



# Qualification specification

**NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Award in Graphic  
Design  
QN: 603/7011/7**

**Qualification summary**

<b>Qualification title</b>	NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Award in Graphic Design		
<b>Ofqual qualification number (QN)</b>	603/7011/7	<b>Aim reference</b>	60370117
<b>Guided learning hours (GLH)</b>	141	<b>Total qualification time (TQT)</b>	155
<b>Qualification purpose</b>	<p>This qualification is part of a suite of technical award qualifications that have been developed to meet the Department for Education's (DfE's) requirements for high-quality, rigorous qualifications that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have appropriate content for the learner to acquire core knowledge and practical skills</li> <li>• allow the qualification to be graded</li> <li>• provide synoptic assessment</li> <li>• enable progression to a range of study and employment opportunities</li> </ul>		
<b>Grading</b>	Level 1 pass/merit/distinction (L1P/L1M/L1D) Level 2 pass/merit/distinction/distinction* (L2P/L2M/L2D/L2D*)		
<b>Assessment method</b>	Externally-set: non-exam assessment (NEA) and an examined assessment (EA)		
<b>Performance points</b>	Please check with the DfE for the most up-to-date information, should there be any changes		

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## Summary of changes

This section summarises the changes to this qualification specification since the last version.

Version	Publication date	Summary of amendments
V1.1	December 2022	Information has been added in <a href="#">assessment guidance</a> to clarify how the non-exam assessment (NEA) will be moderated by NCFE.
V1.2	June 2023	<p>Two additional hours have been added to the <a href="#">NEA</a> assessment time to allow learners 2 hours of open book preparation and research time before sitting their NEA. The GLH has been increased from 139 to 141, and the TQT has been increased from 153 to 155.</p> <p>The <a href="#">moderation</a> section has been updated for clarification by removing the statement advising that moderators are not aware of the marks awarded by the centre's assessors while looking at samples of work.</p> <p>The '<a href="#">How the qualification is assessed</a>' section has been updated to clarify that there is only one attempt permitted for each assessment.</p>
V1.3	July 2025	Amendment made to definitions of hierarchy and proximity within the teaching content <a href="#">1.3 Graphic design principles</a> .
V1.4	November 2025	Minimum age removed from qualification summary and <a href="#">NEA</a> brief release date updated.
V1.5	May 2026	Amendment made to sub bullet in range within the teaching content <a href="#">1.3 Graphic design principles</a>

## Section 1: introduction

Please note this is a draft version of the qualification specification and is likely to be subject to change before the final version is produced for the launch of the qualification.

If you are using this qualification specification for planning purposes, please make sure that you are using the most recent version.

### Aims and objectives

This qualification aims to:

- focus on the study of the graphic design sector
- offer breadth and depth of study, incorporating a key core of knowledge
- provide opportunities to acquire a number of practical and technical skills

The objectives of this qualification are to provide an understanding of:

- components of graphic design
- work of graphic designers
- requirements of a graphic design brief
- planning, development and experimentation
- graphic design production
- displaying, presenting and promoting graphic design work

### Support handbook

This qualification specification must be used alongside the support handbook where appropriate, which can be found on the NCFE website. This contains additional supporting information to help with planning, delivery and assessment.

This qualification specification contains all of the qualification-specific information you will need that is not covered in the support handbook, such as information regarding moderation.

### Entry guidance

This qualification is designed for learners aged 14 to 16 in schools and colleges but is also accessible for post-16 learners.

It is a vocational qualification equivalent to GCSE grades 8.5 to 1.

There are no specific prior skills/knowledge a learner must have for this qualification.

Registration is at the discretion of the centre, in accordance with equality legislation, and should be made on the Portal.

Centres are responsible for ensuring that all learners are capable of achieving the aims and objectives of the qualification and complying with the relevant literacy, numeracy and health and safety requirements.

Learners registered on this qualification should not undertake another qualification at the same level, or with the same/a similar title, as duplication of learning may affect funding eligibility.

## Achieving this qualification

To be awarded this qualification, learners are required to successfully demonstrate the knowledge and skills to meet the requirements of all content areas of this qualification.

The awarding of this qualification is compensatory. Learners must obtain enough marks to achieve a minimum of a level 1 pass to achieve the overall qualification. Marks can be obtained from the non-exam assessment (NEA) and/or the externally set examined assessment (EA).

<b>Qualification title</b>		NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Award in Graphic Design
<b>Qualification number (QN)</b>		603/7011/7
<b>Level</b>		Combined level 1/2
<b>Guided learning hours (GLH)</b> (Total GLH has been rounded up to the nearest hour)		141
<b>GLH breakdown</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 120 hours delivery</li> <li>• 1 hour 30 minutes examined assessment</li> <li>• 17 hours 30 minutes non-exam assessment plus 2 hours preparation and research time</li> </ul>
<b>Non-exam assessment (NEA)</b>	Weighting (60%)	Externally-set, internally marked and externally moderated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• synoptic project</li> </ul>
<b>Examined assessment (EA)</b>	Weighting (40%)	Externally-set and externally marked <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• written exam</li> </ul>
<b>Total</b>	100%	Overall qualification grades: L1P, L1M, L1D, L2P, L2M, L2D, L2D*

Please refer to the content area summaries in section 2 for further information.

## Progression

Depending on the grade the learner achieves in this qualification, they could progress to level 2 and level 3 qualifications and/or GCSE/A Levels.

Learners who achieve at level 1 might consider progression to level 2 qualifications post-16, such as:

- GCSE Graphic Design and Technology
- level 2 certificate in creative media (graphic design)

Technical certificate qualifications provide post-16 learners with the knowledge and skills they need for skilled employment or for further technical study.

Learners who achieve at level 2 might consider progression to level 3 qualifications post-16, such as:

- level 3 national diploma or extended diploma in art and design practice (graphic design)
- level 3 art diploma or extended diploma in art and design (graphic design)
- A Level Graphic Design (this will support progression to higher education)

Learners could also progress onto an apprenticeship. The understanding and skills gained through this qualification could be useful to progress onto an apprenticeship through a variety of occupations that are available within the sector; for example, artworker, creative director, advertising art director, animator, illustrator or concept artist.

### **Staffing requirements**

There are no additional staffing requirements for this qualification. Please see staffing requirements section in the support handbook.

### **Resource requirements**

Centres must ensure learners have access to suitable resources to enable them to cover all the content areas.

The resources required to deliver this qualification are as follows:

- materials (for physical design activities)
- tools
- personal protective equipment (PPE)
- access to IT equipment (including printer and scanner)
- access to software packages appropriate to graphic design
- the ability to submit assessment evidence in the following acceptable file formats:
  - JPG/JPEG
  - TIF/TIFF
  - PDF

### **Real work environment (RWE) requirement/recommendation**

This is a knowledge-only qualification. Experience in the real work environment is not required.

### **Work/industry placement experience**

This is a knowledge-only qualification. Work/industry placement experience is not required.

## **Purpose statement**

### **Who is this qualification for?**

The Level 1/2 Technical Award in Graphic Design is designed for learners who want an introduction to graphic design that includes a vocational and project-based element. The qualification will appeal to learners who wish to pursue a career in the graphic design sector or progress onto further study.

The Level 1/2 Technical Award in Graphic Design complements GCSE qualifications. It is aimed at 14 to 16-year-olds studying key stage 4 (KS4) curriculum who are interested in the graphic design sector. This qualification is designed to match the rigour and challenge of GCSE study. The qualification is graded at level 1 pass, merit, distinction and level 2 pass, merit, distinction and distinction\* (equivalent to GCSE grades 8.5 to 1). More information on grading can be found in section 2 of this qualification specification.

This qualification focuses on an applied study of graphic design and learners will gain a broad knowledge and understanding of working in the sector.

This qualification has been designed to sit alongside the requirements of core GCSE subjects and is appropriate for learners who are motivated and challenged by learning through hands-on experiences and through content which is concrete and directly related to those experiences.

It is distinct from GCSE Graphic Design as it provides an opportunity for learners to gain an introduction to a wide range of themes. It encourages the learner to apply their knowledge and use practical tools across a range of areas within graphic design.

### **What will the learner study as part of this qualification?**

This qualification will promote the learner's understanding of:

- components of graphic design
- the work of graphic designers
- requirements of a graphic design brief
- planning, development and experimentation
- graphic design production
- displaying, presenting and promoting graphic design work

**What knowledge and skills will the learner develop as part of this qualification and how might these be of use and value in further studies?**

Learners will develop the following knowledge, which will inform future training and work in the graphic design industry:

- graphic design components (line, colour, tone, composition, typography, imagery)
- the use of visual language and graphic design principles
- graphic design roles, graphic design work and employment opportunities available in the industry
- types of graphic design briefs, the requirements of a brief and the constraints a graphic designer may encounter
- the stages involved in planning and developing a graphic design and experimentation with tools, materials and techniques
- digital technical skills and resources used in graphic design production
- displaying, presenting and promoting graphic design work and the considerations to be made

Learners will develop the following skills, which will inform future training and work in the graphic design industry:

- decision making
- observation
- resourcefulness
- independent working
- problem solving
- adapting own ideas and responding to feedback
- planning
- evaluation
- reflection
- communication
- professional behaviour
- respect and appreciation of others
- an ability to reflect upon their preferred learning style and identify relevant study skills

Successful completion of this qualification will enable learners to progress to level 2 or 3 qualifications in related subjects.

The knowledge and skills gained will provide a secure foundation for learners to progress into career opportunities in the graphic design sector and provide a valuable platform for further study.

**Which subjects will complement this qualification?**

The following GCSE subject areas will complement this qualification by further broadening the application of skills in the context of graphic design:

- design and technology
- art and design
- creative design

This list is not exhaustive, and a range of other subject areas may also be appropriate.

### How the qualification is assessed

Assessment is the process of measuring a learner's skill, knowledge and understanding against the standards set in a qualification.

The qualification has **2** assessments externally set by NCFE: **one** NEA and **one** written EA. Only one attempt at each assessment is permitted.

Unless stated otherwise in this qualification specification, all learners taking this qualification must be assessed in English and all assessment evidence presented for external quality assurance must be in English.

Non-exam assessment (NEA)	
Assessment method	Description
NEA Externally set Internally marked and externally moderated	60% of the technical award  120 marks  The completion time for the NEA is 17 hours 30 minutes plus 2 hours preparation and research time.  The NEA will assess the learner's ability to effectively draw together their knowledge, understanding and skills from across the whole vocational area. The NEA will target the following assessment objectives (AOs): AO1, AO2, AO3, AO4 and AO5.
NEA availability	The learner should not undertake the NEA until all content areas have been delivered. This is to ensure learners are in a position to complete the NEA successfully.  A different NEA brief will be released during the first term of each academic year.

### Non-exam assessment (NEA)

NEA encourages the learner to combine elements of their learning and to show accumulated knowledge and understanding across the content areas.

NEA enables the learner to show their ability to integrate and apply knowledge, understanding and skills with breadth and depth. It also requires them to demonstrate their capability to apply knowledge, understanding and skills across all content areas that are being assessed.

The NEA is internally assessed work and should be completed by the learner in accordance with the qualification specification. Information on delivery guidance and assessment hours for the internal assessment will be available in the NEA brief. To support with this, we have also created a sample NEA brief, which is available on the qualification page under support materials. A representative number of assessment hours should be timetabled into the scheme of work. Internal assessment hours must be administered outside of scheduled teaching and learning hours and should be supervised and assessed by the teacher.

Any work submitted for internal assessment must be completed during scheduled assessment hours in accordance with the scheme of work and must be authenticated and attributable to the learner. The teacher must be satisfied that the work produced is the learner's own and the learner must declare that the work is their own.

In practice, this means that all of the NEA will be completed in normal class time within scheduled assessment hours and kept separate from any teaching and learning hours.

Prior to commencing the formal NEA time learners should be allocated 2 hours of preparation and research time. This 2-hour time period is entirely open book where learners can access their teaching and learning materials, text books, internet and other published materials. From this they should develop a research support pack which can be used as their source of information when completing the NEA. For more information on the 2 hours of preparation and research time please see the tutor guidance.

The internally assessed NEA component is based on coverage of the qualification content areas, which are assessed holistically against descriptors to achieve a grade.

Each learner must create a portfolio of evidence generated from appropriate assessment tasks that demonstrates achievement of all content areas. The assessment tasks should allow the learner to respond to a real-life situation that they may face when in employment. On completion, learners must declare that the work produced is their own and the assessor must countersign this. Examples of suitable evidence for the portfolio are provided in section 2.

<b>Examined assessment (EA)</b>	
<b>Assessment method</b>	<b>Description</b>
EA Externally set Written examination Externally marked	40% of the technical award  Written examination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80 marks</li> <li>• 1 hour 30 minutes</li> <li>• a mixture of multiple choice, short answer and extended response questions</li> </ul> <p>The written EA is a terminal assessment and will assess the learner's knowledge and understanding of all content areas and target the following AOs: AO1, AO2 and AO3.</p>
EA availability	The examination date is expected to take place in May/June every year  Please refer to the external assessment timetable available on the NCFE website.

### **Examined assessment (EA)**

EAs are set and marked by NCFE. The assessment assesses learners' knowledge and understanding of the content areas of this qualification. Centres must not assess, internally quality assure or otherwise access or review any EA materials or learner responses at any time and must adhere to the required exam regulations at all times.

The EA is on a set date and time (invigilated). NCFE specifies the date and time that the EA must be administered at the centre and also publishes in advance the dates on which assessment results will be released.

A variety of assessment questions will be used, including multiple-choice, short-answer and extended response questions. This will enable learners to demonstrate their breadth of knowledge and understanding of the subject and ensure achievement at the appropriate level, including stretch and challenge. Questions will be written in plain English and in a way that is supportive and accessible to learners of all abilities.

As far as possible, real-world case studies and contexts that are relevant to the sector will be used. This is to engage and stimulate learners under examination conditions and to facilitate the drawing out of a wide range of knowledge and skills developed throughout their learning.

All questions will have available marks clearly identified. The EA will be carefully constructed following a rigorous quality control process to ensure that the assessment is valid.

The EA material will be sent out in time for the start of the assessment. Assessment materials must be kept secure at all times in line with the requirement of the regulations for the conduct of external assessment.

You must return all EA materials and partially or fully completed learner work to NCFE within one working day of the EA taking place or the final timetabled supervised/invigilated session.

### **Rationale for synoptic assessment**

Synoptic assessment encourages the learner to combine elements of their learning and to show accumulated knowledge and understanding across content areas.

Synoptic assessment enables the learner to show their ability to integrate and apply knowledge, understanding and skills with breadth and depth. It also requires them to demonstrate their capability to apply knowledge, understanding and skills across a range of content areas that are being assessed.

### **Enquiries about results**

All enquiries relating to learners' results must be submitted in line with our enquiries and appeals about results and assessment decisions policy, which is available on the policies and documents page on the NCFE website.

### **External assessment conditions**

For more information on external assessment conditions and conducting external assessments, please see the regulations for the conduct of external assessments and qualification specific instructions for delivery on the policies & documents page on the NCFE website.

There is one assessment window during the year. Please refer to the external assessment timetable on the NCFE website for the specific date.

## Assessment windows

For assessments sat in windows, the centre must enter learners to the specified window. This will be either a set date and time assessment or a window in which the assessment will be completed.

For qualifications with 'entry on registration', the centre will choose the assessment window at the point of registering the learner. The last date that we will accept learner work for a specified assessment window is by that assessment window's cut-off date.

**Please note: the 'cut-off date' is the last day that returned scripts will be accepted for the specified assessment window.**

On completing their work at the end of the assessment window, learners must sign the assessment declaration to authenticate the work produced as their own. Centres must ensure that all assessments are submitted for marking in accordance with the assessment windows.

## Scheme of assessment

The following table summarises the qualification's scheme of assessment.

Assessments	Assessment time	% weighting	Raw marks	Scaling factor	Scaled marks*	Assessment conditions	Marking
NEA	17 hours 30 minutes (plus 2 hours preparation and research time)	60%	120	1.000	120	Supervised	Internal, with external moderation
EA	1 hour 30 minutes	40%	80	1.000	80	Invigilated	External
<b>Assessment total</b>	<b>19 hours</b> (plus 2 hours preparation and research time)	<b>100%</b>			200		

## Assessment objectives (AOs)

The assessment of our technical awards is mapped against assessment objectives (AOs). These AOs provide a consistent framework for learners and are applied synoptically, allowing learners to show their knowledge, understanding and skills from across the full breadth and depth of the qualification.

The AOs that will be assessed against the content in our technical awards are:

<b>AO1</b>	<b>Recall knowledge and show understanding</b> The emphasis here is for learners to recall and communicate the fundamental elements of knowledge and understanding.
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<b>AO2</b>	<b>Apply knowledge and understanding</b> The emphasis here is for learners to apply their knowledge and understanding to real-world contexts and novel situations.
<b>AO3</b>	<b>Analyse and evaluate knowledge and understanding</b> The emphasis here is for learners to develop analytical thinking skills to make reasoned judgements and reach conclusions.
<b>AO4</b>	<b>Demonstrate and apply relevant technical skills, techniques and processes</b> The emphasis here is for learners to demonstrate the essential skills relevant to the vocational sector by applying the appropriate processes, tools and techniques.
<b>AO5</b>	<b>Analyse and evaluate the demonstration of relevant technical skills, techniques and processes</b> The emphasis here is for learners to analyse and evaluate the essential technical skills, processes, tools and techniques relevant to the vocational sector.

### Assessment objective (AO) weightings

The table below shows the approximate weightings for each of the AOs in the technical award assessments.

<b>AOs</b>	<b>Non-exam assessment NEA (%)</b>	<b>Examined assessment EA (%)</b>	<b>Overall weighting (%)</b>
AO1	13.3%	40–45%	26.665–29.165%
AO2	20%	35–40%	27.5–30%
AO3	6.67%	20–25%	13.33–15.83%
AO4	36.67%	N/A	18.335%
AO5	23.33%	N/A	11.665%
<b>Overall weighting of assessments</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>100%</b>

The purpose of the qualification means that it is necessary to assess understanding through 2 means of assessment, an internal NEA and an external EA. The variance in assessment methods used allows for a range of knowledge, understanding and skills to be assessed using the most fit-for-purpose method.

### Non-exam assessment (NEA)

Refer to the mark scheme for the current NEA where you will find the information required to mark the NEA tasks and their descriptors.

Centres will mark the NEA, and this will then be submitted to NCFE for moderation.

### Examined assessment (EA)

The EA will be submitted to NCFE for marking to calculate the overall grades for learners.

## **Moderation**

Moderation occurs before results are issued and helps us to ensure assessment judgements made by centres are in line with NCFE's guidelines and are reliable across centres. During moderation the moderator will re-assess a sample of learners' non-exam assessments (NEA) marked by assessors within the centre.

Moderators will look at a subsample of learner work (either remotely or through a visit). The sample size will be selected using JCQ sampling guidelines and include assessments from across a range of centre marks, which include a learner with the highest centre mark and a learner with the lowest non-zero centre-mark. Where an assessment has been carried out by more than one assessor, all assessors will be included in the sample, where possible.

## **Overall grading descriptors**

### **To achieve a level 2 distinction learners will be able to:**

- recall and apply highly relevant knowledge and understanding in a highly comprehensive manner regarding graphic design processes, procedures, techniques and factors that influence the development of graphic design solutions
- analyse and evaluate, to make reasoned judgements and reach well-supported conclusions regarding the application of processes, procedures and techniques used in realising a finished graphic design solution
- effectively demonstrate highly relevant vocational skills, processes, working practices and documentation relevant to the sector; when assessing holistic development against deadlines (when using the planning cycle, planning, and creating and completing procedures) learners should demonstrate the use of highly relevant and effective processes, procedures, and development activities
- analyse and evaluate their own demonstration of relevant vocational skills, processes, working practices and documentation relevant to the sector when reflecting on the effectiveness of processes, procedures, and techniques that they have used in realising a graphic design solution in a highly comprehensive manner

### **To achieve a level 2 pass learners will be able to:**

- recall and apply mostly relevant knowledge and understanding in a mostly detailed manner regarding graphic design processes, procedures, techniques and factors that influence the development of graphic design solutions
- analyse and evaluate, to make mostly reasoned judgements and reach mostly coherent conclusions regarding the application of processes, procedures and techniques used in realising a finished graphic design solution
- effectively demonstrate mostly relevant vocational skills, techniques and processes, working practices and documentation relevant to the sector; when assessing holistic development against deadlines (when using the planning cycle, planning, and creating and completing procedures) learners should demonstrate the use of highly relevant and effective processes, procedures, and development activities
- analyse and evaluate their own demonstration of relevant vocational skills; processes, working practices and documentation relevant to the sector when reflecting on the effectiveness of processes, procedures, and techniques that they have used in realising a graphic design solution in

a mostly detailed manner

### To achieve a level 1 pass learners will be able to:

- recall and apply some knowledge and understanding, in a limited manner that has some relevance and some detail of graphic design processes, procedures, techniques and factors that influence the development of graphic design solutions
- analyse and evaluate, to make adequate judgements with some reasoning and reach straightforward conclusions regarding the application of processes, procedures and techniques used in realising a finished graphic design solution
- safely and effectively demonstrate a limited level of skills, processes, working practices and documentation relevant to the sector, when assessing holistic development against deadlines (when using the planning cycle, planning, and creating and completing procedures) learners should demonstrate the use of highly relevant and effective processes, procedures and development activities
- analyse and evaluate their own demonstration of relevant vocational skills; processes, working practices and documentation, when reflecting on the effectiveness of processes, procedures, and techniques that they have used in realising a graphic design solution, and is completed in a reasonable, straightforward manner, with limited detail

### Grading information

The following grades are available for the qualification; level 1 pass, level 1 merit, level 1 distinction, level 2 pass, level 2 merit, level 2 distinction, level 2 distinction\*.

The qualification is linear, meaning both assessments must be taken in the same assessment series and cannot be combined across different assessment series. After both assessment are complete, the marks for each assessment are combined to give a final mark for each learner. Where raw marks do not reflect the required weighting of the assessment, a scaling factor is applied to the raw mark prior to aggregation.

Scaling factors can be found in the table below.

Assessment	Maximum raw mark	Weighting	Scaling factor	Maximum scaled mark
NEA	120 marks	60%	1.000	120
EA	80 marks	40%	1.000	80
<b>Total</b>				200

For each series, grade boundaries are set by NCFE using a variety of statistical and judgemental evidence. Each learner's overall grade is determined by comparing their combined final mark with the grade boundaries for that series.

Where a learner achieves insufficient marks across the 2 assessments in the series to achieve a level 1 pass they will be awarded an unclassified (U) result.

## **Section 2: teaching content and assessment guidance**

This section provides details of the structure and content of this qualification.

Information in the teaching content section must be covered by the teacher during the delivery of the content areas and should be considered as mandatory teaching content.

The verb 'understand' encompasses both 'knowledge' and 'understanding' within the content areas of this qualification. Each content area will read 'the learner will understand'.

To make cross-referencing assessment and quality assurance easier, we have used a sequential numbering system in this document for each content area. The numbering system used refers to a content area, subject topic, and teaching content (for example, 1.1.1 refers to the content area (first number 1), the subject topic within that learning content, (second number 1.1) and the teaching content within the subject topic (third number 1.1.1)). This will support signposting feedback and tracking.

Anything within the teaching guidance is advisory and optional and is intended to provide useful advice and guidance to support delivery of the teaching content.

The types of evidence listed are for guidance purposes only. Within learners' portfolios, other types of evidence are acceptable if all content areas are covered.

Whilst studying the qualification, learners should reflect on the importance of knowing and developing their preferred learning style. They should also be able to identify a range of individual study skills they can use in order to study effectively.

For further information or guidance about this qualification, please contact our customer support team.

**Content areas**

This qualification consists of 6 content areas.

<b>Content area number</b>	<b>Content area title</b>	<b>Suggested GLH</b>
Content area 1	Components of graphic design	30
Content area 2	Work of graphic designers	10
Content area 3	Requirements of a graphic design brief	15
Content area 4	Planning, development and experimentation	30
Content area 5	Graphic design production	20
Content area 6	Design, present and promote graphic design work	15

**Content areas**

<b>Content areas</b>
<p><b>1. Components of graphic design</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Components               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1.1 Line</li> <li>1.1.2 Colour</li> <li>1.1.3 Tone</li> <li>1.1.4 Composition</li> <li>1.1.5 Typography</li> <li>1.1.6 Imagery</li> </ul> </li> <li>1.2 Visual language of graphic design</li> <li>1.3 Graphic design principles</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Work of graphic designers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Types of graphic design work</li> <li>2.2 Employment opportunities in graphic design</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Requirements of a graphic design brief</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 Types of graphic design briefs</li> <li>3.2 Graphic design brief requirements</li> <li>3.3 Design constraints</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Planning, development and experimentation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.1 Planning and development processes               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.1.1 Stages of the development process</li> <li>4.1.2 Techniques, components and properties</li> </ul> </li> <li>4.2 Experimenting with tools, materials and techniques               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.2.1 Components of graphic design</li> <li>4.2.2 Tools</li> <li>4.2.3 Materials</li> <li>4.2.4 Techniques</li> </ul> </li> <li>4.3 Ongoing review</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Graphic design production</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.1 Digital technical skills</li> <li>5.2 Effective use of resources</li> <li>5.3 Summative evaluation</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Display, present and promote graphic design work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6.1 The purpose of displaying, presenting and promoting graphic design work</li> <li>6.2 Ways to display, present and promote graphic design work</li> <li>6.3 Self-promotion</li> <li>6.4 Considerations when displaying, presenting and promoting work</li> </ul>

## Teaching content

Information in this section must be covered by the teacher during the delivery of this qualification.

### 1. Components of graphic design

<b>1.1</b>	<b>Components</b>
	<p>The learner will understand the fundamental aspects of graphic design components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• line</li> <li>• colour</li> <li>• tone</li> <li>• composition</li> <li>• typography</li> <li>• imagery</li> </ul>
<b>1.1.1</b>	<b>Line</b>
	<p>The learner will understand line in graphic design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to create expression: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ colour</li> <li>○ number of lines</li> <li>○ line thickness</li> <li>○ spacing</li> <li>○ angles of line: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ including curved lines</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ borders</li> </ul> </li> <li>• to create emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ colour</li> <li>○ number of lines</li> <li>○ line thickness</li> <li>○ spacing</li> <li>○ angles of line</li> <li>○ borders</li> </ul> </li> <li>• to define space</li> </ul>
<b>1.1.2</b>	<b>Colour</b>
	<p>The learner will understand the principles of colour in graphic design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• colour: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ monochromatic</li> <li>○ harmonious</li> <li>○ saturation values</li> </ul> </li> <li>• colour schemes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ triadic</li> <li>○ tetradic</li> <li>○ analogous</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• colour theory: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ primary</li> <li>○ secondary</li> <li>○ tertiary</li> <li>○ complementary</li> </ul> </li> <li>• colour association: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ mood</li> <li>○ emotions</li> <li>○ psychology of colour</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>1.1.3</b>	<b>Tone</b>
	<p>The learner will understand tone in graphic design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tone gradients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ linear</li> <li>○ radial</li> </ul> </li> <li>• tone to provide contrast</li> <li>• tone to create definition, shape and depth</li> <li>• processes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ hatching</li> <li>○ cross hatching</li> <li>○ shading</li> <li>○ gradient fills</li> <li>○ stippling</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>1.1.4</b>	<b>Composition</b>
	<p>The learner will understand composition in graphic design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the relationship between shape and space</li> <li>• the rules of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ proximity</li> <li>○ white space</li> <li>○ hierarchy</li> <li>○ repetition</li> <li>○ alignment</li> </ul> </li> <li>• placement</li> <li>• flow</li> <li>• the relationship between typography, image and space within graphic design</li> <li>• pattern: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ sequence</li> <li>○ direction</li> </ul> </li> <li>• contrast: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ emphasis</li> <li>○ similarity</li> <li>○ isolation</li> <li>○ inclusion</li> <li>○ colour</li> <li>○ shape</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• scale: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ relative size</li> <li>○ relative area</li> <li>○ ratio</li> </ul> </li> <li>• unity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ grids</li> <li>○ connecting lines or shapes</li> <li>○ colour scheme</li> <li>○ text with image or shape</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>1.1.5</b>	<b>Typography</b>
	<p>The learner will understand typography in graphic design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• characteristics of fonts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ serif</li> <li>○ sans serif</li> <li>○ hierarchy</li> <li>○ leading</li> <li>○ tracking</li> <li>○ kerning</li> </ul> </li> <li>• font styles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ display</li> <li>○ modern</li> <li>○ traditional</li> </ul> </li> <li>• the characteristics of individually designed letterforms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ shape</li> <li>○ pattern</li> <li>○ colour</li> <li>○ imagery</li> </ul> </li> <li>• opposites attract rule</li> </ul>
<b>1.1.6</b>	<b>Imagery</b>
	<p>The learner will understand imagery in graphic design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• digital: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ vector</li> <li>○ pixel</li> <li>○ photography</li> <li>○ cartoon</li> <li>○ illustration</li> </ul> </li> <li>• handmade/freehand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ illustration</li> <li>○ stencil</li> <li>○ cartoon</li> <li>○ sketch</li> <li>○ lino print</li> <li>○ monoprint</li> </ul> </li> <li>• infographics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ symbols</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ shape</li> <li>● to create meaning</li> <li>● to link image and text</li> <li>● to communicate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ message</li> <li>○ idea</li> </ul> </li> <li>● image manipulation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ cropping</li> <li>○ recolouring</li> <li>○ reshaping</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>1.2</b>	<b>Visual language of graphic design</b>
	<p>The learner will understand visual language of graphic design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ capture attention</li> <li>○ appeal to intended audience</li> <li>○ meaning</li> <li>○ message</li> <li>○ ideas</li> <li>○ reaction</li> <li>○ emotion</li> </ul> </li> <li>● aesthetics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ shapes</li> <li>○ textures</li> <li>○ patterns</li> <li>○ colour</li> </ul> </li> <li>● context: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ contextual factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ personal</li> <li>▪ social</li> <li>▪ cultural</li> <li>▪ economic</li> <li>▪ political</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>1.3</b>	<b>Graphic design principles</b>
	<p>The learner will understand the fundamental aspects of graphic design principles used to create a design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● hierarchy – the arrangement/presentation of graphic design elements, for example, text to imply importance to capture the viewers' attention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ dominance</li> <li>○ priority</li> </ul> </li> <li>● alignment – the way in which text and other design elements are placed on a page to create an ordered appearance with visual connections</li> <li>● balance – the way in which design elements are presented throughout a design layout: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ symmetrical</li> <li>○ asymmetrical</li> <li>○ radial</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• contrast – the way in which design elements are placed in opposition with each other:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ dark and light</li><li>○ thick and thin</li><li>○ large and small</li><li>○ traditional and contemporary</li></ul></li><li>• rhythm – the way in which elements within a design are repeated:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ fluid</li><li>○ progressive</li></ul></li><li>• proximity – the arrangement/presentation of graphic design elements, for example, text close to each other to show their connection</li><li>• colour and space – considering the choice of colour selection for the text and background in a design and the space left between the design elements</li></ul>
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## 2. Work of graphic designers

2.1	Types of graphic design work
	<p>The learner will understand a range of graphic design work and their associated features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visual identity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ logo</li> <li>○ brand identity</li> <li>○ style guides</li> </ul> </li> <li>• packaging design for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ food</li> <li>○ drinks</li> <li>○ storage</li> <li>○ products</li> </ul> </li> <li>• marketing and advertising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ leaflets and flyers</li> <li>○ magazine and newspaper advertisements</li> <li>○ posters, banners, billboards</li> <li>○ infographics</li> <li>○ vehicle wraps</li> <li>○ brochures</li> <li>○ in-store signage and point of sale</li> </ul> </li> <li>• layout and print (publication): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ magazines</li> <li>○ newspapers</li> <li>○ catalogues</li> <li>○ cover artwork: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ music albums</li> <li>▪ books</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• environmental: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ exhibitions</li> <li>○ murals</li> <li>○ event and conference space</li> <li>○ museum display</li> <li>○ special events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ launch events</li> <li>▪ celebrations</li> <li>▪ fayres</li> <li>▪ retail space</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• illustration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ graphic novels</li> <li>○ comic strips</li> <li>○ websites</li> <li>○ album and book covers</li> <li>○ infographics</li> <li>○ technical illustrations</li> <li>○ fashion and textiles</li> <li>○ video games</li> </ul> </li> <li>• typography: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ kerning</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ leading</li> <li>○ typeface</li> <li>○ size</li> <li>○ tracking</li> <li>○ serif</li> <li>○ sans serif</li> </ul>
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Employment opportunities in graphic design</b>
	<p>The learner will understand the following employment opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● graphic designer</li> <li>● artworker</li> <li>● creative director</li> <li>● advertising art director</li> <li>● animator</li> <li>● illustrator</li> <li>● concept artist</li> </ul> <p>Within the graphic design industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● graphic design agencies</li> <li>● freelance graphic designer</li> <li>● in-house graphic designer</li> </ul> <p>In the following sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● visual identity</li> <li>● packaging design</li> <li>● marketing and advertising</li> <li>● layout and print (publication)</li> <li>● environmental design</li> <li>● illustration</li> <li>● typography</li> </ul>

### 3. Requirements of a graphic design brief

<b>3.1</b>	<b>Types of graphic design briefs</b>
	<p>The learner will understand the different types of graphic design briefs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• commercial</li> <li>• competition</li> <li>• collaborative</li> <li>• online only</li> <li>• open call</li> </ul>
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Graphic design brief requirements</b>
	<p>The learner will understand the requirements of a graphic design brief:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• different clients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ corporate</li> <li>○ public sector</li> <li>○ independent</li> </ul> </li> <li>• the client's design requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ purpose</li> </ul> </li> <li>• research and analysis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ design trends</li> <li>○ target market</li> <li>○ competitor research</li> </ul> </li> <li>• copyright considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ images: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ use of stock images</li> <li>▪ licensing</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ content</li> <li>▪ typography</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• target audience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ primary</li> <li>○ secondary</li> <li>○ demographic</li> </ul> </li> <li>• contextual factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ personal</li> <li>○ social</li> <li>○ cultural</li> <li>○ economic</li> <li>○ political</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Design constraints</b>
	<p>The learner will understand constraints in producing a graphic design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• design components to produce the design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ line</li> <li>○ colour</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ tone</li><li>○ composition</li><li>○ typography:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ copyright considerations</li></ul></li><li>○ imagery:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ copyright considerations</li></ul></li><li>● expected timescales of work/tasks:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ collecting information</li><li>○ research</li><li>○ planning</li><li>○ building design concepts</li><li>○ production and completion</li></ul></li><li>● resources needed:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ materials</li><li>○ tools</li><li>○ computer</li><li>○ appropriate software</li><li>○ appropriate hardware</li></ul></li></ul>
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#### 4. Planning, development and experimentation

<b>4.1</b>	<b>Planning and development processes</b>
	The learner will understand development processes in realising graphic design ideas.
<b>4.1.1</b>	<b>Stages of the development process</b>
	<p>The learner will understand the stages of the development process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ mind maps</li> <li>○ first sketches</li> <li>○ experimentation</li> <li>○ drafts</li> <li>○ research</li> </ul> </li> <li>• design development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ refinement of first sketches</li> <li>○ refinement of experimentation</li> <li>○ final idea</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>4.1.2</b>	<b>Techniques, components and properties</b>
	<p>The learner will understand techniques, components and properties when planning graphic design work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ layout sketches</li> </ul> </li> <li>• design principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ hierarchy</li> <li>○ alignment</li> <li>○ balance</li> <li>○ contrast</li> <li>○ repetition</li> <li>○ proximity</li> <li>○ positive and negative space</li> </ul> </li> <li>• techniques: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ colour mixing</li> <li>○ sketching</li> <li>○ gradients</li> <li>○ digital image manipulation/creation</li> <li>○ digital illustration</li> <li>○ photography</li> <li>○ stencil</li> <li>○ free hand drawing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ digital</li> <li>▪ hand-drawn</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ scanning</li> <li>○ collage</li> </ul> </li> <li>• creating the components of the design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ line</li> <li>○ colour</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ tone</li> <li>○ composition</li> <li>○ typography</li> <li>○ imagery</li> <li>● properties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ colour scheme</li> <li>○ size</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Experimenting with tools, materials and techniques</b>
	The learner will understand experimental application of tools, materials, and techniques to create the components of graphic design.
<b>4.2.1</b>	<b>Components of graphic design</b>
	<p>The learner will understand experimental application of tools, materials and techniques in relation to the components of graphic design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● line</li> <li>● colour</li> <li>● tone</li> <li>● composition</li> <li>● typography</li> <li>● imagery</li> </ul>
<b>4.2.2</b>	<b>Tools</b>
	<p>The learner will understand experimental application of tools in graphic design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● pens</li> <li>● brushes</li> <li>● pencils</li> <li>● tablet</li> <li>● scanner or scanner apps</li> <li>● software applications</li> <li>● camera</li> <li>● computer</li> </ul>
<b>4.2.3</b>	<b>Materials</b>
	<p>The learner will understand experimental application of materials in graphic design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● paints</li> <li>● inks</li> <li>● paper</li> <li>● marker pens</li> <li>● charcoal</li> <li>● card</li> <li>● acetate</li> </ul>

<b>4.2.4</b>	<b>Techniques</b>
	<p>The learner will understand experimental application of techniques in graphic design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• colour mixing</li> <li>• sketching</li> <li>• gradients</li> <li>• contrast</li> <li>• alignment</li> <li>• digital image manipulation</li> <li>• digital illustration</li> <li>• photography</li> <li>• mono print</li> <li>• lino print</li> <li>• stencil</li> <li>• freehand drawing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ digital</li> <li>○ hand-drawn</li> </ul> </li> <li>• scanning</li> <li>• collage</li> </ul>
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Ongoing review</b>
	<p>The learner will understand the considerations for ongoing review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• client requirements</li> <li>• communication of ideas</li> <li>• appropriateness for target audience</li> <li>• potential problems and solutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ time</li> <li>○ resources</li> <li>○ skills</li> </ul> </li> <li>• effective use of resources</li> </ul>

## 5. Graphic design production

<b>5.1</b>	<b>Digital technical skills</b>
	<p>The learner will understand digital technical skills in graphic design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• digital image creation and manipulation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ vector-based software</li> <li>○ pixel-based software</li> <li>○ file type: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ JPEG</li> <li>▪ TIFF</li> <li>▪ PDF</li> <li>▪ GIF</li> <li>▪ PNG</li> <li>▪ EPS</li> <li>▪ RAW</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• digital image correction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ colour balance</li> <li>○ saturation</li> <li>○ colour cast</li> <li>○ contrast</li> <li>○ cropping</li> <li>○ rotation</li> <li>○ mode: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ greyscale</li> <li>▪ red, green, blue (RGB)</li> <li>▪ cyan, magenta, yellow, black (CMYK)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• scan and print: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ scan resolution</li> <li>○ on-screen resolution</li> <li>○ print resolution</li> <li>○ print size</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>5.2</b>	<b>Effective use of resources</b>
	<p>The learner will understand the effective use of resources in graphic design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• planning a graphic design project</li> <li>• client requirements</li> <li>• considering the most efficient use of methods and processes</li> <li>• anticipating difficulties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ availability of supplies</li> <li>○ working to deadlines</li> </ul> </li> <li>• avoiding waste: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ volume of materials</li> <li>○ ink</li> <li>○ recycling</li> <li>○ reusable eco-friendly alternatives</li> </ul> </li> <li>• cost effective</li> </ul>

5.3	Summative evaluation
	<p>The learner will understand components for consideration in the summative evaluation of graphic design work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• meeting the needs of the client</li><li>• communication of ideas</li><li>• appropriateness for target audience</li><li>• identify improvements</li><li>• identify successes with the design</li></ul>

## 6. Display, present and promote graphic design work

<b>6.1</b>	<b>The purpose of displaying, presenting and promoting graphic design work</b>
	<p>The learner will understand the purpose of displaying, presenting and promoting work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enhance design profile</li> <li>• showcase work</li> <li>• attract new clients</li> <li>• enhance employment opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>6.2</b>	<b>Ways to display, present and promote graphic design work</b>
	<p>The learner will understand digital and physical methods of displaying, presenting and promoting graphic design work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• digital: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ website</li> <li>○ social media</li> <li>○ static</li> <li>○ interactive</li> <li>○ vlog or blog</li> <li>○ showreel</li> <li>○ pitching</li> </ul> </li> <li>• physical: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ presentation folder</li> <li>○ exhibition</li> <li>○ design sheets</li> <li>○ design presentation boards</li> <li>○ book</li> <li>○ pitching</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>6.3</b>	<b>Self-promotion</b>
	<p>The learner will understand self-promotion in the graphic design industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• self-promotion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CV</li> <li>○ online presence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ social media</li> <li>▪ websites</li> <li>▪ blogs</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ networking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ online</li> <li>▪ face to face</li> <li>▪ business cards</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

6.4	<b>Considerations when displaying, presenting and promoting work</b>
	<p>The learner will understand the components to consider when displaying, presenting and promoting graphic design work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• different clients:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ corporate</li><li>○ public sector</li><li>○ independent</li></ul></li><li>• a client's individual needs</li><li>• communication of ideas</li><li>• appropriateness for target audience</li></ul>

## Teaching guidance

In this section we provide useful advice and guidance to support the delivery of the teaching content.

Website links are provided as sources of potentially useful information for delivery/learning of this subject area. NCFE does not explicitly endorse any learning resources available on these websites. For official NCFE endorsed learning resources, please see the additional and teaching materials sections on the qualification page on the NCFE website.

### 1. Teaching guidance – components of graphic design

It is recommended that the elements of this content area are delivered together at the start of the qualification. It is also recommended that this section is delivered separately to other sections as it focuses on learners being introduced to the fundamentals of graphic design and allows learners to undertake independent experiment using appropriate physical and digital techniques. Content could be formatively assessed using one or more internal assessment tasks or a mock assignment, such as a mini brief, in preparation for the NEA.

#### 1.1 Components (line, colour, tone, composition, typography, imagery)

This should be an exciting start to the subject and use visual (physical and digital) examples to illustrate the range of components used in graphic design disciplines. Note that graphic design disciplines are covered in more detail in section 2 (2.1).

Lessons could be teacher-led to explain the components used for a range of examples across disciplines (illustration, packaging and signage). Learners could then undertake investigations of additional examples in small groups using teacher prompts and one learner could present their findings to the class. All components and how they interlink should be covered in the group tasks.

There should be further opportunity for learners to experiment, applying this knowledge using physical and digital techniques, and recording this activity with annotations or notes.

#### 1.2 Visual language of graphic design

This content area should follow on from 1.1 Components, however, it should focus and introduce the factors of visual language and the subject terminology: communication, aesthetics and context.

This section should use visual (physical and digital) examples to illustrate the key factors of visual language. Examples of good and weak graphic design should be used to illustrate the key factors and meaning. Varied examples of graphic design across eras should also be used to illustrate the wide range of what design is in context (such as signage, advertisement, packaging, print and digital). Key features and designers over time should be visually illustrated, including the contextual factors of that era.

There should be further opportunity for learners to experiment with applying this knowledge using physical and digital techniques and recording this activity with annotations or notes.

#### 1.3 Graphic design principles

This content area should follow on from 1.2 Visual language, however, it should focus and introduce the fundamental aspects of graphic design principles and the subject terminology: hierarchy,

**1. Teaching guidance – components of graphic design**

alignment, balance, contrast, rhythm, proximity, colour and space.

This area of content could use visual (physical and digital) examples to illustrate what design is; teachers could use examples of graphic design in everyday life (for example, architecture, signage, clothing and the internet) and discuss/revisit what is considered to be 'good' and 'weak' design', reintroducing terminology such as communication, aesthetics and contextual factors.

Learners could then be encouraged to think about what discipline they would like to work in, considering available resources, skillsets and intended outcomes, in preparation for the next section (work of graphic designers).

## 2. Teaching guidance – work of graphic designers

It is recommended that the 2 elements of this content area are delivered together at the start of the qualification. It is also recommended that this section is delivered after section 1. The content could be formatively assessed using one or more internal assessment tasks or a mock assignment in preparation for the non-exam assessment.

It is important that learners are given the opportunity to explore the work of a diverse range of graphic designers in the following areas:

- illustration
- advertising graphics
- branding and corporate identity
- packaging graphics
- typography
- digital design
- communication graphics

It would be useful to deliver research skills in this content area. Learners could be introduced to different types of primary and secondary research. They could be given different graphic designers and/or eras to research in groups or pairs using the most appropriate research methods and record their findings. They could present their findings to the class.

### 2.1 Types of graphic design work

This should be an inspirational introduction to the range of different disciplines and types of graphic design work. The full range of types of graphic design work (visual identity, packaging design, marketing and advertising, publication, environmental, illustration and typography) must be covered.

Learners could be introduced to the different disciplines using visual sources, this could include video footage of design practitioners and showcases of designers' work. Where possible, this could also be delivered using guest speakers. Learners could then be encouraged to think about what discipline they would like to work in, considering available resources, skillsets and intended outcomes.

### 2.2 Employment opportunities in graphic design

This content area ensures learners understand employment opportunities within the graphic design industry. All content must be delivered in the teaching and learning stages to cover industry sectors and job roles, different types of contracts and opportunities for upskilling.

It is important for learners to understand that not every job role will be relevant to every sector and discipline. Teachers could deliver a series of formal lessons to explain the different sectors that learners could work in based on their knowledge and skills in design production and then request learners undertake some group research into the different job roles across the sectors. This could lead to an individual case study of a given scenario for learners to identify the types of jobs currently available as well as the qualifications and skills they may need.

## 2. Teaching guidance – work of graphic designers

### Useful websites:

- [www.designcouncil.org.uk/](http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/)
- [www.designweek.co.uk/](http://www.designweek.co.uk/)
- [www.toptal.com/designers/visual/visual-designer-vs-graphic-designer](http://www.toptal.com/designers/visual/visual-designer-vs-graphic-designer)

### 3. Teaching guidance: requirements of a graphic design brief

It is recommended that the elements of this content area are delivered together after sections 1 and 2 to ensure learners have the sufficient understanding of fundamentals of graphic design, and also have some insight to the different types of graphic design work in the creative industries.

At this stage, it would be useful for learners to be working within their chosen discipline to effectively respond to a given design brief.

This section links well with sections 4, 5 and 6. A project approach for delivery is also recommended, therefore, sections 4, 5 and 6 should use the same vocational scenario and design brief as this section.

Content could be formatively assessed using one or more internal assessment tasks or a mock assignment in preparation for the synoptic assessment.

#### 3.1 Types of graphic design briefs

This content area will ensure learners understand the importance of working in response to design brief requirements. The full range of types of design brief (commercial, competition, collaborative, online only and open call) will need to be covered. Note that some briefs may cover more than one type (for example, an online competition) and this is acceptable as long as learners are aware that these 2 types may also be presented separately to a client or company. Teachers could introduce the content area by showing learners different examples of design briefs and requesting learners' identify the types.

#### 3.2 Graphic design brief requirements and 3.3 Design constraints

This content area could be delivered alongside or follow on from 3.1 Types of graphic design briefs. Delivery will need to cover the different elements of a design brief, how to interpret key information, and understanding the different types of client and client needs (including constraints).

Teachers could introduce the content area by showing learners different examples of design briefs for different disciplines, and request they extract key information such as the type of client, purpose, theme, market research, target audience, contextual factors, competitor research and copyright issues.

Learners could then be presented with a design brief that they will work on for this section and sections 5 and 6. Learners should be requested to fully consider the constraints of the design brief and evaluate how they can respond appropriately in terms of skills, resources, and time.

#### Useful websites:

- [www.gov.uk/design-right](http://www.gov.uk/design-right)

#### **4. Teaching guidance: planning, development and experimentation**

It is recommended that these content areas are combined and delivered as a practical project. The same design brief should be used as in section 3, section 5 and section 6. All areas of content should be taught; however, learners should select the most appropriate planning processes, development methods and techniques based on the discipline they are working in as well as the intended design solution.

##### **4.1 Planning and development processes**

Teachers could provide learners with planning and production templates, however, all content placed into templates must be the learner's own. It is recommended that teachers undertake an observation and facilitation role after all content has been delivered and learners can work independently to develop skills in all of these areas. It is important to note that review of progress during the planning and production stages should be ongoing, this should not be an evaluation at the end of the project.

##### **4.1.1 Stages of the development process**

This content area will ensure learners understand the stages involved in the design development process. This should be a practical activity that allows learners to respond individually or in groups to a design brief or scenario provided by teachers. Learners should be encouraged to include all of the following areas in the practical activity:

- planning:
  - mind maps
  - first sketches
  - experimentation
  - drafts
  - research
- design development:
  - refinement of first sketches
  - refinement of experimentation
  - final idea

##### **4.1.2 Techniques, components, and properties**

This content area will ensure learners can understand the techniques, components and properties involved in the design development process. This should be a practical activity that allows learners to respond individually or in groups to a design brief or scenario provided by teachers. Learners should be encouraged to include evidence of all of the following areas in the practical activity in an appropriate format (such as a sketch book or blog): planning, design principles, physical and/or digital techniques. They should also be able to create the design, annotating the graphic design components of the design and properties.

##### **4.2 Experimenting with tools, materials and techniques**

This content area will ensure learners undertake practical experimentation with the materials and techniques appropriate to their intended graphic design solution. This should be a practical activity that allows learners to respond individually or in groups to a design brief or scenario provided by teachers.

#### 4. Teaching guidance: planning, development and experimentation

Learners should be encouraged to include evidence of all of the following areas in the practical activity in an appropriate format (such as a sketch book or blog): components of graphic design, tools, materials, and techniques.

##### 4.3 Ongoing review

The review of the design and production process should be ongoing and recorded throughout the planning and production stages. Learners should be encouraged to do this via a project diary or progress journal. This could be a physical or online record of progress and decisions made throughout the stages of the design and production processes. The ongoing review should feed into and naturally inform the summative review of the final design solution. Learners should have some formal teacher-led lessons to ensure all content areas are covered with illustrated examples.

##### Useful websites:

- [www.marketing-partners.com/conversations2/understanding-the-creative-production-process](http://www.marketing-partners.com/conversations2/understanding-the-creative-production-process)
- [www.blog.designcrowd.co.uk/article/680/the-7-steps-of-a-professional-design-process](http://www.blog.designcrowd.co.uk/article/680/the-7-steps-of-a-professional-design-process)

## 5. Teaching guidance: graphic design production

It is recommended that these content areas are combined and delivered as a practical project. The same design brief should be used as in sections 3 and 4. All areas of content should be taught to learners; however, they should select the most appropriate production processes, methods and techniques based on the discipline they are working in as well as the intended design solution.

### 5.1 Digital technical skills and 5.2 Effective use of resources

Teachers could provide learners with production templates, however, all content placed into templates must be the learners' own. It is recommended that teachers undertake an observation and facilitation role after all content has been delivered and learners can work independently to develop skills in all of these areas. It is important to note that review of progress during the planning and production stages should be ongoing, this should not be an evaluation at the end of the project.

Learners should be encouraged to include evidence of all of the following areas in the practical activity in an appropriate format (such as a sketch book or blog): digital technical skills, effective use of resources and design principles.

It is recommended that safe working practices are taught alongside any practical tasks in order to ensure risk management and health and safety requirements are purposefully understood when learners are working in design production disciplines. This should include all content areas, inclusive of personal protective equipment (PPE) at work.

### 5.3 Summative evaluation

The review of the design and production process should be ongoing and recorded throughout the planning and production stages. Learners should be encouraged to do this via a project diary or progress journal. This could be a physical or online record of progress and decisions made throughout the stages of the design and production processes. The ongoing review should feed into and naturally inform the summative review of the final design solution. Learners should have some formal teacher-led lessons to ensure all content areas are covered with illustrated examples, particularly regarding:

- meeting the needs of the client
- communication of ideas
- appropriateness for target audience
- identify improvements
- identify successes with the design

#### Useful websites:

- [www.shillingtoneducation.com/blog/graphic-design-process/](http://www.shillingtoneducation.com/blog/graphic-design-process/)

## **6. Teaching guidance: display, present and promote graphic design work**

It is recommended that the elements of this content area are delivered together, following sections 3, 4 and 5, as this will allow learners to purposely present a final graphic design they have previously created. A project approach for delivery is also recommended, therefore, sections 3, 4, 5 and 6 should use the same vocational scenario and design brief. Content could be formatively assessed using one or more internal assessment tasks.

### **6.1 The purpose of displaying, presenting and promoting graphic design work**

It is recommended that these content areas are combined and delivered together, this could be over a series of teacher-led sessions to discuss different presentation purposes and methods across the range of disciplines. Physical and digital/online presentation methods should be included in the teaching and learning; however, the learner should select the most appropriate method to practise dependent on the discipline they are working in and the product they presented in the previous task.

### **6.2 Ways to display, present and promote graphic design work**

This should be an exciting content area delivered towards the end of the qualification when learners have experience and skills to be able to promote their work in interesting and creative ways. Teachers could lead a series of initial sessions to discuss good and diverse examples of how practitioners promote their work using physical and digital methods. Where possible, teachers could introduce guest speakers to show their work as examples. Learners should then be able to use current examples to inspire their own product promotion. This content could be linked with self-promotion.

### **6.3 Self-promotion**

Learners should have gained experience and skills to be able to promote themselves in interesting and creative ways. Teachers could lead initial sessions to discuss good and diverse examples of how practitioners self-promote using physical and digital methods. Where possible, teachers could introduce guest speakers to show their work as examples. Learners should be able to use current examples to inspire their self-promotion. This content could be linked with product promotion.

### **6.4 Considerations when displaying, presenting and promoting work**

This content area will ensure understanding of the importance of communication skills and modification of a design solution in response to feedback. All content areas of client, graphical and digital communication skills should be covered in the teaching and learning, however learners should select the most appropriate communication skills that are required in response to the given brief and chosen discipline. Learners should be encouraged to evidence the following areas in an appropriate format: client's individual needs, communication of ideas and appropriateness for target audience.

#### **Useful websites:**

- [www.inmotionnow.com/project-workflow/5-ways-to-give-more-effective-creative-feedback/](http://www.inmotionnow.com/project-workflow/5-ways-to-give-more-effective-creative-feedback/)

## **Synoptic connections**

Synoptic assessment requires learners to combine elements of their learning and show accumulated knowledge and understanding across the qualification content. It enables learners to evidence their capability to integrate and apply knowledge, understanding and skills gained with breadth and depth in context.

It is therefore essential when planning for teaching and throughout delivery that the interdependencies and links build across the content of the qualification and are highlighted and reinforced.

The qualification comprises 6 content areas. All content areas are mandatory and must be taught.

The teaching content does not have to be delivered in a linear way; the content areas are interdependent in knowledge, skills and concepts.

Teachers may take a synoptic approach across the qualification. This will enable learners to be able to apply theories and concepts from across the qualification specification in context to skills-based situations. Through combining content and developing holistic connections, learners will be able to demonstrate and evidence their full knowledge and understanding of the subject area and graphic design sector.

Learners will have the opportunity to identify relevant study skills and reflect upon their preferred learning style throughout the qualification.

## **NCFE assessment strategy**

### **Knowledge LOs:**

- assessors will need to be both occupationally knowledgeable and qualified to make assessment decisions
- internal quality assurers will need to be both occupationally knowledgeable and qualified to make quality assurance decisions

### **Competence/skills LOs:**

- assessors will need to be both occupationally competent and qualified to make assessment decisions
- internal quality assurers will need to be both occupationally knowledgeable and qualified to make quality assurance decisions

### Section 3: additional information

#### School accountability measures (performance points)

This technical award has been developed to meet the criteria set by the Department for Education (DfE) to be included in the key stage 4 performance tables. Each grade has been assigned a points value. Please check the Register of Regulated Qualifications website ([www.register.ofqual.gov.uk/](http://www.register.ofqual.gov.uk/)) for further information.

#### Discounting

If a learner is taking a GCSE and a technical award in the same year with the same discount code, such as GCSE Physical Education and the NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Award in Health and Fitness (603/7007/5), the first entry will count. For more information about discounting and discount codes, please refer to the performance tables guide on the NCFE website.

Discount codes for technical awards can be found on the NCFE website. We advise centres to refer to the [discounting and early entry guidance](#) document provided by the DfE. For more information on discounting please contact the DfE directly.

#### Qualification dates

Regulated qualifications have operational end dates and certification end dates.

We review qualifications regularly, working with sector representatives, vocational experts and stakeholders to make any changes necessary to meet sector needs and to reflect recent developments.

If a decision is made to withdraw a qualification, we will set an operational end date and provide reasonable notice to our centres. We will also take all reasonable steps to protect the interest of learners.

An operational end date will only show on the Ofqual Register of Regulated Qualifications ([www.register.ofqual.gov.uk](http://www.register.ofqual.gov.uk)) if a decision has been made to withdraw a qualification. After this date we can no longer accept learner registrations. However, certification is allowed until the certification end date so that learners have time to complete any programmes of study. The certification end date will only show on the Ofqual Register once an operational end date has been set. After this date we can no longer process certification claims.

Where a qualification has an external assessment, this can only be taken up to the last assessment date set by us. No external assessments will be permitted after this date so learners will need to be entered in sufficient time.

#### Support materials

The following support materials are available to assist with the delivery of this qualification and are available on the NCFE website:

- resource packs containing:
  - schemes of work
  - PowerPoint presentations
  - learner workbooks

- qualification factsheet

### **Other support materials**

The resources and materials used in the delivery of this qualification must be age-appropriate and due consideration should be given to the wellbeing and safeguarding of learners in line with your centre's safeguarding policy when developing or selecting delivery materials.

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## Contact us

NCFE  
Q6  
Quorum Park  
Benton Lane  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE12 8BT

Tel: 0191 239 8000\*

Fax: 0191 239 8001

Email: [customersupport@ncfe.org.uk](mailto:customersupport@ncfe.org.uk)

Website: [www.ncfe.org.uk](http://www.ncfe.org.uk)

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