Nottingham Trent University

Course Specification

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6.	Overview and general educational aims of the course

The FdA in Graphics and Digital Design is delivered at The Confetti Institute of Creative Technologies (CICT) which is part of Nottingham Trent University (NTU)

Graphic design is the process of visual communication and creative problem-solving using a variety of mediums such as typography, photography and illustration. Graphic Design is an integral part of the UK design industry, which is the largest design industry in Europe and is recognised for the high quality of its designers.

The FdA in Graphic and Digital Design course will give you the opportunity to pursue a career in this area of the creative industries. The course aims to create ambitious graduates who are equipped with the relevant skillset for entry into the graphic design industry.

Whilst on the course, you will develop key skills in creative problem solving using a range of materials and you will gain advanced knowledge of design software packages including Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, After Effects and InDesign. You will gain an understanding of the professional platforms of graphic design such as advertising and branding and gain project management skills through working on collaborative projects, which will put you firmly on the path towards a career in the graphic design industry. The course encourages you to explore the role of a designer in contemporary society whilst developing a critical understanding of graphic design principles, theory and research methods.

On successful completion of the course you will be able to demonstrate to employers that you have a variety of graphic design specialisms that you can bring to an employment opportunity that will be supported by an outstanding portfolio of work created whilst studying on the course.

Employability will be an integral element of the course and you will receive training on the latest industry software and hardware combined with ample opportunities throughout the programme to undertake appropriate work-based learning within the graphic design industry. The curriculum design aims to give you the necessary technical skills in the latest technologies and the discipline required to work in a variety of roles within the graphic design industry.

You will learn how work is commissioned within the graphic design industry and you will work with live briefs in order to develop your portfolio of work. The course encourages you to take an experimental and creative approach to graphic design and seeks to establish good working practices and independent study, as well as exploring the interrelationship between research and graphic design.

7.	**Course outcomes**

Course outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of your course if you take advantage of the opportunities for learning that we provide.

Knowledge and understanding
By the end of the course you should be able to:

- Critically discuss theory, development and context of graphic design
- Evaluate approaches to enquiry in graphic design and own performance
- Explore stages of design process and relationship with audience, client and market
- Apply design thinking to outcomes in response to a brief and explore opportunities for inter-disciplinary collaboration

Skills, qualities and attributes
By the end of the course you should be able to demonstrate:

- Deploy experimental processes and techniques to conceptualise and adapt ideas
- Formulate and present visual outcomes with industry standard tools and competency
- Utilise professional skills demonstrating ethical, resourceful and entrepreneurial behaviour
- Apply informed analysis to problem solving

8.	**Teaching and learning methods**

Within individual modules the delivery of the material encourages increasing levels of skill development and student participation, ensuring that, as you progress through the course, you become a more confident and independent learner. We aim to include a range of methods of delivery that may include;

- Lectures
- Seminars
- Workshop
- Group tutorials
- Academic Tutorials (ATs)
- Presentations and Pitches
- Team working
- Independent learning
- Visiting industry professionals

All the modes of delivery are structured to develop on-going abilities and skills through exploring ideas and problem solving. The course will offer a broad range of assessment methods.

9.	**Assessment methods**	3

A variety of formative and summative assessment methods will be employed throughout the course such as presentations, idea development, research led projects, live briefs, essays, reports and evaluations.

Each assessment undertaken for each module will enable you to develop specific skills required by a graphic designer.

Assessment is clearly defined in module specifications and module guides and each module has a final summative assessment at the end of each module but is also supported with specific formative assessments during the course of the modules. Lecture, tutorial and seminar dialogue allow you ownership and understanding of the assessment process. Informal formative feedback is provided in tutorials, seminars and individual surgery sessions or via online methods.

Both formal and informal formative feedback is provided throughout each module at appropriate points, i.e. when you are best placed to be able to act on that feedback.

Summative feedback occurs at the conclusion of each module and is completed in line with University regulations. Summative feedback is completed within the 21-day time frame and is returned via the NOW. (NOW is the virtual learning environment at CICT and NTU and is a key tool to aid your university study. It puts all the information you need for your course at your fingertips.)

In year 1 you will have 12 hours of contact time per week and be expected to undertake a minimum of 16 hours per week of self-directed study.

In year 2 you will have 11 hours of contact time per week and be expected to undertake a minimum of 20 hours per week of self-directed study.

10.	**Course structure and curriculum**

The course is structured in a modular manner, over two years of study.

Core modules:
Level Four (120 Credits)
- Graphic Design Development 1 (40 Credits)
- Design Techniques and Technology 1 (40 Credits)
- Theory and Context 1 (20 Credits)
- Exploring Industry (20 Credits)

Level Five (120 Credits)
- Graphic Design Development 2 (40 Credits)
- Design Techniques and Technology 2 (40 Credits)
- Theory and Context 2 (20 Credits)
- Industry Practice (20 Credits)

You will study towards 120 credit points in each year of study. The first year of study focusses on introductory material to establish a base level understanding of theoretical principles and practical processes. Your second year of study will expand your technical understanding of the core subject

disciplines, whilst also introducing you to new contexts and working practices. During the second year of study you will participate in an 'Industry' based module. This will provide you with an opportunity to put into practice the skills acquired in your other modules within an industry setting.

The assignments completed across all modules of the course are designed so that you will have developed a core set of skills by the end of your studies that will prepare you for work in industry. Additionally, the work you complete as part of your studies will form an ongoing portfolio of work that demonstrates your developing professionalism in the subject area, thus helping support your entry into industry or further study after graduation.

As an NTU student studying at CICT you will have access to a wide range of resources including the wider NTU facilities such as the library and the student's union.

Higher Certificate

Interim Award

The interim award for this foundation degree is a Higher Certificate in Graphic and Digital Design. 120 credits at level 4 FHEQ (Framework for Higher Education Qualifications) are required to achieve this award.

Progression routes

Should you achieve a merit for your overall grade on successful completion of the FdA in Graphics and Digital Design, your formal automatic progression route is to progress to the BA Graphic Design Course at NTU. In order to support your progression from CICT to NTU a transition tutorial will take place, conducted by the BA Graphic Design team where you will be required to present your portfolio of work so the team at NTU can ensure that appropriate support (if necessary) is made available to you.

11.	**Admission to the course**

Application is through Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). Minimum entry requirements follow the University's Code of Practice for Admissions.

The target groups for the course are:

- Applicants who have gained a BTEC Extended Diploma
- Applicants with A-Level award qualifications
- Mature students looking for career development or change.

For admission to the course you will need to have achieved 64 UCAS points from one of the following:

- A-levels – DDE; or
- BTEC Extended Diploma – MPP; or
- 64 UCAS Tariff points from equivalent qualifications
- GCSEs – English and Maths Grade C / 4.
- Applications from mature students will also be considered in terms of their skills, aptitude and experience

Additional support for speakers of languages other than English is provided within the University.

Though the entry requirements outlined are such as to encourage applications from a wide range of potential students the course has no part-time route.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
In exceptional circumstances applicants with RPL will be considered for admission to the course.

Widening Participation
The course will consider applicants with non-standard entry qualifications on demonstration of potential to undertake and benefit from the course.

CICT is currently unable to accept applications from International students.

12.	**Support for learning**

You will be assigned a named personal tutor at the start of your year who can act as a guide in more personal matters and your module leaders will be available to offer guidance and support where necessary.

It is recognised that there may be times when your performance in an assessment is adversely affected by circumstances beyond your control, this is called an Extenuating Circumstance. You can notify us of an Extenuating Circumstance at any time during the academic year through the University's online Notification of Extenuating Circumstance's procedure (NEC) which can be found within the Academic Appeals section of the University's Student Handbook. Please speak to your Course Leader for advice on what to do next.

CICT is committed to assisting you to achieve the best results possible during your studies and will provide you with a wide range of academic help and advice. A comprehensive learner support system is in place and additional advice and support is also available from the university and student union and this can be tailored to meet your needs.

Resources such as open access computers and specialised computer facilities are available for your use as directed by your tutors.

13.	**Graduate destinations / employability**

Academic Tutorials are designed to help focus your individual career plan. These sessions, designed by your tutors are supported by the Employability Team at NTU. The Industry Practice module will help align your own exit trajectory with the assignment work you will be completing during the course.

Employability will be an integral element of the course with training on the latest industry standard software and hardware combined with ample opportunities throughout the programme to undertake appropriate work-based learning. The integration of problem solving and diagnostic testing and intensive tuition in increasingly complex software and hardware will increase your experience of creating and experimenting with a range of design processes so a confident, creative, innovative, technically savvy

graduate is prepared with the new entrant skills demanded by the television industry.

Typical job roles in the graphic design industry might include:

- Graphic designer
- Animator
- Illustrator
- Website designer
- Artworker

Many roles in industry operate on a freelance or self-employed basis and the course aims to equip you for these working models through professional industry-based projects and specific business skills workshops and seminars. Graduates seeking to enter the industry in a freelance capacity are well placed to successfully do so.

14.	**Course standards and quality**

There are well-established systems for managing the quality of the curriculum within NTU and CICT. External examiners are appointed to each course and report on the appropriateness of the curriculum, the quality of student work and the assessment process.

CICT and NTU reviews, refines and updates its courses and modules with dialogue between staff and the student body an important part of this process. Whilst there are good informal relationships between staff and students, we also have formal channels for student feedback which comprise of:

- Student/Staff Liaison Committee (CCM)
- Formal module evaluation, undertaken by questionnaire
- Course Student Representatives, elected by the student group, represent students.
- Course Survey
- National Student Survey (NSS)

At the end of each year the course team at CICT write an evaluative Interim Course Review (ICR) which is discussed by the Confetti Academic Standards and Quality Committee (CASQC) for actions recommended. Your contribution to this process is important.

15.	**Assessment regulations**

This course is subject to the University's Common Assessment Regulations (located in Section 16 of the NTU Quality Handbook). Any course specific assessment features are described below:

There are no course specific assessment features

16.	**Additional Information**
	Collaborative partner(s): Confetti Institute of Creative Technologies and Nottingham Trent University

Course referenced to national QAA Benchmark Statements:	Art and Design February 2017
Course recognised by:	N/A
Date implemented:	April 2020
Any additional information:	

Key features of the course:

- Designed to provide you with the core skills required to work in the Graphic Design industry.
- Teaches advanced computer skills working with industry standard design software.
- You will develop industry facing skills combined with creativity, good communication and organisational skills.
- Integration of problem solving and intensive tuition in increasingly complex software and hardware will increase your experience of creating and experimenting with a range of design processes.
- Annual Industry Week event exposes you, along with fellow CICT students, to industry professionals within the world of media, gaming and music.