
ADAM SMITH COLLEGE
INSPIRING LEARNING

Course Handbook

**HND Visual Communication
Graphic Design**

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Welcome to Adam Smith College

This is the Course Handbook for the HND Visual Communications Graphic Design. On behalf of the Course Team I would like to warmly welcome you to Adam Smith College. We feel sure that you will enjoy your time spent here.

To help you make the most of your time at College and to familiarise you with your course we have produced this course handbook. In here you will find information about the structure of your course, the teaching and learning styles used and the ways in which your work will be assessed and graded.

There is a considerable amount of information contained in this handbook, some of which will be of greater relevance to you as you work through the course than it is at the start of your studies in the College. However, we recommend that you read this Course Handbook through carefully **now**, then keep it safely - you will need to use it through your course.

We hope you will find the handbook a useful guide to your course and wish you every success in your studies.

Alan Ogilvie

Curriculum Head: HND Visual Communication Graphic Design

Information about your course

Your course is:

HND Visual Communication Graphic Design

Your Curriculum Head is:

Alan Ogilvie

His/Her office is:

CCI, Stenton Campus

His/Her telephone number is:

01592 223136

His/Her email address is:

alanogilvie@adamsmith.ac.uk

Scheduled guidance time:

Monday 12-1pm

Your Curriculum Head

Each course in the Adam Smith College is assigned a Curriculum Head, whose role is to provide you with advice and support through your course of study. This falls roughly into two categories – guidance related to your studies and pastoral care to help you deal with any difficulties you might encounter of, for example, a personal, financial or health-related nature.

At the beginning of your course you will agree your learning targets with your Curriculum Head. These will be recorded on your Learner Agreement which both of you will sign. Throughout your course, your Curriculum Head will monitor your progress and meet with you regularly during the year to discuss how you are getting on.

Your Curriculum Head will also be available at a set time each week when you can meet if there's something you need to discuss. However, if something comes up which has to be dealt with urgently, you can ask to speak to your Curriculum Head at any time. He/she might not be able to meet you immediately – Curriculum Heads have classes to teach and other students to look after – but he/she will offer you an appointment as soon as possible or refer you to another appropriate member of staff.

Your Curriculum Head may not always be able to personally provide you with the sort of help or support you need, in which case he/she might recommend that you are referred to a member of the College's Guidance or Learning Support staff.

So, if at any time throughout your course, you experience difficulties which are affecting your progress as a student, your Curriculum Head should be your first contact. Please remember that unresolved problems rarely just go away. On the contrary, they tend to get worse the longer they're not dealt with. So, speak to your Curriculum Head sooner rather than later.

Your attendance at college and part-time employment

Your success as a student depends on full and regular attendance at **all** classes. You should inform your Curriculum Head as soon as possible if you have problems with attendance. Our records show that students who do not attend all their classes have a very high risk of failure.¹

We recognise that you may need to undertake part-time work, but we strongly advise you not to take employment of more than 15 hours a week if you are a full time student. Should you need to take employment of more than 15 hours per week we recommend you register as a part time student. A full time student is expected to follow their timetable and negotiate work times around it.

Your learning

Your College course will provide you with constant opportunities to learn new skills and acquire knowledge in your chosen subject areas. In order to make the most of all the opportunities available, you need to organise and plan your learning and also to manage your time effectively.

You must attend **all** your timetabled classes. You also need to study in your own time and you should plan to spend several hours a week to fulfil your commitment as a full-time student. You need to allocate time for this in your diary.

Prepare for lectures and tutorials by doing any reading or exercises in advance. Always make some notes – there is usually a handout provided. Review these after the class and ask your lecturer if there is anything you do not understand.

Note assignment deadlines and exam dates in your diary and remember to begin assignments early. You will enjoy researching and planning your work if you allow yourself plenty of time. Make sure you understand what you need to do and plan how you are going to tackle it. Seek advice from your lecturer or Curriculum Head if there is anything that needs clarification.

For full details of regulations about attendance, see the College Attendance Policy and Procedure.

¹ For full details of regulations about attendance, see the College Attendance Policy and Procedure.

In summary:

- ❖ plan your learning strategy
- ❖ allocate enough time
- ❖ attend **all** of your classes
- ❖ start assignments well in advance
- ❖ seek advice and help
- ❖ use the learning resources offered
- ❖ enjoy the learning experience!

Credit for previous learning

Some students have previous experience or qualifications for which they may receive credit on their present course of study. If you have any qualification that may exempt you from part of your course, for example from school or another college, you may apply for Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL). Similarly, if you have undertaken work, paid or voluntary, that has resulted in learning skills or knowledge that is equivalent to units you will be studying here, you may apply for Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL). Together these are known as AP(E)L and it means you do not have to duplicate study you have done previously. It does not necessarily have to be in your chosen subject, but it must be at the same level as your course of studies here.²

If you wish to claim for APL/AP(E)L please speak to your Curriculum Head.

The aims of your course

The aims of your course are:

- ❖ to develop your knowledge of the facts, theories, concepts, , development and importance of Visual Communication;
- ❖ to enhance your practical skills in all aspects of Graphic Design & new technologies;
- ❖ to provide a sound basis for those of you who may decide go on to a more advanced course of study;

² For full details of the scheme for crediting previous learning, see the College Credit Transfer and APL/APEL Procedure.

- ❖ to give you experience of the equipment, materials, processes and practices currently used in the Visual Communication industry;
- ❖ to encourage your development of effective learning strategies.

The structure of your course

The course consists of 13 first year units, with a total value of 15 credits. The second year contains 10 units with a value of 15 credits. Over two years you study 30 credits in order to complete the HND.

The course consists of 3 days of formal classes each week along with individual study and coursework.

The units you will study in Year 1 are:

Year 1		
Unit Code	Unit Title	Credit
DM0V34	Creative Industries: An Introduction	1
DV6A34	Visual Communication: An Introduction	1
D77G34	Communication: Practical Skills	1
DV6734	Mixed Media	1
DV5W35	Art and Design Project	1
DV5R35	Art and Design Context	1
DV5T34	Art and Design: Creative Process	1
DV5M34	Web Design: An Introduction	1
DV6234	Graphic Design	2
DV6934	Typography	2
DV6034	Digital Imaging	1
DW9X34	Visual Communication: Graded Unit 1	1
DW6C34	Photography: An Introduction	1

The units you will study in Year 2 are:

Year 2		
Unit Code	Unit Title	Credit
DM2L35	Working in the Creative Industries 2	1
DX3035	Design Production	1
DV5N35	2D Computer Animation	2
DX5N35	Illustration Project	2
DX3635	Graphic Design Project	2
DX3C35	Typography Project	2
F0H935	Visual Communication: Graded Unit 2	2
DX3G35	Client Initiated Design Project	1
DX3335	Digital Imaging Project	1
DX2Y35	Creative Project for Artists and Designers	1

The content of your course

Here are brief descriptions of the units which make up your course:

Year 1

DM0V34: Creative Industries: An Introduction

To introduce candidates to the concept, history and workings of the Creative Industries and to develop their understanding of how an elected vocational area fits within the overall structure of the sector.

DV6A34: Visual Communication: An Introduction

This Unit is designed to provide candidates with the knowledge and/or skills necessary to manipulate the basic elements of visual communication. The main activities in the Unit are aimed at producing creative solutions, with the skills learned providing the tools for the candidate to fully express their creative thinking. This Unit would be suitable for candidates wishing to develop greater competence in understanding the relevance of visual communications in today's environment.

D77G34: Communication: Practical Skills

This Unit is about applying practical communication skills to complex issues in a vocational context.

DV6734: Mixed Media

On completion of the Unit the candidate will understand and be able to apply practical knowledge of a range of media styles and techniques which could be employed in the production of an artefact within their chosen area of study.

DV5W35: Art and Design Project

This Unit is designed to enable candidates to work through the creative process in a manner which follows that of professional practitioner in their specialist areas of study.

DV5R35: Art and Design Context

This Unit is designed to provide candidates, from a wide range of art and design disciplines, with a historical and contemporary understanding of art and design. It should allow the candidate to contextualise historical and contemporary factors in art and design within a specific subject area. It is intended that the candidate will, as part of this process, develop research and analytical skills through the gathering, organising, developing and documenting of relevant data.

DV5T34: Art and Design: Creative Process

An understanding of the creative process is a key building block to the development of all creative practitioners. This Unit provides candidates with a vehicle for the exploration of the process, the development of visual language and an introduction to critical evaluation. It is not the purpose of this Unit to achieve a final product.

DV5M34: Web Design: An Introduction

The Unit will look at the aesthetics of web design and the creativity that can be expressed within the design of a web page.

DV6234: Graphic Design

This Unit is designed to develop the candidate's ability to understand and apply the processes of research, conceptualisation, development and critical analysis in the design and production of finished creative solutions for graphic design brief/s.

DV6934: Typography

This Unit is designed to introduce the candidate to the use of typography in a design context, by researching prominent typographers and understanding their influence on contemporary design.

DV6034: Digital Imaging

This Unit is designed to embrace the importance of digital and computer technology within the design process. It will enable the candidate to explore digital imaging, gain basic technical knowledge of digital imaging software (vector and bitmap), be aware of the importance of file types and file management and be able to use the relevant applications to produce a product to a given brief/s.

DW6C34: Photography: An Introduction

The Unit is designed to give candidates opportunities to develop knowledge and skills in making and looking at photographic images. Candidates will explore the differences and similarities of modern and historical photographic equipment and techniques. Candidates will follow specified and self-initiated briefs to produce and present original images, demonstrating how basic photographic techniques and considerations can affect the appearance and meaning of what is photographed.

DW9X34 Visual Communication: Graded Unit 1

Year 2

DV6034 Working in the Creative Industries 2

This Unit is designed to prepare candidates to enter the Creative Industries workplace as an employee or as a self-employed practitioner. It aims to familiarise candidates with the variety of working patterns and conditions within an elected vocational area and thereby encourage enterprise and entrepreneurialism.

DX3035 Design Production

This Unit is designed to develop candidates' knowledge and skills in techniques for preparing material and design work for the production of a publication.

DV5N35 2D Computer Animation

This Unit is designed to provide candidates with the knowledge and skills involved in the design and production of a two dimensional computer animation. This Unit would be suitable for candidates wishing to develop greater competence in the design, creation and production of animation for various applications.

DX5N35 Illustration Project

This Unit is designed to provide the candidate with an extensive understanding of commercial illustration requirements and to develop a professional approach to creating and presenting illustrations.

DX3635 Graphic Design Project

This Unit is designed to develop the candidate's ability to initiate and interpret a design brief/s, to develop and produce creative and complex design solutions within their chosen area of graphic design and to undertake critical evaluation of solutions. Throughout the Unit the candidate is expected to develop and demonstrate autonomy. This Unit is suitable for candidates with previous experience of graphic design who wish to further develop their skills.

DX3C35 Typography Project

This Unit is designed to further develop the candidate's understanding of typography in a design context, by producing research and development for a final typographic solution. The candidate should have the skills to produce a cohesive, well-managed project that meets the requirements of the project brief/s.

DX3G35 Client Initiated Design Project

This Unit is designed to provide candidates with an opportunity to plan, undertake and present a creative response to a design brief initiated by a client.

DX3335 Digital Imaging Project

This Unit is designed to apply digital and computer technology within the design process. It will enable the candidate to explore digital imaging, gain advanced technical knowledge of both vector and bitmapped digital imaging software. This unit would be suitable for candidates wishing to develop advanced competence in digital imaging as it will develop an awareness of the importance of vector and bitmapped images and when they should or should not be used in relation to design work.

DX2Y35 Creative Project for Artists and Designers

This Unit is designed to challenge the candidate to develop and produce work from a live or simulated brief which is of a professional standard and presented appropriately.

FOH935 Visual Communication: Graded Unit 2

Assessment of your work

Throughout your course, your work will be assessed in a number of different ways, depending on the different criteria in individual units.³

The majority of courses delivered in the College are assessed partly or wholly on a continuous basis – in other words, you will be assessed on parts of your work as you go along rather than all of it at the end of the unit. This assessment is carried out by the lecturer teaching the unit.

So that assessments can be fair to all students, and whoever teaches them, internal assessments are checked by other lecturers teaching the same, or similar, units. This is a process called 'internal moderation'.

Over and above the internal moderation of assessments of student work, awarding bodies check that colleges are assessing work appropriately by a process called 'external verification'. This process involves the awarding body carrying out checks on College staff's assessments of student work. This is done by sending 'external moderators' to the College, where they check assessments against national standards.

Only after these three stages have been completed can you be sure of your results, the certificates for which will be sent to you directly by the awarding body, not the College.

Internal assessment is not just about judging whether you have passed or failed. It also provides both you and your lecturers with important information about what you're doing well and where you have shortcomings in your knowledge, understanding or skills. Assessment is closely linked to the learning process in the sense that the feedback you will receive from your lecturers will help you improve your work in the future.

Finally, a range of courses delivered in the College are assessed by means of an externally-set and externally-assessed examination. The examining body will inform you directly whether or not you have completed your course successfully. College lecturers are not in a position to tell you whether you have passed or failed, until they have been informed by the examining body (usually at the same time as you will know directly from the examining body). If in doubt, please ask your lecturer about the procedures used.

³ For full details of the College's regulations about assessment, see the College's Assessment Procedure.

Re-assessment of your work

If you are unsuccessful in an internal assessment, you will be offered the opportunity to be re-assessed. Depending on the arrangements for re-assessment laid down for a particular unit, this may involve retaking either the whole assessment or just part of it.

You will normally only be allowed one (or, in exceptional circumstances, two) re-assessment opportunities.

Submission of your coursework

You should hand all coursework in to your lecturer in charge of the subject unit.

All coursework for assessment will have a specified deadline for submission. It is essential that you meet the submission deadline to ensure fairness amongst all students and to enable staff to mark efficiently.

Your subject lecturer may allow you an extension to a submission date if there are valid circumstances affecting your ability to meet the deadline.

Any coursework (for which there are no mitigating circumstances or an agreed extension) handed in after the submission deadline will normally receive a mark of 0.

If you are unwell when completing assessed coursework or sitting examinations, or have any other specific difficulties that may affect your performance in assessed coursework or examinations, you should notify your Curriculum Head in writing of the circumstances as soon as possible, and make immediate arrangements for medical certificates or other letters of support to be submitted.

Cheating and plagiarism

There are various forms of academic dishonesty but in the student's context it means cheating in examinations or presenting work for assessment which is not your own.

Plagiarism as a form of cheating takes place when the student 'borrows' or copies information, data or results from an unacknowledged source, without quotation marks or any indication that the presenter is not the original author or researcher.

If carried out knowingly, cheating and plagiarism have the objective of deceiving examiners and this threatens the integrity of the assessment procedures and the value of your award.

Work produced by someone else may be summarised or repeated providing it is referenced to the original author. As well as text, work such as diagrams, maps and charts must also be acknowledged. In addition to the use of quotation marks when quoting from original sources and secondary material, full reference for both quotes and paraphrases or summaries of published material must be given. All references should then be included in a bibliography at the end of the piece of work. Appropriate references for web-based material must also be given, including the relevant URL.

Any student found to have used unfair means in any examination or assessment procedure will be penalised.⁴

Support for your learning

The College has a positive policy of supporting students with learning difficulties or disabilities and their interests are represented by the Diversity Committee which reports directly to the Principals Group. The College has a Learning Support team, which can provide help and advice on all aspects of learning support and coping with learning difficulties.

The College offers support in making alternative arrangements for exams and assessment, support with study skills and advice with applications for the Disabled Students Allowance. Support and advice

⁴ For full details of the College's regulations on cheating and plagiarism, see the College Academic Deceit Procedure.

can also be provided in the specification and purchase of specialist equipment and the use of Information Technology.

In order to ensure that you are provided with the appropriate advice and support from the start of your studies it is important that you discuss any difficulties and special requirements with the Learning Support Manager, or with your Curriculum Head, as early as possible.

Your feedback

The College requires all courses to have a formal system through which students are invited to comment routinely, in confidence, upon the teaching they have received. This helps us to check that students have a clear idea of our aims in teaching particular units, and of what we expect them to do; that our classroom teaching is effective and stimulating; that our advice and feedback to students on individual work is helpful; and that our resources are adequate.

Questionnaires are the primary mechanism for this formal 'feedback'. You will be asked to complete a questionnaire for each unit you are taught. We appreciate that they can be tiresome to complete in large numbers, but hope that you will take the time to give a full and detailed response. Both negative and positive feedback is important. In order to be able to assess the feedback and to attempt to take appropriate action it is important that when making comments you indicate **why** you feel that something is good or bad, not just that you think it is.

Each lecturer responsible for a unit will prepare a short report analysing the questionnaire returns, highlighting any criticisms or suggestions. The report and the questionnaires for each unit will then be passed on to the Curriculum Head, who will present the reports at meetings of the Course Committee. The reports will also be discussed at appropriate meetings of staff within the department so that appropriate action can be taken. A summary of the student feedback and action taken will be included in the Institute's Annual Report which is presented to the College Academic Board.

Your representation

Each course in the College is required to have a Course Team. This meets at least twice a year to review the course and consists of the Curriculum Head, all member of staff who teach units on the course and two representatives from the students on the course.

Prior to each meeting, your course representatives will be given a copy of the agenda and will be asked to consult their fellow students about the items listed and be prepared to report to the meeting on any issues raised.

Following the meeting, the class representatives will receive a copy of the Course Review report to share with their fellow students on the course.

The existence of the formal system of student representation doesn't mean that you should feel this is the only channel open to you. You may of course raise issues directly with a lecturer or your Curriculum Head. Individual problems are often likely to be more easily and quickly resolved in this way.

Your comments, complaints or compliments

Naturally, we hope that your experience at the Adam Smith College will be an enjoyable and rewarding one. However, we do recognise that sometimes things can go wrong and encourage you to make your comments or complaints known to us so that we have the opportunity to resolve the problem and improve our services to you.

Problems are often most quickly and easily sorted by being dealt with informally. So we would ask that, in the first instance, you raise the matter with the appropriate member of staff. If you're not satisfied with the outcome, you can discuss the matter with your Curriculum Head.

Comments or complaints can also be put forward through your course representatives.

Where informal methods have failed to resolve the problem, you can make a formal complaint through the College's Complaint Form, which is available at Reception on all College campuses and in outreach centres or through the Students' Association.

However, the College Complain Form is designed for more than making complaints. If you have any comments or suggestions about how you think we could improve our services to you and other learners, please let us know. We will consider each comment carefully and let you know if we can put it into practice.

It's always good to hear about what you think we do well and we encourage you to use the Compliments Form available at Reception. Every compliment received will be passed on to the person or department it's about.