Course Specification

Course Summary Information			
1	**Course Title**	BA (Hons) Graphic Design	
2	**BCU Course Code**	**UCAS Code**	US1389	W211
3	**Awarding Institution**		Birmingham City University	
4	**Teaching Institution(s)** (if different from point 3)			
5	**Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation** (if applicable)			

6	**Course Description**

BA Graphic Design here at BCU is an exciting, engaging, and stimulating course that will equip you with the skills, knowledge, and confidence needed to enter the creative industries.

Our team of experienced and knowledgeable staff will support you on your journey, helping you to bring your creative ideas to life. You'll develop a variety of design approaches and creative problem-solving techniques, giving you the resilience to succeed in your chosen career path.

As designers, we play an important role in society, and we have the ability to make meaningful change to our world. You will be encouraged to develop a critical eye through briefs that challenge you to go beyond the surface, providing sustainable & culturally-conscious solutions to real-world issues.

What's covered in the course?

Our BA (Hons) Graphic Design course will enable you to stand out through your imaginative thinking, passion and commitment to new ideas and international perspectives. You will study a course that will enhance your design skills and challenge your creative thinking, helping you identify the latest directions in design communication on a world stage. We aim to attract independent learners who are creative, imaginative, playful, full of passion and aware of the power they possess to facilitate change, inform opinion and make their mark in industry. Many graduates have gone on to become leaders in their field of specialism and they often return to the University to share this knowledge.

During your time with us, you will develop the practical and intellectual skills required to succeed in a dynamic and ever-changing environment. Our modules are designed to provide you with exciting and engaging learning experiences which will prepare you for your onward journey. Our first year of study focuses on creative play and risk-taking, along with building up core skills and an understanding of design principles and areas of practice. In your second year, you will get the chance to work on live briefs and to gain real-world industry experience, along with advancing your creative and technical skills to a higher level. Our final year is all about developing autonomy within your practice, cultivating a deeper approach to critical thinking and readying yourself to enter the world of creative work.

On the course you'll get the chance to explore a wide range of areas of practice within graphic design, including branding, packaging, motion design, editorial, typography, UX/UI, art direction, and advertising, as well as delving into emerging technologies such as VR/AR and 3D rendering. Rather than specialising in just one of these areas of practice, we encourage our

students to adopt a multi-disciplinary approach, making them desirable to employers and giving them the adaptability, they need to flourish in their creative futures. Collaboration is not only facilitated but actively encouraged on our course, and you'll have the chance to work with students from other disciplines including illustration, photography, digital marketing and more.

You will immerse yourself in our vibrant studio culture and creative community, based at our City Centre Campus, where you will find traditional and digital print-making facilities, photographic studios, 3D printing, Adobe software training and large format print facilities to enhance your design work. You will also have the opportunity to study abroad for part of the course, or to go on trips to destinations such as New York, Berlin or Paris.

One of our main focuses is employability, and all students who study with us will receive targeted support with professional skills and will leave with an industry-ready portfolio. The course has excellent links to industry, both here in the West Midlands, and nationally too, with opportunities to get involved with live briefs and placements from some of the top design agencies in the country. Previous students have worked on live projects with Turner Duckworth, Superunion, Conran Design, Design Bridge, Man Vs Machine, Studio BLUP, Moonpig, Bulletproof, The Times and The Pratt Institute (New York). We are also fortunate to have great links with Birmingham Design Festival, an event which provides access to an inspiring line-up of internationally renowned designers and creatives. Many of our students have volunteered at the festival, building up their industry networks and confidence.

Your tutors are enthusiastic about their areas of practice, which fosters an invaluable knowledge transfer within the course. We have exceptional levels of external engagement, with visiting lectures given by nationally and internationally-recognised practitioners such as David Carson, Jonathan Barnbrook, Neville Brody, Morag Myerscough, Jim Sutherland, Adult Art Club, Gail Anderson, Adrian Shaughnessy, Becky Smith and Patrick Thomas. As well as having numerous links with industry, you will engage in workshops, seminars, masterclasses, careers advice, portfolio reviews, mentorships and placements.

7	Course Awards		
7a	Name of Final Award	Level	Credits Awarded
	Bachelor of Arts with Honours Graphic Design	6	360
7b	Exit Awards and Credits Awarded		
	Certificate of Higher Education Graphic Design	4	120
	Diploma of Higher Education Graphic Design	5	240
	Bachelor of Arts Graphic Design	6	300

8	Derogation from the University Regulations
	None

9	Delivery Patterns		
Mode(s) of Study	Location(s) of Study	Duration of Study	Code(s)
Full Time	City Centre	3 years	US1389
Professional Placement Year	Placement	4 years	US1391

10	Entry Requirements
	The admission requirements for this course are stated on the course page of the BCU website at https://www.bcu.ac.uk/, or may be found by searching for the course entry profile located on the UCAS website.

11	Course Learning Outcomes
1	**Knowledge and Understanding**
1.1	Describe and evaluate the critical and contextual dimensions of graphic design practice.
1.2	Develop a high level of technical and practical skills in analogue and digital communication and be able to creatively apply these.
1.3	Undertake research into graphic design and its contexts, through the use of creative experimentation, academic rigour and critical analysis.
1.4	Develop multiple skills for employability and be working at a professional standard.
2	**Cognitive and Intellectual Skills**
2.1	The ability to source, synthesise and apply research and to develop and articulate ideas in practical, written and verbal forms.
2.2	Demonstrate critical and reflective analysise of their own practice and the work of appropriate design practitioners.
2.3	Demonstrate creative thinking skills and different approaches to solving problems.
2.4	Review, consolidate, and apply their knowledge in accordance with theories, discourse and concepts of graphic design.
3	**Practical and Professional Skills**
3.1	Generate a range of potential ideas and visual developments and apply this to the production of creative work.
3.2	Confidently apply appropriate practical and technical knowledge through a wide range of materials, tools, technologies and approaches to graphic communication.
3.3	Explore the benefits of risk-taking, iterative failure and the possibilities found within innovative forms of cross-disciplinary activities.
3.4	Synthesise theory and practice towards personal career ambitions and reflect upon their position within photography and related disciplines.
4	**Key Transferable Skills**
4.1	Manage own learning, including self-evaluation through reflection and take action that results in self-development.
4.2	Employ negotiation, enterprise, planning, exhibition and presentation skills to a professional standard.
4.3	Communicate ideas, information, problems and solutions in visual, written and oral forms.
4.4	Work effectively and efficiently, either autonomously or collaboratively.

12	**Course Requirements**

12a	**Level 4:**

In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 100 credits):

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
VIS4060	Introduction to Graphic Design	20
VIS4062	Principles and Practice of Graphic Design	40
VIS4061	Enterprise of Graphic Design	20
VIS4041	Discourse	20

In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete at least 20 credits from the following indicative list of OPTIONAL modules:

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
VIS4038	Narrative (Space and Place)	20
VIS4040	Narrative (Time and Sequence)	20
VIS4037	Narrative (Sound and Movement)	20
VIS4039	Narrative (Text and Image)	20
VIS4036	Narrative (People and Identity)	20

Level 5:

In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 100 credits):

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
VIS5042	Context of Graphic Design	40
VIS5041	Identifying Direction	40
ADM5001	Live Project	20

In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete at least 20 credits from the following indicative list of OPTIONAL modules:

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
ADM5000	Work Placement	20
ADM5006	Collaborative Practice	20

Level 6:

In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 120 credits):

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
VIS6041	Advancing Practice	40
VIS6042	Independent Enquiry	20
VIS6039	Major Project	60

12b   Structure Diagram

Please note list of optional modules is indicative only as modules will only run if selected by 15 or more students. Students' choice will not be guaranteed for optional modules but a fair and transparent process will be adopted and shared with students.

Level 4

SEMESTER ONE	SEMESTER TWO
Core • Introduction to Graphic Design (20 credits) • Principles and Practice of Graphic Communication (40 credits)	Core • Enterprise of Graphic Design (20 credits) • Discourse (20 credits)
Optional • No Optional Modules this Semester	Optional • Narrative (Space and Place) (20 credits) • Narrative (Time and Sequence) (20 credits) • Narrative (Sound and Movement) (20 credits) • Narrative (Text and Image) (20 credits) • Narrative (People and Identity) (20 credits)

Level 5

Core	Core
• Context of Graphic Design (40 credits) • Live Project (20 credits)	• Identifying Direction (40 credits)
Optional • No Optional Modules this Semester	Optional • Work Placement (20 credits) • Collaborative Practice (20 credits)

Level 6

Core	Core
• Advancing Practice (40 credits) • Independent Enquiry (20 credits)	• Major Project (60 credits)

13 Overall Student Workload and Balance of Assessment

Overall student *workload* consists of class contact hours, independent learning and assessment activity, with each credit taken equating to a total study time of around 10 hours. While actual contact hours may depend on the optional modules selected, the following information gives an indication of how much time students will need to allocate to different activities at each level of the course.

- *Scheduled Learning* includes lectures, practical classes and workshops, contact time specified in timetable
- *Directed Learning* includes placements, work-based learning, external visits, on-line activity, Graduate+, peer learning
- *Private Study* includes preparation for exams

The *balance of assessment* by mode of assessment (e.g. coursework, exam and in-person) depends to some extent on the optional modules chosen by students. The approximate percentage of the course assessed by coursework, exam and in-person is shown below.

Level 4

Workload

% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	257
Directed Learning	703
Private Study	240
Total Hours	1200

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	100%
Exam	
In-Person	

Level 5

Workload

% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	201
Directed Learning	759
Private Study	240
Total Hours	1200

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	66%
Exam	
In-Person	34%

Level 6

<u>**Workload**</u>

% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	89.5
Directed Learning	870.5
Private Study	240
Total Hours	1200

<u>**Balance of Assessment**</u>

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	100%
Exam	
In-Person	