Get ready for MA Design Communication: Illustration

As your Programme Leader, I'm thrilled to warmly welcome you onto MA Design Communication: Illustration. Congratulations on gaining an offer of a place – I hope that you are looking forward to joining our postgraduate community at the School of Arts, UWE Bristol.

I have provided some information below that will help you to prepare for starting with us this September, do read through it carefully and if you have any questions at all, do get in touch.

Stephen Monger - Programme Leader

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Before you start

The Programme Team are looking forward to welcoming you onto campus in the week commencing 21 September for the beginning of your programme.

Your full timetable will be available to you via MYUWE (login required) once you have started the enrolment process. Please visit the 'Understanding your teaching timetable' website to find out when your timetable will be published.

Starting Block is a UWE Bristol initiative that can help you settle into university and get to know our campus, digital resources, and support services. We will help you find your way around, get used to our systems, and practice the skills you need to make a strong start once we meet you, too.

Preparing and arrival

You can find everything you need to know about enrolment, Starting Block and the start of teaching, on our Preparing and Arrival webpage. Take a look at our website to familiarise yourself with our facilities and services such as the library, study skills, academic support, health and wellbeing support and much more.

Enrolment

Once you have satisfied all admissions requirements, we'll send you your login details for our IT systems to enable you to activate your university email account. Once your account has been activated, you'll gain access to the MYUWE platform where you can enrol. Note that your login details for MYUWE are different to those used for the UWE Welcome website. Enrolment for September programmes will only be open from August onwards. You can find guidance and further information on our Enrolment website.

ID card - upload your photo now

We can only print your ID card if you have added your photo to MYUWE. To avoid delays, upload your photo as soon as you receive login details. For help, go to our student card guidance.

Engage with your programme

There are four activities we want you to engage with before you arrive on campus, as listed below:

1 Start your learning

To succeed within your chosen programme, you will need to think critically about key issues and practices within the discipline. To help you to enhance these skills and be ready to engage with your studies, you should start to read and research around your subject before you arrive. You might also explore the Library webpages to see the wide range of resources available to you once you become a UWE Bristol student.

2 Read around your subject

Your first module on the MA Design Communication: Illustration is called Imagining Contemporary Practice in the Graphic Arts. The subject specific reading for this module is listed below, and you may wish to access some of these texts prior to your arrival. Whilst these books are in our library, you may be able to locate them elsewhere or want to buy one or more for yourself. Used copies can sometimes be found online:

- Male, A. (2017) Illustration: A Theoretical and Contextual Perspective, Bloomsbury.
- Taylor (2024) Illustration and Heritage, Bloomsbury.
- Cooke, A., & Smith, M. (2015) People of Print: Innovative, Independent Design and Illustration, Thames & Hudson.
- Zeegan, R. (2014) 50 Years of Illustration, Laurence King.
- Schiller, A. L. (2016) Graphic Recording, Gestalten.

3 Position yourself

This task is designed to help you arrive onto your postgraduate programme with a developing sense of purpose – and will be discussed in the first weeks of your time on campus:

Prepare a 250-500 word statement that details your ambition for postgraduate study. This may include comment on why you have chosen the programme; the career trajectory you anticipate following your studies; how you imagine the year might stretch or challenge you; what excites you about the opportunities available; any creative or professional influences, ideas or techniques you wish to pursue. You could describe this brief summary as your 'manifesto' for study – a framework that will inevitably evolve during your creative development. This will help initiate a conversation at the start of the *Creative Professional Contexts* module.

4 Connect with others

If you haven't already, you can find examples of past student work on:

https://showcase.uwe.ac.uk and
https://www.instagram.com/uwe_ma.designcommunication/

Be prepared

Access support

Check the information on our Disability web pages so you know what you need to do. If you need any urgent additional mobility or other support to fully access all activities during your studies, contact me as your programme leader.

Get equipped

The University has computers on all our campuses for you to use during your studies. These provide access to our core digital learning tools and any specialist software required for your course. You may have scheduled sessions in computer labs or other specialist facilities, and you will be able to use open-access PCs for self-study.

UWE Bristol licenses many specialist software packages for use on personal laptops for the duration of your course. If you're struggling to meet the financial demands of your course, please contact the Student Money Service team for advice and guidance.

See the UWE website for detailed information on choosing your IT equipment including recommended specifications. For this programme we recommend the **Enhanced Specification**.

Materials list

The materials list below is not exclusive, and provided as a guide only:

- A diary or wall chart calendar
- Personal notebook
- A3 layout pad
- A4 sketch book
- Range of pencils 2H to 6B
- Colour materials: colour pencils; markers; watercolour paints; acrylic paint
- 450mm Perspex rule
- 500mm steel/cutting rule
- A2 cutting mat
- Swann Morton Scalpel
- Scissors
- Putty rubber
- Glue stick
- Masking tape
- White Tac
- Portfolio: A2 in size and substantial enough to protect your work
- Black Presentation Boxes (available from Bower Ashton campus shop)
- A memory stick/portable hard drive
- A Bone Folder (available from Bower Ashton campus shop)
- Bookbinding Needles (available from Bower Ashton campus shop)
- A pair of sensible walking shoes
- Bicycle
- A City of Bristol map or A-Z
- Camera
- Waterproof coat
- Flask / Water bottle / Mug
- Sound recording device

International students

The Global Student Support Team offer information and advice to ensure you receive all the support you need to get the best from your time at UWE Bristol. They are here to help you settle in when you first arrive at UWE Bristol, and they organise social events to help you adapt to your new environment.

Who to contact if you have questions

For any questions about the programme, starting your studies at UWE, or the above information, please contact me directly: stephen.monger@uwe.ac.uk

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Please note: this information has been provided on the assumption that you will meet the conditions of your offer and be eligible to take up your place.

Entry: September 2026 Last updated: March 2026