

Post-16 Curriculum - Art and Design

Subject Curriculum Overview

Subject	Art and Design
Qualification / Specification	Art, Craft and design
Awarding Body	AQA
Level	A level
Curriculum Lead	Rich Wiseman
Teaching Staff	Di Vince, Sophie Houghton
Guided Learning Hours	360
Year(s) Delivered	12 & 13
Last Review Date	June 2026
Next Review Date	June 2027

1. Curriculum Intent

The purpose of Art and Design is to create and develop: Independent thinking, Independent creativity, Critical thinking and Technical skills. These are all highly transferable skills. Upon developing these skills at A Level students are then in a secure place to explore pathways such as: Foundation Diplomas, Undergraduate degrees, Russell group universities. Outside of University Art and Design is part of the Art industry. At the end of A Level Art and Design success is shown by the development of a cohesive visual journey that demonstrates technical skill, creative experimentation, and deep conceptual understanding. Learners succeed by deeply exploring an original theme, learning from historical and contemporary artists, and continually refining their ideas.

2. Foundational Knowledge

Area	Why It Matters	Essential Knowledge / Skills
Aesthetics & Philosophy of Art	Explores what art is and why it matters.	Beauty, expression, representation, conceptual art, ethics, artistic intent.
Cultural and Global Art Traditions	Broadens perspectives and avoids narrow interpretations of art.	Indigenous arts, Asian art traditions, African art, Islamic art, European traditions, contemporary global art.
Elements of Art	Forms the visual vocabulary of all artwork.	Line, shape, form, color, value, texture, space.
Principles of Design	Helps organize visual elements effectively.	Balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, rhythm, unity, variety, proportion.
Drawing Fundamentals	Builds observation and visual communication skills.	Contour drawing, gesture, perspective, shading, composition, proportion.
Color Theory	Enables intentional use of color for meaning and aesthetics.	Color wheel, primary/secondary/tertiary colors, complementary colors, color harmony, temperature, saturation.
Composition	Guides how viewers experience an artwork.	Focal point, rule of thirds, visual hierarchy, positive/negative space, framing.
Perspective & Spatial Representation	Creates the illusion of depth and space.	One-point, two-point, three-point perspective, atmospheric perspective, foreshortening.
Light and Value	Essential for realism, mood, and form.	Highlights, shadows, tonal range, contrast, reflected light, chiaroscuro.
Art History	Provides cultural, historical, and intellectual context.	Major periods, movements, artists, cultural influences, historical developments.
Visual Analysis & Criticism	Develops critical thinking and interpretation skills.	Description, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, visual literacy.
Materials & Techniques	Understanding tools expands creative possibilities.	Drawing media, painting methods, printmaking, sculpture techniques, digital tools.
Creative Process	Supports idea development and problem-solving.	Research, brainstorming, sketching, experimentation, revision, reflection.
Anatomy & Figure Studies	Improves representation of living forms.	Human proportions, skeletal structure, muscle groups, gesture,

		movement.
Landscape & Environmental Observation	Enhances understanding of natural and built environments.	Scale, atmospheric effects, natural forms, architecture, perspective in outdoor settings.
Symbolism & Visual Communication	Allows artists to convey meaning beyond appearance.	Metaphor, iconography, cultural symbols, narrative, audience interpretation.
Digital Art & Emerging Media	Increasingly important in contemporary practice.	Digital illustration, photography, video, animation, AI-assisted art, interactive media.
Professional Practice	Helps artists sustain careers and share work effectively.	Digital illustration, photography, video, animation, AI-assisted art, interactive media.

3. Powerful Knowledge

Powerful Knowledge Area	Why It Matters	Evidence of Understanding
Art Elements	Provides the visual language used to create and analyze artwork.	Line, shape, form, color, texture, tone, space
Design Principles	Helps students understand how artists organize visual elements effectively.	Balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, rhythm, unity
Artistic Techniques and Processes	Enables students to communicate ideas through skilled artistic practice.	Drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, digital media, mixed media
Art History	Connects students to humanity's cultural and historical development.	Major movements, periods, and styles across cultures and time
Cultural Contexts	Develops understanding of diverse perspectives and worldviews.	How art reflects beliefs, values, identities, and societies
Critical Analysis	Builds higher-order thinking and evidence-based judgment.	Interpreting, describing, analyzing, and evaluating artworks
Visual Literacy	Helps students navigate a world increasingly shaped by visual communication.	Reading and understanding visual messages and symbols

Creative Decision-Making	Encourages innovation and independent thinking.	Generating ideas, experimenting, refining, and problem-solving
Artists and Their Work	Provides models of artistic practice and creative achievement.	Studying influential artists and their contributions
Materials and Media Knowledge	Supports informed artistic choices and technical competence.	Properties, uses, and limitations of artistic materials
Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art	Encourages deep reflection on the nature and role of art.	Questions about beauty, meaning, value, and purpose
Contemporary Art Practices	Helps students engage with current artistic and social issues.	Modern and emerging artistic approaches and technologies

4. Curriculum Implementation

Term / Unit	Key Content	Foundational Knowledge	Powerful Knowledge	Assessment Opportunities
Yr 12 - Autumn 1	drawing, painting, mixed-media, sculpture, ceramics, i printmaking, photography.	Elements of Art Drawing Fundamentals Art History Creative Process Composition understanding of Materials & Techniques	Communication Develop understanding, Visual language, Informed choices, technical competence.	Formative Crits & Peer Reviews Material Workshops, A02. Tutorials.
Yr 12 - Spring 1	Ceramics. Development of working vocabulary and specialist terminology. Independent project.	Materials and techniques. Analysis and evaluation. Idea development.	Critical thinking and contextual understanding. Communication. Conceptual understanding. Problem solving.	A01 A02 A03
Yr 12 - Summer 1	Introduction of personal study. Introduction of personal investigation.	Building on knowledge gained in first 2 terms.	Critical thinking and contextual understanding. Communication. Conceptual understanding. Problem solving.	As above. Formative assessment at each stage.
Yr 13 - Autumn 2	Continuation of Summer 1	Consolidation of all knowledge.		As above. Formative assessment at each stage.

Yr 13 - Spring 2	Component 2; Response to an externally set assignment.	As above.		Tutorials and one to one assessment weekly.

5. Assessment Strategy

Assessment Type	Purpose	Frequency
Diagnostic	GCSE results to establish identifies strengths, weaknesses, and potential,	Start of course.
Formative	Monitoring progress and providing actionable feedback during the creative process	Weekly
Summative	Overview of progress and to set targets.	Every half term
Synoptic	Ability to meet 4 assessment objectives.	Termly