

Major Project Direction

It is important that when you are deciding on a major project, that you pick something that will keep your interest for the duration of the year & don't be afraid to express yourself. At level 6 the rational & intellectual engagement are as important as the execution of the project.

Look at student projects on the web from other Universities and read the rationales. Your project can 'hang on' a simple paragraph. Projects can be any form of transport/vehicle exterior, interior or system, but generally tend to be cars, vans, trucks, trains, motorcycles, bikes, power boats etc. A generic/open project title will give more scope for research and exploration i.e., 'A Russian Culture Inspired Luxury Car for the Patriotic Russian Millionaire' will always give more scope to rationalize and defend your project than; 'A New Zil'.

Your Major Project is a '**Research Lead Independent Design Project**'. Your project choice must give you scope to contextualise & defend a rational. Try not to think of the word Research as a swear word – it can be quick and simple and helps you develop a dialogue to give you confidence when discussing your project with professionals.

Project options can come under (but not confined to) many categories and may be a combination of two or more:

Brand Transfer – This is when you design a vehicle based on the brand **values** of a brand not normally associated with the vehicle i.e., Bvlgari Boat, Sony city car etc. Motorcycle brands transfer quite well into cars, look at KTM & Ariel for instance.

Cultural Influence – Research to find a common threads and national identities of a nation or culture; this becomes your brand values. Extrapolate these values and apply them to your design. Example: 'Mass Transport for an Emerging Nation', 'A Chinese 'Peoples' Car', American Dream' etc., etc.

Design for a Character or Specific Type of Person – Design a vehicle for a famous person, film character or a 'vehicle for young female city dwellers' for example. Research lifestyle and personal requirements. Early sketch development can be fun.

Blue Skies – this is when you theorise about future scenarios by using prediction and forecast - design for that scenario. This could range from near future to distant future. You must be able to defend your theories & your final design must still meet the normal

assessment criteria set out in the major project. You can still apply a brand if you prefer to. Example: 'Autonomous Individual Transport for 2035 London', Post Oil Personal Leisure vehicle'.

Concept vehicle – A new type of vehicle that is unique, innovative and/or solves a transport problem, or uses new technologies. This could be as open as: 'Design a Concept Car' to 'Design the Ultimate Leisure Vehicle' to 'Can Amphibious Vehicles be Cool'. These are usually technically innovative projects which include things that change shape, fold, multi-function, modularity, etc.

New design Language – Take influence from other areas of design, art, sculpture, nature, bio-mimicry, generative design, technology etc. to create a new design aesthetic – this can be applied to most of the titles listed. Example; 'A new Ford Capri inspired by Henry Moore' (abstract female forms).

Niche – Design a vehicle in a niche not currently occupied by a specific manufacturer or a unique vehicle in a niche that no manufacturer currently occupies. Avoid 'cutting and pasting' current styling cues. 'A Niche Dacia' could end up as a moped or a Super Car depending how your research direction goes. *See note***

****Note:** *A car project **should not** be aligned to a car manufacturer's brand. If it does, be aware that you will need to evolve or create a new design language to give credibility to your research. Branding can constrain forward thinking and the research can appear shallow. You will research the evolution of a brand aesthetic to understand the DNA of the brand – your job is to continue that observation into predictions of where the DNA evolves to.*

If you have a passion for a particular type & brand of car don't use the rational; 'because I like them' or 'I've always wanted to do one of these'. Also these types of projects can be constrained by your own pre-conceptions which may already be dated. For instance if you want to do a DB12 Aston Martin your design is likely to be more progressive or unique if you start with a project title of; 'A car for the Savile Row Gentleman' as you will research the life style, market position, British culture, British brands, British luxury car aesthetics and could end up with a vehicle that looks like a futuristic cross between Tron, a RR Phantom and an Aston Martin – by then you may want to call it 'A British Coupe for the Savile Row Gent' or if it happens to look like a new direction for Aston the feel free to call it a DB12. If you get my gist.

Once you have a clear direction for your project you will be asked to create a draft PDS (product design specification). This is basically your self-generated - research lead - design brief. Once this PDS is finalised you will design to your own brief. Your project will be assessed on whether it successfully meets your PDS.

Print this letter off and highlight/circle things that interest you for your own information – hopefully it may get some of you thinking and remember you don't have to adhere to any of the suggestions listed.

Remember that the package drawing (ergos, drivetrain, regs, power source etc) determines the proportions of your vehicle. The package is the design, the shape and surface definition is the style/aesthetic. Your design proposals at assessment points will need to be backed up by package drawings, market maps, life style boards, style influences and technical insight, design development and visuals.

You will get contradicting advice from different tutors, professionals and your peers. Take it all on board and make your own decisions and be prepared to defend them – this is your project, use it to promote yourself.

The important thing is to return next year (Sept 24th 2018) with a firm idea of what you intend to do, so please fill out the **2018-19 MP Proposal Form** to help you frame your idea. You will be asked to hand in the form and do your 1st pitch of your idea to Staff (Paul, Sergio, Andre & possibly Pete Stevens) in week one. This is informal and isn't marked so be brave if you want to. Based on your initial pitch, the lecture team decide on who becomes your main mentor/1st tutor for you project. This will normally be me or Andre for Transport Students.

Get busy

Paul