



**Course Specification
Part A**

**BA (Hons) Graphic Design
AHU055**

**School of Art & Design
Faculty of Arts and Humanities**

Academic Year: 2020/2021

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

We regularly review our course content, to make it relevant and current for the benefit of our students. For these reasons, course modules may be updated.

More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content, and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the Module Information Directory (MID), student module guide(s) and the course handbook.

The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be verified by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

Revised November 2018

Template Revised August 2018

PART A Course Specification (Published Document)

BA (Hons) Graphic Design

1. Introduction

The BA (Hons) Graphic Design programme at Coventry University builds on a strong reputation for industry standard professionalism, equipping students with the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to join the industry market and drive the future of design. Graphic Design is a complex discipline that encapsulates a wide range of aims and outcomes. To be a graphic designer is to be an astute visual communicator who understands and responds to changing contexts. Curiosity, empathy, responsibility and technical proficiency are key.

Visual language is a powerful force that can transcend reason and appeal to emotions and senses. The work graphic designers do, through its symbols and messages, shapes and challenges the perceptions of the people who come into contact with it. With that kind of power comes responsibility—designers don't just make "pretty pictures", they make the world. For graphic designers, the world becomes a playground, a place for experimentation, a source of continuous inspiration and a measure for success.

On this course, we teach within a framework that takes into account the multi-faceted roles a designer might perform. Be it a storyteller or a systems' thinker, the course allows students to explore these roles through a wide variety of projects and through the exploration of a spectrum of industry standard digital skills along four main threads of inquiry: *Narrative & Time*, *Systems & Information*, *Strategy & Direction* and *Personal Development Planning*.

Narrative & Time	Enables the exploration of design as storytelling; revolves around visual narrative and the power of image and text to communicate expressively. This branch of study is built on the belief that designers can and should exercise their authorship and explore and express self-interests and stories of personal interest, as a way of becoming more capable at design communication in the service of others.
Systems & Information	Promises the investigation and application of design as a functional and practical practice. It engages with typographic principles along with visualisation methods.
Strategy & Direction	Allows for the practice of real-life design within authentic contexts: client led briefs and renowned design competitions. The focus here is on design as strategy, with a clearly defined aim and impact. Through this thread students also get to explore the sustainable, social and ethical facets of design practice.
Personal Development Planning	Puts the student first and enables the development of self-awareness, reflexivity and criticality in relation to their practice and how this is situated within the wider professional contexts.

The course might therefore appeal to:

Generalists: the course is an intensive exploration of today's vast graphic design landscape. Guided by our modules and briefs, students delve into branding, packaging, mapping, editorial design, font design, advertising campaigns, experimental work and design writing.

Specialists: the course is a fantastic springboard towards a more specialised trajectory, be that in post-graduate education or employment. By exploring a multitude of design outputs and contexts throughout their first two years, students are encouraged to begin shaping and directing their focus towards personal areas of interest in the final year.

The course is not prescriptive, instead proposing lines of inquiry that enable students to become owners of their own learning. Typical graduate portfolios might therefore include branding, publicity, info-graphics, animations, publishing or web and app design in a range of technology and media from a mix of inhouse assignments, self-initiated tasks, national / international competition opportunities (such as D&AD and YCN), live project briefs and possible input from courses in other Schools in the Faculty and beyond (for instance, Architecture, Photography and Creative Writing). Students are actively encouraged to be imaginative,

ambitious and resourceful to face the challenges of an unpredictable, demanding, globally competitive and technologically-driven world.

The teaching and learning strategy on the course aims to instil principles around four key pillars which provide points of differentiation between higher education route and other potential routes of development:

Community – The course fosters a sense of belonging to a community of practice in all of aspects of teaching and assessment through: collaborative projects, international trips, peer critiques, course exhibitions, and other initiatives. Students are invited to drive parts of the curriculum and may write their own briefs and co-create learning materials.

Vocation – The course intends for all students to have positive graduate outcomes, be that through employment or entrepreneurship. Students are prepared for professional contexts through live briefs, exposure to competition briefs, guest talks, studio visits, portfolio reviews, alumni conferences such as the annual Future Proof event and specialised lectures and workshops on personal and professional promotion and action planning.

Experimentation – Expression, play and experiments are serious components on the course. Channelled through key modules, they allow students to explore materials, tools, processes and ideas of personal interest. The course is attuned to industry standards, but it does not aim to replicate the working world; instead, it provides a safe space for innovation and uninhibited creativity.

Critical Thinking – To be a world-leading designer means to be a designer who is aware of the global impact of their work. To ensure that students are sensitive to the wider contexts in which their work might perform and the overall value of graphic design, the course guides students through research methods, critical thinking, design writing and critique. In a world of questionable news and misinformation, an informed, inquisitive designer can begin to make a change in local, national and global communities.

Students will typically engage with the course through classroom activities, through collaborative projects within and without the course, and through study trips, studio visits, professional visiting speakers and via the course newsletter, *snap to guides*, all of which provide essential learning and community-based content which enriches the student profile.

2 Available Award(s) and Modes of Study

Title of Award	Mode of attendance	UCAS Code	FHEQ Level
BA (Hons) Graphic Design with Professional Enhancement	F/T 4 years	W211	Level 6
BA (Hons) Graphic Design with International Enhancement	F/T 4 years	W211	Level 6
BA (Hons) Graphic Design	F/T 3 years	W211	Level 6
BA Graphic Design	F/T 3 years	W211	Level 6
Diploma of Higher Education in Graphic Design	F/T 2 years	W211	Level 5
Certificate of Higher Education in Graphic Design	F/T 1 year	W211	Level 4

3 Awarding Institution/Body

Coventry University

4 Collaboration	Raffles Design Institute, Singapore [Franchise] Raffles Design Institute, Malaysia [Franchise] Hong Kong Design Institute (HKDI) [Franchise]
5 Teaching Institution and Location of delivery	Coventry University Faculty of Arts & Humanities, School of Art and Design (on campus)
6 Internal Approval/Review Dates	Date of approval*/latest review*: (02/2020) Date for next review: Academic year 2028-2029
7 Course Accredited by	Not Applicable
8 Accreditation Date and Duration	Not Applicable
9 QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s) and/or other external factors	QAA Art and Design Benchmark Statement, 2017: qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/sbs-art-and-design-17.pdf
10 Date of Course Specification	February 2020
11 Course Directors	Philip Perry / Paula Murarescu

12 Outline and Educational Aims of the Course

The educational aims for the course are in line with the Faculty and University mission statement and School of the Arts and Design as a whole. They are aligned to the Art and Design Benchmark Statements 2017.

The overall aims of the BA (Hons) Graphic Design course are to:

Aim 1	Provide a rigorous and hands-on learning environment in which students can gain experience and engage at the forefront of graphic design practice;
Aim 2	Enable students from all backgrounds to develop their creative, intellectual, technical and professional potential through diverse design practice;
Aim 3	Foster discipline-related transferrable skills so that students become independent learners with the intellectual flexibility to contribute to, and benefit from, societies in continual change;
Aim 4	Enable students to take ownership of their own learning and align themselves with their professional community of practice or further study;
Aim 5	Nurture interpersonal skills to enable effective communication and collaborative practice with audiences and/or clients;
Aim 6	Cultivate methods of inquiry, critical analysis and creative synthesis through the development of individual creativity and the exercise of informed aesthetic, utilitarian and design judgements;
Aim 7	Encourage cross-discipline and forward thinking, engagement and experimentation with new tools, processes and media at all stages of design development leading to innovative and expressive artefacts;
Aim 8	Promote the exploration of a variety of experiential material and technological capabilities towards the application of design theories and creation of appropriate design work.

13 Course Learning Outcomes

The course outcomes have been mapped against the 6 pillars of the Education Strategy:

- a) Creativity & enterprise
- b) Intercultural & international engagement
- c) Community contribution and responsibility
- d) Innovation & digital fluency
- e) Employability
- f) Research-inspired teaching

The intended learning outcomes are that on successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

LO 1 (a, b, c, d, e)	Evidence capabilities including accountability, adaptability and resilience to practice within wide and continuously changing diverse cultural contexts at a professional and socially-engaged level;
LO 2 (a, c, e)	Position practice within its wider community and professional contexts, demonstrating ownership, engagement, initiative and self-awareness;
LO 3 (a, b, c, e)	Work independently and collaboratively with professionalism;
LO 4 (a, c, e)	Present and advocate work effectively and competently to a variety of audiences, demonstrating conceptual, visual, oral and interpersonal skills;
LO 5 (a, e, f)	Practise curiosity and critical thinking through design development by applying sustained methods of research, investigation, analysis and interpretation;
LO 6 (a, b, e, f)	Reflect on, synthesise and integrate learning towards the creation and optimisation of a coherent body of work which responds to relevant criteria, including context, stakeholder expectations, environmental factors and socio-cultural norms;
LO 7 (a, d)	Employ both convergent and divergent thinking, speculative inquiry, experimentation and risk-taking in the processes of observation, investigation, visualisation and making;
LO 8 (a, d, e)	Effectively communicate sustained creative and conceptual design outputs using appropriate tools, technologies and materials, applying key design theories and techniques in the control of form and content.

14 Course Structure and Requirements, Levels, Modules, Credits and Awards

Course structures must comply with the curriculum frameworks set out in the Academic Regulations. Please refer to the appropriate guidance documents – [Academic Regulations](#) 2019-20

Patterns and modes of attendance

This course operates as a full-time programme of study according to the University's regulations for undergraduate provision

Enhancement years

Students successfully completing the first two years of the course (i.e. having accumulated 240 credits) can take a Professional or International Enhancement module which runs for a full academic year between levels 5 and 6. They might do one of:

1. an Erasmus study placement at an EU university;
2. a study placement at a university outside the EU;
3. an Erasmus professional work placement;
4. an approved professional work placement separately and independently organised that is outside the EU;
5. an approved professional work placement separately and independently organised within the UK;

Students opting for either 1 or 2, above will be registered on 5010AAD; those opting for 3, 4 or 5 will be registered on 5011AAD. These modules are worth 0 credits. Students will thus graduate with 360 credits in total, assuming successful completion of their final year. Eligibility for placements is in line with Coventry University regulations.

Typical pattern of delivery for full-time attendance



↑ Image above: *Diagram of curriculum structure*

Distinctive features

This course focuses on community, vocation, experimentation and critical thinking.

The course fosters independence, collaboration and professionalism within a curriculum that encourages creative freedom and play; this is designed to develop students' self-discovery, ownership of knowledge and personal design identity. Students typically engage with industry through live client-led projects and through simulated industry projects, including competition briefs, personal branding and portfolio development, as a means of developing vocational skills and professional thinking. All students will receive the required learning to engage professionally in industry contexts by the end of the second semester of level 5. This thread of vocational inquiry is balanced against teaching and learning content which accentuates theory and abstraction as a means of imbuing academic credibility in students' work. In all modules, students will explore lateral thinking strategies, develop the capacity to defend their work and take risks in a safe environment.

The three levels of the course follow three distinct threads: level 4 offers an introduction to practices and theory, level 5 consolidates thinking with respect to audience and professional practice, and level 6 focuses on the students' individual design identities and exit plan. With this ethos at its heart, the course is designed to facilitate 'vertical studios', with modules constructed around a 'stepped learning system' in which equivalent modules run synchronously at all three levels. For example, level 6 students studying Narrative & Time 3 are enabled to work with level 5 students studying Narrative & Time 2; this extends student learning opportunities beyond traditional lecturer / student and cohort-centric student learning relationships, opening up opportunities for unpredictable discoveries and project development. In addition, modules have been written to close and dissolve gaps between module content, espousing the transition of knowledge from one to another.

Cascade of Awards

BA (Hons) Graphic Design with International Enhancement Year BA (Hons) Graphic Design with Professional Enhancement Year BA (Hons) Graphic Design ↓
BA Graphic Design ↓
Diploma of Higher Education in Graphic Design ↓
Certificate of Higher Education in Graphic Design

Credit and outcomes map

Modules within the course, their status (whether mandatory or options), the levels at which they are studied, and their credit values are identified in the table below.

Credit level	Module Code	Title	Credit Value	Mandatory /Optional	Course Learning Outcomes
		Semester 1			
4	4015AAD	Narrative & Time 1: Design Expression	30	M	1,3,4,5,7,8
4	4016AAD	Systems & Information 1: Design Function	20	M	3,5,6,8
4	Add+Vantage 1		10	M	N/A
		Semester 2			
4	4017AAD	Strategy & Direction 1: Design Promotion	40	M	1,3,5,6,8
4	4018AAD	Personal Development Planning 1: Design Reflection	20	M	1,2,4,5,6
		Semester 1			
5	5009AAD	Narrative & Time 2: Design Experience	30	M	1,3,5,6,7,8
5	5017AAD	Systems & Information 2: Design System	20	M	4,5,6,7,8
5	Add+Vantage 2		10	M	N/A
		Semester 2			
5	5018AAD	Strategy & Direction 2: Design Awareness	40	M	1,2,3,4,6,8
5	5019AAD	Personal Development Planning 2: Design Community	20	M	1,2,4,5,6
		Year Out (SW)			
5	5010AAD	International Enhancement Year	0	O	
	OR				
5	5011AAD	Professional Enhancement Year	0	O	
		Semester 1			
6	6017AAD	Narrative & Time 3: Design Experiment	30	M	1,5,6,7,8
6	6018AAD	Systems & Information 3: Design Identity	20	M	2,4,6,8

6	Add+Vantage 3		10	M	N/A
		Semester 2			
6	6019AAD	Strategy & Direction 3: Design Persuasion	40	M	1,2,3,5,6,7,8
6	6020AAD	Personal Development Planning 3: Design Critique	20	M	2,3,5,6

↓ Modules ↓	↓ Module Learning Outcomes ↓	↓ Course Learning Outcomes ↓							
		CLO1	CLO2	CLO3	CLO4	CLO5	CLO6	CLO7	CLO8
Narrative & Time 1									
Semester 1	LO1: Research								
	LO2: Conceptualisation								
	LO3: Implementation								
Systems & Information 1									
Semester 1	LO1: Analysis								
	LO2: Application								
	LO3: Testing								
Strategy & Direction 1									
Semester 2	LO1: Strategy								
	LO2: Direction								
	LO3: Evaluation								
	LO4: Collaboration								
Personal Development Planning 1									
Semester 2	LO1: Awareness								
	LO2: Reflection								
	LO3: Synthesis								
		CLO1	CLO2	CLO3	CLO4	CLO5	CLO6	CLO7	CLO8
Narrative & Time 2									
Semester 1	LO1: Research								
	LO2: Conceptualisation								
	LO3: Implementation								
Systems & Information 2									
Semester 1	LO1: Analysis								
	LO2: Application								
	LO3: Testing								
Strategy & Direction 2									
Semester 2	LO1: Strategy								
	LO2: Direction								
	LO3: Evaluation								
	LO4: Collaboration								
Personal Development Planning 2									
Semester 2	LO1: Awareness								
	LO2: Reflection								
	LO3: Synthesis								
		CLO1	CLO2	CLO3	CLO4	CLO5	CLO6	CLO7	CLO8
Narrative & Time 3									
Semester 1	LO1: Research								
	LO2: Conceptualisation								
	LO3: Implementation								
Systems & Information 3									
Semester 1	LO1: Analysis								
	LO2: Application								
	LO3: Testing								
Strategy & Direction 3									
Semester 2	LO1: Strategy								
	LO2: Direction								
	LO3: Evaluation								
	LO4: Collaboration								
Personal Development Planning 3									
Semester 2	LO1: Awareness								
	LO2: Reflection								
	LO3: Synthesis								

↑ Image above: Diagram of module learning outcomes as mapped against course learning outcomes. The lighter shades indicate unintended learning outcomes that might be achieved throughout the module, whereas the deeper shades indicate focused course learning outcomes that each module aims to equip the students with upon completion.

15 Criteria for Admission and Selection Procedure

UCAS entry profiles may be found by searching for the relevant course on the [UCAS website](#), then clicking on 'Entry profile'.

International applicants require IELTS 6.0.

In evaluating the candidate's potential and appropriateness we look for the following skills, which may be demonstrated through but not limited to design specific briefs:

- Adaptability and curiosity
- Propensity for acquiring technical skills
- Critical engagement with ideas and concept making
- Visual aptitudes: use of colour, composition, storytelling
- Use and diversity of mediums: photography, illustration, typography

APEL Procedure

Applications from candidates with relevant experience will also be considered on an individual basis and they may be eligible to apply for advanced standing Accreditation of Prior Learning or Prior Experiential Learning in accordance with the [University's defined process](#).

16 Academic Regulations and Regulations of Assessment

This Course conforms to the standard [Academic Regulations](#) 2019-20 Undergraduate Mode E.

University policy requires the internal moderation of all assessments. External Examiners are appointed for all named University awards. The role of the External Examiner at module level is to ensure that academic standards are in line with national norms for the subject. External Examiners undertake the moderation of examination papers and assessment tasks, and view representative samples of work for the modules for which they have responsibility. At programme level, External Examiners help to ensure fairness in the consideration of student progression and awards. They have the right to comment on all aspects of the assessment system and participate as full members of the assessment boards.

The Pass mark for all modules is 40%. This overall module mark may comprise more than one component (e.g. coursework and exam). The individual module descriptors give the precise pass criteria and the credit value of the component marks that contribute to the overall module mark.

On Undergraduate programmes, the Honours classification boundaries for First Class, Upper Second Class, Lower Second Class and Third Class are 70%, 60%, 50% and 40% respectively.

The course naturally recognises and promotes University support mechanisms in addition to its own local policies, and its policies are consistent with University policies on Equality and Diversity. Students will always be referred to the University's Undergraduate Handbook, with its advice on support and guidance in health, finance, social and study matters.

In addition to that our Induction Programmes and regular Academic Personal Tutorials are aimed at guiding students through relevant policy and signposting them towards they support systems that they might need.

Students with disabilities and additional learning needs, for example wheelchair users and those with dyslexia and visual impairment, have been well accommodated in the past and the course makes every effort to continue to do so. Reasonable adjustments can be made to the teaching, learning, assessment and support of the course(s) to maximise accessibility to students with disabilities.

17 Indicators of Quality Enhancement

The Course is managed by the School of Art and Design Board of Study of the Faculty of Arts & Humanities.

The Programme Assessment Board (PAB) for the School of Art and Design is responsible for considering the progress of all students and making awards in accordance with both the University and course-specific regulations.

The assurance of the quality of modules is the responsibility of the Boards of Study which contribute modules to the course.

The course has been designed in accordance with the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) benchmark statements for Art and Design for UG February 2017.

The course employs a qualified course team with a broad knowledge and set of interests. The team continues to practice graphic design professionally, where appropriate, and all have industry experience in different facets of graphic design practice. The team is embedded in external academic duties, including transnational education (TNE) in the form of teaching and moderation, and in External Examiner roles within the UK. This provides valuable resource for ongoing course review.

The course is reviewed via weekly Module Leader-led module review proformas and through Student Voice meetings, Module Evaluation Questionnaires, Course Evaluation Questionnaires, the National Student Survey, External Examiner visits and reports, and through objective analysis of international franchises; the course feeds into Boards of Study and to the Course Quality Enhancement Monitoring (CQEM) process, which also receives contributions from the student body. The CQEM report measures the course against the pillars of the Coventry University Education Strategy 2015-2021.

The course has maintained three successive years of overall student satisfaction in excess of 80% (NSS 2017, NSS 2018, NSS 2019). 2018/2019 NSS data, live at the time of this document's creation, includes:

NSS Overall Satisfaction	NSS Teaching & Learning	NSS Assessment and feedback	NSS Academic Support	Completion Rate	Good Honours (1 st /2:1)	Course Pass Rate	Course Score
83%	84.5%	66%	83.1%	93%	78%	90%	819

Recent comments from the National Student Survey include:

"The teaching staff on the course have been amazing for the whole three years. They are supportive, inspiring, and always push you to achieve your best."

"Working with clients on live briefs was an important experience and it helped me as a designer to be more confident."

"The course stretches students to practice what they've learnt and explore out of their comfort zone. It's extremely experimental and testing but has developed me and my skills as a designer."

"The level of feedback throughout the course has positively affected me and been reflected throughout my work and grades."

"The briefs have given me a chance to explore more and gain more knowledge in different fields of design."

"The quality of the teaching from our lecturers is intellectually stimulating and inspiring."

Recent comments from the External Examiner include:

“Teaching and assessment is organised and confidently carried out while there is a supportive community of engaged staff and students seemingly being built on a mutual respect and the commitment to creative endeavour.”

“Assessment is fair and is subjected to second marking/moderation. Regulations/guidance is acknowledged, the feedback and marks are available in agreed timeframes and the whole process is rigorous.”

“Assessment continues to be robust with marks carefully mapped to assessment criteria. Students are also aware of these learning outcomes. Bringing students into the assessment process via the creation of audio feedback (while in consultation with learners) continues to assure individuals that their work is capably assessed while opening up to further discussions/questions should any additional clarification be sought.”

The course operates well on the international stage, with franchises in Singapore, Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur. International teams feed into their own CQEM reports and these are reviewed at a local course level alongside outcomes of on-site moderation and External Examiner reports, teaching visits and staff development visits, in order to identify course strengths and weaknesses.

Recent comments from the International External Examiner (Raffles, Singapore) include:

“I spoke to the Graphic Design team today UK time 10.10 and Singaporean time 5.10. I was impressed once again with their dedication and hard work. The work produced in Raffles has developed and grown and this is down to the hard work of both Raffles and the Coventry. [Staff] have worked tirelessly to ensure that there is a parity between the standard of these two courses and this shows. They have all been dedicated and enthusiastic.”

Students are encouraged to participate in design competitions and have won accolades from a range of discipline-renowned awarding bodies in the last 5 years, such as YCN and Penguin Random House, as well as receiving prizes at New Designers.

18 Additional Information

Enrolled students have access to additional, key sources of information about the course and student support including:

Faculty/School Handbook

Student Handbook

Module Guides

Module Information Directory

Study Support information

Course newsletter
