

A Level

Specification: Edexcel

ART & DESIGN: Graphic Communications

What will I study?

During your A Level course you will extend your knowledge and skill in key graphical areas such as promotional design, packaging, and typography.

In the first two terms of year 12, you will cover a core range of graphical techniques including typography principles, understanding page layout, photography, illustration, and digital skills using professional design software. The rest of the year will be a branding project that will explore a range of different phases and outcomes as part of a branding package. Students will be able to source their own clients and write creative briefs to set their project into a vocational scenario. This will enhance their own communication skills as well as develop a high-quality portfolio to support their application into higher education. This portfolio will include an extended written assignment of 1000-3000 words with a supporting theme that relates to their coursework studies, and contain in-depth research and analysis of artists and designers to conclude a personally selected question.

How will I be assessed?

60% of the assessment is based on the coursework and 40% is on the final examination. The final exam starts in January of year 13 and is an externally set theme, with a 15-hour final practical test in May. Coursework consists of practical preparatory studies in the form of sketchbooks or design sheets, plus supporting design experimental pieces and refined, developed outcomes.

The course is taught across four assessment objectives (equal in weighting) that measure the success against research, development, experimentation, and investigation, refinement and making. All units are marked internally and externally moderated.

How will I learn?

- Personal research, experimentation and development of ideas.
- Coverage of a wide range of techniques and processes, including 3D and contemporary art forms.

- Art/Design history and theoretical concepts.
- Site visits, exhibitions and museum visits.

What skills will I need?

- Independent learning and self organisation.
- Passion for design and the creative industries.
- Problem solving, reviewing and modifying skills.
- Good observational skills and critical analysis skills.
- An understanding of the formal elements and principles of design, i.e. composition, colour, geometry, construction etc.
- Skills in digital design software such as Adobe Creative suite (Photoshop & Illustrator).

Careers & Progression

Every forward-thinking company realises that good quality promotion and branding is an important factor in generating new business, as well as making yourself visible in a competitive marketplace. Therefore, studying a design discipline such as Graphic Communication can not only satisfy the creative soul, but it can also open the door towards a commercial career opportunity too. There are many transferrable skills that are naturally embedded into the working practices of designers that can be used in every industry.

After A Level, many students go onto higher education in Design via a foundation course or straight to a BA (Hons) art/design degree. JMF6-Abingdon has a 100% success rate of students gaining places on their chosen Art and design courses. Graphics students then progress to a range of related careers such as advertising and promotional design, web and digital design, animation, media and film, set and special effects design, product design, illustration or even architectural and automotive design.

These are just a few of the careers that are open to students with a qualification and experience in Art and design.