

# NCAD - YOUR PORTFOLIO – YOUR WAY

## Graphic Design Guidelines

The following guidelines may be used when applying to **Graphic Design**. Please note that these are simple guidelines to get you started on your portfolio journey and do not have to be followed. If you do decide to follow them, we suggest that you come up with your own ideas for the guidewords.

Pick one or more of the following guide words to explore.

Expansion	Territory	Remnant
Departure	Encounter	Restriction
Gradient	Hurdle	Affinity

For example; if you were to design an advertising campaign for the word “**Gradient**”, how would you start, what could your product be and what is the outcome? Think of an advertising campaign that you admire or dislike and think about the reasons you like/dislike it. Come up with a new campaign for the same product and place **restrictions** on it eg. a soft drink where people over 80 are the target audience, or a travel brochure for only pets. Think of your favourite book. Come up with five different book cover ideas for different plot points within the story. Can you **expand** on the designs and add in new images?

Your Portfolio will be assessed using the following criteria:

### **1. Research and observation**

Look around you at any graphic designs; advertisement campaigns, graphic novels, book covers, billboards etc. Discover what you like about your favourite ones and what you dislike about your least favourite ones. For the elements that you do like, figure out what it is about them that appeals to you. Also research into designers that you admire. Think about creating a brief that you can follow, using some of the guidewords above.

### **2. Creative ideas - outcomes of your research and observation**

Use your research to generate lots of ideas – draw your ideas and come up with possible solutions. You do not have to follow all of these through to completion, but we want to see how you think and solve problems, so make sure to document all ideas that come to your mind and how you

could possibly solve them. Think about who you are targeting with your designs and what would appeal to them.

### **3. *Developed creative work***

This is where you select, develop and present at least one idea. Your completed designs should demonstrate your ability to integrate text within a design and keep the purpose of the product and the target audience at the centre of your ideas.

### **Creative Notebook**

Your notebooks can show any extra project development like planning, thoughts and notes. They should be full of ideas from your Observation and Research stage, right through to your final conclusions. We are also interested in the designers that inspire you, the drawings that didn't quite fit in the portfolio or the hobbies, art, school projects or work experience that you didn't get chance to show. We would suggest that you try to get into the habit of bringing a notebook with you at all times so that you never miss a good idea.

For information on the practicalities of submitting your portfolio to NCAD, [please CLICK HERE](#)

### **Helpful Information**

Throughout the year, NCAD runs several Portfolio Information sessions, workshops and clinics. These will be in November and January and will be clearly advertised on our website. These events are specifically designed by our expert portfolio assessment teams to help you with your portfolio. If at all possible, you should try to attend at least one of these events. These events are free but places are limited, so be sure to check back on the website regularly in order to book your free place.