

This document outlines the typical stages for a graphic design project for print. All projects vary of course, but this aims to set out the process and highlight where potential pitfalls and opportunities might lie. Understanding this process helps us and our clients work together better, avoid misunderstandings and create stunning work.

Stage: **Brief**



Receipt of a written brief detailing all deliverables required including target audience and key messages. Detail the size of the document, the special paper requirements, the number of printed pages, plus a four-page cover (if required), list the print quantity and delivery address if possible. Will you need additional services? Copy writing for instance. Define the deadline, bearing in mind the days set out in this project plan. Detail what sort of creative you are looking for, it's OK to show an example of something you like.

Stage: **Questions**



02  
Days

After reading your written brief, we may contact you to clarify any questions we may have or discuss with you the best way of responding. If you have not supplied a brief, or if some items are missing, we can talk them through or even supply a brief template if that helps.

Stage: **Agree Brief**



01  
Days

Once all questions have been answered from both parties, and everybody feels that everything is clear we can agree on the brief and begin to estimate costs.

Stage: **Estimate / Production Spec. / Schedule**



02  
Days

From the brief specification, we will estimate all costs. We will break down costs as much as possible. These costs will not include VAT. It is important to read the specification carefully to ensure we have understood you correctly. We may offer alternative solutions and cost saving advice.

Stage: **Commission**



00  
Days

If you are happy to proceed, we will require a written order, PO or contract. At this stage we will require you to send us the content and images. We will give the project a unique job number, which will track it through our system.

Stage: **Creative**



07  
Days

We will begin the creative process. We will look into various routes and ideas to deliver your requirements in the most creative and cost-effective way. Our basic framework is to show 'exactly what you asked for', 'what you might like to consider' and 'something you have never dreamed of'.

Stage: **Consultation**



03  
Days

After you and your team have reviewed the concepts, please consolidate all the opinions and discuss with us. The best ideas are from a single point of vision, asking to mix bits of one concept with another generally weakens a concept.

Stage: **Proof 1**



03  
Days

A full proof of the materials will be generated and sent to you. The file will have an affix to identify the proof number, i.e. 01.pdf. Please mark up the PDF proof using the 'Sticky Notes'. Please correlate all comments into one document.

Stage: **Proof 2**



02  
Days

This proof is your second proof, please check it carefully.

Stage: **Proof 3**



02  
Days

The last proof that has been allowed for in the original estimate. Once signed off, this will be what you can expect to see printed. It should be checked very thoroughly, as we cannot take responsibility for any mistakes not detected at this stage.

Stage: **Quality Check**



00  
Days

At this stage one of our team will perform a quality check. This focuses on typography and layout, not proofreading.

Stage: **Written Sign off**



01  
Days

With the final proof, we will attach sign off instructions within the email. We require a written sign off before proceeding with any print. You will need to read through the instructions, and if happy to proceed, reply to the email with – 'Approved – NO CHANGES' in the subject line.

Stage: **Pre-press**



01  
Days

We send the artwork to the printers and it goes through a process called pre-press to get it ready to print.

Stage: **Proofing**



02  
Days

The printers will send us a proof, this is either a 'ripped' PDF or hard copy, high quality proofs. We usually check these on behalf of the client, but if you would like to see them, that's fine.

Stage: **Print**



10  
Days

Please allow ten working days for print and finishing (see below). Jobs that have a large print run will take longer.

Stage: **Finishing**



This stage covers document binding and any special finishes such as die-cutting or embossing. Sometimes the printed pieces will need to go to a different finishing house.

Stage: **Logistics / Delivery**



02  
Days

We can arrange delivery anywhere. If you require a project to be at a location by a certain date and time, please make this clear in your brief.

Stage: **Review**



We arrange for one of everything we produce for our client to be sent to us. It will be reviewed for quality among a number of KPIs. You may be contacted to discuss the project.

If you would like an A4 printer friendly version of this document, just ask.

Days (working) are indicative, it could be faster or slower, it will depend on the job spec and the deadline.

Comment:

The more detailed the brief the better. Remember, we know nothing about the project at this stage. Don't leave us guessing.

Make sure every stakeholder has seen your brief and they agree it's the way to go, before sending it to us.

When placing print work, please consider the number of pages. For any kind of bound booklet, the number of printed pages will need to be divisible by four, i.e. 12 pages plus a four-page cover.

We'll base our solution on what you tell us.

Comment:

If anything isn't covered at this point, and we begin to get an estimate together, if anything else needs to be added or changed it will mean re-estimating.

Comment:

You can save on costs if assets such as images are supplied. Usually we allow for two sets of revisions within the estimate.

VAT is charged at 20% if you are in the UK on our services.

Comment:

When supplying text, it's good to have had it proofread and finalised before the design process begins. This will save on revision costs further down the line. All images, if being printed, should be 350dpi resolution. All logos should be supplied as .EPS files for the best print quality.

Comment:

If your organisation has a style-guide that we have to work to, this should be provided before we start the creative process.

We normally present three ideas, but not always.

If the brochure has a lot of pages, we'll present a cover option and just one spread before proceeding.

Comment:

If we have not presented anything that you like, we will contact you to discuss how you feel we have missed the brief before thinking about another round of creative.

It is likely that your estimate will only include taking one concept forward.

Comment:

If revisions are sent in multiple emails, over a period of time, it is likely that some may get missed.

If large amounts of text need changing, please send it digitally.

Comment:

Some changes could incur extra charges, like adding pages, changing the agreed format or asking for charts and diagrams that were not mentioned before.

Comment:

Note, further revisions will incur charges based on our standard hourly rate from this point onwards.

Comment:

Any changes at this stage will usually only ever be very slight tweaks to the artwork to achieve the best printed result. Any larger changes that may be spotted by us will be cleared again with you before proceeding with it, or proceeding to print.

Comment:

We cannot proceed to print without a written sign off. We do not accept any responsibility for errors past this stage.

Comment:

We will check the printer's proof for you, it's part of our job.

Comment:

If any changes are made at this point, there will be additional charges. We'll let you know before we start. But remember the clock is ticking, changes will add to the delivery time.

Comment:

On small jobs, we may have suggested printing the document digitally. This will cut down the delivery times by half.

Comment:

Including special finishes to a print project will really make the piece stand out from the crowd but they do add to the delivery schedule.

Comment:

We can't always estimate on print delivery cost at the beginning of a project, because we don't know how much it weighs until it is printed. Delivery charges can be high.

Comment:

You can tell us what you are happy with, and what you think could be improved for next time.