

Programme Specification BA (Hons) Visual Communication

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 advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detail on the specific learning outcomes, indicative content and the teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found (1) at www.bcu.ac.uk/biad, (2) in the Module Specifications and (3) in the Student Handbook.

The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked within independent review processes undertaken by the Quality Assurance Agency.

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| Awarding Institution / Body: | Birmingham City University |
| Teaching Institution: | Birmingham City University, Birmingham Institute of Art & Design |
| Interim Awards and Final Award: | Cert HE/ Dip HE/ BA/ BA (Hons) |
| Programme Title: | BA (Hons) Visual Communication BA (Hons) Visual Communication (Graphic Communication) BA (Hons) Visual Communication (Illustration) BA (Hons) Visual Communication (Film & Animation) BA (Hons) Visual Communication (Photography) |
| Main fields of Study: | Graphic Communication, Illustration, Film, Animation, Photography |
| Modes of Study: | Full-Time 3 years |
| Language of Study: | English |
| UCAS Code: | PW92, W211, W220 WW26, W460 |
| JACS Code: | W213 |

Professional Status of the programme (if applicable):

The following subject routes have achieved Creative Skillset Accreditation:

BA (Hons) Visual Communication (Graphic Communication)

BA (Hons) Visual Communication (Illustration)

BA (Hons) Visual Communication (Photography)

Relevant subject benchmark statements and other external reference points used to inform programme outcomes:

Art and Design Benchmarks

FHEQ Statements

Programme philosophy and aims

BA (Hons) Visual Communication – Course Philosophy

BA Visual Communication offers students the opportunity to participate in a degree course, which reflects the very latest ideas and practices found in the creative industries. Endorsed by industry and awarded the Creative Skillset tick, this unique programme has four distinct subject routes under the umbrella of Visual Communication; Graphic Communication, Illustration, Photography and Film & Animation.

Students study one of these subject routes, defining and developing their practice through active and practical engagement informed and underpinned by universal principles and theories of visual communication. As in the creative industries, the course celebrates opportunities for interdisciplinary practice and recognises that some students may have an ability to find synthesis between more than one subject and that this may help them develop a unique and original expression in their work.

Each subject route promotes the idea of a creative community, encouraging collaboration and the value of peer learning. This is supplemented by opportunities to seek advice from experts in other disciplines, work collaboratively with students from all subjects and take workshops in all subjects, to learn new skills and techniques.

Enterprise and employability are embedded within the practice, but not at the expense of imaginative and creative expression, indeed creative thinking, innovative ideas and imaginative solutions are essential to professional practice. This intimate relationship with our industries is maintained by a rolling programme of guest specialists and leading international professionals, who bring not only insight, but real work experience through live briefs, critiques and portfolio surgeries.

As students move through the course they will discover and refine a portfolio of practice which best suits their motivations and aspirations. Through this relationship they will develop as creative individuals, equipped not only for a career in their subject, but with transferable skills to benefit a whole range of professional contexts. The worth of this creative education goes beyond vocation, promoting individual well-being and a wider contribution to society.

The aims of the programme are to provide learners with:

- Requisite knowledge and enterprise skills to successfully enter the visual communication industries as a creative practitioner.
- An in-depth working understanding of universal principles of visual communication, a range of analogue and digital skills and competencies.
- A stimulating curriculum that encourages learners to develop and communicate ideas through exploration, production, analysis and synthesis, to fully resolve a body of work to a professional level.
- Ability to work effectively both individually and collaboratively.
- Effective research and study skills to underpin the development of imaginative visual work.
- Appropriate conditions to engage and contribute to a creative community of reflective practice.
- Creative thinking skills to develop a range of strategies using appropriate materials and processes, to achieve outcomes in a variety of contexts to defined audiences.

Intended learning outcomes and the means by which they are achieved and demonstrated:

Learning Outcomes¹

1. Knowledge and Understanding

KU1: The broad critical and contextual dimensions of visual communication.

KU2: Visual Communication practice in relation to audiences, clients, markets and/or other participants.

KU3: A range of working strategies, methods and materials and their broad applications.

KU4: Key aspects of visual communication, including underlying concepts and established principles.

KU5: The relationship between theory and practice through research.

2. Intellectual Skills

IS1: Communicate an understanding of the key principles of practice in written and oral presentation.

IS2: Demonstrate creative thinking skills.

IS3: Apply analysis to the work of appropriate practitioners.

IS4: The ability to source, synthesise and apply research, to work independently and develop and articulate ideas.

IS5: Make sound judgements in accordance with the theories and concepts of visual communication subjects.

3. Practical Skills

PS1: The ability to source and apply research, to work independently and confidently apply practical and technical knowledge in an appropriate and professional manner.

PS2: Demonstrate efficient and reliable working practices in relation to the subject and / or profession/s.

PS3: Generate a range of potential ideas and visual developments and apply this to the production of creative work.

PS4: Application of information technology to demonstrate an understanding of media, software and recognised competencies/skills.

PS5: Make informed choices in the selection and application of existing and new technologies (digital and non –digital) within a subject and /or professional context.

¹ Guidance on the specification of learning outcomes is available from the Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching.

4. Transferable/Key Skills

TS1: Manage your own learning, including self-evaluation through reflection and take action that results in self development

TS2: Communicate ideas, information, problems and solutions in visual, written and oral forms.

TS3: Negotiation and planning skills

TS4: Exhibition, portfolio and presentation skills to a professional standard

TS5: Apply interpersonal and social skills to interact with others

TS6: Enterprise skills and risk taking to enhance employability.

TS7: Work effectively and efficiently, either autonomously or collaboratively as a member of a team.

Learning teaching, and assessment methods used

Knowledge and Understanding

An integrated programme of practice and theory modules that incorporate the following; Individual and group tutorials, workshops, demonstrations, individual and collaborative projects, student and staff led seminars, peer group learning, reflective journal, case studies, problem based learning. Live projects, industry competition briefs, exchanges, group exhibitions, national and international study visits.

Knowledge and understanding are assessed through:

A presentation of practical work and research support material and written and verbal presentations evidenced in written work and seminars

Intellectual Skills

An integrated programme of practice and theory modules that incorporate the following: Problem based learning, reflective evaluation and analysis, group discussion, lectures (including visiting lecturers and guest speakers) and critical presentations.

Intellectual skills are assessed through:

A presentation of practical work and research material, written and verbal presentations evidenced in written work and seminars

Practical Skills

Practical workshops and demonstrations, simulated or live projects, study visits, E learning using forums and resources on the virtual learning environment. Presentations and exhibitions demonstrating both collaborative and independent learning skills.

Practical skills are assessed through:

Presentation of visual work with supportive research material, written and verbal presentations evidenced in written work and seminars

Transferable/Key Skills

Project work, professional practice lectures and seminars, individual and group tutorials, peer group learning and collaborative activity.

Discussion groups, student presentations, special interest groups, reflective journals

Transferable/Key Skills are assessed through:

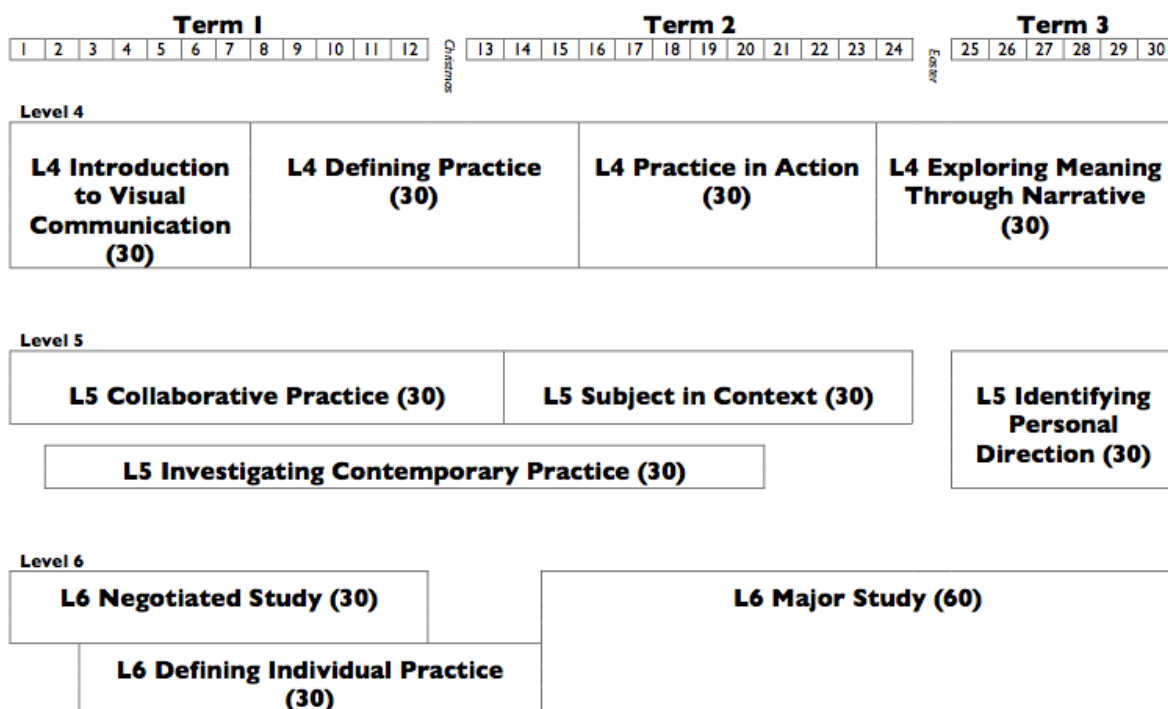
Presentation of practical work and supportive material, written and verbal presentations evidenced in written work and seminars, self evaluation.

Programme structure and requirements, levels, modules, credits and awards

The structure of the course, the modules, levels and credit values, and the awards which can be gained are shown in the diagram below.

BA (Hons) Visual Communication

(Graphic Communication) (Illustration) (Photography) (Film & Animation)



Support for Learning including Personal Development Planning (PDP)

Students are encouraged to identify and, with guidance, to reflect on their own learning needs and are offered the following support as appropriate to meet those needs:

A comprehensive induction including an introduction to the course, staff, resources and University/Faculty support systems

A student guide, which outlines the course philosophy, structure and aims

A well resourced academic environment and library

English Language support is available for overseas students.

A reflective visual journal to demonstrate project development and as a basis for tutorials.

Access to module tutors, level coordinators, Subject Leaders and Course Director. There are opportunities to meet with the Head of School with reasonable advance notice

An Equal opportunities policy and student charter is operating at BCU

Student copies of assessment feedback

Comprehensive feedback from all formal work-checks and assessments

PDP is fully embedded in each module of the programme.

Criteria for admission

Candidates must satisfy the following general admissions requirements of the programme and attend a portfolio interview.

The current admission requirements can be found under the 'Entry Requirements' tab of the web page for this course.

Methods for evaluation and enhancement of quality and standards including listening and responding to views of students

Staff/Student Forums

Course Team Meetings

Course Board of Studies

External Examiner Visits

Examination Boards

School Academic Monitoring Committee

Institute Board

Annual Course Report

Module Reports

Module Feedback

National Student Survey

Student Experience Survey

Viscom Voice