Unit 50:   Information Graphics

Unit code: D/502/5250

QCF Level 3:   BTEC National

Credit value: 10

Guided learning hours: 60

● Aim and purpose

The aim of this unit is to enable learners to develop the technical and creative skills needed to produce information graphics.

● Unit introduction

Information graphics is an exciting area of graphic design and covers a wide variety of mainly client led graphics applications, including magazines and books, posters, flyers, advertisements, packaging, point of sale, web design, corporate identity and signage. Whether advertising an event or a product, information graphics should be visually stimulating as well as informative.

In this unit learners will produce outcomes for information graphics applications through assignment briefs which have similar constraints to those expected in a real work situation. These constraints, often set by a client, include deadlines, cost issues, specific design approaches and possible legal and ethical issues such as copyright and designing work to be inclusive to all.

Learners will investigate the design contexts of a brief such as target audience, the product, the message and the media in which it will be presented. During these investigations learners will be encouraged to make changes to existing thinking by exploiting their own new and imaginative ideas.

A design methodology should be taught and applied to this discipline to highlight the key stages of the design process. Learners will develop skills in planning and good time management in order to meet deadlines and recognise the need for regular evaluation and review of work in progress in order to meet the requirements of the assignment brief.

This unit will also help learners develop valuable presentation skills as they will be expected to present their work in a manner suitable for the design outcome of this brief, such as portfolio presentation, mounted examples of work, formal presentation or critique.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

1   Be able to investigate information graphics briefs

2   Be able to develop ideas towards information graphics outcomes

3   Be able to present final designs for information graphics applications

Unit content

1 Be able to investigate information graphics briefs

Information graphics: eg flyers, magazine layouts, book layouts, posters, point of sale, packaging, web design, advertising, signage, corporate identity, animations

Work of others: primary sources eg galleries, exhibitions, guest speakers, practitioners' studios, commercial design businesses; secondary sources eg internet, books, magazines, design examples

Medium: eg web, animations, magazines, illustrations, television, advertising, packaging

Graphics brief: audience; product; medium; message; constraints eg client expectations, time, cost, resources, approaches, legal, ethical; opportunities eg new approaches, ideas, new openings

2 Be able to develop ideas towards information graphics outcomes

Develop ideas: ideas generation techniques eg mind maps, reordering, new processes, group work; materials exploration eg drawing, painting, digital, photography, video, storyboards, mood boards, worksheets, thumbnail sketches, collage; primary sources eg field trips, gallery visits, visiting designers; secondary sources eg internet, books, magazines, film, television; organise information eg found imagery, photographs, lettering, text, illustrations

Graphic communication: materials eg pen, pencil, brush, inks, airbrush, digital, photography, animation; support eg paper, packaging, on-screen, projection, poster, hand held device; abstract message eg subtle, non-literal, theoretical, conceptual, complex, non-representational; literal message eg exact meaning, factual, explicit, representational

3 Be able to present final designs for information graphics applications

Present: target audience eg portfolio presentation, exhibition, seminar presentation; presentation method eg finished maquettes, models, mounted prints, video, digital, audio-visual

Suitable design solutions: eg magazine advertisements, press advertisements, posters, flyers, packaging, point of sale, film or TV advertising storyboards

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 investigate information graphics briefs [IE, RL, TW, SM]	**M1** demonstrate effective exploration and investigation of information graphics briefs	**D1** independently apply investigations into information graphics briefs to inform the development of innovative and engaging work
P2 develop ideas towards information graphics outcomes [CT, RL, EP]	**M2** develop diverse individual ideas into effective information graphics outcomes	**D2** clearly present innovative and exciting final designs for information graphics applications.
P3 present final designs for information graphics applications. [CT, RL, TW, EP]	**M3** present coherent and effective final designs for information graphics applications.	

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	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

Tutors delivering this unit should provide learners with opportunities to investigate all aspects relevant to an assignment brief such as an audience, a product, a particular message and media. The majority of learners' work will be carried out in a studio/workshop environment, where they should be able to participate in directed sessions and benefit from demonstrations and discussions.

Tutors should acquaint learners with design principles such as shape, form, function, scale, and relationship. To further contextualise this investigation and to reinforce learning, the teaching should include visits to galleries, field trips, and if possible, visits from professional practitioners. Learners should be directed towards examples of the work of others, past and present, and encouraged to research these using the internet, libraries and multimedia sources, which will inform the learning by encouraging analytical skills.

Learning outcome 1, should be delivered through assignment briefs that mirror those given in the workplace. To evaluate client-based scenario there should be constraints such as deadlines, specific approaches, ethical considerations, a target audience, production limitations or, a particular product. It can be useful to take a competition brief or one sponsored by a local or national company and adapt it to take in the learning outcomes of the unit or units being covered by the assignment. Learners should be taught how to identify all the relevant contexts and opportunities of a given brief and how to communicate a message to a particular audience.

Learners should be encouraged to think differently about ordinary products, to generate new approaches to a product, to find something original to say about a product and to look for opportunities for change.

For learning outcome 2, learners need to develop ideas using a variety of methods such as mind maps, as individuals or in groups, creating thumbnails or design boards. They should visit galleries or go on field trips to source relevant information and inspiration. Sources such as the internet, books, magazines, CDs and DVDs should be provided to further contextualise the work. Learners should be encouraged to be experimental and develop ideas in the form of thumbnails and roughs and then further develop them with marker pen or computer generated visuals in order to recognise the idea's full potential.

For learning outcome 3 learners need to produce design outcomes for a given brief in a variety of ways. They need to be able to use suitable software and hardware as well as traditional techniques, prepare a suitable portfolio of work, mount and exhibit work for an exhibition, present work verbally and visually at informal and formal presentations and give feedback to peers and tutors and possibly visiting practitioners.

Tutors could consider integrating the delivery and assessment of this unit with any other relevant units learners are taking as part of the programme of study, especially those which use information graphics in the production of outcomes such as *Design for Advertising*.

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 brief: • discussion – initial thoughts • potential, constraints, contexts • possible outcomes • ideas generation.
Assignment 1: Investigate Information Graphics: • past and present examples • different media – TV, magazine, animation, advertising, packaging • literal and abstract examples.
Supported study time: • individual learning plans • production of sketchbook work, mood boards, thumbnails and roughs • annotation and research • ideas development • informal discussions.
Learner initiated study.
Assignment 2: Practical Exploration: • workshops • collage • thumbnail sketches • computer generated words and images • software/hardware task and training.
Assignment 3: Information Graphics Brief One to one discussions and one to one support: • individual learning plans • time management • formal discussion with tutors • assignment feedback • evaluations • formal and informal presentation/discussion.
Learner initiated study.
Presentation preparation: • presentation techniques – body language, voice, structure, visual aids • mounting and displaying work.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Peer evaluations:
• ideas generation and development
• interim critique
• final critique
• discussion group.
Visiting speaker:
• designer, illustrator, journalist, photographer.
Field trip:
• exhibition
• walking tour
• museum
• studio.

Assessment

To achieve a pass grade learners must provide evidence in the form of a sketchbook (electronic or paper based), design boards, annotated notes etc that show they have investigated the design contexts, opportunities and constraints of the brief. Learners need to be guided through how all this affects the development of their work and how to generate ideas incorporating these findings using basic idea generating techniques. Learners could produce evidence through sketchbook annotation, interim critiques, individual learning plans identifying the difference between literal and abstract concepts as well as the importance of communicating a message to an intended audience through a client-led brief.

Learners must provide a variety of evidence in the form of digital or paper-based annotated sketchbooks, design boards, discussion evidence that shows they have effectively investigated the design contexts, opportunities and constraints of the given brief. Using design briefs that replicate real-world design assignments, learners demonstrate competence in the way that they apply the results of their investigations to the origination and development of work. Learners should show should they have an intelligent understanding of the use of information graphics as a communication tool of abstract and literal messages. A coherent and individual approach to the development of ideas and final solutions should be evident within learners' work and justification of these ideas and solutions should be evident in the form of written notes, verbal feedback and possibly learning journals.

Learners should produce final designs that demonstrate an individual and thoughtful process of decision-making. Learners should present their work for a given brief coherently and effectively.

Learners need to demonstrate a good understanding of the design contexts, opportunities and constraints of design briefs. They should apply this understanding creatively and fluently to the set brief using a wide variety of idea generation techniques which convey comprehensive knowledge of using information graphics for literal and abstract concepts. Learners should demonstrate confidence in the presentation of highly imaginative work produced using computer software and traditional media. Work should be presented to a high standard using forms of evidence identified for the pass and merit criteria.

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, M1, D1	**Assignment 1:** Investigate Information Graphics	Designer investigating new ideas for a brief.	Sketchbook (paper-based or PDF) consisting of research into examples of and annotated notes.
P2, M2, D1	**Assignment 2:** Practical Exploration	Designer developing techniques and use of materials for a brief.	Experiments with design ideas using traditional and digital media).
P1, M1, D1 P2, M2, D2 P3, M3	**Assignment 3:** Information Graphics Brief	Designer creating designs for an environmental awareness campaign.	Final piece/s mounted mocked up to a professional standard. Formal presentation/critique that incorporates an overall evaluation of learner's work.

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
Introduction to Letterforms and Words	Working with Graphic Design Briefs	Words and Images in Graphic Design
Introduction to Graphic Visual Language		Design for Advertising
		Typographic Design
		Image Manipulation Using Computer Applications

Essential resources

Learners require access to specialist graphic design studios and digital workshops. These should be equipped with appropriate hardware, software and materials to fulfil the practical work in this unit. Access to digital media and design software is essential. A well-stocked learning resource centre should be available with appropriate research materials in the form of books, magazines and internet facilities.

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 for work experience and future employment.

Vocational learning support resources:

● 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', for example, to support the vocational content of the unit and programme.

Creative and 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), provides details (www.skillset.org/careers) on careers and the industry and has a regularly updated news and events page.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Baines P and Haslam A – *Type and Typography (Portfolio Series)* (Laurence King, 2005) ISBN 978-1856694377

Berger W – *Advertising Today* (Phaidon Press, 2003)

Bernstein D – *Advertising Outdoors* (Phaidon Press, 2004) ISBN 978-0714843872

Bergstrom B – *Essentials of Visual Communication* (Laurence King Publishing, 2009) ISBN 978-1856695770

Eskilson S – *Graphic Design: A New History* (Laurence King Publishing, 2007) ISBN 978-0300120110

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

Hall S – *This Means This, This Means That: A User's Guide To Semiotics* (Laurence King Publishing, 2007) ISBN 978-1856695213

Hollis R – *Graphic Design: A Concise History* (Thames and Hudson, 2002) ISBN 978-0500203477

Lupton E – *DIY: Design It Yourself* (Princeton Architectural Press, 2006) ISBN 978-1568985527

Shaughnessy A – *Look at This: Contemporary Brochures, Catalogues & Documents* (Laurence King Publishing, 2006) ISBN 978-1856694698

Walsh Macario J – *Graphic Design Essentials: Skills, Software and Creative Solutions* (Laurence King, 2009) ISBN 978-1856695992

Zappaterra Y – *Editorial Design (Portfolio Series)* (Laurence King, 2007) ISBN 978-1856694339

Journals

Artists & Illustrators (Quarto Group)

Association of Illustrators Journal (Jo Davies)

Baseline

Computer Arts

Computer Arts Projects

Creative Review

Dazed and Confused

Graphics World (Graphics World Publications)

Typographic (The Design Press)

Visual Studies (Taylor & Francis Informa)

Websites

www.computerarts.co.uk	Computer Arts News and tips
www.dandad.org	D&AD: Representing creative industries
www.davidcarsondesign.com	David Carson Design
www.dmoz.org/arts/graphic_design/typography	List of typography websites
www.eyemagazine.com	Eye Magazine
www.ilovetypography.com	Celebrating Typography
www.limitedlanguage.org	Platform for discussion about
www.linotype.com	Linotype
www.microsoft.com/typography/default.mspx	Microsoft Typography
www.portfolios.com	Showcases designers' portfolios
www.rsub.com/typographic	All about Typography
www.typography.com	Hoefler & Frere Jones fonts
www.webstyleguide.com/wsgz/8-typography/index.html	Style Guide Information on typography

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	discussing assignment requirements researching and annotating evaluating work
Creative thinkers	generating and developing ideas developing final outcomes evaluating work
Reflective learners	Evaluating their own and others' presenting ideas and final solutions
Team workers	generating ideas developing software and hardware skills
Self-managers	researching and annotating developing ideas and final solutions managing time and workload
Effective participators	generating ideas peer assessing discussing work.

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 …
Reflective learners	giving feedback on assessment decision evaluating their own work and that of others presenting ideas and final solutions
Team workers	researching and annotating discussing ideas generating ideas developing software and hardware skills
Self-managers	organising time and managing resources effectively researching and annotating developing ideas and final solutions
Effective participators	participating in critiquing their own work and 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	researching examples of words and images developing and producing final outcomes
Use ICT to effectively plan work and evaluate the effectiveness of the ICT system they have used	planning project briefs and where and how ICT might be used when appropriate evaluating outcomes and the appropriateness of medium
Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval	backing up digital files researching from internet sources; downloading information; creating folders for storage and retrieval
Follow and understand the need for safety and security practices	undergoing induction period – introduction to the ICT centre and systems and working practices
ICT – Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	finding related examples to support development of ideas
Access, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose	finding and using relevant information to support the development of ideas and the formulation of opinions
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: ● text and tables ● images ● numbers ● records	designing digitally using scanners inputting and formatting information from sources
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	researching and developing ideas and producing final outcomes
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	developing design ideas digitally importing visual and textual information relevant to brief/activity
Evaluate the selection and use of ICT tools and facilities used to present information	using digital means to plan, create and give presentations to different audiences
Select and use ICT to communicate and exchange information safely, responsibly and effectively including storage of messages and contact lists	assessing their progress and commenting on the appropriateness of their selection of ICT tools and facilities, eg use of software

Skill	When learners are …
Mathematics	
Understand routine and non-routine problems in a wide range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts and situations	working with: scale paper sizes and formats font sizes
Identify the situation or problem and the mathematical methods needed to tackle it	using measuring and orthographic projection for accuracy, and scaling using software to observe and modify designs from different viewpoints
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	presenting ideas, development, evaluation and analysis discussing the project brief describing the physical properties and characteristics of different materials contributing to group discussions and the sharing of ideas evaluating own and others' designs and finished work presenting to target audiences
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	selecting text and images using contextual texts and images
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively.	annotating ideas evaluating results of designs to meet the brief analysing and evaluating selected artists' images for the purpose of developing their own work, using personal judgements and relating research to their own ideas preparing presentations of final work.