

Richard McGillan

# Graphic Designer

Like genius “design is 5% inspiration, 95% perspiration”, in my opinion if you manage this balance then you are doing well!

BTEC National Diploma Graphic Design, BA  
Graphic Information Design

Providing information and advice



**Who I am:** I am a graphic designer specialising in the tourism, cultural/heritage, educational and sustainable sectors. Creating brand integration through mixed media including print, online, advertising, signage and strategic marketing.

**What I do:** First and foremost, I work very hard and I care about everything I do. It is not just about doing the work that a brief may command, it is seeing beyond that and doing what is actually needed. Sometimes this can be conventional thinking and sometimes it involves a bit of risk-taking – the skill is knowing which route to take and visualising the outcome at the start.

Some key projects I have been involved with include:

- Branding, signage, advertising and communications for Manchester Art Gallery
- Branding and long-term communications for the Museums Association
- Branding and long-term communications for the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)
- Marketing for The Royal Collection
- Redesign of magazine and guide books for the National Trust

There is genuinely no standard process to the work I do. If you standardise the process you standardise the results. The reality is that you need to talk to your clients, talk to their audiences and carve a process that is right for that project and for everyone involved.

**Getting there:** From the start I knew what I wanted to do – I just didn't know it existed. Graphic design was a new industry then and not an option at my school. Design and technology did not feel quite right for me.

I've been driven by wanting to make things better. At school I felt the closest things to what I aspired to were metalwork and art and design. In metalwork I researched existing markets for products and learned to understand the importance of quality, whilst art and design encouraged me to explore ideas and materials - the perfect combination of creativity and knowledge.

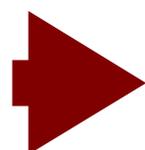
Whilst I understood the importance of the core subjects, knowing what I wanted to do very early on made me frustrated that I wasn't able to specialise at school. So at 16 I decided to take the vocational BTEC route that allowed me to focus on graphic design rather than continue with the more academic A Level pathway.

As a graphic designer the biggest skill you need is the ability to understand different audiences and to be able to adapt each project to its respective market. There are now many other people doing similar work and so you need to be competitive and have the drive to succeed, without being over-confident. A famous designer once said, show me a confident designer and I'll show you an average one – I think they were right.

I am currently merging my two companies into one, doing some consolidation and getting back to what is really important – just being a designer.

What pathways could learners follow in order to enter this career? Learners could draw a progression pathway and consider their options.

Explore the links in the 'Finding out more' section of this site to help you learn more.



For further information please visit  
[www.steersmcgillan.co.uk](http://www.steersmcgillan.co.uk)

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