**EXERCISE: Design Rights**

**Is design an important aspect of your work or product?** Have you searched to find out if a similar design has already been registered? It is not just a case of considering protection; you need to be confident that you are not infringing an existed protected design. Make a note of designs similar to yours.

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**Is unregistered design protection enough or do you need registered protection?** If design is important to your business, consider registering the design. Remember that in Europe (and some other countries) you have a grace period of 12 months after making the design available (by putting it on the market), during which time you can still register the design. Make a note here of the designs you have and how important they are to your business.

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**Do you have a good record system in place?** Keep all original documents associated with your designs, preferably signed, dated, and, if possible, countersigned. Keep original prototypes so that you can show when and how you came up with your design – you may need to do this in court. Make a note of the way you record your design processes.

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