

Qualification specification

NCFE Level 3 Certificate in Graphic Design
QN: 603/7620/X

This qualification is now withdrawn



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Summary of changes

This document summarises the changes to this qualification specification since the last version (Version 1.0 August 2021) Please check the NCFE website for the most recent version.

Version	Publication date	Summary of amendments
v1.0	August 2021	First publication
v1.1	June 2022	<p>Further information added to the how the qualification is assessed section to confirm that unless otherwise stated in this specification, all learners taking this qualification must be assessed in English and all assessment evidence presented for external quality assurance must be in English.</p> <p>Information added to the entry guidance section to advise that registration is at the discretion of the centre, in accordance with equality legislation and should be made on the Portal.</p> <p>Information added to the support handbook section about how to access support handbooks.</p>
v1.2	July 2023	Information regarding UCAS added to About this qualification, Qualification Summary.

Section 1

About this qualification

Introduction

This qualification specification contains details of all the units and assessments required to complete this qualification.

To ensure that you are using the most up-to-date version of this qualification specification, please check the version number and date in the page footer against that of the qualification specification on the NCFE website.

If you advertise this qualification using a different or shortened name, you must ensure that learners are aware that their final certificate will state the full regulated qualification title.

Reproduction by **approved** centres is permissible for internal use under the following conditions:

- you may copy and paste any material from this document; however, we do not accept any liability for any incomplete or inaccurate copying and subsequent use of this information
- the use of PDF versions of our support materials on the NCFE website will ensure that correct and up-to-date information is provided to learners
- any photographs in this publication are either our exclusive property or used under licence from a third-party. They are protected under copyright law and cannot be reproduced, copied or manipulated in any form. This includes the use of any image or part of an image in individual or group projects and assessment materials. All images have a signed model release
- 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 institute's safeguarding policy when developing or selecting delivery materials

Support handbook

This qualification specification must be used alongside the mandatory support handbook which can be found on the NCFE website. This contains additional supporting information to help with the 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.

Qualification summary	
Qualification title	NCFE Level 3 Certificate in Graphic Design
Qualification number (QN)	603/7620/X
Aim reference	(6037620X)
Total qualification time (TQT)	260
Guided learning hours (GLH)	180
Minimum age	16
UCAS	This qualification has been allocated UCAS points. Please refer to the UCAS website for further details of the points allocation and the most up-to-date information.
Qualification purpose	This qualification is designed for learners who are working or would like to work in graphic design and want to increase their own knowledge, skills and understanding of the subject, or may want to seek an opportunity for relevant employment.
Aims and objectives	<p>This qualification aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focus on the study of graphic design • offer breadth and depth of study, incorporating a key core of knowledge • provide opportunities to acquire a number of practical skills <p>The objective of this qualification is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide the learner with the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills relating to graphic design practices
Work/industry placement experience	Work/industry placement experience is not required.
Real work environment (RWE) requirement/ recommendation	Experience in a real work environment is not required.
Grading	Achieved/not yet achieved
Assessment method	Internally assessed and externally quality assured portfolio of evidence.

Progression	<p>Learners who achieve this qualification could progress to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• further study:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Level 3 Certificate in Web Design○ Level 3 Certificate in Games Design and Development○ Level 3 Certificate in User Experience/User Interface (UX/UI)○ Level 4 Award in C#○ Level 4 Award in Python○ BA (Hons) Graphic Design• job roles:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ graphic designer
Regulation information	<p>This is a regulated qualification. The regulated number for this qualification is 603/7620/X.</p>
Funding	<p>This qualification may be eligible for funding. For further guidance on funding, please contact your local funding provider.</p>

Entry guidance

This qualification is designed for learners wishing to develop sector awareness. It will provide them with skills and knowledge relating to graphic design practices with a view to seek employment or further study.

It may also be useful to learners studying qualifications in the following area:

- web design

There are no specific recommended prior learning requirements for this qualification. However, learners may find it helpful if they have already achieved a level 2 qualification.

Registration is at the discretion of the centre, in accordance with equality legislation, and should be made on the Portal. However, learners should be aged 16 or above to undertake this qualification.

There are no specific recommended prior learning requirements for this qualification. However, learners may find it helpful if they have already achieved a level 2 qualification.

Centres are responsible for ensuring that this qualification is appropriate for the age and ability of learners. They need to make sure that learners can fulfil the requirements of the learning outcomes and comply with the relevant literacy, numeracy and health and safety aspects of this qualification.

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

Achieving this qualification

To be awarded this qualification, learners are required to successfully achieve **3** mandatory units.

Please refer to the list of units below or the unit summaries in section 2 for further information.

To achieve this qualification, learners must successfully demonstrate their achievement of all learning outcomes of the units as detailed in this qualification specification. A partial certificate may be requested for learners who do not achieve their full qualification but have achieved at least one whole unit.

Units

To make cross-referencing assessment and quality assurance easier, we have used a sequential numbering system in this document for each unit.

The regulated unit number is indicated in brackets for each unit (for example, M/100/7116) within section 2.



Knowledge only units are indicated by a star. If a unit is not marked with a lightbulb, it is a skills unit or contains a mix of knowledge and skills.

Mandatory units

Unit number	Regulated unit number	Unit title	Level	GLH
Unit 01	R/618/7631	Graphic design fundamentals	3	60
Unit 02	Y/618/7632	Practising graphic design	3	90
Unit 03	D/618/7633	Building a graphic design portfolio	3	30

The units above may be available as stand-alone unit programmes. Please visit our website for further information.

Progression to higher level studies

This qualification aims to provide learners with a number of progression options, including higher level studies at university or further education (FE) colleges. The skills required to progress to higher academic studies are different from those required at levels 1 and 2. Level 3 qualifications enable the development of these skills. Although there is no single definition of higher level learning skills, they include:

- checking and testing information
- supporting points with evidence
- self-directed study
- self-motivation
- thinking for yourself
- analysing and synthesising information/materials
- critical thinking and problem solving
- working collaboratively
- reflecting upon learning and identifying improvements

Level 3 criteria can require learners to analyse, draw conclusions, interpret or justify, which are all examples of higher level skills. This means that evidence provided for the portfolio will also demonstrate the development and use of higher level learning skills.

If you need any further information, please refer to the NCFE website.

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.

This qualification is internally assessed and externally quality assured.

The assessment consists of one component:

- an internally assessed portfolio of evidence which is assessed by centre staff and externally quality assured by NCFE (internal quality assurance must still be completed by the centre as per usual)

Learners who are not successful can resubmit work within the registration period; however, a charge may apply.

All the evidence generated by the learner will be assessed against the standards expected of a level 3 learner for each learning outcome.

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.

Internal assessment

Each learner must create a portfolio of evidence generated from appropriate assessment tasks, which demonstrates achievement of all the learning outcomes associated with each unit. On completion of each unit, learners must declare that the work produced is their own and the assessor must countersign this. Examples of suitable evidence for the portfolio for each unit are provided in section 2.

Internally assessed work should be completed by the learner in accordance with the qualification specification.

The tutor must be satisfied that the work produced is the learner's own.

A centre may choose to create their own internal assessment tasks. The tasks should:

- be accessible and lead to objective assessment judgements
- permit and encourage authentic activities where the learner's own work can be clearly judged
- refer to course file documents on the NCFE website.

Assessment guidance is provided for each unit. Assessors can use other methods of assessment as long as they are valid and reliable and maintain the integrity of the assessment and of the standards required of this qualification.

Supervision of learners and your role as an assessor

Guidance on how to administer the internal assessment and the support you provide to learners can be found on the NCFE website.

Feedback to learners

Guidance on providing feedback during teaching and learning and each stage of the assessment can be found on the NCFE website.

Section 2

Unit content and assessment guidance

Unit content and assessment guidance

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

The types of evidence listed are for guidance purposes only. Within learners' portfolios, other types of evidence are acceptable if all learning outcomes are covered and if the evidence generated can be internally and externally quality assured. For approval of methods of internal assessment other than portfolio building, please contact our quality assurance team.

The explanation of terms explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification. This document can be found in section 3.

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

Unit 01 Graphic design fundamentals (R/618/7631)

Unit summary	In this unit, the learner will be able to use the design cycle and understand how it impacts the role of a graphic designer. They will learn how graphic design components impact designs and gain an understanding of their practical application within industry.
Guided learning hours	60
Level	3
Mandatory/optional	Mandatory

Learning outcome 1

The learner will:

- 1 Be able to use the design cycle

The learner can:

- 1.1 Show an understanding of the benefits of using the **design cycle** when creating designs
- 1.2 Demonstrate the application of the design cycle within a project

Key words

Design cycle – a 5 step process to produce content. The 5 steps are understanding the creative brief, initial research, initial developments, further developments and present work.

Assessment guidance

Delivery and assessment

Wherever possible, learners should use real clients and briefs. If this is not possible centres can create their own briefs.

1.1 The learner should be able to explain how the design cycle benefits a graphic design. This will allow the learner to demonstrate:

- client details
- who the target audience are
- what the final product should be (for example, brochure, eBook)
- timeline expectations and milestones
- comparisons between the work of designers
- minimising any frustrations during the creative process
- generation of relevant feedback to develop the project further

Learners will need to follow an iterative design process when designing and identify the 5 steps of the design cycle and describe what happens during each phase:

- understanding the creative brief – create an understanding of what the scope of the project is and what deliverables would be required
- initial research from primary and secondary sources – understand an industry, look at the client's competition and what the target audience engages with to create a mood board that you can

analyse

- initial developments – this is a step for ideation and generating as many ideas as possible and developing initial sketches
- further developments – experiment with the graphic design components; this step develops a sample of initial sketches and creates variations of those initial ideas
- present work – to the client and gain their feedback; if they have any changes, go back to ‘further developments’ and develop their ideas and repeat this step
- once complete, the learner should evaluate their designs and their performance within the project

1.2 Learners will show an understanding of the design cycle through a sketchbook showing how they have used the design cycle within several projects.

The explanation of terms (section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

Types of evidence

Evidence could include:

- research
- reports
- learner written statement
- written or oral questions and answers
- discussion
- assignment
- presentation
- digital, physical, and interactive portfolios

Learning outcome 2

The learner will:

2 Understand the fundamentals of composition

The learner can:

- 2.1** Explain the basics of **composition**
- 2.2** Identify form and space within a design
- 2.3** Identify **symmetry/asymmetry** within a design
- 2.4** Identify basic principles of design layout
- 2.5** Describe the contrast within a design

Key words

Composition – the arrangement of elements or parts of a design (text, images) on the page.

Symmetry – a composition where elements are balanced or mirrored on a page.

Asymmetry – a composition where elements are juxtaposed and do not mirror the other forms on the page.

Assessment guidance

Delivery and assessment

2.1 The learner will understand how to build a composition that consists of multiple elements to create a harmonious design. They should understand the following terms:

- hierarchy – the principle of arranging elements to show their order of importance
- contrast – the difference between 2 or more elements in a composition
- alignment – refers to aligning elements on the page to an orientation to organise a design and make it visually appealing

2.2 The learner should be able to highlight these design practices and create designs using the following practices:

- the rule of thirds – is to divide a design into an even 3x3 grid; the elements should fall onto the intersections of the grid lines, this allows you to create movement within a design and to have even balance between positive and negative space
- the golden ratio (Fibonacci Spiral) – starts with a rectangle partitioned into 2 squares; in each step, a square the length of the rectangle's longest side is added to the rectangle, this spiral can be used to create a proportional and harmonious composition
- white space/negative space (law of closure) – the mind creates a solid object on the page from suggestions of shapes and placement and proximity of elements

2.3 The learner should be able to highlight these design practices and create designs using the following practices:

- using symmetry to create balance within a design
- using asymmetry to create motion within a design

2.4 The learner will understand how to use a grid system to enhance the communication of the content within a design. They will also look to use symmetry/asymmetry within their designs to create contrast between their designs if they consist of multiple variations.

2.5 The learner will have an understanding of how to create contrast within a design to provide the end user with an enjoyable experience and highlight key content.

The explanation of terms (section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification

Types of evidence

Evidence could include:

- research
- reports
- learner written statement
- written or oral questions and answers
- discussion
- assignment
- presentation
- practical/design work

Learning outcome 3

The learner will:

- 3 Understand the fundamentals of typography

The learner can:

- 3.1 Identify the **anatomy** of typefaces
3.2 Justify the correct **font** to use within a relevant project
3.3 Explain why spacing plays an important part of typography
3.4 Identify typographic emphasis and **hierarchy** within a design

Key words

Anatomy – the language used to describe the various parts of letterforms.

Font – serif, sans serif, bold, italic, display, script.

Hierarchy – in this context, the name of differing levels of text in a document. A page title, for example, is at the top of the hierarchy, whereas paragraphs of text are below.

Delivery and assessment

3.1 The learner will be able to correctly identify the type **anatomy**:

- ascender line
- cap height
- x-height
- base line
- descender line
- crossbar
- ascender
- counter
- serif
- eye
- cross-stroke
- bowl
- link
- loop
- ear
- bracket
- leg
- break
- descender
- terminal

3.2 Learners will understand the different meanings behind fonts and use them appropriately. For example, serif fonts portray tradition, history and reliability; sans serif fonts are modern and contemporary; script fonts add a sense of feminism, romance and elegance. They will also understand to choose fonts that are readable

3.3 Learners will show an understanding of why spacing is important within typography. They should express knowledge and understanding in:

- alignment – the setting of text relative to a column or page, including how to correct rivers and orphans
- rivers – occur when text is incorrectly justified, and it makes the text hard to read
- orphans – a paragraph-opening line that appears by itself at the bottom of a page or column
- kerning – adjustments to the spaces between 2 letters
- leading – the horizontal space between lines of type (related to the historical use of strips of lead in letterpress)
- optical adjustments – adjusting letterspacing by eye, not mechanically
- tracking – the space between words, which can be adjusted
- opposites attract rule – choose 2 fonts that complement each other

3.4 Learners will understand how to create a **hierarchy** within type. They will also understand methods on how to create **hierarchy**:

- adding vertical white space
- changing a font's weight
- changing type size
- changing the typestyle
- changing some lowercase type to capitals
- contrasting condensed with extended type
- using colour variation
- correctly pair fonts together to create hierarchy and contrasts (for example, sans serif font with a serif font)
- opposites attract

The explanation of terms (section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

Types of evidence

Evidence could include:

- research
- reports
- learner written statement
- written or oral questions and answers
- discussion
- assignment
- presentation

Learning outcome 4

The learner will:

- 4 Understand the fundamentals of colour

The learner can:

- 4.1 Demonstrate within design work the difference between **hue**, **tone** and **saturation**
- 4.2 Identify within projects how colour can impact a design
- 4.3 Identify methods to use colour to create contrast and harmony
- 4.4 Demonstrate how you can make associations with colour
- 4.5 Understand how colour theory can determine design decisions

Key words

Hue – distinguishes one colour from another.

Tone – refers to light or darkness of a colour.

Saturation – refers to the brightness of a colour (for example, heavy saturation leaves a brighter colour whereas a lower saturation leaves a duller colour).

Delivery and assessment

4.1 Learners will understand that **hue** distinguishes one colour from another. **Tone** refers to light or darkness of a colour. A colour with white added to it is called tint, and a colour with added black is called a shade. **Saturation** is similar to brightness. A colour that is heavily saturated is a bright colour whereas one with a low saturation is a dull colour.

4.2 Learners will understand that onscreen colours and printed colours use different colour systems. They are called **RGB** and **CMYK**. **RGB** would be used for onscreen colours. **RGB** is an additive colour system because when they are combined, they create a white light. **CMYK** is a subtractive colour system because when they are combined, they create black.

RGB is a colour system used on computers, mobiles phones, TV's. It stands for red, green and blue. **CMYK** is a colour system used within printed media. It stands for cyan, magenta, yellow and key (black).

4.3 Learners will be able to identify colour palettes with 2 or more colours that work harmoniously. They will also be able to identify colour palettes with high and low contrast. The learner could use colour palettes that are:

- complementary – colour schemes from opposite sides of the colour wheel (for example, red and green)
- analogous – colour schemes that sit next to each other on the colour wheel (for example, red, orange and yellow)
- triadic – colours schemes which are evenly spaced around the colour wheel. Traditionally they will be bright and vibrant colours (for example, red, yellow and blue)

4.4 Learners will be able to identify and create colour palettes that create a connection between colours, emotions, culture, experience and memory. They will also understand the connotation a colour may have (for example, green would be jealousy, growth nature).

4.5 Learners will be able to justify design decisions made when considering colour theory.

The explanation of terms (section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

Type of evidence

Evidence could include:

- research
- reports
- learner written statement
- written or oral questions and answers
- discussion
- assignment
- presentation

Learning outcome 5

The learner will:

5 Understand the design industry

The learner can:

- 5.1** Explain the design elements used by recognised designers
- 5.2** Describe how recognised designers use the features to convey a message within their designs
- 5.3** Compare the work of a recognised designer with another designer

Assessment guidance

Delivery and assessment

5.1 The learner will be able to identify how recognised designers use the graphic design components in their work.

5.2 The learner will be able to justify why the designers have used the graphic design components to communicate a message in their work.

5.3 Learners should look to compare and analyse the work of chosen designers and look at similarities and differences in designs.

The learner should also be able to recognise the message that the designers are portraying through their work.

The learner should choose at least 1 designer from 3 of the disciplines listed below:

- digital design
- illustration
- branding
- corporate identity

- typography
- advertising

The explanation of terms (section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

Types of evidence

Evidence could include:

- research
- reports
- learner written statement
- written or oral questions and answers
- discussion
- assignment
- presentation

Unit 02 Practising graphic design (Y/618/7632)

Unit summary	In this unit, the learner will learn graphic design skills and show understanding of graphic design tools, equipment, and software. They will undergo graphic design briefs to practise their skills using the design cycle and will present the end results to the client.
Guided learning hours	90
Level	3
Mandatory/optional	Mandatory

Learning outcome 1

The learner will:

- 1 Understand essential graphic design tools, equipment and software

The learner can:

- 1.1 Differentiate between the types of graphic design software
- 1.2 Identify when to use appropriate graphic design software and other media

Assessment guidance

Delivery and assessment

1.1 The learner will identify which graphic design software they have used/are currently using within a graphic design brief. Examples of graphic design software are:

- Adobe:
 - Illustrator
 - Photoshop
 - InDesign
 - Lightroom
 - After Effects
 - Dreamweaver
- GIMP
- Scribus
- Inkscape
- Blender

1.2 The learner will identify when to use the graphic design software. For example:

- illustration project – Adobe Illustrator
- animation project – Adobe After Effects
- editorial project – Adobe InDesign or Scribus

The learner will justify why they have used the graphic design tools during the development phase of the design cycle.

The explanation of terms (section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

Types of evidence

Evidence must include:

- justification within sketchbook

Learning outcome 2

The learner will:

- 2 Demonstrate print production techniques

The learner can:

- 2.1 Describe the process required to prepare files for print production
- 2.2 Demonstrate use of appropriate finishing techniques
- 2.3 Explain the forms of colour that can be used within print
- 2.4 Demonstrate how media can be used within print
- 2.5 Demonstrate colour proofs and pre-print checks and explain why these are essential
- 2.6 Explain components of editorial design
- 2.7 Produce a printed editorial design in response to a brief

Assessment guidance

Delivery and assessment

2.1 The learner will understand how to prepare files for print production. The learner will understand what files are appropriate for print production. To embed media within the print production, the learner should use either:

- PSD – Adobe Photoshop file name used for image creation (for example, filename.psd)
- AI – Adobe Illustrator file name used for image creation (for example, filename.ai)
- EPS – file format to contain vector images (for example, filename.eps)
- TIFF – high quality image file format (for example, filename.tiff)
- JPEG or JPG – image file format using lossy compression; this means a certain amount of quality is lost during the saving process

2.2 When creating a print document, they should use the appropriate document setup (for example, when creating an A2 poster the document should be 594 x 420 mm with the **bleed** setup, this is determined by the printing provider). They should be producing **PDF** files to print unless specified by the printing provider.

The learner should understand to embed fonts and images within a **PDF** file to prevent printing errors:

- **bleed** – a bleed is essentially the visual content that runs over the trim edge, or the intended cut line on the printed stock sheet; once the stock sheet is printed on, the trim line is cut and the bleed is removed
- **PDF** – stands for ‘printable document format’ (for example, filename.pdf)
- matte finish – a dull, non-shiny quality of paper
- foiling – speciality printing process which uses heat, pressure and metallic paper (foil)
- spot varnishing – a varnish applied only to portions of a printed piece after printing, rather than to the entire sheet, typically for aesthetic purposes.

The learner will understand what different paper stocks and finishes are available and which are appropriate to a project. Finishes that are available are:

- gloss finish – a shiny form of paper
- satin finish – a hybrid between matte and gloss finish
- varnished finish – a liquid sprayed onto paper to give it a hard surface to preserve the ink
- laminated finish – a plastic sheet that is bound to the paper to protect it
- embossed finish – a cut out of metallic foil or colour to emphasise an element on a design; it can also cut out to expose pages underneath

The learner should understand the term **GSM** as it affects the overall finish. The learner should think about the texture and light of material, as well as the desired impression of a project during print production.

GSM – grams per square metre, this is how paper is weighed.

2.3 The learner will understand the 3 forms of colour print available:

- monochrome – printing using only 1 colour
- duotone – printing using only 2 colours
- CYMK – is a colour system used within printed media; it stands for cyan, magenta, yellow and key (black)

2.4 The learner will understand that when using media within print documents they should be creating documents with high **DPI** to stop distorting images. They should also be using high quality images whenever possible.

DPI – dots per inch is the measurement a printer will use to colour dots within a square inch of a document.

2.5 The learner should understand why colour proofs and pre-print checks are essential. They should:

- check **registration marks** to see if the job has been proofed in register
- check trim marks for position and that the bleed allowance is correct
- check greyscale density patches are printed in steps from no tint through to black
- check the colour control strip which tells the designer whether the proof is faithful to the film being proofed

Registration marks – hairline marks at the corners of a printed page to help ensure plates are lined up correctly and that designate what will be cropped off at finishing time.

Quality control strips – usually incorporated in printed sheets outside the grid to monitor the quality of platemaking, inking and registration. These can be either greyscale or colour.

2.6 The learner will have to understand the following elements to know what makes a good editorial design. They will understand:

- the anatomy of an editorial:
 - the cover
 - branding and identity

- copy
- imagery
- page grids/layout
- understanding type and image harmony
- combining layouts with type and imagery
- creating consistency without monotony

2.7 The learner will produce a printed editorial design. They will demonstrate their knowledge of print production. The learners will have to research a topic in response to a brief and produce a 50 page editorial design. They should research and develop coherent design layouts and grid systems within the editorial design.

The explanation of terms (section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

Types of evidence

Evidence must include:

- one or more projects on creating print productions within a sketchbook

Learning outcome 3

The learner will:

- 3** Be able to create content for the web

The learner can:

- 3.1** Produce appropriate files for the web
- 3.2** Explain the role a **content management system (CMS)** plays online
- 3.3** Demonstrate how to produce a **search engine optimisation (SEO)** friendly website
- 3.4** Describe the purpose of common website elements
- 3.5** State the range of different types of websites
- 3.6** Demonstrate use of layout grids to create basic web pages
- 3.7** Create a basic website to promote design work

Key words

CMS - creates a structured framework for websites to be built on.

Assessment t

Delivery and assessment

3.1 The learner should understand that files for the web should be produced with the **RGB** colour system. The learner should be aware of what files are appropriate for the web. **JPEG** files are common on the web for their small file size, **PNG** files can be larger inside when compared to **JPEG** files. They can have a transparent background unlike **JPEG** files. **GIF** files are similar to **JPEG** images as they use lossy compression, but they can be animated. **MP4** files are video that can play on websites.

RGB is a colour system used on computers, mobiles phones, TV's. It stands for red, green and blue.

JPEG is image file format using lossy compression. This means a certain amount of quality is lost during the saving process.

Portable Network Graphics (PNG) is a raster-graphics file format that supports lossless data compression

Graphics Interchange Format (GIF) is a lossless format for image files that supports both animated and static images.

Motion Picture 4 (MP4) is used to store audio and video files.

3.2 The learner should understand that **CMS** are essential when creating content for the web. There are various **CMS** available, the most common is WordPress. The learner should understand you would install a **CMS** to your hosting provider. A **CMS** allows you to create a database for a website, where text and images will be stored and defines the admin/password credentials to access the systems dashboard. The learner should understand they need to produce complex passwords to prevent security breaches and add **SSL** certificates to the domain.

Secure sockets layer (SSL) is a protocol to encrypt data within a server.

3.3 The learner should understand how to leverage the following elements to increase discoverability online:

- meta data:
 - meta data elements within the HTML code are used by search engines to index a website and can be broken down into:
 - page title – this is what appears at the top of your listing in the search results and in the browser tab; a bad example of a page title is “Site Name | Recipes” whereas a good example of a page title is “Award Winning Chinese Recipes | Site Name”
 - keywords – word combinations that are used within search queries to find a topic of websites
 - site description – a sentence of 20 words that appear within the search results
- images – often web users search through images and click the most relevant and visit the website, and therefore to make your images more discoverable, you should:
 - appropriately name your files:
 - bad example “Img12345678910.jpg”
 - good example “award-winning-chicken-chow-mein.jpg”
 - include ALT tags from images on your website
 - do not put important text inside images as search engines cannot read images

3.4 The learner should understand what role these common website elements play:

- navigation
- page title
- header
- body copy
- footer
- call-to-action (CTA) elements
- breadcrumbs

3.5 The learner will know the variety of websites they can potentially create:

- e-commerce website
- magazine website
- portfolio website
- blogging website
- landing pages
- directory websites

3.6 The learner will understand how to use a grids system to produce a website layout.

3.7 The learner will demonstrate their knowledge of producing content for the web and create a website for a topic of their choice but must have a minimum of 5 pages.

The explanation of terms (section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

Types of evidence

Evidence must include:

- one or more projects on creating interactive web content within a sketchbook

Learning outcome 4

The learner will:

- 4** Be able to promote through appropriate social media platforms

The learner can:

- 4.1** Demonstrate what media types are applicable on social media.
- 4.2** Explain the considerations to prepare graphics for social media.
- 4.3** Evaluate content used by different organisations for promotional purposes.
- 4.4** Create a social media campaign in response to a brief.

Delivery and assessment

4.1 The learner should have an understanding of what media types can be used on social media. For example, for images you can post PNG, JPEG or GIF and for video's you can publish MP4 and MOV files. Learners should be aware of what media types perform best on social media. For example, on Facebook from best to worst post types are:

- live video
- video
- image
- text
- links

4.2 The learner should be able to show an understanding of image dimensions and application of social media posts.

4.3 The learner should be able to conduct research on similar social media campaigns and understand how the graphics were made, the purpose of them and whether the campaigns are effective.

4.4 The learner should be able to produce a social media campaign in response to a brief. They should be able to produce multiple graphics (for example, feed posts, story posts, video/live video) across several social media networks.

The explanation of terms (section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

Types of evidence

Evidence must include:

- one or more projects on creating social media campaigns within a sketchbook

Learning outcome 5

The learner will:

5 Be able to produce graphics for animation

The learner can:

- 5.1** Describe the animation principles
- 5.2** Compare and contrast a range of animation techniques
- 5.3** Plan a storyboard for an animation
- 5.4** Create an animation in response to a brief

Delivery and assessment

5.1 The learners will be expected to describe how animation is formed by joining a series of still frames together, exploring the stretch and squash principle and key frames.

5.2 The learner will demonstrate knowledge of the following animation techniques:

- traditional animation
- 2D animation
- 3D animation
- typography animation

- motion graphics

5.3 The learner will plan and produce a storyboard for an animation they plan to create in response to a brief.

5.4 The learner will show their skills for animation and apply their knowledge. They should use one of the animation techniques above to create their animation.

The explanation of terms (section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

Types of evidence

Evidence must include:

- one or more projects on creating graphics for animation within a sketchbook

The learner will:

6 Be able to create a brand identity

The learner can:

6.1 Define 'brand identity'

6.2 Demonstrate the elements applied to create a brand identity

6.3 Develop a brand identity in response to a brief

Delivery and assessment

6.1 The learner will understand a brand identity is a collection of elements to visually portray a business or individual. Brand identity is different to 'branding'. The learner will understand the term 'branding' refers to the marketing practice of a brand. 'Brand' is the perception of the business.

The learner will understand that to develop a brand identity they will need to answer these questions:

- what is your mission?
- what are your values?
- what kind of personality would your brand have?
- how do you differentiate yourself from the competition?
- how would your brand communicate?

6.2 The learner will show an understanding of what elements create a brand identity and justify the choices they make to create a brand, for example:

- typography:
 - serif fonts are letters that have decorative flourishes at the end of strokes; this classic typography is great if you want your brand to appear trustworthy, traditional, and elegant
 - sans serif fonts are letters that have smooth edges and lack the anchor or "feet" of their serif counterparts; sans serif fonts give a more sleek, modern feel to brands
 - script fonts are designed to mimic cursive handwriting; these fonts can be a great way to

- add a luxurious or feminine feel to your brand
 - display fonts are unique fonts; each display font is made up of unusual shapes, letters, outlines, shadowing, or a more artistic/hand drawn edge
- colour palette – colours have psychological attachment; learners will use **colour theory** to justify their choices
- shapes – shapes also have psychological attachments:
 - round shapes create feelings of community, unity and love
 - straight edges create a feeling of stability and trustworthiness
 - straight lines – vertical lines suggest masculinity and strength while horizontal lines suggest tranquility and mellow vibes
- psychology of colour – is the study of how colours determine human emotions and behaviours

6.3 The learner will produce brand style that identifies:

- brand assets
- brand identity
- how and when to use the assets
- brand do's and don'ts

The learner should create a brand identity by creating elements, such as:

- logo
- business cards
- leaflets
- posters
- website
- product packaging
- email design
- social media templates

The explanation of terms (section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification

Types of evidence

Evidence must include:

- one or more projects on branding within a sketchbook rebrand an existing product
- rebrand an existing product

Learning outcome 7

The learner will:

7 Understand graphic design technical skills

The learner can:

- 7.1 Describe the basic rules of photography
- 7.2 Explain the range of techniques and platforms to edit imagery
- 7.3 Explain the range of techniques and platforms to manipulate imagery
- 7.4 Describe a range of illustration techniques
- 7.5 Explain the concepts of vector artwork
- 7.6 Understand the benefits of drawing/sketching out ideas before developing them digitally

Delivery and assessment

7.1 The learner will understand the terms:

- aperture – refers to the opening of a lens's diaphragm through which light passes through
- shutter speed – the length of time the camera shutter is open, exposing light onto the camera sensor
- ISO – a camera setting that will brighten or darken a photo
- depth of field – the distance between the closest and furthest objects in a photo that appears acceptably sharp
- white balance – means adjusting colours so that the image looks more natural
- composition – the arrangement of elements within a photo
- rule of thirds – is to divide a design into an even 3x3 grid; the elements should fall onto the intersections of the grid lines, this allows you to create movement within a design and to have even balance between positive and negative space

7.2 The learner will understand they can edit images they have taken using platforms such as Adobe Lightroom, for example. They will understand how to warm up their photos, highlight their subject and adjust the tone of their photos.

7.3 The learner will understand they can manipulate imagery with platforms, such as Adobe Photoshop, for example. They will understand how to retouch up their images, turn their images into works of art, combine other graphic design elements, such as text or illustration, with their imagery and use brushes within their composition.

7.4 The learner will understand the following illustration techniques:

- hand drawn
- vector graphics
- freehand digital

7.5 The learner will understand that vector artworks are comprised of paths and not pixels like JPEG's and PNG's. They have a start and end point. In between the start and end they can have curves and angles along the way. Examples of vector artwork paths can be a line/square/circle/triangle/curvy shapes. You can use programmes, such as Adobe Illustrator, to create vector artwork, for example.

7.6 The learner will understand that it is helpful to draw and plan their initial ideas on paper before moving to developing them by taking photos or moving to digitally sketch them to develop them.

The explanation of terms (section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

Types of evidence

Evidence must include:

- one or more projects on photography within a sketchbook
- one or more projects on illustration within a sketchbook

Unit 03 Building a graphic design portfolio (D/618/7633)

Unit summary	In this unit, the learner will produce a traditional and digital portfolio of work. They will demonstrate their skills, how they developed projects and their influences. Learners will also understand working in the graphic design industry and personal professional development within the graphic design industry.
Guided learning hours	30
Level	3
Mandatory/optional	Mandatory

Learning outcome 1

The learner will:

- 1 Be able to produce a traditional and digital portfolio

The learner can:

- 1.1 Create a range of design projects
- 1.2 Review and evaluate the design projects
- 1.3 Reflect on the actions taken during the design projects
- 1.4 Demonstrate good presentation skills when presenting developed designs

Delivery and assessment

1.1 Learners must have a minimum of 10 completed projects that have achieved all the steps of the design cycle. They should show an understanding of the graphic design components in those 10 projects and that they can demonstrate knowledge in:

- print production
- interactive web
- social media
- video production/animation
- branding
- visual identity graphic design
- marketing and advertising graphic design
- user interface graphic design
- publication graphic design
- packaging graphic design
- motion graphic design
- environmental graphic design
- art and illustration for graphic design

1.2 Learners should review their work at all stages of the design cycle. They should follow an iterative design process.

1.3 Learners will justify why they have chosen to include specific pieces of work within their portfolio.

1.4 Learners should demonstrate skill in the effective presentation of their portfolio. Learners will

not be credited for quantity of work but for the careful consideration and presentation of the work they have edited and selected.

The explanation of terms (section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

Types of evidence

Evidence must include:

- learners' digital portfolio
- learners' traditional portfolio

Evidence could include:

- a digital portfolio
- a traditional portfolio
- interactive portfolio
- a presentation
- report

Learning outcome 2

The learner will:

2 Understand working in the graphic design industry

The learner can:

2.1 Describe employment opportunities in the graphic design industry

2.2 Describe ways a graphic designer can specialise

2.3 Identify a range of techniques to present and promote graphic design work

Delivery and assessment

2.1 Learners employment opportunities are:

- freelance graphic designer
- working in a graphic design agency
- in-house graphic designer (working for company and producing all graphic design assets)

2.2 Learners will understand that you can specialise in a graphic design sector. The following areas a graphic designer can specialise in are:

- visual identity graphic design
- marketing and advertising graphic design
- user interface graphic design
- publication graphic design
- packaging graphic design
- motion graphic design

- environmental graphic design
- art and illustration for graphic design

2.3 Learners should research and explore different ways that work can be presented by graphic designers. They should have an understanding of the aesthetics of well-presented graphic design work and how this helps with the promotion of their image as a designer. Learners should explore different ways they can promote their graphic design work.

The explanation of terms (section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

Types of evidence

Evidence could include:

- audio/visual narrative
- presentation
- report

Learning outcome 3

The learner will:

3 Understand personal professional development within the graphic design industry

The learner can:

- 3.1** Identify strengths and weaknesses within own graphic design work
- 3.2** Identify technical skills that need to be developed
- 3.3** Analyse own graphic design projects
- 3.4** Analyse projects from recognised graphic designers

Delivery and assessment

3.1 Learners will review the aspects of their portfolio and its presentation which provide a positive description of the learner as a graphic designer, and those aspects which provide a less positive description of the learner as a graphic designer.

3.2 The learner will understand and identify technical skills they need to develop and how they will practise them. They will also be able to demonstrate technical skills they have developed throughout their design portfolio.

3.3 Learners will review the work produced in response to a brief. Learners will reflect on their imaginative and original interpretations, their use of inventive visual communication, and the suitability of their designs.

3.4 Learners will review the work produced by a recognised graphic designer. Learners will reflect on the graphic design project and understand what they are visually communicating, how they are interpreting the design and why the design is suitable/unsuitable.

The explanation of terms (section 3) explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification.

Types of evidence

Evidence must include:

- a review

Evidence could include:

- presentation
- report
- audio/visual narrative

Section 3

Explanation of terms

Explanation of terms

This table explains how the terms used at level 3 in the unit content are applied to this qualification (not all verbs are used in this qualification).

Apply	Explain how existing knowledge can be linked to new or different situations in practice.
Analyse	Break the subject down into separate parts and examine each part. Show how the main ideas are related and why they are important. Reference to current research or theory may support the analysis.
Clarify	Explain the information in a clear, concise way.
Classify	Organise according to specific criteria.
Collate	Collect and present information arranged in sequential or logical order.
Compare	Examine the subjects in detail and consider the similarities and differences.
Critically compare	This is a development of compare where the learner considers the positive aspects and limitations of the subject.
Consider	Think carefully and write about a problem, action or decision.
Demonstrate	Show an understanding by describing, explaining or illustrating using examples.
Describe	Write about the subject giving detailed information in a logical way.
Develop (a plan/idea which...)	Expand a plan or idea by adding more detail and/or depth of information.
Diagnose	Identify the cause based on valid evidence.
Differentiate	Identify the differences between 2 or more things.
Discuss	Write a detailed account giving a range of views or opinions.
Distinguish	Explain the difference between 2 or more items, resources, pieces of information.
Draw conclusions (which...)	Make a final decision or judgement based on reasons.
Estimate	Form an approximate opinion or judgement using previous knowledge or considering other information.

Evaluate	Examine strengths and weaknesses, arguments for and against and/or similarities and differences. Judge the evidence from the different perspectives and make a valid conclusion or reasoned judgement. Reference to current research or theory may support the evaluation.
Explain	Provide detailed information about the subject with reasons showing how or why. Responses could include examples to support these reasons.
Extrapolate	Use existing knowledge to predict possible outcomes that might be outside the norm.
Identify	Recognise and name the main points accurately.
Implement	Explain how to put an idea or plan into action.
Interpret	Explain the meaning of something.
Judge	Form an opinion or make a decision.
Justify	Give a satisfactory explanation for actions or decisions.
Perform	Carry out a task or process to meet the requirements of the question.
Plan	Think about and organise information in a logical way using an appropriate format.
Provide	Identify and give relevant and detailed information in relation to the subject.
Reflect	Learners should consider their actions, experiences or learning and the implications of this for their practice and/or professional development.
Review and revise	Look back over the subject and make corrections or changes.
Select	Make an informed choice for a specific purpose.
Show	Supply evidence to demonstrate accurate knowledge and understanding.
State	Give the main points clearly in sentences or paragraphs.
Summarise	Give the main ideas or facts in a concise way.

Section 4

Additional information

Additional information**Resource requirements**

There are no mandatory resource requirements for this qualification, but centres must ensure learners have access to suitable resources to enable them to cover all the appropriate learning outcomes.

Support for learners**Learner's evidence tracking log (LETL)**

The LETL can help learners keep track of their work. This blank document can be downloaded free of charge from the qualifications page on the NCFE website. You do not have to use the LETL, you can devise your own evidence-tracking document instead.

Support for centres**Qualification factsheet**

This document outlines the key information of this qualification for the centre, learner and employer.

Learning resources

We offer a wide range of learning resources and materials to support the delivery of our qualifications. Please check the qualifications page on the NCFE website for more information and to see what is available for this qualification.

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