

Project Brief: GDE730

Studio and Entrepreneurship

Course	MA Graphic Design (Online)
Module	GDE730 Studio and Entrepreneurship
Study Block	3
Project duration	Weeks 1—11
Deadline	Week 11

Background This module explores the building blocks of studio practice from a business perspective. The brief will give you a core understanding how to develop a concept for a new entrepreneurial endeavour.

Your Task Create a speculative proposition for your own original entrepreneurial concept. The type of business you choose to explore is entirely up to you. For example, you may choose to develop:

- Your own creative studio
- A digital platform such as a design social network
- A publishing house or new magazine
- An event such as festival or conference
- A social enterprise, cause driven or not-for-profit organisation

At the end of the module, you will submit: a business plan for this idea, a product or service associated with your new enterprise, and an artefact that could be used in a wider marketing campaign to help promote this business.

Specifications Assignment 1: Individual report (business plan of 3000 words)

This should include an initial overview of the fundamentals of your business idea, along with the strategies you might adopt to make it a reality.

Traditional business plans often follow a specific structure and include information such as an executive summary, a product road map and a business development plan.

See the separate document 'What to include in your business plan' for more details about these components and how we expect you to submit them.

Assignment 2: Studio Practice

This is a concept for a product or service associated with your new business proposition. You might think of it as a mock-up example of what your new business would make or provide. For example, if you choose to create your own indie publishing house, you might decide to produce a pilot zine or monograph to demonstrate your creative approach. Likewise, if you're developing a new community organisation, you might want to design a customer journey map to convey how local people would get

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involved. Whatever you choose to do, this outcome should be presented as a clear, accessible document to pitch the idea within a professional context.

Assignment 3: Artefact

This is an artefact that could be used in a wider marketing campaign to help promote your new business. Your artefact can be digital (such as an animated social media video) or physical (such as a series of publicity flyers or posters). The artefact should adhere to the house style of your new business and clearly communicate what it does. It should be fully documented and coherently explained within the format of a designed PDF.

Considerations What is the primary goal of your business or organisation? How might you set this up? What is your USP? How are you different from what is already out there? How are your personal expertise integral to this concept? What resources would you need? What tone of voice would your new business have?

Audience This is up to you but don't narrow yourself down too much. Your idea might be quite specific and niche, but should be presented as accessible to a general, uninitiated audience. You don't have to get too bogged down in finances and technical jargon. Instead, focus on presenting your ideas in a well-designed, visually engaging and thought-provoking series of documents.

Weekly research themes The weekly research tasks on Canvas are optional but highly recommended as they are intended to help broaden out your research process. They are not always directly related to the brief but will address thematic issues that emerge in the lecture material and content throughout the module.

Week 1

Reflecting on the literature, studios, individual practitioners, organisations, businesses and brands that inspire you. Considering your own positioning as a designer/researcher alongside these examples.

Week 2

Assessing the core operational aspects of a design studio, organisation or freelance business. Mapping out a hypothetical resourcing model for a new business which utilises your unique design expertise.

Week 3

Looking at common copyright issues, as well as some of the ethical and legal factors most frequently affecting graphic designers today. Understanding the key areas that may infringe copyright or require IP protection when creating an artefact or object.

Week 4

Reflecting on what is working well with your business plan, what's missing and how it might be improved in the future.

Week 5

Researching the ways in which graphic designers produce work collaboratively. Reflecting on examples of impactful collaborative work.

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Week 6

Understanding the various meanings of interdisciplinary collaboration and how such approaches can form exciting partnerships in graphic design. Developing design ideas to encourage productive dialogue and co-creation.

Week 7

Looking at contemporary, global examples of collaborative creative practice that push boundaries. Thinking about how you can work in new collaborative ways as a designer.

Week 8

Thinking carefully about the practical viability of your proposal and considering ways to ensure that it is communicated clearly, concisely and coherently.

Week 9

Researching the various meanings of entrepreneurship, particularly within the field of graphic design. Finding a range of definitions, descriptions or summaries of what it means to be a design entrepreneur today.

Week 10

Looking at examples of designers as authors and makers. Understanding how designers as makers publicise their activities and the most effective platforms that they use to share their work.

Week 11

Thinking what makes your product or service for this brief unique. Researching examples of similar projects and key competitors, understanding what aspects will make yours different and stand out.

Week 12

Peer reflection and review. Considering the future steps that would be required to hone your idea and bring your prototypes to life.

Submission requirements You'll submit each assignment as a single PDF. Your design development and research should make up a separate chapter/section at the beginning of each PDF.

You should be updating your blog with all of your weekly development and research findings. Include a link to your blog in the PDF but bear in mind that the blog itself isn't marked individually for this project.

Don't forget...

- **Make it engaging!** Use your designer's brain to make this a vibrant and arresting piece of work for the reader to look through.
- **Think big or small.** You might have a grand concept for a new tech company or smaller idea to create a modest one-person studio. The scale is up to you but be ambitious either way.
- **Immerse yourself in the field.** Make sure you're fully informed about what else is out there.

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- **Reflect.** Step back and think regularly about how your work exists in the arena of design, consider who your competitors are and why.
- **Don't overcomplicate things!** This doesn't need to be ground-breaking and lifechanging. The important thing is to explain your idea clearly and evidence why it could be useful.
- **Plan your time carefully.** Four weeks will go very quickly!

FAQ Do I need to carry on with my blog?

Yes, even though it's not being marked as a separate assignment, update your blog regularly and evidence your research and creative development.

Where do I submit my research?

Your research and development should be refined and included as a separate chapter/section in the first part of your assignment PDF.

How long do the PDFs need to be?

The business plan is 3000 words and there is no restriction on the number of pages.

The Studio Practice and Artefact pdfs should be concisely presented. As an approximate guide, we recommend 10—15 pages total for each document (including research and development).

Do I need to have everything finished in week 11?

Yes, week 12 is for peer-review and reflection.

Do I need to do all of the weekly research tasks or are they optional?

We highly recommend doing the research tasks as they will help inform your project. Of course, your research shouldn't be limited to just these areas and your findings might lead you into new, unexpected places.

How do I get feedback from other students?

Get your work on the ideas wall and comment on what other people are doing. Feel free to set up peer-to-peer discussions and discuss your work with other students. Take part in webinar discussions and group tutorials and attend the crits throughout the module.

How do I get feedback from tutors?

Tutorials will be scheduled regularly throughout the module. You're entitled to 5 tutorials throughout the module and there are enough tutorials for everyone. Remember that if tutorials are not booked, new tutorials are not scheduled. Therefore, it's a good idea to book your tutorials early and spread them throughout the module.

How is my work assessed?

Your work is benchmarked, first-marked and second-marked by the module leader and tutorial staff. The work is assessed carefully against the marking criteria and learning outcomes summarised below.

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Learning Outcomes Assignment 1: Individual report (business plan of 3000 words)

LO1: Research – select and deploy appropriate research methodologies to inform the needs within a project.

LO4: Distil – position a creative strategic insight that has been distilled and refined through an informed investigation.

LO9: Communicate – communicate effectively in a range of contexts and situations to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

L10: Manage – demonstrate applied planning and organisational skills to support self-directed project work and inform ongoing professional development needs.

Assignment 2: Studio Practice

LO1: Research – select and deploy appropriate research methodologies to inform the needs within a project.

LO4: Distil – position a creative strategic insight that has been distilled and refined through an informed investigation.

LO5: Imagine – deliver appropriate and innovative ideas that embrace risk, have contemporary relevance and question the boundaries of the discipline.

LO8: Design – realise a final solution that evidences its strategic journey and clear relationship between form and function.

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L10: Manage – demonstrate applied planning and organisational skills to support self-directed project work and inform ongoing professional development needs.

Assignment 3: Artefact

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