

THE ART ACADEMY

Foundation

Course Document

Academic Year 2017/18

OVERVIEW AND STRUCTURE

The course aims to give students an intensive and fulfilling foundation in what it means to be an artist and pursue a future in the Visual Arts. Students develop a strong and dynamic work ethic, analytical evaluative skills and tools for developing ideas and their individual practice. The course is distinctive from other Foundation courses in that it also provides unprecedented skills training whereby students are introduced to a wide variety of disciplines through the choice of elective skills workshop courses throughout the year which enrich and inform student's individual emerging artistic practice.

Our intensive and supportive tutoring enables students to plan and enact progression to further study through the development of a comprehensive portfolio, personal statements and all the necessary information and support for entry into Higher Education.

Diverse skills modules and specialist sessions allow students to experiment with different core media and techniques, exploring a broad range of materials and processes with which to express and help students decide where to focus their practice in future study. A series of personal projects develop student's personal interests, core practical skills, design process, formal language and conceptual clarity.

A range of talks, lectures, seminars, workshops and trips help students to contextualise their practice within the history of art and importantly, within the contemporary environment. Students are also introduced to research resources through professional development topics which equip them for both further study and future life as an artist.

The Academy works to three 10 week terms:

TERM	DATES
Autumn	September to December
Spring	January to March
Summer	April to July

Full time

The full time programme is one year. Students are tutored three days a week in the Academy but are expected to work independently on projects for 2 days (14 hours minimum) a week. One tutored day a week will be spent on the personal project in the Foundation studio space and two days of the week in various skills workshop courses based in different studios and workshops in the Academy.

The tutored skills workshop courses run every day of the week 10am-5pm and students have access to the Foundation studio space during Academy hours (9am-5pm weekdays) for project work and self-directed study, although students may complete this work elsewhere. This would, for example, allow students to undertake paid work on those days if needed and to catch up on your self-directed study at other times.

Term 1:

1 day Foundation skills module - Drawing (5 wks/ ½ a term)

1 day Foundation skills module -Painting (5 wks/ ½ a term)

1 day Foundation skills module - exploring Digital techniques (5 wks/ ½ a term)

1 day Foundation skills module - exploring 3D skills workshop courses (5 wks/ ½ a term)

+ Friday Personal project 1

Term 2:

2 elective skills workshop course days (students have free choice of a range of 10 week long courses)

+ Friday Personal project 2 + UCAS portfolio prep & Application

Term 3:

1 or 2 elective skills workshop course days (*in term 3 students may wish to devote more time to the personal project and graduate exhibition and are therefore able to opt out of 1 skills day when they elect their choices*)

+ Friday Personal project 3

Part time

The part time programme is two years. Students are tutored two days a week but are expected to work independently on projects for an additional 7 hours minimum a week. One tutored day a week will be spent on your personal project and one day of the week in various elective skills workshop courses based in different studios and workshops in the Academy. As part time students do not complete the Foundation skills modules in digital and 3d, they are expected to select a 3D and digital elective skills workshop course where relevant.

Term 1:

1 day Foundation skills module -Drawing (5 wks/ ½ a term)

1 day Foundation skills module - Painting (5 wks/ ½ a term)

+ Friday Personal project 1

Term 2:

1 elective skills workshop course days (students have free choice of a range of 10 week long courses)

+ Friday Personal project1(to half term)/ Friday Personal project 2 (second half of term)

Term 3: 1 elective skills workshop course days + Friday Personal project 2

Term 4: 1 elective skills workshop course day + Friday UCAS portfolio prep & Application

Term 5:

1 elective skills workshop course day

+ Friday UCAS prep & Application (to half term)/ Friday Personal project 3 (second half of term)

Term 6: 1 elective skills workshop course day + Friday Personal project 3

AUTUMN (TERM 1)

Students actively explore the different notions of what art is considered to be and thereby, how different artists are situated in the wider context of the art world, becoming confident in their expressive abilities and discover the joy and power of experimentation and exploration in a wide range of media in four disciplines; Drawing, Painting, 3D (including Installation and sculpture) and Digital Media.

Full time students follow a module comprising of 5 week long modules over the first term (along with a studio practice/ personal project day) Part time students will undertake only the drawing and painting modules in the first term (along with a studio practice/ personal project day):

Drawing

This first module is designed to settle students into the programme, encourage free expression, and illustrate the huge potential and versatility of 'drawing' in its widest sense and of drawing as a primary medium of expression and observation. A wide range of styles and materials will be used.

Photo, video and digital

In this module students get the chance to explore photography, video and other digital media as an artistic medium and as a means of documentation. This will include introductions to key software for photographic work (including Adobe Photoshop) and video editing. Students also explore narrative, storyboarding and presentation of time-based work, as well as learning how to photograph their own work.

Painting

The aim of the module is to develop student's exploration of the medium of paint and its basic techniques through experimentation, still life and developing work from another painting. Students will primarily consider the materiality of various paint mediums and how it feels to handle them and how their materiality can inspire and direct the forms they make.

3D

The aim of the module is to introduce students to the practice of Installation and Kinetic sculpture. Students will explore basic mechanics and ways to create sculptural movement as well as how space is used as a medium and vehicle of expression, to developing a sensitivity to 3D language; processes, materials, and form. Students will also develop the confidence to work on a large/architectural scale in a variety of mediums and learn the value and nature of working on a collaborative project and how this may function within their singular practice.

SPRING (TERM 2)

Students will be given the opportunity to select elective skills workshop courses in areas that particularly appeal to them. Full time students choose two ten week courses (each course is 1 day a week) from a range of focused skills workshop courses available on the Art Academy programme which combine a selection of skills aimed at giving students a wider introduction to different mediums and techniques. The third day will be spent on a studio practice personal project.

Part time students choose one ten week elective skills workshop course to accompany their studio practice personal project day. This format is repeated for terms 3, 4 & 5 for part time students.

SUMMER (TERM 3)/ FINAL TERM (TERM 5/6 for part time students)

Students work towards a final exhibition as well as selecting one or two final elective skills workshop courses to complement and support the development of their personal project work in the final term.

Individual tutors and the Head of Foundation constantly monitor individual student's progress and each personal project module will be followed by a critique and roundup session. Students are given constant care and guidance throughout the programme.

CONTENT

Foundation Skills Modules and Elective Skills Workshop Courses (Media experimentation)

The skills are all taught in such a way that students gain a real understanding of the techniques and creative opportunities within that medium, but we will also ensure that students understand how the skill is relevant within the broader context of their own creative practice. Lectures at the beginning and end of each skill component explore such things as the language and nature of that medium, why you might choose it, how it combines with other media, and its individual aesthetics, concepts and contexts.

The tutors for each skills course are all practising artists who are specialist, highly skilled professionals in their particular field.

Visits

Being situated in central London, regular gallery visits to key contemporary exhibitions will take place throughout the course to engage students with contemporary artists and curation. These will be complemented by visits to museums to study and observe the history of art and creativity at first hand.

Talks, seminars & lectures

Students participate in a range of practical and theoretical talks, seminars, lectures and workshops on subjects such as design process, portfolio preparation, the use of sketchbooks, what it is to be an artist, the language of art, art critique, and contemporary contextualisation.

Preparation and progression

This element of the course is designed to help students prepare for application and interview for their chosen course for further study. The Head of Foundation and tutors will make sure that each student has a clear understanding of the subject area they aim to study, and help students decide the institutions best suited to their personal study aims. Students have mock interviews and receive help with writing a statement and applying through UCAS, the organisation and presentation of their portfolio in time for applications and interviews. Students also have time to visit the institutions they are considering applying to, and will have ample opportunity to find out about the Art Academy HE courses and to speak to currently enrolled students should these courses be of potential interest.

Personal Projects (integrating theory and practice)

Throughout the course, projects* are set to develop students' practical and conceptual skills as an artist and allow room for extensive experimentation. The projects allow students to discover and develop the ideas and processes central to their practice. The final stage of the course uses skills gathered throughout the Foundation course. The final project (term 3 full time students and terms 5 & 6 part time students) will partly form the basis of a final exhibition and is intended to help

students consolidate the key elements of the course from design process and conceptual development to formal interpretation.

*Full time students undertake three personal projects; one each term. Part time students complete the same projects over a term and a half each time, with term 4 through to half term in term 5 being used for portfolio and UCAS application preparation.

Art Theory

A broad introduction to art history including key movements and their context. Special attention is paid to the movements and developments of the 20th century and how they have led to contemporary practice. The teaching of these sessions will involve visits, lectures, discussions, student presentations and practical sessions.

This module invites students to think critically about a range of topics in the field of art theory including how we can look at and talk about art, how artworks are affected by the world around them, how art can alter the way we perceive things and how art can be political. Throughout the course we will consider different ways in which art theory can be useful for art practice - how can our ideas about art influence what we decide to make? There will also be a strong emphasis on looking throughout and students can expect their visual skills to be greatly improved by the end of the year.

There will be one short, annotated written piece undertaken as part of the Art Theory module in order to teach the research skills needed for study at Higher Education level and instill an understanding of the value of research and contextualisation of student's individual practice.

End of year exhibition.

The show will be a culmination of the work students make during the course, not only helping and pushing to develop and complete work to a deadline, but also channelling efforts into student's chosen areas and providing the invaluable experience of setting up and running an exhibition.

Personal Tutorials

Students are assigned a personal tutor who will provide pastoral care, advice on artistic practice and progression to Higher Education. Throughout the year students also have tutorials that will specifically address:

- **Portfolio and progression tutorials** :individual tutorial sessions with the appropriate tutors to help guide choices, presentations and portfolio preparation.
- **Project tutorials**: During each project, there will be constant individual tuition helping students with skills, exploration, and concept development.

Assessment

Skills modules and elective skills workshop course are not graded as they are intended to allow students to take risks, experiment and learn skills that will inform and develop their personal projects, which are graded. Skills module work is also used as a diagnostic tool to assess where student's strengths lie and to inform the advice given in regards to progression and personal practice.

However, it is Academy policy that students must attend at least 80% of each skills module/ course to pass it and the overall programme.

In exceptional circumstances, the Head of Foundation may exercise their discretion to waive this requirement, taking account of any extenuating circumstances or other relevant factors as outlined in the Academy's extenuating circumstances policy (see student handbook). Any failed components need to be made up or credited in order to complete the programme (this will be arranged in consultation with the Head of Foundation and Academic Course Manager)

Informal feedback and assessment will happen at the end of each skills module/ elective skills workshop, so that students can monitor their own progress, assess strengths and identify areas of interest.

At the end of terms one and two, there will be a portfolio presentation of student's personal projects. Students will present their work to assessors and then leave their portfolios for further review. This work will receive a grade and students will be provided with written feedback.

All three personal projects and the art theory essay contribute to the final grade.

The assessment structure is devised to ensure that students make full use of the whole foundation programme and do not focus all their efforts on the initial stages and portfolio development for degree application, putting less effort into the latter stages of the course once acceptance to further study has been granted. All assessment goes through a double marking process to ensure standards and parity.

Grading Criteria (Art Theory)

<i>Your art theory essay is graded by the following criteria and 4 levels.</i>	Fail (unsatisfactory standard)	Pass (satisfactory standard)	Merit (high standard)	Distinction (very high standard)
Demonstrate visual acuity and an ability to describe artworks in detail				
Demonstrate an understanding of how materials, techniques and processes communicate meaning and ideas in art work.				
Demonstrate an understanding that the 'meaning' of any artwork is grounded in its objects and practices				
Demonstrate an ability to think reflectively				
Communicate and present ideas clearly				

Grading Criteria (all practical work)

<i>All studio projects are graded by the following criteria and 4 levels.</i>	Fail (unsatisfactory standard)	Pass (satisfactory standard)	Merit (high standard)	Distinction (very high standard)
Research Systematic identification and investigation of a range of academic and cultural sources.				
Analysis, Evaluation & Interpretation Examination and interpretation of research material evident within preparation and final Piece.				
Experimentation				

Dynamic practical experimentation of ideas, materials and processes relevant to the selected methodology and concepts explored.

Self Management

Management of learning through reflection, evaluation, planning, self direction, subject engagement and commitment leading to a resolved final piece.

Technical Competence

Level of skills evidenced in the execution of ideas appropriate to the medium and expression of the concept

Communication and Presentation

Clarity of purpose/intention, awareness of context of own work (formal /conceptual / thematic/ historic etc.)

Grade allocation

Term one personal project 1 presentation assessment – 30%

Term two personal project 1 presentation assessment – 30%

Term three personal project/ Final show assessment – 30%

Art Theory Essay – 10%

Students are awarded an overall programme grade of Pass, Merit or Distinction using the above weighting of elements.

Facilities

The Foundation programme has its own dedicated space in the Art Academy's Newington site with plenty of space for study and the storage of materials and artwork. Some of the Academy's resident artists have studios in the various buildings that make up the campus, offering excellent opportunities to rub shoulders with and learn from practising artists.

Students will also come to the Art Academy's Mermaid Court buildings for skills modules and workshop courses. The elective workshop courses are comprised of a range of students from all of the Academy's long courses (the Foundation Skills modules in the first term are comprised only of Foundation students). This means that students on the Foundation course benefit from the knowledge and experience of a diverse student body and have the opportunity to socialise with the wider community. Students also have access to the Foundation studios outside tutored hours to continue with project work and develop their self-directed practice.

Some materials and equipment are included in the course or provided in the studios, but students will need to buy some basic materials for general use (such as painting and drawing kits) and for specialist courses in printmaking or sculpture.

The Mermaid Court studios are ideally located in central London, with excellent transport links just a few minutes walk away and benefit from being 15 minutes walk from Tate Modern and all the other exciting cultural and recreational facilities of London's South Bank. The Newington studio is in a vibrant area of Elephant and Castle, 15 minutes walk from the Mermaid Court building and close to many bars and eateries.

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