A Level Product Design Transition Pack

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“Design is not just what it looks like and feels like. Design is how it works.” – Steve Jobs.

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What is Product Design?
Product Design is the process of imagining, creating, and iterating products that solve users' problems or addresses specific needs in a given market. The key to successful product design is an understanding of the end user customer, the person for whom the product is being created. Product designers attempt to solve real problems for real people by using both empathy and knowledge of their prospective customers habits, behaviours, frustrations, needs and wants. Understanding the impact product design has on the environment is also key to a successful product and we will focus heavily on sustainability of products and materials as well as ethical consideration.

Why should I study Product Design?
Creative minds and problem solvers are essential to the rapidly developing world in which we live. Could you be the person who designs the affordable green energy car? Sustainable clothing? Develops new ideas for packaging reducing environmental impact? Creates fun everyday products for people to use? The possibilities are endless. Everything we see and use in the manufactured world comes from the product designer. Skills that the course will offer you are as follows:

- Problem solving
- Awareness of intended user
- Research methods
- Analysis of existing products
- Working with and understanding materials and their properties
- Manufacturing methods to include CAD CAM (computer aided design and computer aided manufacture)
- Appreciation of the relationship between form and function
- Three-dimensional drawing and communication skills
- The ability to respond to a concept, work to a brief
- Safe use of a variety of tools and equipment
- Understanding working methods, such as model-making, construction and assembly
- Appreciation of solid, void, form, shape, texture, colour, surface treatment, scale, structure, rhythm and movement.

What careers could the A Level Product Design course lead to?
Due to the nature of the subject the career opportunities are endless. Below are some of the careers our students have gone onto after studying A Level Product Design:

- Automobile and aviation design
- Furniture design
- Fashion - including shoe and jewellery design
- Military vehicle design
- Designing Apple products
- Electronic product design
- Graphic products (packaging).
What will I study and how will I be assessed?

### Component 1

**Personal investigation**

This is a practical investigation supported by written material. Your personal investigation is self-driven, you have ownership of it. You will be taught drawing and presentation skills. Given the opportunity to learn about materials and joining materials in a practical setting. You will work with woods, metals, plastics, resin, concrete, clay and textiles and to help with the creative process.

You will be exposed to the world of design, architecture and art both past and present

It is essential that you can work independently and undertake your own primary (first-hand) research.

Students are required to conduct a practical investigation, into an idea, issue, concept or theme, supported by written material. The focus of the investigation must be identified independently by the student and must lead to a finished outcome or a series of related finished outcomes.

The investigation should be a coherent, in-depth study that demonstrates the student’s ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning from an initial starting point to a final realisation.

The investigation must show clear development from initial intentions to the final outcome or outcomes. It must include evidence of your ability to research, develop ideas, and relate to your work in meaningful ways to relevant critical/contextual materials.

The investigation must be informed by an aspect of contemporary or past practice of artists, photographers, designers or craftspeople.

This coursework must be between 1000 and 3000 words and is worth 60% of the A Level grade.

### Component 2

**Externally set exam**

Separate question papers will be provided for each title. Each question paper will consist of a choice of eight questions to be used as starting points. Students are required to select one. Students will be provided with examination papers on 1 February, or as soon as possible after that date.

Component 2 has the same content as component 1 but on a much smaller scale.

**Preparatory period – from 1 February**

Following receipt of the paper students should consider the starting points and select one. Preparatory work should be presented in any suitable format, such as mounted sheets, design sheets, sketchbooks, workbooks, journals, models and maquettes.

**Supervised time – 15 hours**

Following the preparatory period, students must complete 15 hours of unaided, supervised time. During the 15 hours students must produce a finished outcome or a series of related finished outcomes, informed by their preparatory work.
Assessment Objectives (AOs)

1. AO1: Develop ideas through sustained and focused investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and critical understanding.
2. AO2: Explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes, reviewing and refining ideas as work develops.
3. AO3: Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions, reflecting critically on work and progress.
4. AO4: Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and, where appropriate, makes connections between visual and other elements.

Meet the staff.

In product design we have 1 full time teacher and 1 part time teacher along with the rest of the department who support our A Level teaching. We have 2 full time technicians.

Mrs M Gracey

Design is global and touches every aspect of our lives. It is creative, solves problems and helps people in so many ways. It is the endless possibilities that I love. The subject gives us so many different transferable life skills, not only in a practical sense but through collaboration, communication, teamwork, working to deadlines. Students who have studied product design with us have gone on to be furniture designers working in Europe, engineers, architects, fashion designers and product designers to name a few. For me teaching product design is inspiring and very rewarding watching students explore their own creativity and developing their understanding of the importance of good design in our ever changing world.

Mr W Tullett

I love teaching product design as it is such a wide-ranging subject that can touch on so many aspects of our every day lives. Until you really sit down and think of all the things that have been designed around you, you do not realise how many objects and environments have been designed by a designer. The course can take inspiration from so many areas, the built environment, industrial design, 3D design and fashion to name just a few. To open student’s eyes to all of this out there and to what possibilities this may lead to in the future is a joy. This is why I love teaching product design.
Tasks

1. Working from a Design Brief

Urban Communal Areas

You have been asked to redesign the seating in a public space in your local area.

GETTING STARTED

Primary Research

PHOTOGRAPH the public space. Look closely at the seating take a range of photographs with people using the area and without people.

ANALYSIS

Ask yourself the following questions:

What material is the seating made out of?
Why has the material been chosen?
How comfortable is the seating? Try it yourself or ask people?
What is the configuration is the seating?
Why has this configuration been chosen?
Find out what people think about the area? What they would like? What is the area lacking?
You will use this information as a starting point for designing.

Print the photographs and glue onto card or paper. Think about how you want to present your analysis. Add your written comments to the photographs.
2. **Working from Designer links. Understanding designers work.**

It is important that you look at existing designers and artists for inspiration.

The title of the study is **Curvy Linear**

Research (secondary) the following designers and artists using the internet and create an interesting image board of their work. You could also visit the Hepworth Gallery in Wakefield and take your own photographs of the artist’s work (primary research)

Tell me something about the designers/artists. This piece of written work **must** focus on their work and **not** their life history. Be creative with your presentation let it reflect curvy linear.

**Artists/designers** to research:

Ron Arad
Barbara Hepworth
Marc Newson
Zaha Hadid (architect)
Using your analysis sheet and your research on Ron Arad, Barbra Hepworth and Marc Newson produce a range of design ideas for the public seating. Your ideas must reflect the style of curvy linear and your designers and sculptor, as well as meeting the needs of the public.

Use quick sketching to get your ideas onto paper. Nothing is a bad idea. Using a pencil or fine line pen, draw in 3D isometric.

Below are 2 examples of isometric drawing and good layout. They are not related to your task.

**WAGOLLS**

Useful websites:

- [www.designmuseum.org](http://www.designmuseum.org)
- [www.bauhaus.de/en](http://www.bauhaus.de/en)
- [www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk)
- marc-newson.com