

The BSP Graphic Skills Portal

Enhancing Urban Design education through outside-the-classroom learning tools: development, implementation, and professional impact

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■ INTRODUCING MYSELF – PRACTICE AND ACADEMIA

- Over 15 years' experience as an Urban Designer in UK professional consultancy, specialising in urban design and streetscape intervention
- Lecturer in Urban Design since 2020, with teaching experience in Urban Design modules at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels since 2014
- Research work focused on UK design governance and place quality: www.placealliance.org.uk



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■ GRAPHIC SKILLS TEACHING – AS IT WAS

- From a wide range of high-quality but individually developed resources, only accessible to specific Modules and student cohorts...



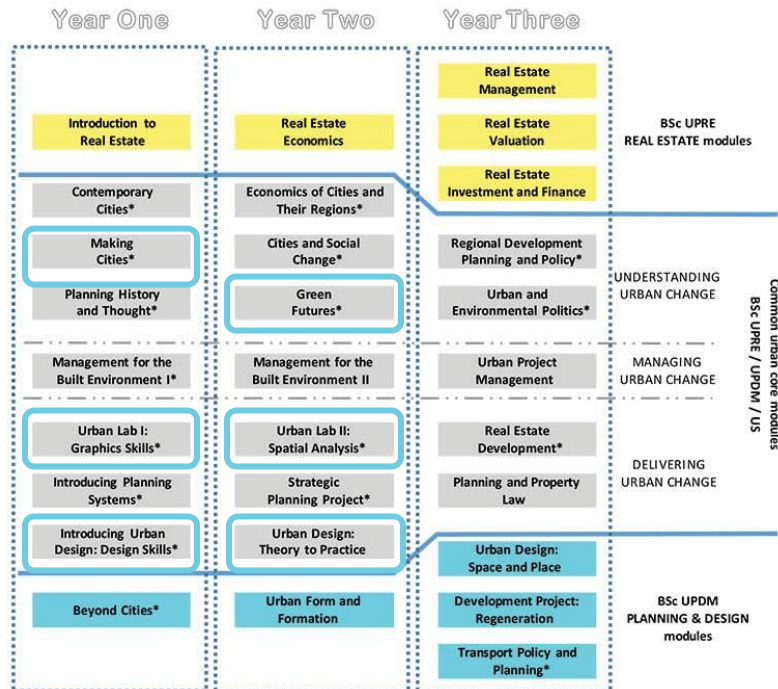
GRAPHIC SKILLS TEACHING – DIFFERENT PROGRAMMES, SHARED CHALLENGES

Undergraduates Programmes

Urban Studies BSc

Urban Planning and Real Estate BSc

Urban Planning, Design and Management BSc



* BSc Urban Studies compulsory modules

URBAN DESIGN
SPECIFIC
PROGRAMMES

PROGRAMMES
SHARING UD
CORE +
SPECIALISM
MODULES

URBAN DESIGN
CORE MODULES

Postgraduates Programmes

MPlan City Planning

MRes Inter-disciplinary Urban Design

MSc Housing and City Planning

MSc Infrastructure Planning, Appraisal and Development

MSc International City Planning

MSc International Real Estate and Planning

MSc Spatial Planning

MSc Spatial Planning Degree Apprenticeship

MSc Sustainable Urbanism

MSc Transport and City Planning

MSc Urban Design and City Planning

MSc Urban Regeneration

BSc Urban Planning and Real Estate

BSc Urban Planning, Design and Management

BSc Urban Studies

NO. OF STUDENTS 550/600

STUDENT & STAFF SURVEY - OVERVIEW

SUMMARY

- Design skills
- Graphic skills
- Data analysis skills
- Softwares



■ STUDENT & STAFF SURVEY – FINDINGS

Student perspective

Main concerns:

Limited time available to learn the required skills

Pre-induction course useful – but too dense to participate in the pre-induction.

Proficiency / skills gap between cohorts

Resulting issues:

Slow vs steep learning curve

Students with no graphic skills struggle and try to learn as fast as possible / students with graphic skills overload themselves with graphic responsibilities, with less time to engage with contents.

Staff perspective

Use of Graphic Skills:

Graphic skills are mainly used for elaborating **diagrams and infographics**, and **spatial analysis**.

Mainly, the final graphic output produced by students are **reports, ppt** and **posters** including graphics .

Students struggle most with:

Technical drawing using a software (*i.e. creating sections, masterplan, etc.*), followed by **hand drawing** (*this reflects the fact that they don't have a graphic background*).

Mainly, **Adobe Illustrator**, which may be the one where students focus most

■ GRAPHIC SKILLS TEACHING – THE PORTAL AS A COMMON SOLUTION

- ...to an interconnected “eco-system” of resources benefitting all students across Programmes and Modules.



■ THE BSP GRAPHIC SKILLS PORTAL – WHO AND WHAT IS IT FOR?

ACCESS THE SITE:

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/bartlett/planning/programmes/graphics-skills-portal>



For BSP students, both in Undergraduate and Postgraduate programmes and across all years.

For students who are new to graphic skills help them explore and understand the basics of both software and techniques to be able to advance.

For students already proficient in graphic skills but given the breadth of topics might find interest in the aspect that they have not considered before.



For anyone interested in discovering and developing graphic skills concepts and techniques



Our portal provides detailed guidance for the following software:



■ THE PORTAL – CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

Provides the basics of urban analysis, design and presentation through the creation of graphics

1. Three separate sections including:

a. Overview, description, and PDF handouts relating to four key design processes:

ANALYSIS



VISUALISATION



DETAILED DESIGN



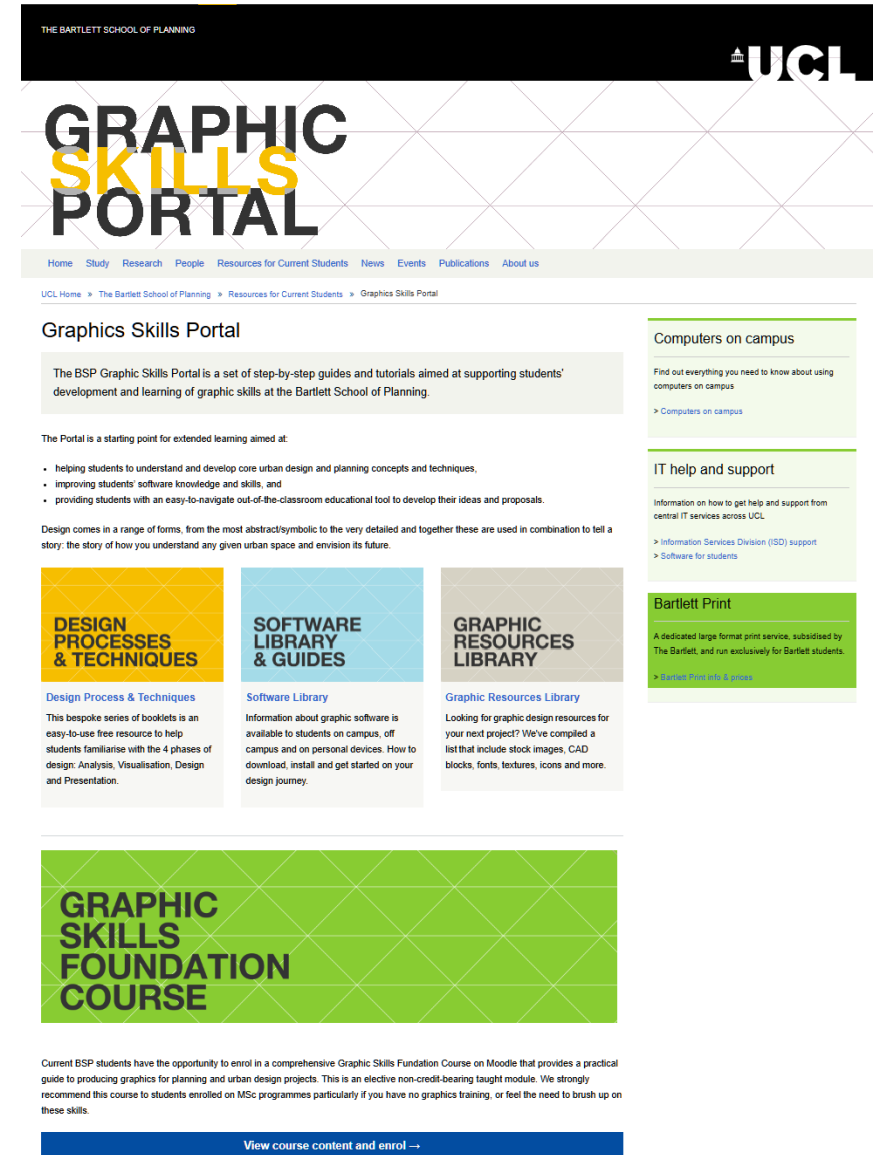
PRESENTATION



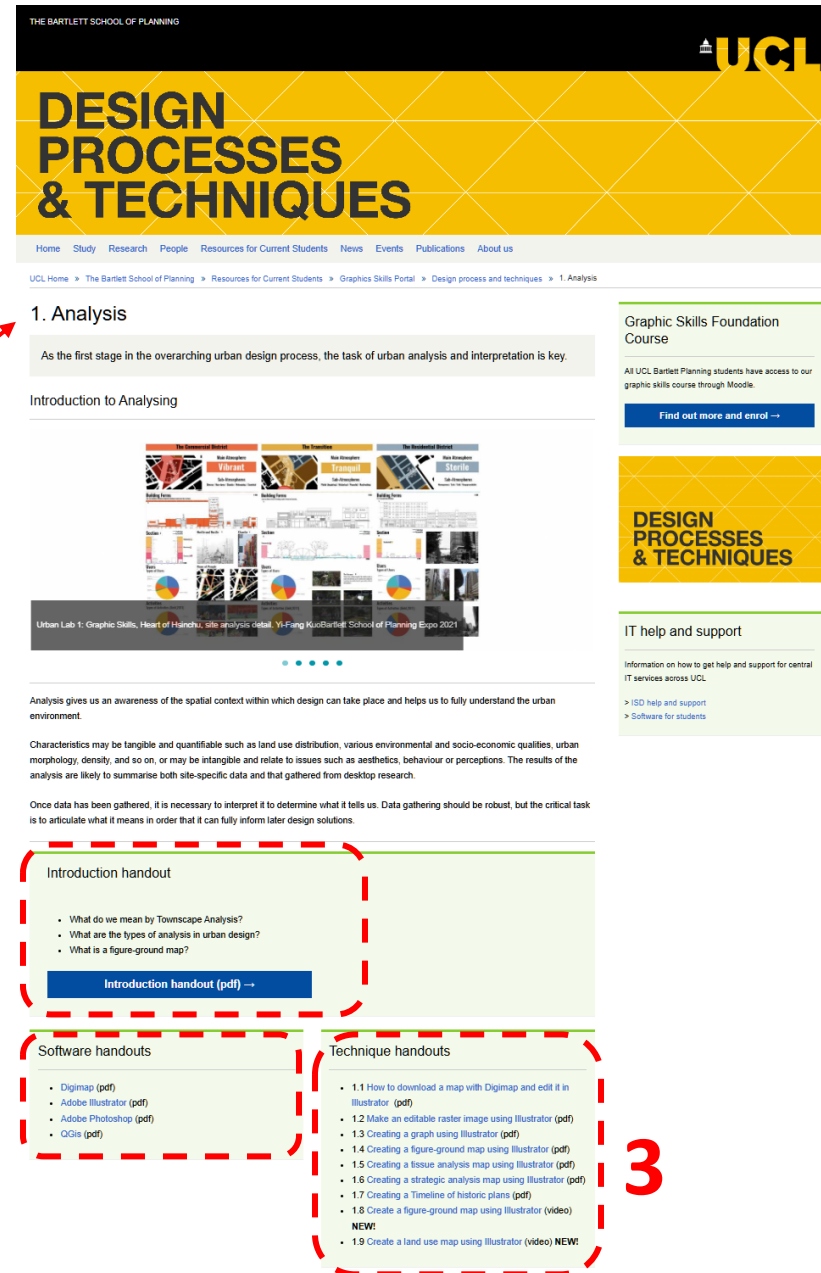
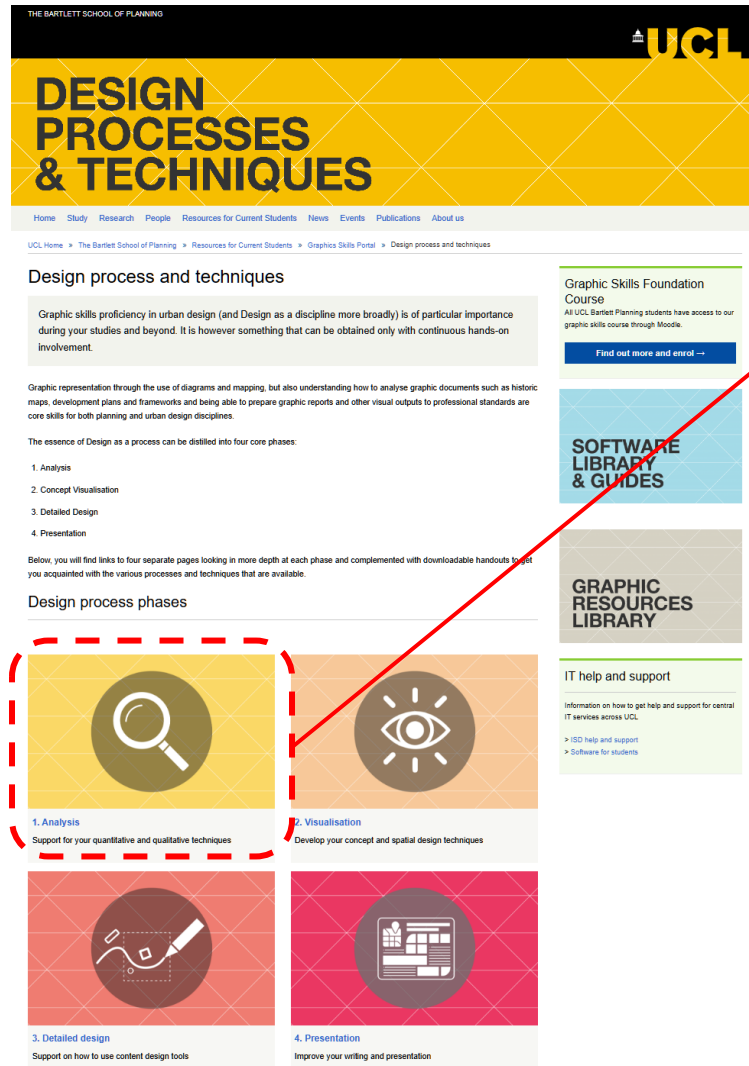
b. A software library with dedicated guidance

c. A graphic resources library

2. A one-week Graphic Skills Foundation Module available to current offer holding students accessible before enrolment



■ FOCUS ON – URBAN DESIGN



Each phase of the Design Process & Techniques includes three parts which contain documents to be downloaded:

1. Introduction Handout – explaining the key features of the phase

2. Relevant Software Handouts

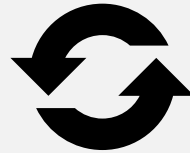
3. Techniques Handout – including some exercises and how-to / step-by-step tutorials)

■ KEEPING IT RELEVANT - CHALLENGES AND NEXT STEPS



MEASURING IMPACT

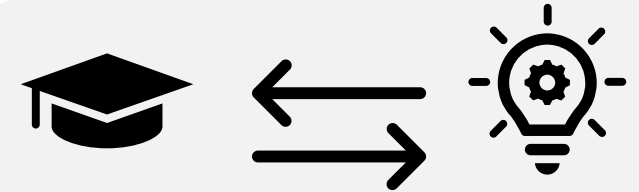
By implementing UCL's Connected Curriculum Framework, to ensure that all UCL students are able to learn through participating in research and enquiry at all levels of their programme of study and connect academic learning with skills for the workplaces.



UPDATES

Regularly revise and update resources to reflect feedback as well as current practices and technologies.

Include Generative AI design tools support students in using them effectively, ethically and transparently.



KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Explore options with UCL Life Learning to create a potential CPD output Continued Professional Development (CPD) path available to both the wider UCL student community and built environment professionals without design background.

THANK YOU



Access the BSP Graphic Skills Portal

Get in touch

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Connect

