Programme Specification

Product Design {Foundation} [Bower]

Version: 2026-27, v2.0, Validated

Contents

Section 1: Key Programme Details

Part A: Programme Information

Programme title: Product Design {Foundation} [Bower]

Highest award: BA (Hons) Product Design

Interim award: BA Product Design

Interim award: DipHE Product Design

Interim award: CertHE Product Design

Awarding institution: UWE Bristol

Teaching institutions: UWE Bristol

Study abroad: Yes

Year abroad: No

Sandwich year: Yes

Credit recognition: No

School responsible for the programme: CATE School of Arts, College of Arts, Technology and Environment

Professional, statutory or regulatory bodies:

Institution of Engineering Designers (IED)

Modes of delivery: Full-time, Sandwich

Entry requirements: For the current entry requirements see the UWE public website.

For implementation from: 01 September 2026

Programme code: H13H00

Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Overview: This programme prepares students for successful careers in product design and the design industries.

The General aims of the programme are:

- To produce graduates with the capacity to proactively solve problems.

- To produce graduates with strong communication skills, who are able to explain their concepts to a diverse audience using a range of media.

- To prepare students for progression to further study and/or research into product design or related disciplines.

- To produce practitioners with an ethical awareness who can take on contemporary issues and objectively seek new and innovative.

The curriculum has been developed within a framework with both Interior Design BA (Hons) and Product Design Technology BSc (Hons).

The programme of study offers students the opportunity to undertake a creative course covering a wide range of perspectives, principals, and contemporary practices in an environment that supports students to proactively develop personally, professionally and academically. The curriculum aims to challenge students to think critically, take creative risks and develop strategies to become lifelong learners.

The programme is practice-based, and the teaching and assessment approaches support students to develop skills in a supportive and authentic learning environment. Students work to solve real-world problems, learn to collaborate with each other and the wider creative community, develop confidence in their abilities and grow to understand the ways in which creative skills can be applied in a range of graduate environments.

Assessments focus mainly on portfolio-based submissions that support students to showcase their learning and achievement.

Features of the programme: Every year, every student at Level 4 and 5 undertakes a live project with an industry partner.
At Level 6, every student undertakes an individual major project with human-centred design briefs created by the students.
The course has a strong focus on industry and knowledge and skills to increase employability within the design industry.

Educational Aims: The specific aims of the programme are:

To prepare students for a careers in Product Design.

To produce graduates with a sound understanding of the tools and techniques used to support the product design and development process.

To produce practitioners with the ability to develop initial design concepts into functional product/service/system models leading to resolved product concepts.

To give students an understanding of product/service/system development tools, materials, manufacturing processes, marketing and business practices.

To develop students with a thorough understanding of the technologies underpinning effective product/service/system design, realisation and development.

To prepare students for progression to further study and/or research into design or related disciplines.

To develop students' independent study skills and prepare them for lifelong learning experiences.

Programme Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this programme graduates will achieve the following learning outcomes.

Programme Learning Outcomes

PO1.   Technical Proficiency: Demonstrate mastery of materials, media, techniques, methods, technologies, and tools relevant to the chosen discipline(s) while adhering to safety and ethical working practices.

PO2.   Idea Generation and Development: Independently and collaboratively generate ideas in response to set briefs and develop those ideas into tangible outcomes, demonstrating the ability to select and utilise appropriate materials, processes, and environments.

PO3.   Design Communication: Effectively utilise visual languages to communicate and articulate ideas to a professional standard.

PO4.   Critical and Contextual Understanding: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the critical and contextual dimensions of the chosen discipline(s), including relevant theories, historical and contemporary practices, and ongoing debates.

PO5.   Professional Awareness: Understand the role of the creative practitioner within the professional context, including relationships with audiences, clients, markets, and communities, and the impact of intellectual property. Factoring ethical considerations into product design practice. Costs, finance and economics. Legal issues including IPR and liability.

PO6.   Technological Integration: Critically engage with and adapt to key developments and emerging trends in media and technologies related to the chosen discipline(s).

PO7.   Research and Inquiry: Apply research methods and investigative skills to explore and record source material, effectively using a range of learning resources.

PO8.   Presentation and Dissemination: Develop and refine presentation skills, effectively communicating and documenting ideas visually, verbally, and in writing, considering appropriate methods for dissemination.

Assessment strategy: Level 3 summative assessments: Students receive a Pass/ Fail – with written and / or verbal feedback clearly indicating their levels of achievement and areas for further development.

Level 4 summative assessments: students receive a Pass/Fail – with written and / or verbal feedback clearly indicating their levels of achievement and areas for further development.

The Pass / Fail Assessment Strategy for Level 4 has been designed to:
Establish a more authentic and subject-appropriate approach to the assessment process, placing greater emphasis on assessment as learning, rather than an assessment of learning – which is more aligned to the iterative nature of creative practice.

Establish a less marks-driven approach to assessment, particularly during the early stages of a student's journey, to provide students with an opportunity to build confidence and develop individual approaches to iterative practice and creative risk-taking without the perceived pressure / punitive nature of a marks driven culture.

Remove the emphasis from final marks, making explicit the role of feedback in students' future learning and progression. Greater emphasis on assessment feedback will enable staff and students to establish a broader shared language and understanding of assessment away from the granular detail of marks.

Signal a more holistic, inclusive approach to assessment and would align with the University's wider priorities of inclusivity and accessibility.

Level 5 summative assessments: students receive a numerical grading mark for each module – with written and / or verbal feedback clearly indicating their levels of achievement and areas for further development.

Level 6 summative assessments: students receive a numerical grading mark for each module – with written and / or verbal feedback clearly indicating their levels of achievement and areas for further development.

Feedback at formative and summative assessment points (verbal and/or in writing) is regarded as a positive learning tool and provides students with a clear understanding of the level of their achievement, their progress and advice about how this can be

improved.

Formative and summative assessments are designed to provide the opportunity for students to understand and reflect upon their achievements, and to support the monitoring of progress by tutors and students. Assessment methods used are varied, are relevant in demonstrating achievement to both academic and industry stakeholders, and form a coherent programme of assessment which is designed to offer students the maximum opportunity to demonstrate the skills, knowledge and experience that they have gained through the course of study, as well as to support ongoing and continuous improvement in their individual creative practice and development as practitioner-researchers.

At assessment, therefore, students are expected to present evidence of work which demonstrates engagement with the minimum number of learning hours for the module (contact and independent study hours).

Forms of assessment used as part of the overall programme include:

Project work

Portfolio of work including:

- Designed outcomes and supporting work

- Designed evaluative Process Document (Module File)

Weekly ongoing tutorials

Presentation and participation in studio-critique

Group and individual visual presentations

Group and individual verbal presentations

Group critiques

Peer and self-assessment

Evaluative and reflective outcomes, including visual, verbal and written

Assessment methods used are varied and focused on feeding forwards

For assessment, students are required to present their outcomes for the briefs, a body of developmental work and an evaluative Process Document/s (Module File) which will include reflective evaluation of the work detailing their process, decision

making, and in relation to the outcomes produced and related contemporary design practice/practitioner research.

Formative and summative assessment activities that involve students participating in the evaluation of presented work (their own and others') take place throughout the programme. Participation in and attendance at these sessions forms part of the assessed content of the module as a result of this.

Resit assessments will match the first-sit.

Student support: Programme and Module leaders
Student support for overarching academic and professional concerns, is provided by Programme Leaders, all issues relating to the content, delivery and assessment of modules is provided by Module Leaders.

Academic Personal Tutors
The Academic Personal Tutor, is an academic member of staff who will have access to information on the performance and profile of the student, allowing them to effectively support students' personal and academic development. This embedded relational approach to student support enables wellbeing to be addressed through the curriculum, and students direct academic personal support at the individual and group level.

Careers support
Careers support is integrated throughout the programme and works to the UWE career framework with direct input from UWE careers team. The UWE Careers team work with programme teams to develop bespoke professional practice activities (Professional Practice Week) alongside offering support on developing the skills, experience and knowledge necessary for improving our student's employability prospects. The service provides high quality professional advice and guidance focusing on enabling students to take control of and responsibility for their own career planning and progression/development. Students can access support around finding vacancies for work experience, volunteering, part time work and internships,

as well as events and workshops. UWE Careers provides recruiter facing services including advertising graduate job vacancies, work experience and volunteering opportunities, and running both undergraduate and graduate internship schemes. There are also part time jobs advertised by the Student Union JobShop. There is specialist support for international students including specific resources developed for a range of countries where students are recruited from. Students are introduced to the service during the induction to the course and are encouraged to use the service all through their undergraduate programme and for three years after graduation.

Study Facilities

In our specialist library and learning hub our librarians manage specialist collections to support students' research. Students can attend workshops and engage with online workshops to develop their academic skills. Students also have access to bespoke study skills sessions and Bower Ashton Campus offers spaces for silent and group study and bookable rooms they can book. Students have access to recommended books, periodicals, academic journals, special collections and industry databases.

Student Advisors

For concerns of a personal nature, students can access help from Student Advisors. Student Advisors provide timely, accurate and confidential advice where necessary on all aspects of the provision, for example coursework and examination arrangements, personal circumstance procedures, progression counselling, as well as personal issues such as problems with studying or meeting deadlines, financial matters, ill health and so on including, when-relevant, how to access the wider support provided by the University. This service is supplemented by extensive online resources.

School Student Experience Coach

The School Student Experience Coach provides friendly, non-judgemental support to students as they progress through the course and act as a connect point to inform students about the ecosystem of support available at UWE. Staff can coach students

on many areas of their life and studies, including:

Academic

- Engage further with the course

- Manage deadlines and grow confidence

- Develop goals to ensure progression on the course

Self-development

- Grow confidence and self-esteem

- Increase motivation

- Shape skills in working with others in groups or team

Wellbeing and self-care

- Develop strategies to manage feelings and thoughts whilst at university

- Feel supported in understanding gender identity

- Develop a set of skills to succeed in life as a student

Student Union and Course Representatives

An important part of the programme is the involvement of students. Student representatives are elected to serve on the Student Representatives & Staff Forum and the Programme Management Committee meetings that are held each term to discuss issues raised by students in relation to their experience of studying at UWE and on the programme. These meetings feed directly into the governance structures at the university. The school also has a number of Lead Student Representatives who represent the student voice in the School Board of Studies.

Disability Services

Support for students with learning adjustments is coordinated centrally through Disability Services. This acts as a holistic service for students and applicants to the University and also supports the academic and administrative staff.

In addition to the above The University's Student Services offers a range of services to support students during their time at university and beyond:

- University Health Centre and general advice on Staying Healthy;

Careers and employability, advice on choosing a career, and finding student and graduate vacancies;

- UWE volunteering, opportunities for students to get involved in the local community through - the Community Volunteer Programme;

Student Advisors & Counselling for anything from exam stress to homesickness and depression;

- The Living Centre, for support with faith and spiritual matters;

Global student support, to help international students to make the most of living and studying in the UK;

- Managing disability and dyslexia, to get help with all disability related support needs;

- Money and Visas, for financial check-ups, or help with UK visas.

Part B: Programme Structure

Year 1
Full-time and Sandwich students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 1.

Year 1 Compulsory Modules (Full-time and Sandwich)
The student must take 120 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Full-time and Sandwich)

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UAAAWR-30-0	Foundation Project 2026-27	30
UAABC9-30-0	Disciplinary Projects 2026-27	30
UAAAWP-30-0	Building Creative Skills 2026-27	30

UAAAFT-30-0	Core Studies in Art, Media and Design 2026-27	30

Year 2

Full-time and Sandwich students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 2.

Year 2 Compulsory Modules (Full-time and Sandwich)

Full-time and sandwich students must take 120 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Full-time and Sandwich).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UADBB8-30-1	Objects and Experiences 2027-28	30
UADB9V-30-1	Studio 1 2027-28	30
UADB9W-30-1	Design Communication 2027-28	30
UA1B9S-30-1	Design Contexts 2027-28	30

Year 3

Full-time and Sandwich students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 3.

Year 3 Compulsory Modules (Full-time and Sandwich)

Full-time and sandwich students must take 120 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Full-time and Sandwich).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UADBBA-30-2	Experience Prototyping 2028-29	30
UADBB9-30-2	Experience Design 2028-29	30
UA1B9T-30-2	Design Futures 2028-29	30
UADB9X-30-2	Studio 2 2028-29	30

Year 4

Full-time students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 3.
Sandwich students must take 15 credits from the modules in Year 3.

Sandwich: We recommend that students take this opportunity to do a year-long placement in industry or research.

Year 4 Compulsory Modules (Full-time)

Full-time students must take 120 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Full-time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UADBA3-30-3	Studio 3 2029-30	30
UADB9Y-30-3	Final Major Project 2029-30	30
UADBBB-30-3	Product Futures 2029-30	30
UA1B9U-30-3	Design Research Project 2029-30	30

Year 4 Compulsory Placement Modules (Sandwich)

Sandwich students must take 15 credits from the modules in Compulsory Placement Modules (Sandwich).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UADBA8-15-3	Placement 2029-30	15

Year 5

Sandwich students must take 105 credits from the modules in Year 5.

Year 5 Compulsory Modules (Sandwich)

Sandwich students must take 105 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Sandwich).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UADBBG-15-3	Product Futures 2030-31	15
UADB9Y-30-3	Final Major Project 2030-31	30

UA1B9U-30-3	Design Research Project 2030-31	30
UADBA3-30-3	Studio 3 2030-31	30

Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis

This programme prepares students for successful careers in product design and the design industries. Within the programme there is a particular focus on real world experience and preparing young professionals for industry. Graduates are able to demonstrate excellent creative and technical competence, the capacity to critically evaluate complex information and the skills to apply their knowledge in solving challenging product and service design problems.

Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks

This programme has been developed in relation to the following reference points:

QAA Benchmark Statement for Art and Design and History of Art, Architecture and Design

QAA National Qualifications Framework

UWE Vision, Mission and Strategy

UWE Learning and Teaching Strategy

UWE Assessment Policy

Staff research (See Appendix 1)

Feedback from 'feeder' institutions

Feedback from alumni

Feedback from employers

UWE QMEF requirements (15/30 credit structure)

Student Feedback via module feedback, SRSF meetings, SU Rep

Staff Feedback via programme reports, module specs, formal and informal meetings

EE comments/reports

Diversity and Disability profiles (sector-wide and department specific)

Department of Creative Industries' 'Writing in the Curriculum Review' 2011/12

The programme structure, curriculum content, professional skills and industry engagements have been successfully scrutinised by professionally engaged external examiners and HE Teaching, Learning and Assessment in Creative Practices specialists. This scrutiny has been enhanced by the regular professional engagement of industry practitioners, the success of the course in national and international open professional awards and the strong track record of our graduating students and alumni in moving into professional practice, employment and further study. The course continually reassesses its professional currency via outward engagement, live commissions and industry events.

Part E: Regulations

Approved Variant to University Regulations and Procedures (from 2022-23 Award Boards).

The following variant regulation for compensation applies to students on this award which has been accredited by a PSRB that comes under the auspices of the Institution of Engineering Designers (IED).

The variant applied from 2022-23 Award Boards onwards. (Note - Compensation applied to all levels not just new students).

The permitted maximum compensated credit is 30 credits for a Bachelors or Integrated Masters degree and a maximum of 20 credits in a Masters degree.

The awarding of compensated credit may be considered for an overall module mark in the range 30% to 39% for Levels 4-6 and 40%-49% for Level 7.

No excused credit.