University of Chester

Programme Specification

Graphic Design BA (Hons) (Single Honours)

2023 - 2024

1.Final Award

Bachelor of Arts (Single Honours)

2.Programme Title

Graphic Design

3.Internal Programme Title

Graphic Design St Helens College

4.Intermediate / Exit Awards

4a. Award

Certificate of Higher Education
Diploma of Higher Education

4b. Title

5.Awarding Institution / Body

University of Chester

6.Programme Delivered By

St Helens College

7.Location of Delivery

St Helens College

8.Framework

Undergraduate Modular Programme

9.Mode of Study

Full-time

10.Forms of Study

Classroom / Laboratory,

11.Normal length of study

3 Years

12.Maximum length of study

7 Years

13.Frequency of intake / starting month

Annual - September

14.UCAS Code

W211

15.JACS and/or HECoS Code

W211

16.Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check Required?

No

17.Faculty & Department

17a. Faculty

Arts and Humanities

17b. Department

Art and Design

18. Subject Benchmarking Group

Art & Design

19. Professional Recognition By (if applicable)

20. Name of Module Assessment Board (MAB)

Arts & Media

21. Date of Approval

Wednesday 5th August 2020

22. Educational Aims of the Programme

- To create an environment which enables the student to explore the boundaries between print and digital media
- To provide a framework of learning which fosters personal creative vocabulary and reflective practice
- To present the opportunity to develop a distinctive and individual portfolio embracing the current needs of the graphic design industry
- To promote professional practice by preparing the student for graduate employment in the creative industries, further study at a higher level or on-going professional development and lifelong learning.

23. Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding
The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:
FHEQ Level 4
- Relevant art and design movements and concepts and develop the appropriate vocabulary and language (AR4902 Ideas & Concepts)
- Techniques, materials and processes associated with and that underpin graphic design (AR4901 Visual Communication)
FHEQ Level 5

- Debate and synthesis of philosophies and inquiry to foster higher study and research (AR5901 Applied Research)
- How design theory and methodology underpin and reflect understanding of the design process (AR5901 Applied Research)

FHEQ Level 6

- Contemporary design concepts and debate in the development of personal visual language and identity (AR6903 Client Brief)
- Critical thinking and innovatory methods in graphic design through self directed practice (AR6901 Major Project)

Cognitive Skills

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate cognitive skills to:

FHEQ Level 4

- Generate ideas, concepts, proposals and solutions to set briefs through the identification of relevant and appropriate stimuli (AR4904 Live Project)
- Demonstrate the creative use of a variety of graphic and time based media including software applications (AR4901 Visual Communication)

FHEQ Level 5

- Question, analyse, and synthesise the process of observation, investigation and production (AR5905 Studio Practice)
- Research effectively at appropriate levels in order to produce innovative and distinctive design solutions (AR5903 Contemporary Media)

FHEQ Level 6

- Impose critical judgement within the context of independent scholarly activity (AR6902 Research Report)
- Examine areas of graphic design and apply knowledge, research methods and attitudes appropriate to this level (AR6902 Research Report)

Practical and Professional Skills

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate practical and professional skills to:

FHEQ Level 4

- Develop an understanding and awareness of team roles and team work (AR4904
- Live Project)

- Communicate ideas effectively through written and oral presentations (AR4902
- Ideas & Concepts)

FHEQ Level 5

- Identify personal strengths and needs and demonstrate the ability to self-evaluate (AR5905 Work Related Learning)
- Produce design work to a professional standard (AR5902 Design & Production)

FHEQ Level 6

- Apply previously learned skills to unfamiliar and increasingly complex and unpredictable situations (AR6903 Client Brief)
- Study independently, set goals, demonstrate effective time management and meet scheduled deadlines (AR6904 Professional Practice)

Communication Skills

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate communication skills to:

FHEQ Level 4

- Select, test and make appropriate use of materials and techniques, processes and digital environments (AR4901 Visual Communication)
- Exercise a sound knowledge of design principles and practice (AR4903
- Typography)

FHEQ Level 5

- Demonstrate professional competence in the employment of a wide range of relevant studio and workshop techniques, materials and processes (AR5905 Studio Practice)
- Demonstrate professional competence in using appropriate software and studio processes in the preparation of artwork for print and screen (AR5902 Design & Production and AR5903 Contemporary Media)

FHEQ Level 6

- Articulate a comprehensive understanding of the significance of the work of other design practitioners (both historically and contemporary) (AR6902 Research Report)
- Develop a personal and original visual language and studio practice relevant to graphic design (AR6904 Professional Practice)

24.Programme Structure and Features; Levels, Modules, Credits and Awards

24a. Programme Structure and Features (levels, modules, credits, awards)

The programme reflects the current demands of contemporary graphic design practice. The programme intends to create designers who can adapt and innovate whilst applying both traditional and emerging technologies in context. To achieve the type of education currently required by the industry this studio based degree is established on core practical and theoretical modules and practically orientated assignment briefs run in a contemporary studio environment.

Level 4 introduces students to visual communication. Modules such as Ideas & Concepts, Visual Communication and Typography allow students to explore methods of communication and experiment with traditional and digital image making. Level 4 modules encourage students to develop their own visual language whilst introducing the practice of current and historical designers. The design studio plays a crucial role in introducing students to the ethos of a creative environment.

Level 5 modules such as Design & Production and Studio Practice allow students to develop a technical understanding and working methodology whilst building a greater appreciation for creative problem solving and innovative experimentation. The Applied Research module allows students the opportunity to study the key concepts of the subject, focusing on a self-initiated study which later forms a proposal for a level 6 Major Project and Research Report. At this level students also work in collaboration, and are expected to develop independent ways of working. At the end of level 5 students have developed their own visual style which via tutorials and guidance helps them choose areas to study at level 6.

Level 6: At this level students build upon creative and analytical aspects of their practice, working on national competition briefs and a self-initiated design study. Live projects run by industry professionals allow students to establish professional links. The focus of level 6 is to encourage students to become motivated self-directed designers.

24b. Module Structure

Mod-Code	Level	Title	Credit	Single
AR4901	4	Visual Communication	40	Comp
AR4902	4	Ideas & Concepts	20	Comp
AR4903	4	Typography	40	Comp
AR4904	4	Live Project	20	Comp
AR5901	5	Applied Research	20	Comp
AR5902	5	Design & Production	40	Comp
AR5903	5	Contemporary Media	20	Comp
AR5904	5	Work Related Learning	20	Comp
AR5905	5	Studio Practice	20	Comp
AR6901	6	Major Project	40	Comp
AR6902	6	Research Report	40	Comp
AR6903	6	Client Brief	20	Comp
AR6904	6	Professional Practice	20	Comp

24c. Credit Accumulation

Level 4: modules are either 20 or 40 credits. A candidate who successfully completes level four will have accumulated 120 academic credit points, and will be eligible for the award of Certificate of Higher Education. These 120 academic credit points can be carried forward cumulatively towards the award of an honours level undergraduate degree award.

Level 5: modules are either 20 or 40 credits. A candidate successfully completing level five will have accumulated 240 academic credit points, and will be eligible for the award of Diploma of Higher Education. These 240 academic credit points can be carried forward cumulatively towards the award of an honours level undergraduate degree award.

Level 6: modules are either 20 or 40 credits A candidate successfully completing level six will have accumulated360 academic credit points, and will be eligible for the award of an honours degree.

24d. Details of any derogation from University Regulations (if applicable)

25.Professional Body Requirements (if applicable)

26.Admission Requirements

On receipt of application, candidates will be shortlisted and the successful candidates will be invited to attend an interview with the Programme Leader, bringing with them a portfolio of work appropriately selected to support the aims of the Programme. Candidates must be able to satisfy the following general admissions requirements and minimum qualifications in addition to satisfactory completion of an interview with the Programme Leader and/or members of the Programme Team. Applicants should possess a minimum of 5 GCSE's at grades A, B or C including English Language in addition to one or more of the following:

- A minimum of 80 UCAS points, including a grade C in Art, Design or an Art/Design-based subject
- The remaining points may be achieved from GCE AS Levels, or from Level 3 Key Skills
- Successful completion of 'A' level study with a minimum of two subjects passed
- Successful completion of a BTEC/EDEXCEL Art & Design Foundation Programme
- BTEC National Diploma / Certificate in Graphic Design or Art and Design: pass / merit / distinction profile
- Successful completion of an Advanced Diploma
- Irish Highers / Scottish Highers: B in 4 subjects, including Art or an Art-based subject
- International Baccalaureate: 24 points including 4 in Visual Arts
- QAA recognised Access course, Open College Units or Open University Credits
- Please note: A BTEC National Award or the Welsh Baccalaureate (core) will be recognised in our tariff offer
- If English is a second language, then at point of entry students should possess IELTS grade 6, TEFL or an equivalent to GCSE English qualification.
- Qualifications deemed equivalent to the above

Points achieved through Key Skills will be acknowledged. Exceptionally, applicants whose qualifications do not conform to the standard requirements may be admitted on the basis of appropriate prior learning or experience.

Applications from candidates with special needs are also considered on a case-by-case basis.

Although entry to the programme is not dependent upon students having formal Graphic Design qualifications, all students are expected to demonstrate an aptitude for design by presenting appropriate evidence in the form of a portfolio which should include evidence of an ability to generate concepts, use appropriate, sound drawing skills, an inquisitive, questioning attitude to all areas of work, sound working methodologies and evidence of evaluative skills.

Mature students and International students will be considered for admission on an individual basis. Mature students with no or few formal qualifications will be expected to show their aptitude and suitability for the programme via a portfolio of recent art/design work. The interview process demonstrates the Department's desire to meet student's aspirations individually and recognises that individuality in the nature of their artistic ambitions.

Applications to undergraduate programmes are made through UCAS APPLY system.

A UCAS tariff score of 80 points or above is needed for entry to this programme. This reflects the level of achievement attained by the successful completion of an EDEXCEL Diploma in Foundation Studies programme at pass grade or the Level 3 BTEC Extended Diploma in Graphic Design (80 UCAS tariff points equal to a Merit/Pass/Pass). UCAS entry profiles may be found at http://www.ucas.ac.uk. APL claims, (Accreditation for Prior Learning), from candidates who wish to be accredited for prior/experiential learning are carefully considered.

27.Subject Benchmark Statements

The design, structure and content of these programmes have been informed by the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Art & Design. The introduction to this Benchmark Statement identifies that: "Typically, programmes in Art & Design emphasise imagination, creativity and, where appropriate, craft skills and are designed to develop students' intellectual powers and their ability to communicate." Furthermore the section dealing with subject specific knowledge and understanding goes on to state: " An honours degree in an Art & Design discipline also confirms that the holder has acquired relevant technical knowledge and practical skills, and will be able to employ materials, media, techniques, methods, technologies and tools associated with the discipline studied with skill and imagination while observing good working practices and professional / legal responsibilities relating to the subject." These two statements are at

the heart of the philosophy, intention and structure of the BA (Hons) Graphic Design programme. Modules demonstrating compliance with benchmark statements employ both convergent and divergent thinking in the processes of observation, investigation, speculative enquiry, visualisation and/or making, and also provide students with the opportunity to develop ideas through to material outcomes, for example images, artefacts, products, systems and processes, or texts:

- Level 4 Typography, Visual Communication, Ideas & Concepts
- Level 5 Contemporary Media, Design & Production, Studio Practice
- Level 6 Research Report, Client Brief,

The following provide opportunities for students to manage and make appropriate use of the interaction between intention, process, outcome, context, and the methods of dissemination;

- Level 4 Live Project, Ideas & Concepts
- Level 5 Applied Research, Work Related Learning
- Level 6 Client Brief, Professional Practice

Level 4 Typography, Visual Communication, Ideas & Concepts, Live Project, Level 5 Contemporary Media, Design & Production, Applied Research, Work Related Learning, Studio Practice, Level 6 Research Report, Client Brief, Professional Practice, provide the student with critical awareness to:

- analyse information and experiences;
- formulate independent judgements, and articulate reasoned arguments through reflection, review and evaluation;
- formulate reasoned responses to the critical judgements of others;
- identify personal strengths and needs and develop interpersonal and social skills
- interact effectively with others for example through collaboration, collective endeavour and negotiation
- communicate and articulate ideas and information comprehensibly in visual, oral and written forms.
- navigate, select, retrieve, evaluate, manipulate and manage information from a variety of sources;
- select and employ communication and information technologies.
- study independently, set goals, manage their own workloads and meet deadlines;

- anticipate and accommodate change, and work within contexts of ambiguity, uncertainty, and unfamiliarity.
- apply resourcefulness and entrepreneurial skills to support their own practice, and/or the practice of others.

Intended Learning Outcomes are clearly stated and mapped to module aims. These are linked to performance criteria, included in assignment briefs and written into module handbooks. There is a comprehensive College framework for the monitoring and improvement of quality and standards in learning and teaching and these willbe used, where and when appropriate.

28.Learning, Teaching and Assessment Methods

We are committed to pedagogic strategies which give the best experience for learners. Students on this programme can expect to encounter a range of learning and teaching models including face-to-face and online (both live and asynchronous) depending on the material to be delivered.

Similarly, the assessment diet is designed in order that students can best present their work to successfully meet the learning outcomes of the modules. These may be in the form of physical submissions, digital submissions, live events, virtual events (synchronous or asynchronous). Submission details will always be clearly articulated within assessment briefs.

The programme is taught by full and part time staff at St Helens College with support from Technicians and Instructors as appropriate. All students will share the underpinning practical, theoretical and technical support for their study that will be built on in subsequent years.

Throughout the programme the aim is for learning to encompass individual development, intellectual challenge and development of professional capability. The programme therefore intends to use a combination of lectures, seminars, group tutorials, team presentations and practical based studio (and work based) activities directed and self-directed learning. Overall this will develop all associated skills, impart knowledge, encourage creative exploration and begin the process of producing self-motivated and effective learners who know how to access and use the available resources.

This balance between research, conceptual exploration, technical aptitude, intellectual growth, aesthetic awareness and the practical achievement of vocational capability with degree level qualification is the basis for the structure and format of the programme. The above practice is acknowledged and embedded within level 6, however a greater emphasis is placed upon individual development to facilitate the transition to independent learning and career aspirations and an understanding of commercial practices.

The following range of teaching and learning methods will be employed:

- Lecture;
- Teaching Workshop;
- Seminars;
- Group Critiques;
- Self-Directed Learning;
- Peer Group Learning;
- Written Work;
- Oral Presentation;
- Group Work;
- Library & Gallery Study;
- Visits;
- Visiting Lecturers.

A scheme of planned teaching and learning activities for each module is issued to all students at the beginning of each Semester. Assignment briefs are issued and discussed at the beginning of each Semester in order to allow maximum planning time prior to presentation/performance/submission. These are detailed in each Module Handbook. Moodle (VLE) will be used to monitor student performance and for off-site pastoral support.

Level 4: Students arrive at the programme with varied academic backgrounds and with differing levels of experience in the creative, practical and theoretical aspects of the subject. The teaching staff therefore ensure that all students share an underpinning of practical, theoretical and technical study that will be built on in subsequent years. Throughout levels 4 and 5 the principle concern is for learning to encompass individual development, intellectual challenge and development of professional capability at each successive level. To achieve this the programme uses an integrated combination of

lectures, seminars, group tutorials, presentations and practical based studio activities, directed and self-directed learning. Overall this will develop all associated skills, impart knowledge, encourage creative exploration and begin the development of self-motivated and effective learners who know how to access and use the available resources. At each level the tutorial system will be employed to test this and to record the development of students.

The programme will also benefit from an annual schedule of Visiting Lecturers – one per semester open to all three levels of study. It is also intended that each semester practitioners are scheduled to present their current areas of research and portfolios to the student cohort.

Students are both formatively and summatively assessed in each module. Formative assessment refers to an evaluation of students' work that is targeted toward helping a student improve. Summative assessment refers to a grade allocated in order to make a final judgement of student attainment. When taking overall view of the programme, summative assessment also has the potential to be used for formative purposes. Modules in Graphic Design are summatively assessed to ensure that progressive development for the student occurs across and/or during each level of the programme. Assessment, whether summative or formative aims to:

- clarify as well as focus students on what is important to learn (which in turn will become the basis for defining and structuring the learning environment);
- clarify the academic standards required and how they are assessed;
- integrate learning from the different modules;
- and offer students sufficient formative feedback.

The programme team are fully committed to "formal formative feedback". Formal in this context means a definitive commitment by the student to undertake the required tasks and to submit these on time, as well as a definitive commitment by staff to the provision of timely, effective and written feedback related to specified learning outcomes/assessment criteria. Formal formative feedback will be used at strategic points throughout a module where it may not benefit students to be summatively assessed, for example with coursework where a holistic view of projects and/or tasks is important to their learning. This will ensure that students have a clear idea of their progress within a project, whilst offering the opportunity to develop and/or evidence learning gained from earlier work. Where any mid-year formal formative feedback is provided, any student

considered to be at risk of failing a module will be issued with a clear message that they are in an "at risk" situation unless they take the appropriate remedial action.

The range of assessment methods to be employed include design artefact(s)/outcomes, essays, workbooks, initial response maps (proposals), project plans, visual rationales, and presentations. Generally, assessment focuses on thinking and research skills as well as on the acquisition of technical and professional skills, thereby supporting a broadening perspective of graphic design practice. All levels of study will be assessed through a combination of practical and/or written work as detailed in the module descriptors. Students must pass all summatively assessed components of each module in order to progress. During Level 4, students will be assessed on the effectiveness of their initial development of design knowledge and their research skills (including visual exploration and experimentation), thinking skills, technical skills, making skills, and communication skills. In Level 5, knowledge and skills will generally be assessed in the context of a broader understanding of professional practice. In Level 6, students will be assessed on their ability to successfully extend and enhance their knowledge and skills as a means of showcasing their creativity, innovation and expertise.

29.Careers and Employability

The BA programme has been designed to consolidate learning, placing the emphasis upon independent investigation, research and practice. To this end the programme has been designed to prepare students to take up work in the creative industries, such as Graphic Design, Contemporary Digital Media, Advertising and Publishing. Graduates wishing to pursue a career in teaching could progress onto the Post Graduate Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector currently delivered at the College or one of several institutions in the region offering PGCE. In the past several graphic design students have taken this option. Graduating BA students also have the option of further study and research at post graduate level. The following are examples of student destinations from existing HE graphic design programmes at St Helens College:

- London Man Vs Machine
- London New Zealand Wax
- New Zealand DDS
- New Zealand Zeitgeist
- Berlin Palfrey Greer

- St Helens Knauf International
- St Helens Armani Chicago/Auckland Burn
- St Helens Cultivate Creative
- Manchester Momentum Worldwide
- Liverpool Splinter
- Liverpool Linden Advertising
- Liverpool Splash Media
- Liverpool Apposing
- Liverpool Smiling Wolf

30.Equality

Extended access is an essential part of the St Helens College mission to maximise local and regional educational opportunities. The Degree programme will have a direct link to the College's Diploma in Foundation Studies and National Diploma Programmes thus providing a coherent, in house progression route dedicated to widening access. Priorities include increasing widening participation, the active promotion of life-long learning and engagement with employers.

St Helens College respects diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity. The College strives to ensure that no student receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of social background, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

St Helens College will take positive steps to eliminate discrimination, reduce the effects of past discrimination, continue the drive to increase levels of under-represented groups and promote equality in all aspects of student admissions and experiences in St Helens College. No student should be disadvantaged by unjustifiable conditions or requirements.

All students of St Helens College are expected to treat each other with respect, as well as staff and visitors. The monitoring of progress against the policy is the responsibility of the Equality & Diversity Committee. St Helens College aims to achieve high academic standards while addressing the vocational needs of local demand. With this in mind, a flexible attitude to recruiting students is adopted and an active promotion of lifelong learning, flexible learning and widening participation are practiced. A large percentage of

our students are the first in their families to study at degree level and a large percentage of mature students on the programme live locally.

For full details please see the St Helens College Equality & Diversity Policy.

31.Additional Information

General Information

The diversity of the programme will be enhanced by a schedule of cultural trips and excursions where possible. It is intended that all programme levels will be encouraged to participate in at least two organised gallery visits per semester. These might include day visits to FACT Liverpool, The War Museum Salford Quays, Cube Manchester, The Tate Liverpool, The Whitworth Gallery [Manchester] and The National Media Museum [Bradford]. In addition to this the programme will offer one international residential field trip each academic year, usually scheduled in semester one. Students will also attend a minimum of one design conference per year. As is common practice within visual arts undergraduate programmes, students from all levels of the programme will be encouraged to attend trips.