

## Template C4



# Programme Specification

**Title of Course:** *BA (Hons) Visual Communications top up*

<b>Date first produced</b>	02/08/2023
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<b>Version number</b>	4
<b>Faculty</b>	Kingston School of Art
<b>School</b>	Design School
<b>Department</b>	Graphic Design
<b>Delivery Institution</b>	Edinburgh College

This Programme Specification is designed for prospective students, current students, academic staff and employers. It provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the intended learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes and content of each modules can be found in the course VLE site and in individual Module Descriptors.

## SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

<b>Award(s) and Title(s):</b> <i>Up to 10 pathways</i>	BA (Hons) Visual Communications top up
<b>Intermediate Awards(s) and Title(s):</b> <i>There are 4 Intermediate awards for each pathway</i>	N/A N/A N/A N/A
<b>Course Code</b> <i>For each pathway and mode of delivery</i>	UFVIC1VIC10
<b>UCAS code</b> <i>For each pathway</i>	N/A

<b>RQF Level for the Final Award:</b>	
<b>Awarding Institution:</b>	Kingston University
<b>Teaching Institution:</b>	Edinburgh College
<b>Location:</b>	Partner Institution
<b>Language of Delivery:</b>	English
<b>Modes of Delivery:</b>	Full-time
<b>Available as:</b>	Full field
<b>Minimum period of registration:</b>	Full-time - 1
<b>Maximum period of registration:</b>	Full-time - 2
<b>Entry Requirements:</b>	<p>The minimum entry qualifications for the programme are:</p> <p>SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority) HND: with an A at Second Year Graded Unit BTEC National: HND Merit Overall</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Plus:</p> <p>All students will be expected to provide evidence of their ability to meet the required standard for the course. External applicants should apply directly to Edinburgh College via the online application.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to a range of alternative qualifications or experience that is equivalent to the entry requirements set out above. Students will be required to demonstrate how their alternative qualifications or experience meets the learning outcomes of the HND/BTEC to fulfil the admissions criteria.</p>

	<p>A minimum IELTS score of 6.5 or equivalent is required for those for whom English is not their first language.</p> <p>All applicants will be interviewed and present a portfolio of work.</p>
<b>Programme Accredited by:</b>	N/A
<b>QAA Subject Benchmark Statements:</b>	Art and Design December 2019
<b>Approved Variants:</b>	N/A
<b>Is this Higher or Degree Apprenticeship course?</b>	

***For Higher or Degree Apprenticeship proposals only***

<b>Higher or Degree Apprenticeship standard:</b>	N/A
<b>Recruitment, Selection and Admission process:</b>	<p>The minimum entry qualifications for the programme are: SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority) HND: with an A at Second Year Graded Unit BTEC National: HND Merit Overall Plus: All students will be expected to provide evidence of their ability to meet the required standard for the course. External applicants should apply directly to Edinburgh College via the online application. Consideration will be given to a range of alternative qualifications or experience that is equivalent to the entry requirements set out above. Students will be required to demonstrate how their alternative qualifications or experience meets the learning outcomes of the HND/BTEC to fulfil the admissions criteria. A minimum IELTS score of 6 or equivalent is required for those for whom English is not their first language. All applicants will be interviewed and present a portfolio of work.</p>
<b>End Point Assessment Organisation(s):</b>	N/A

## SECTION 2: THE COURSE

### A. Aims of the Course

- To equip students with a broad range of key and transferable skills to enable them to progress to postgraduate study or to enter directly into Industry.
- To develop workplace skills through practical application, flexibility, successful networking, collaboration, imagination, and creativity.
- To encourage an entrepreneurial and adaptive mindset in preparation for freelance, agency and in-house roles.
- To embed a range of voices in the learning and teaching activities within the course and to allow spaces for LGBTQ+, ethnic minorities and students who are differently abled to engage fully in the course
- To extend students' understanding of the place of visual communication and its specialisms within the contemporary art and design landscape.
- To enable students to experience creative work through live projects both individually and as a member of a team, to evaluate and refine their work and to present their solutions to peers in Industry.
- To enhance and develop students' skills in writing and thinking critically about visual communication and its place in a contemporary context.
- To develop students' knowledge and understanding of the ways in which social, political, cultural, and historical contexts affect visual communication.
- To equip students with the skills and knowledge to be able to undertake effective research in response to commercial briefs and real-world problems.
- To encourage experimentation with, and the creative use of, new and existing processes, methods, and technologies to enhance creative practice.

### B. Intended Learning Outcomes

*The course outcomes are referenced to the relevant QAA subject benchmarks indicated, and the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (2014), and relate to the typical student. The course provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding specific to the subject, key skills and graduate attributes in the following areas:*

The programme learning outcomes are the high-level learning outcomes that will have been achieved by all students receiving this award. They must align to the levels set out in the [‘Sector Recognised Standards in England’](#) (OFS 2022).

Programme Learning Outcomes					
	<b>Knowledge and Understanding</b>		<b>Intellectual Skills</b>		<b>Subject Practical Skills</b>
	On completion of the course students will be able to:		On completion of the course students will be able to		On completion of the course students will be able to
A1	Demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of historical and contemporary visual communication practice and theory.	B1	Make well-judged connections between intention, process, outcome, context, and methods of dissemination	C1	Convey personal expression and imagination through generating self-initiated ideas and, using critical judgement with respect to the needs of a client, do this to a high standard of technical accomplishment.
A2	Demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of artistic, social, and ethical contexts of art and design and how stakeholders relate to each other.	B2	Organise and present relevant research in an effective and meaningful manner	C2	Consider, explore, and apply essential current and emerging media and technologies in Visual Communication and Art and Design to enable them to practice successfully in their chosen professions
A3	Demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of the relationship between theory and practice including planning, processes: theoretical, texts, resources, concepts, and systems.	B3	Demonstrate the appropriate level of individual creativity, vision, personal expression, and intellectual ability and initiative in their chosen specialism to enable successful professional engagement.	C3	Develop experience and knowledge of collaborative working methods and processes within a professionally focused environment.
A4	Demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of the role and impact of intellectual property within the Visual Communications practice.	B4	Demonstrate effective analysis and problem-solving skills.	C4	Make design choices with regard to their impact on culture, society, and the environment, including an appropriate knowledge of the application of communication materials and processes.



In addition to the programme learning outcomes, the programme of study defined in this programme specification will allow students to develop the following range of Graduate Attributes:

1. Creative Problem Solving
2. Digital Competency
3. Enterprise
4. Questioning Mindset
5. Adaptability
6. Empathy
7. Collaboration
8. Resilience
9. Self-Awareness

### C. Outline Programme Structure

TB1	TB2
HA6307 Self-Initiated Project	30 credits
HA6308 Responding to Directed Briefs	30 credits
HA6309 Creative Team Projects	60 credits

This top-up degree programme is offered full-time and leads to the award of BA (Hons) Visual Communications. The BA (Hons) Visual Communications is made up of two 30-credit and one 60-credit module. Full details of each module will be provided in module descriptors and student module guides. A student must complete 240 credits previous to joining this course through a relevant HND or other acceptable means. This constitutes the entry requirements to the Level 6 top-up degree. All students will be provided with the University's Undergraduate Regulations and the Course Handbook. Intake is normally in September. Progression to level 6 requires an A grade for the second year HND graded unit and a successful portfolio review and interview.

#### [BA \(Hons\) Visual Communications top up](#)

Progression to Level 5

N/A

Progression to Level 6

This top-up degree programme is offered full-time and leads to the award of BA (Hons) Visual Communications. The BA (Hons) Visual Communications is made up of two 30-credit and one 60-credit module. Full details of each module will be provided in module descriptors and student module guides. A student must complete 240 credits previous to joining this course through a relevant HND or other acceptable means. This constitutes the entry requirements to the Level 6 top-up degree. All students will be provided with the University's Undergraduate Regulations and the Course Handbook. Intake is normally in September.

Progression to level 6 requires an A grade for the second year HND graded unit and a successful portfolio review and Interview.

<b>Level 6</b>							
<b>BA (Hons) Visual Communications top up</b>							
<b>Core modules</b>	<b>Module code</b>	<b>Credit Value</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Teaching Block</b>	<b>Pre-requisites</b>	<b>Full Time</b>	<b>Part Time</b>
Creative Team Projects	HA6309	60	6	TB1 and TB2	N/A	1	
Responding to Directed Briefs	HA6308	30	6	TB1 and TB2	N/A	1	
Self-Initiated Project	HA6307	30	6	TB1 and TB2	N/A	1	
<b>Optional Modules</b>							

Level 6 requires the completion of

Level 6 requires the completion of all modules. The three modules run concurrently across the academic year.

Level 7 information

N/A

#### **D. Principles of Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

Edinburgh College is committed to equality of opportunity and to a culture that respects difference. It is committed to providing an inclusive ethos and environment, where everyone feels welcome, supported, and respected. The College recognises that equality of access to education is crucial in unlocking many significant opportunities in life. It aims to help remove barriers and advance equality for groups who experience disadvantage in our society. The College collaborates with community partners to ensure sufficient provision is made available to those in the region most at risk of not achieving a positive outcome. Edinburgh College strives to widen access and increase participation from the most deprived areas in the region and endeavours to enhance social mobility by engaging with the hardest to reach communities. The College wants to ensure that all its students feel respected in college and have an equal opportunity to fulfil their potential. In line with The Kingston Inclusive Curriculum Framework, the student voice is reflected in the design, delivery, and assessment methods within the modules in this programme. The degree is designed to allow students to choose areas of focus and methods of assessment which fit their personal development plans, aims and ambitions. Assessment design allows for a variety of approaches such as: face to face pitches with supporting evidence; written reports and presentations.

Edinburgh College aims to create an inclusive curriculum. The following are specific examples:

- The student handbook contains a clear statement related to inclusive course values.



- The college uses a variety of delivery and assessment methods to accommodate different learning styles. Teaching methods are varied. This includes the use of the VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) (Moodle), practical and written work.
- Students can see themselves and their backgrounds reflected in the work they do as part of their individual projects and collaborative work. All students have freedom to explore spaces for all in the courses.
- Through the interaction of the three co-related Visual Communications disciplines (Graphic Design, User Experience Design, and Illustration) and across the wider college at all levels of study, there are embedded opportunities for cross-cultural interaction to help students recognise the value of working with people from diverse backgrounds.
- A range of speakers deliver seminars where students are exposed to culturally challenging views, opinions, and contexts.
- Students are included in the design and review of the curriculum through student assemblies, the student rep system, and surveys.
- Staff engage in the regular and continuous professional development on equality and diversity.
- Through peer review, design practice, and the practical application of theoretical knowledge, students are being equipped to work in a global and diverse world.
- The student voice (current and alumni) has been a key part of the development of this degree.

Learning in visual communications entails the acquisition and utilisation of knowledge and the development of powers of analysis and criticism; students use the books, journals, audio/visual and electronic resources provided in the College's Learning Resources Centre. E-resources and computer software packages aid students' individual study. The College's online virtual learning environment, Moodle, is used for provision of general module information, class notes, reading lists and web links. In some modules it plays a key role in module delivery by enabling virtual seminars as well as the dissemination of literature. Moodle also provides the opportunity to enhance learning using interactive media such as interactive presentations, quizzes, surveys, schedulers, and journals. Wikis and Glossaries (Mural and Miro) provide ways of sharing good practice and research. In this programme, fora and workshops will be utilised for sharing feedback on pitches. Glossaries and databases will allow students to share additional practical Visual Communications sources and the quiz function will enable students to check their learning during planning stages. These will be invaluable in encouraging critical reflection.

Within the Visual Communications industry, jobs are at a premium and, to this end, the aim of the course is to give students the experience, skills & knowledge to make them employable and to have an industry standard portfolio which they could continue after university.

The college aims to create a course that will create adaptable, creative, and entrepreneurial individuals with the skills, knowledge, and personal qualities to make an immediate contribution to any employment. A graduate's reputation can be a valuable tool to gain employment and so the course will aim to help the student develop visibility in the local and global market. Collaboration and networking will be introduced and encouraged early in the course through the Creative Team Projects module.

Large group lectures, focused on the communication of concepts, ideas and knowledge are central; within these, use is often made of small-group tasks and plenaries. Workshops form the key mode of delivery for skills-based modules where, following staff exposition of a topic, students obtain experience and understanding through hands-on engagement with the theory and knowledge in question.

Students being recruited from outside Edinburgh College will be given additional induction activities to enable them to be integrated into the progressing family of students.

At level 6, all students will take the previously mentioned 60-credit “Creative Team Projects” module. Two other 30 credit core modules complete the programme: ‘Self-Initiated Project’ and ‘Responding to Directed Briefs’. These core modules have choice built in to allow students to focus on their specialities. All students are encouraged to make use of the individual support for written work and the seminars on academic writing available in the Learning Centre (Edinburgh College Library), which is open throughout the week.

Students whose native language is not English are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the tuition provided by the college’s English Language Support Programme. The required IELTS level is 6.5 which is in line with the partner institution, Kingston University. It is expected that progressing students who have been with the college for two years will have improved their standard of written and spoken English to the extent that they will be able to undergo the relevant language test. The student should be aware that the test is not funded or arranged by the college and that students will need to produce the relevant certificate before being enrolled on the course. Students are encouraged to undertake language development if necessary. The College’s English as a Second Language department can advise. Mail to: [esol@edinburghcollege.ac.uk](mailto:esol@edinburghcollege.ac.uk).

External candidates planning to apply for this course, can also apply for English language courses at the college in preparation.

In visual communication, at level 6 most assessment is by coursework and practical exams, such as presentations and written work. Assessments are designed to be inclusive. A strong feature of all modules is the use of a range of formative feedback techniques such as class discussion, peer review, in-class tests, “soft” assessments, and both written and verbal evaluation of work by staff. Through feedback and feedforward, students will have the opportunity to learn from errors and to gain confidence in their work before formal summative assessment takes place.

## **E. Support for Students and their Learning**

Students are supported by:

- *A Module Leader for each module*
- *A Curriculum Manager to help students understand the programme structure*
- *Personal Tutors to provide academic and personal support as part of the Personal Tutor Scheme embedded in the 60 credit, Creative Team Projects module.*
- *Technical support to advise students on IT, the use of software and the technical operation of the studios and to advise and support them in the creation of curricular and extra-curricular studio projects*
- *A designated programme administrator*
- *A Partner Liaison Officer to clarify the relationship between the college and the partner.*
- *An induction week at the beginning of each new academic session*
- *Staff Student Consultative Committee*
- *Moodle – a versatile on-line interactive intranet and learning environment*
- *The Learning Centre that provides academic skills support*
- *Student services provide advice on issues such as finance, regulations, legal matters, accommodation, international student support and a wellbeing team.*
- *Student support staff who support Disabled students and those with special needs*

- *ECSA (Edinburgh College Student Association)*
- *Careers and Employability Service: CV drop ins, tutorials, sessions on maintaining a professional profile and our annual Employability Day (careers fayre)*
- *Academic and Pastoral support is provided by the personal tutor as part of the course as well as Edinburgh College Student Support and Services. Part-time students will be assigned a personal tutor from year 1.*

## **F. Ensuring and Enhancing the Quality of the Course**

The University has several methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of its provision. These include:

- External examiners
- Boards of study with student representation
- Annual Monitoring and Enhancement
- Student evaluation including Module Evaluation Questionnaire (MEQs) and Early Module Reviews (EMRs)
- Moderation policies
- Feedback from employers and stakeholders

## **G. Employability and work-based learning**

Studying Visual Communications develops practical as well as theoretical and academic skills and develops the self-discipline necessary for focused and specialist study. Through the embedding of Personal Tutor sessions within the *Creative Team Projects* module, students will be supported to create and maintain a professional portfolio. By being asked to focus on how they disseminate their work and to engage with professionals through an established mentor programme, exposure to live projects, exhibitions and at the annual Employability Day (careers fayre) and visiting speakers, they will be encouraged and supported to network effectively.

Visual Communication graduates are highly regarded, because of the number and range of transferable skills they possess, allowing them to secure work in a wide range of business and commercial environments. Kingston University and Edinburgh College have traditionally had strong links with Industry and graduates go onto a range of design related workplace environments worldwide. Students can also go on to take postgraduate courses, either at Kingston or elsewhere. A formal arrangement is in place to enable students on this degree to take up a place in a postgraduate course with Kingston. Courses range from subject-focused academic courses, or vocational training. Some have secured places on postgraduate courses in other disciplines.

This degree is designed with employability at its heart: A suite of core modules, with embedded choice in the mode of assessment encourages collaboration, flexibility, the practical application of theoretical knowledge and development of creative solutions thus preparing students for the portfolio nature of the current design industry landscape. Teaching staff are experienced in, and have connections with, current design practice through a range of industry related partnerships, leading to authentic approaches to teaching and learning. Collaboration and networking are at the core of working in the creative industries and it is essential that those working in the industry learn to navigate the field. To this end collaboration and networking are supported in the *Creative Team Projects* module, allowing students from graphic design, user experience design and illustration to collaborate and share practices, mirroring the authentic design environments for contemporary designers. It is expected that through all stages of their project, students will seek opportunities to collaborate to extend the

possibilities of what they can achieve while establishing networks that will facilitate their on-going professional development.

Students will find solutions to a range of creative challenges, pitch ideas, make connections, and create work that enables them to further develop their design skills leading to enhanced employment opportunities in the creative industries. Supported by academic tutors and specialist staff, the practical nature of the three core modules prepares the student for undertaking authentic assessment activity. The flexibility of in-built choice within modules allows for a highly tailored approach. Through evaluation tasks embedded in realistic scenarios, students are encouraged to become reflective practitioners aware of how their practice is advantageous for employment. The teaching team consists of practising industry professionals with links to employers and potential clients. They bring their knowledge and connections to the degree.

Through connections with design agencies working globally and locally, students are offered a unique opportunity to experience authentic settings. Exposure to design professionals as mentors bridges the gap between education and practice. This is supported through relationships with agencies such as: Emperor Works; Kin & Carta; Whitespace; Weiden Kennedy, Amsterdam, Dyson.

### ***Work-based learning***

Although work placements are not required for the modules in this course and are not specifically arranged, students will be actively encouraged to seek out opportunities, where possible, to engage with professional environments. This allows students to reflect upon their own personal experience of working in an applied setting, to focus on aspects of this experience that they can clearly relate to theoretical concepts and to evaluate the relationship between theory and practice.

### ***Work-based learning, including sandwich courses and higher or degree apprenticeships***

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#### **H. Other sources of information that you may wish to consult**

The Quality Assurance Agency benchmark statement for Art and Design in Higher Education can be downloaded from: [subject benchmark statements](#).

[Link to Degree Course](#)

#### **I. Development of Course Learning Outcomes in Modules**

This table maps where course learning outcomes are **summatively** assessed across the modules for this course. It provides an aid to academic staff in understanding how individual modules contribute to the course aims, a means to help students monitor their own learning, personal and professional development as the course progresses and a checklist for quality assurance purposes.

Module Code		Level 6		
		HA6307	HA6308	HA6309
Knowledge & Understanding	A1		S	
	A2	S		
	A3			S
	A4			S
Intellectual Skills	B1	S		
	B2			S
	B3	S		
	B4		S	
Practical Skills	C1			S
	C2			S
	C3			S
	C4		S	

Students will be provided with formative assessment opportunities throughout the course to practise and develop their proficiency in the range of assessment methods utilised.