

# Placing Learners at the Centre through Design in Education

Goldsmiths, University of London - Jennifer Bain & Juliet Sprake  
Miriam College - Edizon Fermin

# Placing Learners at the Centre through Design in Education

1. Our unique approach to **designing education**
2. The importance of a **design thinking** approach to education
3. Insights into the power of combining design thinking with **critical pedagogy** in shaping education practice and research

**Are you a Designer?**

**A teacher of Design?**

There is, we believe, a broader rationale for engaging with design as this allows us to understand and make choices about our designed worlds. We believe this is imperative in shaping 21st Century Education.

**The Design Commission**

Lord Richard  
Alice Black  
Sir George Cox  
Jeremy Davenport  
Julian Grice  
Laura Haynes  
Wayne Hemingway  
Graham Hitchen  
Emma Hunt  
David Kester  
Catherine Large  
Lesley Morris  
Jeremy Myerson  
Dick Powell  
Vicky Pryce  
Barry Sheerman MP  
Andrew Summers  
John Thackara  
Baroness Whitaker  
David Worthington  
Gavin Williamson MP

House of Lords  
Design Museum  
Institution of Engineering Designers  
University of the Arts London  
The Team  
Design Business Association  
Hemingway Design  
Directional Thinking  
CHEAD  
Design Council  
Creative and Cultural Skills  
Design Council  
Helen Hamlyn Centre, The Royal College of Art  
Seymourpowell and D&AD  
FTI Consulting  
House of Commons  
Companies House  
Doors of Perception  
House of Lords  
Holmes & Marchant Group, Media Square  
House of Commons

# WE POSED FOUR QUESTIONS:

WHY DOES DESIGN MATTER?  
WHERE ARE WE NOW WITH UK DESIGN EDUCATION?  
WHAT ARE OUR COMPETITOR NATIONS DOING?  
WHAT MUST WE DO TO CONTINUE TO COMPETE?

THE ANSWERS LED US TO RECOMMEND CHANGES IN EDUCATION AT ALL LEVELS. THEY ARE NOT REVOLUTIONARY AND THEY ARE NOT FINANCIALLY ONEROUS. BUT WE THINK THEY WOULD SAFEGUARD THE CAPACITY OF OUR WORLD-CLASS DESIGN INDUSTRY AND CONTRIBUTE SUBSTANTIALLY TO OUR ECONOMIC REVIVAL – AS WELL AS MAKING OUR COUNTRY A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE.

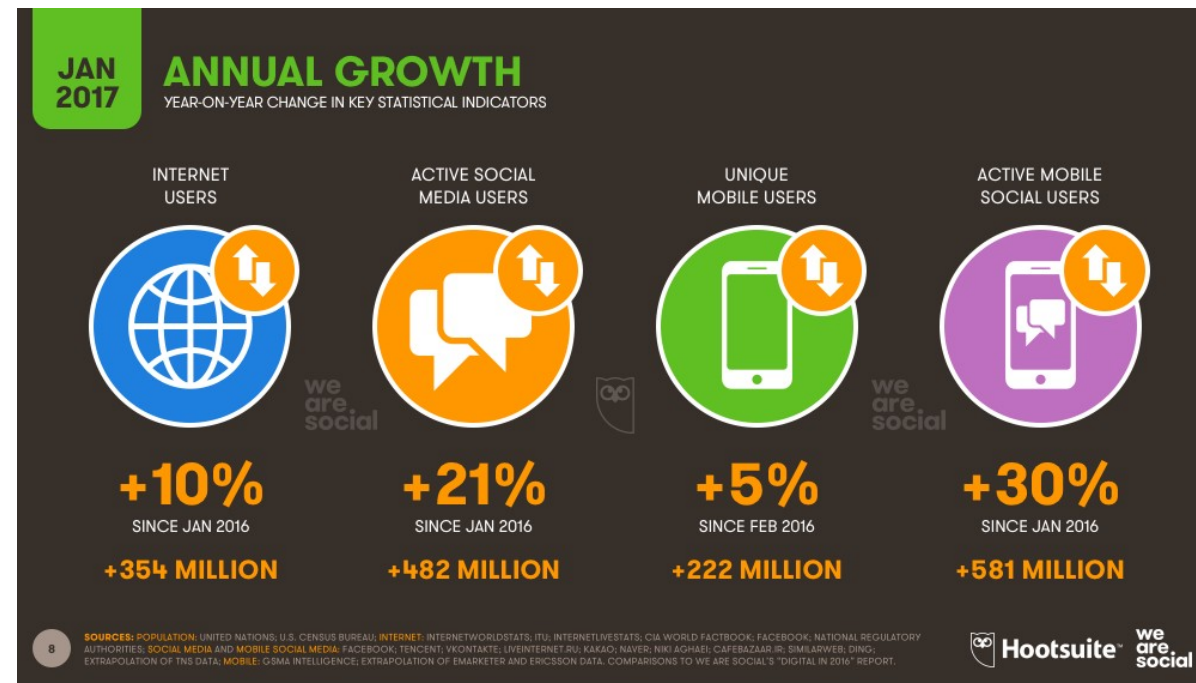
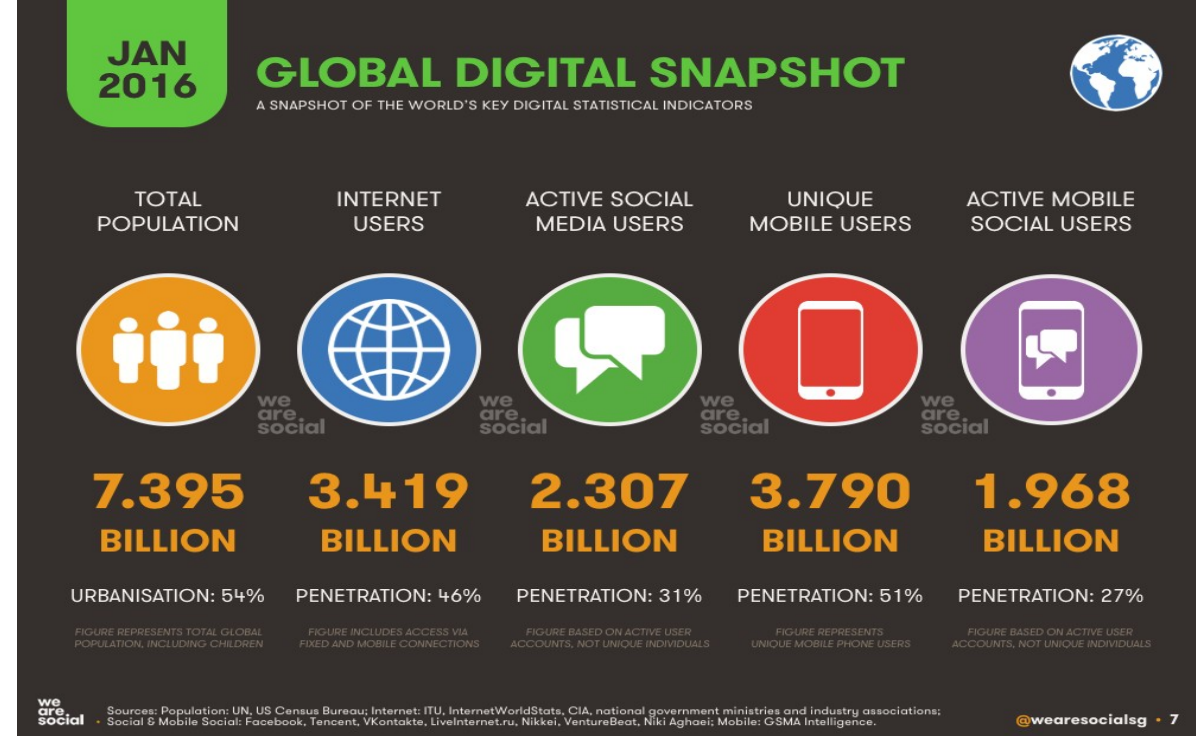
THEY MERIT SERIOUS AND URGENT CONSIDERATION.

OUR PRIMARY CONCLUSION IS THAT GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO RECOGNISE DESIGN, AND IN TURN, DESIGN EDUCATION, AS A POSITIVE LEVER FOR GROWTH, AND ACT ON THAT UNDERSTANDING.

It is because we believe design education is both fundamental to national prosperity, and under threat, that we carried out this inquiry. We interviewed a number of key players in the field, invited and received written evidence from educational institutions, businesses and individuals, and surveyed a mountain of existing literature on the subject.

# Digital Growth since January 2016

- The number of reported internet users is up by **10%**, growing by **354 million**
- The number of reported social media is up by **21%**, an increase of **482 million**
- Unique mobile users increased by **5%** thanks to **222 million** new users
- Mobile social media users leapt **30%**, adding **581 million** new users





# Terrible or beautiful?

Artificial intelligence is already changing our world. But will it one day bring about our destruction? Silicon Valley guru **Tim O'Reilly** says the answer lies within ourselves

**E**lon Musk has said that artificial intelligence represents “the most serious threat to the survival of the human race”. Stephen Hawking and Bill Gates agree. Surely these technology luminaries must be right? Yet upon seeing the 37th move of the second game in which Google’s AlphaGo AI defeated human Go master Lee Sedol, professional player Fan Hui said, “It’s not a human move. I’ve never seen a human play this move... So beautiful.”

Terrible or beautiful? Which is it?

Musk has expressed fears ranging from the plausible (an AI arms race between the superpowers leads to World War III) to the possible (a rogue trading algorithm at a hedge fund or investment bank decides that destabilising a national economy or starting a war is the best way to achieve its single-minded aim of gaining a financial edge), to the stuff of science fiction (a self-improving strawberry-picking robot gets smarter and smarter, but never forgets its original mission: to destroy humans).

NEXT?



**LOOK, NO HANDS**  
**HOW WILL A DRIVERLESS WORLD WORK?**



# Multi-disciplinary design education in the UK

Report and recommendations  
from the Multi-Disciplinary Design Network

NOVEMBER 2010

## Introduction

Design and innovation are critical to the UK reaching its economic goals. Reigniting the enterprise economy, commercialising science and technology, and embedding innovation in the public sector, all of which are vital for the country's future economic and social success, can only happen if the UK's workforce includes people with the skills to harness design as a tool for productivity and growth.

But more specifically design or the act (practice) of designing supports us in:

- creative-critical thinking,
- opportunity & problem identification and solving
- team work and collaboration
- entrepreneurial and business acumen
- resilience
- flexibility and a 'can do' attitude
- self-confidence
- appreciation of and ability to plan
- using mistakes and criticism helpfully
- making ideas
- communication

Our research-led approach to Designing Education is based on two guiding principles.

Firstly that **design thinking** (as a form of critical thinking) allows us as educators to see beyond the closure of the present moment, to **conceptualise, ideate and action new possibilities**

for learning opportunities and interactions, for curriculum, for learning spaces, for educational infrastructures...



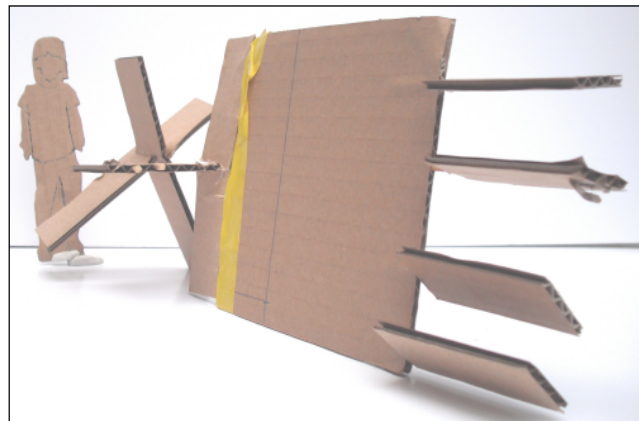
We acknowledge that education is not a service, it is a set of complex relationships.

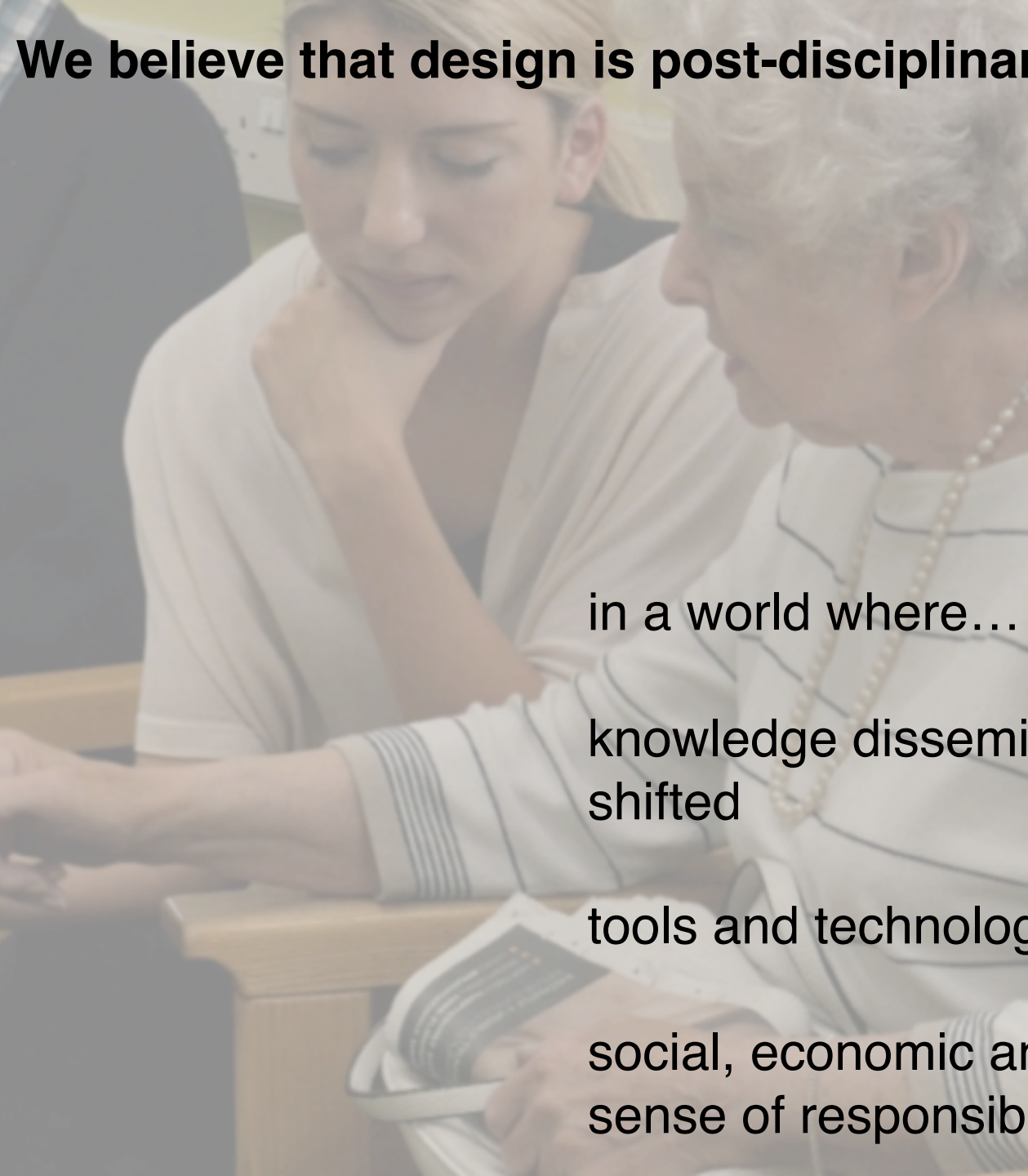




We also draw on human-centred design. Focusing on methods and mindsets that place the learner at the centre of pedagogy.

'exemplar co-design by 8 year olds'





# We believe that design is post-disciplinary and relational in character

Product Furniture Graphic  
Web DESIGN Textile  
Service Interior Interaction  
Fashion

in a world where...

knowledge dissemination and distribution has dramatically shifted

tools and technologies of production have changed

social, economic and environmental contexts demand a greater sense of responsibility

BUT design thinking in itself is not enough for educators to develop critical consciousness.

So coupled with design thinking we draw on a range of key thinkers to shape our **pedagogy in practice**.

By looking at the continuum of learning theories from behaviourist to critical humanist approaches, we uncover contradictions, locate disjunction and critique dominant discourses.

## **Becoming Critical**





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## Global Education Reform Movement

Professor Stephen Ball, of the Institute of Education, has commented "Pearson, the giant London based multinational, offers products and services in all areas of school practice: assessment, pedagogy, curriculum and management, with the aim of influencing policy to create opportunities for further business expansion. It's a very well thought-out business strategy." As the Global Education 'Reform' Movement strengthens its position on the global education stage it poses a real threat to high quality public education. Here is how:

The Global Education 'Reform' Movement (GERM) threatens the teaching profession by prioritising and imposing a business model on education.

The traits of the GERM are: competition (both between schools and teachers); test based accountability; performance related rewards; and attacks on teacher unions.

Education in almost every country in the world is subject to the grip of education 'reform' which is diminishing public schooling, promoting privatisation and destroying teacher professionalism. It aims to produce a narrowly educated workforce, which can read instructions and advertisements but is discouraged from thinking critically about the world.

These reforms are being advocated by: the World Bank; OECD; some governments; and private corporations.

The mechanisms used to propagate GERM and infect education systems globally include: testing, technology, the weakening of teacher's collective professional voice and corporate capitalism.

Education is viewed as an opportunity to maximise human capital, abandoning education's role of creating cultural good and social cohesion. The audit and accountability culture of GERM takes education out of the hands of those who create it and own it (teachers, students, and the public) to develop a commodity which can be traded globally. Education becomes a service sector which is open to trade and investors. This view of education is about profit not people, for example developing education technology for capital.

In the UK the GERM is evident in: fragmentation of education provision through 'academies' and 'free schools'; marketisation and competition; growth in standardised testing and 'league tables', end of the national pay framework and the introduction of performance related pay; and privatisation of education services.

Countries such as Finland have resisted the GERM and as a result, the education system in Finland is considered to be the best in the world.

"Healthy schools are resistant to GERM and its inconvenient symptoms. In these countries, teaching remains an attractive career choice for young people." Pasi Sahlberg, visiting Professor of Education at Harvard University, 2012

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The dominant discourse of assessment constructs learners as passive subjects. This illuminates the role of students in assessment as one where they conform to the rules and procedures of others.

As we move along the line from Behaviourism to Critical Humanist perspectives, the theories become less concerned with control and prediction and more concerned with social values



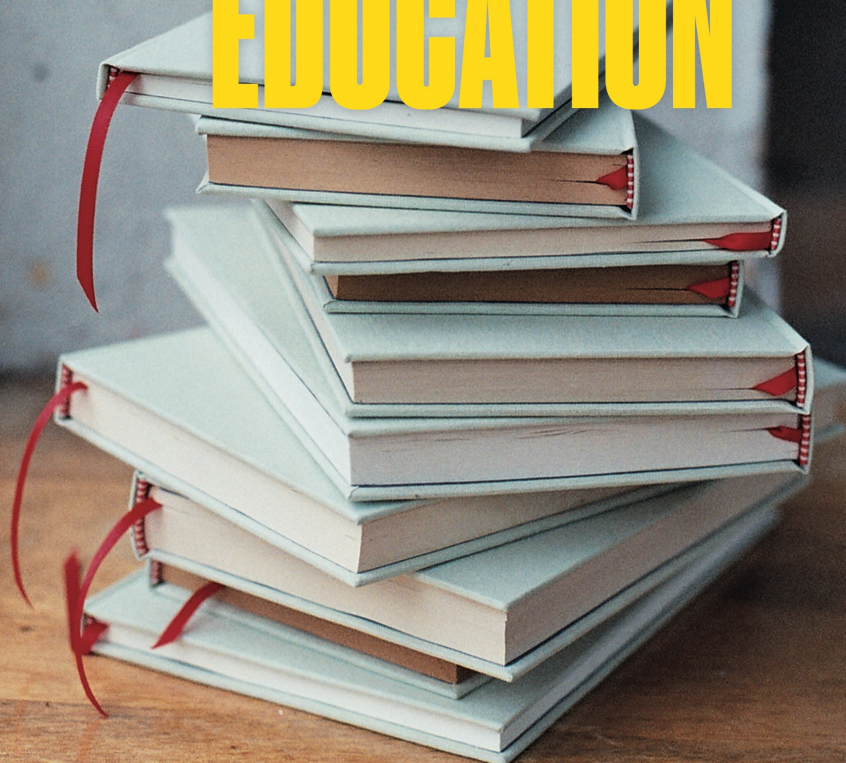
Theories of Learning	
Theories/Perspectives	Key concepts
Behaviourism	Building connections between stimuli and responses, task analysis and reinforcement. Relevant to course design, instruction and assessment.
Objectives, outcomes and taxonomies	The framework for course design and estimating levels of teaching and achievement. Strong links with behaviourism .
Constructivism	Learners build schemata that enable them to construct meaning and understanding. Implications for teaching are to help the students to develop more sophisticated concepts through the use of discussion and study tasks.
Reflection and experiential learning	Types of reflection, styles of learning and reflection on experience. Relevant to portfolios, personal development plans, self-assessment and related forms of learning.
Critical humanist perspectives	Enablement, empowerment, critical reflection, transformative learning, changing perceptions and changing environments. Relevant to course design, methods of teaching and learning and assessment.

(Adapted from Brown, 2004)

When these concepts are brought together, **critical design thinking** and **critical pedagogy** offer a platform for praxis (reflection and action) that seeks to empower both educators and learners, placing the **human at the centre** of everything we do

This, in essence, is what our **MA Designing Education** is all about.

# MA DESIGNING EDUCATION\*



## Modules and structure

Modules	September to October	November to December	January to March	April to June
	2-week teaching block, Miriam College	Online learning activities and tutorials	3-month teaching block, Goldsmiths, University of London	Online tutorials*
Critical & Radical Pedagogies (30 credits)	30 hours	15 hours		
Spaces & Practices of Education (30 credits)			45 hours	
Independent Research Project (60 credits)	30 hours		50 hours	10 hours

We need tools to support educators in navigating and making decisions in a complex and rapidly evolving world, empowering them to work in collaborative, critical and creative ways that place the learner at the centre of relevant and rewarding educational experiences that maximise social inclusion.

RP-UK TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION (TNE) LINKS PROGRAMME  
Blending mission statements workshop 25.04.17

The Philippine Design Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century diverse learner centers on the development of global knowledge and skillsets, cultivation of creativity and innovation and ultimately the transformation and empowerment of an evolving dynamic society that values positive change.

In a culture of creativity and innovation, the Miriam College Design Education program enables and empowers diverse learners with local and global knowledge, values, and skills in pursuit of positive and transformative change for a dynamic, evolving, and just society.

PHILIPPINE DESIGN EDUCATION EQUIPS THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY FILIPINO CITIZEN WITH EMPOWERING GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE, VALUES, AND SKILLS; NECESSARY IN CULTIVATING, NURTURING, AND SUSTAINING A CULTURE OF CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION IN SCHOOLS IN THE SPIRIT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE.

Design Education pursues multifaceted strategic and transformative processes towards the empowerment of diverse learners and stakeholders, sustaining the creativity and innovation in learning systems that cultivate positive change in a dynamic and just society.

The 21st century learner, empowered by design education, acquires global knowledge, skill sets, and transformative processes that leads to relevant change.



Goldsmiths  
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON