THE UNIVERSITY OF HUDDERSFIELD

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<tr>
<th>University</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Title</td>
<td>Creative Imaging</td>
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<td>Deliverer of</td>
<td>School of Design Technology</td>
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<td>course</td>
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<td>Partners</td>
<td>ATTIC Communications Ltd</td>
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<td>Commencement of</td>
<td>2003 – 2005: Full time funded programme with ATTIK:</td>
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<td>course</td>
<td>To start in 2006: Rewritten part-time programme:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qualification</td>
<td>MA</td>
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<td>Course Leader</td>
<td>Margot Short</td>
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<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td><a href="http://www.huddersfield.ac.uk">www.huddersfield.ac.uk</a></td>
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INTRODUCTION
From 2003 to 2005 Huddersfield University has been running a MA course in Creative Imagining in partnership with communication company ATTIK (www.attik.com). The course has been rewritten to reflect on experiences gained during the running of the course over the 2 years, due to changing funding conditions and due to difficulties in recruiting sufficient full time student.

This case study describes the first part of the programme in partnership with ATTIK and looks at the new programme that will be launched September 2006.

COURSE BACKGROUND: PARTNERSHIP WITH ATTIK
The original Masters Degree in Creative Imaging was validated in 2001 and delivered from 2003/4 – 2004/5, in addition to four other programmes supported by Yorkshire Forward.
Students on the course received £5000.00 in support to cover course fees and £ 5000.00 towards living expenses. Funding was furthermore received to cover cost of setting teaching space and to cover setting-up costs.

The postgraduate course was the result of a collaborative programme between the University of Huddersfield and the global communications company ATTIK.

The programme was developed to bring together creative design practise and innovative thinking through taught business, marketing and management modules. The partnership aimed to produce a pool of talented professionals to maintain the UK’s leadership within the global creative community. The Master degree programme integrated design and business to provide commercial and strategic foundation required to compete in an increasing competitive marketplace.

The vigorous year-long course combined academic classes at the university with on-the-job experience at the nearby ATTIK Huddersfield studio. Nearly all of graduates leave university with little or no commercial experience, no sense of entrepreneurial foresight or strategic planning, and with unrealistic expectations for the pressures and rewards of their chosen field. To address this, the innovative MA in Creative Imaging with ATTIK was developed. The course saw a close relationship with ATTIK during the 48 duration of the programme where students had the opportunity to get first hand experience of working in a commercial environment and working on live projects.

Founder of ATTIK James Sommerville, explains why they decided to set-up the initiative:

“I wanted to create an environment where post-grad students could cut their teeth on the realities of our industry whilst still being within an academic environment.”
COURSE CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

One of the students from the first cohort had this to say about their experience:

“It has only been since I graduated that I have found the true benefits of the course. It has allowed me to hit the ground running and I have felt at home, whether it is leading a creative team or presenting to clients, while other designers with more experience than myself still struggle with these aspects of the design industry.”

Experience of the initial programme proved that delivery across the range of Master’s courses, fostered synergy between the business design aware and practising designers, and creates a strong dynamic. The experience of delivering the Creative Imaging Masters programme is that much of the value experienced by the student is in working within fields that are unfamiliar to them.

Working with creative masters candidates across several disciplines gives a shared postgraduate experience. This enhances their ability to solve business problems encompassing multiple perspectives and provides the appropriate contribution from creative practitioners. It is this interconnection that the programme promotes in its widest sense.

The programme provides students with an experience that broadens their understanding of different working methods and remits, where high profile companies and partners will demonstrate innovative and individual approaches for students to challenge and analyse whilst reaching academic mastery.

COURSE MODULES

Academic modules in Research Methods, Entrepreneurial Studies, Understanding the Corporation, Global Consumerism, Buyer Behaviour, Advertising Strategy and Managed Personal Development are delivered internally by staff and visiting management consultants.

Some management modules were delivered by professional training providers. Academic, creative and managerial elements are all combined on the programme.

STAGE 1
- Managed Personal Development + Minor Masters Design Programme (20)
- Research Investigation Management
- Global Consumerism
- Consumer Behaviour

STAGE 2
- Understanding the Corporation + Major Master’s Design Programme (20 credits out of 40)
  - Entrepreneurship in Action
  - Design Business

STAGE 3
- Design Strategy Planning + Major Master’s Design Programme (20 of 40)

CONNECTON WITH INDUSTRY

Cross-disciplinary projects were used to generate experience of entrepreneurship and risk-taking. Attik Design Group provided briefs from global markets, bringing in Nike, AOL and Smith Barney

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1 Shay McCloskey, Yahoo employee, US February 2006
amongst others, and included experience of new business strategy, client handling and production.

From Christmas to Easter students worked on live projects with ATTIK where students would get the opportunity to work on up to 6-8 different commercial projects. All live projects were real project that ATTIK was delivering for clients and students were expected to treat the experience as a full-time job. Due to the close proximity of the ATTIK's offices to the university, students had the opportunity to work very closely and interact directly with the staff from ATTIK. Several students would spend time at the office premises and form close relationships with the individuals at the company, and a non-structured relationship developed as a result.

Through the work, and these experiences, the students were provided with the opportunity literally to make “the leap from student to practitioners” and to experience how a commercial company and a design practice works.

“We run a commercial studio”, says Sommerville. “Students have to respect our commitments to clients. They work long hours, manage other people's money, and deliver.” The students are facing those types of demands, often for the first time.

Industrial partners to date have included Wanadoo and Halifax/HboS. These partners were launching new products to the market and involved students being the creative teams for these companies, in association with each firm's own marketing, financial and IT staff.

This programme offered students the opportunity to:

- Develop personal creative strategies which can be tested in a real commercial environment
- Spend time working within and alongside Attik and observe their core business values
- Work within a well-resourced technical environment
- Gain insights into cultural diversity
- Develop cross-media campaigns
- Research personal design projects in the digital domain
- Liaise with business support agencies for future opportunities

DIFFERENTIATOR/ SPECIAL FEATURE

- The course is the result of a collaboration programme between the University of Huddersfield and a corporate company, the global communications company, ATTIK.
- Students get the opportunity to work ATTIK's in-house team and get real commercial 'client-side' experience.

Benefits to industry
For ATTIK, it's a 12-month recruitment school with the availability to handpick talented young designers from several continents and an assurance that they are part of developing the new creative world.

An International Aspect
Selection for the MA in Creative Imaging was from an international pool of applicants; it was targeted at people with 2:1 minimum first degree, or appropriate industrial experience. Recruitment was via the University Website and Attik’s site. Candidates were asked to apply online with a portfolio of appropriate work. Only fifteen students from around the world were selected to participate each year. Keeping the class-size small and multicultural ensures that those enrolled will get the most possible out of the experience. Students came from remarkably different backgrounds and end up collaborating on world-class projects.
The course had a high number of foreign students including students from the USA, Canada, Pakistan, Singapore, and Mumbai together with EU students and UK students. This mix of students proved to be a good mix based on the experience the different students brought to the course. It provided the UK students with an opportunity to get a more international perspective. Furthermore, though the live project that the student worked on with ATTIK, (which often were international working on large global brands such as AOL and Nike), the students were able to understand at first hand, subjects such as Global consumerism when discussed in lectures.

Staff from ATTIK’s office San Francisco would also be involved in the programme when visiting the Huddersfield office, giving the student the opportunity for multi cultural inputs in their learning experience.

GOING FORWARD: NEW TIMES, NEW COURSE

The full time course has been running for 2 consecutive years, from 2003 to 2005. The last cohort of students graduated in 2005. Due to increased course fees, the ending of funding and difficulties in recruiting students without bursaries available, the course has been rewritten into a part time course, which is now being targeted at the part time market. Furthermore, despite a very positive outcome from students, the original course proved to be very resources intensive both for the university and for ATTIK, who needed to commit a lot of resources to the programme, and the course has now been redesigned to allow for more flexibility.

The new course, which will be offered from September 2006, will still maintain the favour of the initial full time course and be based on the same ideas and values. Students will be challenged to develop their critical thinking, and enhance their personal practice to satisfy the many and varied outcomes. The mastery of creative imaging is judged by achieving successful integration and transfer of skills.

The programme is designed to fulfil the needs of both a national and international clientele, specifically to cater for the needs of local designers and their firms. Two year / part-time delivery will enable students to manage part-time employment at the same time as studying, and also gives an opportunity for potential students who are in employment to seek support from their employer for part-time study leave. It is anticipated that students with an existing commercial background may bring some issues from their own companies to address within project work.

The main difference is the structure of the course (from full time to part time) together with a new module in “Master in Craft”, which is being added. The intention is still to maintain strong relationship with industry through partnership companies but the relationship with ATTIK will become less intimate and other companies will be sought to work with the students.

Rational behind the new course:

- To take burden of partner companies (time commitment from ATTIK), not to drain on resources of one company.
- To widen student experience by bring more companies into the programme to show how companied work and experience design practice.
- To open-up course to mark time market.
- To broaden subjects to include innovation.
- To allow more time for reflection: by developing a 2 years part time course, that will run over 90 weeks, students and staff will be allowed more time for reflection.
- The aim is to get student to see risk taking and aspects of entrepreneurialism by engaging different companies.
- To introduce new module on ‘Master in Craft’ which will allow student from different backgrounds (i.e. photography, crafts etc.) to work on their specific field. This course will be more self-driven that the other modules.
LESSON LEARNED
Despite a very fruitful and productive relationship between ATTIK and The University of Huddersfield, several issues and problems occurred during the delivery of the 2-year course.

Margot Short explains that the relationship was not an “easy marriage” and that the problems often related to the differences between the different objectives that academia and industry have. As students were working on live projects in a real agency environment, designer mentors would often shortcut processes to save time which meant that student often did not get a full picture of the design process and as a consequence lecturers would have to fill the missing gaps. Furthermore, because the industry is moving at a fast rate, students often did not manage to get involved in time before the project was delivered.

DETAILS ABOUT NEW COURSE

Educational Aims

- To enable students to develop and demonstrate their creative and inventive ingenuity in the context of the design industries
- To provide the opportunity for students to develop a perceptive and an acute appreciation and understanding of the importance and significance of market awareness and entrepreneurship to the initiation and success of design within business
- To develop an acute appreciation of the key roles of creativity, strategic planning, design and innovation to business success
- To provide exciting opportunities for students to develop through understanding and practice the flexible thinking, group working and creative responses to opportunities so vital to successful design practise.

Programme structure

The generation of original ideas, their evaluation and development and their successful exploitation in the commercial design market place is the central focus of the pathway and has determined both the nature of each module and the structure and design of the programme.

In Term 1 the student will address the principal issues and methodologies associated with the generation of ideas namely innovation and creativity studies, future forecasting and its application within the design industry. The contextual study of consumerism and subsequent impact on branding and the growth of the advertising industry will be investigated.

In Term 2 Students experience projects that require them to bring innovation and lateral thought to bear, industrial partners supply design briefs that are intended to stretch the student thoughts to apply principles of innovation branding within the local and global context. Cross-disciplinary working will be required and students may experience an element of team work, depending on the individual projects.

In Term 3 further detailed study concentrates upon the specific relationship of innovation and entrepreneurship with the three industrial parameters of design, manufacture/implementation and marketing. The context of global consumer culture and the nature of buying behaviour activity therein will be developed by lectures, visiting experts and by workshop simulations.

In Term 4 lectures, workshops and visits supports the development of design strategy planning. A group project with a major external partner provides the opportunity to deliver creative and strategic solutions to a current industrial project. Students will deliver proposals and present in a highly professional and businesslike manner, emulating that of an agency pitching for work.
In Term 5, modules focuses on developing a sound research base, giving the student the opportunity to develop practice through their ‘craft’ and prepare for the final term major project module.

In Term 6 an individual project for award route of is identified after consultation with staff, ideally where possible with an appropriate industrial partner. The project will demonstrate clearly an understanding of the innovation process and of the need for entrepreneurial disciplines at Masters level as indicated by the generation of original creative ideas and the projected strategy for commercial exploitation in the market place or detailed resolution of a strategy for implementation.

The pathway structure and modules are organised so that graduates from different disciplines can provide individual perspectives, especially within the project modules, which will be based upon their personal professional experience and on their knowledge to-date. The pathway is arranged with three potential exit points coinciding with the conclusion of each of the three terms. The sequential inter-related nature of the modules will provide a valuable self-contained educational experience for the award of either Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma at the appropriate stages. There will be one award board per year.

The major project taken in Term 3 defines the individual award outcome, MA or MSc. Students will develop their project remit under advice from the pathway leader and their academic supervisor. The nature of the project determines the award. An extensive scientific or technical approach to a digital domain project will lead to MSc. Developments of business opportunities, digital applications in arts and design, studies of social policy and behaviour in the digital domain, will lead to the MA award. In difficult hybrid cases, the usual choice will be MA, and the student will be counselled by discussion with the supervisor.

### Overview of modules

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<th>Modules</th>
<th>Credit</th>
<th>Exit Point/Award</th>
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<td>Term 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creativity and Innovation Futures</td>
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<td>The Rise of Consumerism and Brand Awareness</td>
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<td><strong>Term 2</strong></td>
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<td>Minor Masters Design Projects</td>
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<td>Postgraduate Certificate</td>
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<td><strong>Term 3</strong></td>
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<td>Entrepreneurship &amp; Innovation in Action</td>
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<td><strong>YEAR 2</strong></td>
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**Selection of students**
An interview, part of careful vetting at the admissions stage, will identify an appropriate business and/or industrial dimension within the previous experience of selected applicants. Candidates who do not have significant business and/or industrial experience will be expected to have a degree or equivalent at a minimum 2:1 level of award and all will have an innovative and creative portfolio of appropriate work.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**
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1 [www.attik.com](http://www.attik.com)