

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
(Undergraduate)**



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	BA (Hons)
4	Programme Title	Fine Art
5	UCAS/Programme Code	W150
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Art and Design
8	FHEQ Level	Level 6
9	Last updated	July 2021

10 Programme Aims

- 1 To recruit students of demonstrable potential who will benefit from the nature and provision of the course.
- 2 To deliver effective teaching of fine art within the School of Arts and Cultures and the University.
- 3 To develop in our students an informed interest in their subject, and enhance their confidence, creativity and independence of thought through the provision of a supportive and responsive learning environment which encourages collaborative and independent learning.
- 4 To produce graduates who are prepared for further creative and intellectual development through the provision of a varied learning experience that supports the development of individual potential and abilities.
- 5 To produce graduates who have acquired a sound knowledge of practical and intellectual approaches to their subject at a general level, and who have progressed to develop learning and understanding in chosen questions.
6. To provide a programme that meets the requirements of an undergraduate level 6 qualification as defined by the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.
7. To provide a programme that conforms to University policies and to the QAA codes of practice

11 Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in the following areas. The programme outcomes have references to the benchmark statements for Fine Art..

A1 - The acquisition of a foundation in and understanding of a range of approaches to Fine Art within the broadly defined areas of painting, sculpture, printmaking, time-based media, photography, performance and art history.

A2 - Building upon this foundation by progressively developing learning and understanding in areas of specialist knowledge and practice (successful careers) in the cultural industry.

A3 - Improving our students' ability to investigate and present their ideas in both a written and visual context.

A4 - The development of the ability to research, analyse and synthesise information and the ability to articulate written and visual material through reasoned arguments based on experimentation and subsequent review and critical evaluation.

A5 - The development of skills known as professional and life skills that are transferable to a wide range of vocational fields that include those skills of visual and verbal presentation, time management and organisation, IT, analytical and critical skills.

A6 - An understanding of the synergies of theory, art history and studio practice and their relationship to the development of a creative contemporary art practice.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The School of Arts and Cultures teaching and learning methods to enable knowledge and understanding are as follows:

Knowledge and understanding (**A1-A6**) in the subject area are communicated through lectures on art and art history (supported by handouts, archival and computer-based reference). There are two distinct and extensive lecture programmes: (a) The Visiting Speaker Lecturer Programme (a series of lectures given by practising artists, critics and curators about their work), (b) art history lectures. Together these provide an historical, contemporary, professional and vocational context within which student knowledge and understanding of art and curatorial / exhibition practice is extended. Seminars, tutorials and student presentations, provide further dissemination of knowledge and understanding. (**A1-A6**).

Throughout the taught component of the course, students are exposed to the language and practice of art through the use of group critique and feedback tutorials, seminars, exhibition and studio visits and international field trips. Individual student learning is supported through reading and archival research, gallery and museum visits, the writing of essays and a dissertation, and practical workshops / projects and seminars covering technical and professional practice and theory.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding (**A1-A6**) are assessed by: essays, dissertation and course-work portfolios in Art History; and, in studio modules, via studio-based assessment tutorials, examination of the submission of practical course-work and examination of Degree Show exhibition submissions. Formal assessment of studio work is supported by informal, formative assessment via peer review, student presentations, group studio critiques and 'open studios' events.

Intellectual Skills

The programme provides opportunities for the development and demonstration of:

B1 - The ability to solve and find creative solutions to problems; aesthetic, practical and theoretical.

B2 - The ability to apply appropriate critical knowledge and understanding of professional practice and its contexts

B3 - Skills in time-management, planning and organisation.

B4 - The ability to reflect critically on the implications of developments in contemporary fine art practice including those mediated by emerging media and technologies and by interdisciplinary strategies, through an understanding of their context and of key current

theories of art.

B5 - The ability to present and formulate ideas and understanding of a given subject.

B6 - The ability to attribute and evaluate value and significance of research and studio work (self-assessment).

Teaching and Learning Methods

Intellectual skills are developed through the dialogue and discussion demanded by individual and group tutorials, and seminars which are features of both studio and art history teaching (**B1-B6**). These skills are also developed by lectures in the Visiting Speaker Lecture Programme and art history modules at Stages 1-3. (**B2-B5**), and by one-to-one supervision of the research, thesis development and written resolution of the Stage 3 dissertation (**B3-B5**). Intellectual command of the implications of technical process is further assisted through workshops and demonstration of technical options/methods across a range of media including photography, electronic media, painting, sculpture, printmaking and drawing (**B1**). Critical evaluation of professional practice through the LifeWorkArt programme and a student-led critical forum at Stage 4 further enhance students' intellectual capacities. Various opportunities and venues to exhibit student's studio work on and off campus provide additional fora for critical discussion of both studio work and its professional context. Two permanent project spaces where students can test and critically evaluate work outside of the normal studio environment provide a distinctive location for individual and group learning methods to be delivered (**B1-B6**).

Participation in collaborative LifeWorkArt projects (such as group exhibitions) with their attendant group discussion sessions and evaluative report writing (**B1-B2**) enables students to develop intellectual skills (**B1, B2, B3, and B6**). The research and testing of data and ideas required in writing the Stage 3 art history dissertation also provide learning opportunities designed to assist students develop their intellectual skills (**B1, B3, B5**).

Assessment Strategy

Intellectual skills (**B1-B6**) are assessed by means of the examination of essays, dissertation, and coursework portfolios in art history, and by studio-based tutorial assessment of practical coursework, examination of the submission of practical course-work and examination of Degree Show exhibition submissions. Formal assessment of studio work is supported by informal, formative assessment via peer review, student presentations, group studio critiques and "open studios" events.

Practical Skills

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in the following areas:

C1 - Developing an understanding of the techniques and methods of fine art production.

C2 - Acquiring a foundation in and understanding of a range of approaches to fine art within the broadly defined areas of painting, sculpture, printmaking, time-based media, photography, performance and art history.

C3 - Improvement in the practical understanding of appropriate subject specific and key skills and the development of 'transferable' skills including those of written and oral communication and presentation.

C4 - Instruction in the use of workshop equipment, in painting, photography, electronic media, IT, printmaking and sculpture.

C5 - Acquiring a sound understanding of professional practice in the chosen subject area and to develop the capacity to identify and develop careers in the visual arts and other related work environments.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The teaching of a range of approaches to the making of studio work is embedded into the structure, content and delivery of the Stage 1 and 2 curricula: Stage 1 projects focussed on specific studio media include practical skills teaching and learning via practical inductions, workshops, technical demonstrations and 1-1 tutorials; Stage 2 “Strands” encourage practical skills diversification taught via small group workshops, demonstrations and discussion groups. Further optional practical workshops (such as video editing, casting demonstrations, specialist printmaking processes, methods and materials of painting) are available to students at all year stages whilst 1-1 tutorials, group studio critiques and the Visiting Speakers Programme (lectures, seminars & tutorials) further support teaching and learning of practical skills. Sign-up tutorials with both academic and technical studio staff offer students access to 1-1 expert instruction. **(C1-C4)**.

LifeWorkArt is a professional development programme running throughout the four-year degree programme. LWA integrates professional practice and studio practice. It is taught through field trips, projects, seminars, workshops and tutorials delivered by Fine Art staff, recent graduates, established artists, professionals from the cultural sector and the careers service etc. Through LWA, students develop subject-specific practical skills relevant to the professional context of their own practice. LWA events and projects typically include: exhibition organisation; website documentation and dissemination of projects; working with galleries, artists and museums; and initiatives such as the LifeWorkArt conference which has been run as a partnership project with other universities in the north east by, and for, the region’s final year fine art students **(C3,C5)**.

Practical skills in art history are supported through access to writing workshops, seminar presentations, feedback on written coursework and, at Stage 3, via 1-1 tutorial supervision by staff assigned to individual dissertation projects. This individual guidance is echoed in studio and workshop teaching where, for example, individual Stage 4 studio projects or Stage 2

A variety of coursework provides learning opportunities for students to develop their practical skills: portfolios of written work, essays, dissertation, projects of studio work, placements, complementary practice “Strands” **(C1-C5)**.

Assessment Strategy

Subject specific and practical skills and the ability to assimilate knowledge and apply skills appropriately **(C1-C5)** are demonstrated in a variety of work submitted for assessment: bodies of creative studio work, the Stage 3 dissertation, essays, seminar presentations, portfolios of pieces of writing and in project reports. Peer review, studio crits and “open studios” events facilitate informal formative assessment of studio work during the semester with summative assessment at the end of each semester: semester 1 in the form of an assessment tutorial; semester 2 through inspection of studio work by an exam panel. In Year 4 a mid-year review provides a vehicle for formative assessment whilst summative assessment takes place at the Degree Show exhibition, which is a central component of finals examination.

Transferable/Key Skills

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the:

D1 - Capacity to work independently, with initiative and in teams.

D2 - Communication and presentation skills.

D3 - Ability to use library, IT and other information resources skilfully and appropriately.

D4 - Ability to apply appropriate research and research methods.

D5 - Plan, organise and prioritise work activities in order to meet deadlines.

D6 - Ability in problem solving.

D7 - Critical, analytic and formative evaluation and judgement skills; formulate reasoned responses to the critical judgements of others.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Key skills are implicit within the structure and aims of the course curriculum, and opportunities are provided for specific skills learning: key skills of communication and presentation are developed in student-led seminars, peer review, group tutorials and studio critiques (**D3, D4**); IT skills, library and subject specific research methods (**D2-D3**) are developed in practical inductions, workshops, and individual tutorials. The context of the student-centred, studio-based learning environment develops and supports the capacity to work independently and with initiative (**D1**). The group tutorial and seminar programmes develop student experience of working with peers as a team (**D1**). Opportunities are provided for collaborative projects when appropriate (e.g. Stage 2 "Strands", Stage 4 art history) (**D1**). The structure of the degree programme and its mix of projects, exhibition presentation, seminars, lectures, studio crits, larger group fora and tutorials, require students to structure and manage time, materials and resources efficiently and effectively (**D5**). Problem solving is fundamental to both fine art study and practice. The development of research and technical methods appropriate to this is supported by studio-based learning and teaching strategies. (**D4, D6**). The use of critique in both individual and group studio tutorials is central to the development of skills in evaluation (**D7**) and is further supported by historical and critical studies (essays, forums, seminars, dissertation) (**D3-D7**).

The LifeWorkArt programme provides students with further learning opportunities in relation to key skills: for example by participating in field trips to galleries, museums and exhibitions where students view, discuss and write about archival materials and artworks (**D1, D4, D7**). Students learn the value of independent and self-initiated practice through the experience of attempting to make and to exhibit distinctive art works, (**D1**). Reflective learning is further supported by tutorial report forms, which ask students to review their work and progress. (**D1-D7**). Presentation skills are developed via: essays, dissertation and other written work; project and exhibition submissions; student-led fora and seminars, and group and individual tutorials. The production and mounting of individual and group exhibitions and presentations is central to student learning, as is the production and publication of attendant literature, posters, postcards and catalogues: all skills that are transferable beyond the subject (**D1-D6**).

Assessment Strategy

Key skills are not usually independently assessed, but regarded as integrated features which contribute to the quality of all coursework. The formal assessment of studio work, essays, seminar presentations, dissertation, portfolios of other written work, reflective reports and the degree show exhibition covers **D1-D6**, **In addition, transferable skills (D 2, D4, D5, D6, D7) are considered as part of** informal formative assessment sessions such as Stage 2 peer review, studio crits at all year stages and Final Year forum.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

BA (Hons) Fine Art at Newcastle University is a full-time 4-year programme comprising modules in studio practice and art history at Stages 1-3, and additional optional professional practice, career development and art writing modules at Stage 4. The structure of the programme has been designed to provide a sound basis of studio,

professional and art historical study at Stages 1-2 enabling more specialised, individual study pathways at Stages 3-4. The emphasis is on the provision of a structure by which students can develop a rigorous and independent fine art practice supported and informed by art historical, theoretical and professional knowledge, and awareness.

With the exception of the Stage 1 first semester art history "module all fine art modules are core, requiring students to pass them in order to progress to the next stage of the degree programme. Compulsory modules at Stage 1 give way to increasing degrees of choice at Stages 2-4. The degree course thus leads students systematically and progressively through a programme of study.

Stage 1

The history of art component provides a framework of art historical training which whilst self-sufficient also supports the study of studio practice by contextualising visual arts practice. The Art History modules (two 20 credit modules) introduce students to some of the essentials of the study of the history of art, including key aspects of chronology, methodology and approaches to looking at artefacts and objects.

Stage 1 of the programme provides an introductory, "strand", project and workshop-based studio practice component in the form of two 40 credit modules. These provide a foundation for student understanding of the principles of making art in a variety of media (**A1-A3; C1-C4**). They introduce students to a range of approaches to the making of studio work, embedding the skills, strategies and understanding which will be required to support their further development (**A4-A7; C1-C6**). The LifeWorkArt programme is introduced at this stage as a further introductory component designed to embed a basic level of awareness of the professional context in which fine art practitioners operate.

The Visiting Speakers Lecture Programme complements both art history and studio practice and is compulsory at Stage 1.

Stage 2

In art history, students select from a menu of specialist modules each informed by staff research interest and expertise. These form a bridge between the generic art historical introduction of Stage 1 and the specialist, more independently researched nature of the Stage 3 dissertation.

In the studio Stage 2 students will typically work across disciplines in order to gradually identify, and to work in depth with, the media and processes most appropriate to their interests and choices of theme (**A4, C3**). In the first semester of Stage 2 the students main studio practice is augmented by an elective, 'complementary practice strand'. These strands extend the range of the students' hands-on experience of contemporary fine art practice and provide opportunities to learn new skills and methods of making work. Strands are focused on subject or discipline-specific issues. In the second semester, strands constitute the LifeWorkArt component of the year stage: students are encouraged and supported in developing projects, often group or collaborative, that happen away from the Fine Art building and thus expose students to working in semi-public, semi-professional situations. A key element of both the first semester and LifeWorkArt Strands is the student's reflective report that documents and evaluates their experience.

The exploratory and experimental nature of Stage 2 studio work allied to the Visiting Speakers Lecture Programme encourages student's developing understanding of the synergies of art history, theory and practice.

Stage 3

At Stage 3 students take the compulsory art history dissertation module (40 credits, 8,000 words) and can select an additional 20 credit lecture-based course if they wish to do so. The art historical subject of the dissertation is decided by the student in consultation with staff and allows for meaningful and useful links to be made between practice, history and theory (**A3, A4, A6**). The dissertation enables students to apply subject specific skills and

understanding (**A1-A7**). It also assists the development of practical (**C1-C5**), cognitive (**B1-B6**) and key skills (**D1-7**).

At Stage 3 student's studio-based inquiries continue alongside their art history dissertation. Studio modules are available to provide either a 80:40 or 60:60 credit balance between studio work and art history. Studio modules enable students to continue the development of a distinctive, individual practice focussed on the examination of themes of their choice, and the application of appropriate technical means. A LifeWorkArt external project forms an integral part of the 80 and 60 credit Studio Practice modules and assists the development of professional and contextual awareness. Bookable project spaces (e.g. The TIC space, Long Gallery & Life Room) provide additional opportunities to take practical work away from the confines of the studio and to rehearse professional and public presentation (**A2, A3, A5, C3**).

At this stage of the course there are opportunities to participate in Fine Art's international exchange programme: semester-long exchanges are available through Socrates/Erasmus* to countries including Austria, Belgium, Germany, Poland and Slovakia. Exchange opportunities are also available at partner institutions in Australia.

Stage 4

At Stage 4 the structure of the programme is further opened out to enable students to make choices appropriate to their strengths, career aims and interests. Studio practice modules of 60, 80, 100 and 120 credits are available. Students can thus concentrate 100% on studio practice or combine smaller studio practice modules with optional modules in art writing (40 credits) LifeWork Art (20 credits) and/or Career Development (20 credits) in order to build a 120 credit study programme. A core of studio practice thus lies at the centre of each student's study practice but may be informed and complemented through study in optional modules.

In Final Year an optional 40 credit art history module focused on art writing is offered which is designed to build on the skills and understanding acquired in the writing of the Stage 3 dissertation. The LifeWorkArt External Project module offers students a chance to carry out projects in the public domain which are supported through teaching, and recognised in assessment. Career Development modules offer possibilities for work-related experience relevant to career and further study plans such as teacher training. At the centre of each student's Final Year is a core of studio practice that must constitute at least 50% of their study programme.

Dependent on module choices methods of teaching and learning in Final Year may include: lectures; seminars; working with the collection of the Hatton Gallery; film showings; workshops, tutorials; studio critiques and larger group sessions; and work-experience. These provide students with opportunities and contexts to further improve and develop in some or all of the areas outlined in intended learning outcomes (**A1-A6**) and to further enhance their subject specific practical skills (**C1-C5**) and intellectual skills (**B1-B6**).

Stage 4 is focused on further specifying and developing a rigorous individual studio practice that will enable the production of a body of work for exhibition. The skills and understanding students have acquired in Stages 1-3 are consolidated and developed in bringing a body of studio work to resolution, and in the management and delivery of projects and coursework in non-practical modules. They will also further develop their ability to be rigorous in critical assessment of their studio work (**B2**) and their knowledge and understanding of professional practice (**C5**), as well as progressively enhance their capacity to work independently (**D1**)

Through developed skills in presentation, planning and organisation (**D5**), students will have initiated and developed a programme of sustained, intensive studio work that reflects individual interests and concerns. They will have produced a body of work for exhibition which derives from the application of acquired skills, understanding and critical judgement (**D1-D6; C1-C5**). They will have extended their knowledge of professional practice and be more aware of a range of visual arts opportunities. In addition, the final exhibition fosters skills of professional presentation and the application of key skills in its planning and

organisation (**D1- D7**).

In defining the nature of their own practice students may choose to specialise in a single studio discipline or to work across and/or between disciplines – this reflects the nature of contemporary fine art practice in the professional sector. Students are supervised in the studio by a tutor individually assigned to them for the duration of Final Year. Studio tutorials, a sign-up surgery tutorial system and a programme of studio-based crits ensure that students encounter a range of studio staff. From October to March the Final Year Forum programme, in which students present their current work to their peers in the lecture theatre, creates a platform to test ideas, engage in debate and to receive feedback. In addition students will receive teaching from visiting artists and fellows. Aspects of professional practice, postgraduate and career opportunities are covered in group sessions, professional workshops, the Visiting Speakers Lecture Programme and LWA sessions. These are further supported by the Interim Project and crits for which students work in tutorial groups to deliver a series of pop-up exhibitions towards the end of the first term. Stage 4 culminates in the planning, organisation and hanging of the Final Exhibition, and submission of course work and project reports.

Key skills (**D2, D3**) teaching is embedded throughout the programme: the development and presentation of practical, LifeWorkArt and art history assignments and projects, and participation in regular group discussions, aural and visual presentations, workshops and collaborative events. These all support and promote the acquisition of key skills. (**D1, D2, D3**). The major requirement of the Degree Show exhibition, which is both a public exhibition and a final exam, promotes and supports the key skills of presentation, organisation, time management, teamwork, and problem solving.

Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)

There are a number of key features which make the programme distinctive.

1. The particular relationship between the study of studio practice and art history distinguishes Fine Art at Newcastle University from the majority of Fine Art courses. An understanding of the synergies of art history, theory and practice and their relationship to the development of a creative contemporary art practice is considered central to the course. Throughout the first two stages of study the balance of studio practice to history of art is set at 80:40 credits, while in Stages 3 and 4, students have the option to change that balance according to their developed preferences and interests. The four-year structure allows an art history dissertation to be delivered at Stage 3: this enables students to apply the knowledge and understanding obtained through their dissertation research to their studio practice in Stage 4. It also allows the programme to offer a distinctive Stage 4 art history option focussed on art writing that builds on the student's experience of the dissertation, and provides a further means of contextualising practice through theoretical and historical research.
2. The studio programme includes two innovative features:
 - (a) The LifeWorkArt programme which is a feature of the studio programme throughout the course. Through a lively and diverse series of innovative field trips, professional artists workshops, exhibition and other visual arts projects, visual arts careers training, and collaborations with those in the cultural sector, LWA provides students with hands-on experience that prepares them for the kind of opportunities they will encounter as Fine Art graduates.
 - (b) 'Complementary practice strands' in Stage 2 are group taught workshops which are designed to encourage students to approach the making of studio work from new and less familiar directions, both conceptually and technically. Strands are led by staff with specialist expertise and are focused on their particular field of practical research.

3. The Visiting Speaker Programme. This provides a diverse package of weekly lectures, seminars and tutorials delivered by a visiting practitioner, curator or theorist. Each visit includes a student-led seminar with the visiting artist, open to all students. In addition the programme generates a website that publicises information on the forthcoming programme, and holds an archive of all past visitors complete with a range of web-links to associated material. This programme therefore works on a number of levels: from being an archive of diverse material on contemporary fine art practitioners, to being a weekly forum for debate, individual tutorial support, and, over the course of a year, a snap shot of twenty different career paths in the visual arts.
4. The structure of the four year programme allows for distinctive options at Stage 4 which allow students to work to their strengths, specialise in areas of greatest interest and to engage with learning opportunities and experience that prepare them for a range of future graduate pathways.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

[W150 Programme Regulations 21-22](#)

13 Support for Student Learning

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

https://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/qsh_progspec_generic_info.pdf

14 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

https://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/qsh_progspec_generic_info.pdf

Accreditation reports

N/A

Additional mechanisms

N/A

15 Regulation of assessment

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

https://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/qsh_progspec_generic_info.pdf

In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in:

The University Prospectus: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/degrees/#subject>

Degree Programme and University Regulations: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/>

Please note. This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if she/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided.

