

Transformation, Dialogue and Collaboration: Developing Studio-based Concept Writing in Art and Design through Embedded Interventions

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Abstract

This article analyses two examples of embedded academic writing and language provision within Art and Design (A&D) degree programmes in Animation and Fashion Textiles. The provision took the form of interventions to develop the students' writing as part of their studio practice, specifically to help them generate concepts and develop studio-based design work. As such, the writing in these interventions formed part of a repertoire of strategies or tools for the development of design, and so was not focused on traditional academic writing (in the form of essays).

The interventions were the product of close collaboration with specialist lecturers from the degree courses and were co-taught with them. We drew on practices and priorities from the studio disciplines and were informed by broadly Academic Literacies and Critical Pedagogy approaches, as well as ideas from Bakhtin (1981) and Freire (1996) on dialogue, and Medway (1996) on writing in art and design.

This article finds that in terms of engagement and confidence with studio-based writing, the interventions had a transformative impact on the students. It also finds that where the interventions were most successful, dialogue played a number of key roles. The paper highlights the value of working on a form of studio-writing that is relatively unexamined; the transformative potential of embedded work like this; and the benefits of dialogue and collaboration inherent in this kind of intervention.

Introduction

The focus of this article is writing development for Art and Design (A&D) students. It is a study of two teaching interventions designed to improve the studio-based writing of students on Animation and Fashion Textiles (FT) undergraduate degree courses at Middlesex University, London. These interventions were embedded within the degree courses and co-taught by a lecturer from the university's Academic Writing and Language (AWL) team and lecturers from the degree courses.

Several factors coincided to prompt the interventions, including two pressing concerns: one from the AWL lecturer, about the students' perceptions of writing; and one from the studio lecturers, about the quality of the students' design work.

In terms of perceptions of writing, many A&D students consider it a problematic feature of their degree courses, a distraction from the main reason they are at art school, 'frustrating and difficult [...] a chore. I don't want to do it but I have to' (Thomas 2008: app.19.4). This

echoes the perception shared by many A&D practitioners of a 'disjunction' (Biggs and Büchler 2012: 231) between studio practices and writing practices common in A&D research.

In terms of the quality of their work, students on the course were not developing concepts for their design work very effectively. This manifested itself in two main ways: the thinking in evidence in the design work was superficial and not very well researched, and the written components were engaged with ineffectively.

The interventions aimed to address these concerns with a particular focus on studio-based writing, which contributes to or shapes the creation of designs (Medway 1996). This kind of writing is distinct from more traditional essayist academic writing (Lillis 2006: 33) which the students also do, and which is supported with other AWL interventions. Despite the importance of 'shaping' writing, students receive little attention regarding instruction in how to do it effectively.

In addition to these concerns, the interventions were also prompted by a longer-term, underlying need for the students to develop a repertoire of skills and strategies to draw on in their design practices. This is a core learning outcome for the degree courses, so is already the focus of course time. By highlighting the potential of writing within this repertoire, the interventions complemented existing initiatives in the curricula.

Beyond these student needs, another reason that these interventions took place was a shared interest among the lecturers involved, in innovation, collaboration and dialogue across disciplines. Without this facilitating factor the interventions would not have happened.

The theoretical framework informing AWL provision for A&D at Middlesex is one of principled eclecticism (Widdowson 1990: 51), drawing on a range of pedagogical approaches to address a range of pedagogical needs. These approaches centre on Multiple Literacies and Academic Literacies (e.g. Cope and Kalantzis, 2009, Lea and Street 1998, Lillis 2003, and Lea 2004), from which we take the notions that writing is a social practice and that effective AWL provision is situated, transformative and dialogic. Related to these we also draw on research into collaboration (e.g. Jacobs 2005, 2010, and Lunsford 1991) and Critical Pedagogy (e.g. Freire 1996, Canagarajah 2005, and Giroux 2011), with its focus on questioning taken-for-granted pedagogical practices, and its emphasis on political and social ramifications of literacy development. Writing in the Disciplines (e.g. Deane and O'Neill 2011) and Writing Across the Curriculum (e.g. Bazerman *et al.* 2005) have also been influences, for the priority they give to the discipline-specific nature of AWL provision. We also draw on research into writing and its relationship with art, design and the performing arts (e.g. Medway 1996, Mitchell *et al.* 2000, Orr *et al.* 2004, Lees-Maffei 2012, and Writing PAD 2013), which suggest expanded possibilities for writing in these creative disciplines, or that writing holds a complex position and performs multiple roles in them.

The article suggests that there are important benefits in working on studio-based writing. In our interventions, these benefits included: a change in students' perception of writing, away from 'burden' towards 'thinking tool'; an expansion of the student designer's repertoire of studio 'tools' to include writing; and a generally more focused and sophisticated student engagement with the design process. The paper also indicates that collaboration with colleagues across disciplines can be a significant catalyst for innovative and effective teaching and learning, and finds that a decisive feature of both the delivery and preparation of this kind of collaborative work is dialogue.

Context of the Interventions

The context of this study is a dynamic and successful school of Art and Design at a London university. Courses are innovative, interdisciplinary, and explicitly linked to industry/professional practice. From an early stage in the courses considered here, students are taught about the professional need to develop effective processes for generating ideas, developing them, and producing final stage design pieces.

However, developing professional competence is complex. One of the lecturers in the study said students readily get interesting ideas into their sketchbooks, but 'capitalising on what they start in sketchbooks takes time, experience and exposure to a range of teaching and learning as they move through the degree course'. Another lecturer in the study said a good start often drifts into cliché without the ability to maintain a creative momentum.

An approach that both studio lecturers mentioned to keeping this momentum up is for students to develop a range of creative skills or 'tools' to draw on. Writing in various forms is part of this repertoire or toolkit of strategies in both studio areas. For example, in FT writing is for reflection, to explain or justify work, and to help student designers generate and develop design work, in the form of a 'design concept' (as in the intervention here). In Animation, writing is also used to help the student animators generate and develop design work (as in the intervention here); and to set out a proposed scheme of work, in the form of a 'production bible'.¹

The role that writing plays, as a part of the process of generating and developing a new piece of design, has been investigated by Medway (1996) and Clark (2003) within architectural practice. Medway observed the production of a multi-modal architectural text comprising images and words he called 'a written representation that will shape the fabrication process' (1996: 474). The process of generating this text was itself multimodal as the architects communicated with each other throughout in writing, images and speaking. The final version of their text was intended to have an instructional purpose for readers external to the process of its creation, including clients and contractors. Medway referred to the architectural structures depicted in the text as 'virtual artifacts', which were 'embodiments of possibility' (1996: 503). They share similarities with preliminary sketchbook work of A&D students and the design concepts they write.

Most writing for A&D students in UK HE takes place in History of Art and Design (HAD) modules, running alongside studio modules and intended to enable students to 'develop their own critical disposition in relation to their disciplines' (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2008: 4). Here writing most often performs the role of commentary or criticism, 'writing *after the fact*' (Lees-Maffei 2012: 4). It generally follows humanities, essayist norms (see Lillis 2006: 33) and involves the application of theory and contextual knowledge to the analysis of examples of art or design. It is the form of A&D writing that is most common in assessment, and where most AWL provision is focused.

The position of writing in HE A&D is problematic. Many A&D students dislike having to do it, particularly essayist writing. As a 'more studied' type of writing, it is by its nature difficult, requiring 'some special effort to transcend naturally occurring limitations' (Bereiter and Scardamalia 1987: 4). This difficulty is compounded by the expectation to use academic language, which is 'no one's mother tongue' (Bourdieu *et al.* 1994: 8).

This perception of writing as difficult adds to a longstanding tension that many A&D students and professionals see between studio practices and practices engaged within HAD (consuming and producing academic texts). Biggs and Büchler identify it as a 'disjunction' between distinct worlds of object production and textual commentary (2012: 231). It is a gap at an epistemological level. Studio practice is often characterised as being practical, personal, unconventional, focused on the 'ineffable' (Polanyi 1974: 87), directed by 'internally persuasive' discourse (Bakhtin 1981 cited in Borg 2004: 195 and in Lillis 2003: 198) and drawing on divergent cognitive attributes (Copley 2006: 391).² By contrast HAD-related

¹A production bible is a text that professional animators (film makers, TV producers, etc.) use to outline the whole production of a film, including a synopsis, a production time-line, descriptions of characters, treatment (or draft of the screenplay), etc. and in industry is a document that different members of a production team rely on for guidance in their work.

² Some studio pedagogies aim for a kind of Socratic meta-un-knowledge, or awareness that, 'what one thinks is knowledge is really an array of received ideas, prejudices and opinions, a way of not knowing that one does not know' (Johnson cited in McKee 2000: 181).

writing practices are often characterised as being theoretical, objective, convention-bound, explicit, reliant on what Bakhtin called 'authoritative discourse' (Bakhtin 1981 cited in Borg 2004: 195 and in Lillis 2003: 198), convergent cognitive attributes, and rationality and logic (Turner 2011: 55). It is not as black and white as this, however.

Dealing with the tension that exists in this gap is something that students need to manage in order to benefit from the creative possibilities that the enriching dialectic (Kristeva 1998: 5) of interdisciplinarity can afford them. This is not an easy thing to do: 'it is actually quite hard to wrap oneself round both productive and theoretical, deconstructive work at the same time [...] one usually takes precedence' (Williamson 1981: 86). It is made more difficult when the gap is reinforced by a common emphasis on differences between its two sides, which entrenches antagonism between them and can lead students to see their circumstances as 'a static reality' rather than a reality 'in process, in transformation' (Freire 1996: 64).

Emphasising a position for writing in between the two camps, with a questioning and exploratory role has been a priority for the AWL work I have been developing, with the aims of helping students deal with the tension in the gap, learn more about practices on both sides of it, and become more effective at exploiting the potential of writing for their own purposes.

At Middlesex University this positioning of writing metaphorically between the two camps takes the literal form of AWL interventions embedded within both studio modules and HAD modules. The studio-based interventions, like those mentioned in this paper, aim to engage students with writing, and other literacy practices, so it can be perceived as directly relevant to their studio practice, the main reason they are at university. The HAD-based interventions focus on language and literacy practices related mainly to essayist writing. In both types of interventions the focus is not exclusively on writing, for example we also make provision for speaking effectively about design work, and reading difficult texts. In both types of interventions I remind students of approaches used in previous sessions, in the other 'camp', to show expanded possibilities for writing in this context and to help students move away from a reductive focus on 'the gap'.

Framework for Writing Development for A&D

This kind of carefully situated writing instruction is made possible by collaborative relationships with subject lecturers and is an approach that the team of AWL lecturers at Middlesex uses in interventions with all schools. In these collaborations, AWL lecturers adopt a broadly ethnographic position, as we try to gain an understanding of, 'the meanings and dynamics' (Rampton *et al.* 2004: 2) of disciplinary settings, to establish the most important features of what needs to be done. The discussions necessitate a professional criticality, which means a lot of questioning. Collaborations need to be 'worked on [...] all the time' (Jacobs 2010: 231) and were characterised by one subject lecturer as relationships of 'tussle and trust'.

To ensure the relevance of situated AWL provision, it is embedded or integrated within degree programmes in a number of ways:

- temporally, it targets issues of priority at scheduled moments within normal course time, so occupies normal teaching hours;
- pedagogically, it is often co-taught, for all students, and follows pedagogical practices relevant to their degree course;
- epistemologically, the collaboration involved in developing and delivering an intervention is a process of critical engagement with epistemologies, between disciplinary insiders and outsiders. It is a process towards a 'synergy' (Jacobs 2005: 475) that increases awareness of other epistemologies. This can help in making epistemologies explicit to students, and engaging the students in critical exploration of them;

- physically, much embedded provision for A&D takes place within studio areas. For A&D students the literalness of carrying out writing in the studio can help reinforce the idea of writing being a part of studio practice (see Mitchell *et al.* 2000: 93).

We expect embedded AWL interventions to be transformative rather than normative (Lillis and Scott 2007) in contesting and changing the status quo. In evaluating the impact of interventions we look for evidence that they have a transformative impact in the following ways:

- Relevant: taking account of student needs in a situated/contextualised way, and responding to them in ways that are informed by awareness of the context;
- Sustainable: providing an ongoing means of development;
- Structural: directed not only at the student but also the structures within which the student studies (the courses and the ways they are taught).

Dialogue plays an important role in making interventions transformative. It lies at the heart of the collaborations that make the interventions possible and shapes their delivery. To define dialogue, I draw on Lillis' reading of Bakhtin's two levels of dialogue: on one level it is a 'given' (Bakhtin 1981 cited in Lillis 2003: 197) of human language and communication, an inevitable feature of utterances and how they communicate meaning as part of 'a chain of communication'; on a second level, dialogue is an 'ideal' (Bakhtin 1981 cited in Lillis 2003: 198) to be striven for, a practice Lillis characterises as 'questioning, exploring, connecting, in order to develop newer ways to mean'. This dialogue-as-ideal is a creative counterbalance to the pedagogy of 'banking', or the transmission model of teaching, where, 'teachers teach and students are taught' (Freire 1996: 54). Dialogue works towards establishing an equivalence or a 'reconciliation...so that both are simultaneously teacher and student' (1996: 53).

An element of the thinking common in the studio that relates to Bakhtin's dialogue-as-ideal is the idea that there is no single right way to do or interpret something. This relates to what Stockholder (2007)³ calls, 'a whole array of different voices looking at ... [your] ... work'. She is speaking of a plurality of meanings and values, or heteroglossia (Swain and Deters 2007: 829). An ability to tolerate uncertainty and find new meanings between things is highly valued in artists and designers, certainly in the studio areas considered here. The studio is often a context in which 'there is no right or wrong way' (Animation project brief - see Appendix 1), to make something, but an array of possibilities.

Given the significance of dialogue in the studio, it was important to bring it to bear on the writing interventions. We did this using Freewriting, a process that allows the writer to silence the internal editor momentarily (Murray 2011: 84), and to, 'generate words better – more freely, lucidly and powerfully; not make judgements about words but generate them better' (Elbow 1973: vii). It relates to Vygotsky's idea of inner language (1962: 148), or language that is likely to be incomprehensible to others because it is not generated for external communication. It engages the writer in what Swain and Deters call languaging,⁴ or the use of, 'speaking and writing to mediate cognitively complex activities' (2007: 822). Elbow refers to such metadiscourse we engage in when we freewrite as a dialogue (1989: 69).

Not a new technique to writing instructors, freewriting is largely used as a pre-writing technique, particularly within process writing, and writing to learn pedagogies (e.g. Britton 1970, Elbow 1973, Emig 1977, and Zinsser 1989). However, until recently, in the context of the interventions, freewriting was largely unknown.

³ Stockholder is a prominent American artist, Yale professor of sculpture, and the Director of the Graduate Studies in Sculpture at Yale University.

⁴ The term Languaging has also been used recently by Turner (2011: 39) but with a different focus. Turner contrasts 'languaging' with 'language' to emphasise the dynamic nature of language use and meaning making.

In terms of the application of freewriting to the interventions considered in this paper, it is a feature of both. I use it as part of what Murray (2011: 101-115) calls a Generative Writing cycle (GWC), involving three stages:

- guided freewriting on a specified topic;
- review and selection;
- freewriting again on the selected themes or 'paths' (Elbow 1973: 10).

A fourth stage of review and a fifth of preparing and making a short presentation were added to the cycle in one of our interventions.

The Interventions

The interventions were intended to improve the development of design concepts through writing. We felt this would address our concerns with students' perceptions of writing, the quality of their work and the underlying need for them to generate a repertoire of skills and strategies for their studio practice. Table 1 outlines the scope of the interventions.

Table 1. Studio-based writing interventions for Animation & Fashion Textiles

Degree programme	BA Animation	BA Fashion Textiles
Name of project	<i>Portrait</i> project	Mythical Bloom project
Year group	2 nd year	1 st year
Length of project	6 weeks	6 weeks
Size of cohort	15 students	75 students
No of sessions in intervention	1	9 (3 x 3)
Length of sessions	2 hours	3 x 2 hours
Scheduling of sessions	The beginning	1. The beginning 2. After one week 3. Half-way
Staffing	AWL lecturer Animation lecturer	1. AWL lecturer & FT lecturer 2. AWL lecturer & Subject librarian 3. AWL lecturer
Session type	Workshop	1. Tutorials 2. Workshop 3. Workshop

The cohort

The cohorts were quite diverse in terms of their relationships with English and educational backgrounds. This is not unusual at Middlesex University, an institution where 'diversity is central and difference is the norm'⁵ (Jacobs 2010: 228). This mixed profile is a result of a number of factors, including the university's policy of Widening Participation (WP) (see HEFCE 2006), which has meant recruiting widely from social groups typically underrepresented in higher education.⁶ It also has successfully pursued international

⁵ An observation made by the New London Group about UK HE in the 1990s, which is relevant to Middlesex University.

⁶ In 2010, 63% of full-time students across the institution were aged 21 and above (Middlesex University 2013a: 6); 56% of students at our London campuses identified themselves as either Asian, Black, Chinese, Mixed or Other (2013a: 13); and approximately 7% of students at our London campuses are registered disabled (Middlesex University 2013b), which is

recruitment, to the extent that overseas students constituted 23% of the student body in 2010-11 (Middlesex University 2013a: 5). Another feature of the diversity of the students in this study is dyslexia. Within the context of our A&D courses, dyslexia and other Specific Learning Difficulties⁷ are common, with more than 15% of recent A&D applicants identifying themselves as dyslexic (Middlesex University 2013b).⁸

This mixed student profile means we cannot make easy assumptions, particularly about factors like our students' levels of awareness of language; their experience or facility with writing; or their understanding of institutional and disciplinary expectations.

Case study 1: BA Animation

In the Animation portrait project, students were asked to produce a 30-second, stop-motion animated portrait of, 'a person you have a strong opinion or feeling towards' (Animation project brief – see Appendix 1). The main purpose of our intervention was to use writing to generate and explore *character*.

The project brief gave considerable direction to students about expectations related to approaches to the design process. It emphasised the need to be inventive, explore the medium of animation and question techniques to find new ways of making. Students were prompted to 'continue experimenting with stop-motion in a playful way with no other purpose than to discover possibilities for your character.' (Animation project brief – see Appendix 1).

These guidelines indicated disciplinary priorities, which informed the writing instruction. A particularly telling comment in the project brief was, 'you'll discover and learn in a more meaningful way when you have direct contact with the medium' (Animation project brief – see Appendix 1). This suggested that an analogous use of writing as a medium for generating ideas would be relevant to the students. I decided to use the GWC as the core activity because of the 'direct contact' it would give students with the 'medium' of writing.

The session had the following structure:

1. Introduction to aims of session and its relationship to project brief
2. Generative Writing Cycle:
 - a. Students *freewrite* (Elbow 1973: 3-14) for 10 minutes - 'My portrait character'.
 - b. Students review freewritten text, and highlight two or three elements to develop further.
 - c. Students freewrite for another 10 minutes, on elements selected from stage (b).
 - d. Students review new text and prepare notes for 3.
3. Students give one-minute talk on their portrait character.
4. The rest of the group listen, comment and question.
5. Review of session: discussion of GWC and possible uses in students' design practice, and in writing essays.

To address our concern for the quality of the students' studio work we encouraged them to think in an exploratory way about their characters, so that they 'journey below the skin, deep into the heart and mind of your subject' (Animation project brief – see Appendix 1). To address our concern with their perceptions of writing, we emphasised the relevance of writing for the students' own purposes, aiming to break up the monolith (Freire and Macedo 2002) of writing into manageable and relevant elements, including:

roughly in line with recent national averages (Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills 2009: 11).

⁷ Mainly Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia, AD(H)D (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and Dyslexia.

⁸ This figure increases once the new academic year starts, because many students are not assessed for dyslexia until they enter HE.

- its potential for experimentation (even at university);
- seeing it as a process of moving through a series of drafts and refinements;
- its private and public phases (Britton 1970), to help manage anxiety about rules/conventions or being accurate at the early stages.

Case study 2: BA Fashion Textiles

In the second case study, the students were asked to create an *origin myth* for a mythical bloom, which was intended to provide a conceptual framework to inform design decisions in the project (see Appendix 2: Fashion Textiles project brief). There was no prescribed form for these myth texts.

After a primary observational drawing day at Kew gardens, work on the project continued in the studio with weekly crits (lecturer-led group-discussions of students' design work). It ended with a final submission of a portfolio including original prints, designs for garments, sketchbooks and the myth text.

Session 1

The first session, at the botanical gardens, comprised a series of group-tutorials to clarify the expectations of the brief, question students about their drawings and make recommendations. The tutorials were scheduled in the middle of the day to guide the students' efforts in the afternoon. The students used a range of record-making methods (sketches, notes, photographs and alternative media - rubbings, etc.)

The most common recommendation was to '[...] be naturally curious and constantly questioning [...]' (Fashion Textiles guidance notes – see Appendix 3) and experiment with ways of gathering information, recording thoughts and capturing the essence of things.

My main aim was to ensure that students identified the parameters of the project, and positioned themselves and the work they proposed to do in relation to them. There is no single correct way to address this kind of brief. Reference to 'your own concept' and 'an investigative and imaginative approach' (Fashion Textile brief – see Appendix 2) emphasise the individual agency of students, so it was important to use the tutorials to encourage students to establish their own informed positions.

Session 2

The second session initiated the writing of the myths, and was co-taught with the subject librarian for Design, in the Library. It involved:

1. Review of work done at Kew;
2. Review of brief (again), focusing on *myth* and its purpose within project;
3. Short introduction to myths (historical, narrative and discourse features);
4. Student exploration of a range of library resources prepared by the subject librarian.⁹
 - Students identify two or three notable elements from the resources and shared findings.
5. Generative writing cycle:
 - Students freewrite for ten minutes on 'My Myth';
 - Review of text: Students highlight two or three elements in text for further independent writing.
6. Review of session - discussion:
 - myth, and initial ideas;
 - project, and relationship between myth/concept and designs;
 - GWC, and possible uses;

⁹ Including: botanical illustrations, dictionaries of plant folklore, collections of myths, fine art monographs on floral still-life painting, samples of textile designs and books on floral textile design.

- Library collection, and how to make use of it.

The intention was to help the students develop their understanding of myths, the resources they might use, and a method of generating and exploring thoughts through writing. The session was also directed at, 'the interdependency of theory and practice' and, 'the application of research including visual research as a basis for the design process' (Fashion Textile brief – see Appendix 2).

Session 3

The third session monitored progress with a follow-up critique of the myths, involving:

1. Critique of myth texts:
 - Myth texts displayed around room and read for 10 minutes;
 - Students volunteer texts to be discussed, selection is projected;
 - Group comments on language and content of texts (notes on whiteboard for discussion); Students identify positive and problematic features of texts, focus mainly on textual structure, word choice (ambiguity of meaning) and relationship of myth to design.
2. Individual re-writing
 - Students work on their texts, addressing features discussed in 1;
 - Progress is monitored and queries are addressed.
3. Editorial boards
 - In small groups, students prepare each other's texts for re-display.
4. Critique of reworked texts
 - All texts displayed around room and read by students;
 - Students single out noteworthy texts - whole-class discussion of these.
5. Review of session and project
 - Discussion of critiquing process and what was learned from it;
 - Discussion of progress on project, and whether/how myths are informing designs.

The main concerns in session 3 were to help the students ensure their texts were doing what they wanted them to do and to emphasise a coherence between the myth and the design. The session provided an opportunity, within a safe but challenging space, for experimentation with text and its relationship with readers.

Impact of the Interventions

Evaluation

A priority of the interventions was that they should be transformative. To evaluate this we looked for evidence of impact that was relevant, sustainable and structural, based on the framework for writing development.

To evaluate the impact of the interventions, feedback was gathered from students and lecturers. At the end of most of the sessions we had a short review of what we had covered and how we had done it. Several students also wrote short, anonymous, reflective responses to a feedback form at the end of the sessions. The collaborator-lecturers gave me feedback on interventions and how they had impacted on the students' design work. This took place in informal interviews (recorded and transcribed).

The lecturers and students provided material for the purposes of this study, including samples of writing and images/animations (design work) from the students, and project-related documents from the lecturers.

Permission was sought and received from the students and lecturers involved in the interventions for their comments and material to be used for research purposes. The comments and material have been anonymised, and all were provided voluntarily.

This feedback suggests our interventions had an impact in three key areas.

Students' perceptions of writing

The interventions seem to have helped the students' perceive writing as a positive tool, rather than a burden.

Students commented that they had not realised that writing could be so useful to them. There were comments about how the studio-writing activities, particularly the GWC, presented a new way of thinking for them. One student commented 'it made me think about ideas I wouldn't usually think about'. In particular, students and staff spoke of the depth of thinking it affords; the Animation lecturer was notably positive about this. He participated as a member of the class the previous year, and characterised the GWC as 'an express train to less superficial thinking'.

Another feature of the thinking that the GWC afforded was freedom from usual constraints. An Animation student commented: 'that liberated state gives you access to those thoughts at the back of your mind'. The Animation lecturer also remarked on how this generated thoughts in a way that was very 'honest', and like 'getting completely naked'.

Freedom was mentioned by FT students, who felt that writing the myth was a liberating and sophisticated activity; in fact one student said that if they had been asked to write something more straightforward or explanatory about their designs instead, it would have been, 'more restrictive' and 'a bit like being in kindergarten'. They mentioned that they had not found it easy to write the myth, but none complained about the difficulty and it was clear that most had worked hard on it.

The FT students' perception of the myth was as a creative text, relevant to them as creative practitioners. Not all of the students were happy with their myths, and not all the myths communicated very clearly. However, the process of writing them served to allow the students to tolerate the compositional difficulties with an eye on their design work. Their writing was not judged for its language, or its academic rigour, but for the role it played in the development of their designs.

Two FT students mentioned feeling less worried about essays as a result of the interventions. This is encouraging, and was an indirect benefit I had hoped for. However, it is not clear what the nature or extent of transfer from these interventions to other forms of writing might be. As this was beyond the scope of the study, it is not possible to say whether their academic writing improved.

Performance in the studio

The lecturers reported that there were improvements in design work following the interventions. The Animation lecturer was most positive, saying portraits by the students who attended our writing session were 'incredibly strong'. By contrast, portraits by students who had not attended the session were more superficial. The lecturer gave an example:

Some of the superficial ones just choose a best friend, but the ones that really think it through [...] it may be someone who they thought was a best friend who's actually been two-faced [...] and one of the strongest portraits does just that.

A possible explanation for this is that the freewriting part of the GWC helps us to 'silence our internal editor' (Murray 2011: 73), allowing us to suspend decision making for long enough to see more and better possibilities (for concepts).

This depth of engagement with the work also had an emotional impact. The Animation lecturer noted that when his students went public in presentations about their characters, 'One girl cried, one walked out and a guy shut down.' These reactions were unusually

extreme, and seem to stem from a combination of the 'heightened intensity' (Elbow 1989: 60) inherent to freewriting and the subjects of their talks.¹⁰

The improvement noticed by the FT programme leader was limited to the already hardworking and dedicated students, who benefitted considerably and produced work that was highly engaged. However, she said the less well-motivated, less high-achieving students benefitted less, with some apparently seeing the project as 'just another exercise'.¹¹

Learning about the design process

The feedback suggested the interventions extended students' learning beyond only learning about writing, to learning (through writing) about how to focus and organise thoughts, and about the design process of their discipline. The interventions seem to have helped students develop a readiness to use writing as part of design practice, particularly for initiating and maintaining momentum with a project.

The Animation lecturer mentioned that the students generated 'really good foundations to refer back to' in the GWC, and that they 'constantly referred back to the notes throughout the process' over the six-week project, producing final pieces of work with 'a stronger message than the initial ideas' as a result.

An FT student spoke about to-ing and fro-ing between designing and writing to clarify doubts during the design process: 'As you're going through and you're like, "What's going, what's going on?" Then you can sit down and you can do some writing and you'll be like, "Well! There you go! Now I'm back on track!"'

This use of writing to keep on track was commented on by two other FT students. They enjoyed the speed of freewriting and how this 'keeps you from losing track' as tends to happen in 'normal' writing, because 'you stop to check spelling and forget what you're thinking'. One said that usually her 'thoughts come too quickly' to keep up. They liked the way freewriting maintained coherence to thoughts because 'by writing your trail of thought, it carries on the trail of thought without separating it'.

This suggestion, that freewriting helps with coherence, was not shared by everyone. In fact, one student said the opposite; that it was confusing, and did not allow her enough time to think, which meant she had to rewrite everything afterwards.

The importance of editing as a part of the design process was apparent during the interventions. One FT student noted that the GWC meant 'You get everything on one page, refine it and take stuff out of it' to develop further. We advised the animation students to manage the intensity and revelation of the GWC, by selecting what not to talk about in their presentations, a strategy mentioned by the animation lecturer: 'I had bits, information in there that was good to write down, but I chose not to talk about certain bits'.

What did the positive impact stem from?

The apparent impact of the interventions on the students' studio work seems to stem in part from our focus on a form of writing that is closely integrated in studio practice. Medway's analysis of architects' 'shaping' texts might offer an explanation for the level of engagement among the cohort. He notes that for the architects and their stakeholders, their text, a product of much dialogue, is an 'embodiment of possibility' (1996: 503). They believe, not just in the theoretical possibility of the project, but in the embodied reality, legitimacy and meaning of it (1996: 487) even though it has been not physically constructed. Something like this seems to

¹⁰ These students were able to present by the end of the session, and following discussion with them we think that this reaction was also in part exacerbated by nervousness about speaking in public.

¹¹ This observation should be seen in light of another from a lecturer teaching on the project, who said he felt he had seen improved engagement across the board.

have happened to the students' concepts, which gradually shift from interesting, ineffable initial ideas in sketchbooks, to 'make their appearance explicitly' (Arendt 1958 cited in Medway 1996: 504). During this shift the concepts develop qualities of reality, legitimacy, etc. of their own that the students are able to engage with in rich and complex ways.

The students' improved perception of writing seems to stem from parallels between the writing practices in our activities and studio practice. The dialogic nature of the GWC and its private metadiscoursal experimentation relates to the way studio practitioners work through ideas, trying different versions and approaches, writing comments to themselves, etc. The materiality of the GWC, or the way it allows the writer to freely produce material and shape it, corresponds with much experiential studio-based learning (see priority given to having direct contact with a medium in animation brief - Appendix 1).

These parallels do not seem to extend to essayist academic writing. Students seem less interested in this because of its convention-bound and after-the-fact nature. The comments about explanatory texts being 'more restrictive' and 'a bit like being in kindergarten' suggest that Biggs and Büchler's 'disjunction' (2012) needs to be addressed further.

The interventions appear to have been broadly transformative in relevant, sustainable and structural ways. In terms of relevance, the fact the interventions were products of collaboration helped us to situate them epistemologically, temporally, physically and pedagogically: Epistemologically, I drew on approaches and priorities from the studio. Temporally, the interventions took place at key moments in the schedules of the projects. Physically, we led almost all of the interventions in studios. Pedagogically, all the interventions were embedded within specific studio projects, so they addressed issues within them: co-teaching by lecturers from different disciplinary backgrounds brought dialogue between pedagogies to bear on these issues.

In terms of sustainability, we had mixed success. We aimed to help students to develop their repertoire of tools or strategies and ways of exploiting them over the long-term. However, in follow-up interviews, a year later, some Animation students mentioned they hadn't actually used the GWC subsequently, despite having got a lot out of it in our session. They put this down to discipline; they needed someone to maintain/enforce the rules. This suggests that although there is a willingness on the part of the students to adopt writing in their repertoire of tools, they still need time to 'build up enough muscle' to carry it (King 2000: 125). The Animation lecturer's comment on this was that the 'questioning and digging' that the GWC encouraged was certainly apparent subsequently, even if the GWC itself was not.

In terms of the structural nature of the transformation, my collaborators and I started out as already interested in innovation, and finding new ways to work together. This has continued, as have our collaborations. This has resulted in raised awareness of practices and possibilities on both sides of the collaborations, which has in turn informed our teaching practices. The changes/improvements we have made subsequently have been examples of change through collaboration, a consequence of dialogue.

Conclusion

This article suggests that our embedded interventions for A&D students on studio-based writing had positive, transformative effects. Writing came to be seen by most of the students as a positive tool more than a burden; students started to develop confidence in using writing as part of design practice; and students engaged more fully with their design work.

A thread running through almost every aspect of the interventions was dialogue. As conceptualised by Bakhtin (cited in Lillis 2003) and by Freire (1996), dialogue is a dynamic process aimed at change and new possibilities for meaning. It played important roles, as part of the collaborative embedded approach, in the development and delivery of these interventions, and in the practices we engaged in during the sessions. I would argue that dialogue is what made the interventions transformative.

For the students, dialogue was an element we encouraged in the processes of writing and generating design, and in the interplay between them. These processes thrive off the challenge to achieve resolution, and facility with the repertoire of tools they are developing relies on a dialogic mindset. Likewise certain negotiations that A&D students are involved in call on dialogue: negotiating the disjuncture of an interdisciplinary curriculum; and negotiating a route towards a position of confidence and authority as an artist or designer, and as a communicator about art and design.

In terms of the teaching and collaboration with colleagues in these interventions, dialogue plays an important part. It makes possible the situating of interventions very precisely, which means that writing instruction has moved out of Swales' 'Ivory Ghetto of remediation' (Swales 1990: 11), into a more developmental location, embedded within degree programmes.

Certain issues remain, including the fact that some activities left less motivated students unaffected, and that the GWC was not adopted independently. The perception of the 'disjuncture' still seems to mean, for some students, that writing is a burden, particularly academic writing. This does not mean that commentary/explanatory writing or essays should be done away with in favour of something students will see as creative, but it does suggest we should work harder to make clear the relevance of all the writing we ask students to do, which means more than simply telling them.

Questions raised by the study include: How far can the students' apparent improvement in terms of confidence and engagement with writing extend to writing more formal texts like essays? How can we sustain impact over the longer term? What other textual practices are common within A&D? Finally, does studio writing constitute a form of literacy in its own right?

Dialogue offers a way of addressing these issues and finding answers to these questions, but perhaps more importantly, it offers a means of refreshing our responses in an on-going way, over the long-term, drawing on multiple sources, as the shifting realities of higher education present new challenges.

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Appendix 1: Animation Project Brief

Middlesex University **BA (Hons) Animation**
Semester : 1&2 **Level: 2**
Module: xxx **Module Leader: xxx**
Tutors: xxx

ADVENTURES IN STOP-MOTION: (Year 2 workshop) 2012 Project Title: PORTRAIT

Briefing Dates: **Group 1 - Tuesday 31st January 2012**
 Group 2 - Tuesday 13th March 2012

Final Crit Dates: **Group 1 - Tuesday 6th March 2012**
 Group 2 - Tuesday 8th May 2012

stop-motion

noun [usu. as adj.]

The exposure of one frame of motion picture film at a time, as opposed to live action photography. Animated effects are produced by changing or moving the graphic image or subject matter being photographed, in between the individual exposures of frames which have been stoppd or interrupted in their continuous motion through the camera.

OVERVIEW:

Drawings, paintings, sculptures, photographs, home movies, diaries, even blogs are portraits of ourselves, evolving since time began. But what can the technique of stop-motion animation capture and reveal about a portrait that any other medium cannot? Does this technique have the ability to see something the eye cannot but the mind can?

The aim of the project is to use stop-motion in an inventive way to discover a bold new vision about your subject that's indigenous to animation and not possible in another medium.

The reason for this project is for students to work in pairs and investigate, experiment, and discover for themselves what stop-motion brings to the treatment of 'a portrait'. Explore your subject on a psychological level that inspires you to understand their motivation and construct your portrait as a compelling character study from the inside out. This is an important transferable skill you'll learn that will help you develop and animate multi-dimensional characters whilst avoiding stereotypes.

THE BRIEF:

You are required to work in pairs and journey below the skin, deep into the heart and mind of your subject and create a :30 second portrait in stop-motion animation. Experiment and explore how to use this technique to reveal the inside of your character while conveying the surface reality.

Choose a person you both have strong opinions, or feelings towards. It can be your hero/heroine, a politician, a role model, someone from the past, or present, a mutual friend, a family member, but not yourself. Ask yourself questions that will inspire meaningful answers. What drives this person? What is the spark within the person that inspires your film? What's at the core of this character? What is it about this person you love, or hate?

Decide what is the singular most important thing to convey in your portrait and how vividly to bring it to life in :30 seconds that defines the essence of the person in new and surprising ways.

You must demonstrate high technical standards and skill in areas of stop-motion craft in order to successfully answer this brief.

AIMS & OUTLINE:

This six week project is designed as a catalyst to develop and build upon your narrative, film language and introductory stop-motion skills learned last year. In order to do this effectively, it is absolutely essential that ALL students once in production, work on the University site in order to maximize professional advice, guidance and support from the lecturers and technicians. Only under exceptional circumstances with prior arrangements by one of the animation lecturers will it be possible to do otherwise.

Through experiments and play you will not only learn the potential of this technique, you will also learn to stretch your imagination and develop transferable film making skills.

With guidance over the course of six weeks, I will help you find a creative approach to stop-motion through a series of exciting, creative experiments which breaks down complex tasks into their fundamental elements.

a) Continue experimenting with stop-motion in a playful way with no other purpose than to discover possibilities for your character. Try and find a way of working that feels fluent and allows you to enjoy filming in this technique.

b) Think carefully about movement, rhythm, time and space in relation to your chosen portrait. You can think laterally - you don't have to illustrate the brief slavishly, but there must be a connection between picture and theme.

c) Plan your piece to be achieved in time.....how can you work efficiently without sacrificing detail and quality? Take risks and try to do something outside of your comfort zone that doesn't look like anything you've done before when working in pairs. You **MUST** finish the film by the final crit deadline.

Remember there is no right, or wrong. The key to this brief is to play and have fun, lots of it. You'll discover and learn in a more meaningful way when you have direct contact with the medium and see the results for yourself.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Your portrait must depict the face, head, or body of the person created in stop-motion by changing or moving the graphic image, or subject matter being photographed one frame of motion at a time.

Any live action and animation techniques such as; pixillation, stop-frame, go-motion, cut-outs, models, puppets, mixed media, CG, digital after effect techniques and compositing effects can be used to enhance your finished stop-motion film.

Integrate your animated pictures with a sound track and/or sound effects that best captures the emotion of the portrait that's exciting and a moving experience for you and your audience. Lip-sync should be used where appropriate, but dialogue can be also be used as an internal monologue.

Delivery specifications

The final stop-motion films should be :30 seconds in duration and created in-camera as much as possible. Finished films must be presented by the crit deadline as a Quicktime movie 1280x720 pixels and remember to use H264 codec.

SCHEDULE:

This project lasts six weeks. You are expected to work to schedule and complete the brief, on time, showing the finished stop motion animation at the crit on the last week.

WEEK 1: Tues 31st Jan 2012 (10am – 1.00pm) BRIEFING, SEMINAR & SCREENING ON VISION IN STOP-MOTION ANIMATION (part 2): PORTRAIT

Morning seminar and screening of stop-motion short films related to the project's theme of portraits will be given to stimulate group discussions and ideas. Detailed analysis of how these techniques are achieved and used to empower the content of the films will take place. You MUST be on time as the screening & seminar will start promptly.

(2pm - 5pm) STUDENT RESEARCH

After this session you're required to begin visual research and start designing your film. Prep and plan as much as possible in the animation studios, to maximise what you can achieve before filming begins. Let your imagination take over and quickly come up with an idea for a visualization on the theme. This is a case where you can be intuitive and sensual rather than purely rational. I will help with the process of developing your concept through to stop-motion filming.

WEEK 2: Tues 7th Feb 2012 EXPERIMENTATION WITH STYLE AND TECHNIQUE

Induction to the new and existing technical equipment in the stop-motion and film studio. Finalize designs and start building sets, models and puppets if required. Scout locations if necessary. Begin stop-motion tests, or principal photography this week.

WEEK 3: Tues 14th Feb 2012 (STOP-MOTION SHOOT)

You must start filming this week by the absolutely latest.

WEEK 4: Tues 21st Feb 2012 (STOP-MOTION SHOOT)

Continue filming this week.

WEEK 5: 27th Feb 2012 (STOP-MOTION SHOOT & EDIT)

Complete filming this week and start picture edit - adding sound track, or music/fx to film.

WEEK 6: Tues 6th Mar 2012 (2.00pm - 5.00pm) DEADLINE: REVIEW & FINAL CRIT

Complete edit with final sound and present in afternoon crit.

Upload completed stop-motion film. Movies must be in 1280x720 pixels and remember to use H264 codec. The aim is to learn from viewing the films in a group, sharing first hand knowledge about the process and experiencing the results with an audience.

Learning Outcomes

Knowledge

On completion of this module, the successful student will be able to;

1. understand the employment opportunities and career potential of a variety of visual communication media subjects. (A2)
2. understand the value of workshop activities and technology, to make reasoned decisions in relation to process and presentation to an enhanced level. (A4)

Skills

This module will call for the successful student to demonstrate;

3. effective research and design methodology in specialist areas of visual communication media to an enhanced level. (B2)
4. the use of a variety of processes to realise and prepare communication solutions for presentation and production to an enhanced level. (C2)
5. the ability to operate safely, competently and effectively in specialist workshop areas and

with technology: photography, letterpress and printmaking. (C4)

6. an enhanced ability to use appropriate criteria to discuss, criticise and evaluate their own and others' creative work. (B3)

Assessment Criteria

Has the student delivered a completed film on time that demonstrates a high understanding and improved technical skills in stop-motion animation?

Has the student understood the range of personal and career development opportunities that exists in the study of specialist subject workshop practices?

Has the student understood the value of materials and processes in the presentation of ideas?

Does the student demonstrate an ability to explore and experiment with materials and process to develop imaginative and appropriate solutions to communication problems and a knowledge of effective learning skills and the ability to select and apply these appropriately to subject-specific tasks?

Does the student demonstrate the ability to realise and prepare Stop Motion animation solutions through a variety of processes?

Does the student demonstrate a use of appropriate workshop activities, information technology and numeracy skills in relation to subject-related tasks?

Does the student demonstrate the use of presentation, communication and debating skills?

ADVENTURES IN STOP-MOTION (Year 2 workshop: part 2) PORTRAIT

Sept. 2011

Appendix 2: Fashion & Textiles Project Brief

BA Fashion & Textiles

Middlesex University

Year 1 Introduction to Print

Project title: Mythical Blooms

Module.....

Tutor.....

Introduction:

During this project you will learn how to develop a unique concept from original visual research through to designs of printed textiles for fashion. You will also be inducted into the print room where you will learn about coating and exposing a screen, pigment printing, heat transfer and colour mixing.

Brief:

Your challenge is to create and present a collection of printed textiles and suggested fashion applications based on your own concept of mythical blooms developed from original observational drawings carried out at Kew Gardens.

Assessment outcomes:

All work must be presented in an A3 portfolio

- A sketchbook full of primary visual research, design ideas and experimentation
- An A3 moodboard illustrating concept
- A short narrative describing your mythical bloom
- Collection of 10 printed textile samples from your original artwork. These must be header mounted labelled with your name and project title.
- A series of original artwork A3
- A series of 6 ½ scale A-line dresses demonstrating innovative use of print, exploring proportion, scale and placement.

All your submitted work must have your name, project title clearly labelled. Work not clearly labelled will be marked as a fail.

Attendance:

You are required to attend a minimum of 75% of timetabled activities for this project. Failure to meet these criteria will result in an X mark (please see handbook for more information)

Assessment & Feedback:

You will receive formative (verbal) feedback from your tutor throughout the duration of the project. You will receive written feedback from your tutor at the end of the project. Your tutor will be looking for evidence of the following:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the role of research, including visual research, within the design process
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the interdependency of theory and practice
3. The application of research including visual research as a basis for the design process
4. An investigative and imaginative approach to composition, mark making and spatial awareness with relation to a design project
5. An understanding of colour

6. Imagination and attention to detail in the presentation of work
7. The effective communication of ideas
8. The ability to work independently and manage time effectively; problem solving through the appropriate use of materials

Mark weighting: (25%) visual research, (50%) design development, (25%) presentation

Grading scale: 1, 2.1, 2.2, 3rd, Fail

Appendix 3: Fashion Textile Guide to Research and Sketchbook Work

Middlesex University

BA (Hons) Fashion Textiles

A Fashion Textile designer's rough guide to research and sketchbook work

By.....

November 2011

Introduction

The purpose of a sketchbook is to combine information/ data from a range of sources to generate and develop original ideas. This document will give you a step-by-step guide through the research process and how to combine findings to synthesis new ideas that will lead to original design.

For purposes of simplicity, I have broken the activities that are recorded in a sketchbook into three stages: each stage builds on the previous. We recommend you apply the methodology described in this guide to all your design projects for the duration of the course.

Research for design usually (year 1 & 2) constitutes 25% of your overall module grade. If you follow the steps outlined in this guide you will demonstrate you have achieved the learning outcomes associated with research. If your research is coherent,¹² exhaustive,¹³ draws on a range of sources and leads to the development of original and innovative ideas, you can expect to achieve a 2.1-1st. If you follow all the stages but not thoroughly you can expect to achieve a 3rd - 2.2, while failure to complete one or more of these stages will result in a fail.

During the 2nd and 3rd year of the degree, we expect you to develop your own style / signature that is reflected in your sketchbook. In year 1, fashion and textile work happens independently of each other; from year 2 you need to identify your own unique way of bringing the two together in research and sketchbook. Nevertheless, you should always demonstrate the completion of each stage.

¹² Has a clear concept, shows strong relationship between ideas generated in sketchbook and design development/ final outcomes.

¹³ This means you have explored a lot of the ideas stemming from your research.

Stage 1: Background research

Stage 1 activities involve background research into the topic of a subject area. In **year 1**, your briefs will dictate the topic i.e. shirts (Fashion DES1111), plants, medical apparatus etc (Textiles FSH1400). In **year 2** we will dictate the subject i.e. a character from literature but you are expected to identify the topic, while in **year 3**, you are expected to come to us with a concept.

As a designer you should be naturally curious and constantly questioning the subject area you are focusing on. You will often hear your lecturers talking about *interrogation*: in the context of fashion textiles we expect you to *interrogate* what you are researching and designing. This means that if you are looking at a particular type of shirt for example, you should not just be interested in the aesthetics (the way it looks) but the historical, social and political context as well as: the materials it is made from, why it looks the way it does, where did particular design features come from and what is their function and meaning. If your background research requires a lot of observational drawing, be intelligent about what you are drawing. In this case *interrogation* involves the production of images that carry a lot of useful information such as shape, colour, texture, function. Make sure you ask your lecturers if you are unclear.

Background research varies depending on the brief, but the aim is to develop an in-depth understanding of your topic. It is always best to look at it from different angles using primary and secondary sources. For example, the shirt project requires you to conduct factual research into the history of your chosen shirt type (the topic); this is supported by images and drawings of your chosen topic. Evidence of other artists' and designers' work that has tackled your chosen topic acts as supportive evidence that demonstrates your awareness of current practice in fashion and textiles. FSH1400 projects allocate one day to carry out primary observational drawings. You won't know what your final concept is at this point so you need to work instinctively: you should support your primary research with secondary sources in the form of interesting work of other designer/ artists that have tackled the same subject area as you.

Stage 2: Mixing it up

The aim of this stage is to explore and identify an innovative angle from which to tackle the findings of stage 1. There are no set methods that can be applied to this stage; your ability to invent an angle is a direct reflection of your creative talent. By year 2 you should begin to find your own style and invent your own methods. During year 1 we will expose you to a few different ways, for example in the fashion module DES1111 we ask you to conduct targeted fashion research seeking good (but unrelated) design ideas that you apply to stage 1 findings. During the print project (part of FSH1400) we ask you to create a descriptive narrative that defines the character of your mythical bloom. It is important that you explore a wide range of approaches in your sketchbook making sure you focus on innovation and originality. We want to see evidence that you can identify and extract good ideas from various contexts (this can be something that another designer/ artist has done, a creative piece of narrative text, ideas from a film etc), take it out of its original context and apply it to your stage 1 findings.

Students who surprise us and generate original ideas from a wide range of contexts can expect to achieve a 2.1-1st for this stage. Students who do the work step-by-step but with no real original output can expect 3rd-2.2. Students who do not show evidence of this stage will fail.

Stage 3: Experimentation

At this point you will rely on outcomes of stage 2 as a point of departure and begin to branch out, away from your sketchbook and into practice. Here, the functionality of your sketchbook will shift from a melting pot for generating ideas to that of reflection.

During your textile work you will be creating original experimental artwork drawing on stage 1 and stage 2 outcomes using mixed media- collage- mono-printing etc. Final artworks are not incorporated in your sketchbook but ideas and techniques should be explored here. Upon completion of this stage, you are ready to start experimenting with techniques that will

translate your outcomes into textiles. This process should be recorded in your sketchbook and you should be at a level where you are juxtaposing your own or found textile samples alongside pages of your artwork.

These methods are also used for fashion work but are further honed into 2 and 3D experimentation focusing on contextualising ideas onto the body. 2D experimentation involves mixed media collages onto silhouettes; these should commence in your sketchbook then attempted in 3D form on a dummy. 3D experimentation must be recorded photographically, printed off and included in your sketchbook. At this point, fashion work should extend into A3 layout pads, where you will be exploring the realisation of your ideas.

A quick note: The purpose of the A3 layout pad is to take rough ideas/ concepts from your sketchbook; these are filtered and refined through fashion drawing in the layout pad. You will often find yourselves working backwards from your experimental work, deconstructing it and developing ways of realising your ideas into fashion garments.

It is important that the work is coherent, meaning that it reflects your original topic of research.

50% of your module mark depends on how you tackle this experimental stage in design development. Original, coherent, clever design work will earn 2.1-1st. If you show you have taken direction from your lecturers, worked hard and completed this stage you can expect to achieve 3rd-2.2. Failure to show any creative thinking, development or coherence to a concept will result in a fail.

Other sources of information:

Sorger, R. and Udale, J. (2006) *The Fundamentals of Fashion Design*. Switzerland: AVA Publishing

Seivewright, S. (2007) *Basics Fashion Design: Research and Design*. Switzerland: AVA Publishing