

# DIEP Final Reflective Report

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This article uses the DIEP framework (Describe, Explain, Evaluate, and Plan) to reflectively assess my performance and learning in the "Design and New Media" module. This report is not an academic paper on user experience or communication design theory, but rather focuses on my personal design practice, learning process, and decision-making process as an emerging designer.

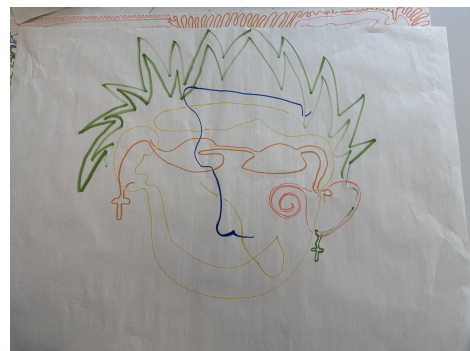
Through the six R<sup>3</sup> tasks—including conditional design, manifesto writing, affordance analysis, prototyping, empathy, and storytelling—I engaged in design through making, observing, writing, and reflecting. These tasks prompted me to question existing assumptions about authorship, control, usability, and narrative, and to rethink how design operates within a system rather than in isolated entities.

Through this reflective process, I gradually came to understand that design is not the generation of solutions, but rather the conscious construction of conditions that shape behavior, attention, and meaning. This report critically reflects on how my understanding of design evolved throughout the module, identifying strengths, limitations, and directions for future development.

## Project Overview

Throughout this module, my work explored how design modulates interaction and perception through rules, systems, and narrative structures. Each R<sup>3</sup> task looked at different dimensions of design practice while contributing to a broader understanding of process-oriented approaches.

In Project 01 and the Conditional Design Workshop, I participated in rule-based collaborative drawing exercises, such as drawing circles, collectively constructing faces, and drawing continuous lines. These exercises prioritized collaborative creation and response over individual expression. My role included collaboratively developing a set of rules and posing reflective questions to guide participants.



**Figure 1.** Collective drawing outcomes generated through rule-based conditions in the Conditional Design workshop.

The Manifesto task required me to analyze manifestos from different creative fields and then articulate my own design manifesto. My manifesto did not define stylistic outcomes but rather positioned design as a process driven by rules, uncertainty, and collective negotiation.

**My Personal Manifesto**

I design conditions rather than final forms.  
Rules are not constraints but the starting point for interaction.  
I embrace uncertainty as an essential component of the process.  
Design arises from collective action, not individual creation.  
Control must be shared and negotiated, not monopolised.  
The meaning inherent in the process transcends visual presentation.  
Limitations breed possibilities, not limitations.  
Design is an ongoing response, not a final declaration.

**Figure 2.** Personal design manifesto articulating a process-oriented and uncertainty-driven design position.

The Availability task examined everyday digital devices through the concepts of perceived availability and indicators. This task focused on how interfaces convey possible operations and how design influences users' understanding beyond technical functionality.

In the prototyping task, I reflected on the significance of rapid prototyping as an iterative learning process, exploring the meaning of sketch prototypes, digital prototypes, and native prototypes as tools of inquiry rather than completion stages.

The empathy task prompted me to reflect on responsibility and perspective shifts in design, while the storytelling task (developed as a London field trip log) used narrative methods to observe how urban systems guide people's attention and actions.

## **A Shift in Understanding and Learning**

A key shift in my understanding throughout the module was recognizing that design is a process of building interactions, not controlling outcomes. The Conditional Design workshop played a crucial role in this shift. It turned out that design rules are more influential than design forms because meaning arises not from intention, but from accumulation, constraint, and response.

Initially, I found the lack of control in the Conditional Design exercises uncomfortable. I realized that while I intellectually agreed with the manifesto's rejection of outcome-oriented design, I subconsciously still judged success by visual coherence. This contradiction revealed how deeply ingrained outcome-oriented habits were in my practice, even when I thought I had transcended them.

Writing a personal manifesto further clarified this contradiction. I began to understand that the manifesto was not an instruction, but a positioning tool that clarified how the designer chose to act. This task helped me realize that uncertainty is not a problem to be solved, but a problem to be proactively

designed to address.

The Availability task redefined my understanding of usability. I realized that many interaction problems I had previously attributed to users were actually failures of design communication. This perspective prompted me to view interaction design in a more empathetic and critical way, where clarity and perceptibility hold significant ethical implications.

Through the "storytelling" task, I recognized narrative as an analytical method. By observing how my attention was drawn to London's cityscape—by signage, surfaces, and rhythms—I began to see the city as a dynamic system that shapes people's perceptions before they make conscious choices.

## Strengths and Weaknesses

### Strengths

One of my main strengths is reflective thinking. In all R<sup>3</sup> tasks, I demonstrated the ability to critically examine my own assumptions and reposition my design understanding through experience. I excel at articulating abstract concepts such as uncertainty, availability, and attention through structured writing and conceptual frameworks.

Another strength is my sensitivity to systems and context. Whether analyzing collaborative rules, interface cues, or urban movements, I always view design as something embedded within social and behavioral structures. This systems-oriented perspective allows me to think about design decisions beyond surface aesthetics.

Furthermore, I am able to connect theoretical concepts with everyday observations. I don't treat reading material as abstract knowledge, but rather as a perspective for interpreting real-world interactions, thus enhancing the relevance and depth of my work.

### Weaknesses

Despite these strengths, I still find some limitations in my practice. I realize that my reliance on conceptual clarity is sometimes a self-protective mechanism. By refining ideas extensively before prototyping, I postpone uncertain moments that might be questioned or falsified. This tendency limits the role of



**Figure 3.** Analysis of perceived affordances and signifiers in everyday digital devices.

failure as an effective design tool.

Time management also became a challenge. I often focused my energy on later refinements rather than allocating sufficient time for early experimentation and iteration. This reduced opportunities to obtain feedback and explore other directions.

Finally, although I conceptually accepted uncertainty, I sometimes hesitated and dared not take risks during execution. This revealed that while I theoretically aligned with process-based design principles, I lacked confidence in practical application.



**Figure 4.** Notes on prototyping stages highlighting learning through iteration rather than final outputs.

## Plans

Looking ahead, I plan to strengthen my design practice by directly addressing the limitations identified through this reflective process. In particular, I have become aware that my tendency to prioritise conceptual definition over experimentation has often delayed moments where ideas could be tested, challenged, or reframed. To counter this, I plan to consciously introduce low-fidelity prototyping at much earlier stages of future projects, using sketches, rough interactions, and provisional artefacts as tools for thinking rather than validation. By treating uncertainty as a productive method rather than an obstacle, I aim to allow ideas to evolve through interaction and feedback instead of remaining conceptually resolved but materially untested.

In addition, I plan to improve my proficiency with digital prototyping tools in order to explore ideas through interaction rather than explanation alone. Developing stronger technical fluency will enable me to simulate user behaviour, test assumptions, and communicate design intentions more clearly to others. This shift will support a more iterative and evidence-based workflow, where decisions are informed by observed interactions rather than anticipated outcomes.

Furthermore, I intend to actively challenge myself to take greater creative risks, particularly in visual and experiential design. While I have become comfortable

discussing uncertainty at a conceptual level, I recognise the need to embody this attitude more fully in execution. Allowing space for failure, ambiguity, and unresolved outcomes will help align my practical work with the values articulated in my manifesto, reinforcing a process-driven approach rather than an outcome-oriented one.

Finally, I plan to continue using reflective writing as an active design tool rather than a retrospective task. By integrating reflection throughout the design process, I aim to maintain continuous evaluation, recognise emerging patterns in my practice, and adjust my approach in response to new insights. This will support a more adaptive and self-aware design methodology across future projects.

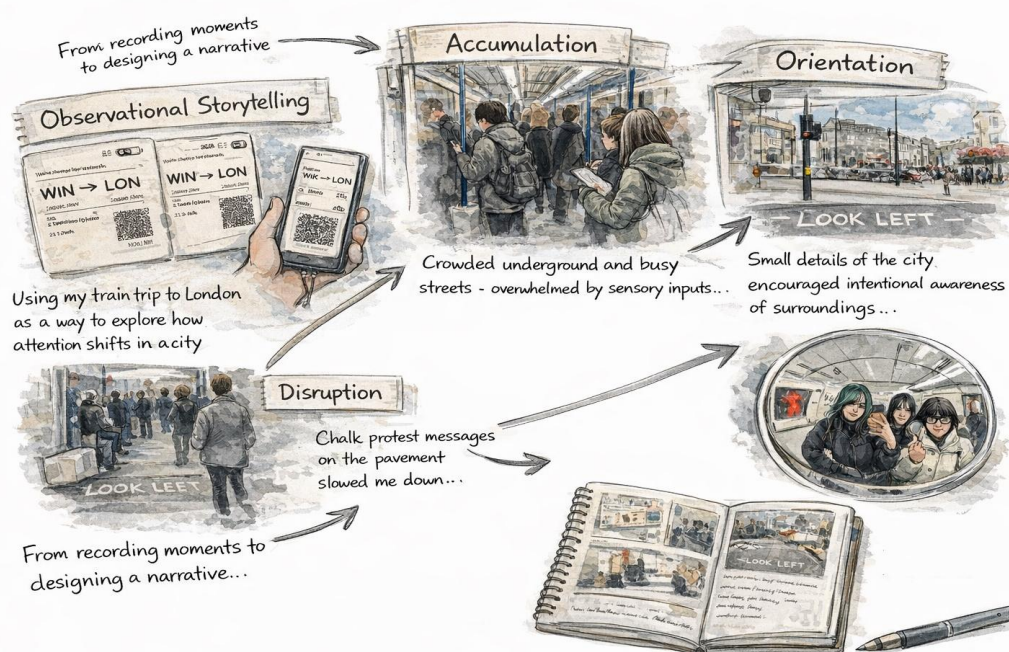


Figure 5. Excerpt from a London field journal using storytelling as a method of observing attention and movement.

## Conclusion

Reflecting on this module through the DIEP framework has enabled me to articulate how my understanding of design has fundamentally evolved. I have shifted from viewing design as a results-oriented, production-driven activity towards understanding it as a process-oriented and systems-conscious practice. Across the six R<sup>3</sup> tasks, I became increasingly aware that design operates through conditions, constraints, narratives, and interactions rather than isolated artefacts or final outputs.

The module reshaped my understanding of key concepts such as authorship, usability, storytelling, and responsibility. Collaborative and rule-based exercises challenged my assumptions about control and ownership, while

analytical and reflective tasks encouraged me to view design decisions as ethical and communicative acts embedded within larger systems. Together, these experiences revealed the value of uncertainty, iteration, and reflection as integral components of meaningful design practice.

I no longer view reflection as a formal or administrative requirement, but as an essential method for developing thoughtful, critical, and adaptable design approaches. While this module does not provide a definitive resolution to my design methodology, it establishes a strong foundation for continued questioning, experimentation, and growth. Moving forward, I will carry these insights into future projects, using reflection not to conclude my practice, but to sustain and evolve it.