

BA (HONS) GRAPHIC DESIGN (WITH INTEGRATED FOUNDATION YEAR)

Institute of Education, Arts and Society

Academic Level:	Level 6	Credits:	480
UCAS Code:	W100		
Awarding Body:	University of Cumbria		
Delivery Site:	Brampton Road		
Programme Length:	Standard registration period (full time) - 4 years		
Mode of Delivery:	Face-to-face		
Pattern of Delivery:	Full time		
	Total weeks of study:	24	
	Delivery pattern:	2 x 15-week semesters comprised of 12 teaching weeks, 2x assessment weeks and 1x Enhancement Week	
	Standard semester dates:	Yes	
Programme Webpage:	https://www.cumbria.ac.uk/study/courses/undergraduate/graphic-design-with-integrated-foundation-year/		

Entry Criteria

The University's standard criteria for admissions apply. Please refer to the [Applicant Information](#) pages of the University website for more information. For [RPL](#), please refer to the University website. Detailed criteria for admission to this programme can be found on the programme webpage.

PROGRAMME AIMS AND OUTCOMES

Programme Aims

This programme aims to provide a supportive transitional route into higher education.

By the end of this foundation year you will be able to:

1. Apply the academic skills essential for successful participation in undergraduate academic study
2. Demonstrate the ability to solve problems and study independently
3. Develop creative confidence and technical skills through practical exploration and expression
4. Develop critical reflection and self-directed learning skills to support informed creative decision-making.

By the end of the L4-6 programme you will be able to:

5. Develop as a creative individual with the capacity for independent judgement, initiative, innovation, flexibility, ambition and with a responsible awareness of the social, cultural and ethical contributions of your work
6. Make appropriate use of developing technologies and develop your digital capabilities to communicate effectively as a socially responsible global citizen
7. Work across disciplines and with other people, be open to new ideas, responsive to change and evolve in relation to the developments in graphic design practice
8. Encourage you to develop confident, imaginative and creative approaches to problem solving through enquiry, research, understanding, and the use of critical judgement
9. Develop appropriate self-reflective approaches to research, analysis, production and presentation
10. Develop the skills, knowledge and personal/professional confidence that will enable you to identify, generate and access opportunities in industry, or in continuing education
11. Enhance qualities of personal initiative, self-motivation, management and self-discipline
12. Acquire, practice and synthesise practical skills and theory to produce effective graphic design work.

Programme Outcomes – Knowledge and Understanding

The programme provides opportunities for you to develop and demonstrate the following:

After 120 credits of study (FdCert) you will be able to demonstrate:

FK1. Understanding of basic creative processes, research methods, and safe technical practice

FK2. Recognition of how ideas connect to cultural and professional contexts

FK3. Structured approaches to research, idea generation, experimentation and iterative development.

After 240 credits of study (CertHE) you will be able to demonstrate:

K4. Knowledge of the ethical, legal and moral contexts and frameworks that apply to graphic design projects

K5. A critical appreciation of the roles of client, audience and designer

K6. Knowledge of the social, political and technological contexts that have influenced the development of graphic design

K7. Knowledge of print and on-screen production processes

K8. Knowledge of the principles, behaviour and dynamics of working in a team.

After 360 credits of study (DipHE) (BA/BSc Hons) you will be able to demonstrate:

K9. Your understanding of the principles and practice of problem identification and project management

K10. Knowledge of a variety of sources for research and the conventions and formats for presentation of academic research

K11. Knowledge of a range of methods and technical skills to present your creative work to the client and others involved in the development and production process

After 420 credits of study (BA/BSc) you will be able to demonstrate:

K9. Your understanding of the principles and practice of problem identification and project management

K10. Knowledge of a variety of sources for research and the conventions and formats for presentation of academic research

K11. Knowledge of a range of methods and technical skills to present your creative work to the client and others involved in the development and production process

After 480 credits of study (BA/BSc Hons) you will be able to demonstrate:

K12. An autonomous, creative and professional approach to graphic design projects

K13. Autonomous critical evaluation skills in the resolution of creative work

K14. Critical interpersonal skills, professional team working practitioners with analytical and contextual reflective abilities.

Programme Outcomes – Skills and other Attributes

The programme provides opportunities for you to develop and demonstrate the following:

After 120 credits of study (FdCert) you will be able to demonstrate:

FS1. Academic, personal, and professional skills needed to succeed in higher education

FS2. Effective problem-based learning (PBL) skills to work collaboratively and solve simple creative challenges

FS3. Basic discipline-specific techniques and competencies safely and appropriately in creative practice.

After 240 credits of study (CertHE) you will be able to demonstrate:

S1. Your ability to respond appropriately to a design brief by visualising a range ideas and making informed value judgements about their effectiveness

S2. Your ability to develop your ideas through a process of open-minded experimentation and critical evaluation

S3. Personal organisation, time management skills and taking responsibility for your own learning

S4. Your ability to research a given topic and to present your findings in written, verbal and visual formats.

After 360 credits of study (DipHE) you will be able to demonstrate:

S5. Your ability to respond creatively and systematically to a wide range of design problems using your individual visual voice to create original graphic design work

S6. Effective verbal, visual and written communication skills with those involved in the design and production process

S7. Effective verbal, visual and written presentation skills

S8. Independent visual research skills.

After 420 credits of study (BA) you will be able to demonstrate:

S9. A critical understanding of the production processes and how these influence decision-making in graphic design projects

S10. Your independent research skills and the ability to formulate a design project proposal

S11. Your fluency in a range of industry-standard design software packages

S12. Confidence in evaluating and reflecting on your own practice.

After 480 credits of study (BA Hons) you will be able to demonstrate:

S13. Your ability to think systematically and strategically and to reflect critically and analytically on your own work

S14. Your ability to work independently in formulating and resolving graphic briefs

S15. Your ability to experiment with and challenge the conventions of form, function and communication

S16. Your ability to apply subject-specific, cognitive and transferable skills and problem solving strategies to a range of situations.

PROGRAMME FEATURES

Programme Overview

Graphic Design was once a profession of fairly narrow specialist fields with little in the way of interplay between them. In the 21st Century this has been overturned, things are changing fast and it's all very exciting! However, it does mean that today's designers must be flexible, enabling them to move freely across a wide range of media and disciplines. What links all these disciplines is the ability to connect audiences with ideas, information or products through direct, engaging and memorable visual communications.

The course we've designed for you acknowledges this and aims to help you become a creative, flexible communicator ready to take on the challenges of this continually evolving profession.

Our graphic design course operates from the University's stunning Brampton Road Campus in Carlisle, just to the north of the Lake District National Park and World Heritage Site.

The Campus is devoted to arts, design, culture and creativity, continuing a tradition of art and design education in Carlisle that stretches back nearly 200 years. Today it is a passionate, thriving creative community that encourages collaboration with colleagues across a wide range of other arts disciplines.

To make the most of these opportunities we keep our Graphic Design course intake manageable which ensures the best tuition experience possible for our students. It means that you can have your own workspace along with lots of attention throughout your time at University, enabling us to help you to develop your individual creative personality and achieve your professional ambitions.

The amazing natural environment and busy rural county of Cumbria that we're lucky enough to work and study in is a truly unique feature of the course. It's easy to think of graphic design as an urban discipline, only practiced in the big cities, but nothing could be further from the truth. Not only does our unique location provide creative inspiration and a healthy lifestyle, but also exciting opportunities to work with world-leading businesses across many sectors from the tech industries of the Energy Coast, to retail, tourism, heritage and arts projects.

Also, whilst it's true that our graduates work in design agencies across the UK and beyond – New Zealand, Australia, India, Europe, Scandinavia, USA, etc. – the Internet has made it possible for Cumbrian-based designers to have world-wide reach.

Although we're justifiably proud of our location, it is always beneficial to cultivate a wider world view, after all graphic design operates in a global economy.

Educational visits in the UK and abroad are an enjoyable and effective way of broadening your professional networks, understanding cultural influences, visiting design studios and seeing iconic and brand new work.

Our institutional membership of D&AD (The Design & Art Direction Association) allows us to gauge our work with other Universities in the UK and beyond. There are direct benefits of our membership for you too, such as reduced entry fees into D&AD's student awards competition, 'New Blood'. You will be invited to attend any external events generated by the academic team and have access to every member of the academic team on every level of your degree.

When appropriate, we'll encourage you to test your skills in other competitions too; for instance,

iSTD (International Society of Typographic Designers) or YCN (Young Creative Network) briefs. It's a great way of keeping yourself sharp and up-to-date in this very competitive field!

Overall, the course aims to provide opportunities for you to develop the skills, knowledge and above all confidence, to make appropriate and relevant choices regarding your future career development. Right now you probably have your sights firmly fixed on a career in graphic design. Perhaps, eventually, you want to work as freelance or even run your own design business? So, it shouldn't be surprising that many of our graduates have gone on to do exactly that, forging successful careers in the field of graphic design. And, when you graduate, we expect that you too will have the passion, skills and knowledge to be able to make the move into industry or Masters level study with confidence.

Integrated Foundation Year (IFY)

The integrated foundation year provides the opportunity for you to settle into university life and gain the confidence and skills to succeed in your chosen arts and creative practice degree through participating in a supportive academic, personal, and professional development programme.

The foundation year modules provide a strong grounding in academic and study skills, preparing you for progression to higher levels of study (Levels 4–6). This route offers a unique opportunity to develop problem-solving, creative, practical, and investigative skills that underpin the interdisciplinary approach to the study of art, design and media, while nurturing your career aspirations.

On the Arts IFY, you will study six modules that explore academic skills and the theoretical and practical concepts underpinning creative disciplines. Two of these modules will be academic and professional skills aligned to your programme of study and the demands of the creative industries, and the following:

- Introducing Creative Research Practice introduces the role of research in creative development, helping you connect ideas to cultural and professional contexts.
- Ideas, Images and Objects develops observation and experimentation skills, encouraging process-led exploration across media.
- Innovation Lab focuses on teamwork and collaborative problem-solving through short, mixed-discipline projects.
- Creative Playbook synthesises research, making, and reflection into a polished artefact, supporting your transition to Level 4.

You will learn how to use specialist equipment and develop techniques for safe and effective practice in studios and digital labs. Through practical application, you will gain awareness of issues such as sustainability, ethics, and audience engagement. Cross-cultural awareness is encouraged through collaborative modules and shared projects with students from other pathways.

Throughout the foundation year, you will develop professional skills such as communication, teamwork, self-management, and organisation. You will make links with the careers team to discuss your skill development and to help you reflect on how these link to your employability and graduate skills. You will also work on your digital skills profile, using university resources such as LinkedIn Learning to enhance your digital literacy and employability.

Level 4

In Level 4 you'll gain fundamental knowledge and practical experience of visual communication, the building blocks of visual language and professional attitudes and practices.

When you join us you become part of a creative community and from the outset, you will be encouraged to share your ideas, experiences and work through discussion with tutors and fellow students. A distinctive feature of the graphic design course is that, initially, you will work closely with Level 4 illustrators exploring the fundamental principles of visual communication and many of the core principles and considerations are shared between the two disciplines, for instance: colour theory and application, traditional and digital media, development processes, presentation skills, etc.

Through these practical projects, you'll also be introduced to the range of workshop/resource areas at the Brampton Road campus, e.g. printmaking, 3D workshops, audio-visual, etc.

As well as visual communication skills, you will also develop the personal management, interpersonal and team working skills that will help you to deal with the challenges of the exciting, fast-changing industry that you're a part of during and after life as a student.

From Level 4, Semester 2 onwards your learning – research, practical project work, professional development and software skill requirements will become ever more specialised and industry-focused. This enables you to develop specialist skills and understanding in such diverse areas as typography, editorial and book design, branding and identity, packaging, motion graphics, exhibition design, etc.

Level 5 is focused on applying the knowledge and skills you've gained to a series of design challenges. Testing and refining your design and personal management skills in a number of scenarios will give you confidence in your ability to tackle unfamiliar challenges. As your confidence grows through experience you'll begin to develop your own, personal stands of interest or specialism.

Your tutors bring a wide range of design experience to the course, but we all have particular expertise and interests in typography, editorial/publishing, corporate identity and branding work. We put great emphasis on knowledge, passion and enjoyment and showing you how they can be used to make memorable, meaningful design. And, we are firm believers that 'great' graphic design requires a 'great' idea and 'great' type!

You will also work with a range of visiting lecturers and travel to relevant exhibitions, while live projects and competition work will give you opportunities to build your confidence and test your knowledge and skills on a wider audience.

Externally set live projects are a very important feature of the course and have developed fruitful partnerships with local enterprises. A good example of this includes our ongoing collaboration with a local craft brewery, and retailer who challenge us to design labelling for a range of limited edition beers which are then sold online and in shops from Cumbria to the south-west of the UK. Other recent live projects have required us to produce websites, packaging, promotional material, branding and editorial design work.

Although work-placement is not an assessed part of the programme, a period of time in industry is extremely valuable in developing your professional understanding and confidence. With that in mind we encourage and support you in finding appropriate industry experience, ideally at the end of

your second year (Level 5). Where and when are largely dependent on your professional interests and the availability of a placement, but we're here to help you formulate, refine and craft your pitch. Around this time, you're also looking at all aspects of freelance practice – from *'how to get work'* to *'how do I get paid for the work'* to *'the tax man wants how much!'*. It might seem a little daunting now, but by the time you get there, you'll be raring to go!

Our small group sizes mean that as you progress, you'll be able to define an ever more personal route of supported study until, ultimately, you become the kind of designer you want to be.

This flexibility is most evident in **Level 6** where all of the skills, knowledge and confidence you have developed so far is brought together to produce a portfolio of design work that showcases your talents. With your career aspirations or personal research interests in mind, you'll have a high degree of freedom in choosing what type of work you want to develop.

You'll become ever more independent as the year progresses.

By this time you'll be preparing for progression – life after you finish your degree – seeking work or preparing for Masters or Postgraduate study. Much of your professional practice will be focused on that exciting step.

Level 6 ends with the Graduate Show, a visual celebration of our work together.

To summarise, on the course you will:

- develop an appreciation of the key theories and contexts that influence graphic design today
- develop a portfolio of graphic design work that demonstrates your understanding, visual skills and critical judgement
- work on industry-led briefs enabling you to develop autonomy, creativity and professionalism
- develop a range of industry standard skills: problem identification, idea generation, design development, typography, layout, 3-Dimensional graphics, motion graphics, digital artwork, print and digital production methods, presentation skills, etc.
- be encouraged to be imaginative and innovative in your use of technology
- be encouraged to be critical and analytical in your approach graphic design problem-solving
- be encouraged to explore and develop your own visual vocabulary as a professional designer through an exploration of ideas, techniques and the practical application of theory
- undertake group projects which simulate the workflow of a professional studio,
- be given the chance to attend relevant research related trips in the UK or abroad
- have support in securing and undertaking a period of work experience
- develop the skills and attitudes necessary to become into a life long learner with critical interpersonal skills, a professional team working practitioner with analytical and contextual reflective abilities

On completion of the course you will:

- have developed the work ethic to be an autonomous creative professional
- demonstrate knowledge, imagination and innovative in your use of technology

- have critical and analytical skills in your approach to graphic design problem-solving
- refined and enhanced your individual visual approach to graphic design
- have developed interpersonal skills, professional team working practices
- have the opportunity to study at Masters level

This programme fully supports the mission of the University of Cumbria as:

- The programme is fully committed to inclusivity and accessibility.
- The programme will promote an environment where diversity is celebrated and inventiveness flourishes.
- The programme delivers accessible lifelong learning opportunities.

The programme will inspire you to achieve your potential by providing progressive teaching in an innovative and flexible learning environment which encourages independent thinking.

Key features of the programme

- **Integrated Foundation Year (IFY):** A supportive entry route designed to build confidence, academic skills, and creative practice for progression to Level 4.
- **Interdisciplinary Approach:** Opportunities to explore multiple creative pathways including Animation & Visual Effects, Film & TV, Fine Art, Games Design, Illustration, Photography and Wildlife Media.
- **Process-Led Learning:** Emphasis on research, experimentation, and iterative development rather than focusing solely on final artefacts.
- **Authentic Assessment:** Portfolio-based tasks, showcases, and collaborative projects aligned with industry expectations.
- **Professional Skills Development:** Communication, teamwork, planning, and reflective practice embedded throughout the programme.
- **Access to Specialist Facilities:** Studios, digital labs, print workshops, and industry-standard software from the start of your studies.
- **Digital and Employability Focus:** Integration of digital skills, LinkedIn Learning, and career development activities to prepare for graduate employment.

Learning and Teaching

Teaching

The University of Cumbria Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) strategy underpins the development of this programme. As a student, you will join an inclusive learning community that values diversity and creativity. Teaching, assessment, and support are designed to provide equitable opportunities for you to optimise your potential and develop autonomy as a creative practitioner.

You will learn in a collegiate, facilitative, and dynamic environment, combining studio-based practice, digital learning, and collaborative projects. Our aim is to create a stimulating and innovative community of learning—whether encountered on campus, online, or through live briefs

and external engagement. Facilitated by expert practitioners, you will experience well-equipped studios, digital labs, and flexible learning spaces that reflect professional practice.

A key feature of the BA (Hons) Graphic Design course is the opportunity, at Level 4, to work alongside students studying Illustration. Learning as an integrated member of this creative community you will experience, first-hand, the methods and techniques used by other visual practitioners. This will foster an appreciation of how your work fits into the wider world of the visual arts and provide you with greater confidence, knowledge and skills as you progress.

A distinct feature of studying at the University of Cumbria is that in level 4, first year, you will study two modules with all level 4 students of the arts and media programmes. These modules are Cultural Contexts and Collaborative Practice. Cultural Contexts introduces you a range of approaches to reading a diverse range of visual creative arts, and Collaborative Practice is a module where you will work with other students and embark on a problem-solving project practicing professional skills such as leadership, team-working and project management.

Planned collaborative and interdisciplinary learning tapers off towards the end of Level 4 as more specialist skills, knowledge and understanding become the focus of learning and your identity as a graphic designer is nurtured. Collaboration is still encouraged, it is a fact of professional creative life, but the learning is centred on you and the operational contexts graphic designers work within.

Most of your studies will be centred around practical projects that have been designed to not only help you practice and improve visual skills, but also develop your study skills, methods of research, critical and analytical abilities, and your ability to manage your time and plan your work.

We use a variety of approaches to learning, teaching and assessment to make sure you develop appropriate concepts, knowledge and skills. These include study skills, research methods, critical and analytical abilities, and your ability to manage your time and plan your work.

You'll be continuously involved in the assessment of your own work and that of your peers; developing the critical, interpersonal and team-working skills that are vital to gaining confidence and independence as a creative practitioner.

A wide range of learning, teaching and assessment methods are used in order to develop work related skills.

- **Tutorials** provide individually tailored feedback to you. They can range from one-to-one to small group situations. They will often be informal sessions conducted in the studio on timetabled taught days. As the course progresses you will be assigned weekly time slots with specialist tutors for more involved and technical feedback reflecting the advanced level at which you are working.
- **Crits** (short for 'critique') lie at the heart of an education in Graphic Design. These take place at the end of a project and will normally comprise a small group of your fellow students, and up to two members of staff, where you will be expected to present your work to the group. The effectiveness of your work and presentation will then be discussed by all present and you will receive a large amount of verbal feedback.
- **Lectures** are used by both studio and theory tutors using a variety of media as support. You will be expected to take notes, ask questions and contribute to any group discussions that ensue.

- **Seminars, Presentation and Discussion** sessions will explore issues in greater depth with both tutor and student-led formats. These will require you to engage in research and background reading and will consider the relation of theory to practice and help develop wide ranging transferable skills.
- **Practical Workshop Sessions** will provide the opportunity for you to develop specialist technical skills and knowledge. They normally take the form of tutor-led studio workshop demonstrations, designed to allow you to focus on, experiment with, develop and personalise specialised skills, media, techniques and concepts.
- **Problem based learning** will comprise the majority of your course programme. Graphic Design is by nature, problem-solving discipline. There will never be only one answer to a specific design problem (normally defined by the *project brief*). You will be expected to work on your own or as part of a small team to find a range of possible solutions. This will involve thorough research, synthesising the information you have discovered and developing and presenting a range of appropriate visual responses.
- **Group work** is very important as Graphic Designers work collectively on activities where communication, trust, responsibility and reliability are fundamental requirements. We write projects and tasks that allow you to experience, consider and develop your team-working skills.
- **Projects** are the usual vehicle by which you develop your design knowledge and expertise. As outlined above, the evaluation of project work is central to this degree programme. The project work you undertake during year two and three will form the content of the professional portfolio of work you will take with you when pursuing employment at the end of the course.
- **Portfolio/s** In assessment terms, 'portfolio' refers to the presentation of a body of visual design work presented on a digital format (website) or perhaps, additionally, as a printed folder or book. It is important to note that two things make up the 'portfolio' – the qualities of the work itself (is it good design / contemporary / fully resolved); and the manner in which that work is presented on the portfolio pages (visual narrative / flow / sequencing / attention-to-detail)
- **Written work** is central to a degree course and many of the learning approaches and emphasis is put upon clarity of style and argument as well as presentation. Different forms of written language will be explored to ensure appropriate critical skills and creative authorship are examined.
- **Self-directed study** forms a natural and expected extension of the formal aspects of the course. Your ultimate success will be dependent on your willingness to develop, experiment with and extend the concepts and approaches introduced by project briefs. It is only with continued application that lasting and valuable progress can be made.
- **E-learning and Blackboard** is the portal to access to project briefs, timetables and lecture notes, to submit module assessments and summative feedback. Learning packages which can be completed at your own pace are also a feature in some modules.
- **Work placement** You will be encouraged and supported in setting up a short (1-2 week) work placement with leading design agencies. It goes without saying that this proves invaluable experience and can be an important stepping stone to your professional career and life after university.

Course Structure

There are two semesters each year and each semester will contain either three 20 credit, or one 20 and one 40 credit module or one 60 credit module. In every module you will be formatively assessed to support your development, and summatively assessed to measure your achievement. The methods we use to teach and assess you are outlined below.

20 credit modules deal with contextual history and theory content or, as in the case of GRAP5070 Type & Typography, advanced specialist skills and knowledge.

The longer 40 and 60 credit modules are dedicated to graphic design practice and professional skills, providing an extended time to critically reflect on and modify conceptual and visual approaches to design problem-solving. In these modules, professional and employability skills are designed into the creative brief; for example, the client presentation element in GRAP5080 Graphic Design Projects requiring you to pitch your design work in a competitive environment.

Your final module is a 60-credit module where all of your knowledge about graphic design is demonstrated in a body of work for the graduate exhibition. The skills, knowledge and other attributes synthesise at this point and the larger module gives sufficient time for this to develop and find resolution. This is the culmination of your degree where everything comes together and you prepare to graduate as a rounded independent practitioner.

Foundation Year Approach

We want to motivate you in your foundation year through varied teaching and learning approaches that support different student needs and help you integrate into university life. Modules combine practical workshops, critiques, seminars, and guided independent study, encouraging you to explore ideas, experiment with media, and reflect on your process.

Vocational and creative practice opportunities form an essential part of the programme, enabling you to make meaningful links between theoretical concepts and practical application. During the integrated foundation year, you will work alongside students from a range of creative pathways, allowing for a richer, interdisciplinary learning experience. You will collaborate in groups to solve design problems, research case studies, and deliver creative outputs.

Each module is led by a module leader with overarching responsibility, but delivery is team-taught, ensuring you benefit from subject specialists and experience diverse teaching styles. This approach mirrors the collaborative nature of the creative industries and prepares you for progression to Level 4.

Overview of Learning and Teaching Methods

At Level 3, you typically have around 12 scheduled learning hours per week, including:

- 6 hours of practical workshops and seminars
- 6 hours of lectures and group critiques
- 13 hours of guided independent study
- 2–4 scheduled personal tutoring meetings across the academic year

At Level 4 students typically have around 12 scheduled learning hours per week, typically consisting of:

- 2 hours of lectures
- 2 hours of seminars
- 5 hours of studio project, research, production skills, presentations
- 3 hour(s) of personal tutoring

At Level 5 students typically have around 9 scheduled learning hours per week, typically consisting of:

- 2 hours of lectures
- 2 hours of seminars
- 3 hours of studio project, research, production skills, presentations
- 2 hour(s) of personal tutoring

At Level 6 students typically have around 6–8 scheduled learning hours per week, typically consisting of:

- 1 hours of lectures
- 2 hours of seminars
- 3 hours of studio project, research, production skills, presentations
- 2 hour(s) of personal tutoring

Independent Learning

When not attending scheduled sessions, you will engage in self-directed study, including research, experimentation, and portfolio development. Independent learning is supported by digital platforms such as Blackboard, LinkedIn Learning, collaborative tools like Padlet, and curated reading lists via OneList.

Digital Capabilities

Digital literacy is embedded throughout the programme. You will use industry-standard software (e.g., Adobe Creative Suite, 3D modelling tools), develop online portfolios, and access LinkedIn Learning and MOOCs to enhance your skills.

Academic Team

Our highly experienced academic team draw on their extensive backgrounds in visual communication practice. This is based on experience of working in the graphic design industry and includes all aspects of the design process and pipeline but also client interaction skills, project management and business development that ensure that the curriculum is current, informed and designed so that you will become a fully rounded practitioner. From the networks that the team bring to the programme you will be exposed to a variety of industry opportunities at every level of study ensuring that your education is relevant, vibrant and most importantly, live. The specialist skills brought by the academic team include: Branding, Art Direction, Typography, Editorial Design, Packaging, Exhibition, Digital Design, Design Software Skills.

Assessment

Assessment of the work submitted for this programme is informed by the Subject Benchmark Statements published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) and which describe the academic standards expected of graduate in the Art and Design subject area.

The range of learning teaching and assessment methods used enables different aspects of your learning to be developed and tested. As well as testing what you know and can do at the end of a module (*Summative Assessment*) you'll get regular advice and guidance while your work is in progress (*Formative Feedback*) through one-to-one, peer-to-peer and group tutorials where you will have the opportunity to discuss and develop strategies to develop your work. This enables you to develop and refine the work as it is being produced with the structured guidance required to achieve the best possible results.

The University of Cumbria's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Plan sets out clear aspirations and commitments for and to our students. Cumbria graduates are enquiring and self-reliant, confident and capable, professionally ready, responsible individuals that are ambitious and proud. These attributes are practiced on every year of study as we support you in your studies. You will find your place in learning environments that will both support and challenge you, explore ideas in and around your discipline, enabling you to grow and develop to become adaptable and reliable agents in the field of graphic design.

In terms of assessment the practice modules will be assessed authentically in line with current industry practice. The assessment of critical and contextual modules fosters critical thinking, academic rigour, and research skills all necessary to the professional graphic designer and will be assessed at each level.

Students will receive both summative and formative assessment throughout each level of study at scheduled points each semester. Formative assessment is developmental and supports students towards final submission.

Feedback

Feedback happens in a variety of ways throughout your course of study. From structured feedback sessions to studio tutorials with tutors. Informal feedback occurs on a day-to-day basis as you work in the studio and tutors can comment on your work in progress and discuss your ideas in relation to the work you are making at that time. Formative feedback will be scheduled crits where you will present your work and receive tutor and peer feedback on work in progress. Summative assessment points are specific moments where your work is assessed formally, the feedback you receive for these will be returned via verbal feedback on a Loom video.

In line with UoC policy, formal feedback on summative assessments will be provided within 20 working days. It will be based on grading criteria linked to the module learning outcomes and aligned to the UoC grade descriptors, which differentiate between the levels of study.

Graduate Prospects

As a successful graduate of the BA (Hons) Graphic Design programme you will be able to access a variety of career options. A degree in graphic design becomes a passport to enter an extensive range of careers throughout the creative industries.

According to Prospects* (2022), 15 months following graduation, 82.2% of graphic design graduates are in employment, with 54% as web, multimedia and design professionals. 2.6% continued with further study. These statistics have confirmed to us that employability skills are central to the success of our graduates and so we have embedded the professional skills and working with industry into the programme.

Transferrable skills (these skills are valued by most employers):

- Being able to work independently, but also working effectively with others
- Clear communication and good interpersonal skills
- Working collaboratively
- The ability to manage your time effectively
- Innovation, creativity and problem-solving
- Presentation skills
- Self-evaluation
- Technical, research, critical and analytical skills

Progression Routes:

- Salaried or freelance employment
- Independent freelance graphic design practice
- Setting up your own business
- Postgraduate education: MA, MPhil and PhD level study

Examples of Graphic Design Graduate Destinations:

- Graphic designer
- Motion graphics designer
- Art director
- Advertising designer
- Packaging designer
- Editorial designer
- Studio assistant
- Brand management
- Exhibition designer
- Website designer
- UX/UI designer
- Animator
- Concept artist
- Printmaker
- Creative project manager

The scope described by these destinations is testament to the flexibility of the programme that supports all the individual interests of our students. It also speaks to the potential that graphic design holds as a great career choice.

* <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/what-can-i-do-with-my-degree/graphic-design>

MODULES

Level 3			
Code	Title	Credits	Status
FYUN3014	Introducing Creative Research Practice	20	Compulsory
FYUN3015	Seeing, Thinking, Making Meaning	20	Compulsory
FYUN3016	Ideas, Images and Objects	20	Compulsory
FYUN3017	Innovation Lab	20	Compulsory
FYUN3018	Creative Industries Toolkit	20	Compulsory
FYUN3019	Creative Playbook	20	Compulsory
Students exiting at this point with 120 credits would receive a FdCert Graphic Design			

Year 1			
Code	Title	Credits	Status
VCOM4000	Introducing Visual Communication	40	Compulsory
UCIA4030	Cultural Contexts	20	Compulsory
UCIA4020	Collaborative Practice	20	Compulsory
GRAP4040	Multi-Dimensional Graphic Design	40	Compulsory
Students exiting at this point with 120 credits would receive a CertHE Graphic Design (With Integrated Foundation Year)			

Year 2			
Code	Title	Credits	Status
GRAP5060	The Designer's Toolkit	40	Compulsory
GRAP5070	Type & Typography	20	Compulsory
GRAP5080	Graphic Design Projects	40	Compulsory
GRAP5090	The Critical Designer	20	Compulsory
Students exiting at this point with 240 credits would receive a DipHE Graphic Design (With Integrated Foundation Year)			

Year 3			
Code	Title	Credits	Status

GRAP6050	Advanced Design Projects	40	Compulsory
ARTD6000	Independent Research Paper	20	Compulsory
GRAP6060	Graphic Design Showcase	60	Compulsory
<p>Students exiting at this point with 300 credits would receive an Ordinary BA Graphic Design (With Integrated Foundation Year)</p> <p>Students exiting at this point with 360 credits would receive a BA (Hons) Graphic Design (With Integrated Foundation Year)</p>			

Additional Module Information

Students must successfully complete 100 credits at Level 3 before progressing to Level 4.

A failed student will not be permitted to re-register on the same programme.

This programme uses a 40 and 60 credit module structure in levels 4-6, this allows for larger / sustained assessments with a greater emphasis on creative development and on modelling process and outcomes on industry practice.

The 40 and 60 credit modules are all dedicated visual practice modules and have been designed such to:

- **Enable progression:** the intensity of the modules will establish and ensure a working practice that is maintained throughout the degree from level 4 to 6, and designed so that you will be equipped to meet the increasing expectations as you progress through each level.
- **Streamline assessments:** the longer modules allow fewer assessments with a greater emphasis on linking practice to professional outcomes, hence you will be more focused and driven on achieving holistically rather than in separate components.
- **Reduce the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs):** as with the streamlining of assessment, this would have the same effect of the ILOs, these can be more focused and relevant to real-world expectations.

The modules are designed so that you have a longer period to rigorously develop your work. This aspect allows you to manage bigger projects, develop personal management skills and experience. You will be well supported on these modules with stop-reviews, timely formative assessment points and interim objectives that monitor progress, encourage reflection and guard you against failure.

Larger modules of 40 and 60 credits are recognised by the QAA to be typical in Art and Design programmes and reflect the pedagogic approach that encourages independent working on significant bodies of work reflective of industry.

Key to Module Statuses

Compulsory modules	Must be taken although it may possible to compensate as a marginal fail (within the limits set out in the Academic Regulations and provided that all core or pass/fail elements of module assessment have been passed).
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Timetables

Timetables are normally available in August each year. Please note that while we make every effort to ensure timetables are as student-friendly as possible, scheduled learning can take place on any day of the week.

Our Timetabling team work hard to ensure that timetables are available to students as far in advance as possible, however there may be occasional exceptions such as in the case of teaching which falls outside of the usual academic calendar. The UoC academic calendar runs from August to July, so timetabling information for programmes which include teaching sessions in August may not be published until closer to the August delivery.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Student Support

We provide responsive student support that promotes student success. Our approach to student support is designed to support achievement and progression, champion inclusivity and accessibility, prepare you for opportunities beyond study, and promote independence and resilience, enabling you to achieve your potential.

As a student of the University of Cumbria, you will be taught by academics and expert practitioners who facilitate learning through structured inquiry. You will be provided with access to high quality academic resources through physical and digital libraries and will be supported to develop skills that enable you to become a critical, reflective, discerning and independent learner and researcher.

Induction

As a student at the University of Cumbria, you will have access to a University of Cumbria on-line provision, currently known as 'Head Start'. This feature provides guidance and exercises for you to enable you to prepare for academic study. Furthermore, you will have access to staff details to ask any questions in advance of commencing the programme.

An undergraduate induction is timetabled for the week before the programme delivery starts and will be your first week on the programme. You will undertake a series of activities designed to form cohesion amongst your peer group, to familiarise you with the University and introduce you to a range of support services who are there to help you settle into university life and help you progress through your studies. You will be shown how to use our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) which is called 'Blackboard' and how to submit assessments using 'Turn it In'. You will attend centrally organised sessions, Student Life and Help is at Hand.

During the induction week you are allocated a Personal Tutor (PT), as are all students at the University, but in addition foundation year students will receive dedicated supported from the Student Learning Developer.

Transitioning to Level 4:

Progressing students will not be required to attend all induction activities at Level 4, but will be invited to activities that will enable them to meet and feel fully integrated with their new cohort such as introduction to programme structure, modules and team building activities. In addition, the students will be invited by the programme leader to mentor and support new students in other activities such as campus tours and general tips and guidance on being a UoC student.

Personal Tutor

You will also be allocated a Personal Tutor at the start of your programme. Your Personal Tutor will be proactively involved in the delivery of your programme and will have contact with you throughout your time at the University. They will support your learning and development, including through tutorials, progress reviews and other support as outlined in the Personal Tutoring Policy. You will meet with your Personal Tutor on a minimum of four occasions per academic year at Level 3 and 4 (and twice yearly at Levels 5 and 6). These meetings are in addition to any discussions you may initiate which are without limit. The scheduled meetings will include the opportunity to

examine your marks and feedback across modules to identify practice which can be encouraged across modules and recognising where further support may be beneficial.

Student Learning Developers (IFY)

During the first year of your programme (Foundation Year) you will have access to support from dedicated Student Learning Developers (IFY support). These advisors will provide you with individual academic and pastoral support alongside the academic team to ensure you reach your full potential whilst you are on this programme. In particular, they will help you to adjust adjustment to university study, assist you in the navigation of the academic environment, policies, expectations and signposting to a wide range of services. They also work with you and your personal tutor to help you to develop your own strategies for effective study and provide additional one-to-one and group support in academic writing and study skills.

The [Student Enquiry Point](#) is a simple way to contact Student Services. Using the Student Enquiry Point tile on the Student Hub you can submit an enquiry to any of the Student Services teams, which includes:

- [Careers and Employability](#)
- [Chaplaincy](#) for faith and spiritual wellbeing
- [Mental Health and Wellbeing](#)
- [Digital Skills](#)
- [Disability and Specific Learning Difficulty \(SpLD\)](#)
- [International Student Support](#)
- [Library](#)
- [Money Advice Service](#)
- [Safeguarding](#)
- [Skills@Cumbria](#)
- [Sports and Fitness Facilities](#)
- [University Student Accommodation](#)

As a student at the University of Cumbria you automatically become a member of the Students' Union. The Students' Union represents the views and interests of students within the University.

The Students' Union is led by a group of Student Representatives who are elected by students in annual elections. They also support approximately 400 Student Academic Reps within each cohort across the entire University. The Students' Union represent the views of their cohort and work with academic staff to continuously develop and improve the experience for all University of Cumbria students. You can find out more about who represents you at www.ucsu.me.

You can email at any time on studentvoice@cumbria.ac.uk.

Course Costs

Tuition Fees

Course fees can be found [BA \(Hons\) Graphic Design with Foundation Year - University of Cumbria](#)

The following course-related costs are included in the fees:

- Use of equipment, technical resources and expertise.
- There will be visits throughout the programme some of which will subsidised by the university other enhancement activities may incur some personal cost to the student.

Additional Costs

The following course-related costs are not included in the fees:

- Printing consumables credit
- Art materials and personal design toolkit (layout pads, sketchbooks, pens, pencil etc)
- Occasional entrance fees on visits to studios/museums/galleries etc

Exceptions to the Academic Regulations

This programme operates in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations and Academic Procedures and Processes with the following permitted exception:.

Module credit size: 60 credits (Undergraduate study)

The 60-credit module in year 3 is a semester long module. All the skills, knowledge and other attributes synthesise at this point and the larger module gives sufficient time for this to develop and find resolution. Formative assessment and interim objectives will support you to make the most of this opportunity.

External and Internal Benchmarks

[QAA Subject Benchmark Statements: Art & Design \(Published: December 2019\)](#)

The programme is also informed by the following internal reference points:

- Business Plan for the Institute of Education, Arts and Society
- [The Academic Strategy - Transforming lives and livelihoods](#)
- cumbria.ac.uk/media/towards-2030.pdf
- [Learning, Teaching and Assessment Plan](#)
- [Academic Regulations](#)

Disclaimer

This programme has been approved (validated) by the University of Cumbria as suitable for a range of delivery modes, delivery patterns, and delivery sites. This level of potential flexibility does not reflect a commitment on behalf of the University to offer the programme by all modes/patterns and at all locations in every academic cycle. The details of the programme offered for a particular intake year will be as detailed on the programme webpage:

<https://www.cumbria.ac.uk/study/courses/undergraduate/graphic-design-with-integrated-foundation-year/>

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