Module Evaluation GD5002

Overall this final major project had been a challenge, but an extremely rewarding one. Responding to a brief I set myself didn’t quite replicate the circumstances that I would be designing under in the real world; however it did teach me valuable lessons and techniques to ensure I stuck to my brief and correctly represented the brand. By acting as both client and designer I had to work a little harder to identify where my role as the designer ended. Through conversations with active professional designers I discovered that this line can definitely blur, especially when working in house which is my ultimate aspiration. Beyond this I gained a lot of experience in organizing my work for outsourcing to manufacturers, this gave me a perfect example of how my role as a designer would carry out in a real world context.   
  
My approach to design somewhat changed within this module, I created far more physical items than I usually would, during the design process as well as once the treatments were completed. I have found it extremely helpful to have a tangible real world item to hold onto, to appreciate in its context when designing the other elements of the brand. It definitely affected my process and productivity when I lost access to university facilities in which I would prototype the product packaging.

There were a few moments during this project that I let out an audible sigh when a certain element of design finally started to work. It’s like the correct answer to a problem is always there and by effective research, appropriate design responses, conversations with peers and tutors and changing your perspective on the design, you chip away at the correct response bit by bit until it finally works.  
I have definitely had a bad habit in the past of simply throwing techniques and materials at a project until something somewhat visually appealing presents itself, on this project I tried far more carefully to understand the brand and correctly represent it. This affected the responses effectively, not only in quality of final outcomes but also in time management.

I started the year with a pretty organized OneNote journal, notes in my phone, a calendar and an overarching plan, this definitely fell out of the window to a degree during the time of lockdown thanks to the Covid-19 outbreak. I am happy I managed to showcase practical skills like screen printing, laser cutting, wax sealing and product prototyping before I lost access to the facilities, once on lockdown I only really had access to digital methods of creation. This definitely affected my brand guidelines positively but other responses suffered. My approach to design definitely makes the most of resources that I have to hand and so it was an interesting lesson to see how I adapted when presented with a computer only environment.

Video series, conversations with industry professionals, books and tutorials all contributed to my theoretical understanding of how to approach the design but also taught me practical skills to do so. Making time to meet with skilled professionals and technicians to utilize their knowledge to best effect of the overall project was something I was adamant of pursuing. Presenting myself politely and professionally definitely netted me more help. Understanding what I could and couldn’t utilise before attempting to prototype or design helped to make best use of my time, ensuring I didn’t waste any of my schedule.   
  
Overall I have enjoyed this module as much as it’s made me pull my hair out. The final outcomes I think stand up to professional responses and make fantastic portfolio pieces. I still have room to improve on my organizational skills however this module definitely forced me to implement a lot more than I usually have. I feel that at the end of this module and this course as a whole I am ready to take the next steps in becoming a professional designer.