

**Institute of  
Art, Design +  
Technology  
Dún Laoghaire**

# rules for rule breakers

**Portfolio  
Guidelines**

# show up + show off

make the most  
of your portfolio

## Welcome to IADT

Here at IADT, we're all about making things happen. Our courses are designed to make things happen too: to create graduates who are curious collaborators and tech savvy innovators; who are storytellers and creators. We offer a wonderfully diverse range of courses, and we collaborate with our students to explore new opportunities and new ways of working.

Some IADT courses ask prospective students to submit a portfolio, which should demonstrate your enthusiasm for the course as well as your interests and strengths. Please use these guidelines to help put together your portfolio; they are designed to help you ensure it becomes the perfect showcase for your work.

### Tips to make the most of your portfolio

1. Think of your portfolio as a collection of work that showcases your interests and enthusiasms.
2. The work you include can be finished as well as work-in-progress.
3. It should demonstrate creativity, curiosity, inventiveness and ideas, as well as your ability to work around selected themes.
4. You can include course and school work as well as any independent work. We like to see a portfolio that demonstrates visual skill, creativity, self-motivation, inventiveness, experimentation, flexibility and stylistic variation.
5. Your portfolio is the best way to demonstrate your energy and enthusiasm – so enjoy putting it together!

**A portfolio is required for application to:**

**Department of Design + Visual Arts**

DL826 BA (Hons) in Graphic Design

DL827 BA (Hons) in Art

DL845 BA (Hons) in Design for Film

**Department of Film + Media**

DL832 BA (Hons) in Animation

DL833 BA (Hons) in Photography + Visual Media

DL838 BA (Hons) in Creative Music Production

DL843 BA (Hons) in Film

DL844 BA (Hons) in Television

**Department of Technology + Psychology**

DL839 BA (Hons) in Interaction + User Experience Design

**“we work beyond the limit of our disciplines to explore new opportunities...”**



**Ideally, your portfolio should:**



**Be organised.**

Decide how best to arrange your work. For example, it may be chronological or in thematic sections where the initial work is placed next to final pieces.



**Be clear.**

If you are including team work, tell us what your role was.



**Be selective.**

Include and highlight your best work. We appreciate quality not quantity. Do not include more than 30 pieces. Show work relevant to the course.



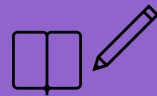
**Show large or 3D work.**

We are always pleased to see such work, but please present it as photographs or other documentation.



**Include a CV.**

Be sure to include a copy for each course you are applying to. Note details of hobbies, technical skills and involvement in activities relevant to that course.



**Include notebooks, sketchbooks, journals or visual diaries.**

We want to see how you document your working process.

**Art**

**Your portfolio will normally include:**

- **Experimentation and exploration**  
Our students work across many different areas and media so show us a variety of work, different media and approaches. Many activities that you are involved in have application to the study of Art... if you are fascinated and active and get inspiration from another activity ... think of a way to show us that in your portfolio too!
- **A variety of observational drawings**  
For example, drawings of spaces, places, objects and people. Consider how elements such as light and tone, shape and structure, movement and change can be observed.
- **A selection of your best project work**  
Projects can include visual research work, development work and final outcomes. Work that is not solely image-based can be uploaded on our digital portfolio platform as short video clips, sound works, etc.
- **3D work as photographs**  
Include photography of sculptural, spatial or experimental 3D work. A short video showing 3D or site-specific work can be uploaded to show the context and environment.
- **Digital work**  
This could be 2D, 3D or 4D (Time-based) work in any media/software.
- **Notebooks and sketchbooks**  
Use your sketchbooks and visual journals to show us a real enthusiasm for your subject. Evidence of your creative process, methods of investigation and ideas is very important! You can show these as a selection of still images or upload, to our digital portfolio platform, short video sequences, ie. flicking through some pages of your notebooks.

**Get it together!** Your portfolio is your showcase, so think carefully what to include and how best to organise it.



## Portfolio

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*Design for Film* brings together set designers, costume designers, character designers, model makers and digital artists – all learning highly specialised skills in a fully professional collaborative context. Our applicants have a keen interest in the narrative arts; film, theatre and entertainment – as well as skills in areas such as three dimensional /spatial design, architecture, art, fashion, sculpture, music, digital arts, games, VFX, drama, character or animation.

Your portfolio should show that you are a highly visual person, that you enjoy working in a variety of media, solving problems creatively and you are willing to explore new ideas and meet new challenges.

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### Your portfolio will normally include:

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- **A wide range of creative work**

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- **A variety of observational drawings**  
For example, life drawing and drawings of spaces, places, objects and people. Use your sketchbooks and visual journals to show us a real enthusiasm for your subject. Evidence of your creative process and ideas is very important. Try to show us work in a variety of media.

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- **A selection of your best project work**  
Include work which shows your interests and enthusiasms. For group work or collaborative work, let us know what your role was. Projects include visual research work, development work and final outcomes.

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- **Model Making**  
3D work as photographs. Include photography of sculptural, spatial or experimental 3D work.

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- **Games/VFX**  
This could be 2D or 3D work in any software. Include notebooks and sketchbooks.

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- **Character**  
Character designers are interested in all aspects of character. We are looking for good ability in sculpting, 3D work, digital work in any software.

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- **Costume Design**  
Costume designers are interested in people and what they wear. You may have designs for costumes and characters, and can show an interest in fashion, textiles, fabrics and materials.

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- **Production/Set Design**  
Set designers are primarily interested in dramatic spaces. This is a wide-ranging discipline so any spatial and 3D work is useful.

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### Like |Subscribe | Follow: Your personal statement

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- **Who inspires you to be creative?**  
Do you have a favourite creator, influencer, artist, or designer?

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- **What moves you?**  
Can you tell us one example of a film, game, book, play, exhibition or show that has made a difference to you in your artistic journey?  
We would like to know about you, so, in addition to your CV, we would like you to give us a short personal statement about your work and why you do it.

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Your portfolio will normally include:

- **A wide range of creative work**  
Graphic Designers have an enthusiasm for exploring and communicating ideas through different media and techniques. We want to see how you enjoy creative problem solving and researching into particular topics or ideas as a way of making work which identifies and solves problems in creative ways.
- **A variety of observational drawings**  
For example, life drawing and drawings of spaces, places, objects and people.
- **A selection of your best project work**  
Include work which shows your interests and enthusiasms. Projects normally include some visual research work, development work and final outcomes.
- **3D work as photographs**  
Include photography of sculptural, spatial or experimental 3D work.
- **Digital work**  
This could be 2D or 3D work in any software.
- **Notebooks and sketchbooks**  
Use your sketchbooks and visual journals to show us a real enthusiasm for your subject. Evidence of your creative process and ideas is very important! We would like to see a range of testing and iteration to explore alternatives and choice for all concepts, techniques and media used. Show yourself to have a curious and playful mind!



“a vibrant atmosphere with a focus on research, creativity, technology and production...”



**Ideally, your portfolio should:**



**Be organised.**

Decide how best to arrange your work. For example, it may be chronological or in thematic sections where the initial work is placed next to final pieces.



**Be clear.**

If you are including team work, tell us what your role was.



**Be selective.**

Include and highlight your best work. We appreciate quality, not quantity. Do not include more than 30 pieces. Show work that is relevant to the course you are applying to and that demonstrates hard work, commitment and quality.



**Not be a copy from photographs.**

Do not include any artwork that is a copy from somebody else's work.



**Include a CV.**

Be sure to include a copy for each course you are applying to. Note details of hobbies, technical skills and involvement in activities relevant to that course.



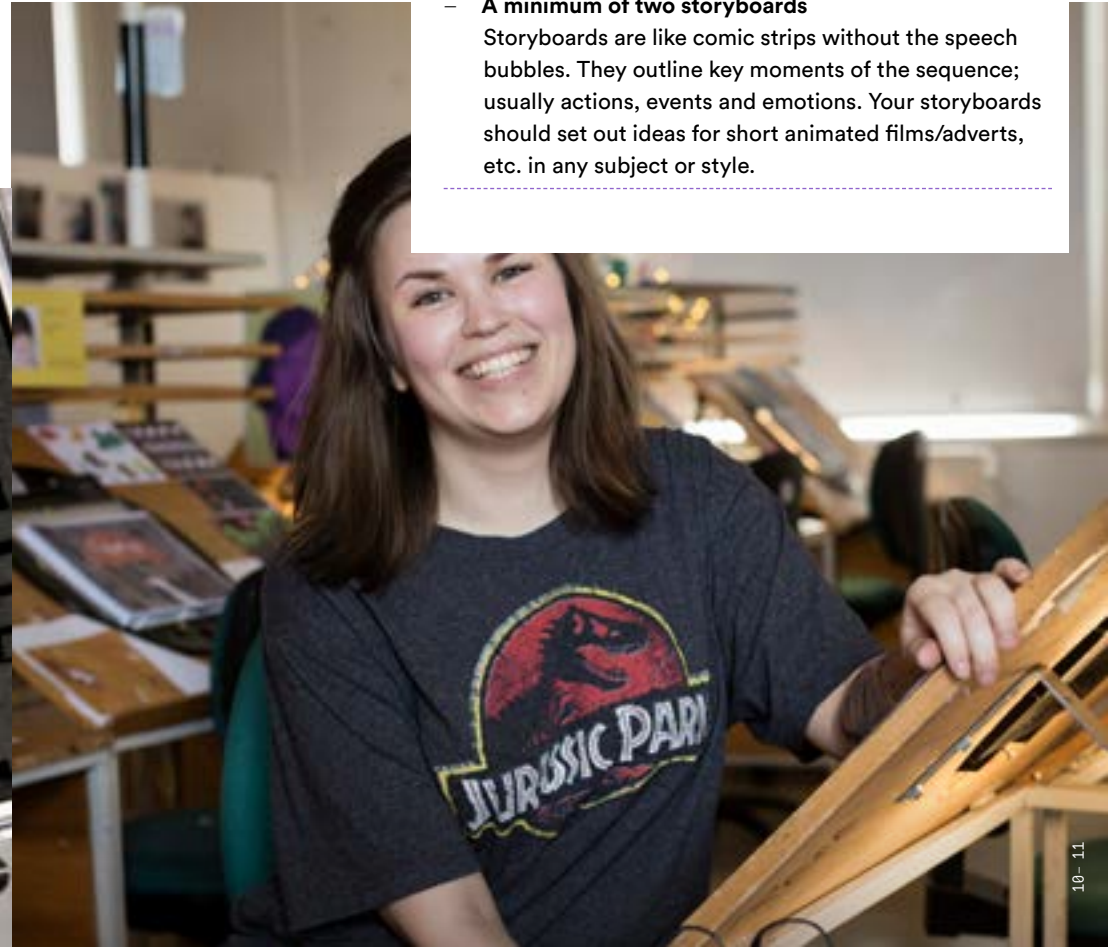
**Include notebooks, sketchbooks, journals or visual diaries.**

We want to see how you document your working process.

**Animation**

**Your portfolio will normally include:**

- **A variety of observational drawings**  
For example, life drawing, drawings of friends, family, animals, landscapes, objects, etc.
- **A wide range of creative work**  
Animation production artists have creative, conceptual, production and storytelling skills. It is not a requirement, but if you have examples of animated film work you have done previously, please include a short sample (max 1 minute total duration). It is also not a requirement, but if you have relevant photographs or prints please include these also.
- **A selection of your best original artworks**  
Your portfolio should show your interests in art, animation and the world around you.
- **A minimum of two storyboards**  
Storyboards are like comic strips without the speech bubbles. They outline key moments of the sequence; usually actions, events and emotions. Your storyboards should set out ideas for short animated films/adverts, etc. in any subject or style.





Following your application to the CAO, you will be contacted and asked which pathway you wish to apply for. You will be sent more details on the next steps. In summary, you will be invited to perform an audition for the Music Practice pathway. If you apply for the Music Production pathway you will be invited to submit a portfolio.

**1. Submit a portfolio for the Production pathway:**

- We are looking for 2 pieces of music, they do not have to be self-composed; we are looking for a detailed statement to accompany the submissions outlining what role the applicant had in its creation, how it was recorded, how they would improve or alter the arrangement or recording in hindsight, etc. and to critically appraise the work.
- You are not marked on songwriting, but on a sense of experimentation and ambition in the tracks. More importantly, you are graded on your understanding of what you have given us, in terms of recording facilities, production techniques and mixing ability; we are not looking for perfect tracks, but an awareness of what can be achieved.
- There is a 25mb limit to the Audio submissions; we suggest 256 kps MP3 files.

**2. A second option for the Production pathway is:**

- A short essay on a genre of music, artist, label, movement or event.
- We are looking for your thoughts, and a sense of inquiry.
- We don't want facts or figures but what you feel about an Artist or an event.
- A review of a concert would look at all factors, the songs arrangements, the sound and lighting, the artist's relationship to the audience, and a detailed look at the performance itself.
- We are looking for ownership and enthusiasm in both options, with a sense of enquiry and passion for the subject matter in the second.





**Your portfolio should include the following:****Film and other moving image content**

Please include at least one completed non-narrative video piece\* – this can be non-fiction, factual, entertainment or documentary. Short fiction films can be submitted but there will be an emphasis on non-scripted work in our assessment. Please state clearly your role(s) on each production and include this as part of your CV / personal statement. The panel will watch a minimum of five minutes – so put your best work first!

\*Examples might be making a short factual documentary on a local event/character, social, cultural and or issue based event. Audio visual storytelling ability is what we are looking for here.

**Written Material**

- **CV / personal statement** listing relevant credits and work (in this field or a related one) is compulsory. We are looking for unique and original audio-visual storytellers with a passion for storytelling in all its forms.
- **Critical Analysis.** Write a short critical analysis of each piece of work you have submitted. Consider the challenges, and what worked and what didn't. What would you do differently?
- **Table of Contents.** Please include an index of the filmed material and the contents of your portfolio.

**Other Material (optional)**

Crews include diverse creative contributors. If you have abilities or experience in a particular area, tell us about it! Optional material you can submit could include:

- TV series or one off. Include the duration, genre, channel and target audience. Give a short synopsis of your idea and how it will look and feel. Be imaginative but realistic!
- Journalistic style writing is welcome. A piece/article on a local famous person, historical, political event for example. Review(s) of TV programming from across the genres (local and/or international) are an option. Speak about your own favourite piece of TV programming and why.



- Screenplays or other creative writing; short stories, plays, etc. are accepted. Please include a short synopsis for each piece and let us know which scene(s) are best to read.
- Audio Work. Radio items, podcasts, music you have composed, and interesting soundscapes are all welcome. If your interest is in sound design, please say so in your CV.
- Production Work. Include any production or planning paperwork you have written such as research briefs, production packs or budgets.
- Directing Work. Include pre-visualization, notes you made on style or theme, shot lists, floor plans, and research notebooks.
- Camera Work. If you have an interest in camera work or lighting, then please highlight it in the video material you submit, and include any relevant research material.
- Photography. Include a selection of your best work in black + white and/or colour, and supply all images on print. If your work is digital, then supply high-quality .jpg. We look for photo essays or thematic work.
- Showreel. If including a showreel, remember to clearly state your role(s) on each clip. A showreel is not a requirement.

**All portfolios must be delivered online using the digital portfolio submission site.**

**Please note!**

The same portfolio can and may be considered for both the BA (Hons) Film and BA (Hons) Television programmes if you are applying for both. However, please note the different portfolio requirements for each discipline. Each programme will be assessed independently and will result in separate scores. The digital portfolio process will require two submissions. We recommend tailoring your application according to the requirements.

Shortlisted candidates may be called for interview to discuss their portfolio and work.

### Your portfolio should include the following:

#### – Film and other moving image content

Please include at least one completed film – this can be fiction, documentary or experimental work. Please state clearly your role(s) on each production and include this as part of your CV/Personal statement. The panel will watch a minimum of five minutes – so put your best work first!

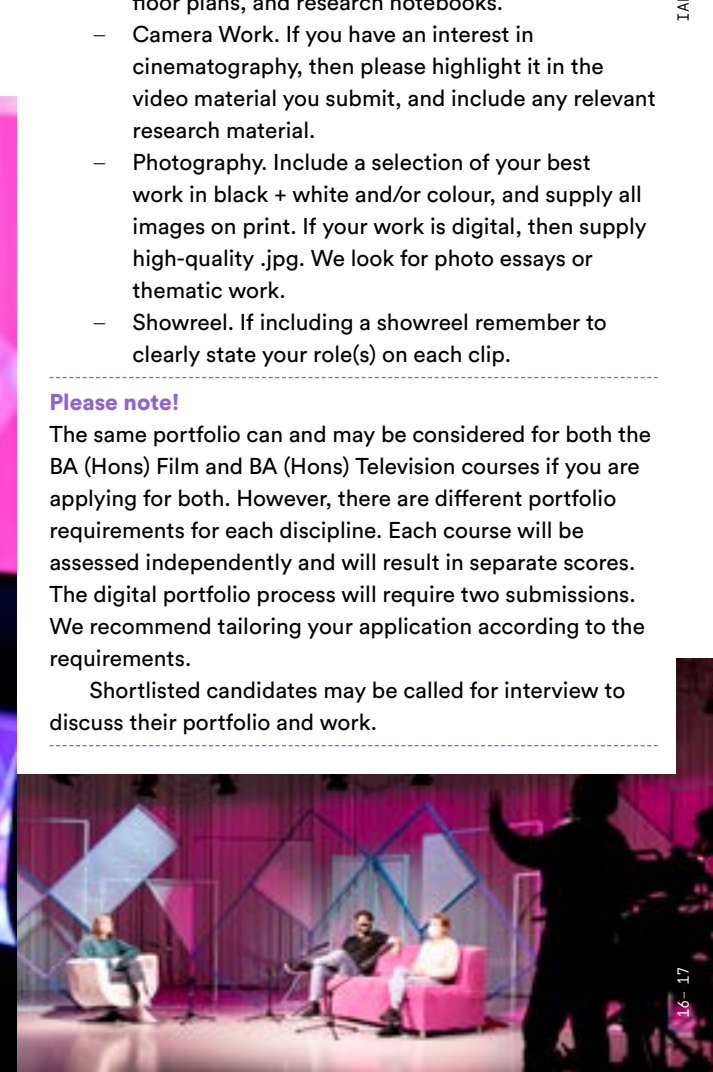
#### – Written Material

- **CV/personal statement.** We are looking for unique and original audio visual storytellers with a passion for filmmaking in all its forms.
- A CV/Personal Statement listing relevant credits and work (in this field or a related one) is compulsory.
- **Critical Analysis.** Write a short critical analysis of each film or piece of work you have submitted. Consider the challenges, and what worked and what didn't. What would you do differently?
- **Table of Contents.** Please include an index of the filmed material and the contents of your portfolio.

#### – Other Material (optional)

Film crews include diverse creative contributors. If you have abilities or experience in a particular area, tell us about it! Optional material you can submit could include:

- Screenplays or other creative writing. Screenplays in the correct format (search for the industry-accepted screenplay format online), short stories, plays, etc. Please include a short synopsis for each piece and let us know which scene(s) are best to read.



- **Audio Work.** Radio plays, music you have composed, and interesting soundscapes are all acceptable. If your interest is in sound design, please say so in your CV.
- **Drawing or Concept Work.** Show us in a few relevant pieces that you have a good eye and imagination. You can submit storyboards, costume and production design sketches.
- **Production Work.** Include any production or planning paperwork you have written such as production packs or budgets.
- **Directing Work.** Include pre-visualization, casting notes, notes you made on style or theme, shot lists, floor plans, and research notebooks.
- **Camera Work.** If you have an interest in cinematography, then please highlight it in the video material you submit, and include any relevant research material.
- **Photography.** Include a selection of your best work in black + white and/or colour, and supply all images on print. If your work is digital, then supply high-quality .jpg. We look for photo essays or thematic work.
- **Showreel.** If including a showreel remember to clearly state your role(s) on each clip.

#### Please note!

The same portfolio can and may be considered for both the BA (Hons) Film and BA (Hons) Television courses if you are applying for both. However, there are different portfolio requirements for each discipline. Each course will be assessed independently and will result in separate scores. The digital portfolio process will require two submissions. We recommend tailoring your application according to the requirements.

Shortlisted candidates may be called for interview to discuss their portfolio and work.

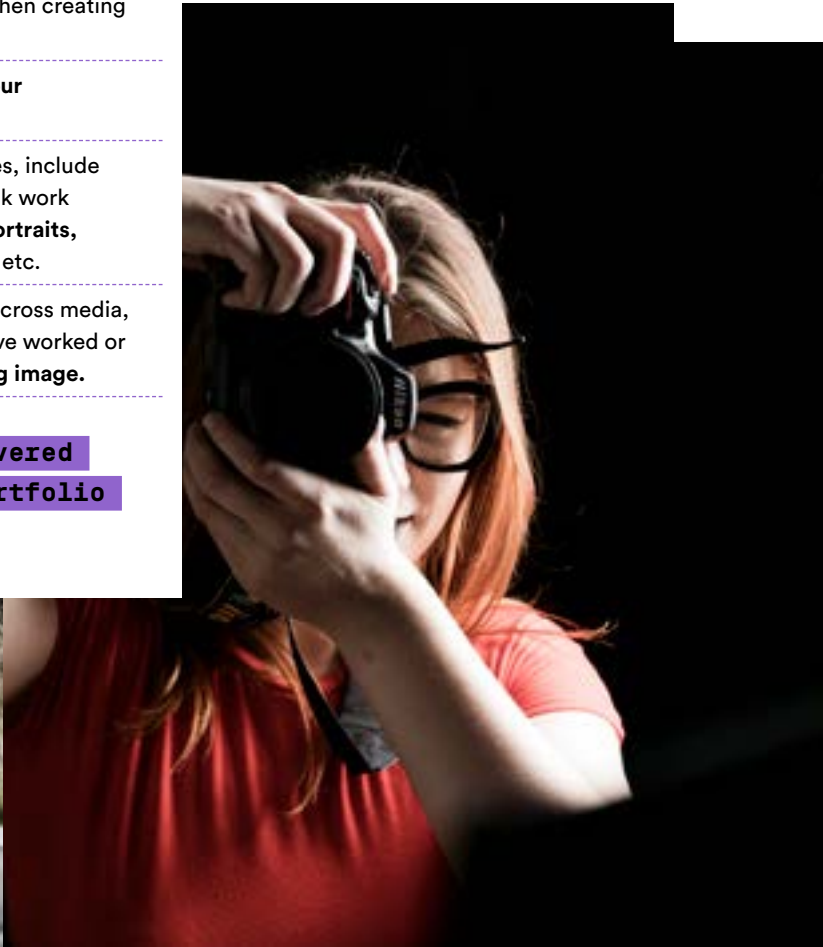
**Your portfolio will normally include:**

- **20-30 pieces of work**  
From fashion and advertising, documentary to contemporary art and digital media, creative photographers are highly sought after and play a leading role in reflecting and defining our visual society and culture. We want to see your work which shows your interests and enthusiasm.
- **A personal statement**  
This should outline some information about you and your interest and passion for photography.
- **An outline of your experience**  
Include work that illustrates your level of experience and technical competence to-date.
- Work which shows your level of **understanding of composition, light, texture and form** when creating photographic images.
- Examples of both **monochrome and colour** photographs.
- As we believe photographs work in series, include **selections of photographs** that you think work together under a theme, for example, **Portraits, Landscapes, Friends, Colour, Still Life**, etc.
- Professional photographers now work across media, please include **other media** you may have worked or experimented with, for example, **moving image**.

**All portfolios must be delivered online using the digital portfolio submission site.**

- **Published work**  
If you've had work published to-date, we'd like to see it! This could be work published in print or if featured online or social media; include for example, screen grabs of your published work.
- **A research journal** which can include clippings and other primary **research material** that demonstrates your active **interest in photography and image making**. Use your **notebooks** and **visual journals** to show us a real enthusiasm for your subject. Evidence of your creative process and ideas is very important!

**Talk to the experts!** We offer portfolio workshops at our Open Days, check [iadt.ie](http://iadt.ie) for info.

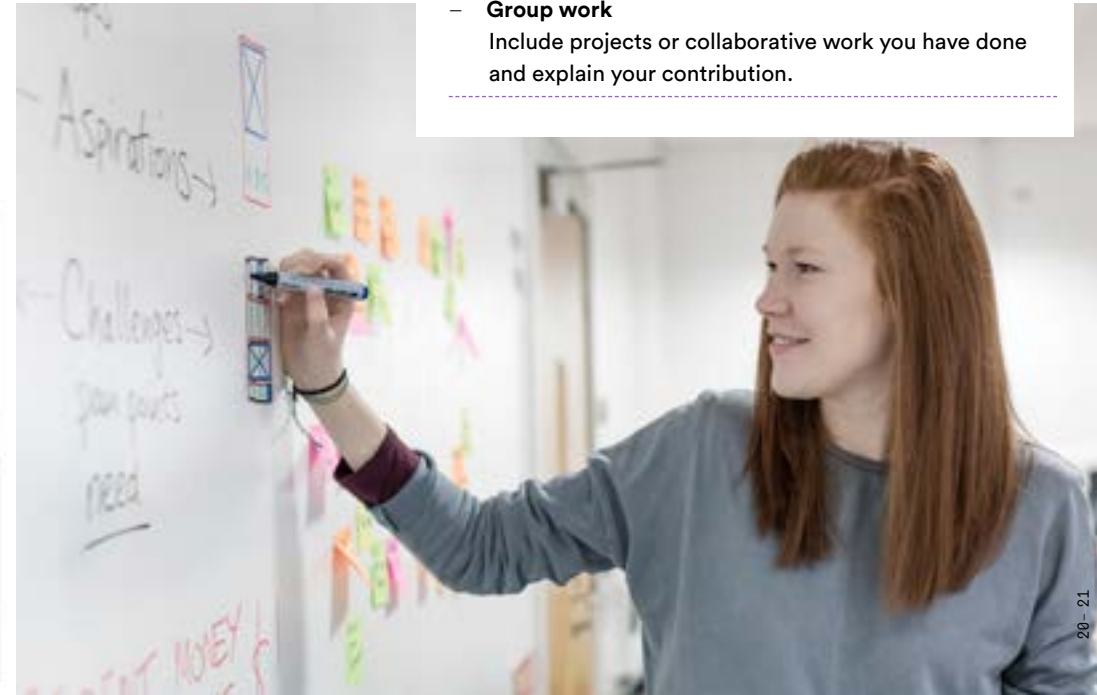




**Your portfolio will normally include:**

- **A selection of your best creative work and project work**  
Show us how you are curious about objects, places and spaces that people use and interact with. For example – through words and pictures – drawings, diagrams, graphics, photographs, collages, etc – can you demonstrate how you observe how things work, if problems exist, how you might solve them or design something better? This requires a real enthusiasm for visual research into particular topics, themes, ideas, creative problem solving, good visual skills and working in a variety of media. Include work which shows your interests and enthusiasms. Projects normally include some visual research work, development work (sketches & mock-ups) and final pieces (the ones you select as most successful).
- **A variety of observational drawings/visual work**  
These are drawings from life (not from photographs), that show how you look and observe the world around you – people, spaces, places, objects. You can show a series of drawings/visual work (in a variety of media) that investigate, or focus on, a single theme/topic.
- **3D work as photographs**  
Paper/card crafts interactive pop-ups, origami, sculptural, spatial or experimental 3D work.
- **Notebooks and sketchbooks**  
Use your sketchbooks and visual journals to show us your enthusiasm and enquiry into a subject(s). Evidence of your creative process and ideas is very important.

- **Maps and Timelines**  
Show us your interest in information, how can you visualise it, make it easier to understand, and interesting? Hand-drawn maps, diagrams, infographics or timelines can explain how something works, show a journey, tell a story, chart the history or development of something, or illustrate interesting facts about a topic. Maps and diagrams can explain how something works, how to get there or show the key points along the way.
- **Storyboards**  
Storyboards are panels with words and pictures, sometimes like a comic strip. They tell a story or show key moments of the sequence through pictures; usually actions, events and emotions. Your storyboards might show how people interact with an object/place/space or how it works (any subject or style).
- **Photographs or Prints**  
Observations of objects, places, spaces, people. Series or sequences of photographs telling a story or documenting a place or object, showing unusual details, etc.
- **Digital work**  
This could be 2D or 3D work in any software.
- **Group work**  
Include projects or collaborative work you have done and explain your contribution.



### How do I apply to IADT?

All applications for admission to the first year of our undergraduate courses must be made directly to the CAO by the 1st February. Please visit [cao.ie](http://cao.ie) for application guidelines.

Courses in the Departments of Design + Visual Arts and Film + Media and the BA (Hons) in Interaction + User Experience Design also require that you submit a portfolio of your work for assessment. These courses are referred to by the CAO as “Restricted”. This year portfolios will be submitted digitally.

You can use the CAO Change of Mind facility (by the 1st July annually), but you can only either remove a restricted course or change the order of preference in your application. You cannot apply to, or add, a new restricted course after the 1st February.

**No late applications can be accepted – no exceptions!**

### How do I submit my portfolio?

Given the current restrictions it is unlikely that we will be able to assess a physical portfolio submission this year. As a result, we have prepared an alternative submission platform for our applicants. Our Digital Portfolio Submission platform will go live in early December.

### When do I submit my portfolio?

Portfolios can be submitted digitally from the 9th December here [iadt-portfolio.awardsplatform.com](http://iadt-portfolio.awardsplatform.com)

The Portfolio Submission Deadline is 18th March at 5pm.

### Before you start your Digital Portfolio submission:

You will need your CAO number to begin your submission. All courses which require portfolio assessment must be included on your CAO application by February 1st.

Your digital portfolio should have a minimum of 10 pieces of work and a maximum of 25 pieces uploaded to your submission. You will also be asked to include a CV and write a personal statement. We have prepared some helpful tips for photographing your work.

Film + video files must be under 5MB for upload, larger files can be submitted via a url: YouTube, Vimeo, etc. Please make sure that any online videos are public and password free for assessing.

### How are portfolios scored?

Portfolios are scored out of 600 points; the pass mark is 240 points (40%). If you get less than 240 points, you will not be considered eligible for the course.

### How do I calculate my total points score?

- i. Take your portfolio score – e.g., 360 points.
- ii. Take your Leaving Certificate points, mature student score, or FETAC/QQI points – e.g., 400 points.
- iii. Add 1 to 2 – e.g., 360 + 400 = 760 points. This is your total points score with which you compete for a place in the course.

Please check [iadt.ie/courses](http://iadt.ie/courses) for information on our courses minimum entry requirements.

### What happens if I apply for multiple courses in IADT?

If you apply for more than one course, your portfolio will be assessed separately for each course. Bear this in mind when preparing your portfolio. It is not unusual for an applicant to receive a favourable response in one course and not in another.

### What if I have prepared a ‘special project’ portfolio for other colleges – do I have to prepare a second portfolio for IADT?

Some institutions now limit you to the completion of a “special project” as the only content for your portfolio. At IADT we do not ask for a “special project” because we recognise that every applicant is different, and as such the portfolio should show your individual abilities, interests, and readiness to join one of our courses.

If you have completed a “special project”, or you are working on one – that is fine. If you are pleased with it, do include it in your portfolio. But please remember, we want to see the work that clearly shows you are ready for the opportunities offered by our courses.

### Are there any alternatives to the Portfolio Assessment?

There is an alternative option for the courses listed below. In February, you can submit a Virtual Project Brief for:

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DL826 BA (Hons) in Graphic Design

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DL827 BA (Hons) in Art

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DL832 BA (Hons) in Animation

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DL833 BA (Hons) in Photography + Visual Media

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DL839 BA (Hons) in Interaction + User Experience Design

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DL845 BA (Hons) in Design for Film

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If you do not have a portfolio of work that you feel strongly about due to exam pressures or you have been out of education for a while, etc., you can be assessed on your performance on the Virtual Project Brief without the need to submit a portfolio for that course.

You can equally submit a virtual Project Brief and submit a Digital Portfolio in March if you wish. The grading system is of equal weight both for the Virtual Project Brief and the portfolio submission. If you decide to opt for the Virtual Project Brief and not to submit a portfolio, then the grade you receive for the Virtual Project Brief will represent your final score for that course. If you decide to opt for both the Virtual Project Brief and portfolio submission, then the highest grade achieved in either the Virtual Project Brief or the portfolio submission will be your final score for that course.

Once you have applied for one or more of the above courses via the CAO before 1st February, our Admissions team will contact you via email regarding the Virtual Project Brief. Please note this initiative only applies to the above courses.

Read more on IADT Portfolio Guidelines and Assessments [iadt.ie/study/portfolio-guidelines](https://iadt.ie/study/portfolio-guidelines).

### Get in touch

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