

BA (Hons) Fine Art

Programme Specification

Awarding Institution: University of London (Interim Exit Awards made by Goldsmiths' College)

Teaching Institution: Goldsmiths, University of London

Final Award: BA (Hons) Fine Art

Programme Name: BA Fine Art

Total credit value for programme: 360 credits

Name of Interim Exit Award(s): Not applicable

Duration of Programme: 3 years full time

UCAS Code(s): W190

HECoS Code(s): (100059) Fine Art

QAA Benchmark Group: Art and Design, and History of Art, Architecture and Design

FHEQ Level of Award: Level 6

Programme accredited by: Not applicable

Date Programme Specification last updated/approved: November 2022

Home Department: Art

Department(s) which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:

Not applicable

Programme overview

The BA Fine Art programme prepares students for life-long learning, together with the ability and confidence to earn their living by being flexible, self-motivated and multi-skilled. The experience of the programme helps students to develop as autonomous individuals, with valuable skills for the changing work place.

The main purpose of the BA in Fine Art is to teach students how to make art and to evaluate different critical approaches to their own practice, so they can participate in and contribute to the expanding field of contemporary art.

The degree programme is for students who wish to study and make art as a full-time activity. It encourages individual development and creativity, and enables the progressive acquisition of ongoing independent learning skills.

Studio Practice research provides the context that integrates all aspects of the programme. Students spend the greater part of their working time in the studios or in one of the many research laboratories. During the three years, the programme encourages student understanding of the interrelationship between practice and theory through the application of

relevant practical skills, critical thinking, writing and discussing their own and others' work in a public forum. The studios provide the student with a working space which they share with peers from all three levels of the programme. This mix of students in the studios encourages shared learning and gives opportunities for informal peer discussion and evaluation.

The Research Laboratories are equipped with specialist equipment and are staffed by qualified and experienced technicians who support the students in acquiring and developing the technical skills necessary for the production of their own work.

The Critical Studies element of the module is designed to support the students' practical work in the studios. The lectures and seminars, introduce and develop key issues which inform and develop contemporary art practice. They engage and extend the students' critical faculties and their ability to discuss, write about, analyse and judge contemporary art.

The Programme supports the creation of a body of practical work and critical writing that demonstrates the student's creative ambition and understanding at the highest level they are able to achieve. It provides an environment that encourages the students to manage their own learning and research as well as stimulating their appreciation of the work of other practitioners in the expanding field of art.

The Programme is staffed by interdisciplinary artists and technicians who use their professional experience of the practical, critical and cultural arenas that characterise contemporary art, to benefit the students' development and understanding.

Each year a student is assigned an individual tutor responsible for their academic development. Students attend tutorials and seminars that support student learning that take place at scheduled intervals throughout the academic year. These occasions provide opportunities for interactive learning which enables students to gain confidence in presenting and discussing their module work critically before a variety of different audiences.

Staff monitor student performance throughout the programme to facilitate students' progress and to provide appropriate encouragement, help and guidance to be given to those students experiencing difficulties.

The programme provides the opportunity for the students to discover and develop a wide range of communication and transferable skills to enable them to practice independently as artists and creative individuals beyond graduation.

Programme entry requirements

Home and EU Applicants

Home and EU applicants apply on-line through UCAS. Once the college has received notification of the application, the applicant is sent details and guidance on how to submit an on-line portfolio. The portfolio should include up to 12 images or digital files, of which three can be media files such as movies and audio work. A preliminary selection is made on the basis of this portfolio. Those applicants selected are then invited for interview, bringing with them a portfolio of current work. A final selection is made at this point.

For entry to degrees at Goldsmiths students need to satisfy the minimum entrance requirements of the University and the individual programme. For degrees in the Department of Art, these are as follows.

Candidates under 21 years of age must have passes in two subjects at General Certificate of Education (GCE) at (Advanced) A-level, including one full (AS + A2) A-level, which can be supplemented with either:

1 or 2 additional full A-levels or
3 to 5 GCE AS-levels in different subjects or
a combination of the above.

Please note: we accept recognised equivalents to the above both from within the UK and abroad.

Students benefit from a certain degree of direction and focus prior to entering the Department. Therefore, although we consider each application on its individual merits, we do not normally interview or consider applicants who have no post-secondary study or experience such as an approved foundation module or similar post-secondary education module in art and design. We welcome applications from mature students (over 21). If they have not completed a period of post-secondary study or a foundation module, we may consider their application on the basis of other relevant experience and a portfolio.

Overseas (non-EU applicants)

Overseas applicants apply on-line through UCAS. Once the college has received notification of the application, the applicant is sent details and guidance on how to submit an on-line portfolio. The portfolio should include up to 12 images or digital files, of which three can be media files such as movies and audio work. A preliminary selection is made on the basis of this portfolio. Those applicants selected are then invited for interview. This interview may either be in person, in which case the applicant is asked to attend with a portfolio of current work, or remotely via Skype or equivalent means. A final selection is made at this point.

English Language qualifications

If a candidate's first language is not English, they should have:

GCSE/O-level at Grade C or above in English Language, or an equivalent qualification OR a minimum score of 6.5 in IELTS (International English Language Testing System) and no element lower than 6.0 as administered by the British Council in most countries.

We prefer IELTS because it shows us more clearly which areas of candidates' English needs to be improved. If they have a lower score than either of these, but at least 5.5 in IELTS, they may be offered a place if they attend an approved module in English for Academic Purposes; we will provide advice on suitable modules. If they are applying for an Extension Degree, they should have a minimum English Language score of 5.0 in IELTS, or equivalent.

Admission is based on the principle that there is a reasonable expectation that the student will be able to fulfil the aims and objectives of the programme and achieve the required academic standards.

Programme learning outcomes

The programme learning outcomes represent the summation of the interrelated learning expectations of the respective module elements. These level specific outcomes are presented in detail in the Programme Handbook.

The programme has a set of specific learning outcomes for each year, which the Studio Practice and Critical Studies elements of the modules utilise in order to assess the student's work and performance on the programme. The outcomes demand more from the student as they move through the programme and track the overall development of the student's incremental learning.

Students who successfully complete the programme will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	understand the key aspects of your own practice and its concerns;	Studio practice tutorials, group tutorials, Convenors, Exhibition
A2	demonstrate a coherent and detailed body of knowledge with regard to the historical and contemporary contexts of art;	Studio practice tutorials, group tutorials, Critical Studies
A3	demonstrate a coherent understanding of the historical and critical models relevant to contemporary art and to your own work and its concerns.	Studio practice tutorials, group tutorials, Convenors, Critical Studies

Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	draw on your own research to analyse, discuss and debate your work critically and coherently in tutorials and Convenor groups;	Group tutorials, Convenors
B2	make imaginative use of historical and theoretical models for understanding and interpreting contemporary art;	Studio practice tutorials, group tutorials, Convenors, Critical Studies
B3	articulate your research, judgements and interpretations in your practice and in the form of an imaginative and conceptually coherent piece of writing.	Studio practice tutorials, group tutorials, Convenors, Critical Studies

Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	make a comprehensive selection of clearly appropriate means and materials to support and enhance the content of your work;	Studio practice tutorials, Exhibition
C2	make innovative critical judgements about your own work and its relationship to the broader field of contemporary art practice;	Studio practice tutorials, group tutorials, Exhibition
C3	make confident use of conceptual and practical skills in your own practice.	Studio practice tutorials, Exhibition

Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	sustain independent study;	Studio practice tutorials, Exhibition, Critical Studies
D2	present and discuss your work, and its concerns confidently;	Group tutorials, Convenors
D3	make effective use of IT in the support of your work and essay writing.	Studio practice tutorials, Critical Studies

Grading Criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	1st: First (Exceptional)	<p>Work that reflects an exceptional level of achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes. The work demonstrates:</p> <p>Studio Practice: original research and a rigorous conceptual understanding of the chosen field. The decisions made in the manipulation of the visual material challenge the current limits and make a significant contribution to the field of contemporary art;</p> <p>Critical Studies: a very ambitious application of knowledge and extremely wide ranging independent research, a rigorous understanding of the chosen field and a distinctive expression of ideas, coherent argument and innovative critical reflection, and an exceptionally imaginative and challenging interpretation of contemporary art.</p>

70-79%	1st: First (Excellent)	<p>Work that reflects an excellent level of achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes. The work demonstrates:</p> <p>Studio Practice: wide research evidence of a clear understanding of the chosen field. It shows a high level of conceptual rigour that indicates sustained independent study together with an original and imaginative visual interpretation of contemporary art, challenging the current limits of the field;</p> <p>Critical Studies: ambitious and excellent application of knowledge and wide ranging research, clear understanding of the chosen field and an excellent expression of ideas, a coherent argument and a distinctive critical reflection, and an imaginative and challenging interpretation of contemporary art.</p>
60-69%	2.1: Upper Second (Very good)	<p>Work that reflects a very good standard of achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes. Work demonstrates:</p> <p>Studio Practice: evidence of very good critical reflection with confident manipulation of the chosen visual material. It is imaginative and indicates that a sustained artistic project has emerged, albeit within known boundaries of the field of study;</p> <p>Critical Studies: clear and coherent expression of ideas and a significant understanding of the chosen field, strong and effective critical reflection, and a strong degree of imagination yet maintains known boundaries.</p>
50-59%	2.2: Lower Second (Good)	<p>Work that reflects a good standard of achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes and demonstrates:</p> <p>Studio Practice: a competent understanding, coupled with good overall ability. There is evidence of imagination and applied critical reflection with sound technical competence in the manipulation of the overall visual material that requires further sustained development;</p> <p>Critical Studies: effective application of knowledge and the capacity to express ideas through discussion, some critical reflection and evidence of a clear understanding of the chosen field, and evidence of some imagination but little ambition to challenge known boundaries.</p>

40-49%	3rd: Third (Pass)	<p>Work that reflects a threshold standard of achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes, and demonstrates:</p> <p>Studio Practice: a limited understanding of the field of study. The work demonstrates some manipulation of the chosen visual material indicating an unimaginative response to the practice that readily accepts known boundaries; Critical Studies: limited understanding of the chosen field and little critical reflection, little coherence and lacks an overall argument, and little evidence of imagination and no ambition to challenge known boundaries.</p>
25-39%	Fail	<p>Work is unsatisfactory and represents an overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes. The work shows:</p> <p>Studio Practice: scant attention to the critical and practical demands of the practice with no apparent judgement in the manipulation of the visual material. The unit must be re-taken;</p> <p>Critical Studies: little evidence of any understanding of the chosen field, no imagination or critical ability, an incoherent expression of ideas, and no evidence of any critical reflection that would allow the student to challenge known boundaries. The unit must be re-sat.</p>
10-24%	Bad fail	<p>Work that represents a significant overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes. The work shows:</p> <p>Studio Practice: no attempt to address the practical demands of the practice and demonstrates no judgement or exercise critical reflection. The unit must be re-taken;</p> <p>Critical Studies: no evidence of any understanding of the chosen field, no imagination or critical ability, an incoherent expression of ideas, a complete lack of critical reflection that would allow the student to identify known boundaries. The unit must be re-sat.</p>
1-9%	Very bad fail	<p>Work that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes. Work shall be deemed a non-valid attempt and must be re-taken.</p>
0%	Non submission or plagiarised	<p>A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for plagiarised assessment.</p>

Mode of study

Programme structure

The BA Fine Art programme consists of modules comprising elements in Studio Practice and Critical Studies leading to a degree in Fine Art. It requires full time study over three years during which the student takes a module to the value of 120 credits in each year. It is an intensive programme of studio and laboratory practice supported by individual tutorials and group seminars, together with a comprehensive series of Critical Studies lectures and seminars. Each student is allocated a studio working base which is the focal point of their activities for the duration of their studies. The student is responsible for determining the specific nature of their practice with guidance from the tutorial staff.

Year 1 (120 credits) Studio Practice = 75% Critical Studies = 25% Overall Weighting = x1
Studio Practice in Year 1 covers the acquisition of fundamental knowledge and basic practical skills necessary for initiating independent research. In Year 1 students are subject to continuous assessment assisted by a presentation of their Studio Practice coursework in term 3. At the end of each term progress reports provide students with an indication of their current level of achievement and tutor feedback reports advise them on how to improve their performance.

In Critical Studies the lecture and seminar series offers the occasion to explore and examine the historical and critical context in which art is made, seen and understood. Students are required to write 2 essays for assessment, one at the end of both the first and second term.

Year 2 (120 credits) Studio Practice = 75% Critical Studies = 25% Overall Weighting = x3
Studio Practice in Year 2 begins to deal with more complex issues and the selected application of acquired knowledge, practical skills and conceptual principles necessary for the development of the student's work. In Year 2 students' Studio Practice coursework is subject to continuous assessment augmented by a Viva Voce in term 3.

At the end of each term progress reports provide students with an indication of their current level of achievement and tutor feedback reports advise them on how to improve their performance.

In Critical Studies the module engages and extends student's critical faculties enabling them to write about their own work and ideas. Students are required to select one seminar option at the beginning of the first and second term. Students are required to submit 2 essays of between 2500 and 3000 words, one at the end of term 1 and one in term 2. Both essays must reach a pass standard for progression to Level 3. Critical Studies seminar presentations at this level, offer students an opportunity for experimentation where the preliminary stages of written work can be explored and developed.

Year 3 (120 credits)
Studio Practice component = 75% Critical Studies component = 25% Overall Weighting = x5

Studio Practice in Year 3 should reflect the potential of the student to practice as an independent artist. It is expected that the student is now fully self-motivated, and able to demonstrate a high degree of understanding, critical awareness and independent judgement. Year 3 students are subject to continuous assessment, and receive progress reports providing them with an indication of their current level of achievement, and tutorial feedback reports advising them on how to improve their performance.

The final exhibition, which takes place in the third term, evidences achievement and is a major component of assessment in Year 3.

In Critical Studies the student's written work is supported through the supervision of Critical Studies staff. The aim is to encourage independent research relevant to the student's studio practice. The student presents this research in the form of a dissertation of between 6,500 and 7,000 words.

Full-time mode

Academic year of study 1

Module Name	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Type	Term
Year 1	FA51012C	120	4	Compulsory (non-compensatable)	1-3

Academic year of study 2

Module Name	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Type	Term
Year 2	FA52012B	120	5	Compulsory (non-compensatable)	1-3

Academic year of study 3

Module Name	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Type	Term
Year 3	FA53012C	120	6	FA52012B	1-3

Part-time mode

Academic support

Support for learning and wellbeing is provided in a number of ways by departments and College support services who work collaboratively to ensure students get the right help to reach their best potential both academically and personally.

All students are allocated a Personal Tutor (one in each department for joint programmes) who has overall responsibility for their individual progress and welfare. Personal Tutors meet with their student at least twice a year either face-to-face, as part of a group and/or electronically. The first meeting normally takes place within the first few weeks of the autumn term. Personal Tutors are also available to students throughout the year of study. These meetings aim to discuss progress on modules, discussion of the academic discipline and reports from previous years if available (for continuing students). This provides an opportunity for progress, attendance and assessment marks to be reviewed and an informed discussion to take place about how to strengthen individual learning and success.

All students are also allocated a Senior Tutor to enable them to speak to an experienced academic member of staff about any issues which are negatively impacting their academic study and which are beyond the normal scope of issues handled by Programme Convenors and Personal Tutors.

Students are provided with information about learning resources, the [Library](#) and information available on [Learn.gold \(VLE\)](#) so that they have access to department/ programme handbooks, programme information and support related information and guidance.

Taught sessions and lectures provide overviews of themes, which students are encouraged to complement with intensive reading for presentation and discussion with peers at seminars.

Assessments build on lectures and seminars so students are expected to attend all taught sessions to build knowledge and their own understanding of their chosen discipline.

All assessed work is accompanied by some form of feedback to ensure that students' work is on the right track. It may come in a variety of forms ranging from written comments on a marked essay to oral and written feedback on developing projects and practice as they attend workshops.

Students may be referred to specialist student services by department staff or they may access support services independently. Information about support services is provided on the [Goldsmiths website](#) and for new students through new starter information and induction/Welcome Week. Any support recommendations that are made are agreed with the student and communicated to the department so that adjustments to learning and teaching are able to be implemented at a department level and students can be reassured that arrangements are in place. Opportunities are provided for students to review their support arrangements should their circumstances change. The [Disability](#) and [Wellbeing](#) Services maintain caseloads of students and provide on-going support.

The [Careers Service](#) provides central support for skills enhancement, running [The Gold Award](#) scheme and other co-curricular activities that are accredited via the Higher Education Achievement Report ([HEAR](#)).

The [Academic Skills Centre](#) works with academic departments offering bespoke academic literacy sessions. It also provides a programme of academic skills workshops and one-to-one provision for students throughout the year.

Employability and potential career opportunities

The BA Fine Art attracts ambitious and capable students whose aspiration is to become professional artists. A large number of students continue to be successful practising artists after graduating. Six winners of the Turner Prize studied at Goldsmiths, including three from the undergraduate programme, and since 1991 nineteen alumni and alumnae from the undergraduate programme have been short-listed. The success of our students continues to be reflected in current exhibitions at home and abroad.

Art defines itself against a background of the past and re-defines itself within a changing present. The ability to recognise the significance of change as a fundamental component of self-development is crucial, both in the making of art, and in enabling the student/artist to contribute to the wider culture and economy. The BA Fine Art programme provides students with more than a disciplinary knowledge. Students also learn the language that identifies them as members of a particular community of critical practitioners with shared intellectual and economic concerns. It grows a knowledge of critical themes and an awareness of the protocols and relevant social procedures that underpin current professional life.

Fine Art practice is represented to the student through a living network of individual practitioners, institutions, galleries, museums, granting agencies, and critical journals - that define and re-define the boundaries of an expanding field. It is this matrix that constructs the concerns of the community, and that is also responsible for circulating and communicating shared values. The programme helps individuals make the connection between life-long learning, the wider culture and personal prosperity within the creative economies. The BA Fine Art programme aims to equip students with the necessary skills to develop independent thought and confidence in their practice. It prepares the students for post-graduate study and further autonomous learning.

The programme aims to provide students with the confidence and the transferable skills - written, verbal and cooperative - that will enable them to work in a variety of fields related to visual art once they graduate. This includes a range of curriculum specific and supplementary training and/or skills acquisition that supports student employability. These include:

- A series of sessions on *Life After Graduation* is organised across the undergraduate programmes in collaboration with the College Careers Service. The series is well attended and the feedback from the students was very positive. These sessions include building an artist's website, writing an artist's statement, applying for MAs in Fine Art as well as panel discussions from practitioners in the field. All those employed are graduates from the art department helping to maintain connections and embed graduate employability formally into our programme.
- The APA's cover a range of technological processes that enhance learning from digital media to digital printing with some running inductions on a needs be basis on particular digital processes such as 3D printing or sketch up, in design, photoshop, CAD in the media suite which are all transferable skills.

- The ‘Schools’ programme affords students the opportunity to work in sixth form art programmes in secondary schools, and in this way contributes significantly to their employability.
- The Ludo participation award is in its trial year and now could be linked with HEAR to ensure reflection on achievement becomes part of a student's final transcript and is visible to employers.
- We have an extensive Junior Fellow programme in which we employ recent graduates to support programme administration and be gallery assistants in the CCA.
- Founded in 2018, A Particular Reality is a collective formed by students, alumni, and educators from the Fine Art departments at Goldsmiths and Kingston School of Art. As an inter-institutional initiative is committed to anti-racist education and building creative learning environments upon the values of equity and care. This year, the collaboration has extended to work with Manchester School of Art and the art department at Middlesex University. APR is one of ten local community and support organisations using the residency space at Goldsmiths CCA. APR also has collaborative links with: the Deptford People's Heritage Museum; the East Asian Women Artist Community; Talic, Goldsmiths; The Careers Service at Goldsmiths. Activities include: Workshops with current and past students, including workshops with staff and students from Goldsmiths and staff from Thomas Tallis Secondary School, Kidbrooke; Funding workshops; Workshops with Talic [Shifting the Margins]; Artists' talks; visits to archives; workshops with artists. One of the key aims of the project is build a community of students across the three years of the BA Fine Art and BA Fine Art and Art History programmes, but a key aim is also to build a resilient network with students who have graduated, bringing them back into the department to support current students. All workshops visits and events have featured the participation of ex -students.

Potential Career Paths

The typical types of career opportunities from this programme include, but are not limited to Fine artist; Creative director; Commercial filmmaker; Academic; Exhibition designer; Gallery/museum curator; Art critic; Community arts worker; Art installer; Gallery professional; Cultural curator/producer; Artistic director; Arts education officer; Art psychotherapist; Art producer; Art journalist; Advertising art director; independent studio organiser; Art dealer/agent; Conservator; Art in health coordinator.

Programme-specific requirements

Undergraduate degrees have a minimum total value of 360 credits. Some programmes may include a year abroad or placement year and this may be reflected in a higher total credit value. Programmes are composed of individual modules, each of which has its own credit value. Full-time students take modules to the value of 120 credits each year and part-time students not less than 45 credits and not more than 90 credits each year. If a programme has a part-time pathway, the structure will be set out in the section “How the programme is structured” above.

Each full-time year corresponds to a level of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), as follows:

Year 1 = Level 4
Year 2 = Level 5
Year 3 = Level 6

More detailed information about the structure and requirements of a Goldsmiths degree is provided in the [Goldsmiths Qualifications and Credit Framework](#).

Tuition fee costs

Information on tuition fee costs is available at: <https://www.gold.ac.uk/students/fee-support/>

Specific programme costs

In addition to these standard costs, you will also be expected to meet some costs which are specifically related to your programme, which are set out below:

Access and support in all of the art practice areas is included in the cost of your tuition fees. However, you are responsible for providing the materials you choose to work with. A range of materials are available to buy in the practice areas, or you may choose to purchase materials from elsewhere. Reading material is available digitally, however printed copies are available to purchase from the department at less than cost price.