



Essential Learning

The essential learning in KS4 GCSE Art, Craft and Design (typically covers years 10-11, however skills and project formats are taught and started in Year 9) revolves around developing students' creative, practical and critical skills through sustained projects that reflect artistic processes. This is guided by the AQA GCSE specification.

2 x portfolio projects (can be 1 x skills based and 1 x sustained) completed through Year 9/10/11

1 x ESA project. ESA paper issued January of Year 11.

AQA Assessment Objectives (AO's)

AO1: Develop ideas through investigations

AO2: Refine work by exploring and selecting appropriate resources

AO3: Record ideas, observations and insights

AO4: Present a personal and meaningful response

Core essential areas for learning:

Developing Ideas

- Investigating and exploring artists, designers, craftspeople and movements.
- Researching and analysing sources to inspire their own work.
- Refining and personalising ideas based on exploration and feedback.

Key Skill: Independent thinking and contextual understanding.

Experimenting with Media and Techniques

- Using a wide range of materials and techniques: drawing, painting, printing, textiles, ceramics, digital media, photography etc.
- Experimenting, combining and refining techniques to suit a theme.

Key Skill: Confident manipulation of media and materials.

Recording Observations

- Drawing / tracing
- Record processes, thoughts and developments
- Mind maps and annotating work to explain thinking and choices.

Key Skill: Visual and written communication.

Presenting a Personal Response

- Creating a final outcome that reflects the development process.
- Work should show clear links to research, experimentation and refinement.
- Demonstrating originality and personal expression.

Key Skill: Coherent, thoughtful final pieces.

Additional Key Learning Themes:

- Understanding the creative process from concept to final piece.
- Learning how to evaluate their own and others' work.
- Awareness of cultural, historical and social contexts in art.
- Building a portfolio of work that shows sustained and focused development.

Wider Learning

In addition to further projects and workshops to support submission, gallery or cultural visits, wider learning in KS4 Art, Craft and Design refers to the broader skills, knowledge and experiences students gain beyond just creating artwork. These go beyond the technical aspects of the course and help to develop personal, cultural, academic growth.

Practical and Technical Skills:

Media and Techniques: Developing skills in drawing, painting, sculpture, textiles, photography, printmaking.

Problem solving: Planning and resolving issues during the making process.

Presentation Skills: Organising projects/folders for assessment.

Personal Development > This has a significant cross over with wider learning.

Creativity and Imagination: Developing original ideas and expressing them visually.

Confidence and independence: Making creative decisions and justifying choices builds self-belief. Instagram showcases students work and recognition from across the world and sometimes recognised artists builds confidence.

Resilience: Learning to accept feedback, experiment and revise work.

Critical Thinking: Analysing and evaluating both you own work and work of others.

Cultural Understanding

Art History and Cultural Awareness: Exposure to a wide range of artists, styles and cultural influences broadens understanding of global and historical perspectives. Use of Instagram further helps to keep artists and inspiration current and contemporary.

Respect for Diversity: Appreciating how different cultures express identity, beliefs and experiences through art.

Communication Skills

Visual Communication: Learning how to convey ideas, emotions and stories through images, materials and design.

Verbal and Written Analysis: Describing intentions, processes and evaluating outcomes often through artist research and annotation.

Cross-Curricular Links

Links to other subjects:

- History- Through art movements or artists from specific time periods.
- English – Through annotation, artist studies and annotation.
- Science- Exploring materials, pigments and chemical processes.
- Maths- Using symmetry, proportion, geometry and measurement in composition.

Preparation for Further Study and Careers:

- Portfolio Development: Creating a body of work that can support post 16 courses.
- Understanding the Creative industries: Learning about careers in the artistic field.
- Work Place Skills: Time Management, meeting deadlines, attention to detail and working to a brief.

Emotional and Mental Wellbeing:

- Mindfulness and Expression: Art provides a space for personal reflection and managing emotions.
- Enjoyment and Fulfilment: Encouraging a lifelong appreciation and enjoyment of the visual arts.

Reflection of 2024/2025

Successes:

- Increased entries. This is a larger cohort of students compared to previous years but most students across the PRU and Medical tuition were entered.
- All students entered achieved a grade 1-9., even for learners at the lower end of the spectrum this was a huge personal achievement.
- EAA enabled students to have increased time and achieve their full potential in controlled assessment. Those entitled to a scribe ensured that they were able to full achieve marks for AO1 and AO3.
- JC achieved a 1 but given limited timetable and SEND needs this was a grade to be celebrated.
- Student TM in Phase 2 missed significant time in centre, moved to online learning and dual attended Churchill. TM only accessed the Oldmixon on a Wednesday afternoon. The student was unsure if she wanted the extra workload of Art GCSE but with encouragement managed to achieve a grade 6 in GCSE Art, Craft and Design.
- BW in Phase 3 as part of their coursework worked to a brief to create a project and artwork for a company in Bristol organised by LP. The feedback from the company has been exceptional with the student being invited to view their work in situ. As a result of this the VLC Art department has benefited from the donation of 3 brand new CriCut machines and accessories.
- Positive moderation feedback report.
- Individualised projects tailored to students' interest and strengths increased student engagement. 'It was a real pleasure to see such a wide range of personal responses to both coursework and the exam component, where no two folders were the same. It clearly benefits the students to enable them to work to their own interests, whether that's football, fashion or body art!' – moderation feedback.
- Instagram continues to showcase students work, build confidence and provide a valuable resource for sourcing contemporary artists. 'Students are provided with an excellent resource base of contemporary artists.'
- Students enjoyed taking part in the mural project and seeing their work exhibited in the community.
- Specialist staff and increased resources enable students to access, 'a wide variety of impressive materials and techniques.'
- Purchase of new folders to display work has reduced presentation time and allows students to take more ownership of presenting their work.

Challenges:

- Students arriving at different stages of the year, often not studying art prior to joining VLC. Those that do rarely bring previous work.
- Baseline assessment hard with limited work and not a true reflection of potential or actual outcomes as predicted grades generated from this.
- Some students have bespoke timetables limiting lessons.
- Part time staff can limit number of lessons groups receive.
- Behaviour and engagement with all subjects can at times hinder progress.
- Phase 2 teacher had extended absence due to family illness/ bereavement. Students did not have a specialist teacher during this time and no art work was completed. This meant catchup sessions were needed.
- No mock meant students, despite being informed of the expectation and process felt they were unprepared. This required a lot of support to ensure students achieved their full potential.
- Mural project, resources used, staff and student time required at key point of the year.

- Marking of work. Students needed maximum time to create work so marking was pushed as late as possible. The system used is robust but time-consuming meaning staff work late into the night on numerous occasions to complete.
- The drive is for more students to return to mainstream, entries may be reduced and those accessing higher grades.

Forward Planning:

- Art mock to be added to the 'Rhythm of the Year'. This will prepare students for the Externally Set Assignment controlled time. This will also provide opportunity for students to have an extended period in the art room to enhance portfolio work.
- Resources purchased to continue to enhance delivery and techniques, e.g., large gel plates.
- Staff to continue to share skills to upskill and enhance delivery, if opportunity with changes to meeting times.
- Investigate Arts Award to increase offer and outcomes.
- Career videos providing a snap shot of successful people in industry roles and their pathway to their current job to be added to be used in the classroom and across the wider school. The aim to encourage interest in art related careers, provide motivation and insight.

Analysing Academic Data

Patterns and trends

Art, Craft and Design outcomes across both Phases exceeded National PRU averages. This evidences that the personalised learning approach, delivered by specialist staff, successfully maximises outcomes.

Whole School

16/25 students achieved grade 9-4 66%

The National PRU average 31%

35% above National PRU average

25/25 students achieved grade 9-1 100%

The National PRU average 90%

10% above National PRU average

Phase 2

Students achieving grade 9-4 46%

The National PRU average 31%

15% above National PRU average

Phase 3

Students achieving grade 9-4 83%

The National PRU average 31%

52% above National average

From studying the data, in particular estimated and challenge grades show that staff baseline assessments are, for the most, accurately predicting outcomes. Some students who have applied themselves have managed to reach or surpass their challenge grade.

Collecting data in art can be challenging as unlike core subjects where knowledge can be measured art requires a body of work to accurately assess current attainment. Therefore, it has been decided that staff will baseline after two terms when the expectation is that there will be a sufficient body of work to assess against the AQA specification assessment objectives.

Different pupil groups

Pupil Premium

Phase 2 7/13

Phase 3 4/12

EHCP

Phase 2 1/13

Phase 3 6/12

Gender

Phase 2

Female 3

Male 10

Phase 3

Female 7

Male 5

Circumstances specific to our school

During the academic year 24/25 there were a number of circumstances both wider across the centres but also for individual students.

Phase 2

- In the Phase 2 cohort there was an increased number of students from the same secondary school. The behaviours that resulted in the breakdown of mainstream placements were being continued in centre. While at times this hindered lesson progress, in art these close friendships became peer encouragement and a motivator for students to complete work outside of timetabled lessons. These students achieved the higher grades.
- Bespoke timetabling can limit the number of lessons accessed.
- Outside agency involvement; Social care, SAS, Police.
- Relationships and friendships between students breaking down. As a result of bespoke timetables students decided not to pursue an Art GCSE.
- SB refused to engage and then decided to be entered in February, had family challenges which hindered mental and emotional wellbeing and in turn engagement.
- JC was on a bespoke timetable so only attended once a week, if he came in to centre.
- JM refused to listen to teacher guidance, therefore his work did not meet the higher grading on the assessment objectives, which resulted in him not achieving his estimated grade.
- Due to relationship and friendship breakdowns TM was on dual role and attended VLC on Wednesday afternoons. TM achieved a grade 6, evidencing the benefit of 1:1 tuition.
- Pregnancy related illness and absence limited lessons and work achieved, which was reflected in the grade achieved.

- Breakdown of family relationships.
- The absence of specialist teacher during the autumn term hindered the delivery of the coursework portfolio, so a large proportion of preparatory work was missed causing a pressurised spring/summer term.

Phase 3

- IR did not attend any lessons in school and was taught entirely at home. This made teacher input and guidance challenging. Timetabled one 50 min lesson a week at home with limited materials and equipment.
- Challenges with attendance and students' medical barriers to education.
- Bespoke timetabling can limit number of lessons accessed.

As a faculty staff regularly access and contribute to the SEND database resource, Pupil Passports, IEP's and CPOMS to evidence, monitor and remain informed to best support all students to achieve.

Success of Interventions

Although there are not subject specific interventions, all interventions add value. In phase 3 L engaged in social interventions which enabled them to access the centre and art lessons. This is not reflected in the data but without it the intervention the student would not have been able to achieve an Art, Craft and Design GCSE.

In Phase 2 Interventions are largely based around raising attainment in Maths and English, this supports annotation writing, but has wider impact improving confidence, self-esteem, resilience, independent working skills.

Despite these benefits there were challenges with sporadic engagement in interventions. This could be due to low confidence; that 1:1 highlights and focuses on the individual, and gaps in learning are perceived as insuperable weaknesses. Some learners preferred being in a lesson setting rather than 1:1 working. A number of those identified for intervention were from the same mainstream secondary school and enjoyed the social interactions of being in classroom groups.

In Phase 2 RW massively benefitted from having 1:1 in the first day of the controlled ESA time due to students absent in his group. He regularly attended intervention and it was identified in his EHCP that he worked well 1:1. This allowed him to make the best use of the time and achieve his potential. RW recognised how much this benefitted his final outcomes.

EAA

Using exams access arrangements like extra time, rest breaks, a reader or a scribe in GCSE Art massively benefits the learners if there is an identified need. Even though Art is mostly practical, many parts of the course such as annotation and ESA controlled time can be challenging without proper support.

Benefits

- Reduces pressure during the 10-hour exam. Boosts confidence and lowers anxiety.
- Extra time and rest breaks help students to stay calm and focussed and reduces rushing.
- Supports annotation and written elements.
- Allows students to work at their best pace. Extra time allows students to complete work with proper care.
- Levels the playing field in that it ensures grades reflect artistic ability not challenges with time, writing or processing instructions.

Phase 2

9/13 students had extra time

6/12 students were entitled to a scribe

Phase 3

12/12 students had extra time

2/12 students were entitled to a scribe

While academic and behavioural issues appear to be interrelated art provides an opportunity to break down those barriers. The classrooms provide a welcoming, inspiring environment where students have access to a broad range of mediums and materials to express themselves through personalised projects, regardless of academic ability.