

A-Level 3D Design — Initial Assignment (Heatherwick)

Brief

Choose one architectural work by Thomas Heatherwick/Heatherwick Studio and complete two parts:

Part A — 500-word personal response (no AI)

Write an essay (approx. 500 words) giving your own views on the piece you selected. Focus on how it makes you think and feel as a designer. Avoid biographies and long descriptions—this is about your judgement.

Suggested structure:

- Hook (1–2 sentences): Your first reaction and why you chose this work.
- Design reading (2–3 short paragraphs): What do you notice about form, structure, materials, movement, user experience, and context? What's innovative or problematic?
- Position (1 short paragraph): Do you think it works for its place and users? Why?
- Takeaways (3–4 bullet points): What ideas will you steal, adapt, or avoid in your own practice?

Academic honesty: This must be entirely your writing—no AI drafting, paraphrasing, or translation tools. Bring handwritten planning notes to evidence process. Include image references and a simple list of sources.

Part B — Design task: Manchester Skyscraper (Heatherwick-inspired)

Design a new skyscraper for central Manchester that channels a Heatherwick-like approach (playful structure, human scale moments, crafted materiality, or inventive public realm).

You may present this as illustrated drawings, CAD/3D, or a physical model.

Minimum requirements:

- Concept board (1 page): title, intent, precedent images, key ideas.
- Form exploration: quick thumbnails or massing studies showing iterations.
- Resolved presentation:
 - Drawings: at least one exterior perspective plus plan + section (can be schematic).
 - CAD/3D: one textured render + one orthographic view.
 - Model: photos from three angles + a simple site context.
- Public realm: show how people meet the building at street level.
- Material cue: identify a primary material or façade strategy.
- Sustainability hint: daylighting, greening, reused/low-carbon materials, or adaptive shading.

Success criteria (what I'll assess)

- Insightful opinion (Part A): clear, personal argument; design literacy; specific evidence.
- Idea quality (Part B): bold concept with human-centred thinking and site awareness.
- Iteration: visible development from sketches/models to outcome.
- Communication: crisp layouts, labels, and scale cues; spelling/grammar in UK English.
- Craft: neat drawings/models/renders; confident line, tone, and material depiction.
- Professionalism: on-time submission with sources and image credits.

Deliverables checklist

- ☐ 500-word essay (printed or PDF) + planning notes
- ☐ Concept board
- ☐ Development sketches/massing
- ☐ Final drawings/renders/model photos
- ☐ Short caption (50–80 words) describing your tower's idea
- ☐ Reference list / image credits

Submission: Bring prints to the first studio and upload digital work to the class folder.

Starter references

Look up “Heatherwick Studio Seed Cathedral,” “Coal Drops Yard,” “NTU Learning Hub (The Hive),” and “Zeitz MOCAA atrium” for examples of materiality, dramatic forms, and people-centred spaces.