



ART and DESIGN GCSE

Ofsted said: "There is an aspirational and broad curriculum." May 2026

ART & DESIGN (FINE ART) GCSE SPECIFICATION AT A GLANCE

EXAM BOARD: Pearson Edexcel

Candidates will pursue a course leading to the award of a GCSE 9-1 qualification at the end of Year 11.

END OF COURSE ASSESSMENT

There are two components associated with the GCSE. Component 1 refers to the Personal Portfolio, which accounts for 60% of the GCSE. Component 2 refers to the externally set assignment, accounting for 40% of the GCSE.

Both components require students to show evidence of all four assessment objectives. Students are required to:

- AO1: develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources
- AO2: refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes
- AO3: record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses
- AO4: present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language

Component 1 - Personal portfolio 60%

Students will be following projects and themes in order to demonstrate their ideas and creative skills. They will work with a range of media to show a journey and the development of their ideas and processes leading to a final piece.

Component 2 - Externally set assignment 40%

The externally-set assignment draws together the skills and creative process acquired in Component 1. Students will present a personal response to an externally-set theme. The themes are broadly based and allow students to respond individually to them.

To allow students to develop ideas, they will have a sustained period of preparatory studies. This will comprise a portfolio of development work through studies, experimentation and contextual research. Under a 10-hour period of examination, the students will work unaided to produce a final personal response to the theme.

SUPPORTING TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES:

The course will include a ceramics workshop to enrich their knowledge in sculpture.

SHOULD MY CHILD STUDY ART & DESIGN (FINE ART)?

Creativity is instilled in us from a young age. An art GCSE allows students to embrace their creativity and desire to experiment. Art allows students to develop mature, independent and insightful ideas through a visual language. The personal approach towards the subject allows students to think visually, socially and culturally through the work they produce, enhancing their knowledge and concepts overall.

What will my child gain from Art & Design (fine art)?

An art student gains more than a qualification. They gain the ability to think creatively and critically. They re-imagine the world and ideas. They analyse and problem solve, to produce work they feel proud of, to display visually as a means to share ideas. Most importantly, if a student has a passion for art, they gain an opportunity and space to focus and enjoy creating.

Where will art & design (fine art) take my child?

There is a wealth of opportunity for art students. In terms of employment, some may lead on to be a Fine Artist and exhibit their works, others may turn towards illustrating, graphic design, textile design, art history, art therapy, advertising, photography or perhaps gallery curating.

Art and Design is recognised for its broad aspect of transferable skills. An art education enhances the skills required in other fields. It allows students to work independently and creatively to problem solve and it requires a strong work ethic; all of which are needed in employment.

Further reading/ suggested revision materials:

Isms – Understanding Art
by Stephen Little

Art – The Definitive Visual Guide
by Andrew Graham Dixon

For further information, please contact:

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