



GCSE Art and Design

Where could it take you?

Student guide

For more information visit:
aqa.org.uk/artanddesign

Why choose GCSE Art and Design?

If you enjoy being creative, want to increase your practical skills and improve your analytical, communication and research abilities, art and design is a great choice.

The skills you gain make it a great complement to other subjects. Art and design is a way of seeing things and making sense of the world around you. It can help you with further study and prepare you for the world of work.

What will you study?

Depending on your school, you'll study at least one of these.

Art, craft and design

This is an excellent general introduction to the study of art, craft and design. You'll look at different approaches to art and use lots of different media, techniques and materials. You are required to study two or more of the titles below:

Fine art

Fine art explores ideas, conveys experiences or responds to a theme or issue of personal significance. The areas of study are very broad and cover drawing, painting, sculpture, installation and mixed media.

Graphic communication

Learn how to design visual materials to convey information, ideas, meaning and emotions in response to a given or self-defined brief. Areas of study include communication graphics, advertising, branding, package design, typography and motion graphics.

Textile design

Your chance to design products for woven, knitted, stitched, printed or decorative textiles. Areas of study include fashion design and illustration, costume design, constructed textiles, printed and dyed textiles and digital textiles.

Three-dimensional design

The design, prototyping and modelling or making of products, objects, and environments, using intellectual, creative and practical skills. Areas of study could include sculpture, ceramics, product design, jewellery design and 3D digital design.

Photography

Produce images using light-sensitive materials such as photographic film, or digital methods of development and production to create static or moving images. Areas of study could include portraiture, installation, photo-journalism, moving image: film, video and animation and fashion photography.

Note: We can't guarantee all of these will be available at your school. Please check with your art and design teacher.

How will you be assessed?

There are two components:

- **Component 1 Portfolio:** produce a sustained project and a selection of further work that represents the course of study. This is worth 60 % of your overall marks.
- **Component 2 Externally set assignment:** there's a separate externally set task paper for each title. It features seven tasks and you have to complete one of them. You get preparation time, plus ten hours of supervised time. This is worth 40 % of your total marks.

Where will GCSE Art and Design take you?

You can continue your art and design studies at AS and A-level, where the same titles are available. You'll also be able to choose areas of study to specialise in within a particular title.

If you don't want to take your art and design studies any further, the transferable skills you gain will still be valuable. You'll develop problem solving, creative thinking, investigation, research, communication and teamwork skills, and gain the ability to develop, refine and present ideas. Employers and universities regard all of these highly.

Art and design opens the door to lots of exciting careers

Try these for starters:

- Fashion design
- Graphic design
- Theatre designer
- Animator
- Video game designer
- Illustrator
- Museum curator
- Photographer
- Architecture
- Product design
- Textiles design
- Ceramics
- Advertising
- Publishing
- Interior design
- Fashion and media journalism
- Hair and make-up design
- Retail design
- Exhibition design
- Jewellery design
- Artist
- Visual media
- Teaching

New technologies are creating a whole new range of courses where art is being used in innovative ways.

Did you know more people work in the creative industries than the finance industry!

The creative industries generate £84.1 billion to the United Kingdom (UK) economy each year and employ over 2.8 million people. Unlike many industries, the creative industries have continued to grow, despite the recent financial crisis.

(Source: thecreativeindustries.co.uk)

What skills will you learn?

Alongside improving your practical expertise, you'll learn how to:

- develop, refine and record your ideas
- present a personal response that realises your intentions
- improve your creative skills through the effective and safe use of media, materials, techniques, processes and technologies
- successfully use visual language and the formal elements eg colour, line, form, shape, tone, texture
- use drawing skills for different needs and purposes.

How will it fit in with your other subjects?

Studying art and design helps to create a broad and balanced curriculum, which is an excellent foundation for whatever you want to do afterwards. The transferable skills you'll gain, such as creativity, analysis and problem solving, complement a range of other subjects and careers.

Can't wait to get started?

Your teacher and careers advisor will be able to help and support you as you choose the subjects that are right for you to study at GCSE.

For more information visit
aqa.org.uk/art-and-design



Lisa Milroy

Lisa Milroy is a painter, who was born in Vancouver, Canada and lives and works in London.

My art teachers and school art rooms

I can still picture my two art teachers from my school days: Mrs Pat Kero, who ran the art department at Kerrisdale Elementary School and Mr Ken Annandale, who led the art programme at University Hill Secondary School, both in my hometown Vancouver, Canada.

Mrs Kero knew how much I enjoyed drawing and painting from her art lessons at school and so one day invited me and a couple of like-minded friends to visit her own studio. I was ten years old at the time, and naturally thrilled by the privilege. I can still sense the potent atmosphere of her studio, so impressed was I by a grown-up's room devoted entirely to making paintings. In my mind's eye I can still see the bumpy weave of a canvas stained with yellow ochre paint. I channelled this deeply affecting experience

back into the art room at school and came to value the art room even more: in my ten-year old heart, I knew it was an amazing space designed to nurture my own creativity and imagination. It fostered the great pleasure I have in painting today.

Later, at high school, when I told Mr Annandale of my growing interest in the history of art, a subject not included in the Canadian secondary school curriculum, he went the extra mile and contacted his colleague who taught art history at the University of British Columbia. This led to my auditing a course in the history of 17th century Dutch painting at the University, which introduced me to the work of Rembrandt, Hals and Vermeer – artists whose work continues to inspire me today.

I took what I discovered back to the art room at high school to share with my fellow students. I was already hooked on making paintings; through the course I became hooked on thinking about paintings and exploring them with friends.

My life as an artist has been fundamentally shaped by these two early art educational experiences at school. Teaching at art schools since the mid-1980s has informed my own artistic practice. My role as an art educator has always been fuelled by the generous, supportive and imaginative spirit of those two wonderful art teachers in my school art rooms.

Lisa Milroy

lisamilroy.net



A Day in the Studio, 2000
acrylic on canvas 173 x 216cm
c Lisa Milroy

Practitioner case studies

We've worked with established artists and practitioners to produce mini career case studies. The artists and practitioners have discussed their experiences of studying art and design in school, some of the artwork they produced there and how it's led to and inspired their careers as professional artists.

Halima Cassell

“Two subjects which I excelled in were maths and art, both of which play a big part in my work today.

The last two years of my secondary school were my most memorable and enjoyable. I had a wonderful and inspiring teacher who gave me guidance with different aspects of the creative process and gave me a good understanding of the core materials and techniques as well as the freedom to think outside the box as I explored my own line of thought. Out of all the different disciplines within the creative process offered, I enjoyed clay the most.

When my art teacher was making an interesting sculpture of a sleeping Buddha (with his head resting on a sleeping tiger) in his spare time after school and during his lunch breaks, I was intrigued to hear the story behind the piece and I went on to make one on my own after observing him make his. I was also deeply inspired by

the knowledge that my art teacher sold and exhibited the art work he made. This gave me some assurance that something I enjoyed doing so much, could be a way of earning money and having a possible career in it.

The piece I made was well received when I showed it as part of my GCSE final exhibition and I was overwhelmed when one of the other teachers in the school wanted to buy it from me. I was also extremely pleased when it was selected for an open art exhibition at a museum in a local town.

The experience at my school was a vital part to developing the core roots of my career today. It led me to continue an educational path in the creative arts at college and university.



Today I work full-time as an artist which I truly love and enjoy, I am doing a job that not only fulfils me in every way but I am my own boss as well. However like any other job it involves the same determination and hard work needed to pursue a career in it. The process that I use to make my artwork is very physical, time-consuming and sometimes the tools and materials I need to use are potentially hazardous however the pleasure I gain from it negates all of this.

Through my work I have been able to visit so many other countries, experiencing a vast range of different and varied cultural traditions, to participate directly in the creative process through exhibitions, commissions, residences and scholarships. Art has opened up so many opportunities for me, ones which I would otherwise probably never have had.

My artwork consists of my love for architecture, mathematics and the different inspirations drawn from various cultural sources that I have acquired through research, all of which culminate in what I create.



As I continue my career in art, my work can be seen in many museums (in their permanent collections) and public places and my work is bought and/or commissioned by many private individuals and establishments.

I also love working on community projects which involve me working with individuals from many different organisations, communities and environments.

I am very lucky to be working in my chosen career however like any other profession you have to be willing to work very hard and to have a lot of determination, enthusiasm and passion to make it work.”

Ian Murphy, Fine Artist



What I did at school

“My artistic journey can certainly be traced back to my formative years at school, or to be more relevant, to specific teachers that connected with my individual traits as a young person. I suppose, like many people will tell you, it is the bond that you make with certain teachers that shape not only the teenage decision making, but the important facets of your personal journey that you take forward into your career path.



My strong subjects at school, given the era I came through, were primarily very ‘hands on’ and I loved art and design along with other practical subjects like ‘engineering drawing’, ‘metal and wood work’. These also fitted with my very ‘logical’ thinking mind which meant that I also enjoyed mathematics and physics, and I suppose it wouldn’t be a surprise to hear this when you see the structure and balance that is inherent in my work.

The key things I remember about my art education are not really centred on any one piece of art work, but more the very important discussions that prevailed between me and my teachers over a longer period of time. In short, it was this interaction that kick started my love of drawing the outdoor environment, they encouraged me to discover what my creativity could be about, and the direction I should take with my sketchbook drawing. They trusted me to leave school during my art lessons and go out drawing in the back streets around the local surrounding area (returning for the end of the session of course to show them the results!).



This approach then prevailed in my homework tasks, both at GCSE and the A-level stage, where I constantly went out to explore in the environments near to where I lived. I soon discovered a wealth of visual possibilities, in fact, my local area was a real ‘Aladdin’s cave’ of stuff to draw; gritty, no nonsense places like canal locks, railway yards and mine workings.

My first go at drawing with mood and atmosphere came at about the age of 15, when I decided to venture into a nearby cemetery at dusk and have a go at drawing the dramatic architecture. The challenges were addictive and this location became a real catalyst to a lot of my ideas. During the same period I went on my first visit to an art gallery, and discovered a painting by Louis Daguerre, *The ruins of Holyrood Chapel*. This was such an important moment for me, as it provided that critical point of creative inspiration, and allowed me to see art created from similar subject matter I could see around me.

When I look back at this period of my life, I realise that these initial drawing expeditions were so vital to my creative outlook, and certainly shaped not only my educational developments, but also the principles I took forward into my professional life. When I answer a common question that is asked during my workshops, ‘...can you pinpoint the moment you became an artist?’ I would find it difficult to look past this period.”



What I do now

“My career as a professional artist now spans 30 years, and I can certainly endorse the profession to any student who wants to embark on a creative pathway. My working day is centred primarily in my large studio developing my mixed media paintings and drawings; this is the central point for my creativity and allows me the luxury to extend my ideas on several themes at the same time.



One of my main aims is to always challenge myself with both the experimentation of materials and techniques, but to also extend my practice with continued journeys to new locations. I am now in a very fortunate position that my work takes me around the world, and I always use my journeys to further develop my sketchbooks and collate as many ideas as possible before I return to the studio. I love both sides of my creative practice, and I feel that the more I overlap the time I spend in the studio with my drawing from the environment, the better my work becomes. I tend to work on at least twelve ideas at once, and have them surrounding me in the studio, this way; I can be working on one piece of work for a few hours and then switch, quite conveniently, to another image when I feel my concentration needs refreshing.”

Malcolm Tween

My school story

Even though I originally started working using traditional drawing/painting techniques, everything I do now is all based around computers. I first became interested in computer graphics when I was at school, but ironically the access I had to the technology was due to me studying computer science rather than studying art. At the time in the late 1980s, the software was extremely basic, so perhaps the potential link between the two wasn't immediately obvious, but the thinking at the time was no one would want to specialise in both arts and technical subjects.

Luckily I still had the opportunity to experiment with the first steps in what would eventually become the focus of my career. For me, the most important part of any art or design education is actual hands on experience, there is absolutely no substitute for time spent simply practising, learning and developing. Maybe without this I would have ended up doing something completely different. Thankfully now the potential choices for students are far more open.



My work now

After a few years of freelancing I co-founded Digital Progression, an illustration studio in 1997. Over the last 20 years I've been very lucky to work with a really diverse range of clients and projects. This includes everything from creating video game artwork for Sony, Microsoft, EA and Activision (all the way back to the original Playstation), to advertising and design work for BMW, Cadbury, Guinness, McLaren and Sky amongst others.

I've even had the opportunity to work on *Star Wars* and *Indiana Jones* for Lucasfilm/Disney, including promotional work for the movies and recently a unique project to illustrate the set of official Royal Mail *Star Wars* stamps. These

featured twelve characters from across the films to tie in with the launch of *The Force Awakens*. It's not often you get the chance to send out Christmas cards with your own Darth Vader artwork on the stamp!

As a studio we don't particularly specialise in one type of work, but most of what we do is computer based using a combination of CGI and Photoshop. The work process often involves a lot of collaboration with other designers, photographers and art directors. Everything in the art and design world is constantly evolving, although some roles have become a lot more specialised, there are more opportunities than ever before for careers in the creative industries.



Sarah Staton

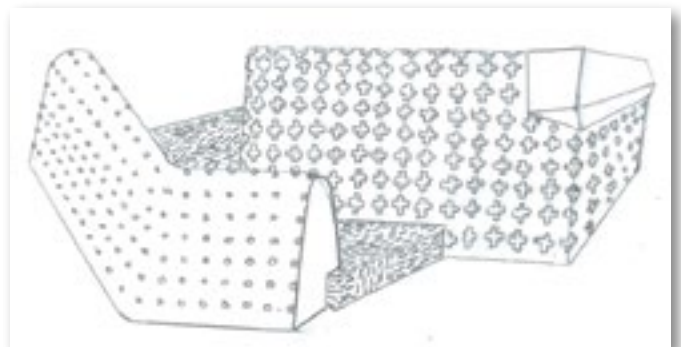
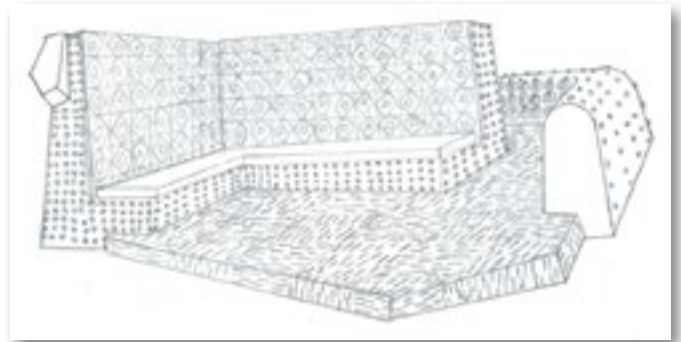
The artwork I did at school

It was the art room, as much as the art that we did, that made me want to draw and paint when I was at school. The room was full of light on account of the huge windows and much higher ceilings than most other rooms. It wasn't one of the many 1970s type class rooms that we spent most of our time in. Within the art room, we could move about arranging objects to draw and paint, go to a special area to mix colours or we could spend time looking at the many fascinating large format art and photography books that were kept in there. Sometimes we were set a task that involved going somewhere else within the school or grounds with paper, pencils and a drawing board to spend an hour drawing some aspect of the Victorian architecture or a part of the garden.

Art and design at my school was fairly traditional, looking back it sounds like it might have been quite dull too but I love to draw, so it was great. It meant that we did a lot of looking. Looking is essential for observational drawing and it helps with imaginative drawing too. Looking at what is actually there in front of you is a journey of discovery.

Smart phones and web browsing provide a constant shower of visual data; a different experience to extended looking at something beautiful, or in fact at something ugly. I remember all sorts of pictures that I made in school. The one that has most bearing on what I am doing now is a brush and ink drawing of a flower stem; I loved the way that the water made the ink flow and the control over the brush that was needed to vary the way that the mark was made. I also love the subject, once you look carefully, nature is an endless array of fascinating shapes and colours.

If you practice eye shadow make up looks, as seen on Instagram, then transfer those looks from your eyes and onto paper and you are making a painting. The beautiful Venetian ladies of long ago were experts at make up and all that blending was what inspired and informed the men who made the early oil paintings. Western art easel painting actually began with make-up.



Drawings for the public art commission in Bristol, 2016



Sketch book showing design of a bag for New Tate Modern, 2016



The art work I do now

The art training I did at secondary school was a step on the progression route to art school and from there I went on to become an artist. I draw a lot, it is the most used skill that I have. I am still very interested in architecture, the interior spaces of buildings inspire the sculptures that I make which are essentially outdoor rooms. I make places for people to gather in, to relax in and to have a good conversations in. This kind of sculpture is known as social sculpture because people can walk into it, sit, lean, climb, or lie on it. Right now I am making an outdoor room like this for students at Bristol University. It is being built in a meadow which is currently little used. Once the social sculpture is finished, the students will have a place within the meadow in which to gather.

Drawing plants, just as I did at school, is still as important to me. When I make a social sculpture, I think about the planting that goes around it. Plants are living organisms so they go well with the hard and strong materials that sculpture is built from. Plants help to oxidise the air, they can smell great and many can be eaten. I now think of plants as a type of special living material that adds an extra quality to sculpture. I am interested to see how many younger artists are now incorporating plants into their sculptures. This is something that I have seen a lot in the past few years with the young artists at the Royal College of Art. Drawing and plants; it is amazing where the love of a certain room at school and a love for what it contained can take you.



Public sculpture 'Steve' at Folkestone, 2014



Botanical drawings for the Royal College of Art Diaspora Project, 2016

