

Unit 1: Visual Recording in Art and Design

NQF Level 3: BTEC National

Guided learning hours: 60

Unit abstract

We live in a world full of creative visual imagery. Advertising, film, video and the internet are part of every aspect of contemporary life. The quality of our increasingly visual world depends to a great extent on the recording skills of the artist or designer and their ability to create exciting, innovative imagery. In the process of generating, developing and communicating their ideas, artists, craftspeople and designers need to use and refine their visual recording skills, whilst being inspired by source material from their environment.

The visual recording skills that learners acquire through this unit will form the basis for all subsequent units and, therefore, underpin the whole qualification.

This unit is about developing learners' visual recording skills and their use of recording as an exploratory tool in communicating different ideas. Learning to observe and select visual information from the world around them forms a vital part of this unit. Learners will use primary sources to work from direct observation, developing their skill and understanding, for the purpose of communicating and expressing creative ideas.

In working through this unit, learners will build their visual language skills and understanding through using the formal elements (line, tone, colour, shape, pattern, surface, structure etc) in a wide range of visual studies activities. Learners will develop the ability to identify and select appropriate visual qualities, from direct observation, for different purposes. Understanding the process of exploring and recording will involve experimenting with mark making using varied materials, techniques and processes appropriate to learners' specialist pathways.

This unit aims to develop learners' use of their recording skills to communicate information to different audiences effectively, using a range of presentation methods. Learners will analyse, refine, modify and develop their visual studies to produce different outcomes for a range of specific purposes and audiences.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Be able to identify and select primary and other sources for recording purposes
- 2 Understand the process of exploring and recording through appropriate mark making skills
- 3 Understand how to communicate information to different audiences through visual recording
- 4 Be able to analyse and refine developmental studies to produce outcomes.

Unit content

1 Be able to identify and select primary and other sources for recording purposes

Identify and select: eg learners need to be able to identify and select appropriate sources for visual recording and analysis working directly from primary sources in order to develop their observational skills

Primary sources: natural world, eg human form, animals, insects, plant-forms, organisms and structures, land, sea, skies, water, fire; constructed world, eg built environments, architectural form, urban detail and structure, street furniture and icons, machinery, engineering, products, artefacts or manufactured objects, electronic devices; visual study from first hand experience of different artists and designers' original works. This will involve gallery, museum and workshop visits or visiting artists

Other sources: learners may also need to use secondary sources, which may include: eg printed material from books, journals, internet, video, film and CD ROM

2 Understand the process of exploring and recording through appropriate mark making skills

Exploring and recording: informal – intuitive, experimental, exploratory work (through the expression or communication of information, responses and feelings); more formal – analytical or investigative work (into methods, materials, equipment, technology)

Mark-making: eg 2D painting, drawing, montage, photography, print-making and digital media; 3D carving, cutting, shaping, forming, joining and digital 3D manipulation techniques and use of software; 4D time-based media and techniques such as video, audio, performance, music, storyboard, film, web design, index cards and flipbooks

3 Understand how to communicate information to different audiences through visual recording

Communicate information: eg factual, instructive, to convey qualities of feeling or mood, messages, to display ideas, as a documentary

Spatial/factual information: eg formal approaches to mark-making in perspective studies, plans or projections to convey accurate information to others

Convey qualities of forms: eg using more informal approaches to mark-making in expressive visual studies to convey different qualities of the objective and subjective world

Documentary information: eg developing rough story-boards, promoting different ideas through visual narrative, use of video/film clips

Specific information: eg numerical figures, projections, orthographic or isometric information, plans, layouts, patterns, designs, diagrams or instructions

Different audiences: specific to learners' specialist pathways, eg advertising demographics, design ideas for a fashion industry, promotional material for a contemporary art gallery

Visual recording: eg mark making using the formal elements in observed studies from primary and other sources, to achieve effective visual recording skills for appropriate purposes

4 Be able to analyse and refine developmental studies to produce outcomes

Analyse and refine: illustrate information by supporting, augmenting, enhancing, clarifying and/or emphasising text; expand information via the use of illustration, thumbnail sketches, instructional drawings and pattern drawing

Produce outcomes: outcomes may take the form of a series of visual studies communicating different ideas and information, or they may well be integrated within one (or more) specialist pathway assignment brief

Grading grid

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all of the learning outcomes for the unit. The criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 identify and select primary and other sources for recording purposes	M1 identify and respond to a broad range of considered primary sources, consistently showing effective experimental visual recording skills	D1 demonstrate independence and innovation in selecting and using informed primary sources, to produce sophisticated, fluent visual records that show comprehensive understanding of communicating information.
P2 explain the process of exploring and recording through appropriate mark-making skills	M2 show an individual approach to communicating, illustrating and analysing information to present effective outcomes.	
P3 communicate information clearly to different audiences through visual recording		
P4 analyse and refine developmental studies to produce appropriate outcomes.		

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

Successful delivery of this unit requires creative planning of visual experiences that will motivate and sustain the interest of the learner. Planning the coverage of this unit could form part of a wider, integrated delivery of units. This could be through assignment briefs that are specific to one or more chosen specialist pathway units. However, the unit could initially form part of an induction where learners are taught the necessary skills and concepts to move on to more complex tasks. It is, however, essential for tutors to recognise that the unit aims to develop visual recording knowledge, skills and understanding and, as such, underpins all other units in the qualification. It is essential in the preparation of a successful portfolio for progression on to employment or higher education.

The unit will provide the opportunity for learners to work with a range of processes and techniques using a variety of equipment, materials, technologies and methods. There will be opportunities for a variety of visual studies both in the studio, workshop and out-of-doors. Experimentation with media and scale should be encouraged. Learners should be challenged to explore and take risks, push ideas beyond preconceived notions and develop their understanding of recording beyond a narrow and superficial definition.

In learning outcome 1, learners need to identify and select appropriate sources for visual recording and analysis, working directly from primary sources, in order to develop their observational skills. Primary sources should be the focus of visual study and these include the natural and constructed worlds, both of which offer a huge range of subjects.

Tutors may initially present objects or organise visits with a specific theme, brief or direction. This sense of purpose or intention will enable learners to focus on selecting appropriate aspects or elements of objects/imagery for recording and communicating purposes.

Learning outcome 2 involves an analysis of methods (for example, exploring surfaces), the exploration of the parameters of materials (for example, wet, dry, malleable or non-malleable) and investigation into equipment and technologies (eg manual, mechanical, electronic or digital). Recording may be undertaken in 2D, 3D or 4D format.

It is essential that learners recognise the importance of developing visual recording skills in a vocational context and this might be achieved through visiting artists/designers or through visits to galleries and workshops. Similarly, learners will benefit from demonstrations and examples of the concepts involved in acquiring accurate and informed visual observation and in how to select and use media and processes appropriately and effectively.

Learning outcome 3 requires learners to communicate visual information. This may be factual, instructive, convey qualities of feelings/moods, display ideas, be a documentary etc. Different ways of communicating information through recording are listed in the unit content.

For learning outcome 4, group discussions and presentations of learners' visual studies will provide opportunities for in-depth analysis and review. This critical review should focus on the effectiveness of learners' visual studies in communicating specific qualities. They should be aware of the variety of approaches to visual observation through experimentation with different viewpoints, compositions and selections, as well as exploratory uses of media and processes. At this stage learners should be encouraged to take ownership of their work and to make individual, creative choices for developing their studies towards communicating an idea or information relevant to their intention. It may be useful to relate the visual study to the particular specialism or pathway that the learner is following.

In developing outcomes for this unit, learners need to understand how to modify and use their visual studies to communicate ideas to different audiences effectively. Group discussions, tutorials and self-review can help learners to develop their own creative solutions. They should be free to develop their own outcomes, perhaps working to a given brief or later in the course to a self-selected intention. This unit offers lots of opportunities for the teaching of the underpinning skills of analysing and refining visual studies for the purpose of communicating information and ideas.

Assessment

To achieve a **pass** grade, learners must achieve the four pass criteria listed in the grading grid.

For P1, learners should demonstrate the ability to identify possible source material, either given by the tutor or selected from their environment, for visual recording. Learners' selection of sources should be based on a theme or brief or a series of focused activities, since they will need to use their recordings to develop specific visual communication skills for P3. There should be evidence of selection from a variety of sources, preferably most from primary experience.

For P2, learners need to show exploratory visual studies recorded from selected primary sources. A range of increasingly complex activities might be set involving experimentation with recording from observation using a variety of media and processes and covering different approaches to mark making. Learners will evidence their developing skills in employing the formal elements through visual observation studies using media associated with art, craft, design or time-based work. Evidence for P2 should show the progressive development of ideas through visual observation studies. It should also show how visual recording can be used to express feeling and personal responses to different stimuli, and how work from direct observation can be used as a source for developing ideas.

P3 and P4 are interrelated. For P3, learners should present evidence showing how visual recording can be used to communicate specific information. They could consider the needs of different audiences through presenting a range of visual studies, which include plans, projections, patterns, layout drawings, video clips and spatial information, that are of particular relevance to the learner's chosen area of study.

For P4, learners should present evidence of their ability to analyse and refine their visual studies, showing how this process can be used as a tool for gathering, selecting, and presenting visual information. For P3 and P4, for example, learners studying graphic design could show how drawing can support or augment a text, as in a book, technical illustration, storyboarding or instruction manual.

To achieve a **merit** grade, learners should achieve all the pass criteria plus the two merit criteria.

For M1, learners should evidence a broad range of consistently skilful primary visual recording from which to identify and select ideas.

For M1 and M2, learners might produce carefully planned storyboards or layout sheets showing how the study of the forms and surface detail of reptiles could be developed to inspire a children's adventure playground or a sculptural form for a city square.

For M2, learners need to show an individual, creative approach to communicating and presenting information to different audiences. Evidence might be through investigating and collating the needs of different audiences and, from this, developing a range of presentation methods, for example: for a technical audience using clear visual instructions on construction methods; for a company marketing and sales department, using richly coloured, aesthetically pleasing visuals. Learners could produce planning sheets to demonstrate their understanding of the need for different approaches to presenting information. Learners could demonstrate the effectiveness of their visual communication skills to selected different audiences by recording comments and collating and analysing information from planned questionnaires.

To achieve a **distinction** grade, all the pass and merit criteria and the one distinction criteria must be achieved.

For D1, learners will independently and fluently select and visually record from primary sources with exceptional skill. They will show a highly informed analysis of their sources for the purpose of creating exciting and imaginative ideas. Well-developed skills of review and refinement towards sophisticated outcomes will be evident. There will be clear evidence of in-depth knowledge of the needs of different audiences and learners can apply that knowledge through fluent and versatile visual recording, development and presentation skills.

Those working in time-based media may wish to explore more widely than the areas listed in the *unit content* section. Sequential and time-lapse photography, animation, drawing and painting onto film, the use of index cards and sound recording could also provide sources of evidence at pass, merit and distinction levels for this unit.

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This is a core unit that should be adapted to suit any specialist subject pathway. It aims to develop a clear understanding of visual recording and the ability to apply the different functions of visual studies. It is fundamental for all pathways by providing an awareness of the value of work from direct observation, the development of observational skills and ideas, and the use and development of visual language which is vital to understanding and achievement in all other units.

There are opportunities for the development of key skills in this unit. It also provides development opportunities for some of the underpinning knowledge and understanding for NVQ Design Level 2 (SFEDI) Unit 21: Research Information and Ideas Using a Range of Techniques.

Essential resources

This is a core unit and is therefore mandatory across all specialist subject pathways. Essential resources include:

- *specialist workspaces*: eg studios, workshops, computer suites, video and film editing suites
- *materials, equipment and tools*: eg for 2D, 3D, 4D and associated materials, equipment and tools across all specialist areas
- *access to a learning centre*: eg for books, periodicals, journals, videos, CD ROMs, the internet
- *specialist staff*: eg for the different specialist pathways; this might necessarily include technical support staff.

Visits to galleries, exhibitions, film reviews, plays, performance and live art, workshops, studios and advertising agencies could play an important role when designing assignments for this unit. Alternatively, bringing professional practitioners, from art, design or media backgrounds, in to talk about their work could help learners with the evidence requirements for this unit.

Indicative reading for learners

Books

Beverly Hale R – *Drawing Lessons from the Great Masters* (Watson-Guptill, 1989)

Cole R – *Perspective for Artists* (Dover Publications Inc, 1976)

Durer A and Strauss W L – *The Complete Engravings, Etchings and Drypoints of Albrecht Durer* (Dover, 1972)

Harris J et al – *The Eye of the Needle – The Textile Art of Alice Kettle* (Telos Art Publishing, 1995)

Muybridge E – *The Human Figure in Motion* (Dover, 1989)

Powers A – *CINEMA 4D: The Artist's Project Source Book* (R & D, 2004)

Raynes J – *The Complete Guide to Perspective* (F & W Publications, 2005)

Simpson I – *Encyclopaedia of Drawing Techniques* (Headline, 1989)

Simpson I – *Drawing, Seeing and Observation* (A&C Black, 2003)

Key skills

Achievement of key skills is not a requirement of this qualification but it is encouraged. Suggestions of opportunities for the generation of Level 3 key skill evidence are given here. Staff should check that learners have produced all the evidence required by part B of the key skills specifications when assessing this evidence. Learners may need to develop additional evidence elsewhere to fully meet the requirements of the key skills specifications.

Communication Level 3	
When learners are:	They should be able to develop the following key skills evidence:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> participating in a group discussion/critique in respect of individuals' projects making a formal presentation on their final outcome and associated processes writing project evaluations. 	<p>C3.1a Take part in a group discussion.</p> <p>C3.1b Make a formal presentation of at least eight minutes using an image or other support material.</p> <p>C3.3 Write two different types of documents, each one giving different information about complex subjects.</p> <p>One document must be at least 1000 words long.</p>

Improving own learning and performance Level 3	
When learners are:	They should be able to develop the following key skills evidence:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertaking a brief which develops visual recording knowledge, skills and understanding • producing a plan or proposal with set targets • exploring and recording the process through appropriate mark making skills • reflecting on the process and using their skills to modify their approach • critically reviewing their effectiveness in communicating ideas to specific audiences • evaluating finished work at close of the project. 	<p>LP3.1 Set targets using information from appropriate people and plan how these will be met.</p> <p>LP3.2 Take responsibility for their learning, using their plan, to help meet targets and improve their performance.</p> <p>LP3.3 Review progress and establish evidence of their achievements.</p>