

Art and Design

Exam board: AQA

Entry requirements:

GCSE Grade 6 in Fine Art or BTEC Art & Design equivalent, Distinction.

Course content:

This new AQA specification allows us to continue to provide for a flexible structure and an excellent choice of experiences, tailored to meet the needs and aspirations of each individual student. The emphasis is on achieving a balance of technical skill, personal expression and contextual knowledge, with each topic being taught and then further developed by each student's own aspirations. Critical/ Historical/ Contextual studies permeate all areas and visits to Art Exhibitions are an essential element.

The course comprises of two components: Component 1 will run from the start of the course until the end of January 2026 where students will engage in a number of practical workshops, including working alongside professional artists, to raise the standard of their skills and find their artistic strengths. Component 2 is externally set by AQA and runs from the start of February 2026 until completing the exam in the May.

Component 1 allows students opportunities to generate and develop ideas, research primary and contextual sources, record practical and written observations, experiment with media and processes, and refine ideas towards producing personal resolved outcomes. It incorporates three major elements: supporting studies, practical work, and a personal study.

- Supporting studies and practical work will comprise a portfolio of development work and outcomes based on themes and ideas developed from personal starting points.
- The personal study will be evidenced through critical written communication showing contextual research and understanding in a minimum of 1,000 words of continuous prose, which may contain integrated images.

Assessment:

The work will be internally marked during the course with External Moderation by a Visiting Examiner occurring at the end of the course.

Why choose Art and Design:

As a distinct subject, Art and Design is unique. The skills learned in Art are entirely transferrable to many situations due to the focus upon creative learning, experimentation and independent thinking. Art is also a way of understanding the world in which we live, our cultures, our histories, our similarities and differences. In many ways Art can be seen as being an integral aspect of all disciplines and can enhance the way that we navigate the challenges of work, study, and everyday life. This course is ideal for any student who has a passion for exploration, and the urge to make something new and original. If you enjoy seeing your ideas come to life then Art and Design is for you.

Skills and progression:

It is now generally accepted that most of the jobs that exist in the future have yet to be invented and many will belong to the Creative Economy. The skills learned in Art and Design will be at the core of this employment revolution. Over £90,000,000,000 (yes, billions) is generated by the Creative Industries each year in the UK alone and we are seen as one of the paramount creative hubs in the world.

A snapshot of the avenues you can follow through an Art and Design education are:

Advertising, Architecture, Museum Curation, Games Design, Fashion Design, Teaching, Lecturing, Industrial Design, Fine Art, Set and Theatre Design, TV and Film Design, Film and TV production, Camera Direction, Film Editor, Photography, Illustration, Media, Animation, Graphic Design, Engineering, Web Design, Textile Design, Printmaking, Exhibition Design, Art History, Interior Design, Cartography, Landscape Architecture, Art Therapy, Art Conservation, Costume Design, Theatre Tech, and the list goes on and will continue to expand in