainly taught through lectures and seminars. Detailed knowledge of one specific area is acquired through researching and writing a dissertation. Practical projects and work experience, including professional assignments, provide an insight into design process and methods. Work experience involves students in close contact with external clients and technical staff.

Assessment

Theory and history (1–4) are assessed through a mixture of coursework, examinations and the dissertation. Practical work (5) is assessed by projects. Compulsory practical modules are globally assessed at the end of Part 2 and Part 3. Optional practical modules are individually assessed.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills – able to:

1. Assemble and review literature
2. Organise material and articulate in written form
3. Analyse examples of graphic language
4. Analyse and solve design problems
5. Plan, conduct, and write up a piece of basic experimental research
6. Demonstrate visual awareness and judgement

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Briefed exercises and self-directed study in close consultation with a supervisor develop research skills. Lectures and seminars promote analysis of graphic language. Project and professional assignments provide the opportunity to analyse and solve design problems and analyse examples of graphic language through critiques. Work in the practical modules also develops visual awareness and judgement. The skills required for basic experimental research are taught through practicals and fieldwork.

Assessment

The dissertation is the primary vehicle for assessing students' research skills (1 & 2). Coursework essays provide additional forms of assessment in modules taken earlier in the programme. Written examinations and essays assess 3. Assessment of practical work includes 4 & 6. Coursework assesses 5.

C. Practical skills – able to:

1. Assess requirements of project brief
2. Explore alternative approaches to a problem
3. Plan practical design work
4. Use appropriate technologies to a suitable level of skill
5. Present a body of practical design work in a professional manner

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Practical skills are taught within the practical modules with projects and professional assignments using studio and computing facilities. Some lectures (e.g. on typographic theory) feed into the development of practical skills by examining a range of design outcomes.

Assessment

Global assessment of body of practical work at the end of Part 2 and Part 3. Individual assessments of optional practical modules.

D. Transferable skills – able to:

1. Solve problems
2. Articulate ideas effectively in speech and writing
3. Manage time
4. Work as a team member
5. Use a variety of computer applications
6. Handle a variety of information sources
7. Use basic statistical techniques
8. Appreciate current professional developments
9. Plan career

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Presentations within seminars and written coursework develop communication skills. Practical work involves problem solving, managing time, working within teams and using various computer applications. Time management is also necessary for submitting coursework. Lectures, seminars and self-directed study provide experience of information handling. Experimental research projects introduce basic statistical techniques. A series of briefings, exercises and self-directed study cover career development skills.

Assessment

Coursework is used to assess 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9. Although the skills associated with 3, 4, 5 are not directly assessed, they contribute to effective outcomes of projects and professional assignments, assessed at the end of Part 2 and Part 3.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably expect to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in module and programme handbooks.