

# A level Art & Design (Fine Art Pathway)

## Why study Fine Art?

- This course allows learners to develop their fine art skills in areas such as drawing, painting, 3D/installation, textiles, printmaking, mixed media and photography.
- This is a creative course, with the emphasis on practical project work, supported by analytical and written elements throughout.
- A qualification in Fine Art can open doors to a range of career options such as Community arts worker, Illustrator, Fine artist, Textiles Designer/Maker, Higher education lecturer, Printmaker and Exhibition designer.



## Why study Fine Art at Solihull Sixth Form College?

- Learners have gone on to study Fine Art at Camberwell, University of the Arts London, Loughborough University, Edinburgh College of Art and Norwich University of the Arts. Other progression routes include Illustration at Birmingham City University and Architecture at the University of Sheffield.
- You will have the opportunity to collaborate on a live brief with a client, gaining invaluable vocational experience. Past learners have had the opportunity to work with Ensall & Hall, who create contemporary prints for the fashion and interior design industries.
- There will also be the opportunity to take part in a range of additional trips and visits. In previous years, learners have visited places such as the National Portrait Gallery, Victoria & Albert Museum and the Whitworth Art Gallery.
- You will have access to all staff in the Art department, as well as equipment. This includes 2 Fine Art studios, a Sculpture studio with a kiln and a print studio, including a brand new screen-printing facility.
- Your end of Year 12 and Year 13 final outcomes will be exhibited in the department's end of year exhibition.

## Case Study

Among the recent successful learners to have taken this course is **Heather Wilkinson**.

She came to the College from Arden Academy and achieved an A\* grade in Fine Art. She has elected to pursue an Arts & Science degree at the University of Birmingham.



*“The library is a fantastic resource with a wide range of subjects, and space to work quietly. In addition, the extra support I received at subject level was really useful, with the Art department operating an open studio policy for students.”*

*Student Heather Wilkinson*



## Course Outline

### Year 12

The specification allows for an introductory, skills based period where learners' work will not be externally assessed. This is a time for experiencing the opportunity of working with a wide and exciting range of materials, media and processes. You will develop a foundation of practical skills in areas such as drawing, painting, collage, textiles, printmaking, digital/moving image and 3D, whilst gaining experience in producing a high quality project, from research stages through to final outcomes. You will be supported by your teachers, who will be preparing you for the challenge of the personal investigation project, which you will start later on in the year and continue with in Year 13. Learners will be introduced to a range of contextual inspirations and will develop skills in research and analysis in order to support your practical investigation.

### Year 13

The second year is split into two components; the personal investigation project that will be completed by the end of January, and the externally-set assignment, which runs from the start of February to the handing-in day in the middle of May. Both of these projects will be an opportunity for you to follow a personal direction, building on your individual strengths, interests and future progression goals.

**Personal Investigation:** The personal investigation project, which is practical by nature, leads to a final piece(s) and is supported by a compulsory written element that links the work of other practitioners to the project. In this component you are in charge and with our support you will produce a portfolio of work that

reflects your strengths and interests. You will be encouraged to work in a variety of ways, exploring fully the subject you have chosen. You will work within 2 areas of study for this component.

**The Externally Set Assignment:** Similar to the last component, but working from a series of starting points set by AQA, you will produce a portfolio of work that leads to a final piece(s), produced in exam conditions. This work will be personal to you and can be produced using techniques and materials that you have chosen. Students, by this stage, are independent learners who work alongside the teachers in the department to realise their ambitions and be given support with their chosen progression pathway. You will work within 1 or more areas of study for this component.

**Independent studio practice:** Each week, in addition to lessons, you will have a timetabled session for independent studio practice. These sessions provide you with access to the studio facilities and equipment (including IT facilities, textiles facilities, photography studio, print room, 3D studio etc.), supported by our technicians. You will use this time for continuous development of your practical and contextual investigations.

### Assessment

The Personal Investigation (Coursework) - 60%

Externally Set Assignment (Exam) - 40%

Examining Board - AQA

### Special Entry Requirements

A GCSE or equivalent qualification at grade 4 or above in Art, Photography, Graphics or Textiles is essential. Creative iMedia is not accepted. Learners must be prepared to work hard and have a passion for this subject. A personal approach is encouraged throughout the course, and it is expected that learners will work in their own time to independently develop their projects. In addition, standard A level entry requirements apply - [www.solihullsfc.ac.uk/courses/entry-requirements](http://www.solihullsfc.ac.uk/courses/entry-requirements).

### Prohibited Options

Learners can only study on one pathway (Graphics & 3D Design, Photography or Fine Art). For this reason, learners interested in 2 or more pathways would be best suited to the BTEC Art & Design Practice course.

### What do our learners go on to do?

Some learners wishing to go onto an Art or Design career progress straight on to specialist degree level courses or in some cases take an Art Foundation course for one year. We are very successful at placing our learners on these courses. We also aim to provide learners with relevant employability skills to support progression in the work place. Through the year, ex-students visit to share their experiences of progression both at HE and in employment. We also host a wide range of talks from universities and professionals.

### Cost Implications

The College supplies most art materials that you will need during your lessons and materials such as paint, clay, paper etc. are available in all studios. Learners are expected to buy a Fine Art Starter Pack at the start of the year which contains sketchbooks and materials from the department. This is approximately £30. Learners are expected to top up their printer credit regularly and this can be actioned on ParentPay. In both Y12 and Y13, learners are required to attend a compulsory local visit at a cost of £20-£30. Learners who choose to go on the overseas residential trip will usually pay approximately £690 for this.

### Complementary Subjects or Enrichment Courses

Year 12 learners can take an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) on an area of study that is not covered in the A level.

#### Examination Results

In the past two years, this course has seen high levels of achievement:

Year	Pass Rate A*-E%	A*-C%
2024	100%	97%
2025	100%	100%

#### Contact

Address: Solihull Sixth Form College  
Widney Manor Road, Solihull  
West Midlands B91 3WR

Tel: 0121 704 2581  
Email: [admissions@solihullsfc.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@solihullsfc.ac.uk)  
Web: [www.solihullsfc.ac.uk](http://www.solihullsfc.ac.uk)