

# BA (HONS) GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION DESIGN



## BA (Hons) Graphic Communication Design

<b>Awarding Body</b>	University of the Arts London
<b>College</b>	Central Saint Martins
<b>School</b>	S School
<b>Programme</b>	CSM Graphic Communication Design (L031)
<b>Course AOS Code</b>	CSMBAGCDF01
<b>FHEQ Level</b>	Level 6 Degree
<b>Course Credits</b>	360
<b>Mode</b>	Full Time
<b>Method</b>	Face to Face
<b>Duration of Course</b>	3 years
<b>Valid From</b>	2025/26
<b>Collaboration</b>	N/A
<b>UAL Subject Classification</b>	Communication and Graphic Design
<b>PSRB</b>	N/A
<b>Work placement offered</b>	N/A
<b>Course Entry Requirements</b>	<p>The standard entry requirements for this course are as follows:</p> <p>One or a combination of the following accepted full Level 3 qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pass at Foundation Diploma in Art and Design (Level 3 or 4) and one A Level at grade C or above</li> <li>• Two A Levels at grade C or above (preferred)</li> </ul>

subjects include Art, Art and Design or Design and Technology)

- Merit, Pass, Pass (MPP) at BTEC Extended Diploma (preferred subjects include Art, Art and Design or Design and Technology)
- Pass at UAL Extended Diploma
- Access to Higher Education Diploma (preferred subjects include Art, Art and Design or Design and Technology)
- Equivalent EU/international qualifications, such as International Baccalaureate Diploma (24 points)

And three GCSE passes at grade 4 or above (grade A\*–C).

Entry to this course will also be determined by assessment of your portfolio. A very high proportion of successful applicants complete a Foundation Diploma in Art and Design.

### **AP(E)L – Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning**

Exceptionally applicants who do not meet these course entry requirements may still be considered. The course team will consider each application that demonstrates additional strengths and alternative evidence. This might, for example, be demonstrated by:

- Related academic or work experience
- The quality of the personal statement
- A strong academic or other professional reference

Or a combination of these factors.

Each application will be considered on its own merit but we cannot guarantee an offer in each case.

Please note that these qualifications alone will not be sufficient to secure entry to the course.

### **English language requirements**

IELTS level 6.0 or above, with at least 5.5 in reading, writing, listening and speaking (please check our main [English language requirements webpage](#)).

<b>Selection Criteria</b>	<p>What we are looking for: We are interested in students who are prepared to be curious investigators of the discipline and who show a commitment to developing an innovative Graphic Communication Design practice</p> <p>Applicants are selected by portfolio and personal statement according to a demonstration of current and potential ability to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work imaginatively and creatively with graphic and visual media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• by engaging with experimentation with media and methods</li> <li>• by showing an interest in developing innovative Graphic Communication Design practices</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Demonstrate a range of skills and technical abilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• by showing a commitment to developing and applying a range of skills and technical abilities</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Provide evidence of intellectual enquiry within your work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• by demonstrating curiosity and a willingness to research around themes and practices relevant to your interests</li> <li>• by reflecting critically on your learning</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Demonstrate cultural awareness and/or contextual framework in your work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• by identifying historical and contemporary graphic design practices</li> <li>• by identifying social and/or cultural influences on your work</li> </ul> </li> <li>5. Demonstrate an ability to articulate and communicate your project intentions clearly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• by making use of appropriate and effective communication and presentation skills</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
---------------------------	--

## Awards and Percentage of Scheduled Learning

### Year 1

Awards	Credits
Certificate of Higher Education (Exit Only)	120

### Year 2

Awards	Credits
Diploma of Higher Education (Exit Only)	240

### Year 3

Awards	Credits
Bachelor of Arts	360

### Scheduled Learning Split by Level

Level 4	20%
Level 5	19%
Level 6	20%
<b>Total Scheduled Learning Split</b>	<b>19%</b>

## Course Aims and Outcomes

The Aims and Outcomes of this Course are as follows:

Aim/Outcome	Description
Aim	Provide supportive and inclusive learning environments that nurture the development of responsible, independent, and collaborative practitioners who contribute to the field of Graphic Communication Design, related sectors and postgraduate study.
Aim	Facilitate the development of investigative, critically reflective, and progressive design enquiries through rigorous experimentation with Graphic Communication Design media, methods and skills.
Aim	Develop Graphic Communication Design practice as an approach to engaging with complex cultural, social, and environmental conditions.
Outcome	Activate your creative and ethical position as a Graphic Communication Design practitioner by working both independently and within Communities of Practice by discussing, debating and responding to the theoretical and practical landscape of Graphic Communication Design.
Outcome	Use Graphic Communication Design methods, materials, and processes to explore and address cultural, social, and environmental questions.
Outcome	Situate and articulate your practice within historical, contemporary, and evolving contexts of Graphic Communication Design.
Outcome	Communicate effectively with a diverse range of audiences by engaging in iterative and process-driven experimentation to unify media and messages meaningfully.
Outcome	Critically reflect on your work and take responsibility for the continuous development and refinement of your practice.

	Distinctive Features
1	<b>Breadth of skills and expertise:</b> students engage with a range of specialist Graphic Communication Design Practices and disciplinary areas of expertise. Generalist, hybrid, and specialist practices emerge from the meeting and mixing of GCD Practices and Platforms that cross traditional discipline boundaries.
2	<b>Contextualised practice:</b> we use Graphic Communication Design to explore and address current environmental, cultural, and social complexities and encourage a renewed consideration of consumerism, ethics, and design for social good.
3	<b>We ask questions:</b> the course has a long tradition of thinking-through-making where the conventions of the discipline are challenged through rigorous experimentation of ideas, processes and techniques. This supports the development of curious, critical and reflective practitioners who are responsive to and influential in shifts within the discipline.
4	<b>Learning together:</b> we use learning strategies that encourage community and collaborative learning cultivated from the wide variety of individual backgrounds and cultural experiences of our highly international and diverse student and staff community. The course adopts an integrated approach to researching, writing and making which is enriched by collaboration as students share their ideas and interests and construct knowledge together.

## Course Detail

The [Graphic Communication Design Programme](#) provides a community of conceptual and creative thinkers and makers who share a commitment to exploring the vast and ever-expanding field of graphic design.

Our industry is led by technological transformation and driven by emerging modes of communication. BA Graphic Communication Design at Central Saint Martins will provide you with a solid grounding in the discipline's core practices, contexts and applications, while also encouraging you to test and stretch its boundaries.

Through graphic design, we bring a diverse range of perspectives and approaches to engage actively with the ways the world is changing. As a community, we continuously remix and redefine the future of our discipline and how it interacts with environmental, cultural and social complexities. We have embedded teaching and learning practices that actively encourage you to bring your own way of working, your own way of thinking and your own practice-based interests to the table. In fact, we see the course as a space for us – a community of students, tutors and practitioners – to explore and interrogate Graphic Communication Design together.

The structure of the course enables mobility across GCD Practices and GCD Platforms that correspond to areas of contemporary graphic design practice. The choices you make and the work you produce will give focus to the intentions, contexts and values unique to your practice. This flexible journey through the course is devised to support three types of practitioner:

- The inter-disciplinary designer or polymath who wants to stay broad-based
- The hybrid designer who works across a targeted combination of areas
- The specialist who has more specific discipline focus

### **Engaging with climate, racial and social justice in the Graphic Communication Design Community at Central Saint Martins**

The accelerating climate and ecological emergency is exposing the unsustainability and injustice of the political, social, and economic systems that have created them. An overarching goal for our programme community has necessarily become to question how graphic communication design practices can critique and intervene in the systems of extraction and exploitation that have led us to the brink of collapse.

Historically, graphic design has serviced various imbalanced power structures, and in this way, has contributed to perpetuating climate, racial and social injustices. At the same time, our discipline's media and methods provide powerful tools for negotiating and communicating the complexities of the current moment.

The need for high quality and carefully nuanced communication is increasing as the



complexity of intersecting crises escalates. In the context of widespread disinformation and cultures of media illiteracy, graphic communication design's capacity for enhancing existing forms of public discourse – and generating new forms – is much needed.

Our programme is distinct in both its scale and its diversity and is well positioned to engage with our present challenges. We will consider these kinds of questions from a range of creative perspectives:

- How might graphic and communication design engage proactively with wider institutions and systems?
- What role might our practices play in envisioning just and sustainable alternatives?
- What is the role of communication in redefining and recreating relations between humanity and nature?

As a community, we will collectively reimagine current and future role(s) for graphic communication design in the face of these urgent crises. We see this as a serious and vital challenge—the future has yet to be designed!

## Course Units

Year 1 and Year 2 is comprised of a sequence of GCD Practices and GCD Platform Units, each structured by a combination of project briefs, independent tasks and associated workshops, seminars, and lectures. A sequence of technical, theoretical and professional skill sets is embedded within the project briefs and associated teaching and learning activities.

**GCD Practice** project briefs adopt reading and writing as critical, reflective and evaluative activities which provide a theoretical and contextual framework for the practical application of traditional and contemporary media, methods, crafts and technologies used in the production of your work.

**GCD Platform** project briefs are written in relation to specific themes, issues or provocations that relate to contemporary design practice and require you to make work which considers content, form, communication and audience.

**As you progress through the course, the relationship between GCD Practices and GCD Platforms becomes progressively porous**, with each student connecting distinct threads of practice. Likewise, the relationship between research, writing, and making become integrated as a unified process for investigation, critical reflection and production.

By the end of the course, you will work in a Community of Practice which is

organised around your practice-based interests and supports your unique approach to graphic design. Each Community of Practice supports students in bringing their ideas and values to the co-creation of the future discipline.

## **Year 1**

### **Unit 1: Introduction to GCD**

### **Unit 2: GCD Practices 01**

### **Unit 3: GCD Practices 02**

### **Unit 4: GCD Platforms 01**

The units in Year 1 will help you to acquire and develop a range of technical, practical and theoretical skills relevant to the discipline. You will also develop the necessary skills for independent, collaborative and community-based learning.

In Unit 1 you will work in collaboration with your peers on a project brief that responds to a real-world complex or “wicked” problem. This project will introduce the fundamentals of studying Graphic Communication Design at undergraduate level by orientating you to learning approaches, practices and knowledge bases needed to engage with your discipline.

This is followed by an introduction to GCD Practices in Unit 2, where you will work on a sequence of project briefs that encourage you to explore and experiment with technical and theoretical skills that relate to the five Graphic Communication Design practices – Computation, Contexts, Lens, Print Production and Typography.

In Unit 3 you will work on a sequence of GCD Practice tasks to further develop your understanding of the expanded landscape of Graphic Communication Design, conceptually, critically and in practice.

In Unit 4 you will experience three of the five GCD Platforms. Each Platform will set fast-paced project briefs which place an emphasis on exploring and experimenting with discipline-specific media and methods and how they can be used to communicate effectively. You will make connections between GCD Practices and Platforms through the application of the new knowledge gained from your Unit 3 projects within your Unit 4 projects which run in parallel.

## **Year 2**

### **Unit 5: GCD Practices 03**

### **Unit 6: GCD Platforms 02**

### **Unit 7: GCD Platforms and Practices**

### **Unit 8: Creative Unions**

In Year 2 the sequence of Units will encourage you to become more self-aware about the trajectory of your practice. In Unit 5 you will use writing to review,

investigate and reflect on the development of your practice in relation to both the work you are producing in Unit 6 and debates in the larger context of Graphic Communication Design.

In Unit 6 you will engage with two of the five Platforms. Each Platform will set project briefs that encourage iterative experimentation and interrogation of a diverse range of media and methods appropriate to your chosen Platforms. The connectivity between Unit 5 and Unit 6, which run concurrently, will enable you to consider your practice in relation to cultural, social and theoretical contexts of contemporary Graphic Communication Design and discover emerging themes that begin to inform your creative practice.

In Unit 7 you will work with a selection of GCD Practices (Computation, Contexts, Lens, Print Production, Typography) and up to two GCD Platform preferences. The uniting of Practices and Platforms will encourage you to make meaningful choices about medium, method, theme and process. You will need to consider how these decisions can be used to communicate effectively with relevant audiences and how they inform the development and location of your practice in relation to the contexts of contemporary Graphic Communication Design.

Unit 8 is a College-wide, transdisciplinary unit where you will work collaboratively with students from other courses. You will engage with a wider field of socially engaged practices for a more ethical world.

### **Year 3**

#### **Unit 9: Situating Practice**

#### **Unit 10: Communities of Practice**

In Unit 9 you will remain in your final Unit 7 GCD Platform and will continue working with both your GCD Platform and Practices tutors. The project briefs will progressively shift the emphasis to self-directed enquiry to support you in situating your practice.

In Unit 10 your practice and research interests are used to form Communities of Practice. Fusing your research, writing and making skills gained throughout the course you will produce an integrated portfolio of work that gives a clear articulation of your identity as a designer which will support your professional practice beyond graduation.

### **Optional Diploma Year**

#### **CCI Creative Computing**

Between years 2 and 3, you can undertake the year-long Diploma in Creative Computing. This will develop your skills in creative computing alongside your

degree. After successfully completing the diploma and your undergraduate degree, you will graduate with an enhanced degree: BA (Hons) Graphic Communication Design (with Creative Computing).

### **CCI Apple Diploma**

Between years 2 and 3, you can undertake the year-long Diploma in Apple Development. This will give you an opportunity to become an accredited apple developer alongside your degree. After successfully completing the diploma and your undergraduate degree, you will graduate with an enhanced degree: BA (Hons) Graphic Communication Design (with Apple Development).

### **The working week**

The Central Saint Martins building, workshops and GCD studios are vibrant and busy working environments where students learn together by being active and giving time to their studies. You should expect to spend 40 hours per week on active participation in teaching events such as lectures, workshops, seminars, group discussions, and on independent and collaborative practice. Students get the most from the teaching and learning environment and are most productive when they are fully committed to their practice and to each other.

### **Mode of Study**

The course runs for 90 weeks in full-time mode. It is divided into three stages over three academic years. Each stage lasts 30 weeks.

You will be expected to commit 40 hours per week to study, which includes teaching time and independent study.

**CSM Academic Support** is delivered by a team of academics and practitioners working alongside your course to help you progress and achieve your maximum potential as a student. Academic Support can help you to develop your skills in different areas, including critical thinking, research and writing, time management, presentations and working independently and collaboratively. These may be offered as part of your timetabled classes or as bookable tutorials and workshops.

### **Credit and award requirements**

The course is credit-rated at 360 credits, with 120 credits at each stage (level). On successfully completing the course, you will gain a Bachelor of Art with Honours (BA Hons degree).

Under the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications the stages for a BA are: Stage 1 (Level 4), Stage 2 (Level 5) and Stage 3 (Level 6). In order to progress to the next stage, all units of the preceding stage must normally be

passed: 120 credits must be achieved in each stage. The classification of the award will be derived from the marks of units in Stages 2 and 3 or only Stage 3, using a dual algorithm.

If you are unable to continue on the course, a Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) will normally be offered following the successful completion of Level 4 (or 120 credits), or a Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE) following the successful completion of Level 5 (or 240 credits).

## **Learning and Teaching Methods**

The learning and teaching methods devised for this course include:

- Unit briefings
- Subject-specific briefs
- Self-directed briefs
- Practical and technical workshops
- Lectures, seminars and group discussions
- Individual and group tutorials
- Project reviews – project presentations, peer and tutor feedback and discussion
- Independent and collaborative learning
- Peer and self-reflective assessment

### **Your engagement with technical workshops at CSM**

The development of technical skills relevant to your practice are an important part of your learning on BA Graphic Communication Design. Throughout your studies, you will interact with a range of workshop facilities related to contemporary and historical media and methods in graphic design within areas including: Print & Production, Digital Media, Film & Video and/or Photography. Your engagements will include some organised introductions, inductions, and technical sessions associated with specific units and taught sessions. At the same time BA GCD is a media agnostic course in which you are expected to take responsibility for identifying which media and methods are most important to your learning and develop your practice by consulting proactively with the relevant workshops and technicians to mature your skills on an independent basis—this is particularly important during your final year of study.

## Assessment Methods

The following assessment methods are employed to support the integrated achievement of the course outcomes:

- Group presentations: participate in a group verbal and visual presentation, to staff and students, summarising the work produced for the unit
- Portfolio of work: summarising the work you have produced for the unit, including evidence of development work and final outcomes, digitally presented and submitted online
- Written work: individual written critical reflections, project statements, reflective and critical reports
- Peer and self-reflective assessment: verbal and written feedback on your own work and that of your peers
- Formative assessment: verbal and written feedback on your work conducted by tutors during the unit

## Reference Points

- The Learning and Teaching policies of the University of the Arts London
- College policies and initiatives
- Art and Design Benchmark Statement
- HE Level Descriptors
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications

## Course Diagram

**BA (Hons) Graphic Communication Design** – PLEASE NOTE DUE TO VACATION DATES, SPECIFIC DELIVERY WEEKS MAY CHANGE.

S=summative assessment

LEVEL 4 – Stage 1																														
BLOCK 1															BLOCK 2															
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
Unit 1: Introduction to GCD (20 credits)				S	Unit 2: GCD Practices 01 (40 credits)								S	S	Unit 3: GCD Practices 02 (20 credits)												S	S	S	
															Unit 4: GCD Platforms 01 (40 credits)												S	S	S	
LEVEL 5 – Stage 2																														
BLOCK 1															BLOCK 2															
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
Unit 5: GCD Practices 03 (20 credits)													S	S	Unit 7: GCD Platforms and Practices (40 credits)							S	S	Unit 8: Creative Unions (20 credits)				S	S	
																														Unit 6: GCD Platforms 02 (40 credits)
OPTIONAL DIPLOMA YEAR – LEVEL 5																														
LEVEL 6 – Stage 3																														
BLOCK 1															BLOCK 2															
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
Unit 9: Situating Practice (60 credits)													S	S	Unit 10: Communities of Practice (60 credits)												S	S	S	S

*The University will use all reasonable endeavours to provide the Course and the services described in this Output. There may be occasions whereby the University needs to add, remove or alter content in relation to your Course as may be appropriate for example the latest requirements of a commissioning or accrediting body, or in response to student feedback, or to comply with applicable law or due to circumstances beyond its control. The University aim to inform you of any changes as soon as is reasonably practicable*