

MA in Typeface Design

For students entering in 2012/3

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	
Faculty:	Arts, Humanities and Social Science Faculty
Programme length:	1 years
Date of specification:	22/Jan/2013
Programme Director:	Mr Gerry Leonidas
Programme Advisor:	
Board of Studies:	Typography and Graphic Communication Board of
Taught Postgraduate Studies	
Accreditation:	

Summary of programme aims

The aim of this programme is to provide a thorough grounding in principles and methods of typeface design, incorporating study of historical and theoretical issues, as well as practical learning. The programme also aims to give an understanding of the constraints and potential of current technology, and equip graduates with the skills to design and produce their own typefaces.

Transferable skills

The programme encourages development of transferable skills including:

- effective communication in speech and writing
- critical analysis and coherent argument
- researching and evaluating evidence
- undertaking self-directed independent work
- managing a substantial project
- using IT for research
- using IT for complex design tasks

Programme content

Code	Title	Credits	Level
TYMTDC	Typeface design: principles & applications	30	7
TYMTDP1	Typeface design	30	7
TYMTDP2	Font Development	20	7
TYMTDX	Typeface design: engaging with contexts	20	7
TYMTDR	Typeface design: reflection on practice	20	7
TYMTDD	Dissertation	60	7

Part-time or modular arrangements

Part-time study lasts two years, with module TYMTDC (taught seminars, essays) completed in the first year. Modules TYMTDP1, TYMTDP2, TYMTDX and TYMTDR (practical projects) should be commenced during the first year. Module TYMTDD (dissertation) can be undertaken during the second year.

Progression requirements

N/A

Summary of Teaching and Assessment

Teaching takes place in weekly lectures and seminars during the Autumn and Spring terms, and weekly tutorials, demonstrations, and critiques throughout the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms. (Small deviations from this schedule may be made to accommodate visiting members of staff.) The dissertation (module TYMTDD) accounts for 33.33% of marks, the practical design projects (modules TYMTDP1, TYMTDP2, TYMTDX and TYMTDR) for 50% and the principles and applications (module TYMTDC) for 16.66%.

The University's taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:

Mark Interpretation

70 - 100% Distinction

60 - 69% Merit

50 - 59% Good standard (Pass)

Failing categories

40 - 49% Work below threshold standard

0 - 39% Unsatisfactory work

For Masters Degrees

To pass the MA students must gain an average mark of 50 or more overall and have no mark below 40 in modules TYMTDD (dissertation) and TYMTDP1, TYMTDP2, TYMTDX and TYMTDR taken as a whole (practice). In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for all modules marked below 50 must be less than 60 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more overall including a mark of 60 or more for practice (TYMTDP1, TYMTDP2, TYMTDX and TYMTDR) and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more overall including a mark of 50 or more for practice (TYMTDP1, TYMTDP2, TYMTDX and TYMTDR) and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Merit.

For Postgraduate Diplomas

To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50 or more. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for all modules marked below 50 must be less than 60 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for the award of a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Merit.

For Postgraduate Certificate

To pass the Postgraduate Certificate students must gain an average mark of 50 or more. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 10 credits.

Admission requirements

The programme is appropriate for qualified or experienced typographers and graphic designers, or those from related fields who can demonstrate a keen sensitivity to the details of typeface design. Applicants should hold a Bachelor's degree in design or a related field. The Department reserves the right to request evidence of relevant experience of skills, particularly in the case of candidates with a first degree from non-design-related fields. In the case of applicants without a first degree, evidence of relevant professional experience should be provided.

Admissions Tutor: Mr Gerry Leonidas

Support for students and their learning

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support is provided by a wide array of services across the University, including: the University Library, the Student Employment, Experience and Careers Centre (SEEC), In-session English Support Programme, the Study Advice and Mathematics Support Centre teams, IT Services and the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@il) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, School Senior Tutors, the Students' Union, the Medical Practice and advisers in the Student Services Centre. The Student Services Centre is housed in the Carrington Building and offers advice on accommodation, careers, disability, finance, and wellbeing. Students can get key information and guidance from the team of Helpdesk Advisers, or make an appointment with a specialist adviser; Student Services also offer drop-in sessions and runs workshops and seminars on a range of topics. For more information see www.reading.ac.uk/student

With particular regard to the programme, the Department of Typography runs introductory sessions covering both programme-related and health & safety issues. There are dedicated sessions on resources in the University Library; on Departmental collections and resources; and on research skills with regard to our field. New students are provided with a copy of the Department's Handbook for taught postgraduate programmes (also available

online) which covers general issues, resources available to students, programme-specific matters, and examinations issues.

In terms of support for learning, the University has a number of outstanding collections. These include a major collection of archives of British publishing houses including Bodley Head, Hogarth Press, Longman, Macmillan, Routledge, and Chatto & Windus; the Mycroft Type Collection; the Rickards and John Lewis collections of ephemera; the Otto & Marie Neurath Isotype Collection; the Hans Schmoller collection of twentieth-century type specimens; the Soulby collection of printed ephemera from the 1820s; and the Icoграда poster collection.

Lectures and seminars last either one or two hours, and are supported by a variety of aids (electronic media, slides, handouts), depending on the subject and the speaker. Students are also offered a number of optional lecture series (from other Master's or final year undergraduate modules) which may enrich their understanding of the subject. We hold regular postgraduate seminars and staff research briefings, where research issues can be discussed in a more formal environment. We provide a small number of computers dedicated to postgraduates, and employ a part-time IT support person who may help with relevant issues. Building computer skills is an essential aspect of the programme, and is supported by regular tutorials and hands-on sessions which focus on the specialised tools employed for typeface design (within Modules TYMTDC and TYMTDP1, TYMTDP2, TYMTDX and TYMTDR).

The Department enjoys particularly close links with the St Bride Printing Library and Oxford University Press. We maintain informal links with design institutions all over the world: in Europe, the US, South America, Australia and India. We have links with a number of professional and scholarly institutions including Pira International, the Rare Book School in Charlottesville, the Information Design Association, SHARP, the Printing Historical Society and the Communication Research Institute of Australia.

Career prospects

Graduates of the MA in Typeface Design can be expected to find demand for their skills in a variety of applications such as typeface design and production, print and electronic publishing, corporate identity, information design, and graphic design. Previous graduates are working as employees of design consultants, digital type foundries, and as freelance designers.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

There are no formal arrangements in place.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

1. a broad historical and theoretical perspective on typeface design and production
2. the influence of technical developments on typeface design and production
3. the history of letterforms from classical Roman times to the 20th century
4. specialist knowledge in particular areas of the field of typeface use
5. typographical issues in multi-script documents

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

- lectures, seminars, and tutorials
- (modules TYMTDC, TYMTDP1, TYMTDP2, TYMTDX and TYMTDR)

Assessment

- One 3,000 word essay: principles and applications; one project brief.
- 10,000-13,000 word dissertation

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills - able to:

1. communicate effectively in speech: in particular discussing concepts and procedures, and presenting coherent arguments
2. communicate effectively in writing: in particular composing documents which investigate, analyse, and argue critically about relevant issues
3. research and evaluate primary and secondary

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

- tutorials with critical discussion sessions
- presentations on specific subjects
- review sessions for written project and dissertation proposals
- support for structuring written arguments
- feedback sessions on written work
- sessions on research methods
- sessions on dissertation preparation

source material

- resource lists

Assessment

- One 3,000 word essay: principles and applications; one project brief
- 10,000-13,000 word dissertation

C. Practical skills - able to:

1. design the typeforms for a number of typeface variants
2. digitise, encode, complete and generate usable digital fonts from original designs
3. use IT for complex design tasks (designing, typesetting, and proofing digital fonts)
4. use IT for research

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

- seminars and tutorials (Modules TYMTDC, TYMTDP1, TYMTDP2, TYMTDX and TYMTDR)
- sessions on research methods, electronic resources (Module TYMTDD)
- online resource lists

Assessment

- submission of a substantial type design project (three typeface variants of an original typeface)
- submission of workfiles and digital files
- submission of type design specimen

D. Transferable skills - able to:

1. communicate effectively in speech and writing
2. undertake independent research
3. use IT to conduct research
4. undertake self-directed independent work
5. manage a substantial project
6. use IT effectively for substantial design projects

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

- sessions on research methods and dissertation preparation
- tutorials with critical discussion sessions
- presentations on specific subjects
- review sessions for written project and dissertation proposals
- support for structuring written arguments
- feedback sessions on written work

Assessment

- One 3,000 word essay: principles and applications; one project brief.
- 10,000-13,000 word dissertation
- submission of a substantial type design project (three typeface variants of an original typeface)
- submission of workfiles and digital files
- submission of type design specimen

Please note - This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance process or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.