

Year 11 GCSE Art & Design: Graphic Communication (8203)

Course Overview

Component 1: Portfolio (60%)

- Sustained project + smaller studies (book cover, and 'in the news' poster project)

AO1: Develop ideas, AO2: Experiment, AO3: Record, AO4: Present

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment (40%)

- Theme paper released in *January 2026*
- 8–10 weeks' preparation, understanding and choosing a theme
- 10-hour supervised exam to produce final piece - *May 2026*

How Parents Can Help

- Encourage regular sketchbook work at home. (ask to see it, talk to them about their work)
- Support with taking/using their own photographs to use in their work.
- Discuss ideas (ask 'why are you choosing this as your route to go down?').
- Remind them to annotate clearly (what they've done, why they've done it).
- Help with organisation: printouts, resources, USB backups.

Key Content

- Research into artists/designers linked to themes.
- Wide range of media & techniques (digital + traditional).
- Clear annotation & reflection (strengths/weaknesses).
- Links between research → development → final outcome.
- Presentation: sketchbook + mounted final work.

Resources

- AQA website: specification & exemplar work.
- BBC Bitesize
- Pinterest / Design Blogs for inspiration.
- YouTube: artist tutorials, Photoshop/Illustrator guides.
- Books: Graphic Design School (Dabner), 100 Ideas that Changed Graphic Design.

Top Parent Tip

The most effective support is encouraging regular, independent creative work. Please be making sure sketchbooks are annotated and up to date before deadlines (these will be throughout Jan and Feb)