

Area of Interest: Arts and Design

Design Foundations

Ontario College Certificate

Program Code: 1442X01FWO

1 Year

Ottawa Campus

Our Program

Explore the array of design fields to define your creative career path.

This one-year Design Foundations Ontario College Certificate allows you to develop fundamental design skills and to explore a range of design-related disciplines in order to discover where your strengths and interests lie.

Throughout the program you develop foundational knowledge and skills used in a variety of design elements such as:

- principles of design and layout
- typography
- drawing and sketching
- perspective
- colour theory
- 3D structure
- time management
- digital graphic software
- industry-standard software

You explore your own aptitudes and interests through research and a speaker series of professionals to help determine which area of design suits you. Your work accumulates into a portfolio that represents your best design and artwork, which can be used to apply for future programs of study. An annual showcase provides an opportunity to exhibit your portfolio and interact with industry professionals, peers and the community.

You have the opportunity to explore design-related areas such as:

- interior decorating
- interior design
- graphic design
- structural design
- web design
- multimedia design

Throughout the program, you create and strengthen a diverse portfolio that represents your design skills that can be used to apply for further programs of study. An annual showcase provides an opportunity to exhibit your best works and interact with industry professionals, peers, family and friends. This foundational training provides you with an introduction to more advanced design-

related programs including, but not limited to:

- Graphic Design Ontario College Advanced Diploma
- Interior Decorating Ontario College Diploma

As a graduate, you will qualify to receive transfer credits in related programs for some courses taken in this program. Contact the Program Coordinator to explore specific transfer credit opportunities.

Learning Outcomes

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

- Create two- and three-dimensional purpose-driven works using a wide range of materials, processes and techniques that support form and function within the principles of design.
- Solve design problems and develop creative form using a research-based design process.
- Develop and present a portfolio that showcases personal artistic style using a range of media appropriate for a variety of design-related disciplines.
- Communicate in an art and design environment using appropriate language, strategies and techniques in order to develop and maintain interpersonal relationships and participate in a peer evaluation process.
- Explore and select existing and emerging technologies and techniques to develop and manage a personal visual and digital presence.
- Explore the professional requirements and opportunities in various design industry-related fields to inform academic and professional goals.
- Identify and apply discipline-specific practices that contribute to the local and global community through social responsibility, economic commitment and environmental stewardship.

Program of Study

Level: 01	Courses	Hours
DSN1710	Design Strategy	42.0
DSN5350	Observational Drawing	56.0
DSN5351	Layout and Design 1	56.0
DSN5352	Introduction to Computer Design	56.0
DSN5355	Design Pathways	42.0
ENL2029M	Foundations of Communication	42.0
Level: 02	Courses	Hours
DSN1782	Understanding Colour	28.0
DSN5318	Drawing Techniques	42.0
DSN5360	Sketching and Concept Development	56.0
DSN5361	Layout and Design 2	56.0
ENL1813M	Communications 1	42.0
Choose one from equivalencies: Courses		Hours

Fees for the 2025/2026 Academic Year

Tuition and related ancillary fees for this program can be viewed by using the Tuition and Fees Estimator tool at <http://www.algonquincollege.com/fee-estimator>

Further information on fees can be found by visiting the Registrar's Office website at <http://www.algonquincollege.com/ro>

Fees are subject to change.

Additional program related expenses include:
Approximately \$600 for books and consumable supplies.

Admission Requirements for the 2026/2027 Academic Year

College Eligibility

- Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) or equivalent; OR
- Mature Student status (19 years of age or older and without a high school diploma at the start of the program). Eligibility may be determined by academic achievement testing, for which a fee will be charged.

Program Eligibility

- English, Grade 12 (ENG4C or equivalent).
- Applicants with international transcripts must provide proof of the subject specific requirements noted above and may be required to provide proof of language proficiency. Domestic applicants with international transcripts must be evaluated through the International Credential Assessment Service of Canada (ICAS) or World Education Services (WES).
- IELTS-International English Language Testing Service (Academic) Overall band of 6.0 with a minimum of 5.5 in each band; OR TOEFL-Internet-based (iBT)-overall 80, with a minimum of 20 in each component: Reading 20; Listening 20; Speaking 20; Writing 20; OR Duolingo English Test (DET) Overall 110, minimum of 110 in Literacy and no score below 95.
- Should the number of qualified applicants exceed the number of available places, applicants will be selected on the basis of their proficiency in English.

Admission Requirements for 2025/2026 Academic Year

College Eligibility

- Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) or equivalent. Applicants with an OSSD showing senior English and/or Mathematics courses at the Basic Level, or with Workplace or Open courses, will be tested to determine their eligibility for admission; OR
- Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) certificate; OR
- General Educational Development (GED) certificate; OR
- Mature Student status (19 years of age or older and without a high school diploma at the start of the program). Eligibility may be determined by academic achievement testing for which a fee of \$50 (subject to change) will be charged.

Program Eligibility

- English, Grade 12 (ENG4C or equivalent).
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Not sure if you meet all of the requirements? Academic Upgrading may be able to help with that: <https://www.algonquincollege.com/access/> .

Should the number of qualified applicants exceed the number of available places, applicants will be selected on the basis of their proficiency in English.

Application Information

DESIGN FOUNDATIONS Program Code 1442X01FWO

Applications to full-time day programs must be submitted with official transcripts showing completion of the academic admission requirements through:

ontariocolleges.ca
60 Corporate Court
Guelph, Ontario N1G 5J3
1-888-892-2228

Students currently enrolled in an Ontario secondary school should notify their Guidance Office prior to their online application at <http://www.ontariocolleges.ca/> .

Applications for Fall Term and Winter Term admission received by February 1 will be given equal consideration. Applications received after February 1 will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis as long as places are available.

International applicants please visit this link for application process information: <https://algonquincollege.my.site.com/myac360/s/self-registration-page> .

For further information on the admissions process, contact:

Registrar's Office
Algonquin College
1385 Woodroffe Ave
Ottawa, ON K2G 1V8
Telephone: 613-727-0002
Toll-free: 1-800-565-4723
TTY: 613-727-7766
Fax: 613-727-7632
Contact: <https://www.algonquincollege.com/ro>

Contact Information

Program Coordinator(s)

- Lou Di-Millo, <mailto:dimilll@algonquincollege.com> , 613-727-4723, ext. 5287

Course Descriptions

DSN1710 Design Strategy

Design projects should be motivated by the answer to the question "Why?". Designers who know the reason for the design create a more successful product that targets a specific audience. Through research, asking key questions and analyses, students develop strategies on which to base their designs.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

DSN1782 Understanding Colour

Colour plays a huge part in determining the success or failure of any graphic design project in the consumer marketplace, be it for print or for the screen. Students explore the foundations of colour theory, the cultural meaning of colour, and how colour influences consumer behaviour as it relates to the field of graphic design. Students gain an understanding of the differences between colour in print and the screen. They learn to create harmonious colour palettes to set a mood or to generate a response from the viewer.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

DSN5318 Drawing Techniques

Drawing skills with an emphasis on structured freehand sketches and rendering techniques are used by Interior Decorators to communicate design concepts to their clients. Students execute professional concept renderings and perspective sketches through the completion of visually correct and balanced compositions of furniture and interior finishes. Shading, balance, cropping, view selection and focal point analysis are studied through instructional drawing sessions and critiques.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

DSN5350 Observational Drawing

Design is a visual art. The better we draw, the better we see detail. Observational drawing is the foundation of strong design. Essential drawing skills and the incorporation of the fundamentals of composition, two-point perspective and grid work are used to create realistic renderings. Using various techniques, sight measurement and observational skills, students create realistic drawings through the study of still life and portraiture.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

DSN5351 Layout and Design 1

Good design enhances our environment and organizes our visual world. The basic elements and principles of layout and design are practiced as students develop solutions to design problems using sketching, conceptualization and critical thinking. Typography, layout and composition are combined to create strong visual communication in a studio environment. Emphasis is on developing hand skills to deliver clean, simple, creative solutions to field-related design problems.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

DSN5352 Introduction to Computer Design

The field of computer graphics consists of page layout, illustration and photo manipulation. Page layout is the hub for illustrations and photographs. Purpose-built instructional web pages, in-class and video tutorials guide students through the process of building electronic documents in Adobe InDesign, containing images edited in Photoshop and custom digital illustrations created in Adobe Illustrator. Students learn common technology-related terminology, organize graphics files and fonts, illustrate digitally and edit photographs, which they integrate into page designs.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

DSN5355 Design Pathways

Understanding the breadth of the design-related industry is essential to making future academic and career plans. Design-related career options are explored by examining various design professions through social media, research and industry-related speakers. Working in groups and as individuals, students develop skills for success, to support their pathway to a higher education in their field of choice. Students develop an action plan to assist in directing them toward choosing programs for future study.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none

DSN5360 Sketching and Concept Development

The ability to quickly sketch concepts by hand is critical, especially during the initial stages of a design. Students explore various materials and techniques to allow quick conceptualization of design solutions within interdisciplinary projects. Emphasis is placed on loose renderings, exploration of concepts, and creative content to visually communicate ideas.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none

DSN5361 Layout and Design 2

Combining digital tools, principles of design and typography into a layout elevates students' ability to create more advanced design. Students explore visual communication through multi-disciplinary projects using critical thinking, conceptualization and other design processes. Focus is on the compilation of a personal competitive portfolio, using industry standard software, to meet entry requirements for further studies in various design-related programs. Through social media, networking and promotion, students present final portfolios to industry, the college at large and the general public during the Annual Showcase.

Prerequisite(s): DSN5351

Corerequisite(s):none

ENL1813M Communications 1

Communication remains an essential skill sought by employers, regardless of discipline or field of study. Using a practical, vocation-oriented approach, students focus on meeting the requirements of effective communication. Through a combination of lectures, exercises, and independent learning, students practise writing, speaking, reading, listening, locating and documenting information, and using technology to communicate professionally. Students develop and strengthen communication skills that contribute to success in both educational and workplace environments.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none

ENL2029M Foundations of Communication

Students develop language and communication skills necessary to promote success in education pathways and careers. With effective workplace communication skills as the focus, students achieve correctness and confidence in presenting messages in various formats appropriate to workplace correspondence, report writing and teamwork activities. Students compose, edit and revise a variety of workplace-oriented messages, practise presentation skills, and use technology to produce a collaborative project. In all written work, students develop and enhance their skills in English language usage, grammar, mechanics and style to meet professional workplace standards.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none

GED1457 General Education Elective

Students choose one course, from a group of general education electives, which meets one of the following five theme requirements: Arts in Society, Civic Life, Social and Cultural Understanding,

Personal Understanding, and Science & Technology.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none