Course Specification

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

6	**Course Description**
	BA (Hons) 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?** 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 a career in graphic design. 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 creative industries. 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. 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.

7	Course Awards		
7a	**Name of Final Award**	**Level**	**Credits Awarded**
	BA (Hons) Graphic Design Bachelor of Arts with Honours Graphic Design with Professional Placement Year	Level 6 Level 6	*360* *380*
7b	**Exit Awards and Credits Awarded**		
	Certificate of Higher Education Graphic Design Diploma of Higher Education Graphic Design Bachelor of Arts Graphic Design	Level 4 Level 5 Level 6	*120* *240* *300*

8	Variation from the University Regulations
	Not applicable

9	Delivery Patterns			
Mode(s) of Study	**Location(s) of Study**	**Duration of Study**	**Code(s)**
Full Time	City Centre (Parkside)	3 years	US1389
Full time with Professional Placement year	City Centre (Margaret Street and Parkside)	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 Aims
	• To provide an exciting and dynamic curriculum that blends practical skills and theoretical knowledge in graphic design. • To explore the historical, cultural, and contextual theories shaping contemporary graphic design practices. • To foster creative problem-solving skills essential for designing innovative, and imaginative visual solutions. • To equip you with effective communication skills to articulate design concepts and collaborate in professional contexts. • To advance critical thinking and reflection to address complex, real-world challenges. • To Enhance employment skills in readiness for future employment or further study.

12	Course Learning Outcomes
	Knowledge & Understanding
1	Explore and critique relevant historical and contextual factors, applying appropriate research methodologies to inform design development.
2	Address complex, real-world challenges through design-led interventions driven by critical, strategic, and creative approaches.
3	Explore the impact of both current and emerging technologies on the future of graphic design practice.
4	Use the process of design thinking to understand users, challenge assumptions, redefine problems, and create innovative solutions to prototype and test.
5	Generate independent conclusions by questioning, reviewing, and assessing information and experiences, both in relation to your own practice and the work of appropriate design practitioners.
	Skills & Other Attributes
6	Confidently apply appropriate practical and technical knowledge through a wide range of approaches to graphic design.
7	Articulate and present ideas and information comprehensibly in visual, oral and written forms to range to audience and situations.
8	Generate a range of potential ideas in the production of creative work.
9	Use a range of professional skills for individual and collaborative shared project outcomes
10	Evaluate career aspirations in relation to local, national and global design practices through engagement with opportunities and creative industry professionals.

13	Level Learning Outcomes
	Upon completion of Level 4 / the Certificate of Higher Education, students will be able to:
1	Identify key historical periods, contextual influences, basic theories, and concepts that have shaped graphic design practice.
2	Investigate sustainable, ethical, and inclusive graphic design principles, materials, and practices.
3	Define key current and emerging technologies relevant to graphic design practice.
4	Describe how the design thinking process can be applied to a range of problem-solving approaches.
5	Recognise key design concepts in both your own work and other design practitioners to the further contexualise and develop ideas.
6	Explore fundamental technical skills appropriate to graphic design practice.
7	Articulate ideas, information, problems, and solutions in visual, written, and oral forms.
8	Utilise creative thinking skills through different approaches to idea generation.
9	Apply a range of collaboration and team working skills to resolve group work
10	Identify relevant contemporary professional practice and learn fundamental networking techniques.
	Upon completion of Level 5 / the Diploma of Higher Education, students will be able to:
1	Apply innovative design solutions informed by historical, cultural and contextual influences.
2	Integrate sustainable, ethical, and inclusive design principles and practices within the design process.
3	Analyse the advantages, opportunities, and limitations of integrating various current and emerging technologies into graphic design practice.
4	Implement techniques of design thinking to explore effective problem-solving strategies.
5	Analyse information from diverse sources to inform thinking, using appropriate methods and frameworks.
6	Appropriately select and apply a range of technical skills to develop and resolve creative outputs.

7	Apply appropriate communication methods (visual, written, and oral) to a range of audiences.
8	Generate a range of ideas and explore the benefits of risk-taking and iterative development within graphic design practice.
9	Utilise and apply skills in practical settings that reflect professional environments.
10	Build a profile across appropriate professional platforms and establish a creative portfolio.
	Upon completion of 60 credits at Level 6 / the Bachelors Degree, students will be able to:
1	Synthesise knowledge of history, cultures, theory and context into the production of informed visual graphic outcomes
2	Justify the use and application of sustainable, ethical, and inclusive design practices, with consideration of appropriate techniques and solutions within the design process.
3	Critically assess the ethical, environmental, and societal implications of adopting current and emerging technologies in graphic design practice.
4	Explore advanced problem-solving techniques to create innovative design solutions.
5	Synthesise connections between theories, ideas and experiences to generate refined and sophisticated conclusions.
6	Utilise advanced technical skills in the production of refined creative outcomes.
7	Develop advanced communication skills (visual, written, and oral) across a wide range of mediums and contexts.
8	Use refined methods of idea generation to produce a wide range of sophisticated concepts.
9	Develop collaborative project outcomes that integrate a diverse skill set to achieve common objectives.
10	Consolidate your professional networks through events, social media, and online platforms to promote an industry ready portfolio.

14	**Course Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy**
	Knowledge and understanding along with practical skills are acquired through formal lectures, seminars, group and personal tutorials, work checks, critiques, demonstrations, individual and collaborative projects, development of soft and technical skills, workshops, studio practice, critical studies, reflective journals and problem-based learning. • Practical study has an emphasis on iterative creative development use hands-on and digital technologies, appropriate to ideas, including effective use of AI, and creative software packages. • Project-based assignments use industry live briefs, linked to developing employability skills. • Creative play and creative risk-taking is important and embedded within the course throughout. • Knowledge is assessed by several methods including practical project and written work. Grades are awarded for problem analysis, research, creativity, technical skills and project resolution. • E-learning on the virtual learning environment is used as an integral part of the programme with three modules on the course have a blended delivery, where 30% is online. • Individual learning within a multidisciplinary approach is combined with collaborative and interdisciplinary dialogue and exchanges. • Projects has its own written brief outlining aims and objectives, and the criteria for assessment. Assessment criteria for each module are specified and align directly with the module learning outcomes. • All modules focus on intellectual, cognitive, and practical skills and these are reflected in module assessment criteria. Students are encouraged to use their imagination, organisational and collaborative abilities, and develop entrepreneurial and employability skills.

15	Course Requirements

15a

Level 4:

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
ART4242	Fundamental Practice: Graphics	40
ART4250	Professional Futures: Communication (Graphic Design)	20
ART4244	Design at Play	40
ART4245	Design for Change	20

Level 5:

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
ART5147	Emerging Technologies	40
ART5153	Professional Futures: Collaboration (Graphic Design)	20
ART5149	Defining Practice: Graphics	40

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
ADM5010	Independent Creative Entrepreneur	20
ADM5011	Industry Projects	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
ART6149	Major Project	40
ART6148	Profession Futures: Presentation	20

15b	**Structure Diagram**

Level 4

SEMESTER ONE	**SEMESTER TWO**
Fundamental Practice: Graphic Design (40 credits - core)	Design at Play (40 credits - core)
Professional Futures: Communication (20 credits - core)	Design for Change (20 credits core)

Level 5

Emerging Technologies (40 credits - core)	Defining Practice: Graphic Design (40 credits – core)
Professional Futures: Collaboration (20 Credits - core)	Work Placement (20 credits - option) Industry Projects (20 credits - option) Independent Creative Entrepreneur (20 credits -option)

Level 6

Advancing Practice (40 credits - core)	Major Project (40 credits - core)
Independent Enquiry (20 Credits)	Professional Futures: Presentation (20 credits)

16	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

19% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	230
Directed Learning	730
Private Study	240
Total Hours	1200

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	95%
Exam	0%
In-Person	5%

Level 5

Workload

18% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	219
Directed Learning	759
Private Study	240
Total Hours	1200

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	80%
Exam	0%
In-Person	20%

Level 6

Workload

11% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	156
Directed Learning	804
Private Study	240
Total Hours	1200

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	90%
Exam	
In-Person	10%