1. How to write a team design brief

1.1 Overview

Project Title (60 characters max.)
Names of people involved
Timeframe of project
Briefing date
Deadline
Budget, if relevant

1.2 The Brief

Context
Provide information about the world your project lives in.

Research question(s)
What is the question?
– Why is the question current/interesting/important/relevant?
– What has inspired the question?
– In which context are you asking this question?
– What has led you to ask this question?
– Why should people be interested in your question?

How will you find answers?
– How do you research? (primary/secondary research, experiences, interviews, ethnography, collaborations, information from subject specialists, etc.)
– Where will your information and knowledge come from?
– How do you structure your time to make the most of it? (timeline, phases, interim deadlines, evaluation points)

Roles and Responsibilities
– Clearly define areas of responsibility and tasks that need to be completed
– Decide who completes which tasks
– Plan how you can combine and use your skills, experiences and interests to best effect

How do you present the answers?
– What are you aiming to achieve within the project timeframe?
– What will the outcome of your project be?
– What kind of support and resources do you need to achieve your project aims and outcomes?
– How do you present your outcomes? (2D/3D/AV/image/graphics/text/performance/workshop...)

The actual brief (50-150 words)
The first sentence should sum up the brief. The first 50 words should explain its essence, target audience, context and process. The remaining 100 words allow you to expand on research and development methods, aims, outcomes, references and timeframe.

Aims
What are you hoping to achieve with this project? What are you hoping to learn? Which connections and networks are you aiming to establish? Which skills and capabilities are you hoping to gain? Who, apart from yourself, should benefit from the project?

Outcomes
What are you aiming to make/generate/produce/establish/create? Is the outcome a

product, service, piece of communication, strategy, network, etc.?

1.3 References

People, experiences, texts, images, AV, online content, materials, networks, forums, etc.
Include all relevant and potential references, even tentative ones. Include contact details.

1.4 Timetable/Schedule
You should set up a schedule for every project, no matter how small. It should include:
– Allocation of tasks over time
– Interim and final deadlines
– Roles and responsibilities

1.4 Budget

It is important to estimate and keep track of your project costs, money paid in and out, financial support, sponsorship and support in kind, i.e. Work done by other parties for you instead of a financial contribution. This will help you establish costs if the project is repeated, extended or continued. Accurate and effective budgeting will help you in all your future projects.

1.5 Follow up

Evaluation of brief, process, outcomes, own role, overall success
Be critical in your evaluation, this will help you to improve future briefs and projects.

Next steps
Does your project have a fixed outcome? Is it a one-off or a stepping stone towards a bigger goal/outcome. If yes, how can you streamline your process based on what you have learned throughout the project.

Archiving/back up
You should back up your research, development, final outcomes, contacts, etc. in at least 2 different physical locations, and storage mediums, plus as a hard copy.

Learning Diary
For university projects, it is important that you keep a good leaning diary, detailing the process, stages and learnings of the project, including your roles and responsibilities. You will hand this in at the end of the project. It will be marked.

Photography and Video
Good high-resolution photography and relevant video documentation is essential. You will need a good image and AV archive to use for your portfolio, presentations, press, etc.