



Welcome to A Level Product Design

AQA A Level Product Design at Burnley College is an exciting and practical course for students who enjoy being creative, solving real-world problems, and making things. The course is **highly project-based**, giving students lots of opportunities to **design, model, and prototype products** using a range of materials, tools, and technologies. Students learn by doing — developing ideas by sketching and building models, evaluating and testing product ideas and refining designs just like professional designers.

Alongside the practical work, students apply **theoretical knowledge** to support their design decisions, including materials, manufacturing processes, sustainability, ergonomics, and historical and contemporary design and technology. This balance helps students understand not just *how* products are made, but *why* designers make certain choices.

Assessment is split **50/50**, making it ideal for students with different strengths. **50%** of the course is a **Non-Exam Assessment (NEA)**, where students complete an in-depth design portfolio and final prototype based on a real design brief. The remaining **50%** is assessed through **two written exams**: one focused on **design principles and problem solving**, and the other on **technical knowledge** such as materials, processes, and manufacturing.

A Level Product Design develops transferable skills valued by universities and employers, opening pathways into **higher education, apprenticeships, and skilled careers** across design, engineering, and manufacturing sectors.

What you can read:

'AS/A Level Design & Technology - Product Design (AQA)' by Ian Granger, Will Potts, Julia Morrison and Dave Sumpner.



'Essential Maths Skills for AS/A Level Design & Technology' by Peter Warne and Chris Walker.

'AQA AS/A Level Product Design Specification' – link below:

- <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/design-and-technology/as-and-a-level/design-and-technologyproduct-design-7552>

Topics	Relevant Skills to the topic
Materials and their applications	Physical and mechanical properties and working characteristics of materials. Practical workshop methods for investigating and testing material properties.
Performance characteristics of materials	Specific names and classification of materials. Performance characteristics of different types of materials. Why different types of materials are suitable for different applications.

What you can watch:

Below are some of the skills/topics that you will be learning when you join us at Burnley College. Here are some videos for you to watch to get you started on those topics and/or skills:

- Design methods and processes - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qyoZTUGzdGY>
- Design styles and movements - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amVvYPU4Gw8&list=PLACTJk4sWiHdk7SHERzNe0rN6guVc9NZ2&index=2>
- Cultural influences on designs - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HxVN42BI0Q4>
- Developments in technology - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FwvLkmdV9QA>
- Surface areas and volumes - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=daJFLVAQrRA>

What are some of the topics and skills that you will cover?

Below are some of the topics and skills that we will cover in September and October:

Enhancement of materials	- Enhancement methods for materials and their suitability for specific applications.
Design Theory	- Key historical design styles, design movements and influential designers. - Key design styles and movements.

Tasks that you can do to prepare you:

<u>Task</u>	<u>Link to the course/specification</u>
<p>Task 1.</p> <p>Watch the video on 'developments in technology' and write a couple of paragraphs about the future of design and the influences from the 'past'.</p> <p>Determine the key points that are applicable to Dieter Rams - why is his philosophy 'Less-but better', so apparent today?</p>	<p>2.3 Technology and cultural changes</p> <p>This topic builds directly from GCSE Design and Technology expanding on your knowledge of the design process and influences.</p> <p>We will look at how this information is used to influence the future of designs.</p>
<p>Task 2.</p> <p>Watch the video on 'design styles and movements'</p> <p>Create a revision poster to outline and illustrate the characteristics and influences of the Art Deco Movement.</p>	<p>2.2 Design Theory</p> <p>This topic builds on GCSE Design and Technology of design movements and influences.</p> <p>In this topic you gain a higher insight into the importance of design movements and their characteristics. These skills will be used consistently throughout the two-year course.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Task 3</p> <p>Watch the Design methods and Processes video and write a couple of paragraphs on the key areas that are talked about - the importance of each within design development. Creation of revision cards is also an advantage here.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2.4 Design processes</p> <p>This will help you form a critical analysis of the design process.</p> <p>In this topic you gain a higher insight into the importance of design processes and the importance of each. These skills will be used consistently throughout the two-year course.</p>
<p>Once you have done the above, make sure you can clearly explain the importance of the stages of the design process.</p>	

- **Contact information**

If you have questions regarding this or any other A Level course at Burnley College, please contact alevels@burnley.ac.uk or call 01282733373

We look forward to seeing you in September.