**Graphic Design A-level Department Assessment Policy 2019-2021**

Updated May 2020 for Covid-19 Situation

**The Importance of Feedback and Learning Outside the Classroom – ’50:50’**

Learning will not happen instantly and takes time; attending lessons is not enough, you also need to be working outside of class, to learn new skills and develop an independent line of enquiry within your personal investigation. In the process, you will experiment and develop your design skills and hopefully with regular feedback will enable you to learn and develop the project design process. Feedback is essential for your learning and will consist of whole class (teacher runs a session in lessons), written (teacher marking), peer (where you feedback on someone else’s work in the class) and self (where you assess yourself).

There are 66 weeks of teaching weeks in total at College to help you learn and prepare for your final assessment. The classes are shared equally between two teachers for 2.25 hours, one of your tutors will be the Lead Subject Tutor who will be responsible for formalised 1-2-1s, writing your Student Reviews, seeing your parents at parents evening and for writing Action Plans.

In line with the College’s ’50-50’ initiative, each week, homework will be set and could take between 4.5 to 6 hours in total.

**The Final Assessment**

At the end of the two years, students will be assessed for their personal study investigation, component 1 worth 60% of their final grade and they will complete a 15 hour practical exam, component 2 worth 40% of their final grade.

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| **Component 1** | **Component 2** |
| * Personal Investigation 60%: Mark out of 96 * Personal study essay 3000 words * Students will be assessed against the following assessment objectives, each marked out of 24:   AO1: Develop ideas through sustained and focused investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and critical understanding.  AO2: Explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes, reviewing and refining ideas as work develops.  AO3: Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions, reflecting critically on work and progress.  AO4: Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and, where appropriate, makes connections between visual and other elements. | * Externally Set Assignment 40%: Mark out of 96 * Students will be assessed against the following assessment objectives, each marked out of 24:   AO1: Develop ideas through sustained and focused investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and critical understanding.  AO2: Explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes, reviewing and refining ideas as work develops.  AO3: Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions, reflecting critically on work and progress.  AO4: Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and, where appropriate, makes connections between visual and other elements. |

**Types of Assessment**

* **Homework (Weekly):** Homework does not necessarily need to be completed at home! You can use study periods during the day to complete these tasks outside of lessons. To keep a good work/life balance, you might like to treat College as an 0845 to 1615 day and use your study periods in the library or in the graphics department completing tasks. This will minimise the work you need to complete at home and might make you more productive. Homework tasks will consist of:

1. *‘PREP WORK’:* Not all homework will be marked but weekly feedback will be given on a 1-1 basis. It will also be given a quick inspection by the class and will involve peer and self-assessment as part of a class exercise. This work will ‘prepare’ you for the lesson and how to progress your independent projects.

* **Mock Exams and Benchmark Checkpoints (Half-Termly):** After a period of teaching, there will be the opportunity to sit a ‘mock exam’ which will be an assessment under timed conditions. The mock exam should allow you to access the full grade range from A\* to U grade. They are an indicator of how well you are fulfilling and have understood the assessment objectives above. Mock exams are extremely important and should be treated like the actual exam. They are an ideal point to see how you are progressing and to get valuable feedback.
* **Coursework Assessment (June 2020 to November 2020):** Your independent personal study started in February 2020 and you will be expected to use the summer holidays to continue developing your projects. Some important dates below but please also refer to the Coursework Booklet for more details:
* **Mock Exam:** Autumn term 2020.Final outcomes produced and preparatory work finalised.
* **Personal Study Essay:** 1st draft of personal study essay to be submitted November 2020.
* **Component 1 final deadline:** 31 January 2021 – students to submit your design books, final personal study essay and a final outcome/s for this deadline.
* **Component 2:** The AQA component 2 brief is released on 1 February 2021. All preparatory work needs to be completed before the exam time starts at the end of April and cannot be added to once the exam time starts.
* The final coursework will be marked and moderated by May 2021 and a final mark (out of 96 for each component) will be submitted onto SELF.

**Tracking your Progress: Student Reviews, Action Plans and Parents Evenings**

The College’s policy is to deal with the student first but we also report to your parents at regular intervals to let them know how you are progressing and to inform them of what our expectations are through four Student Reviews (Reports) spread throughout the two years at College and also four parents evenings.

If the department feel you are under-performing based on evidence such as benchmark grades and your approach to learning in between these periods, then your Lead Subject Tutor may place you onto a Formal Department Action Plan and we will formally write to your parents after a 1-2-1 with yourself and to try and get you back on track in a supportive way.

**Student Review 2, the ARG and Predicted Grades**

At the end of the first year (June 2020), your Lead Tutor will have a 1-2-1 to discuss your Annual Review Grade or ARG and also finalise your Predicted Grade which might be used for UCAS applications for University and other destinations.

The ARG is determined by your Lead Tutor in communication with your other teacher and will rely on the following evidence base:

1. **Benchmark Checkpoints Performance Grades (1 to 4).** Benchmark 3 and 4 would normally carry more weight than 1 and 2 but since they have been carried out remotely under the current Covid-19 scenario, although still valid, they will be taken into consideration alongside other factors like your ‘Approach to Learning’ before and after lockdown to signal your academic potential.
2. **Approach to Learning (before 20th March 2020):** How you are engaging in your learning, evidenced by attendance, punctuality, ability to meet weekly deadlines with quality work, how you have sought out extra support via workshops and your overall communication with your teachers.
3. **Approach to Learning (after 20th March 2020):** How you were engaging in your learning remotely, evidenced by the ability to meet weekly deadlines with quality work, attendance at any remote lessons (unless previously communicated to state your unavailability) and communication with your teachers via Email and/or Microsoft Teams.

The ARG plays a key part in determining the context in which you progress to the second year. Students who receive an A\*-D grade (A-level) are encouraged to continue with their studies into the 2nd year. However for students who receive a U or E Grade (A-level) as their ARG, it suggests that for whatever reason they have struggled with the transition from Level 2 Courses (GCSE) to Level 3 Courses (A-level). This will be evidenced by poor performances throughout their benchmarks and an inconsistent or poor approach to learning in their student reviews and via formal Action Plans. Students who receive a U Grade we would not recommend to continue with the course and they would need to speak to a Senior Tutor about alternative pathways.

The College adopts a consistent and optimistic approach to predicting grades to ensure that they are both aspirational and achievable. A predicted grade is what we believe a student is likely to achieve by the conclusion of their course in positive circumstances and the predicted grade provides universities and colleges with some understanding of a student’s academic potential alongside their Personal Statement and a written Reference from their Personal Tutor.

The ARG is important in forming the basis for the predicted grade as well but the predicted grade will also be aspirational for the students’ ambitions although it must remain realistic and cannot be based on the idea that only now will the student start to work harder in the second year!

**Other Considerations**

* *LATE POLICY:* In line with the ‘College Assessment Policy’, the department are under no obligation to provide feedback to a student who does not meet the internal deadlines for weekly independent tasks, benchmark assessments or coursework drafts. Please be warned that a failure to meet the final coursework deadline is the equivalent to missing the exam and it will be recommended that the student should be removed from the course. Students who fail to prepare adequately for the lesson as requested, maybe excluded for part of the lesson and asked to work independently at the back of the classroom. A continued failure to meet ‘PREP’ work requirements will result in a reference to the pastoral team and a phone call home to parents.
* *RETURNED WORK:* Work will be assessed and returned within 10 working days of it being submitted unless it is the final coursework submission. The exam board stipulates that no feedback or formal grade can be released to students by the teacher. The exam board reserve the right to inform you of the final grade in August with your results. Please do not ask the teacher for your final mark as they will be unable to provide it.
* *PLAGIARISIM:*  Plagiarism is submitting another person’s written work as one’s own original work or using someone else’s idea without referencing the source or using pictorial work without permission or referencing the source. If there is a suspicion of plagiarism, the Head of Department and Senior Tutor will be informed and a meeting will take place. If a student is found guilty, they will be subject to disciplinary action by the College and the awarding body will be informed. Students should be aware that the College is subscribed to software designed to detect plagiarism.

**Benchmark Checkpoints, Student Reviews (Reports) and Mock Exams 2019-21**

Below is an overview of all the key assessment checkpoints

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| **CHECKPOINT** | **DATE** | **DETAILS** |
| **Benchmark 1 Checkpoint** | Oct 2019 | 1. Assessment of homework and classwork activities. 2. Assessment based on mock exam. |
| **Parents Evening (For All)** | Nov 2019 | **Meetings with your parents to discuss how you have settled in and transferred from GCSE to A-level learning based upon:**   1. **Approach to learning** (how you are engaging in your learning, evidenced by attendance, punctuality, ability to meet weekly deadlines with quality work, how you have sought out extra support via workshops and your overall communication with your teachers) 2. **Performance Grade** in Benchmark 1 and from your homework tasks |
| **XMAS BREAK** |  |  |
| **Benchmark 2 Checkpoint** | Dec 2020 | 1. Assessment of homework and classwork activities |
| **Student Review 1** | Jan 2020 | **A review of your progress in the first term (12-13 weeks of teaching) after a 1-2-1 with your Lead Tutor:**   1. **Performance grade (A to U)** (based on benchmark 1 and 2 but also your homework tasks) 2. **Approach to Learning** (how you are engaging in your learning, evidenced by attendance, punctuality, ability to meet weekly deadlines with quality work, how you have sought out extra support via workshops and your overall communication with your teachers). |
| **Parents Evening (Targeted)** | Mar 2020 | **Meetings with your parents primarily where teachers may have a concern about your progress since Student Review 1 in January.** |
| **EASTER BREAK** |  |  |
| **Benchmark 3 Checkpoint** | May 2020 | 1. **Assessment (April 2020) – (Remote Assessment due to Covid-19)**    1. Assessment based on personal study progress.    2. Progress made with additional weekly tasks set on Teams. |
| **Benchmark 4 Checkpoint** | July 2020 | 1. Assessment (June 2020) **(Remote Assessment due to Covid-19)** 2. Assessment based on personal study progress. 3. Additional weekly tasks set on Teams. |
| **Student Review 2** | July 2020 | **A review of your progress for the academic year (30-35 weeks of teaching) after a 1-2-1 with your Lead Tutor**   1. Approach to Learning 2. Performance Grade (Annual Review Grade or ‘ARG’ – performance for whole year (see notes above in main doc.) 3. Predicted Grade |
| **SUMMER BREAK** |  |  |
| **Benchmark 5 Checkpoint** | Oct 2020 | **Coursework Draft Mark**   * Mark given for personal study development. Remember we cannot reveal what grade this might achieve. |
| **Parents Evening (All)** | Oct 2020 | **Meetings with your parents to discuss how you have settled in to the second phase of learning:**   1. **Approach to learning** (how you have engaged since Student Review 2 including completion of summer homework and the first five weeks of teaching – deadlines met, engagement in class and communication with teacher) 2. **Performance** with reference to your draft coursework mark and to talk about the final deadline for after half-term. 3. **How to support you:** Discuss how parents can further support you and what is coming up in this year |
| **Benchmark 6 Checkpoint** | Dec 2020 | **Final C1 outcomes finalised – personal study essay to be completed.** |
| **Student Review 3** | Dec 2020 | **A review of your progress for the academic year since last Student Review (July) after a 1-2-1 with your Lead Tutor**   1. Approach to Learning 2. Performance Grade (based upon benchmark 6 and homework tasks) compared to Predicted Grade |
| **XMAS BREAK** |  |  |
| **Benchmark 7 Checkpoint** | Feb 2021 | **Component 1 final deadline 31/01. C2 AQA exam theme released on 1 February 2021.**   1. Assessment based on personal study final submission and progress on component 2 exam component. |
| **Student Review 4** | Mar 2021 | **A review of your progress for the academic year (30-35 weeks of teaching) after a 1-2-1 with your Lead Tutor (see above)**   1. Approach to Learning 2. Performance Grade (based upon benchmark 7) compared to Predicted Grade |
| **Parents Evening (Targeted)** | Apr 2021 | **Meetings with your parents primarily where teachers may have a concern about your progress since Student Review 4.** |
| **EASTER BREAK** |  |  |