

Design for Web Content

Small business website

This assessment is designed to test your understanding of HTML, CSS, and the core principles of coding and interface design.

Deliverables

1. A website designed for a small business, in accordance with the project brief, and linked to from your coursework homepage.
2. A short (approx. 500 words), reflective account of your design process posted as a WordPress post and linked to from your coursework homepage.

Please read this brief in full for details of these two elements.

Scenario

As part of a new campaign to bring customers back to the high street, you have been commissioned to build a website for a small, independent business retail outlet (shop) based in a small town somewhere in England. The campaign organisers believe that by giving small, local businesses a web presence, they can increase awareness and improve trade. Although all the businesses are retailers, the required website is **not an e-commerce site**, it is a marketing tool which will be used to encourage people to visit the shop premises in person. Your challenge, as a designer, is to work out how best to do that.

You may choose any **one** of the 3 fictitious businesses below:

- Julia's Vintage Clothing, discover your style
- Spokes and Saddles, your local cycle shop for bikes and repairs
- Robinson and daughter, fine foods, locally sourced

The fee for this work is fixed and you have already decided that you can deliver an appropriate website for that amount, so you don't need to negotiate fees with the business owner or the campaign organiser.

None of the businesses currently have a website so you will be starting from scratch.

Site Requirements

Each website should contain all the information a potential customer might need. For example, location/contact details, product descriptions along with suitable images, opening times and any other useful and relevant information. In addition, since the business does not currently have a strong brand image or any marketing expertise, you will need to develop an engaging brand identity to attract new customers. Think carefully about your use of colour, image, and typography.

Note: these are fictional businesses, and you may add any additional fictional details as appropriate. You may use "found" images and body text – remember, this project is about design and development and not content creation, but you may need to write some content yourself.

Technical Requirements

Your website must be hand-coded and built using HTML and CSS only. Do **not** use Bootstrap or any other templating system. The Markup should be lean and semantic. Make good use of the HTML

semantic structural elements. Use divs sparingly and only as required. Minimise the use of classes and IDs by using advanced CSS selectors.

The CSS should be linked from an external file and must include a reset. It should be well-organised and make use of inheritance for typographic properties.

HTML and CSS should be validated using the W3C validation services. They should both be adequately commented and clearly, and consistently formatted. Pay special attention to indenting for both HTML and CSS. Ensure that CSS is clearly sectioned with comment headings.

All images must be optimised to achieve a good balance between image quality and file size. Ensure that the images used are cropped appropriately and maintain the intended aspect ratio when viewed in the browser (don't squash or stretch images).

Typography should be appropriate and carefully crafted to make the best use of your typeface choices. Pay special attention to your use of whitespace and ensure that headings are clearly associated with the content they refer to.

Colours should be carefully chosen so that they are appropriate and help to present a strong brand.

You may use whatever additional services you need to complete the design. For example, Google Web Fonts or the Google Maps API.

Page layouts should be responsive. Ensure that your layouts don't break when the viewport width changes.

The site should consist of several themed pages, linked to form a site, with appropriate navigation. Single-page sites are not appropriate for this project.

Ensure that your site conforms to our core principles:

The Web Standards Model – a clear separation of the layers.

Content out – plan and create the content first before you begin the design.

Mobile First – begin with a design for mobile and progressively enhance for desktop.

WordPress Post Requirements

The process of design and development is as important as the finished product. We believe that when you are learning web design, the process is more important. If you understand the process and can effectively describe it, you can apply that understanding to any future project.

Your post should be written in the first person and be reflective of your learning journey during the development of the project. For example, you might say, "I decided on a blue colour scheme because..." and "During this project I learned the importance of...", and "if I were doing this project again, I would...". These types of reflections help us to understand your process and your learning.

Your post should be approximately 500 words, illustrated appropriately, and linked to from your coursework homepage. The deadline for the post is the same as for the project site.

Tips

1. Previous students have found [Unsplash](#) to be a useful source of images for this project.
2. We recommend you take a "mobile first" approach to your responsive design, using the min-width media query.

Schedule

You will need to prepare for a meeting with your client (roll play) on the **15th November 2023**. So, before that session, decide which small business you are going to build a site for and do some research (e.g. looking at small business websites in general and *cognate* sites – those with a similar theme). Be prepared to ask all the questions you need answers to before starting your design.

Your work in progress must be linked to from your coursework homepage as you develop your project so that staff and other students can see how your work is progressing (mood board, ideas for look-and feel, colour, typography, information architecture etc.).

There will be an interim crit on the **17th January 2024** (prototype site, page layouts, navigation, functionality proposals etc.). This is your opportunity to get some feedback before the project is submitted.

The project must be completed, online and ready for assessment by **4pm on 2nd February 2024** with a link to the site from your coursework homepage.

Submission checklist

1. Validate your code (both HTML and CSS).
2. Ensure your code is lean, consistently formatted and clearly commented.
3. Check that the semantics and structure of your HTML are logical and consistent. Pay special attention to heading levels.
4. Ensure you are using an appropriate CSS reset (e.g. Meyer).
5. Optimise your images (file size, image size and image quality).
6. Check your file and folder management – filenames and folder names should be descriptive, all lower case, no spaces. Folder structure should be logical.
7. Check all your links and make sure navigation works as expected.
8. Ensure the visual design shows attention to detail, especially typography. Think about font choice, line height, use of whitespace etc.
9. Ensure that your branding design and use of colour is appropriate for this business.
10. Check that all the information a visitor may need is included on the site and is easily findable.
11. Check that your responsive page layout works from the narrowest to the widest of viewport widths.
12. Check that the links to your work from your coursework homepage are working.
13. Read the requirements of the brief and ensure you have done everything you need to do before the submission deadline.

Assessment Criteria

This project is worth 70% of the total module mark (30% for the Three Designed Objects project). This assessment is weighted towards the technical aspects of your Small Business Website project but also includes assessment of your interface design. The weighting is approximately 60/40. See the submission checklist above for details.

A note on the work you submit:

1. Importance of process

All assessments prioritise the process over the end product. When your work is assessed, we will expect to see details of your approach and the methods you used to produce the final piece of work. We need to understand the thinking and decision-making which has led to your submission. A list of final outcomes will not suffice. You should write a reasoned explanation of your process, including references, and submit this as PDF or on a web page.

More info: [Handbook Chapter 8: Design rationale](#)

2. Originality

The work you submit must be entirely your own work, original, unique, and authentic. If you are quoting external sources, ensure that you reference them accordingly, and give credit to the original author/s as appropriate. We take plagiarism very seriously and will follow the university's process to report any incidents we find.

More info: [Writing with authority and avoiding plagiarism](#)

3. Tools

You may use any tools you wish for your project work; this includes AI tools. Your use of tools must be stated in the documentation you submit and should include details of what you used each tool for. This information will help us to understand your workflow.

More info: [Guidance on the Use of Artificial Intelligence \(AI\)](#)

4. Deadlines

Your work for this assessment must be submitted by the deadline given in this brief. Work submitted after the deadline but within 14 calendar days will be marked and then capped at 50% unless you have an accepted claim for [Extenuating Circumstances](#). Work submitted more than 14 calendar days after the deadline will not be marked and graded at 0%.

More info: [Academic Regulations 2023-24](#)

Grade reference

Weighting

Three Designed Objects = 30%
Small Business Website = 70%

Overall grade scheme (Level 7)

49% and below = Fail
50% - 59% = Pass
60% - 69% = Merit
70% and above = Distinction