

What is Art?

Art is the study of materials and techniques when combined with ideas and concepts. The term 'art' can relate to many visual forms, from drawing and painting to performance and sculpture, collage and photography to graphic design and textiles.

Our general Art and Design course aims to provide students with a vast array of skills to allow them to develop into any of the previously mentioned specialisms.

Why students choose this course

Most students choose to study this course if they are considering studying a higher-level Art and Design course in the future, however some students choose it simply due to their love of creativity.

Although making artwork is time consuming, it is also a very therapeutic and rewarding process, to make something visual that can be enjoyed and admired by others. For many students their artwork is a form of release and the biggest ingredient for success in this course is a love for the subject.

What the course covers

Year 1

The first year of the Art and Design A level course will provide students with the skills to develop strengths and interests through initial workshop-based sessions. Students will undertake 2 major projects where they will be introduced to a variety of materials, techniques and processes. They will learn how to develop a project successfully, create effective final outcomes and evaluate work with purpose.

Year 2

The second year of the course will see students putting their skills into practice and completing Component 1 and Component 2, both of which are internally and externally assessed.

- **Component 1: Personal investigation**
Supported by a course which celebrates the traditions of the art school: atelier, foundation studies and contextual studies, Component 1 will build upon skills from GCSE and give students the confidence in working with a variety of new processes. Students will gain an underlying knowledge of the history of Art and understand their place as an artist within this developing history. This unit will also include a 1,000 – 3,000 essay in which students will discuss how chosen artists/designers have influenced their work.
- **Component 2: Externally-set assignment**
This is the exam paper where students will be provided with 8 questions from the examining body. They will have a lengthy preparation time for ideas generation, practical creation and development, followed by 15 hours of unaided, supervised time where they will produce a quality final outcome.

Further information can be found on the AQA website: www.aqa.org.uk

What students can do with this course

A broad and exciting range of higher education courses are available to progress onto and we will help to prepare students for this next step. A portfolio of the most successful work will be vital material for any University interview.

Tutors will help with portfolio production and interview preparation. It is important to remember that collectively, the creative industries are one of the largest employers in the UK and they offer a range of exciting careers. Architecture courses at University also usually require an Art A Level and A Level Mathematics.

How this course is assessed

The personal investigation component 1 is 60% of the overall A level grade. This work is internally assessed by the tutor and externally moderated.

The externally set assignment component 2, is a project of work with a 15-hour examination period, completed in controlled class conditions at the end of the component.

This constitutes to 40% of the overall A Level. The component projects will be carried out in the second year of study, to ensure that the best possible work will be assessed for the full A level grade.

Entry requirements

All our course entry requirements are detailed in the Entry Requirements document located in the admissions section of our website.

Further Reading

The Art Book: Big Ideas Simply Explained - published by DK

High Art Lite: The Rise and Fall of Young British Art - Julian Stallabrass

Student Profile:



Before Sixth Form, Elliot was a student at Dixons City Academy. At Dixons Sixth Form, he studied Art, Maths and Physics. He left Dixons with a B grade in Art and Design and has gone on to study Mechanical Engineering at the University of Huddersfield.

“ I chose to study art as it is a subject that I consider myself to be good at, and it seems more like a hobby than a lesson. It is also a good subject to accompany the career path that I am hoping to go down, which is Engineering. ”