

Lancaster
University



Design

Undergraduate Degrees 2026



Welcome

Designers increasingly address complex issues faced by businesses, governments and society, such as climate change and net zero, social inequalities, public health problems and rapid technological change. Creative, collaborative, agile designers are needed to design meaningful responses to these issues. At Lancaster University, develop your skills to work in an industry that designs impactful experiences in both our physical and digital worlds.



This degree will prepare you for a range of exciting careers within existing and emerging creative industries. We offer:

- + A creative design practice that is supported by historical, intellectual and theoretical content.
- + Design studios in which you can develop practical skills in design research, ideation, making, visualisation and presentation using specialist equipment and industry-standard software.
- + Real-world projects and live briefs that prepare you for professional practice.
- + Guest speakers and external organisations that provide valuable insights into design and related industries.



for Art and Design
Complete University





Guide 2025





ImaginationLancaster is an internationally recognised research lab based at Lancaster University, known for an open, design-led approach to exploration.

Since our founding in 2006, we have applied innovative research to tackle complex challenges across industry, public and private sectors, and government at both national and global levels. As a student of design at Lancaster, you'll benefit from the University's close links with cutting-edge research and leading thinkers.

Degree title		Degree (Hons)	UCAS code	Course duration (years)	Typical A level offer
Design		BA	W281	3	ABB
Design (Placement Year)		BA	W282	4	ABB
Design (Study Abroad)		BA	W283	4	ABB
Marketing and Design		BSc	NW52	3	AAB
Marketing and Design (Industry)		BSc	NW53	4	AAB
Marketing and Design (Study Abroad)		BSc	NW54	4	AAB

Visit our website for more information on degree options, scholarships and entry requirements lancaster.ac.uk



Made for *learning*

Studying design at Lancaster, you'll cultivate creative problem-solving skills, develop research skills and get to grips with professional visualisation techniques. With guidance from experts in our world-class design research lab, this degree equips you for dynamic careers in a range of sectors.

Design facilities and equipment

As a design student at Lancaster, you will work in our purpose-built design studios, our digital art lab, installation spaces and fully-equipped workshops. We have specialist fabrication equipment, including laser cutters and 3D-printers, accompanied by access to industry-standard design software.

Taught elements

Many of your modules will involve workshops in which you will spend time thinking about, creating, making, visualising and testing your designs in relation to project briefs. For your other and lecture-based modules, you will have a combination of lectures and small-group seminars that may involve discussions and various design activities, as well as time spent in our design studio.



Assessment

We use a variety of methods to assess student work, as we believe that knowledge and learning is more than just the memorisation of facts. Instead, through creative assessment, you should be able to tell us what you did, how you did it and what you learned, through reflection. These methods include: design portfolios, prototypes, physical designs, essays, workbooks, presentations, project reports and dissertations.

Student work

At the end of every year, our final-year students showcase their designs in a major degree show exhibition on the Lancaster University campus. The exhibition is open to the public and provides a fantastic opportunity to share the design work students have done to family, friends and even potential employers. See previous degree show work: lancaster.ac.uk/lica/degreeshow

“

*It combined
my creativity
and artistic
skill with
industrial
design
practice and
software.*

”



Jacob, second year

BA Hons Design

A typical day as a design student goes like this; the morning workshop is usually an hour, in which we are introduced to a new concept or area of design that we will eventually attempt ourselves. After a gap of a couple of hours, which allows me to get to grips with the new topic or hang out with friends, there is an afternoon workshop which is much more 'hands-on'. In these workshops it is encouraged that any work-in-progress is shown to the tutors for feedback and advice, which is usually where I end up improving my designs the most!

My last module involved designing advertising material for an imaginary festival of my choice, which involved using Adobe Dimension and Photoshop to create truly unique 2D / 3D composites. Though sometimes we do work in groups, this is often for small activities, such as analysing existing examples of work. Hearing the insights of others is one of the best ways to improve your own work.

Workshops can also be based around physical design. For example, one of the modules improved my skills in laser cutting and 3D printing, with the end goal of creating a moving piece of art, also known as an automaton, alongside an accompanying portfolio. This module was by far my favourite because it combined my creativity and artistic skill with industrial design practice and software, such as Fusion 360 and Meshmixer. It was also one of the more personal modules I've had, with my tutor carefully overseeing everyone's designs every step of the way.

Gain *real-world* experience

We know you want to graduate confident and ready to step into your career. That's why we make it easy to incorporate work and life experience into your time at Lancaster.

Your ambitions are important to us, and we will help you build the skills you need to succeed by offering a range of placement and internship opportunities as well as the chance to study abroad and see the world.

Placement year

You can opt to study your degree with a placement year (also known as a year in industry). On this degree you spend your third year working in a graduate-level, professional job in a sector of your choice before returning to complete your final year at Lancaster University. Securing a placement is a competitive process and we support you with personalised coaching and professional guidance.

Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Internship Scheme

You'll gain sector-relevant work experience and get paid for it with these internships. Apply in all years of study for opportunities such as publishing assistant, content delivery manager or assistant events producer. The scheme is delivered by our faculty employability team who are here to support your access to direct work experience while you study.

Study abroad

You can choose to study your degree with a study abroad year. On these four-year degrees, you spend your third year studying at one of our partner universities abroad. Our current partners are in Australia, Canada, and the USA, although availability of destinations varies each year.

Living in another country and studying design from a different perspective enhances your subject knowledge and develops resourcefulness for life after university.

Vacation travel and overseas summer schools

You can also discover the world during your vacations. We run short trips to destinations such as China, Germany, Ghana, Malaysia and Switzerland. These trips include meeting local students and businesses as well as some academic study and cultural discovery.

In addition, you can attend summer schools at one of our many overseas partners.

Find out more at lancaster.ac.uk/your-global-experience





Ryan, *final year*

Design (Placement Year)

I undertook a placement year last year, which was largely focused on design. I spent a year working on website design for Yell.com, in which I developed many skills, both specific to graphic design and also personal, workplace skills.

The placement developed my broader aesthetic skills and pushed how I view balance and form. This certainly informed my creative work back at university this year, paying closer attention to composition and balance.

The availability of the tutors is something I really value; I appreciate having the opportunity to be able to receive feedback on my work and discussing possible routes forward. We often consider different ways of viewing the work, with a focus on how the final form will appear in the upcoming degree show.

he Mexican governm
nplloys face recogniti
ftware to prevent vo
nial in the Mexican
residential election.

uces facial
on the iPhone X.

Design

BA (Hons)

This degree prepares you to tackle the complex challenges of today's world by developing versatile skills in graphics, products, and user experience (UX/UI). You'll learn to solve problems with creativity, design research, and professional visualisation techniques

In your first year, you will be introduced to many practical design activities through studio-based teaching, whilst developing a broad knowledge of the history and theory of design.

During your second year, you will deepen your practical experience via intensive design studio modules focusing on design visualisation, interactions and experiences, speculative design and sustainability.

During your final year, you will undertake a design consultancy project with an external organisation, learn about what it takes to be a design leader and manager, and complete a major independent project in an area of design that interests you.

Enhancing your curriculum

We continually review and enhance our course curricula to ensure we are delivering the best possible learning experience, and to make sure that the subject knowledge and transferable skills you develop will prepare you for your future. Information within this publication with respect to courses and modules is correct at the time of publication, and the University will make every reasonable effort to offer courses and modules as advertised. In some cases, changes may be necessary and may result in new modules or some modules and combinations being unavailable, for example as a result of student feedback, timetabling, staff changes and new research.

Year 1

Core Modules

The Reflective Design Process

You will develop essential creative and analytical skills, and build your confidence in conducting research, generating insights, exploring possibilities, prototyping, testing, and refining ideas into innovative solutions.

Design Contexts

Through interactive lectures, practical activities and critical discussions, you will investigate how design responds to global challenges, drives innovation, and reflects societal change. From the Industrial Revolution to the Digital Age, this module covers design's evolving role in society, the economy, and the environment.

Visual Communication

Focussing on key forms of visual communication, including the photograph, the diagram, and the page, you will explore mediums both conceptually and practically. Through lectures, practical studio activities and video tutorials, you will develop the ability to translate complex ideas into clear and compelling visuals.

Design Through Making

Using our well-equipped workshop, you will explore a range of techniques including laser cutting, 3D printing and traditional fabrication methods, helping you bring your ideas to life.

Design Sprints

Working on a series of intensive one-week projects, you will explore different ways to develop and present your ideas, helping you to build confidence in your own creative process. You will think critically, adapt to new challenges and communicate your ideas in weekly exhibitions and design reviews.

The Arts and Identity

This module explores the role of the arts in building community, identity and confidence. You will engage with a variety of different art forms (such as painting, theatre, fiction and film) and develop your own voice via collaborative projects such as a podcast, video essay, or presentation.

Year 2

Core Modules

Interaction and Experience Design

You will learn to design intuitive, engaging, and effective interactive experiences. Explore design methods including wireframing, prototyping (both paper-based and digital), and interactive testing. You will learn to identify interaction strengths and weaknesses to continuously improve your designs.

Insight-led Design

You will explore methods such as workshop design for gathering and interpreting insights, alongside data-led processes and research. Emerging technologies, including AI, will be introduced to enhance insight generation. You will transform data into meaningful concepts, strategies, and narratives, ensuring your ideas are both informed and innovative.

Design Visualisation

You will engage with practical techniques for creating visualisations, including 3D modelling, rendering, generative AI, and data visualisations. You will also engage with contemporary issues in design visualisation, such as the ethical implications of using generative AI in design practice.

Design for Sustainability

You will engage with sustainability frameworks and ethical design principles to develop creative, impactful solutions. Whether designing tangible products, services or digital experiences, you will explore strategies like repair, reuse, regeneration, and material innovation to align your work with the growing need for sustainability.

Speculative Design

In this studio-based module, you will examine emerging innovations such as artificial intelligence, robotics, and biomaterials. You will develop skills that enable you to envision future scenarios through creating 2D and 3D prototypes that make speculative futures feel real and relatable.

Plus one from:

Employability, Purpose and Social Impact
Global Challenges and Collaborative Solutions
Cultural Diversity and Professional Contexts
Taking an Idea and Making it Happen

Final Year

Core Modules

Design Consultancy

In a team, you will tackle real business challenges, delivering creative solutions grounded in robust design research. Each project is unique, shaped through collaboration with your client to meet their specific needs. Your brief could cover new product development, brand strategy, user Experience (UX) research and/or design guidelines.

Design Independent Project

You will take full creative control and develop an independent project that reflects your interests and career goals. Dive deep into a topic you are passionate about; push your creative boundaries and refine the skills you have developed throughout your studies.

Design Leadership

As you prepare to graduate, you will learn key principles of design management, design and product development processes and tools for designing sustainable business models, to help you transform creative ideas into impactful solutions.

Plus one from:

Technology and Social Justice
Queer Futures
People Power, Community Engagement and Collective Action
Confronting the Climate Crisis
The Power of Ideas
Artistic Fusions
Futures Beyond Borders

Study abroad degrees

You will study abroad at a partner university in your third year. The grades you achieve at your host university will be translated back and be credited to your Lancaster degree.

Placement year degrees

In your third year you will undertake as core the 'Placement Year Work Based Learning Module'.

Careers and employability

Careers service

Throughout your degree, there will be a wealth of career guidance and support available from your tutors and the University's Careers Service, which has specialist Careers Consultants. We have connections with some of the world's top graduate recruiters and employers, and organise careers fairs, workshops, and networking opportunities throughout the year.

The Lancaster Award

The Lancaster Award is a non-academic certificate developed in partnership with employers to help you make the most of your time at Lancaster and to demonstrate the skills you have developed along the way. It is designed to reward the wide range of volunteering activities and placements undertaken by many of our undergraduates. Potential employers increasingly value a profile that includes more than just strong academic results, and the Lancaster Award recognises and validates this.



Graduate destinations

Our graduates are at the cutting-edge of critical design. They are able to respond creatively to the evolving needs of the public, private and third sectors, and have the skills and experience to design innovative products, places, services and systems.

You will be equipped to enter a range of design careers such as:

- + Design consultant
- + Brand designer
- + Service designer
- + UX/UI designer
- + Graphic designer
- + Design ethnographer
- + Innovation consultant
- + Design researcher
- + Design manager



“

I had the opportunity to tailor my third-year projects to UX, inspiring me to pursue a career in this field.

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Designer at Capgemini

Lancaster University



Lizzie Hockett

BA (Hons) Design,
graduated 2024

I am a User Experience Designer at Capgemini, a technology consultancy, working within the design team of the Customer Experience department. I consult with clients from both the public and private sectors to enhance their digital interfaces. My role allows me to dive into various aspects of UX, including user research, content design, UX/UI design, service design, and interaction design. I am loving the opportunities to work on different client projects and explore various areas of UX.

My passion for UX was sparked while studying on the BA Design course at Lancaster, where I had the opportunity to tailor my third-year projects to UX, inspiring me to pursue a career in this field.



lancaster.ac.uk/design

The information provided in this publication relates primarily to 2026 entry to the University and every effort has been taken to ensure the information is correct at the time of printing in June 2025. The University will use all reasonable effort to deliver the course as described but the University reserves the right to make changes after going to print. You are advised to consult our website at: lancaster.ac.uk/study for up-to-date information before you submit your application. Further legal information may be found at: lancaster.ac.uk/compliance/legalnotice.