CONCEPT

Graphic Design and Art Direction: Typography, Layout and Print Production



Graphic Design and Art Direction: Typography, Layout and Print Production

Introduction:

Graphic design and art direction decide whether an organisation's campaigns, reports and booklets read clearly and reach print without costly reprints, yet many in-house teams work without shared grids, type rules or a prepress routine. This Core Concept course builds hands-on skill in visual hierarchy, grid layout, Arabic and Latin typography, colour, imagery, art-directing briefs and print production, from bleed and colour modes to paper and finishing. Participants produce an Art-Directed Publication Pack: a creative brief, bilingual layout spreads and a print-ready PDF/X file.

Course Objectives:

- Apply visual hierarchy, contrast, alignment and proximity to organise campaign and publication layouts that readers scan correctly
- Build column and modular grid systems for reports, booklets and screen formats and keep multi-page documents consistent
- Set Arabic, Latin and bilingual typography with correct typeface pairing, leading, tracking and right-to-left page flow
- Direct imagery, colour and brand guideline application across a campaign from a written creative brief
- Prepare print-ready artwork with correct colour modes, bleed, resolution, paper stock and finishing specifications, and check it through preflight and proofing
- Run structured design reviews that turn stakeholder comments into clear, actionable revision rounds

Target Audience:

- Designers responsible for producing campaign, report and publication artwork in-house
- Communications and marketing staff responsible for commissioning, briefing and approving design work
- Art direction and creative leads responsible for keeping a consistent visual style across channels
- Publications and editorial staff responsible for annual reports, booklets and printed collateral
- Production and procurement staff responsible for liaising with printers and checking proofs

Course Outline:

Day 1: Design Principles and Visual Hierarchy

- Visual Hierarchy Audit of Existing Organisational Collateral
- Gestalt Principles: Proximity, Similarity, Closure and Figure-Ground
- Contrast, Scale and Alignment Exercises on a Campaign Poster
- White Space and Reading Path Mapping: Z-Pattern and F-Pattern
- Art Director and Copywriter Creative Team Model and the Big Idea

Day 2: Grid Systems, Typography and Arabic Type

- Manuscript, Column and Modular Grids in the International Typographic Style
- Baseline Grid, Margins and Master Pages for Multi-Page Documents
- Latin Type Anatomy: Point Size, Leading, Tracking and Kerning
- Arabic Script Styles for Print and Screen: Naskh, Kufi and Monolinear Faces
- Bilingual Type Pairing and Right-to-Left and Left-to-Right Page Flow

Day 3: Colour, Imagery and Art-Directing Campaigns

- Colour Wheel Harmonies, Tints and Accessible Contrast Choices
- Brand Guideline Application Checklist: Logo Clear Space, Palette and Type Scale
- Image Selection Criteria, Cropping and Basic Retouching in a Raster Editor
- Creative Brief Template: Objective, Audience, Message, Mandatories and Format
- Campaign Key Visual Adaptation Matrix Across Print, Social and Display Sizes

Day 4: Print Production, Prepress and Digital Output

- CMYK Versus RGB Colour Modes, Spot Colours and Image Resolution for Print
- Bleed, Trim, Safe Zone and Imposition Planning for Booklets and Folded Items
- Paper Stock, Weight and Finishing Options: Coating, Foiling, Embossing and Binding
- PDF/X Export, Preflight Checks, Soft Proofs and Hard Proofs
- Motion Type and Screen Export Settings for Digital Channels at Overview

Day 5: Publication Lab and Design Review

- Annual Report Case: Cover, Divider and Data Page Layout Build
- Booklet Case: Bilingual Spread Sequence and Pagination Plan
- Structured Design Critique Protocol and Revision Log
- Printer Handover Specification Sheet and Proof Sign-Off Checklist
- Art-Directed Publication Pack Assembly and Peer Review

Skills You Will Gain:

- Visual Hierarchy Design
- Grid Layout Construction
- Bilingual Typesetting
- Colour Palette Management
- Image Art Direction
- Creative Brief Writing
- Prepress File Preparation
- Design Critique Facilitation

Why Attend This Course:

- Return with an Art-Directed Publication Pack, including a creative brief, bilingual spreads and a preflighted PDF/X file, built on your own material
- Cut reprint risk by catching colour mode, bleed and resolution errors before files leave your desk
- Brief agencies, photographers and printers with specifications they can act on without repeated clarification
- Compare layout and production practice with designers and communicators from government, finance, energy, healthcare and education

Conclusion:

Consistent, readable design comes from shared craft rules rather than individual taste. The one week move from visual hierarchy and composition, through grids, Latin and Arabic typography, colour and imagery, to art-directing campaigns and preparing files for print and screen. The final day applies these methods in a publication lab, with a design critique and printer handover, and closes with an Art-Directed Publication Pack that participants can reuse for the reports, booklets and campaigns their teams produce.