How to write an Initial Specification

When you are set a project the first thing you need to do is to write an initial specification. An initial specification goes between the Introduction/Scenario/Aim (known as the Brief) and your research.

It is a numbered list of what you need to design and what the project has to do. It will also help you work out what you may need to find out in your research.

After your research you revise your initial specification into a final specification, which is a more detailed list and with specific and measurable points and informed by what you have found out by your research.

You start with your introduction/scenario/aim:

LITTER BIN PROJECT

INTRODUCTION/SCENARIO:

It has been agreed by Harchester Council to invest in a new approach in ensuring that the town is kept clean. This is very important to them as they wish visitors to get a good impression. Part of the project is to replace the existing set of litter bins with a new range. The main area around the central zone will have their bins emptied quickly. It is intended to use a small fleet of dustcarts, the size of a small van, to undertake the task and shop waste will be emptied at night by the same fleet. The Council intends to pave areas within the town to help and make create people friendly zones

CLIENT:

Harchester Council

TASK:

To design and make a range of litter bins which will reflect the new and modern style of Harchester. They will be free-standing and they will have a liner which will be made of galvanised steel and which can be removed quickly. Any material can be used for the main body if you feel it is appropriate. It is advised that you look at some existing products

From this you can create a numbered list, but first list down what the item must do, it may sound obvious, but sometimes with big projects people forget or get carried away and the final outcome does not answer the brief.

1. It must hold litter
2. It must enable people to put litter in easily
3. It must stop rubbish being blown out
4. The client is Harchester Council
5. They must make a good impression
6. It will be used in the centre of the town

These points are from the Brief, which is made up of the Introduction/Scenario and Aim

1. It must be able to be emptied quickly
2. There must be a range
3. It must look new and modern
4. It will have a galvanised liner
5. The main body can be any material
6. It must be waterproof

Then try to think of other things it must do which are not mentioned in the brief, but it has to have. These points can be or maybe found during research and then added into the final specification, but this doesn’t stop you of thinking of them now.

1. It must be hard wearing
2. It must be vandal proof
3. It must be lockable

During your research use this list to help find information, all of which will help you when you design. Remember, good research makes good design and that all research must relate directly to what you are designing.