

Glasgow School of Art Programme Specification
Programme Title: BA (Hons) Communication Design

Please note that this programme specification is correct on the date of publication but may be subject to amendment prior to the start of the 2023-24 Academic Year.

1. Programme Details:

Programme Title	BA (Hons) Communication Design
HECOS Code	100632/100048/100783
School	School of Design
Programme Leader	Steve Rigley
Minimum Duration of Study	Students are normally admitted to study full-time for 4 years (48 Months) with the aim of achieving BA(Hons) Communication Design 24 Months (Direct Entry to Year 3) 36 Months (Direct Entry to Year 2)
Maximum Duration of Study	6 years is the maximum time period within which the BA(Hons) Communication Design may be studied (full-time) – this allows for delays in progression between levels of study and academically authorised leaves of absence.
Mode of Study	Full-time
Award to be Conferred	BA (Hons) Communication Design
Exit Awards	Year 1 Certificate of Higher Education Year 2 Diploma of Higher Education Year 3 BA Communication Design Year 4 BA (Hons) Communication Design
SCQF Level:	7-10
Credits:	480

Academic Session	2023-24
Date of Approval	PACAAG April 2022

2. Awarding Institution	University of Glasgow
3. Teaching Institutions	The Glasgow School of Art
3.1 Campus	Glasgow
4. Lead School/Board of Studies	School of Design
5. Other Schools/Board of Studies	N/A
6. Programme Accredited By (PSRBs)	N/A

7. Entry Qualifications	
7.1 Highers	Standard: ABBB, including a literate subject Minimum: BBCC, including a literate subject
7.2 A Levels	Standard: ABB and GCSE English at A/7 grade or above Minimum: Minimum BBC GCSE English at A/7 grade or above
7.3 Other	Normally with a minimum of 30 points, including at least 18 points at the higher level and a minimum of 4 points in English.

	Students not presenting English at grade 5 or above at Higher Level will be required to submit an IELTS or TOEFL. Students should normally have taken higher level Art with over 5 points.
7.4 English Language Requirements	<p>All students will have to provide evidence of English language proficiency when applying.</p> <p>International Students</p> <p>Students who require a Tier 4 visa to study in the UK must meet one of the following requirements in order to gain entry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IELTS for UKVI Academic with an overall score of 6.0 with a minimum of 5.5 in all components; • complete an acceptable Pre-sessional English Language Programme taught from within the UK with an outcome that equates to the IELTS scores as stated above. <p>Students who have a degree from an English-speaking country, or are a national of an English speaking country as listed in the UKVI Guidance, may use this as proof of English language ability.</p>

8. Programme Scope:

Communication Design within The Glasgow School of Art provides a creative learning environment that aims to produce skilled and confident graduates, able to either extend their study onto Masters or beyond to PhD, or enter the profession as accomplished practicing communication designers.

Graduates develop the knowledge and understanding to undertake sophisticated research and visual problem-solving; they acquire appropriate skills to contribute to the wider international context of communication design, sensitively responding to social and cultural implications of contemporary design practice.

The curriculum design of each year is structured into Courses, which are project-based. Projects and Courses vary in length within and across the two academic semesters each year. Project-based enquiry is core to the curriculum.

The contemporary relevance and currency of the Communication Design Programme and curriculum is maintained and directly informed by the research, scholarly activity and the professional practice of staff employed either on a full-time or part-time basis.

The Programme promotes a culture that recognises teamwork and interdisciplinary peer learning as well as independence as essential elements in the effective practice of Communication Design

9. Programme Structure:

Year 1	Credits	SCQF Level
UCMD101 Studio 1	80	7
UCOLAB1 Co-Lab 1	20	7
UCOLAB2 Co-Lab 2	20	7
Total	120	
Year 2		

UCMD201 Studio 2	80	8
UXDE202 Design Domain 2	20	8
UDHT2WWD DH&T 2: Worlds and Words of Design ¹	20	8
Total	120	
Year 3		
UCMD301 Studio 3	80	9
UXDE303 Design Domain 3	20	9
UDHT3CTD DH&T 3: Concepts and Territories of Design ²	20	9
Total	120	
Year 4 (Essay)		
UCMD401 Studio 4	100	10
UDHT4EE DH&T 4: Essay or UDHT4CR DH&T 4: Curatorial Rationale or UDHT4CJ DH&T 4: Critical Journal	20	10
Total	120	
Year 4 (Dissertation)		
UCMD411 Studio 4	80	10
UDHT4D DH&T 4: Dissertation or UDHT4ECJ DH&T 4L Extended Critical Journal or UDHT4ECR DH&T 4: Extended Curatorial Rationale	40	10
Total	120	
<p>¹ Where there is a requirement for a student to commence and exit a programme during the same semester, for example exchange students, the student will study an associated 10 credit course.</p> <p>² Where there is a requirement for a student to commence and exit a programme during the same semester, for example exchange students, the student will study an associated 10 credit course</p>		

9.1 Programme Structure – Exchange In/Exchange Out/Study Abroad:		
Year 2	Credits	SCQF Level
UCMD201X Communication Design – Studio 2, Semester 1 or 2	40	8
UXDE202X Design Domain 2 (Study Abroad/Incoming Exchange)	10	8
UDHT2WWDS1 Worlds and Words of Design (Semester 1)	10	8
UDHT2WWDS2 Worlds and Words of Design (Semester 2)	10	8
Year 3		
UCMD301X Communication Design – Studio 3, Semester 1 or 2	40	9
UDEX302X Design Domain 3 (Study Abroad/Incoming Exchange)	10	9
UDHT3CTDS1 Concepts and Territories of Design (Semester 1)	10	9
UDHT3CTDS2 Concepts and Territories of Design (Semester 2)	10	9

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10. What are the requirements for progressing from each stage/year?

Students who successfully complete and pass all credits from the previous stage of study will be allowed to progress to the next stage.

11. Programme Aims:

Communication Design at GSA aims to engage students in a deep understanding of their discipline. The department of Communication Design has three defined disciplines; Graphic Design, Illustration and Photography. To encourage interdisciplinary activity and collaboration years one and two are designed to allow students to find their own focus and avoid former preconceptions of the disciplines, students electing at the end of year two which discipline within Communication Design is the most appropriate pathway based on the individual student experience and tutor advice and guidance.

11.1 Year 1 Aims:

The aims for Year 1 offer students the opportunity to:

- undertake a series of project-based learning activities within the specialist – Communication Design core of Year 1
- exercise a degree of independence in carrying out set project work using a broad range of approaches to create responses
- demonstrate an integrated approach to subject specific skills
- undertake a range of set projects investigating aspects of drawing, research, exploration and outcomes
- work under guidance and with others in developing awareness of the broader subject of design in relation to Communication Design.
- use appropriate software applications to support design development
- convey, present and evaluate ideas in a structured and coherent form using a range of communication methods
- gain awareness and understanding of significant examples of contemporary and historical communication design practices
- understand the assessment of studio practice and portfolio presentation.

11.2 Year 2 Aims:

The aims for Year 2 offer students the opportunity to:

- explore ideas and creative thinking through a series of project-based learning activities within the specialist – Communication Design core of Year 2
- exercise initiative in carrying out and interpreting set project work using a range of approaches to create responses and solutions
- manage the organization of work in relation to resources and deadlines and develop safe working practices
- convey specialist information to a range of audiences for a range of purposes
- demonstrate a working knowledge of a broad set of skills and understanding of Communication Design fundamentals, these may include; creative thinking, ideas generation techniques, image making, semiotics, colour theory, typography, print process, digital media.
- take account of broad discipline matters including any ethical or professional issues raised by the discipline

- evaluate the scope of creative potential before focussing on a Communication Design specialism.
- understand the assessment process of studio practice which is facilitated through the presentation of a portfolio

11.3 Year 3 Aims:

The aims for Year 3 offer students the opportunity to:

- identify specialist direction through a series of project-based learning activities within Communication Design core of Year 3
- students will interrogate the subject of Communication Design and their position within it related to Graphics Illustration and Photography.
- achieve a level of sustained inquiry, applying further understanding of either Graphic Design Illustration or Photography
- exercise autonomy in undertaking and interpreting set project work and draw on a range of sources to make objective judgements
- undertake analysis, evaluation and synthesis of ideas, concepts and matters raised by the subject specialist areas
- engage in an optional overseas Study Exchange, providing the opportunity for creative cultural exchange
- understand contextualisation of the wider audience and the social responsibilities of the Communication Designer
- manage time and resources in relation to set project briefs and exercise safe working practices
- make formal and informal presentations to a range of audiences
- use a range of digital design software to support and enhance work
- demonstrate understanding of selected theories, concepts and principles (historical, cultural and contextual) associated with Communication Design
- understand the assessment process of studio practice which is facilitated through the presentation of a portfolio

11.4 Year 4 Aims:

The aims of Year 4 offer students the opportunity to:

- self-select and self-generate projects and learning activities within the specialist Communication Design core of year four
- define their own field of interest within Communication Design and refine their personal field of study
- exercise autonomy, initiative, individuality and judgement in undertaking self-directed project work
- demonstrate in-depth subject specialist skills and knowledge relating to the characteristics, terminology and practice of either Graphic Design/Illustration/Photography.
- deal with complex subject specialist matters including any ethical or professional issues raised by the discipline
- offer insights and specialist interpretations and solutions to matters raised by individual Graphic Design/Illustration/Photography interests
- work under guidance and with others to develop an individual position in relation to specialist Graphic Design/Illustration/Photography interests
- manage time and resources effectively and exercise safe working practices
- communicate with, and make formal presentations to, informed and professional level audiences
- use appropriate digital technologies to support and enhance specialist work

- demonstrate an informed understanding of the theories, concepts and principles (Historical, Cultural and Contextual) associated with Communication Design
- engage in the preparation and mounting of a Degree Show exhibition of professional standard communication design work
- understand the importance of public engagement with diverse audiences including industry professionals.

12. Intended Learning Outcomes of Programme:

After full participation in and successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a coherent knowledge and understanding of key aspects of Communication Design practice, including the acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge of particular contemporary practices and their historical, theoretical, cultural and professional contexts
- Select and use appropriate research and experimental methods, analyse results to support the formulation of conclusions for future work, and in the development of a self-initiated Communication Design projects.
- Demonstrate the ability to work with other people, accepting responsibility and recognising individual strengths and weaknesses, so that individual or common goals can be achieved
- Formulate appropriate questions to identify and anticipate problems, to explore alternative possibilities and to apply the most appropriate solution in a sustained project within Communication Design.
- Select the methods and techniques of, enquiry and analysis in the design, development and production of practical or written projects in Communication Design.
- Evaluate and comment upon the analysis of practices and products in the light of current major debates and the formulation of a personal position within the contemporary contexts of Communication Design.

12.1 Intended Learning Outcomes of Year 1

Knowledge and Understanding 30%

- an outline knowledge of the fundamental characteristics of the subject of Communication Design
- an understanding of the fundamental creative processes and methods associated with Communication Design.
- an outline knowledge of the design contexts associated with Communication Design.
- an understanding of the accepted theories and principles associated with Communication Design.

Applied Knowledge and Understanding 50%

- fundamental practical skills and processes associated Communication Design
- a range of set projects investigating aspects of research, collaboration, exploration and outcomes
- awareness of the contexts associated with Communication Design

Professional Practice: Communication, Presentation, Working with Others 20%

- present, evaluate and reflect upon ideas familiar to the discipline of Communication Design
- use a range of approaches to create responses to and answer set project briefs
- convey ideas in a structured and coherent form
- use a range of forms of communication effectively
- use standard applications to process and obtain a variety of information

- exercise a degree of independence in carrying out set project work
- manage organization of work within set deadlines
- take account of health and safety regulations and develop safe working practices
- work with others in developing awareness of the broader subject of design in relation Communication Design

12.2 Intended Learning Outcomes of Year 2

Knowledge and Understanding 30%

- a working knowledge of the differing characteristics and practices associated with a range of Communication Design subject specialisms
- an understanding of the key stages of the design process associated with Communication Design
- a broad knowledge of a range of design contexts associated with subject specialist Communication Design
- an outline knowledge and understanding of some core theories, principles and concepts associated with Communication Design

Applied Knowledge and Understanding 50%

- a range of skills, processes and materials associated with Communication Design subject specialisms.
- the application of skill acquisition to familiar Communication Design contexts

Professional Practice: Communication, Presentation, Working with Others 30%

- undertake analysis, evaluation and synthesis of ideas and matters associated with the Communication Design subject specialisms.
- use a range of approaches to create responses and solutions to defined project briefs
- evaluate responses and solutions Communication Design subject specialisms
- convey specialist information to a range of audiences for a range of purposes
- use a range of standard applications to process and obtain subject discipline information and for image manipulation
- exercise initiative in carrying out and interpreting set project work
- manage organization of work in relation to resources and deadlines
- take account of health and safety regulations in studio and workshop practice and continue to develop safe working practices
- continue to work under guidance with a range of qualified practitioners
- work with others in developing a broad understanding of the wider discipline Communication Design
- take account of broad discipline matters including any ethical or professional issues raised by the discipline

12.3 Intended Learning Outcomes of Year 3

Knowledge and Understanding 30%

- a broad knowledge of the scope and practice and specialist characteristics of Communication Design.
- an understanding of the design process specific to a subject specialism and how it can be applied to Communication Design contexts.
- a broad knowledge of potential design contexts for subject specialist Communication Design.
- an understanding of selected theories, concepts and principles associated with Communication Design.

Applied Knowledge and Understanding 50%

- a selection of the key processes, materials, practical and technical skills associated with a particular Communication Design subject specialism
- a range of subject specialist projects of research, exploration and outcomes
- a range of subject specific Communication Design contexts

Professional Practice: Communication, Presentation, Working with Others 20%

- undertake analysis, evaluation and synthesis of ideas, concepts and matters raised by the subject specialist Communication Design disciplines
- identify and analyze subject specific Communication Design matters
- draw on a range of sources to make objective judgements
- make formal and informal presentations to a range of audiences about specialist Communication Design matters
- use a range of IT applications to support and enhance work
- exercise autonomy in carrying out and interpreting set project work, manage time and resources in relation to set project briefs
- continue to take account of health and safety regulations in studio and workshop practice and adhere to safe working practices
- work under guidance with qualified and/or specialist practitioners
- work with others in developing a subject specialist understanding of Communication Design
- deal with subject specialist matters including any ethical or professional issues raised by the discipline

12.4 Intended Learning Outcomes of Year 4

Knowledge and Understanding 30%

- specific knowledge relating to the characteristics, terminology and practices of a Communication Design subject specialism; Graphic Design or Illustration or Photography
- an informed understanding of the design process and Communication Design subject specialism by utilising a range of research, exploration and interpretation methodologies and approaches.
- an informed knowledge of design contexts for individual subject specialism within Communication Design
- informed understanding of the theories, concepts and principles (including historical, cultural and contextual) associated with Communication Design interests.

Applied Knowledge and Understanding 50%

- subject specialist processes, materials, practical and technical skills associated with individual Communication Design interests
- a self-defined subject specialist project of research, exploration and outcomes which reflects individual Communication Design interests
- a defined, subject specialist, Communication Design context

Professional Practice: Communication, Presentation, Working with Others 20%

- identify, define, conceptualize and analyse individual, subject specialist, Communication Design interests
- offer insights and specialist interpretations and solutions to matters raised by individual Communication Design interests
- review and consolidate knowledge, skills, the practice and thinking associated with individual, subject specialist Communication Design interests

- demonstrate individuality and judgement in dealing with subject specialist Communication Design interests
- make formal presentations to informed audiences about specialist Communication Design matters
- communicate with professional level peers, senior colleagues and discipline specialists
- use a range of digital technologies appropriately to support and enhance specialist work
- exercise autonomy and initiative in undertaking self-directed project work
- manage time and resources effectively in relation to self-directed project work
- continue to take account of health and safety regulations in studio and workshop practice and adhere to safe working practices
- work effectively under guidance in a peer relationship with qualified and/or specialist practitioners
- work with others in developing a critical position as an individual Communication Designer and contribute to ongoing studio debate
- deal with complex subject specialist matters including any ethical or professional issues raised by the discipline

13. Learning and Teaching Approaches:

Briefing	This takes place at the beginning of a project or a Course. The brief is discussed and this is an opportunity for students to ask questions and to clarify aspects of the project or course.
Tutorial	A reflective and critical discussion to provide feedback about work in progress. This may take place on a one-to-one basis with staff or involve a group. An organisational meeting between staff and students or students and students, relevant to a project or event.
Group Meeting	An organisational meeting between staff and students or students and students, relevant to a project or event.
Review	The presentation of work in progress or completed work. This may take place on a one-to-one basis with staff or involve a group. External parties may be present if relevant to the project.
Induction	An introduction to a resource (such as I.T, Library or Workshop)
Lecture	A formal presentation given by staff or visiting speaker
Technical Demonstration	Learning through the observation of a technical process normally demonstrated by a member of technical staff.
Technical Workshop	Learning through the observation and practice of a technical process.

Pastoral Appointment	A meeting available to students with a member of academic staff to discuss issues of a personal nature or relating to general welfare which may be affecting their academic progress. Pastoral appointments are timetabled for all new students within the department. Appointments can also be arranged with staff as necessary.
Guidance Note	Record key areas of discussion specifically the future development of studio work.
Peer Evaluation	Completed by a student about another student in relation to group tasks within a project.
Self-Evaluation	Completed by a student providing an opportunity to reflect on their work and progress.
Cause for Concern	Is issued when a student is not meeting work requirements or attending timetabled sessions. GSA Registry will be notified if issues or concerns are not rectified within a stated period of time.
Record of Assessment	Written feedback completed by staff at either formative or summative assessment points.
Formative Assessment	Feedback given in the form of a Record of Assessment that provides an indication of performance and levels of attainment reached up until that point or at the end of a project or course.
Summative Assessment	The final point of assessment, an official grade is issued from GSA Registry.

14. Assessment Methods:

Formative Assessment

Ongoing work is monitored and recorded regularly by staff against the year learning outcomes and set assessment criteria for each stage of the programme. Formative assessment offers constructive and supportive review of ongoing performance. Identifies strengths and weaknesses and gives advice on future direction. A 'Cause for Concern' can be issued by staff at any point this highlights any performance concerns and/or risk of failure alongside required 'actions' to support student progress.

Engagement with formative assessment is a mandatory requirement.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment evaluates individual performance for the stage (year) in its entirety. Final submission work is assessed against the level learning outcomes and set assessment criteria for each stage of the programme. The final grade is determined by aggregation of grades for each course and is issued by GSA Registry.

Methods of assessment include portfolio presentation of project work reviews, formal presentations and essays for Design History and Theory.

Formative and Summative Assessment methods include:

Tutorial	A reflective and critical discussion to provide feedback about work in progress. This may take place on a one-to-one basis with staff or involve a group.
Review	The presentation of work in progress or completed work. This may take place on a one-to-one basis with staff or involve a group. External parties may be present if relevant to the project.
Guidance Note	Record key areas of discussion specifically the future development of studio work.
Peer Evaluation	Completed by a student about another student in relation to group tasks within a project.
Self-Evaluation	Completed by a student providing an opportunity to reflect on their work and progress.
Cause for Concern	Is issued when a student is not meeting work requirements or attending timetabled sessions. GSA Registry will be notified if issues or concerns are not rectified within a stated period of time.
Record of Assessment	Written feedback completed by staff at either formative or summative assessment points.

15. Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statements and Other External or Internal Reference Points:

Art and Design 2017:

https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/sbs-art-and-design-17.pdf?sfvrsn=71eef781_16

16. Additional Relevant Information:

Studio

In the context of Communication Design, Studio can be defined as both a physical, shared space, and a digital environment. The term is also used to cover the activities within these spaces, including workshops, seminars, group discussions, individual and group tutorials, and peer learning.

Enrichment of Learning Experience

International Exchange

Students may be able to undertake a period of exchange with one of our international partner institutions. International exchanges will normally take place in Stage 3 of study and will normally be for the duration of one full semester - either semester 1 or semester 2.

In order to be eligible for consideration for international exchange the student will normally have achieved a minimum grade of C3 in the formative studio component. Where a student has not met the level of attainment specified but can make a case under 'Good Cause', the Programme Leader can consider their application and discretion may be exercised.

Students who are interested in going on international exchange are advised to attend the departmental briefing session which will be arranged by the Exchanges Officer. Following on from that briefing session, students should discuss their application with the Programme Leader with a

view to gaining approval sufficiently in advance of exchange application deadlines. Should a student be granted approval to go on international exchange they must complete and submit for the Programme Leader's approval a Learning Agreement which outlines their programme of study and credit transfer relative to their studies on exchange.

Students must negotiate with the Programme Leader any differences between start and end dates of GSA's semesters and the exchange period and agree how this will be managed – to ensure that the terms of the Learning Agreement are met without impacting upon study of GSA courses, either prior to or post the exchange period.

On completion of the exchange the transcript provided by the partner institution must evidence and confirm study undertaken, as per the Learning Agreement, at which time associated credits will be transferred.

In exceptional cases, students may request that an exchange be extended. However, permission must be granted by the Board of Studies in advance.

Ethics Statement

The Glasgow School of Art is committed to the ethical conduct of research and has developed policies and procedures to ensure that the importance of individual and corporate responsibility is communicated to staff and students, and that ethical approval is sought where appropriate particularly in the case of human subject research.

In case of an ethical concern arising from their individual projects of research (e.g. research involving human participants), students will be asked to seek the advice of the programme team, where appropriate. They may also be required to complete the GSA Application Form for Ethical Approval, for consideration by the programme team and, where appropriate, the GSA Ethics Committee.

Project Briefs

Briefs are dyslexia-friendly and use plain language (therefore clearer to all students). Academic and support staff contact time is made explicit. Students are aware of with whom and when they can expect contact. Reading lists and online resources are identified to encourage students to use study time effectively. Aims and level learning outcomes of the brief are made clear. Work requirements and assessment criteria are made explicit and relate to the specified aims. Briefs include a suggested timetable for students (highlighting key dates) to assist them manage their study time effectively.

Archives and Collections Centre (ACC)

The School has one of the largest and most important museum and archive collections of any UK Art School and these provide an excellent study resource.

The institutional archive dates back to the School's foundation in 1845 and documents over 150 years of art, design and architectural education at the School through official papers, correspondence, photographs and press cuttings relating to the School, its staff and students. Together with over 30 Deposited Archive Collections, the size and significance of the archive continues to grow.

Internationalisation

In line with the Glasgow School of Art internationalisation strategy, we intend to enhance curriculum and learning opportunities in ways, which enable students and graduates to operate effectively in international and global contexts.

We can do this by creating programme opportunities and support mechanisms for international projects for students, which build on international partnerships.

There is also the opportunity to explore international internship and work placement opportunities for students. We intend to develop, refine and strengthen international collaborative educational partnerships in order to deepen trans-cultural understanding, promote opportunities for students and staff and enhance the international reputation of the School. We do this by establishing academic staff exchange as a core feature of key international partnerships and consolidating existing partnerships and recruitment potential.

We will continue to develop and provide appropriate support for an increasingly culturally diverse community of students and staff in order to enhance the educational experience of all students

Design History and Theory

Design History and Theory provides a theoretical and critical underpinning within a wider design, art and architecture context, and exists to support all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at GSA, including doctoral study, and to produce high quality research into the histories and contemporary contexts of creative material practices.