

# **Achieving Learning Outcomes in Design**

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Zagreb, October 2005

## *Elements That Characterise a Healthy Learning Environment (1)*

Design = a partnership between the designer and the client, and the means of production; it is a team process.

**Learning to become a designer should take these essential connections into account in the environment in which the designers become educated.**

# *Elements That Characterise a Healthy Learning Environment (2)*

Connections between students and their predecessors.

## *Elements That Characterise a Healthy Learning Environment (3)*

The wider connections between the student and the external bodies whose aims are to provide a professional dimension of experience through placements and competitions, and aim to support the education of new generations of designers.

**These elements are only effective insofar as they work together as a total process.**

**It is the interconnections and the appropriate connections and partnerships between these elements that bring them to life and make the total process meaningful.**

- **The Physical Learning Environment**
- **The Academic Staff**
- **The Student Community**
- **External Bodies**

# *The Education of the Designer*

A complex arena in which design plays its part:

- a designer who produces concepts which cannot be realised or carried into production will fail;
- the designer will not find the unique satisfaction that successful designers enjoy, both expressing a creatively unique personality and finding an appropriate solution to a genuine problem

Key requirements for a designer must include the ability to communicate well; the designer must possess the skills of advocacy and articulation

(as well as those of a researcher and conceptualiser).

Most designers work within parameters which are constructed by others or by situations beyond their control.

These are working partnerships and as such require team work and collaboration within an agreed context.

The student is the focus of our joint educational efforts, not the teacher - the student will best prosper where the implied partnerships work coherently and systematically to educate the individual student.

Although each student is an important individual and seeks to express their unique qualities these cannot be effectively developed to their fullest except within an active dynamic community.

**Isolation, of any kind is disastrous for design.**

Most programmes of study in design link the learning of techniques with appropriate problems or tasks which introduce the student to the purpose of the technique.

**Technical instruction which provides a basis for the student to begin to think about the relationship between technique and conceptual thinking is likely to be mastered and remembered by the student.**

Students are at their best when they are ambitious. Enthusiasm can be modified where the ambition gets out of hand, but it cannot be engendered in either art or design without inspiration.

The inspiration to work hard and enjoy doing so must be the aim of the teacher and be the guiding principle behind all academic planning and delivery.

**Without passion and inspiration the creative arts are lifeless.**

The achievement of learning outcomes are the basic requirement for the student's education - the student will need to transcend their limits and create a synthesis of understanding.

This is necessary to pass on to the next stage, and beyond - whether this is to practice or to undertake research in the field of study.

A typical set of Learning Outcomes for a module to introduce a subject to students in the second semester:

- 1) Develop a self directed pattern of learning under tutorial supervision.
- 2) Demonstrate competence and a readiness to experiment in a range of appropriate media.
- 3) Retrieve and access the use of research material towards creative solutions
- 4) Develop an awareness of individual studio practice within the broader cultural context of contemporary movements in the specialism
- 5) Develop time management skills towards the resolution of project work under tutorial supervision.
- 6) Select and record material relating to a given location, event or situation.
- 7) Produce imagery which conveys information, atmosphere and the character of a place or situation.

**Where learning outcomes are expressed as a series of competencies and understandings the correct connections must be established between the elements.**

Three examples of how learning outcomes may be achieved in three stages of the individual's development:

*1) Identifying a Personal Direction  
Within a Chosen Discipline*

Three examples of how learning outcomes may be achieved in three stages of the individual's development:

*2) Case Study of a Module - Introduction to Reportage*

# Learning Outcomes for **Introduction To Reportage**

- 1) Develop a self directed pattern of learning under tutorial supervision.
- 2) Demonstrate competence and a readiness to experiment in a range of appropriate media.
- 3) Retrieve and access the use of research material towards creative solutions
- 4) Develop an awareness of individual studio practice within the broader cultural context of contemporary movements in the specialism.
- 5) Develop time management skills towards the resolution of project work under tutorial supervision.
- 6) Select and record material relating to a given location, event or situation.
- 7) Produce imagery which conveys information, atmosphere and the character of a place or situation.

*The module was, to some extent a revelation for the students, for three main reasons:*

- Few of them were used to seeing the work of the others as it progressed.
- The opportunity to see how different media affected the way in which reportage was developed
- The requirement for the student to take responsibility for the physical presentation of work in progress and articulate their discoveries and critical views of the developing work was immensely valuable in generating student self confidence.

Two clear processes remained once the work was complete.

(1) Assessment of the work by the teacher, usually with a colleague who was unconnected with the teaching of the module. (This included written comments by the teacher which reflected on the success or otherwise of the work in relation to the aims of the brief.)

Two clear processes remained once the work was complete.

(2) The students completed, anonymously, an evaluation of the module, its teaching and resources. (The results of this survey were later discussed by teachers and students at the Programme Monitoring Committee where the opportunity to improve delivery for the student was a vital part of the Programme Monitoring process.)

Three examples of how learning outcomes may be achieved in three stages of the individual's development:

### *3) Opportunities for Responsibility and Enterprise*

In the UK, a number of organisations have cultivated relationships with Institutions of Higher Education which bring the student into connection with business and help promote the work of students with work placements and publication beside the work of established professionals.

The apparently simple set of Learning Outcomes constructed for the student at the end of the second semester have a continuing validity throughout the student designer's education and beyond.

They have, in the way in which they have been interpreted at each stage, served a useful purpose in reminding us of the relevance of these issues.

- 1) Develop a self directed pattern of learning under tutorial supervision.
- 2) Demonstrate competence and a readiness to experiment in a range of appropriate media.
- 3) Retrieve and access the use of research material towards creative solutions
- 4) Develop an awareness of individual studio practice within the broader cultural context of contemporary movements in the specialism.
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