



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Guide to briefing a designer

Your objective

Clearly explain what your key objectives are to the designer. It is good practice to keep these to a maximum of three objectives to ensure clarity. Ensure these are quantifiable and within a timeframe.

Your audience

You know who your target audience is, but be clear if you have a primary and secondary audience and which way around this is, and who they are. What do you want the audience to do when they receive your flier/read your poster etc. Explain this to the designer.

Your message

What is your key primary message within the flier/poster/leaflet? If you have more than one message be clear to the designer which one is the primary message. It can be a good idea to list the selling points of your message to the designer (eg this course is unique because of the following five reasons etc).

Your product

Provide all the details the designer will need about the course/event/subject, such as dates, times, places etc. Try to have this finalised before briefing the designer to avoid late (expensive) changes.

Style

Give the designer a steer on a style you are looking for. This is especially important if you don't have sample material to show. It is important to specify if you wish a graphic design/photography/illustration based product from the outset.

Photography

If you require photography to be taken for the product you need to clearly specify if you expect the design agency to provide this, in the initial brief. You also need to allow for budget, and specify who will have editorial control over the photography direction. If you are briefing a photographer separately, be clear from the outset if you require him/her to assign copyright to the University so the images can be re-used freely. Be sure to explain that images are required for print as well as online so the photographer provides these in the correct resolution. If you are supplying photographs to the design agency, ensure they are high resolution, sufficient to print. You can access hi res imagery from the University database at images.ed.ac.uk.

Format

Provide a note of the size and format you wish the product to be. Be specific on measurements. Be specific on how many pages or where a flier is to be folded. Try to suggest a type of paper you would like to use, by providing an example from another University publication.

Budget

Specify the budget and be clear as to what it should cover. For example state clearly how many stages of proofs you would like to receive, and how these should be supplied to you. A standard rule would be to receive three rounds of proofs as PDFs, but if you don't have access to a good colour printer with A3 capacity, you will need to receive proofs as hard copies from the agency. If your budget does not include printing or distribution, make sure this is outlined in the brief.

Presentation

If you are tendering for a large project and wish agencies to provide visual presentations of their ideas, be sure to provide sufficient time for them to prepare for the presentation and include the dates for presentations in the brief. They may require a space with electronic access for the presentation if there is a digital element to their work, so please prepare a room with web access.

Timescales

When do you want the completed design work? Make this clear on the initial brief. If the designers are not doing your printing/production, ensure you have built in time for the other suppliers to have your product ready by your required deadline.

Design contract

You don't need a formal contract to use anyone from the framework.

University brand

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/communications-marketing/resources/university-brand

Mandatory requirements:

- the University logo and the University name on the front cover of any materials produced;
- incorporate the University's colour palette;
- use only the corporate fonts as indicated;
- use only high resolution photos for printed projects.

Checklist of things to include in a brief:

- background to the University and the HE market, including;
- trends / issues in your subject area;
- contextual information and competitors;
- samples of previous materials – what worked and what did not work.

If in any doubts, contact CAM:

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