Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
towards creating opportunities for further study, for design graduates in India

Shashank Mehta

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the Indian Scenario

Undergraduate Progrmmes in Design
Entry after 10 +2
Duration four years

Postgraduate Progrmmes in Design
Entry after Graduation
Engg., Architecture, Fine Arts, equivalent
Duration 1.5, 2.0, 2.5 years

Design Education began in 1961

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the Indian Scenario

- Some of the Institutes offering PG Programmes in Design in India

  - NID, Ahmedabad,
  - IIT - Mumbai, Guwahati, Delhi and Kanpur,
  - IISc, Bangalore,
  - NIFT,
  - MAEER MITs Institute of Design, Pune,
  - Wigan & Leigh College,
  - Apeejay Institute of Design, New Delhi,
  - D J Academy of Design, Coimbatore,
  - Pearl Academy, Delhi and Jaipur,
  - M S Ramaih School of Advanced Studies , Bangalore,
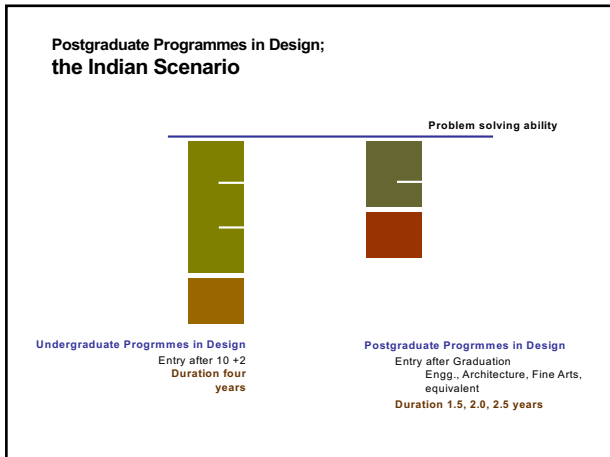 - NTTF School of Post Graduate Studies, Bangalore,
  - DAIICT, Gandhinagar

  M.Des, PgD in Design, PgD + B.Sc

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the Indian Scenario

- students joining PG programmes are mostly the new entrants to design discipline,
  - focus on developing design attitude, skills and design techniques
  - emphasis on design thinking, ability to synthesize, creative problem solving and ability to conceptualize and visualize variety of alternates for the given problem
  - General awareness and exposure to industry and professional situations
- offer opportunities to convert to a new discipline and to broaden knowledge of other design disciplines,
- focused largely towards horizontal growth
- The approach is thus to train them as generalist designers

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the Indian Scenario

Problem solving ability

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the Indian Scenario

UG and PG programmes of design in India

- Little difference in terms of the objectives, approach and the curriculum delivery methods

- little demarcation in terms of design skills, techniques and capabilities at the exit level of the programmes

- No options available for the graduates of design to undertake further study in his/her own discipline.

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the Indian Scenario

- The importance of design in India's economic and societal development is now well recognized.

- The National Design Policy envisages
  - raising the Indian design education to global standards of excellence
  - making India a major hub for exports and outsourcing of designs.

- The Indian industries and the Indian economy as a whole, demand design inputs that are specialized to specific domains.

- The demands for designers trained as design managers, design strategists, design researchers and/or as design educators have now grown in the country.

Designers therefore have to now constantly refine, update and upgrade their skills, capabilities and knowledge in their respective design disciplines.

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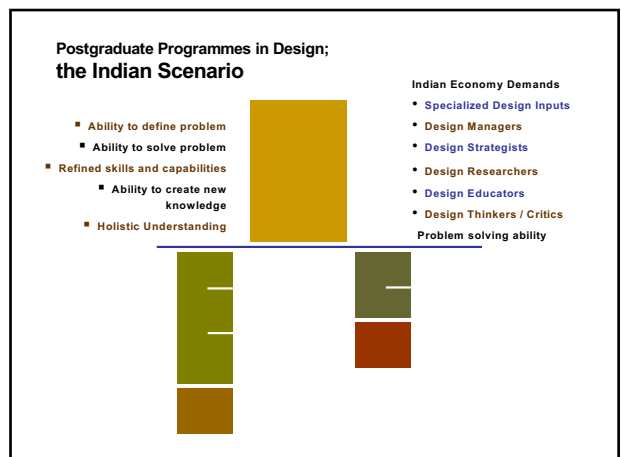
Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the Indian Scenario

Indian Economy Demands
- Specialized Design Inputs
- Design Managers
- Design Strategists
- Design Researchers
- Design Educators
- Design Thinkers / Critics

- Ability to define problem
- Ability to solve problem
- Refined skills and capabilities
  - Ability to create new knowledge
- Holistic Understanding

Problem solving ability

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the Indian Scenario

Indian Economy Demands
- Specialized Design Inputs
- Design Managers
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- Design Thinkers / Critics

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- Refined skills and capabilities
- Ability to create new knowledge
- Holistic Understanding

- Design Graduates of India are now increasingly opting for further study in design
- These aspirants explore their options with institutes outside the country
- Design being based on contextual inquiry, they may face difficulty to adjust to new culture
- India looses the opportunity for further in depth inquiry of their culture

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the approach

Royal College of Art, UK

The Design School, Stanford, USA

Monash University, Australia,

Art Center college of Design, USA

Domus academy, Milan, Italy

University of Art & Design, Helsinki, Finland

Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, USA

University of Central Lancashire, UK

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the approach

- Postgraduate Art and Design Prospectus, Royal College of Art, UK

  - Postgraduateness is primarily and constantly about 'deep learning'

  - The successful student should not only be capable of applying the skills and knowledge of today, but also of thinking and practicing beyond these in substantial and demonstrable ways.

  - The Art, Design and Communication at the postgraduate level should be taught through 'project-based education'; face-to-face teaching' and 'professional orientation

  - The key to a successful postgraduate course is the balance between the scaffolding and independent learning.

  - Student should complete their postgraduate studies displaying and defending what is known as 'mastery' – as in ' Master of Art'.

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the approach

- Postgraduate Art and Design Prospectus, Royal College of Art, UK

  - Education at postgraduate level must be advanced, focused and independent:

    o Advanced in the sense that postgraduates are assumed to have acquired understanding and abilities / skills, both general and specific, at undergraduate level (or equivalent) prior to entering the course.

    o Focused, in that the education deals in depth with a specialized discipline or field rather than a broad educational experience

    o Independent, in that postgraduates are expected to apply their understanding and abilities / skills to new, complex and unpredictable situations and to be in a position to evaluate and justify their outputs in an academic / professional environment.

  - By combining these three, students demonstrate what is known as 'mastery' – i.e. demonstrable skill, appropriate knowledge and maturity of practice.

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the approach

- The postgraduate programmes at the Art Center college of Design, USA (www.artcenter.edu)

  - emphasis on critical thinking, theory and research as well as deep awareness of the place and function of art and design in the world today.

  - the postgraduate programmes are distinguished by their application of theoretical, conceptual and research-based thinking to real-world problems in art and design and a high level of collaborative synergy.

  - The combination of discipline-based professionalism and critical investigation produces entrepreneurial and creative leaders who will redefine the landscape of art and design in the 21st century.

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the approach

- Monash University, Australia, (www.artdes.monash.edu.au)

  - Graduates of the Master of Design will have enchanted, highly developed capabilities, which will place them at the forefront of their field of design practice.

  - Through the completion of sustained design projects, students are required to demonstrate high-level planning, resourcing, implementation, completion and evaluation, culminating in an expert understanding of the professional design process.

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the approach

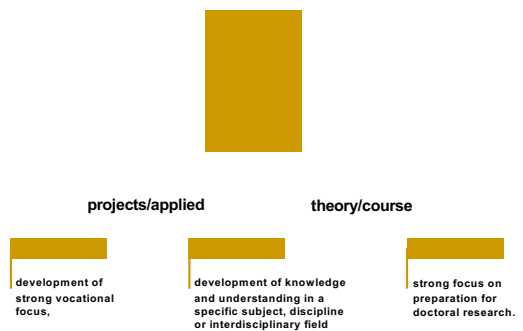- The Design School, Stanford, USA (www.stanford.edu/group/dschool)

  Design thinking is a catalyst for innovation and bringing new things into the world.

  - Prepare future innovators to be breakthrough thinkers and doers
  - Use design thinking to inspire multidisciplinary team
  - Foster Radical Collaboration between students, faculty and industry
  - Tackle big projects and use prototyping to discover new solutions.

  Being good design thinkers means being human centered, prototype driven, and mindful of process in everything we do.

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the approach

projects/applied   **theory/course**

development of strong vocational focus,   **development of knowledge and understanding in a specific subject, discipline or interdisciplinary field**   **strong focus on preparation for doctoral research.**

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the aims & objectives

Some of the basic aims and objectives, found common in the PG programmes in design offered internationally and the ones that are relevant to the Indian context, can be listed as below:

- To enable students to engage with deeper understanding of individual disciplines.

- To refine students' design skills and advance their core knowledge to higher level.

- To help designers sharpen their professional practice and thereby improve their effectiveness within industry.

- To keep students abreast of current developments in design, design practice and design research.

- To further develop students' critical ability to analyze and synthesize information with holistic perspective.

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the aims & objectives

Some of the basic aims and objectives, found common in the PG programmes in design offered internationally and the ones that are relevant to the Indian context, can be listed as below:

- To undertake original research in the field of design and design related issues.

- To enable students develop their own methods and techniques for deign research and design practice.

- To engage students with discourses in design and debates in design research itself.

- To enable student to produce balanced portfolio of high quality designs.

- To develop knowledge that enables future designers to cope with the increasing demands of handling design complexities.

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the structure

- MDes, Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, USA
  - two-year, 54-credit-hour degree programme

- M.Des, Monash University, Australia
  - duration of 1.5 years.

- The Design School, Stanford, USA,
  - duration of 1.5 years.

- MA (Design), UK
  - Full time programmes normally of 48 weeks durations,
  - divided in three quarters,
  - part time programmes of 96 weeks duration.
  - postgraduate-diploma programmes (pg-dip) of two quarters and postgraduate-certificate programmes (pg-cert) of one quarter duration.

- MA (Design), RCA, UK
  - duration of 2.0 years.

- Domus academy, Milan, Italy
  - duration of 1.0 years
  - series of short courses of the duration of two to six weeks

- MA (design), University of Art & Design, Helsinki, Finland
  - integrated programme of the duration of 5.0 years.

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the structure

- MA, Design, UK
  - The courses are structured as modules of block timings with structured exit and return points with an appropriate flexibility in terms of delivery time.
  - Student to define and write his/her own project proposal to be worked further during the study

- MA, Design, RCA, UK
  - The Programme offers a large number of group projects / platforms for the first year and the second year students to work together.
  - The courses, lectures, seminars, workshops, visits etc. are weaved around these projects.

- M.Des, Art Center College of Design, USA,
  - dynamic collaboration and exchange amongst the students from its different postgraduate programmes as well as with its undergraduate students.

- The Master in European Design, MEDes,
  - the programme formed by the network of seven of the best design universities in Europe provides opportunities to its students to travel and learn different reality through experience

- MDes, IIT, Chicago, USA
  - The Programme concludes with a project that demonstrate the application of new theories and processes to given design problems.

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the structure

- offer a focused period of study for the students to develop their personal project ideas to a level of postgraduate quality and having relevance to their appropriate disciplines.

- opportunity to experiment, reflect and rethink

- opportunity to improve and learn new skills and approaches and an opportunity for professional updating.

- provide the student the freedom and flexibility to pick and choose the courses of his / her interest and relevance.

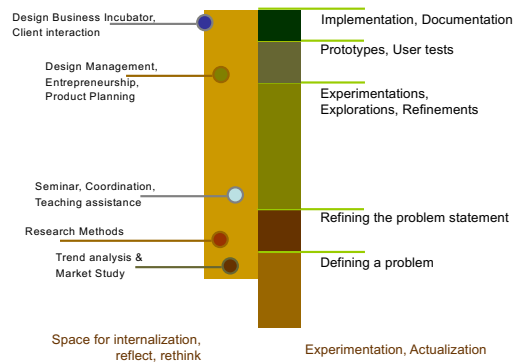- provide the student time for internalization and experimentation.

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the structure

- create an environment that encourages experimentation, risk-taking (failure included) and the breeding of new affinity groups for cross-fertilization of ideas.

- enable students to become independent learners.

- encourages the student autonomy

- provide real life experiences.

- tutorials, seminars, lectures, real life exposures, research and group projects built around the student's personal project

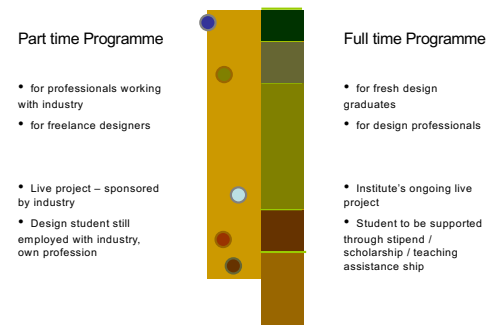- students to learn to navigate by themselves and arrive at a confident definition of their own position.

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the structure

Design Business Incubator, Client interaction

Implementation, Documentation

Prototypes, User tests

Design Management, Entrepreneurship, Product Planning

Experimentations, Explorations, Refinements

Seminar, Coordination, Teaching assistance

Refining the problem statement

Research Methods

Trend analysis & Market Study

Defining a problem

Space for internalization, reflect, rethink

Experimentation, Actualization

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
the structure

Part time Programme

- for professionals working with industry
- for freelance designers

- Live project – sponsored by industry
- Design student still employed with industry, own profession

Full time Programme

- for fresh design graduates
- for design professionals

- Institute's ongoing live project
- Student to be supported through stipend / scholarship / teaching assistance ship

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
student candidates

- University of Central Lancashire, UCL, postgraduate prospectus

the students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning and to carry out independent study and research which will be intellectually demanding and contribute to personal development.

- Active participation in discussions presenting coherent arguments whilst acknowledging the ideas of others
- Researching information from a wide range of sources including electronic, and applying it effectively in one's studies
- In the case of research degrees, initiate and carry out original research and present it in a publishable form
- Developing skills that equip oneself with the ability to interpret ideas with originality
- Maintaining one's self motivation and overcoming academic difficulties by reassessing own opinions.

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
student candidates

- The candidates to be selected through interviews and presentation of their portfolio and previous work experience.

- The main criteria for selection

  - maturity and readiness to undertake the postgraduate study,
  - creative attitude and analytical ability.
  - talent, ambition and will to succeed,
  - potential to contribute to the discipline in terms of new knowledge.

- students to define and write the project proposal of his/ her interest,

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
faculty & staff

- The faculty member
  - an advisor and a facilitator,
    - help student understand his / her strengths and weaknesses,
    - help student become independent learner
    - help him set and achieve his goals.
    - encourage students to grasp and learn from his / her environment and through various other modes.
    - engage the students in constant debate and discussions among themselves on all the various aspects of design
  - crisp and focused inputs and guidance
  - ability and experience to recognize original thinking and creativity
  - a mentor
    - constantly monitor the growth and progress of the student
    - helps the student in selecting the courses of his / her relevance

- studio / workshop staff members
  - positive and active support, guidance and encouragement
  - willingness to become part of the team of these PG students
  - to be well trained and very well informed
  - experience of the field

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
conclusion

- Design is now recognized as an indispensable part of any business success.

- New design disciplines are powered by
  - ubiquitous technologies,
  - growing interests in collaborative practices,
  - increasing awareness of the need to preserve the local while embracing the global.

- The role of the designer has changed to that of a strategic innovator.

- Unique demands and expectations of the large craft, SME and service sectors of the Indian industry and the Indian economy as a whole.

- Design institutes in the country now well equipped with their vast experience of over four decades.

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
conclusion

The PG programmes in design, targeted specifically to designers would –

- open up major options for the Indian designers to undertake further study to update their knowledge, sharpen their skills and upgrade their capabilities.

- spark interests in the students to develop their areas of specializations and devote their carriers in those fields.

- lead to few of them taking up further study at the doctoral level.

- help develop and generate new knowledge in the field of design, design practice and design research, specific to the Indian context.
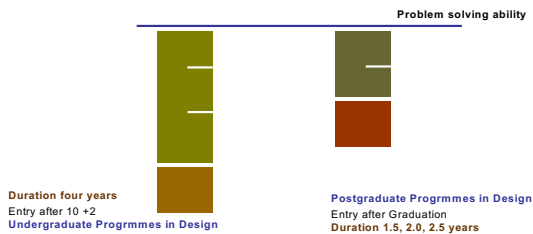
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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
conclusion

The PG programmes in design, targeted specifically to designers would –

- cater to the diverse design needs of the country's industry, government, and NGO's etc. sectors

- help generate diverse design talents in the country

- help refine, improve and up date designer's problem solving capabilities, support design processes and help develop design tools and methods accordingly.

- help up grade the standard of design education and design practice in India.

- help promote and expand design's reach within the industry and the Indian economy as a whole.
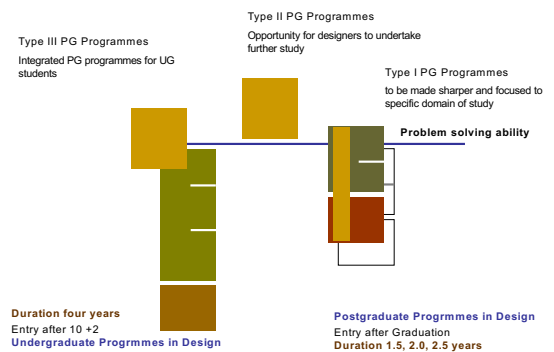
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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
conclusion

Problem solving ability

Duration four years
Entry after 10 +2
Undergraduate Progrmmes in Design

Postgraduate Progrmmes in Design
Entry after Graduation
Duration 1.5, 2.0, 2.5 years

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
conclusion

Type III PG Programmes

Integrated PG programmes for UG students

Type II PG Programmes

Opportunity for designers to undertake further study

Type I PG Programmes

to be made sharper and focused to specific domain of study

Problem solving ability

Duration four years
Entry after 10 +2
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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
conclusion

The postgraduate programmes in design can thus be proposed to be categorized as below.

- Type I - PG programmes as offered at present, to the graduates from other disciplines.
  - to be made sharper and focused to specific domains of study to develop specialization in particular area
  - Duration 2.5 years

- Type II - PG programmes that provide opportunities to designers to undertake further study
  - Duration 1.0 to 1.5 years
  - To be offered both as full time as well as part time programmes
  - Flexibility in terms of entry and exit
  - options of either project based study or research based study.

- Type III - Integrated PG programmes for the undergraduate students to continue their study and complete their post-graduation at a stretch.
  - Duration 5.0 to 5.5 years
  - Last 1.0 to 1.5 years may be offered as part time study
  - Flexibility at exit level

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
conclusion

The PG programmes in design, targeted specifically to designers

- Emphasis on in-depth understanding of individual discipline and expert understanding of the professional process
- Emphasis on critical thinking, theory and research
  - To prepare them to be *breakthrough thinkers and doers*
  - Original and creative thinking
- Collaborative and multidisciplinary learning approach
- User centered and prototype driven approach
  - Explore, experiment, reflect and rethink
- Student-led and project based study
  - student to develop his/her personal project ideas to a level of postgraduate quality
  - student to be assigned a mentor – student as research/project associate
  - courses, real life exposures, workshops to be built around the student's personal project
  - enable him/her to become independent learners

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
conclusion

The PG programmes in design, targeted specifically to designers

- built around the institute / department initiated research projects
  - provide new directions, vision and strategies for effective implementation and utilization of design for the benefit of the Indian economy and society.
  - Case studies and the knowledge generated to be used for design education

- linked to ongoing real life/ research projects either sponsored by government or industry.
  - to be offered as both research/theory and project/course based programme

- as far as possible sponsorships, stipend or financial assistance to be arranged for the full time students
  - students to be actively involved in institutional and organizational tasks such as organizing conferences, seminars, workshops etc
  - full time student may also be involved in teaching the undergraduate students and/or assisting the faculty members for developing course work etc

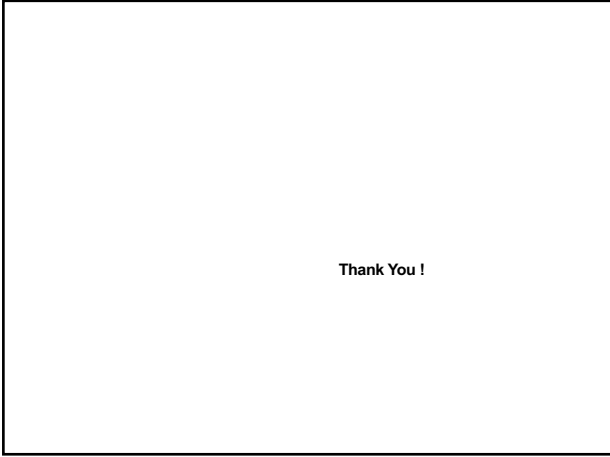- Flexibility in terms of the mode of study and also its entry and exit points

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Postgraduate Programmes in Design;
conclusion

Profile of the postgraduate

- In-depth understanding of design process along with strong conceptual and research based thinking.
- ability to undertake in-depth research, user behavior study, emerging trend study and analysis, to discover and meet the needs.
- strong empathy with the user, deep cultural understanding of design contexts and wider perspective on design profession,
- ability to create appropriate balance between human-ware and that of the hardware (user aspirations and manufacturing constraints).
- refined skills and capabilities, create high quality design solutions.
- ability to create new knowledge in the field of design and design practice.
- strong entrepreneurial and managerial skills
- ability to coordinate projects, motivate the team members and collaborate with other partners and industries.

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Thank You !

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