



Pre-university: Foundation Design (Non-credit)

School & College	College of Humanities & Social Science & Centre for Open Learning
Subject Area	Design/Portfolio Preparation
SCF Credit Level	n/a
Credits	n/a
Course availability	Students must be in penultimate year of high school (aged 16-17)
Language requirements	Evidence of language ability equivalent to IELTS 5.5

Summary

This course will introduce the creative potential of design and equip participants with tools to develop an expressive personal portfolio for a university application. Delivered online, with a hands-on learning approach, participants will engage with the creative process by engaging with design workflows and acquire practical image-making and research skills.

Course Description

The Design Foundation course is open to students in the penultimate year of high school and interested in pursuing an undergraduate degree course in Design.

Submitting a portfolio is now an important part of most university applications for courses such as Animation, Graphic Design, and Illustration. This three-week online course offers students an opportunity to begin curating a personal portfolio around visual communication design.

The Pre-University: Design course is immersive and designed to emulate the everyday realities of attending a university design course through synchronous online learning. Students will be able to embrace the responsibility of creative freedom, gain an in-depth understanding of the creative practice and learn how to develop ideas into to practice.

The course will introduce students to:

- the design process and workflow
- creative tools and techniques
- development of individual communication and presentation skills

Tutorials and individualised feedback will guide students to identify their strengths and hone skills in their field of interest.

Students will be part of a series of creative skill-building seminars such as maintaining a sketchbook, contextual research, and documentation. Seminars will also introduce students to studio culture and group critique which are vital to any specialised design study at university.

Using Adobe Creative Cloud software, students will explore illustration and image-making, digital animation, and typography.

During the course, students will be expected to continue developing their assigned projects on their own time to share during group tutorials. By the end of the course, students will have a self-developed design portfolio which will offer them an opportunity to focus on their particular design interests.

Course Format and Teaching Method

This online course involves a hands-on learning approach facilitated by a diverse group of tutors offering a range of skills and expertise. Students will be immersed in a dynamic workflow and respond to and appreciate different teaching and working styles, similar to a university setting.

By participating in a series of intensive design exercises, students will build practical skills in research, image-making, visualisation, and presentation. Through live sessions, group critiques and individual feedback, students will develop formative skills to be used in the realisation of a personal portfolio to show an aptitude to reflect, edit, execute, and present work.

Students will be equipped with the tools necessary to develop a strong, expressive personal portfolio, evidencing experimentation using analogue and digital mediums to apply for an Undergraduate Design Programme.

Course Syllabus

Week 1:

Introduction to the Course and 'A Designer's Sketchbook'

Students will begin developing individual sketchbooks while considering visual style, materials, and process.

Illustration & Image Making 1 and Illustration & Image Making 2

These seminars will introduce students to digital media and techniques to develop an illustration project. Students will be introduced to Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator through practical hands-on demonstrations to learn pixel-based image creation.

Week 2:

Digital Animation 1, 2 and 3

The week is dedicated to learning the basic techniques and approaches to digital animation to develop creative ideas through the moving image. Students will learn the principles of animation and the workflow, how to use a layered Photoshop composition in After Effects, and work with digital animation tools to create the illusion of movement in a short sequence.

Week 3:

Working with Type & Image

An introduction to the importance of typography and lettering in effective visual communication and identity design.

Documenting Design

Students will learn to document, edit, annotate and compose a digital design portfolio to visually present and communicate their creative skills and techniques.

Final Presentation + Feedback

Students will share the design projects developed during the course through individual presentations of a curated design portfolio.

Learning Outcomes

- On completion of this course, students will be able to:
- Demonstrate practical image-making and visualisation techniques, by exploring a range of mediums and approaches.
- Apply a variety of design research methods to explore and develop a self-initiated idea.
- Visually present and communicate ideas and concepts to an intended audience.

Art Materials and Recommended Reading

Essential materials or equipment to be provided by The University of Edinburgh

- Access to Adobe Creative Cloud

Essential materials or equipment to be provided by the student

- Sketchbook
- Assorted drawing materials: pens, pencils, drawing inks, water colours, paint brushes, markers, etc.
- A personal computer with a stable internet connection.
- A digital camera mobile or phone with a camera

Recommended Reading

- The recommended titles below may be of interest in following up the themes discussed in the course.
- Baldwin, J. & Roberts, L., 2006. Visual communication: from theory to practice. Lausanne [Switzerland]: AVA.
- Berman, D. B., 2009. Do Good: How designers can change the world. Berkeley, CA: AIGA: New Rider
- Collier, G., 1963. Form, Space and Vision: discovering design through drawing. Prentice Hall
- Hauffe, T., 1998. Design: A concise History. London: Laurence King
- Powell, D., 1994. Presentation techniques: a guide to drawing and presenting design ideas. Boston MA: Little, Brown & Co