

Senior Designer, Home Design

Core information

Location: London head office ▾ Hybrid working ▾	Lines of business or shared capability area: John Lewis Commercial
Reports to: Design Manager	
People Management: Yes ▾	
Assignment Management: Yes ▾	
Partnership Level: Partnership level 6 ▾	Manager's Partnership level: Partnership level 5 ▾
Number of direct reports: Up to 3	Partnership level(s) of direct reports: Partnership level 8 ▾ Partnership level 9 ▾

About the John Lewis Partnership

The Partnership is the UK's largest employee-owned business and home to our two well-loved retail brands – John Lewis and Waitrose, as well as expanding into new areas beyond retail.

We aren't an ordinary business, though. The Partnership is different because everyone who works here isn't just an employee. We are Partners, with a shared responsibility for our success, and we share the rewards when we're successful.

Everything we do is powered by our unique Purpose: **Working in Partnership for a happier world.** Our Purpose inspires our principles, drives our decisions and acts as our guide, so that everything we do contributes to Happier People, Happier Business and a Happier World.

Critical purpose of the role

As a Senior Designer, you will support the Leadership team in creating the individual category design strategy, ensuring it is aligned to the overall strategic direction and providing insight into your area of Own Brand products.

You will be responsible for designing, developing and delivering original, relevant, customer-centric and distinct best in class own brand products, utilising customer insights, to inspire, excite and delight our customers. You will tangibly contribute to the delivery of planned growth for Own Brand categories. You will take a leading role in designing more complex products / design briefs within the category, working independently, alongside or in collaboration with the wider Design and Commercial community. Additionally, you will work strategically with smaller suppliers to support longer term plans (as an example).

Through your Profession you will have the opportunity to develop and stretch personally and professionally to achieve your potential. We celebrate diversity and inclusion in the John Lewis Partnership and we are committed to becoming the UK's most inclusive business, reflecting and connecting with the diverse communities that we serve.

Primary Outcomes & Accountabilities

Design:

Create the individual category design strategy, ensuring it is aligned to the overall strategic direction and providing insight into your area of Own Brand products.

Measures of success

High sales of products designed in their area of expertise (% sell through rate at full price).

Your remit will deliver agreed KPIs including sales, profit and customer metrics, shared across the Category.

Play a critical role in delivering product design that will form a coherent category assortment aligned to brand / sub brand guidelines and in service of our customers. You will focus on technically more complex products and/or lead the design of a more complex sub-category.

Align to the Own Brand assortment strategy with a strong focus on understanding our customer and their evolving needs and desires to ensure that we deliver appropriate and relevant products. You will have high involvement in trend and forecasting.

Recommend, prepare and present relevant and appropriate category trends through high quality research to the wider team.

Ensure the sampling process is efficient. Produce precise design packs and fulfil seasonal design briefs with commercial and innovative solutions, supported by illustrating / briefing / sourcing key materials and details. Ensure accurate samples are produced. Maintain comprehensive records of design projects.

The role requires the application of a diverse set of skills to effectively bring design concepts to life. Candidates must demonstrate proficiency not only in traditional design and development techniques—such as drawing, painting, and model making—but also in the use of modern design software. This includes tools for 3D modelling, (furniture & hard goods design), and 2D applications (pattern and surface design) Additionally, a working knowledge of emerging technologies, including 3D printing, rapid prototyping, and the integration of artificial intelligence in the design development process, is essential.

The role requires you to effectively communicate the technical designs of your designs to suppliers and manufacturers for costing, prototyping and production.

Stakeholder Management:

Work collaboratively with all levels of Buying, Merchandising and the Technical team to co-create the briefs and deliver identified outcomes ensuring that these align with the brand guidelines.

Build and maintain strong supplier relationships, including co-creating designs.

Lead success-driven, cross-department working through effective stakeholder relationships. Lead through change.

Leadership:

Foster a collaborative and high-performance team culture and, where required within the team structure, provide high calibre People Management to L8 Designers and Assistant Designers.

Positive feedback from customers on products designed in their area (ratings and reviews).

Positive brand perception across industry.

Clear aesthetic alignment of product handwriting within each sub-category.

High hit rates on products designed by the Senior Designer.

Positive feedback from customers on products designed by the Senior Designer

Complying with deadlines set within the critical path, maintaining a high standard of quality and ensuring you are delivering to the requirements outlined in the category strategy.



Create the conditions for them to thrive, and balance their focus and priorities as required.

Where required within the team structure, you will be accountable for the Partners you manage, ensuring they deliver against their goals and addresses any underperformance decisively, fairly and swiftly. Engages in conversations to support their direct reports via development to improve/close the gap to give every chance to improve performance.

Mentor, develop and share skill knowledge across the design studio, enabling team members to learn and contribute in a practical way and have the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge.

Act as a role model and contribute to ensure a cohesive and positive Design team through behavioural and work ethics.

Support the professional development and growth of team members, ensuring a skilled and motivated workforce capable of achieving departmental objectives. Provide Coaching, development and feedback.

Uses a coaching style to support others to find their own answers and helps them to unlock their own potential through skilful questioning and active listening. Uses support and challenge in a balanced approach to support others in finding their own answers.

Lead Partners within multi-disciplinary and matrix teams to achieve and deliver work, in line with business outcomes and with the voice of the customer at the heart of decision making.

Work autonomously and set a clear direction for those within your project team, agreeing ambition and a process to achieve the outcome. Task management responsibilities can include projects, category collections, sub brands.

Continuous Improvement:

Demonstrate and role model a Continuous Improvement mindset

Think boldly and see issues and opportunities from all angles and multiple perspectives, even the unprecedented, to draw out meaning and connections and make recommendations to adjust strategy and outcomes as a result. Generate a number of workable options and overcome barriers to finding solutions.

Co-ownership:

Act in accordance with the Partnership's purpose and democratic principles, constructively participating in co-ownership, and demonstrating to customers and each other that it is a better way of doing business. Share your knowledge, experiences, ideas and opinion to improve the

Partnership, speaking honestly and frequently.

Invest in your personal and professional development to achieve your potential, by doing more, doing better, or doing different. Continuously engage with and actively contribute to your Profession.

Take responsibility for actively engaging with change.

Create the conditions for all Partners to thrive, make their best contribution and achieve their potential.

Appreciate what different life experiences bring to the Partnership and the value this adds to unbiased and smarter decision making.

Set the tone, context and outcomes for the team with the voice of the customer at the heart.

Enable the conditions for Partner opinion to be heard and acted upon.

Skills

Organisational Strategy and Business Strategies: Thinks for the long term whilst making sense of the current climate. Cuts through any issues in order to reach the defined strategic goal and ensures continued alignment to current business objectives. Puts these strategies in place for peers and team and in doing so, creates a culture where everyone contributes.

Task Prioritisation and Setting Priorities: Plans and reviews workload regularly and is prepared to adapt to ever changing circumstances. Assesses workload realistically in terms of urgency and importance and is ready for "curve balls" and changes plans where necessary to ensure optimum achievement and deadlines are hit and stakeholder relationships are maintained.

Stakeholder Management and External Stakeholder Engagement: Identifies who is impacted by or involved in your goals/objectives and therefore who is key to achieving the desired successful outcomes. Understands the motivations and priorities of these stakeholders and takes these into account in order to build and manage sustainable relationships. Can anticipate potential challenges stakeholders may bring and puts plans in place to achieve collaboration.

Empowering others through Delegation: Shares own vision with others in a compelling way to enable an environment of stretch and challenge balanced with support so they can act and deliver success for you with freedom and without micromanagement.

Empathy, Active Listening and Interpersonal Sensitivity: Demonstrates the ability to understand, relate to and be sensitive to your team, peers, colleagues and customers and is in the habit of seeing the world through the eyes of others. Adopts a daily practice of considering the wellbeing of others.

Managing Employees and Challenging Conversations: Drives accountability for delivering goals and manages the consequences for Partners who underperform by dealing decisively, fairly and swiftly with poor performance. Face into conversations about poor performance to help Partners see the gap in performance, support Partners via development to improve/close the gap to give every chance to improve performance.

Qualifications & Experience (where applicable)

Essential



- Demonstrated ability to translate design concepts into production-ready sketches and technical specifications, using technology. Pattern and surface design roles require excellent Adobe Suite/Photoshop, NEDgraphics skills. Furniture & Hard product design roles require excellent 3D modelling skills using software such as Solidworks, Rhino, Keyshot.
- Experience in stakeholder management, excellent communication and presentation skills and experience in leading and motivating a design team, fostering creativity and collaboration
- A strong understanding of the retail Home market, including trends, consumer behavior, and competitive landscape. Hold an ability to translate trends into commercially viable designs.
- A proven commercial and customer focus
- An excellent knowledge of product construction or other relevant technical experience for your relevant role, be it pattern, textiles, hard goods or furniture. e.g. an understanding of key materials, construction techniques, commercial manufacturing constraints.
- A track record of credible creative achievements
- A strong understanding of the JL&P brand and / or sub brands, their brand values and potential for product

Desirable

- Experience in People Management, demonstrating a passion to develop and acquire leadership skills and capabilities
- Ability to switch between strategic creative thinking and guiding product design & development of a team
- BA degree in Design (product, furniture, textiles, surface pattern, decorative arts)
- Substantial experience within a retail product design studio
- Good external network across the design industry

Version	Created/updated by	Date
1.0	Izzy Stoker	14/12/20
2.0	David Barrett	May 2025