

## Course Information

**Award:** BA (Hons) Graphic Design

**UCAS Code:** W210

**Location:**

Southend Campus  
South Essex College of Further and Higher Education  
Luker Road,  
Southend-on-Sea  
Essex  
SS11ND

**Awarding body:**

UAL (University of the Arts London).

Students who complete the course successfully will receive a degree from UAL. The agreement between South Essex College and UAL is reviewed every four years for developmental purposes and was originally validated in 2015.

**Professional body accreditation:**

None.

**Duration:**

3 years (full-time)

**Academic year:**

Full-time course: October 2019 to July 2022

**Part-time study:**

No

**Work placements:**

Work placements are encouraged throughout the duration of the course. However, there is particular emphasis on this aspect during Y2 in relation to Unit **AGD 206 Work Placement**. On this unit students will work towards securing a work placement either locally or nationally\* for 60 hours over the year. Some students take this in one block others over a number of weeks, both in term time and during the holiday period; this is usually negotiated with the placement provider. You will be assisted in gaining a placement, however the emphasis is on you to secure it as part of this Unit. Should you not be able to secure a placement a suitable live or competition brief may be taken on to fulfil the requirements of the Unit. This live brief will be negotiated with your Unit Leader.

\* Usually locally.

**Timetables:**

Timetables are normally available one month before registration, though we endeavour to let you know an outline as soon as possible. Please note that while we make every effort to ensure that timetables are as student-friendly as possible, scheduled teaching can take place on any day of the week. Typically year groups are expected to attend for 13 hours a week spread over two and a half days. We expect students to build on this learning through Independent Study for at least a similar

period. For this time, we usually have space available within the campus or at the Forum in Southend.

### **Entry Requirements:**

**Award:** BA (hons) Graphic Design

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Entry requirements 2019-20:

You will need a minimum of 64 UCAS points from one or more of the following:

- At least two A-levels
- BTEC/UAL Level 3 Extended Diploma/Diploma/Subsidiary Diploma/Certificate [RQF]
- BTEC National Award/Certificate/Diploma [NQF]
- Access to Higher Education Diploma (minimum 15 credits at merit or above)
- International Baccalaureate
- AQA Baccalaureate
- Progression Diploma
- Advanced Diploma

You will also need GCSE English at grade C (old specification) or Grade 4 (new specification) or above OR a Level 2 equivalent such as functional skills qualification.

To find out how many points your qualifications are awarded, [view the UCAS Tariff tables](#).

You will also be required to undertake a portfolio-based interview. Portfolios should include examples of recent project work and may reference a variety of media.

### **Mature Entry:**

Applications from mature students who do not possess the entry requirements as listed above, but who possess related professional experience or professional qualifications are welcome to apply. You will need to demonstrate by interview, exceptional entry portfolio (this is likely to include evidence of paid or unpaid work experience) and/or written assessment that you are suitable for the course. In the first instance, we suggest you contact [HEAdmissions@southessex.ac.uk](mailto:HEAdmissions@southessex.ac.uk) to discuss your application.

### **International applicants:**

If English is not your first language you will need an IELTS score of 6.0 with a minimum score of 5.5 in each component (Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking), or an equivalent English Language qualification.

### **Additional requirements:**

#### **Credit transfer and accreditation of prior learning or experience:**

If you have achieved a qualification such as a foundation degree or HND, or have gained credit another higher education institution, you may be able to enter the course at level 5 or level 6. Other qualifications and relevant work experience may also count for academic credit. Further information is available at in the Higher Education Admissions Policy for students studying on the University of Arts London Degree.

### **Course Overview:**

**Course Name: BA (hons) Graphic Design**

The BA (Hons) Graphic Design degree programme treats the various subject areas within design not as discrete disciplines but as interweaving lines of enquiry. It is for this reason we operate upon a unit structure, which encourages individual creativity.

Our strength is in our determination to provide a pro-active, creative atmosphere, which observes and responds to current and future working practices. We run a small tight-knit course of around twenty students in each year, this allows us to really get to know you as learners and you in turn to always have a tutor available to discuss your practice.

**Year 1 for full-time students (Level 4)**

An emphasis on the core skills of graphic design you will need as a designer, coupled with an encouragement to take risks, make year one an exciting introduction to the course. When we say risks we mean risks, we'd much rather you fail spectacularly every now and again than produce safe-outcomes well within your comfort zone. We want you to shake things up!

**Year 2 for full-time students (Level 5)**

You will be introduced to the key concepts of visual communication, focusing on collaborative, experimental and independent ways of working. We'll continue setting you challenging briefs; just how do you produce a piece of packaging for a Knock, Knock joke? Or how do you design a map with a tea bag for inspiration?

You will also begin to explore the creative industries via a personal and professional development programme, while your own practice is enhanced through critically analysing the work of others

**Year 3 for full-time students (Level 6)**

The focus of this year encourages you to move towards a more self-directed programme of study. You will work on set and self-initiated projects, prestigious competition briefs and live industry projects, whilst establishing professional practice links and completing your dissertation. The third year is all about you re-inventing and challenging the world of graphics.

A copy of the rules and regulations governing the course is available

<https://www.southessex.ac.uk/higher-education/higher-education-policies>

**Unit Information:****Unit map**

This unit map provides a list of the units that make up your course.

Each unit is worth a specified number of credits: all are compulsory, enabling you to cover key subject knowledge while developing your own interests.

You must achieve units worth a total of 120 credits at each level of the course.

Our teaching is informed by research, and units change periodically to reflect developments in the discipline. You can always find the most up-to-date information about your units and who is teaching them through our VLE, [Canvas](#) and in the Course Handbook.

The units available on the course are as follows:

## **Year 1 for full-time students (Level 4)**

### **AGD 101 Introduction to Visual Communication (15 credits)**

This unit will introduce you to the fundamental skills of Graphic Design. You will explore through practices and theory the use and application of different hand rendered, computer application media and the appropriate application of image and type in various graphic disciplines

### **AGD 102 History of Visual Communication (15 credits)**

This unit offers a broad introduction to contemporary cultural studies, and its link into more traditional art and design history. It is not intended to provide a comprehensive review of the subject but to introduce you to sufficient themes and discourses within this area of study for them to explore areas of personal interest which fall outside of the indicative unit content. The unit is designed to be viewed as a companion to the practical units concurrently undertaken by you, so that academic and visual research undertaken for this unit will also inform your own design production.

### **AGD 103 Illustration (15 credits)**

This unit will introduce you to the fundamental skills of illustration, including narrative image making and the principles of image making applications. You will explore through practices and theory the use and application of different hand rendered and computer application media within the confines of illustration.

### **AGD 104 Digital Design Solutions (15 credits)**

This unit offers a broad exploration of the most frequently used digital design software applications and a critical examination of their scope and limitations for the creative designer. The unit aims to develop your digital design skills building upon hand rendered methods and the links between these two approaches which will be explored so that you will begin to be able to select design methods fit for purpose. You will be encouraged to demonstrate your knowledge and formulate independent and analytical approaches to working relating to the digital design process. You will explore the visual language and the structure of communication through digital design experimentation.

### **AGD 105 Typography (30 credits)**

This unit will introduce you to the fundamental skills of typography. You will be required to develop their basic knowledge and practical skills in the use of typography, within a blended understanding of using type with appropriate imagery (illustrative, tactile, digital and/or photographic) being the overall goal. You will be encouraged to look at the subject of typography in terms of the argument of legibility versus illegibility, contextual use and application.

### **AGD 106 Alternative Media & Thinking (30 credits)**

This unit will explore the use of visual language to communicate with a specified target audience. The creative and imaginative use of photographic, graphic and illustrative imagery in 2D and 3D will form the basis of your response – and allow you to explore how to represent effective meanings without necessarily showing the subject matter pictorially. Discussions about a variety of visual considerations including style, genre, signs, analogies and cultural symbolism appropriate to a specified context will be investigated.

## **Year 2 for full-time students (Level 5)**

**AGD 201 Experimental Design Solutions (15 credits)**

You will examine the practical aspects of merging the best of traditional and new (digital etc) mediums to explore how these constraints positively affect aesthetic beauty, accessibility, balance, legibility, and ease of use for viewers of an intended visual message. This unit also contrasts key differences between meanings and messages which are intentionally designed with or without the use of other forms of visual imagery.

**AGD 202 Corporate ID & Branding (15 credits)**

This unit deals with corporate identity and the core values of branding. You will be expected to research the historical origins, philosophy, culture and contexts that have helped develop the concept of corporate identity. You will also consider and gain practical experience of creating effective design solutions that focus on branding.

**AGD 203 Graphic Design in Three Dimensional Contexts (15 credits)**

This unit will explore a variety of visual communication problems that relate to the application of graphic media techniques and technology in three dimensional contexts. These may include packaging, wayfinding systems, retail signage and materials (such as standees) and information graphics.

**AGD 204 Self – Directed Study (30 credits)**

In preparation for your year three subject realisation you will be requested to author and deliver your own self-directed brief. This brief should have both the scope and breadth to reflect your on-going enquiry into your emerging graphic design practice.

**AGD 205 Literature Review & Dissertation Proposal (15 credits)**

"Cogito ergo sum" (Descartes) This unit is all about thinking, about ideas, about theories and about applying research in the exploration of a topic chosen by you. This work will be a springboard for your third year dissertation, encouraging independent work prior to year three. You will be led through, via a series of lectures and one to one tutorials, research methods and methodologies; analysis tools and theories specific to your subject areas.

**AGD 206 Work Placement (30 credits)**

This unit will provide the opportunity to develop an understanding of the graphic designer in a commercial setting. The placement will give awareness to the business of and allow you to analyse the roles, responsibilities and the necessities of communication, teamwork and the development of your own personal skills within the graphic industry and should complete a minimum of 60 hours. The specific content of this unit is therefore defined primarily by you, but it will also provide a clear framework within which a research timetable supports a period of self-directed study, followed by a phase of conceptual, technical and aesthetic exploration that will lead towards development of an independent process. If unsuccessful in obtaining a work placement, this unit will be linked to a live project brief to attain the credits required. (The live project brief will require a similar time commitment to a placement and will run alongside other on-going projects.

**Year 3 for full-time students (Level 6)****AGD 301 Dissertation (30 credits)**

This unit allows for the opportunity to develop a critical awareness, in-depth research, and to form a sustainable argument for an area of investigation. You will negotiate with a supervisor a line of enquiry that is relevant to your chosen field of study and undertake an avenue of research that could, but is not limited to, Graphic Design.

**AGD 302 Industry Led Brief (30 credits)**

In this unit, you will be entering one of the major industry competition briefs such as the Penguin Design awards or the D&AD New Blood awards. These industry led briefs are recognised industry-wide and can lead to significant opportunities for winners. You will be encouraged to develop your opinions and views about how live briefs should be approached. You will review key areas of industry principles which can assist your final year's progression regardless of any specialised or generalised interests.

**AGD 303 Subject Realisation (45 credits)**

The aim of this unit is to identify a subject of personal significance and a working process that has the potential for sustained investigation. You will review and examine work produced in year two of the programme and address your choice of media and working process through discussion and exploration of alternative practices and media. By establishing a critical statement of intent, you will form an intellectual and creative foundation for your final major project.

**AGD 304 Professional Promotion (15 credits)**

By this stage of the degree you will be considering the next steps of your career, be it for example working for a company, setting up as a freelance designer, or further study. This unit will give you the opportunity to consider the options available to you, and to prepare appropriate promotional materials. In addition it will tie in with the Subject Realisation, so that you will have the opportunity to produce self-promotional materials as advertising for your end of year show, and for distribution to prospective clients and employers who will visit the show.

**Teaching and Learning:****Course Name BA (hons) Graphic Design****Teaching:**

You are taught through a combination of lectures, seminars and workshops, which enable you to discuss and develop your understanding of the discipline of Graphic Design.

You use industry-standard Macs and the Creative Suite programs and have access to various facilities including the 3D, Fashion, Printmaking & Photography studio. You also have access to hardware such as the laser & vinyl cutters, 3D Printer and scanners.

At Level 4 you typically have around 13 hours contact time per week, typically consisting of:

- 4 hours of lectures/seminars.
- 6 hours of workshops (including dedicated one-to-one tutorials when necessary).
- 2 hours of Contextual Studies (either lecture or one-to-one tutorial).
- 1 hour group tutorials.

Units are delivered through a variety of methods of teaching and learning. These will include:

- Technical demonstrations - designed to provide essential inductions to print and graphics resources and to support the acquisition of essential skills.
- Small group teaching - studio based group sessions which are led by a tutor.
- Group critiques - will usually occur towards the end of a unit before assessment.
- Individual tutorials - The tutor will ask key questions regarding your project and offer advice and suggestions regarding future development.
- Independent research and studio practice - during the unit students are expected to follow up on suggested directions regarding project direction.

**Independent learning:**

When not attending lectures, seminars and workshops or other timetabled sessions you will be expected to continue learning independently through self-study. Typically, this will involve reading journal articles and books, working on individual and group projects, undertaking research in the library, preparing coursework assignments and presentations. A range of excellent facilities, including the library, the Learning Resource Centre and the Forum, supports your independent learning.

**Overall workload:**

Your overall workload consists of class contact hours of around 13 hours per week, including assessment activity plus group critiques as well as a similar amount of independent learning, with each credit taken equating to a total study time of around 8 hours. (120 credits per year).

The following information gives an indication of how much time you will need to allocate to different activities at each level of the course.

**Level 4:**

50% of your time is spent in timetabled teaching and learning activities

Teaching, learning and assessment: 390 hours

Independent learning: 390 hours

**Level 5:**

50% of your time is spent in timetabled teaching and learning activities

Teaching, learning and assessment: 390 hours

Independent learning: 390 hours

**Level 6:**

45% of your time is spent in timetabled teaching and learning activities

Teaching, learning and assessment: 330 hours

Independent learning: 450 hours

**Assessment & Feedback:****Assessment:**

Coursework is assessed in a range of different ways in order to accommodate a variety of learning styles and aptitudes including portfolio and sketchbook submissions, group presentations, written essays and research folders. There are no examinations.

**Percentage of the course assessed by coursework:****Year 1**

100% coursework: 88% Studio based with a written element 12%

**Year 2**

100% coursework: 88% Studio based with a written element 12%

**Year 3**

100% coursework: 75% Studio based with a written element 25%

**Feedback:**

You will receive formative feedback as part of your one-to-one sessions with your unit teachers. You will also receive summative feedback on all formal assessments undertaken by coursework. Feedback is intended to help you learn and you are encouraged to discuss it with your unit leader tutor. Feedback can be given in a range of different ways in order to accommodate a variety of learning styles and aptitudes including group critiques, recorded verbal feedback and written feedback.

We aim to provide you with feedback within 20 working days of hand-in (for all formal studio based coursework assessment). For the third year Dissertation Unit you will receive feedback and grades at the same time as your Final Creative Output Unit.

### **Academic support**

Our Academic Support Team provides help in the following areas:

- Study skills (including reading, note-taking and presentation skills)
- Written English (including punctuation and grammatical accuracy)
- Academic writing (including how to reference)
- Research skills (in conjunction with the library)
- Critical thinking and understanding arguments
- Revision, assessment and examination skills (including time management).

Our Disability Advice and Support Service helps students with additional needs resulting from disabilities such as sensory impairment or learning difficulties such as dyslexia.

### **Teaching staff:**

You will be taught by an experienced teaching team whose expertise and knowledge are closely matched to the content of the units on the course. The team includes senior academics, professional practitioners with industry experience, co-ordinators and technical officers. Our teaching is informed by the research and consultancy we undertake, and all of our lecturers have a teaching qualification.

### **Course Costs:**

**Course Name: BA (hons) Graphic Design**

**Duration:** 3 years (full-time)

### **Fees**

For the academic year 2019-20 the tuition fees for this course are £8000

### **UK/EU Overseas**

Full-time

### **The following course-related costs are included in the fees:**

- As this course may incur more than the normal printing costs, the University currently gives BA Graphics students double the yearly amount of free printing at time of writing this is £40.00 per year.
- Third Year students will show their work at an industry event such as New Blood, this will be covered by the Faculty of HE but may incur additional costs (ie: printing) depending on the work you produce.
- D&AD, YCN and ISTD competition briefs are entered in Y3 as part of the Unit AGD 302 Industry Led-Brief. The Faculty of HE covers any entry costs.

### **The following course-related costs are not included in the fees:**



You may need to purchase art materials for your course, which will vary according to your solution to particular briefs. For example the quality of paper will vary in price. Some costs you should factor in include:

Second year students should own a good quality portfolio case to assist when applying for work placements or attending job interviews, this will cost approximately £50.

Additional costs for larger purchases will again vary according to the requirements of individuals (for example some may wish to purchase a digital SLR camera, but most wouldn't). All students will have access to the University and Forum outside of University hours but many choose to purchase a Mac to assist their studies. Students wishing to do this will get an HE discount and the cost of this (dependent on the model you choose) is approximately £1200. You will also qualify for a discounted sign-up to Apple's Creative Suite which will give you access to Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, etc for £20 per month (at time of writing).

Optional trips both day and residential are routinely arranged to support your studies. Students should factor in train fares and related costs for approximately one organised trip to London per-term. Independent trips to assist studies are encouraged, but will need to be self-funded.

### **Accommodation and living costs not included in the fees**

This information can be obtained from our Accommodation Services home page  
<https://www.southessex.ac.uk/higher-education/accommodation>

### **Sources of financial support**

If you receive funding from Student Finance you may be eligible to apply for additional benefits. Details can be obtained from our Student Services home page  
<https://www.southessex.ac.uk/higher-education/fees-and-funding>