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| Course | Certificate Two |
| Competency | Use Basic Drawing Techniques |
| Project title | Design & Composition |
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DESIGN AND COMPOSITION

The ways in which ideas of proportion and form are applied depend not only on the perception of the artist. An extremely important element is the size and shape of the surface you will be using. Another is the way in which the image is arranged on that surface. If you know what you want to draw or paint, consider at the outset the format of the surface on which you are going to depict it. Should the format be vertical (or portrait), or horizontal (or landscape)? If you are doing some preliminary sketches, experiment with formats to see which suits the subject best.

The next matter to consider is the position of the image on the surface and within the format you have chosen. Do you want the image to occupy a large or small area of the surface? Is the best position for the image in the centre or to one side? Consider in this regard too the areas around the image itself. How important is the background? Do you want it to blend in with the subject? Should the subject dominate or be dominated by its surroundings? If you are drawing a figure, do you simply want to depict the figure? Do you want to show the figure in the context of another figure, some objects or even in an exterior or interior setting? What relationship do you want to establish between the elements in the picture. Placing objects close together can imply some connection between them. On the other hand, objects placed far away from one another can seem distanced. For example, two figures sitting closely together with their heads inclined creates an intimate image, while the same figures standing one at each side of the picture, their backs to one another, may create an impression of distance or alienation. Similarly, a building placed among other larger buildings may seem less significant than the same building standing in splendid isolation in a rolling landscape. These are very important considerations for any artist, and, especially at the beginning, you should try to develop patience when working out the arrangement of the subject.

