

DEFINITIVE COURSE RECORD

Course Title	BA (Hons) Graphic Design (Graphic Illustration) (with Professional Placement)
Awarding Bodies	University of Suffolk
Level of Award ¹	FHEQ Level 6
Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies Recognition	None
Credit Structure ²	480 Credits Level 4: 120 Credits Level 5: 120 Credits plus 120 placement credits* Level 6: 120 Credits *For an award 'with Professional Placement,' 120 placement credits are also required
Mode of Attendance	Full-time
Standard Length of Course ³	4 years full-time
Intended Award	BA (Hons) Graphic Design (Graphic Illustration) (with Professional Placement)
Named Exit Awards	CertHE Graphic Design (Graphic Illustration) DipHE Graphic Design (Graphic Illustration) DipHE Graphic Design (Graphic Illustration) (with Professional Placement) BA Graphic Design (Graphic Illustration) (with Professional Placement)
Entry Requirements ⁴	Typical Offer: 112 UCAS tariff points (or equivalent) Applicants will be expected to attend an interview and show a portfolio, or submit an e-portfolio, as part of the application process
Delivering Institution(s)	University of Suffolk
UCAS Code	

This definitive record sets out the essential features and characteristics of the BA (Hons) Graphic Design (Graphic Illustration) with Professional Placement. The information provided is accurate for students entering level 4 in the 2027–2028 academic year⁵.

¹ For an explanation of the levels of higher education study, see the [QAA Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies \(2024\)](#)

² All academic credit awarded as a result of study at the University adheres to the [Higher education credit framework for England](#).

³ Where the course is delivered both full-time and part-time, the standard length of course is provided for the full-time mode of attendance only. The length of the part-time course is variable and dependent upon the intensity of study. Further information about mode of study and maximum registration periods can be found in the [Framework and Regulations for Undergraduate Awards](#).

⁴ Details of standard entry requirements can be found in the [Admissions Policy](#) and further details about Disclosure and Barring Checks (DBS) can be found on the [University's DBS webpage](#).

⁵ The University reserves the right to make changes to course content, structure, teaching and assessment as outlined in the [Admissions Policy](#).

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Course Summary

The BA (Hons) Graphic Design (Graphic Illustration) with Professional Placement degree enables students to develop practical, creative and intellectual skills underpinned by theoretical and conceptual approaches to design. Delivered in a professional environment, utilising traditional and contemporary media, students produce inventive, high quality, and vocationally relevant work.

Employability is at the heart of the Graphic Design (Graphic Illustration) course at the University of Suffolk. As well as learning how to be creative and critical thinkers while also developing a broad range of practical skills, contemporary professional practice prepares students for their future careers.

Transferable knowledge and skills are embedded throughout the teaching and learning experience, further enabling students to become enterprising and employable graduates.

Course Aims

The primary aim of the A (Hons) Graphic Design (Graphic Illustration) with Professional Placement programme is to educate students so that they are able to work as creative visual communicators, or to support their progression onto a postgraduate course, either straight after graduating or later in life. The course also aims to teach many transferable and employable skills that will enable students to meet the challenges of a changing world, allow them to be agile in their use of existing and emerging technology, and to encourage a professional self-awareness in order that they are more able to influence their own career decisions in line with their personal creative ambitions.

The course provides a suitable base for a wide variety of potential employment types, whether that relates to working as an employee, becoming self-employed, or working as a freelancer. The teaching of creative and analytical thinking, research skills, problem solving, communication skills, time-management and self-organisation, are all embedded within the delivery of the course. This aims to allow students to develop personal and professional attributes which can be applied to a wide range of post-course options, both within and outside of the fields of graphic design and illustration.

The course aims to:

- Provide a flexible, stimulating and challenging learning experience that accommodates the diverse academic and vocational backgrounds and prepares you for your future careers.
- Nurture and maintain a commitment to intellectual and personal development in order to form a basis for a lifetime of experience and learning.
- Provide an educational framework that promotes the development of broad professional Graphic Design and/or Graphic Illustration awareness and abilities, alongside the acquisition of transferable and employability skills.
- Promote the cultural and vocational relevance of the course and enable links with practitioners, professional organizations, the creative industries and the wider community in general.
- Assist and encourage students to develop a mature and self-motivated attitude in creating and producing original solutions with a diverse, explorative range of creative and critical approaches and methods.

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Course Learning Outcomes

The following statements define what students graduating from the A (Hons) Graphic Design (Graphic Illustration) with Professional Placement course will have been judged to have demonstrated in order to achieve the award. These statements, known as learning outcomes, have been formally approved as aligned with the generic qualification descriptor for level 6 awards as set out by the UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)⁶.

1. Articulate and synthesise your knowledge and understanding, attributes and skills in effective ways in the contexts of creative practice, potential employment options or further study
2. Independently generate a diverse range of creative ideas, concepts, proposals, solutions and/or discussion points through the production of multifaceted design solutions produced to a professional standard in response to self-initiated enquiry and activity
3. Adopt a substantive critical and analytical approach to questioning independently sourced research material in relation to the practical and theoretical contexts of Graphic Design and/or Graphic Illustration, demonstrating an articulate command of design vocabulary

Course Design

The design of this course has been guided by the following QAA Benchmarks:

- QAA Subject Benchmark Statements Art and Design, December 2019
- QAA Subject Benchmark Statements Art and Design, October 2025 (consultation version)

⁶ As set out in the [QAA Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies \(2014\)](#)
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Course Structure

The A (Hons) Graphic Design (Graphic Illustration) with Professional Placement comprises modules at levels 4, 5 and 6.

Module Specifications for each of these modules is included within the course handbook, available to students on-line at the beginning of each academic year.

	Module	Credits	Module Type ⁷
Level 4			
	Design Fundamentals	30	M
	Typographic Explorations	30	M
	Social Contexts of Design & Illustration	30	M
	Applied Design & Illustration	30	M
Level 5			
	Visual Identity	30	M
	Illustration For Screen	30	M
	Studio Practice	15	M
	Critical Perspectives	15	M
	Professional Illustration Practice or	30	O
	* Work Based Learning	30	O
Placement Year			
	Professional Practice (sandwich year)	120	M
Level 6			
	Research into Practice part 1	30	M
	Research into Practice part 2	30	M
	Independent Project and Illustration Portfolio part 1	30	M
	Independent Project and Illustration Portfolio part 2	30	M

* Work-Based Learning module is offered as an option every year; enrolment on the module is dependent on a successful application process which is run in Block 3 in Level 5.

Awards

On successful completion of the course, students will be awarded a BA (Hons) Graphic Design (Graphic Illustration) (with Professional Placement). Students who leave the course early may be eligible for a BA Graphic Design (with Professional Placement) on successful completion of 420 credits including all mandatory modules at level 4 and 5, successful completion of the Professional Practice (120 credits) and at least 60 credits at level 6, a DipHE Graphic Design (Graphic Illustration) on successful completion of 360 credits including all mandatory modules at levels 4 and 5 and successfully completing the Professional Practice (120 credits), a DipHE Graphic Design (Graphic Illustration) on successful completion of 240 credits including all mandatory modules at levels 4 and 5, or a CertHE Graphic Design

⁷ Modules are designated as either mandatory (M), requisite (R) or optional (O). For definitions, see the [Framework and Regulations for Undergraduate Awards](#)

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(Graphic Illustration) on successful completion of 120 credits including all mandatory modules at level 4.

Course Delivery

The course is delivered at Ipswich. Students studying full-time on BA (Hons) Graphic Design are likely to have approximately 10 tutor structured learning hours per week for levels 4,5 and 6. Tutor structured learning will be a mix of lectures, seminars, critiques, practical activities, tutorials and workshops. Students will be expected to engage with tutor set learning, independent learning and assessment activity that will encompass approximately 960 hours per academic year ; but should be prepared for this to vary based on assignment deadlines and class exercises.

For the sandwich year involving a full year of professional practice, students are expected to engage in 1090 hours of professional practice (including 30 weeks of supervised and relevant work experience), 10 hours of tutorials and online support and 100 hours of independent study.

Course Assessment

A variety of assessments will be used on the course to enable students to experience and adapt to different assessment styles. The assessment methods used will be appropriate to assess each module's intended learning outcomes. Assessment on the course overall will comprise of 100% coursework (including practical assessments, essays, reports, presentations, group work, reflective learning journals and research projects).

Course Team

The academic staff delivering this course are drawn from a team that includes teaching specialists and creative practitioners. All staff are qualified in their subjects with their own specialist knowledge to contribute.

Course Costs

Students undertaking A (Hons) Graphic Design (Graphic Illustration) with Professional Placement will be charged tuition fees as detailed below.

Student Group	Tuition Fees
Full-time UK	£10,050 per year
Part-time UK	N/A
Placement year in UK / Abroad & UK / Abroad	£2,010
Full-time EU and International	£16,500 per year
Part-time EU and International	N/A

Payment of tuition fees is due at the time of enrolment and is managed in accordance with the Tuition Fee Policy.

Students are likely to incur other costs:

- course trips can be run 2 or 3 times every year at each level. While these are sometimes module specific, they are optional. Costs usually range from between £30-£60, depending on mode of transport and destination.
- the course sometimes runs an international trip that is optional. The cost of such trips is dependent on location, travel details, length of trip and accommodation.
- specialist materials will need to be bought, such as papers, layout pads, inks, drawing equipment, etc. On average, costs per module should range between £75–£100, however, this may rise to between £100–£200 for practical modules late in

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Level 5 and at Level 6 as students need professional standard prints for their portfolios, and produce realistic dummies and prototypes of 3D design work for display purposes.

- there is an optional Work Based Learning module in Level 5, which students negotiate to do as a replacement for another module. Students have to fund their own transport to this placement.
- there is an expectation that Level 6 students fund their Degree Show, although they often take on fundraising activities throughout the year to help with this. A final year student should budget approximately £100–£150 for this, but often it is much less.
- it is advised students invest in a portable hard-drive to back-up all their digital work. Approximate cost £100.

Academic Framework and Regulations

This course is delivered according to the Framework and Regulations for Undergraduate Awards and other academic policies and procedures of the University and published on the [website](#).