

## MA in Typeface Design

Awarding Institution: The University of Reading  
Teaching Institution: The University of Reading  
Faculty of Arts and Humanities Programme length: 12 months (FT)  
For students entering in 2003 Date of specification: October 2002  
Programme Director: Gerry Leonidas  
Board of Studies: Typography & Graphic Communication, Board of Taught Postgraduate  
Studies Accreditation: not applicable

### Summary of programme aims

The aim of this programme is to provide a thorough grounding in principles and methods of typeface design, incorporating study of historical and theoretical issues, as well as practical learning. The programme also aims to give an understanding of the constraints and potential of current technology, and equip graduates with the skills to design and produce their own typefaces.

### Transferable skills

The programme encourages development of transferable skills including:

- effective communication in speech and writing
- critical analysis and coherent argument
- researching and evaluating evidence
- undertaking self-directed independent work
- managing a substantial project
- using IT for research
- using IT for complex design tasks

### Programme content

		<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
TYMTDC	<i>Typeface design: principles &amp; applications</i>	30	M
TYMTDP	<i>Typeface design: practice</i>	90	M
TYMTDD	<i>Dissertation</i>	60	M

### Part-time/Modular arrangements

Part-time study lasts two years, with module TYMTDC (taught seminars, essays) completed in the first year. Module TYMTDP (practical project) should be commenced during the first year. Module TYMTDD (dissertation) can be undertaken during the second year.

### Progression requirements

The University's taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:

<u>Mark</u>	<u>Interpretation</u>
70 – 100%	Distinction
60 – 69%	Merit
50 – 59%	Good standard (Pass)
<u>Failing categories</u>	
40 – 49%	Work below threshold standard

0 – 39%

Unsatisfactory work

### *For Masters Degrees*

To pass the degree of Master students must gain an average mark of 50 or more overall including a mark of 50 or more for the practice module and have a mark of 40 or more in module TYMTDC. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for all modules marked below 50 must be less than 60 credits.\*

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more overall including a mark of 70 or more for the practice module and have a mark of 40 or more in module TYMTDC will be eligible for a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more overall including a mark of 60 or more for the practice module and have a mark of 40 or more in module TYMTDC will be eligible for a Merit.

### *For Postgraduate Diplomas*

To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50 or more. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for all modules marked below 50 must be less than 60 credits.\*

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for the award of a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Merit.

### *For Postgraduate Certificate*

To pass the Postgraduate Certificate students must gain an average mark of 50 or more. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 10 credits.\*

\* The provision to permit a candidate to be passed overall with a profile containing marks below 40 is made subject to the condition that there is evidence that the candidate applied himself or herself to the work of those modules with reasonable diligence and has not been absent from the examination without reasonable cause.

### **Summary of teaching and assessment**

Teaching takes place in one series of weekly lectures and seminars, and one series of weekly tutorials, demonstrations, and critiques. Both series run throughout the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms. (Small deviations from this schedule may be made to accommodate visiting members of staff.)

### **Admission requirements**

The programme is appropriate for qualified or experienced typographers and graphic designers, or those from related fields who can demonstrate a keen sensitivity to the details of typeface design. Applicants should hold a Bachelor's degree in design or a related field. The Department reserves the right to request evidence of relevant experience of skills, particularly in the case of candidates with a first degree from non-

design-related fields. In the case of applicants without a first degree, evidence of relevant professional experience should be provided; acceptance to the programme may be recommended by the Department, but rests with the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities.

Applicants for whom English is not a mother tongue should provide evidence of fluency in English, in accordance with The University of Reading's published guidelines for students at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities.

Admissions Tutor: Mr Gerry Leonidas

### **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 Programme Directors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union.

With particular regard to the programme, the Department of Typography runs introductory sessions covering both programme-related and health & safety issues. There are dedicated sessions on resources in the University Library; on Departmental collections and resources; and on research skills with regard to our field. New students are provided with a copy of the Department's *Handbook for taught postgraduate programmes* (also available online) which covers general issues, resources available to students, programme-specific matters, and examinations issues.

In terms of support for learning, the University has a number of outstanding collections. These include a major collection of archives of British publishing houses including Bodley Head, Hogarth Press, Longman, Macmillan, Routledge, and Chatto & Windus; the Mycroft Type Collection; the Rickards and John Lewis collections of ephemera; the Otto & Marie Neurath Isotype Collection; the Hans Schmoller collection of twentieth-century type specimens; the Soulby collection of printed ephemera from the 1820s; and the Icograda poster collection.

Lectures and seminars last either one or two hours, and are supported by a variety of aids (electronic media, slides, handouts), depending on the subject and the speaker. Students are also offered a number of optional lecture series (from other Master's or final year undergraduate modules) which may enrich their understanding of the subject. We hold regular postgraduate seminars and staff research briefings, where research issues can be discussed in a more formal environment.

We provide a small number of computers dedicated to postgraduates, and employ a part-time IT support person who may help with relevant issues. Building computer skills is an essential aspect of the programme, and is supported by regular tutorials and hands-on sessions which focus on the specialised tools employed for typeface design (within Modules TYMTDC and TYMTDP).

The Department enjoys particularly close links with the St Bride Printing Library and Oxford University Press. We maintain informal links with design institutions all over the world: in Europe, the US, South America, Australia and India. We have links with a

number of professional and scholarly institutions including Pira International, the Rare Book School in Charlottesville, the Information Design Association, SHARP, the Printing Historical Society and the Communication Research Institute of Australia.

### **Career prospects**

Graduates of the MA in Typeface Design can be expected to find demand for their skills in a variety of applications such as typeface design and production, print and electronic publishing, corporate identity, information design, and graphic design. Previous graduates are working as employees of design consultants, digital type foundries, and as freelance designers.

### **Opportunities for study abroad or for placements**

Students may have the opportunity to take part in a field trip to study Roman and Renaissance letterforms in Rome and Florence.\* This will be for a student's interest and will not be credit-bearing. Students will have to bear the cost of travel, accommodation, food, and entry to museums during the trip.

\*Except in year 2003–04, when the trip will be to Amsterdam, Antwerp and The Hague.

### **Educational aims of the programme**

The Department aims to:

- provide an integrated education that develops a range of transferable skills (intellectual, visual, technical, and social) through the study of typography and graphic communication
- provide high quality teaching, informed by research, of historical, theoretical and practical aspects of typography and graphic communication;
- develop students' confidence in their ability to work and learn effectively both independently and in co-operation with others;
- provide students with the knowledge and experience necessary for further academic and professional study;
- provide a supportive learning environment where students will be stimulated to develop their own interests within the broad field of enquiry offered by typography and graphic communication.

Specifically, the MA in Typeface Design aims to provide a thorough grounding in principles and methods of typeface design, incorporating study of historical and theoretical issues, as well as practical learning. The programme also aims to give an understanding of the constraints and potential of current technology, and equip graduates with the skills to design and produce their own typefaces.

### **Programme Outcomes**

### ***Knowledge and Understanding***

#### **A. Knowledge and understanding of:**

a broad historical and theoretical perspective on typeface design and production

the influence of technical developments on typeface design and production

the history of letterforms from classical Roman times to the 20th century

specialist knowledge in particular areas of the field of typeface use

typographical issues in multi-script documents

#### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

lectures, seminars, and tutorials (modules TYMTDC, TYMTDP)

#### *Assessment*

two 4,000-word essays on: typeface design: principles and applications

10,000–13,000 word dissertation

*Skills and other attributes*

**B. Intellectual skills** – able to:

communicate effectively in speech: in particular discussing concepts and procedures, and presenting coherent arguments

communicate effectively in writing: in particular composing documents which investigate, analyse, and argue critically about relevant issues

research and evaluate primary and secondary source material

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

tutorials with critical discussion sessions  
presentations on specific subjects

review sessions for written project and dissertation proposals

support for structuring written arguments

feedback sessions on written work

sessions on research methods

sessions on dissertation preparation

resource lists

*Assessment*

two 4,000-word essays on: typeface design: principles and applications

10,000–13,000 word dissertation

**C. Practical skills** – able to:

design the typeforms for a number of typeface variants

digitise, encode, complete and generate usable digital fonts from original designs

use IT for complex design tasks (designing, typesetting, and proofing digital fonts)

use IT for research

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

seminars and tutorials (Modules TYMTDC, TYMTDP)

sessions on research methods, electronic resources (Module TYMTDD)

online resource lists

*Assessment*

submission of a substantial type design project (three typeface variants of an original typeface)

submission of workfiles and digital files

submission of type design specimen

**D. Transferable skills – able to:**

communicate effectively in speech and writing

undertake independent research

use IT to conduct research

undertake self-directed independent work

manage a substantial project

use IT effectively for substantial design projects

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

sessions on research methods and dissertation preparation

tutorials with critical discussion sessions

presentations on specific subjects

review sessions for written project and dissertation proposals

support for structuring written arguments

feedback sessions on written work

*Assessment*

two 4,000-word essays on: typeface design: principles and applications

10,000–13,000 word dissertation

submission of a substantial type design project (three typeface variants of an original typeface)

submission of workfiles and digital files

submission of type design specimen

*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.