BA (Hons) Graphic Design

Awarding institutio	Bath Spa University
Teaching institution	Bath Spa University
School	Bath School of Design
Main campus	Locksbrook Campus
Other sites of delivery	N/A
Other Schools involved in delivery	N/A

Name of award(s)	Graphic Design
Qualification (final award)	BA (Hons)
Intermediate awards available	CertHE, DipHE
Routes available	Single
Professional Placement Year	Available (optional 4 years)
Duration of award	3 years full-time 4 years full-time (with Professional Placement Year) 6 years part time

Modes of delivery offered	Campus-based
Regulatory Scheme[1]	Undergraduate Academic Framework
Exemptions from regulations/framework[2]	Yes
Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body accreditation	N/A
Date of most recent PSRB approval (month and year)	N/A
Renewal of PSRB approval due (month and year)	N/A
UCAS code	W200 S168 (with Professional Placement Year)
Route code (SITS)	GCSPSSIN (3 year course GCPSSINSW (4 year course)
Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statements (including date of publication)	Art & Design (February 2017)
Date of most recent approval	June 2022
Date specification last updated	January 2025

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[1] This should also be read in conjunction with the University's Qualifications Framework

[2] See section on 'Exemptions'

Exemptions

The following exemptions are in place:

Programme/Pathway	Regulations/Framework	Brief description of variance	Approving body and date

BA (Hons) Graphic Communications	Undergraduate Academic Framework	Exemption requested to depart from Framework Paragraph 1.4	Academic Quality Standards Committee, 12 December 2018

Programme Overview

The programme provides a carefully structured and comprehensive set of both practical and theoretical experiences each designed to enable you to develop as an innovative, thoughtful and unique Graphic Designer.

Our Studio modules prepare you for the complex and interdisciplinary nature of Graphic Design by developing skills in typography and image making – illustration, collage, photography, animation and video. You will work with both analogue and digital technologies exploring the potential for type and images in print, time-based and interactive media (websites, apps). You are taught in a range of methods: tutored studio time (led by practising designers and illustrators who are also experienced lecturers) will develop your form making ability, while technical workshops develop craft skills in areas as varied as printmaking, screen printing, digital photography and coding for interactivity.

Modules in Professional Development provide opportunities to investigate the design industry through a professional lecture series (visiting professional speakers), seminars as well as visits to printers and design studios. National and optional international visits to museums, galleries provide a context for your developing practice. Historical and Contextual Study modules will help you develop your critical and analytical abilities through an investigation of theoretical and cultural perspectives. At Level 5 there are options to study abroad at selected universities in Europe and further field; USA, China, Japan, Australia for example. Alternatively at Levels 5 and 6 there are options to choose modules outside of the programme and the option of a professional placement year.

We offer a professional education to prepare you for the multifaceted nature of contemporary practice. A programme where you can choose to specialise (as an illustrator, typographer or animator), or to develop a more integrated approach as a graphic designer or art director.

Programme Aims

1. Develop graphic designers with both the practical and intellectual skills to develop professional careers within the creative industries
2. Provide students with both historical and contemporary contexts for their practice
3. Embed the appropriate research and analytical methods necessary to address complex graphic design problems
4. Encourage students to develop independent critical judgment and facilitate a unique artistic voice
5. Foster the skills for successful and sustainable professional collaborations with others both inside and outside the discipline
6. Enable students to generate useful networks at local, national and international levels to enhance career opportunities
7. Build a comprehensive digital skillset to produce professional level graphic design outcomes

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

A Subject-Specific Skills and Knowledge

	Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) On Achieving Level 6	On Achieving Level 5	On Achieving Level 4
A1	Systematic knowledge of 2D, 4D (time based) and/or interactive design	Apply knowledge of 2D and 4D (time based) concepts to the research of interactive media	Knowledge of the underlying concepts of 2D and/or 4D (time based) design thinking

A2	Accurately employ 2D, 4D and/or interactive technical processes to solve contemporary graphic design problems	Evaluate critically 2D and 4D (time based) technical processes to generate interactive outcomes	An ability to select and employ appropriate 2D and/or 4D technical processes
A3	Critically employ skills in: image making and/or typography producing graphic form solving graphic design problems	An ability to effectively produce image making/typography graphic form to static, dynamic and/or interactive media	An ability to produce image making/typographic graphic form
A4	Critical application of marketing and promotional tools and skills	Evaluate critically marketing and promotional opportunities relating to your personal career goals	Knowledge of marketing and promotional platforms for career facilitation
A5	An ability to employ a systematic understanding of design practice with specialised and non-specialised audiences	Critical understanding of practice in the context the design and creative industries	Understanding of the value of design and the creative industries
A6	Ability to critically employ historical and theoretical perspectives, undertake critical evaluation of the creative process, and to engage in contemporary debates in visual and material culture and wider society.	Ability to effectively employ historical and theoretical perspectives, reflect effectively on the creative process, and analyse contemporary issues in visual and material culture and wider society.	Ability to investigate selected historical and theoretical connections and reflect on the creative process.

B Cognitive and Intellectual Skills

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) On Achieving Level 6	On Achieving Level 5	On Achieving Level 4

B1	Exercise independent judgement about your work and that of others	Analyse and communicate graphic design principles and concepts, recognising competing perspectives.	Identification of the key principles and concepts of Graphic Design
B2	Employ in-depth research strategically to expand and inform ideas and knowledge, and to deepen understanding of human experience	Undertake research to develop ideas and explores new or existing practice. Uses appropriate theoretical models to judge the significance of the information collected.	Ability to find a focus for enquiry and undertakes research strategies.
B3	Integrate theory and practice in critical and creative engagement with the Design subject	Collect and synthesise information to inform a choice of solutions to problems in unfamiliar contexts.	Recognise the value of primary and secondary sources and employs these to inform the context of final outcomes.
B4	Engage information to construct informed arguments and contribute to current debates in Graphic Design	Analyse a range of information, comparing alternative methods and techniques. Is able to debate the pros and cons of various approaches and outcomes.	Realisation of the distinctive nature of 'design thinking' and its value when applied to design problems.

C Skills for Life and Work

	On achieving Level 6 you will be able to:	On achieving Level 5 you will be able to:	On achieving Level 4 you will be able to:
C1	**Work Independently** Exercise initiative, independence and personal responsibility to manage your own learning and time.	**Work Independently** Exercise independence and personal responsibility to manage your own learning and time.	**Work Independently** Manage your own learning and time.

C2	**Work with Others** Work collaboratively with others to achieve individual and common goals, solve problems creatively and build interpersonal relationships to flourish in a global workplace.	**Work with Others** Work collaboratively with others to achieve individual and common goals, solve problems creatively.	**Work with Others** Work collaboratively with others.
C3	**Communicate with Impact** Communicate clearly, effectively and impactfully with specialist and non-specialist audiences.	**Communicate with Impact** Communicate clearly and effectively with others.	**Communicate with Impact** Communicate accurately and reliably with others.
C4	**Demonstrate Digital Fluency** Use digital skills productively, critically and ethically to enhance creativity and communication.	**Demonstrate Digital Fluency** Use digital skills productively, critically and ethically.	**Demonstrate Digital Fluency** Use digital skills productively.

Programme Content

This programme comprises the following modules

Key:

Core = C

Required = R

Required* = R*

Optional = O

Not available for this status = N/A

If a particular status is greyed out, it is not offered for this programme.

BA (Hons) GRAPHIC DESIGN				Status	
Level	Code	Title	Credits	Single	Joint
4	GCO4000-40	Design Principles — type & image	40	C	
4	GCO4002-40	Designing With Time — type & image	40	C	
4	GCO4001-20	Professional Development 1	20	C	
4	CDT4000-20	Wicked Problems: The Complexity of Critical Design Thinking	20	C	
5	GCO5000-40	Interactivity with type & image	40	C	
5	GCO5001-20	Professional Development 2	20	O	
5	GCO5002-20	Graphic Communication — social good	20	R*	
5	GCO5003-20	Graphic Communication — culture	20	R*	
5	GCO5004-20	Graphic Communication —commerce	20	R*	
5	CDT5000-20	Critical Design Thinking and Contemporary Issues	20	C	
5	PPY5100-120	Professional Placement Year	120	O	
6	GCO6000-20	Independent Practice 1	20	C	

6	GCO6001-20	Professional Development 3	20	O	
6	CDT6000-20	Design Futures: Independent Critical Project	20	C	
6	GCO6002-60	Independent Practice 2	60	C	

R*, students select two of the three GC level 5 semester 2 modules.

Assessment Methods

A range of summative assessment tasks will be used to test the Intended Learning Outcomes in each module. These are indicated in the attached assessment map, which shows which tasks are used in which modules.

Students will be supported in their development towards summative assessment by appropriate formative exercises.

Please note: if you choose an optional module from outside this programme, you may be required to undertake a summative assessment task that does not appear in the assessment grid here in order to pass that module.

Work Experience and Placement Opportunities

- There are Professional Development modules at each level (20 credits at each level) that introduce and investigate the Graphic Design industries from a career perspective.
- Students have the option of a sandwich year between levels 5 and 6 where they can do a work placement (see below).
- There are external and industry engagement opportunities at level 6 Studio Module: Independent Practice 2.

- Students who develop freelance work during the course can submit a reflective text on their experience as part of the Professional Development Dossier.
- The course engages with industry partners (design agencies and creative industry opportunities) on a case-by-case basis.

In addition to the course external projects, you will have the opportunity to consider undertaking the Professional Placement Year (module PPY5100). This is coordinated and supported by the Careers and Enterprise team, and you will also be assigned a Professional Placement Year tutor.

In advance of starting a Professional Placement Year, the module preparation provides you with the opportunity to create a Development Plan, to identify, apply for, and secure the professional experience, normally comprising of 1-3 placements.

During the Professional Placement Year, you would commit to working for the external organisation/s for a period of 9-13 months, between the second and third year of your course.

At the start of your final year, you return to university and submit a Placement Report detailing your development on placement. By successfully completing the module, you are entitled to the addition of "with Professional Placement Year" to your degree title, evidencing your work and outcomes in respect of your placement, and demonstrating your ability to secure and sustain graduate-level employment.

Additional Costs Table

There are no additional costs associated with this course.

Module Code & Title	Type of Cost	Cost

Graduate Attributes

	Bath Spa Graduates…	In Graphic Design, we enable this…
1	Will be employable: equipped with the skills necessary to flourish in the global workplace, able to work in and lead teams	By embedding professional practice into modules on all courses; utilising collaborative design projects to offer opportunities for teamwork and leadership; engaging all students in live industry projects; actively engaging external input throughout all courses

2	Will be able to understand and manage complexity, diversity and change	By having a curriculum that enables students to apply their creative and technical skills to diverse design opportunities and problems; developing project management skills; engaging with a contemporary social and cultural context
3	Will be creative: able to innovate and to solve problems by working across disciplines as professional or artistic practitioners	By encouraging experimentation and taking creative risks throughout each discipline; thinking and problem solving through making; collaborating across disciplines and fields; working across materials and contexts
4	Will be digitally literate: able to work at the interface of creativity and technology	By immersing students in software driven ways of planning and creating; developing students' skills in specialist digital design and making processes; utilising and driving digital platforms to promote, converse and explore a design practice
5	Will be internationally networked: either by studying abroad for part of their programme, or studying alongside students from overseas	By offering study abroad opportunities; international field trips; studying alongside overseas students.
6	Will be creative thinkers, doers and makers	By ensuring that creative practice and confident attitudes to experimentation are expectations of all students; encouraging and delivering innovation; having practicebased courses that all have 'thinking through making' at their heart
7	Will be critical thinkers: able to express their ideas in written and oral form, and possessing information literacy	By having all modules contain research; Historical and Critical Studies as a key component across all courses, embedding theory with practice and developing written analytical skills; visual and written opportunities for discussion and presentation
8	Will be ethically aware: prepared for citizenship in a local, national and global context	By exploring wider design issues that have impact at all levels; exercising responsibility and consideration of others; taking part in international opportunities and projects; embedding sustainability and ethics into design briefs and context

Modifications

Module-level modifications

Code	Title	Nature of modification	Date(s) of approval and approving bodies	Date modification comes into effect
HAC6101-20	Visual and Material Culture - Final Study	New Module Descriptor	Approved by SQMC March 2022	2022/23
HAC4005-20	History and Context: Introduction to Material and Visual Culture	Changes to Module name and assessment item	Approved by SQMC March 2022	2022/23
GCO4001-20	Professional Development 1	Summative assessment items reduced from 3 to 1	Approved by SQMC March 2024	2024/25

Programme-level modifications

Nature of modification	Date(s) of approval and approving bodies	Date modification comes into effect
Change of award name from Graphic Communications to Graphic Design	Curriculum Committee June 2022	2023/24
HAC5105- 20 Graphic Communication: Contemporary Issues and Practice replaced with new HAC5111-20 Design: Contemporary Issues and Practice	Curriculum Approval Panel March 2024	2024/25
HAC4005-20 History and Context: Introduction to Material and Visual Culture replaced with CDT4000-20 Wicked Problems: The Complexity of Critical Design Thinking	Approved by Curriculum Approval Panel December 2024	2025/26

HAC5111-20 Design: Contemporary Issues and Practice replaced with CDT5000-20 Critical Design Thinking and Contemporary Issues	Approved by Curriculum Approval Panel December 2024	2025/26
HAC6101-20 Visual and Material Culture: Final Study replaced with CDT6000-20 Design Futures: Independent Critical Project	Approved by Curriculum Approval Panel December 2024	2025/26

Attached as appendices:

1. Programme structure diagram
2. Map of module outcomes to level/programme outcomes
3. Assessment map
4. Module descriptors

Appendix 1: Programme Structure Diagram – BA (Hons) Graphic Design

Single Honours	
Level 4	
Semester 1	**Semester 2**
Core Modules	
GCO4000-40 Design Principles — type & image	GCO4002-40 Designing With Time — type & image
GCO4001-20 Professional Development 1	CDT4000-20 Wicked Problems: The Complexity of Critical Design Thinking
Rule Notes: N/A	
Level 5	

Single Honours	
Core Modules	
GCO5000-40 Interactivity with type & image GCO5001-20 Professional Development 2	CDT5000-20 Critical Design Thinking and Contemporary Issues
Required* Modules	
N/A	GCO5002-20 Graphic Communication — social good GCO5003-20 Graphic Communication — culture GCO5004-20 Graphic Communication —commerce
Rule Notes: Students must select two of the three Required* semester 2 modules.	
Optional Professional Placement Year 120 credits	
Level 6	
Core Modules	
GCO6000-20 Independent Practice 1 CDT6000-20 Design Futures: Independent Critical Project	GCO6002-60 Independent Practice 2
Optional Modules	
GCO6001-20 Professional Development 3	
Rule Notes: N/A	

Appendix 2: Map of Intended Learning Outcomes

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Status (C,R,R*,O)[4]	Subject-specific Skills and Knowledge						Cognitive and Intellectual Skills				Skills for Life and Work			
				A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	B1	B2	B3	B4	C1	C2	C3	C4
4	GCO4000-40	Design Principles – type and image	C	x	x	x				x	x	x	x	x		x	
4	GCO4002-40	Designing with Time – type and image	C	x	x	x				x	x	x	x	x		x	x
4	GCO4001-20	Professional Development 1	C				x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
4	CDT4000-20	Wicked Problems: The Complexity of Critical Design Thinking	C					x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x
5	GCO5000-40	Interactivity with type and image	C	x	x	x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
5	GCO5004-20	Graphic Communication – commerce	R*	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x		x	x
5	GCO5003-20	Graphic Communication – culture	R*	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x		x	x
5	GCO5002-20	Graphic Communication – social good	R*	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x		x	x
5	GCO5001-20	Professional Development 2	O				x	x			x			x	x	x	

Level	Code	Title	Type	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
5	CDT5000-20	Critical Design Thinking and Contemporary Issues	C					x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
5	PPY5100-120	Professional Placement Year	O											x	x	x	x
6	GCO6000-20	Independent Practice 1	C	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x
6	GCO6002-60	Independent Practice 2	C	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
6	GCO6001-20	Professional Development 3	O			x	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	
6	CDT6000-20	Design Futures: Independent Critical Project	C						x		x	x	x	x		x	x

[4] C= Core; R* = Required*; R = Required; O = Optional

Appendix 3: Map of Summative Assessment Tasks by Module

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Status (C,R,R*,O)[5]	Assessment method														
				Coursework							Practical					Written Examination		
				Composition	Dissertation	Essay	Journal	Portfolio	Critical Project	Report	Performance	Practical Project	Practical skills	Presentation	Set exercises	Written Examination	In-class test (seen)	In-class test (unseen)
4	GCO 4000-40	Design Principles – type and image	C					x										
4	GCO 4002-40	Designing with Time– type and image	C					x										
4	GCO 4001-20	Professional Development 1	C					x										

4	CDT4 000- 20	Wicked Problem s: The Complex ity of Critical Design Thinking	C					x											
5	GCO 5000- 40	Interacti vity with type and image	C					x											
5	GCO 5004- 20	Graphic Commun ication – commerc e	C					x											
5	GCO 5003- 20	Graphic Commun ication – culture	C					x											
5	GCO 5002- 20	Graphic Commun ication – social good	C					x											

5	GCO 5001-20	Professional Development 2	C					x							
5	CDT5 000-20	Critical Design Thinking and Contemporary Issues	C					x							
5	PPY5 100-120	Professional Placement Year	O				x	x							
6	GCO 6000-20	Independent Practice 1	C					x							
6	CDT6 000-20	Design Futures: Independent Critical Project	C						x						
6	GCO 6002-60	Independent Practice 2	C					x							

6	GCO 6001-20	Professional Development 3	O					x									

[5] C= Core; R* = Required*; R = Required; O = Optional