

Graphic Design Technical Handbook

About WorldSkills UK

WorldSkills UK is a set of dynamic skills competitions for young people and adults, designed and delivered by industry experts annually in over 70 skills.

Many WorldSkills UK competitions lead into WorldSkills International competitions which are biennial global events.

The Manchester College

The Manchester College is the competition organising partner for the Graphic Design national competition and the UK's largest Further Education provider, working to develop a career and work ready Greater Manchester, and beyond.

This includes our Industry Excellence Academy, with courses developed and supported by notable businesses from each relevant sector.

Graphic Design

A Graphic Designer is tasked with realising the vision of a client – from re-branding, expanding a brand across new platforms, crafting packaging, or challenging the conventions of modern media, the graphic designer creates the messages and images we see across our lives.

This will mean the learning of new skills and how to use new platforms within projects, adapting and expanding your skillset in response to clients who want you to use your talents to bring their message to life.

Careers in Graphic Design

Careers associated with Graphic Design vary, with opportunity ranging from the ability to do freelance work, to working for a design agency, working in UX Design, or advertising amongst many other fields. For more information on careers associated with the Graphic Design competition, [please visit this link](#).

Competition Overview

The Graphic Design competition is your chance to show off your skills and talents in response to industry briefs from the UK's biggest marketers and designers.

Anyone with a background in Graphic Design, Visual Art or Creative & Digital Media would be ideal for the competition – the modern graphic designer comes from a variety of backgrounds, bringing their artistic and technical experiences to briefs. You may be more traditional in your approach, a smart user of technology or combine the two – in this world, we need them all to be the next generation of message makers and communicators.

Throughout the competition, each brief will pose a series of challenges in which branding, and imagery will be used across media and platforms. The competition is also designed to build your skillset and knowledge at every stage. This both replicates the working methods of a graphic designer and gives the valuable experience needed to build your understanding of this exciting role. In the competition, you will be tested on what we call 'core competencies', which are outlined later on in the document.

There are several stages of the national competition:

Registration:

Once you have completed your registration (and accepted all terms and conditions) you will be emailed a link to complete a Passive online test.

Passive Stage:

When the passive online test has been completed you will be notified to let you know if you have scored high enough to go through to the national qualifiers (the semi-final round). You will then be informed when the National Qualifiers will take place.

National Qualifiers:

Ensure you're ready to compete in your national qualifiers by looking at the **online training resources, core competencies and marking guidelines** below.

This handbook outlines the type of tasks you will be expected to carry out. Ask your lecturer/employer for help in any areas where you feel you could improve and try to gain practical experience in all the task areas of the competition.

Please note, this year the national qualifiers will be held virtually.

WorldSkills UK National Finals

The 8 highest scoring competitors across each National Qualifiers will be invited to compete at the finals in a venue,

Ensure you're ready to compete in the national finals by looking at the **core competencies** and **marking guidelines** below. This outlines the type of competencies you will be expected to carry out. Ask your lecturer/employer for help in any areas where you feel you could improve and try to gain practical experience in all the task areas of the competition.

Core Competencies

The core competencies are the skillsets, knowledge and attributes that the competition will measure and judge. Understanding the core competencies required for each stage of the competition will help you to prepare for the competition.

	Passive	Qualifiers	Finals
Competitors taking part in this competition should be able to			
Branding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding a client's needs and direction • building of meaning and/or identity through words/pictures • building a consistent message across media/platforms/products 	Yes	Yes	Yes
Concept & Ideas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • researching references and influential work • use of sketchbook (or other medium) for idea development • clear communication of concept at every stage of production and presentation 	Yes	Yes	Yes
Font & Type <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding of basic font types • be able to manipulate font beyond simple sizing/leading/kerning • identify appropriate and/or similar fonts for clients 	Yes	Yes	Yes

<p>Layout, Grids & Use of Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • correct laying out of documents across software • correct laying out of documents for different platforms • understand of use of grids and space, inc. negative space 	Yes	Yes	Yes
<p>Colour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriate use of colour and colour theory • recognise existing use of colour by a brand and incorporate into won designs 	Yes	Yes	Yes
<p>Imagery & Illustration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • select appropriate images in terms of content & type (vector, raster) • manipulate existing imagery • create simple original illustrations 	Yes	Yes	Yes
<p>Motion Graphics & Animation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create simple keyframed/tweened animation (such as in Animate, After Effects or Similar) • create & export simple motion graphics for web and social media platforms 	No	Yes	Yes
<p>Presentation & Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicating through images • creating a consistent message • creating presentation materials • verbally explaining decisions through presentation and discussion 	No	Yes	Yes

General Instructions

1. Maximum working time is 6 hours at National Qualifiers and 6 hours at the National Final, across 3 days.
2. At the start of the competition an allotted time will be allocated for presenting the brief to competitors. This time is not part of the working time.
3. All materials and equipment must be marked out/used in the most economical method.
4. Competitors will be awarded marks for document setup, correct naming, file saving and storage & organisation.
5. Minimum marks will not be awarded for dimensional accuracy or technical perfection where instructions have been disobeyed.

Practice Resources

There are some free resources that competitors can start to practice with:

- [3D total tutorials](#)
- [BBC bitesize](#)
- [BBC Blast](#)

In addition to this, competitors are heavily encouraged to complete the WorldSkills UK [practice brief](#), available on the WorldSkills UK website. This resource is the most important practice exercise for competitors.

Judges Top Tips

CLUE 1 Bring your talents to the brief – try and bring your skills to the table.

CLUE 2 Be brave. Creativity is subjective and you need to stand out.

CLUE 3 Know your client. Know your market. Know your audience.

- 1) **Be Creative.** There is no one definition of being creative, or how to be creative, but natural talent is not the only way to show imagination and originality. From Reverse Thinking to SCAMPER, simple mind mapping to accidental moments of genius, there is no one way of doing any of this – so use this in your favour!

We encourage participants to bring and use their talents in the competition, and if you are an outstanding illustrator or photo editor then we want to see this in your work. Some briefs will offer little guidance and demand that you put forward something totally new, but all projects require your understanding of the challenge to be combined with your skills and ideas.

- 2) **Manage Stress.** We've seen a lot of competitors thrive and a few panic, but each one was able to perform in the end. Stress, nerves and anxieties don't have to be negative – they are part of who you are as an individual and a designer.

Pressure. You will be nervous, but you will need to keep nerves under control and not let the pressure overtake you. But managed pressure can be good, increasing energy and performance potential.

How to handle nerves:

- **listen to the Judge's brief and ask questions** – what sort of questions depends on you, i.e. repeating an aspect of their brief; gives you a chance to understand more
- **importantly, understand at what point your allotted time actually starts**, i.e. normally after the Judge's brief
- **read your competitors' brief**; everything you need to know for the task is in that brief. Allow yourself 2 to 3 minutes to read it. Read it at least twice as your first reading will be too fast
- **take a deep breath and start the task.** You are against the clock and so you will need to work with focus
- **task going wrong? Take a moment, think.** If necessary, quickly re-read that part of the instructions and then refocus. You may need to move on from that particular aspect of the task.

- 3) **Time Management.** The tasks are all against the clock. So once you have had your task brief and know how long you have, then quickly plan your workload. Section the aspects of the task into time blocks.

Remember, it is a competition and so practically everything you do within the task is marked and worth points; so focus on gathering points. Leave some time to put tools away at the end (that is worth points), clean up the working area (again, worth points). If you are stuck on a particular aspect then accept you may or may not get points for that particular part and in order to move onto the next part of the task, ask the Judge for assistance. Remember, there are other points to be earned.

- 4) **Practice before the competition.** You can't practise at a brief, but you can review the tools (see below) and learn from previous challenges.

Maybe complete a short challenge with a tight time constraint, or spend some time learning something you know you are less strong at. Don't underestimate research – the more you know about a platform, and industry or a practitioner, the more you can bring to the competition.

- 5) **The right tool for the job.** Most of the work a Graphic Designer does is not tool specific, although the Adobe Suite is the one we use as much as we can. Select the right tool for the job, and then consider what else is available. We will be looking for you to make good use of Vectors, Layouts, Motion etc – these come with expectations and conventions so understand what you have in your arsenal is key.
- 6) **Sleep.** Get plenty of sleep the night before. If offered, take advantage of accommodation for the night before the competition. A clear head is an undervalued tool.
- 7) **Mistakes.** These are good! They show you are thinking, trying and being bold. Plan in contingency time and you'll get the chance to fix any changes you want to make.
- 8) **You.** We recognise that our field requires individuality and diversity. We believe that supporting every individual is important and that this is what leads to a vibrant and creative industry, but for now we want to focus on you. If there's anything we can do to help you, whether it's questions over your access to equipment, a particular learning or social need or even something medical we need to be aware of then please let us know and we will support as much as we possibly can, and a little more on top. There is no one way of being unique and so we support every person as an individual in their own right.

Insight into the competition tasks

Task Breakdown

Time will be allocated for familiarisation prior to the competition which will allow the competitor to ask any remaining questions regarding the brief and the tasks.

The competitor will be given time to create a response to the guidance and supporting documentation only once introduced to the project brief.

After the competitors' allocated time is over the work will be marked to specified criteria created by three independent judges including at least one judge from the company providing the brief.

Marking Criteria

The two tables below show an outline of how marks have been distributed for tasks in the past.

Subjective Scoring

Aspect ID	Description	Max Marks
A1	Overall - Tone / Message	5
A2	Overall - Answering Brief	5
A3	Overall - Use of Text & Fonts	5
A4	Overall - Use of Colour	5
A5	Overall - Use of Layout & Space	5
A6	Overall - Image Selection	5
A7	Overall - Illustration & Original Design Work	5
A8	Overall - Suitability for Audience	5
A9	Overall - Semiotics	5
A10	Element 1 - Overall Effectiveness	5
A11	Element 2 - Overall Effectiveness	5
A12	Element 3 - Overall Effectiveness	5
A13	Element 4 - Overall Effectiveness	5
A14	Impact of Total Design Solution*	10

Objective Scoring

Aspect ID	Description	Max Mark
B1	Evidence of design and idea development	1
B2	Justification and communication of designs and ideas	1
B3	Sketchbook/designs are clear and easy to navigate	1
B4	Consistent Application of Branding	2
B5	Consistent Use of Colour	2
B6	Consistent use of type	2
B7	Effective utilisation of information provided	1
B8	Correct Colour Mode	1
B9	Correct method of presentation	1
B10	Correct usage of sizing and resolution conventions	1
B11	Effective utilisation of information provided	1
B12	Correct Colour Mode	1
B13	Correct method of presentation	1
B14	Correct usage of sizing and resolution conventions	1
B15	Effective utilisation of information provided	1
B16	Correct Colour Mode	1

B17	Correct method of presentation	1
B18	Correct usage of sizing and resolution conventions	1
B19	Complete with all required content	2
B20	Work submitted appropriately.	2

Health & Safety

During the competition, as in any work or educational facility, you have a duty to protect yourself and those around you.

As an Organising Partner, The Manchester College & our delivery partners have a responsibility to protect you and keep you informed about health & safety procedures and practices including:

- making the competition area safe and without risks to health
- provide adequate welfare facilities
- give instruction, information, supervision and where applicable training.

As a competitor you have a legal duty to:

- take reasonable care for your own health & safety and that of others who may be affected by what you do or do not do
- cooperate with the Organising Partner and/or their appointed delivery team on health and safety matters
- correctly use work/competition items provided, in accordance with instructions and/or training given
- not interfere with or misuse anything provided for your health, safety or welfare.

Conclusion

Remember, the competition will be difficult but achievable. There will be a lot of 'self-pressure'. You need to learn how to control this and focus on the task in hand.

Once a task is complete, you cannot change the outcome good or bad, start the next task afresh and with positivity.

Drink plenty of water throughout the competition, staying hydrated will help with your concentration, focus and will reduce stress and headaches