



# UPPER YEAR PORTFOLIO GUIDELINES

Updated October 2026

## Bachelor Fine Arts Programs

- Drawing & Painting
- Integrated Media
- Integrated Media: Life Studies
- Photography
- Printmaking & Publications
- Sculpture/Installation

## Bachelor of Design Programs

- Advertising
- Digital Futures
- Environmental Design
- Environmental Design: Interior Design
- Experimental Animation
- Graphic Design
- Illustration
- Industrial Design
- Material Art & Design

## Portfolio requirements for upper year entry

Your portfolio should include completed work that reflects your areas of interest and abilities. Include a selection of pieces that represent your ideas and your vision, while also demonstrating a range of skills.

For **Year 2** consideration, you must have the equivalent of one year of study at OCAD U. While it is expected that you have work that directly applies to the program area that you have selected, feel free to include work that demonstrates experimentation and other skills.

For **Year 3** consideration, you must have the equivalent of two years of study at OCAD U. Your portfolio should primarily showcase specific knowledge and experience in your chosen program, demonstrating maturity in ideas and development, as well as proficiency in presenting them. Familiarity with relevant media, materials, and processes is expected.

1. **Statement of Intent** (max. 350 words) introducing yourself as an artist or designer. It should summarize your work to date and how OCAD U fits into your development as an artist or designer.
2. **10-20 pieces of original finalized work**, in various media, demonstrating fundamental skills including work directly related to the program of interest. **Do not combine multiple finalized works into a single multi-page PDF and upload to SlideRoom. Each completed work must be uploaded separately.**
3. **Description about each piece** (approximately 50 words) as well as the title, medium, and size.

4. **Supplementary process materials** that should include process and concept development skills. You can document your process work as a **sketchbook, creative journal, concept/idea book or a digital document**. Your process work should demonstrate a routine of creative process, should link to several of the finished pieces included in the portfolio and include experimentation, photos of development, drawing, mark-making, writing, research and inspirations. You may upload your process work to SlideRoom as a multiple page PDF or a brief video.

## **Evaluation Criteria**

- **Criteria Creative Problem Solving:** Recognition of issues, creative exploration, working methodology, technical knowledge
- **Visual Language Skills:** Colour sensibility, 2D composition, 3D form development
- **Communication:** Drawing/sketching, rendering, model making, verbal/written skills
- **Knowledge/attitude:** Knowledge and enthusiasm for chosen profession, confidence in abilities, conceptual development

## **Specific Program Considerations**

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| <b>Drawing &amp; Painting</b><br><b>Experimental Animation</b><br><b>Integrated Media</b> (with or without Life Studies)<br><b>Photography</b><br><b>Printmaking &amp; Publications</b><br><b>Sculpture/Installation</b> | <p>Include work that demonstrates advanced compositional abilities, a sophisticated understanding of colour, creative and critical thinking, and the development of concepts, processes, and form, including work that is directly relevant to the program of interest. Work produced in video, film, animation, audio, kinetic, interactive, or other time-based media is encouraged.</p> <p>All applicants should include a sketchbook, creative journal, or examples of process work in their portfolio submission.</p>                         |
| <b>Advertising</b><br><b>Graphic Design</b><br><b>Illustration</b>                                                                                                                                                       | <p>Demonstration of two-dimensional exploration and development is critical. This includes creative thinking, concept and form development, compositional skill, color sensibility, and storytelling. Fundamental observational drawing skills and the demonstration of the use of a variety of media and techniques should be included. You may include some three-dimensional pieces and work done in other mediums. All applicants should include a sketchbook, creative journal or examples of process work in their portfolio submission.</p> |

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| <b>Digital Futures</b>                                                                           | <p>Demonstrate a variety of your skills, approaches to making, and strengths in diverse areas such as creative writing, science, computing, or business. If your strengths are predominantly visual, include experimentation in a diverse range of media, traditional and digital media. Work exploring colour, form and mixed media approaches are welcome, as are three-dimensional works, such as models, jewellery, or sculpture. You can also provide links to websites that you have designed or that contain your work. If your strengths are predominantly non-visual, include your best project work, such as reports or extensive written work. You should also include information about any hobbies or interests that give us an indication of your passion and curiosity. Some examples include photography, craft, poetry, cartoons, homemade videos, model making, computer programs, or other websites. If your strengths are both visual and non-visual, include a variety of items to showcase your strengths. All applicants should include a sketchbook, creative journal, or examples of process work in their portfolio submission.</p> |
| <b>Environmental Design</b><br>(with or without Interior Design)<br><br><b>Industrial Design</b> | <p>Emphasis is on three-dimensional exploration, either spatial or object. This may be demonstrated through drawings, models or full-size pieces. Some knowledge of materials and techniques is expected, however most important is the exploration of ideas and form. Two-dimensional work or work done in other mediums such as drawing, painting, or photography for example is recommended. All applicants should include a sketchbook, creative journal or examples of process work in their portfolio submission.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Material Art &amp; Design</b>                                                                 | <p>Emphasis is placed on explorations in three-dimensions, specifically objects. Applicants are encouraged to select their best drawings, models or original pieces that are relevant but not restricted to the area to which they are applying (textiles or jewellery). Some knowledge of materials and techniques is expected, however most important is the exploration of ideas and form. Two-dimensional work or work done in other mediums such as drawing, painting, or photography for example is recommended. All applicants should include a sketchbook, creative journal or examples of process work in their portfolio submission.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |