

Unit 4: Communication through Art and Design

Unit code: D/502/4969

QCF Level 3: BTEC National

Credit value: 10

Guided learning hours: 60

● Aim and purpose

This unit aims to develop the breadth and depth of learners' knowledge, and understanding of and skills in communication through art and design. Learners will achieve this by studying how practitioners use primarily visual imagery to communicate ideas, messages and meaning, and then applying findings to their own ideas.

● Unit introduction

The ability to communicate ideas in original and innovative ways is essential for all art, craft and design practitioners. Potential audiences and clients are becoming increasingly knowledgeable about the different forms of communication and there is a constant requirement for fresh, creative ideas to replace or revise familiar forms. In every vocational field of art craft and design, practitioners need to continuously review and update their knowledge, and understanding of and skills in using new and more effective methods of communicating ideas.

Learners will then apply this research to their own ideas, investigating and exploring the communication techniques they have studied.

The unit will enable learners to develop their understanding of how to communicate different meanings and messages, through the manipulation of formal elements in 2D, 3D or time-based media as a means of creating a range of imagery or artefacts for different purposes. The form that works of art and design take, and the media and techniques used to communicate meaning, will vary according to learners' specialisms but it is expected that they will gain experience across disciplines.

Learners must appreciate the need to create informed and stimulating presentations of their intended to communicate ideas to different audiences. Learners will apply visual and non-visual skills in exploring a range of presentation techniques and methods.

This unit could be integrated with specialist unit assignments, as the knowledge, skills and understanding required underpin all other units in the qualification.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Understand how media, materials and processes are used in others' work to convey ideas and meaning
- 2 Be able to develop visual language
- 3 Know how art and design is used to communicate ideas and meaning
- 4 Be able to communicate by using the language of art and design

Unit content

1 Understand how media, materials and processes are used in others' work to convey ideas and meaning

Media: eg photographic, painted, drawn, etched, interactive, graphical, fashion, woven, constructed, cast, time-based

Materials: eg paint, plaster, graphite, paper, wood, stone, digital, fibres, metal

Techniques: eg washes, scumbling, solarisation, focusing, composition, layering, cloning, sampling, carving, blocking out, cross-hatching, cutting, fastening, juxtaposing, contrasting, finishing, presenting

Convey ideas and meaning: eg a sense of mystery, atmosphere, style, attract, provoke, sustain interest, sell, create mood, harmony, unintended messages

Others' work: historical; contemporary; traditional; non-traditional

2 Be able to develop visual language

Visual language: formal elements eg line, tone, texture, scale, colour, shape, form; expression; feeling; imagery eg symbols, impressions, compositions, pictures, visions, semiotics; visual ideas; illustrations; 2D visuals; 3D pieces; time-based pieces

Methods, materials and media: eg 2D media (mark-making, drawing, painting, photography, collage, printmaking, digital media), 3D media (object-making, use of materials, tools, equipment, processes and techniques, carving, modelling, constructing, fabricating, cutting, forming), time-based media (film, video, multi-media, interactive media), combined media (clothing, fashion, animation, performance)

3 Know how art and design is used to communicate ideas and meaning

Art and design: specialism eg painting, photography, typography, product design, sculpture, video, animation, pattern making, feltmaking, embroidering, model making, printmaking, dyeing, illustration, game designing

Communicate: appearance; presence eg formal elements, tactile, sound, movement, smell, spatial, interactive; context eg presentation, juxtaposition, framing, support, space, surroundings; forms eg signs, symbols, billboards, leaflets, paintings, sculptures, on screen, packaging, large scale, small scale, DVD

4 Be able to communicate by using the language of art and design

Communicate an intended meaning: message; information; expression; idea; feeling; intention eg set brief, self-identified brief

Present: eg display, exhibit, project, show, commentary

Specified audience: eg consumers, gallery visitors, fine art 'audience', readers, age range, class, cultural 'sectors', individuals, groups, special interests, needs or requirements, opinion formers, experts, public, private, commercial

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 explain how media and materials are used in the work of others to convey ideas and meaning [IE]	M1 evaluate how media, materials and processes are used diversely to convey ideas and meaning, drawing on own experiments to make effective comparisons	D1 communicate an intended meaning cogently to a specified audience through imaginative use of the language of art and design
P2 create own visual language by working with materials, media and processes [CT, RL]	M2 communicate an intended meaning clearly to a specified audience through refined use of the language of art and design.	
P3 describe ways in which visual language is used to communicate ideas and meaning [IE, RL]		
P4 communicate an intended meaning to a specified audience using the language of art and design. [CT, SM]		

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers CT – creative thinkers	RL – reflective learners TW – team workers	SM – self-managers EP – effective participators
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Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

This unit forms the basis for learners to develop their understanding of communication through art and design and underpins the whole qualification. It could be planned and integrated with other unit assignments. The focus for delivery is through practical approaches to primarily visual studies.

It is essential that learners adhere to health and safety regulations when using media, materials and processes across the specialist areas. Learners will need to undertake a range of activities to communicate meaning or information through the language of art and design. From their explorations, learners will develop focused work for communicating different ideas. Delivery for this unit will include initial activities that explore media, materials and technologies designed to develop specific skills relevant to learners' specialist pathways. The form that work takes will vary according to the specialism but may include 2D, 3D or time-based media. Activities should be planned which develop learners' art and design language skills through observation from primary sources, with a particular focus on mark-making techniques and experience of 3D and time-based materials. The interaction of the visual with other senses, particularly touch related to 3D design, textiles and clothing, and how sound relates to time-based media. These activities can be undertaken discretely, but briefs can provide opportunities for learners to integrate work across the learning outcomes, where possible. Briefs should be structured clearly with specific requirements for the ideas, meaning and messages or information intended for specified audiences where necessary. They should also be negotiated to allow for learner development on an individual basis. Opportunities might be planned to develop learners' skills in communicating ideas to the public, including both commercial and private sectors.

The use of combinations of media and non-traditional materials should be encouraged to broaden learner experience, extend visual thinking and develop their creative and imaginative faculties. Integral to the development of visual skills, will be an ongoing evaluation of learners' use of visual language. Learners will need to recognise strengths and weaknesses in the quality of their visual work, learn to compare the results of their experiments and assess the appropriateness of images in conveying their intended message or meaning. This can be through presentations and group critiques.

Visits to galleries, exhibitions, film reviews, plays, performance and live art, workshops, studios and advertising agencies could play an important role in designing assignments for this unit. Alternatively, bringing professional practitioners from art, design or media backgrounds in to talk about their work could help learners with the evidence needed for this unit.

For learning outcome 1, learners will need to analyse how others use visual language. This can be through tutors introducing a wide variety of examples and exposing learners to art galleries, museums, exhibitions, advertisements in print and on websites. Learners will need to consider how formal elements have been used to create effective visual language which evokes different audience responses.

For learning outcome 2, from the above research, learners will extend their use of media, materials and processes to generate and develop their own creative ideas. This will broaden their visual communication skills and provide the opportunity to focus on conveying appropriate messages for specific audiences.

For learning outcome 3, learners will need to investigate ways in which art and design is used to communicate ideas and meanings. Analysis of the work of artists, craft people and designers will form the basis of their research. This could include the visual communication methods of different cultures, contemporary culture and from wider historical sources. By making comparisons and identifying similarities and differences across practices, times and cultures, learners will gain an understanding of the diversity of communication forms in art and design. Ideally, learners should see examples of communication from all specialist pathways, but whatever is selected should be contextualised with in learners' ongoing practical studies. Planned opportunities for viewing and discussing the work of others could be through a series of slide shows, CDs,

DVDs, film and video, visits to galleries, artists' studios, and environmental exploration such as urban signs and symbols, billboards, advertising, leaflets and packaging. The purpose of learner research will be to evaluate how effectively an idea, a meaning, a message or a piece of information has been communicated to an audience and to enable them apply their knowledge and understanding to inform and inspire their developing studies. Learners might create interim presentations of how their studies have been influenced by others' work, to tutors, peers or others in order to explore the effectiveness of their communication skills.

For learning outcome 4, learners will need to communicate an intended meaning to a specified audience using visual language. From the previous learning outcomes, more in-depth vocational briefs should emerge which could be given to, or negotiated with, learners to provide opportunities for extensive visual investigation. Learners should be encouraged to work with media, materials and techniques across a range of disciplines to communicate analytical, investigative or intuitive qualities based on expression and feeling.

The use of combinations of media and non-traditional materials should be encouraged to broaden learner experience, extend thinking and develop their creative and imaginative faculties. Integral to the development of communication skills, will be an ongoing evaluation of learners' use of the language of art and design. Planned critical reviews, following practical activity, could be of learner presentations, group discussions or individual tutorials. Learners will need to recognise strengths and weaknesses in the quality of their work and learn to make comparisons between results of their experiments and assess the appropriateness of work in conveying their intended message or meaning.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way in planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Introduction to unit
Lecture/seminar relating to general art and design or specialisms: a variety of visual communication that has made an impact in different ways. Learners to discuss strength of visual messages.
Assignment 1: Experimental Media Learners to explore visual communication in their specialism: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• research and collect/record samples• experiment with media to replicate parts of samples• review and evaluate work
Assignment 2: Compare and Contrast Learners to gather materials that they consider to be examples of strong visual communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• compare and contrasts examples• present findings in an essay or onscreen presentation

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment

Assignment 3: Selling a Specialism

Brief requires learners to prepare materials to communicate information about their course to potential learners a postcard to college applicants to welcome them to the course and an illustration about the course for a poster. Results must be predominantly visual

- brainstorm the brief
- develop ideas independently
- produce mock-ups
- review and refine ideas
- produce outcomes independently
- present outcomes

Review of unit and assessment

Assessment

For P1, learners will undertake basic research, appropriate to the intentions of a given brief, that requires them to investigate how media, materials and processes are used in others' work to convey ideas and meaning. Work will mainly be supported by tutor guidance.

For P2, learners will work with materials, media and processes primarily linked to their subject specialism in developing their own visual language, following the direction of a given brief. Work will be simply conceived and lack exploration.

For P3, learners will make direct comparisons showing how visual language is used to convey ideas and meaning in different ways. Descriptions and comparisons will be direct and obvious.

For P4, learners will produce work which demonstrates use of visual language to communicate an intended meaning appropriately to a specified audience. The use of materials, media and processes will be appropriate to the intended outcome.

For M1, learners will demonstrate that they are developing their understanding of how the work of others uses visual language to convey meaning and messages through the considered selection of source material, learners both within and outside of their subject specialism. This will show links to their own work. Learners will make direct and subtle comparisons of visual language (and the effects these achieve) will be made across a variety of others' art and design work and their own practice. This will be through a variety of means. There will be indications of how contextual and practical research connects, and evidence will be presented in different ways including research notes, selected annotated imagery from different sources and detailed worksheets. Other methods relevant to the subject specialism, for example refined maquettes, film clips with accompanying clearly annotated storyboards and planned audio visual presentations, will also be used.

For M2, learners will show their ability to plan, construct and comment on a broad range of methods, materials and media in extending their a communication skills in art and design. Learners will propose ideas for final pieces which show clear indication of utilising their developing knowledge, skills and understanding to produce work that synthesises elements into specific pieces aimed at defined audiences. A range of methods will be used to record findings, research and practise throughout the assignment and to show explicit links to the practical work produced.

For D1, learners will work independently from negotiated briefs and show evidence of integrating their understanding, knowledge and skills in communication in art and design. They will consider sources that relate to their subject specialism as starting points to inform original practice in the development of persuasive communication, for a specific audience.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, P2	Assignment 1: Experimental Media	A fine artist developing a new set of work	Witness statement, self-evaluation, journal, sketchbook, portfolio of work
P1, P3, M1	Assignment 2: Compare and Contrast	A graphic designer making a pitch to a prospective client	Presentation, witness statement and self-evaluation
P1, P2, P3, P4, M1, M2, D1	Assignment 3: Selling a Specialism	A college lecturer promoting a new specialist art and design course	Presentation, witness statement, portfolio

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC Art and Design sector suite. This unit has particular links with the following unit titles in the BTEC Art and Design suite:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Explore Drawing	2D Visual Communication	Visual Recording in Art and Design
Explore Artists' and Designers' Working to a Visual Arts Brief	3D Visual Communication	Ideas and Concepts in Art and Design
	Using Ideas to Explore, Develop and Produce Art and Design	Design Methods in Art and Design
		Art and Design Specialist Contextual Investigation

National Occupational Standards

This unit also provides development opportunities for some of the underpinning skills, knowledge and understanding of the following National Occupational Standards:

CCSkills Sector Skills Council

Design (revisions in draft form June 2009)

- DES1 Apply Research on the History and Theory of Design to Your Own Design Activities
- DES2 Apply Design Industry Knowledge to Inform Your Own Design Work Practice and Work
- DES3 Use Critical Thinking Techniques in Your Design Work
- DES4 Communicate the Importance of the Design Brief
- DES5 Follow a Design Process
- DES6 Work Effectively with Others in a Creative Environment
- DES7 Contribute to the Production of Prototypes, Models, Mock-ups, Samples or Test Pieces
- DES8 Explore the Use of Colour in a Creative Environment
- DES9 Research, Test and Apply Techniques for the Design of Products
- DES10 Create Visual Designs
- DES11 Provide Written Information in Relation to Your Design Work
- DES12 Make a Presentation

Skillset Sector Skills Council

Animation

- ANIM9 Visualise The Script
- ANIM11 Create 2D Assets For Production

Interactive Media and Computer Games

- IM9 Provide Creative and Strategic Direction for Interactive Media Projects

Design for the Moving Image

- DMI7 Create Models For Use In Productions
- DMI30 Create Physical Artwork For Graphic Designs For The Moving Image
- DMI31 Edit Graphic Sequences To Specification
- DMI34 Produce Graphic Elements On Electronic Media

Photo Imaging

- P6 Conceive and Take Photographs
- D5 Plan and Produce Edited Images

Skillfast-UK Sector Skills Council

Textiles and Material Design

- D3 Develop design responses for textiles and materials to meet agreed requirements
- D2 Develop and communicate design ideas for textiles and materials
- D4 Contribute to producing detailed designs for textiles and materials
- D9 Clarify textile and material design briefs and research information
- D15 Plan and contribute to the realisation of final textile and material design

Essential resources

This mandatory unit forms the basis for learners to develop their understanding of communication through art and design and underpins the whole qualification. It could be planned and integrated with other unit assignments. The focus for delivery is through practical approaches to primarily visual studies.

This is a mandatory unit across all specialist subject pathways. Essential resources include:

- *specialist workspaces*: eg studios, workshops, computer suites, video and film editing suites
- *materials, equipment and tools*: eg for 2D, 3D, time-based and associated materials, equipment and tools across all specialist areas
- *access to a learning centre*: eg for books, periodicals, journals, videos, CD ROMs, the internet

There must be sufficient access to audio-visual and digital resources to enable learners to be aware of the range of possible presentation methods appropriate to their ideas and audiences.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Centres should develop links with practising artists, craftspeople and designers, to deliver assignments to learners or to provide work experience.

Links with employers are essential to the delivery of the programme in terms of work experience and future employment.

Vocational learning support resources include:

- Learning and Skills Network – www.vocationallearning.org.uk

Business and finance advice:

- local and regional Business Link – www.businesslink.gov.uk

Assignments should be vocationally relevant. Centres should consider the delivery of 'live projects' to support the vocational content of the unit and programme.

Creative & Cultural Skills (www.ccskills.org.uk), the sector skills council for arts, crafts and design, have launched the web portal Creative Choices (www.creative-choices.co.uk). This portal has a range of information about careers in the arts, crafts and design sector, including job descriptions.

Skillset, the sector skills council for creative media (www.skillset.org), provide details (www.skillset.org/careers) about careers advice and industry information, plus a regularly updated news and events page.

Skillfast-UK, the sector skills council for fashion and textiles (www.skillfast-uk.org), provide (www.skillfast-uk.org/justthejob) about careers advice and industry information, plus regularly updated news and events pages.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Arnheim R – *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye* (University of California Press, 2004) ISBN 978-0520243835

Baldwin J and Roberts L – *Visual Communication from Theory to Practice* (AVA Publishers, 2006) ISBN 978-2940373093

Berger J – *Ways of Seeing* (Penguin Classics, 2008) ISBN 978-0141035796

Bergstram B – *Essentials of Visual Communication* (Laurence King, 2008) ISBN 978-1856695770

Dormer P – *Design Since 1945* (Thames & Hudson, 1993) ISBN 978-0500202616

Dormor R, Holmes S, Mott T, Schofield J, Thomas L, Wicks S, Wilson G – *Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Art and Design Student Book* (Edexcel, 2010) ISBN 978-1846906374

Dormor R, Holmes S, Mott T, Schofield J, Thomas L, Wicks S, Wilson G – *Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Art and Design Teaching Resource Pack* (Edexcel, 2010) ISBN 978-1846906374

Fletcher A – *The Art of Looking Sideways* (Phaidon Press Ltd, 2001) ISBN 978-0714834498

Forty A – *Objects of Desire* (Thames & Hudson, 1986) ISBN 978-0500274125

Frascara J – *Communication Design: Principles; Methods and Practice* (Allworth Press, 2005) ISBN 978-1581153651

Gombrich E H – *Art and Illusion* (Phaidon Press Ltd, 2002) ISBN 978-0714842080

McNally J – *The Moment it Clicks: Photography Secrets from one of the World's Top Shooters* (New Riders, 2008) ISBN 978-0321544087

Mijksenaar P – *Visual Function: An Introduction to Information Design* (Princeton Architectural Press, 1997) ISBN 978-1568981185

Park J – *Visual Communication in Digital Design* (Younglin, 2008) ISBN 978-8931434347

Pipes A – *Foundations of Art and Design* (Laurence King, 2008) ISBN 978-1856695787

Pipes A – *Production for Designers* (Laurence King, 2009) ISBN 978-1856696012

Scharf A – *Art and Photography* (Penguin Books, 1990) ISBN 978-0140131321

Journals

Visual Communication

Websites

www.designmuseum.org website of the Design Museum, dedicated to contemporary design

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit:

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	exploring how media and materials are used in the work of others to convey ideas and meaning comparing and contrasting ways in which visual language is used to communicate ideas and meaning
Creative thinkers	developing their own visual language by working with a range of methods, materials and media
Reflective learners	developing their own visual language by working with a range of methods, materials and media
Team workers	communicating with a group
Self-managers	completing work on time
Effective participators	communicating with a group

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	independently investigating visual communication when visiting galleries and museums to see the work of others
Creative thinkers	pushing boundaries to develop new ways of communicating visually and adopting new technologies
Reflective learners	reviewing and refining ideas
Team workers	producing material for the benefit of others, such as marketing materials
Self-managers	completing work on time
Effective participators	producing material for the benefit of others

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT – Use ICT systems	
Select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs	using ICT packages to obtain information about visual communication
Use ICT to effectively plan work and evaluate the effectiveness of the ICT system they have used	planning for the production of a final outcome
Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval	aware of obtaining information from secure internet sites
Follow and understand the need for safety and security practices	
Troubleshoot	
ICT – Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	researching visual communication ideas, methods and processes including web-based material and CDs
Access, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose	exploring, extracting and assessing the relevance of information from websites and in relation to CDs
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text and tables • images • numbers • records 	presenting information in a professional manner
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	
Evaluate the selection and use of ICT tools and facilities used to present information	
Select and use ICT to communicate and exchange information safely, responsibly and effectively including storage of messages and contact lists	communicating with tutor via email using VLE message boards
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	discussing work of own and others
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	reading and responding to research
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	annotating sketchbooks writing up formal evaluation of outcome