

Unit 5: Contextual Influences in Art and Design

NQF Level 3: BTEC National

Guided learning hours: 60

Unit abstract

Artists and designers have always looked to the past for inspiration and innovation. In order to learn from the past and build on others' creativity, it is essential to practitioners' professional development that they understand the importance of historical and cultural influences on art and design and how artists have always been early adopters of emerging visual technologies. Practitioners in every field of the industry also recognise the necessity and value of keeping abreast of contemporary art and design developments, within and beyond their specialist practice.

This unit is intended to form the basis of the learners' knowledge and understanding of contemporary and historical art, craft and design and as such, it underpins all other units in the qualification. The unit also aims to promote and deepen learners' contextual awareness. Learners will develop knowledge and understanding of key movements within an historical context, providing a framework for their understanding of works of art and design. Learners will also develop research and skills in identifying, selecting and recording appropriate references for study. They will be expected to research and record information from primary and secondary contextual sources. Through exploring and recording from sources the learners will develop their critical and analytical skills in by using combinations of visual, written and verbal presentations.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Understand contemporary and historical developments in art and design
- 2 Understand the interrelationships between art works and the wider cultural context
- 3 Be able to research and record contextual information
- 4 Be able to use information to produce and present outcomes from contextual sources.

Unit content

1 Understand contemporary and historical developments in art and design

Learners will need to know about the developments of key art and design movements and individuals in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. This will include the main characteristics, the theories behind them and influences of other art works.

Of the 19th century: eg Romanticism, Realism, Impressionism, Post Impressionism, Symbolism, the Arts and Crafts Movement, Art Nouveau

Of the 20th century: eg Fauvism and Cubism, the Bauhaus, Art Deco, emergence of abstract works, responses by artists and designers to social and political changes, responses to mass media and popular culture, works produced outside galleries, influential artists, designers, architects

Of the 21st century: eg the development of digital art and design; the development of site-specific installation and video as art forms; the development of new concepts, materials and products and new forms of dissemination

Other influences: eg Japanese art, African tribal and Egyptian art, early European art such as Celtic, medieval and folk, rediscovery of traditional processes, new materials and technological developments

2 Understand the interrelationships between art works and the wider cultural context

Interrelationships: between art, craft or design in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries and other periods, eg Surrealism's impact on fine art, photography, graphics, fashion, ceramics and other art forms; links between artists' work and learners own work, the influence of one aspect of art and design upon another, the influence of one artist upon another

Influences from wider contexts: significant events, eg the Industrial Revolution, the Great Exhibition, design reforms of the 19th century, colonialism, communications and trade, First World War, the Russian Revolution, the movement of émigré artists across Europe and to America, Socialist Realism, abstraction, scientific discoveries, theories of psychology, developments in technology, the impact of media; social and political influences such as urban migration, increased leisure, cultural events such as world fairs (The Exposition des Arts Decoratifs, Paris 1925, The Festival of Britain London 1951), design innovation in the post war years

3 Be able to research and record contextual information

Viewing, reading, interviewing, selecting and recording: content will vary according to individual selections but should include primary sources from gallery visits, industries, practitioners' workplaces, work experience; secondary sources from learning centre facilities: books, journals, CD ROMs, internet, videos

Extracting appropriate information: pertaining to learners' intentions; key points, phrases, quotes, highlighting text, notes, annotated visual studies, combinations of textual and visual information; changing use of media, materials, technology, processes and techniques affecting artists and designers work, eg types of paint, unusual media combinations and non-traditional media, colour photography, digital developments and computer software, video

Information: key movements and individuals linked to the 19th/20th/21st centuries appropriate to specialist pathway and intention; identifying influences on artists when developing their works; identifying wider cultural influences

Analysis: the formal elements and visual language of specific work; developing and using vocational vocabulary; making personal judgements on qualities found; interpreting meaning and understanding the use of metaphor; using personal opinion supported by research which may include critics' writing, quotes from the artist or designer; making links with works from other movements and exploring interrelationships; placing work in historical and social context

4 Be able to use information to produce and present outcomes from contextual sources

Use information: identify, select and organise research; plan and structure analyses; create appropriate format for presentation; employ scholastic conventions for bibliographies and references

Methods of presentation: recording, eg notes, bullet points, photography, the use of illustrations in oral presentations to support written work, records of interviews with practitioners, annotated art works; completed outcomes, eg essays, formal written reports, video or film with supporting notes and outline/storyboards, web designs, interactive CD ROMs, presentations, following scholastic conventions (referencing quotations, collating bibliographies and inserting footnotes)

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 discuss contemporary and historical developments in art and design	M1 purposefully research and effectively organise information about art and design developments, consistently linked to the contexts in which works were produced	D1 extract and analyse complex information independently gained from comprehensive research
P2 discuss the interrelationships between art works and the wider cultural context	M2 express coherent opinions, supported by examples drawn from established sources	D2 express informed opinions and argued conclusions, using vocational language fluently.
P3 research and record contextual information	M3 demonstrate a considered approach to structuring and presenting coherent outcomes from information sources.	
P4 use information to produce and present outcomes.		

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

The aim of this unit is to provide a broad knowledge of developments in art, craft and design. Learners should be able to appreciate the breadth of art and design practice and how it relates to the different specialist areas by making links, where possible, between theory and practice across specific pathways. The unit aims to show learners how to study art, craft and design by looking at a particular period, such as the 19th, 20th and 21st century examples given in the content and to select from their research to create completed outcomes.

In planning this unit tutors will need to construct a programme of study relevant to the learners' specialist pathways. This unit could be integrated and delivered effectively with other core and/or specialist unit assignments. However, an initial general introduction on the developments in art and design from the 19th century to the present day may be appropriate for a whole cohort of learners. Tutors might then develop a more focused, selected programme of study suited to learners' chosen pathways. The content section of this unit is a guide and is not prescriptive; tutors are free to start with any era or stage of contemporary and historical contexts. However, content and delivery methods must be related to the interests and needs of the learners. As motivation, programmes of study could begin by using examples from current practices for deconstruction and analysis or by asking groups of learners to trace possible connections with historical work and cultural influences.

Learning outcomes 1 and 2 are linked and delivery should be integrated. Programmes of study could include a series of lectures to provide the broad-based content of this unit. It is important that learners recognise and understand how the wider culture (for example technological developments, social trends, new movements, subcultures, changing music and street fashion) interconnects with innovation and development within all aspects of art and design.

Specialist subject areas should be included in the examples discussed, giving learners the opportunity to see connections between design developments and cultural influences across different disciplines. Learners can focus their investigation on key individuals within a chosen specialism or undertake a more general overview. Whatever approach is used, learners need to apply their understanding to explain the main characteristics of and progression in art and design developments during the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, their interrelationships and the historical and contemporary interconnections. Learners should be taught how to analyse the formal elements and visual language of specific work and the interrelationships between the work and historical and social contexts.

Learning outcome 3 requires coverage of the essential study skills involved in researching and recording from a range of different sources. It is expected that learners will have the opportunity to visit relevant museums, galleries, workshops or acquire knowledge from a visiting practitioner in order to gain first-hand understanding of the work of others in their specialist field.

Learners could also benefit from using work experience to research and collect information about artists' and designers' working practices. Learners will also need to understand how to select and record information from a range of possible secondary sources. Access to a well stocked learning centre is essential.

Tutors will need to develop learners' critical faculties and to expand and deepen their vocabulary of terms. Learners could collate glossaries of terms and phrases and use exemplar analytical written pieces to enable them to build their repertoire. Apposite questions, or suggested formats for the study of movements or specific works, might offer useful starting points in teaching methods of selecting and recording information from research or using descriptive and analytical writing.

For learning outcome 4 tutorials, group discussions and seminars might be used to give learners guided opportunities for selecting focused investigations and synthesising their research and recordings towards appropriate outcomes. These may be presented in the many possible forms outlined in the unit content.

Audiovisual and computer-aided equipment may be useful in supporting delivery. The use of a data projector will give learners the opportunity to view images at full size and enlarged, in slide shows, annotated presentations, video and film. Learners might consider using this type of equipment to present their verbal, visual and written presentations.

A vital part of this unit is learners' ability to synthesise their research skills in to coherent outcomes. Tutorials will form an essential part of the teaching programme, where learners will be guided through the selection, modification and refinement process needed in order to present outcomes appropriate to their intention.

Assessment

To achieve a **pass** grade, learners will produce evidence that meets the required standard for all pass criteria.

For P1, learners should evidence their knowledge and understanding of developments in art and design by explaining characteristics of selected movements and selected individuals' works, the materials and processes used, describing the formal elements of the selected works and cataloging associated artists and art influences.

For P2, learners should explain the connections between different art forms and movements and the wider cultural influences. P1 and P2 may be evidenced across a range of activities where learners have undertaken ongoing, annotated, visual contextual study over the whole course and integrated this unit with their specialist practice. Evidence may also include producing appropriate lecture notes, research recording from primary and secondary sources, video evidence from an oral presentation, annotated visuals, presentation boards, written assignments or other recordings. From this knowledge and understanding base, learners will identify and select subjects to research and develop and present focused and specific outcomes for P3 and P4.

For P3, learners need to show that with tutor support, they have explored several examples of different kinds of information around a given subject. They should demonstrate an understanding through written and visual recording from selected sources using different approaches through annotated visual study, notes and descriptive written pieces. Evidence for P3 should show the progressive development of the learners' understanding of the purpose of research recording. Learners should show some evidence of analytical ability to, for example, by deconstructing an image, object or film clip, to demonstrate their understanding of how it has been created, what qualities are communicated and its wider contextual connections. There should be evidence of selection from a variety of sources. It is expected that primary experience from gallery or workshop visits will form part of the evidence for P3 as well as the use of secondary sources.

Evidence for P4 will emerge from work for P3. Learners will need to show they can select relevant information from their recordings to develop and produce completed outcomes. Verbal evidence sheets and witness statements from individual tutorials, seminars and group discussions could be used to gather evidence of an understanding of the process of review and refinement in developing a study and similarly for the clarity of presentation skills. Learners might use varied presentation methods for assessment activities such as written essays, annotated illustrations, video, film or annotated slides and presentations.

To achieve a **merit** grade learners must achieve all the pass criteria and the three merit criteria. Learners should use their understanding of art and design developments to identify and select subjects for research.

To achieve M1, learners should purposefully research a broad range of information using different sources, and produce articulate and explanatory notes, descriptive and analytical pieces of text or detailed annotated visual studies. There should be evidence of effective organisation and a planned approach to selecting and focusing ideas for outcomes. Works researched should always be considered in relation to the context in which they were produced.

For M2, learners need to synthesise their understanding from their selected sources, using examples and quotes from established sources to support coherent personal opinions.

For M3, the structuring and presenting of information should demonstrate considered planning. Evidence might be through carefully structuring an essay where each paragraph moves the text forward without digressions or repetitions or by investigating and collating visual and written critical analyses and developing a range of well-planned presentation methods as suggested in the content for this unit.

To achieve a **distinction** grade all the pass and merit criteria and the two distinction criteria must be met.

For D1, the learner will independently select and comprehensively record from an extensive range of contextual sources, investigating and reviewing alternative opinions and interpretations.

For D2, the learner will express informed personal opinions and argued conclusions using vocational language confidently and fluently.

Those working in time-based media may wish to explore more widely than the areas listed in the unit content section. Sequential and time-lapsed photography, animation, drawing and painting onto film, the use of index cards and sound recording could also provide sources of evidence for presentations of contextual investigations 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 unit provides essential underpinning knowledge for any study of art, craft and design and is relevant to all pathways. It links with *Unit 13: Art and Design Specialist Contextual Investigation*, where it provides background knowledge and research skills which learners can then develop into their own area of specialised interest. This unit also has useful links with other units in which learners will research contemporary and historical work.

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 22: Develop and Communicate Design Ideas*.

Essential resources

Learners should have access to a well-stocked learning centre, where resources include a broad coverage of 19th, 20th and 21st century art, craft and design. These should include written and visual materials, books, journals, DVDs, video, slides, CD ROMs. The collection should be sufficient to enable learners to complete this unit. Learners will also need to access information via other methods, such as the internet, and should also be encouraged to visit museums and galleries to select and record first hand from relevant and appropriate work.

Indicative reading for learners

Books

Britt D – *Modern Art Impressionism to Post Modernism* (Thames & Hudson, 2002)

De Olivera N, Oxley N and Milhae P – *Installation in the New Millennium* (Thames & Hudson, 2004)

Dormer P – *Design Since 1945* (Thames & Hudson, 1993)

Duro P and Greenhalgh M – *Essential Art History* (Bloomsbury, 1993)

Hopkins D – *After Modern Art 1945-2000* (Oxford University Press, 2000)

Hughes R – *The Shock of the New* (Thames & Hudson, 1991)

Jervis S – *Penguin Dictionary of Design and Designers* (Penguin Books, 1989)

Julier G – *The Thames & Hudson Dictionary of Design Since 1900* (Thames & Hudson, 2004)

Livingston A and I – *Graphic Design and Designers* (Thames & Hudson, 1998)

Lynton N – *The Story of Modern Art* (Phaidon, 1980)

Pevsner N – *Pioneers of Modern Design* (Penguin Books, 1983)

Scharf A – *Art and Photography* (Penguin Books, 1983)

Sparke P – *Design in Context* (Bloomsbury, 1991)

Weston R – *Modernism* (Phaidon, 1998)

Wilk C – *Modernism Designing a New World* (V&A Publications, 2006)

Wilson E and Taylor L – *Through the Looking Glass: A History of Dress from 1860 to the Present Day* (BBC Books, 1989)

Woodham J M – *Twentieth Century Design* (Oxford University Press, 1997)

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. Tutors 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"> • discussing ideas/finished work with the group • undertaking timed presentations at a critique, using resources including image(s) • researching aspects of contemporary and historical art, craft or design developments • synthesising information effectively • producing a report or dissertation on research and analyses • producing a synthesis/handout or presentation resources with image(s). 	<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>C3.2 Read and synthesise information from at least two documents about the same subject. Each document must be a minimum of 1000 words long.</p> <p>C3.3 Write two different types of documents, each one giving different information about complex subjects. One document must be at least 1000 words long.</p>

Information and communication technology Level 3	
When learners are:	They should be able to develop the following key skills evidence:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planning how to obtain information on aspects of contemporary and historical art, craft or design developments • choosing appropriate ICT and non-ICT sources when selecting information to present the analysis of the outcomes of their research • producing the draft synthesis and report/dissertation, in appropriate formats, using software features to improve efficiency of their work • emailing draft copy of work to tutor for feedback • refining and producing the final presentation and report/dissertation • annotating work to identify any changes made. 	<p>ICT3.1 Search for information, using different sources, and multiple search criteria in at least one case.</p> <p>ICT3.2 Enter and develop the information and derive new information.</p> <p>ICT3.3 Present combined information such as text with image, text with number, image with number.</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"> • working with tutor to agree approaches to research skills • planning and target setting • using their plans to produce work within the set time constraints of the project • reflecting on and recording stages of learning • reviewing progress with tutor • evaluating finished work at close of the project. 	<p>LP3.1 Help set targets using information from appropriate people and plan how these will be met.</p> <p>LP3.2 Take responsibility for your learning, using your plan to help meet targets and improve your performance.</p> <p>LP3.3 Review progress and establish evidence of your achievements.</p>