



THE
KING'S
FOUNDATION



THE DIPLOMA YEAR

A FOUNDATION COURSE IN FINE AND APPLIED ART



INTRODUCTION

THE DIPLOMA YEAR IS A DYNAMIC SKILLS-BASED FOUNDATION COURSE WITH FIVE DAYS' TEACHING PER WEEK.

The small cohort size of up to 60 students allows for targeted one-one teaching in a supportive and creative environment. Located at Trinity Buoy Wharf, the Diploma Year benefits from its creative and inspiring neighbours in its Thames-side location. The programme is unique in its focus on the interplay between traditional skills, innovation, and creativity – all essential requirements for successful progression to Higher Education and careers in the creative industries.

The structure of the programme's interdisciplinary curriculum develops from taught workshops to increasingly self-directed study. Throughout the programme, life drawing is integral in helping students to explore, express, and crystallise ideas. Students are encouraged to engage with studio critiques and discussions informed by contextual studies and weekly accompanied gallery and museum visits.

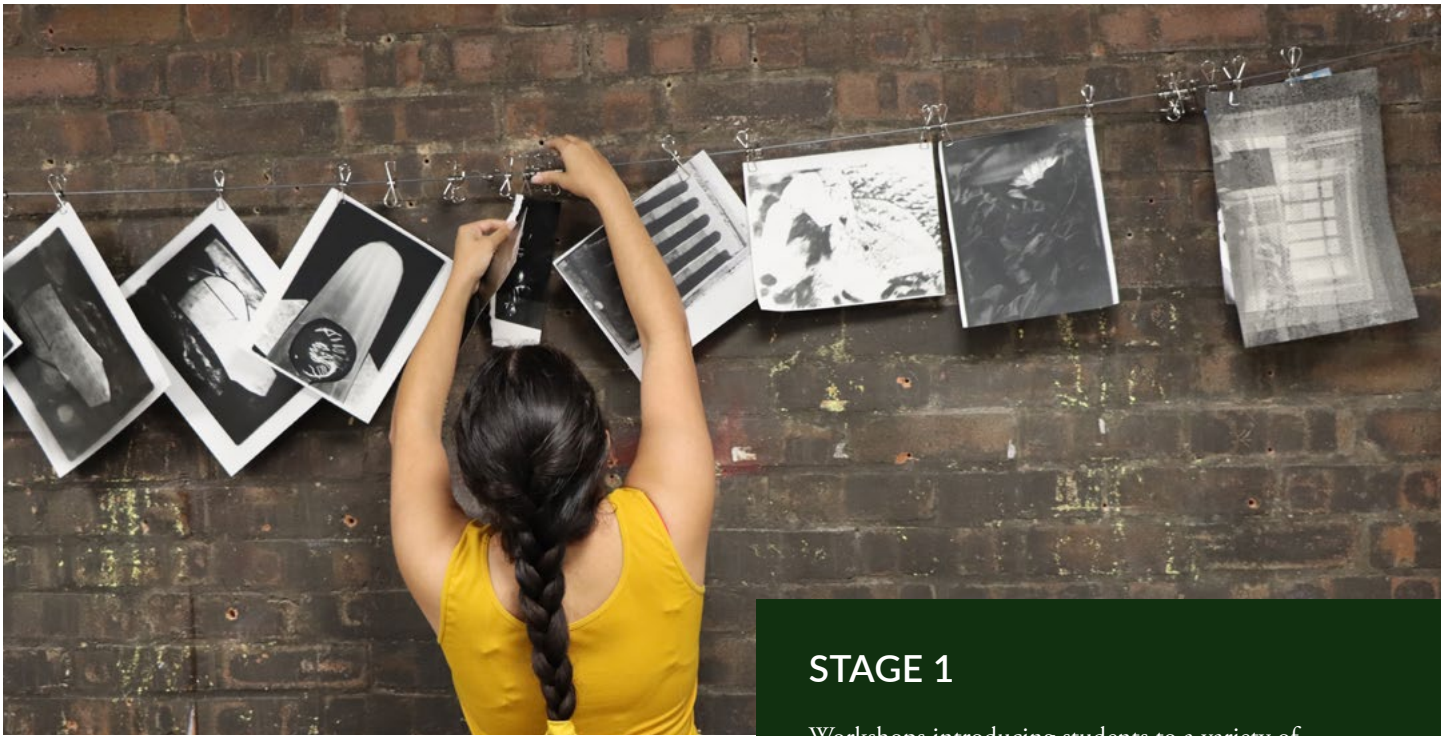
The broad curriculum is especially suited to progression on to Visual Arts courses such as Fine Art and Applied Arts, Animation and Illustration, Architecture, Textiles and Fashion, Photography and Film, Theatre and Set Design, Sculpture, Prop Making for Screen and Theatre, Furniture Making and Design, Carving, Game Design, Concept Art, and many more.



WHY CHOOSE US FOR A FOUNDATION COURSE?

- Intensive five days teaching each week for 36 weeks, considerably longer than many of our competitors.
- A unique interdisciplinary programme designed to support progression on to creative degrees within the visual arts, design, architecture, fashion, textiles and applied arts.
- Weekly tutorials with professional and experienced practitioners and educators.
- Access to extensive workshop facilities, large drawing studios, and research library.
- B&W photography laboratory and darkroom, large print studio and animation studio.
- Weekly life drawing.
- Workshops throughout the year to complement personal practice. There is no need to specialise or choose a diagnostic route.
- Weekly contextual studies lecture and accompanied gallery and museum visits.
- A unique qualification, universally recognised by Art Schools and Universities in the UK.
- Electives, which are opportunities to select additional workshops to complement your practice and interests.
- Solar powered rooftop studios with panoramic view of the River Thames.
- Large personal studio spaces for each student.
- A broad curriculum which is essential for progression to Universities and Arts Schools.
- 50% of the cohort awarded a scholarship or fee reduction.
- All fees subsidised through the generosity of our partners and donors, making them substantially lower than our competitors.
- Residencies at Highgrove and Dumfries House.
- Open studio events.
- Professional level Summer Exhibition at the Garrison Chapel in Chelsea.
- The option to be assessed at Level 3 (with UCAS Tariff points) or at Level 4.





ABOUT THE COURSE

Students investigate approaches to observation and experimentation in preparation for the development of personal ideas in fine and applied arts. Students also have weekly life drawing sessions in the studio where they draw from the unclothed and clothed model. A broad curriculum of workshops such as sculpture, animation, textiles, casting, photography, and painting, to name a few, are designed to build skills and confidence in students' abilities which then feed into their personal practice. Uniquely, the Diploma Year doesn't require students to specialise, allowing them time to decide which areas they wish to explore and refine. The Contextual Studies component runs weekly, and students are awarded a Level 3 or 4 Diploma on graduation, depending on their requirements for progression.

STAGE 1

Workshops introducing students to a variety of processes and media with a focus on skill building. Students are matched with a personal tutor who reflects their individual interest and progression routes. This stage is all about giving students the confidence to experiment and explore at Stage 2 and help them discover and confirm what and where they would like to go on to study at Higher Education level. Students are allocated a generous studio space to settle into and develop their personal practice. Students can apply to attend a 4-day stone carving residency at Highgrove.

STAGE 2

Students continue to develop new skills and have opportunities to select elective workshops that complement their practice. UCAS applications, interview practice and portfolio preparation are a focus at this stage, along with an increase in personal project days to produce a portfolio for interview. Students are taught how to photograph, light and present work to a professional level.

STAGE 3

There is an increase in personal project days during Stage 3, where students develop their Final Major Project for assessment and for the end of year exhibition in June. The students celebrate their successes by attending a weeklong painting residency at Dumfries House in Scotland. Students are assessed at the end of each stage and must pass in order to progress to the next stage of the programme.



JASMINE WATERS

It was important to me that I developed a primary understanding of all disciplines before choosing an undergraduate degree. I value technicality and the Diploma Year's focus on the relationship between traditional skills, innovation, and creativity was unique and sure to widen my artistic approach. I knew that the course's attention to artistic tools of communication, on changing conditions, ethics and currencies of artmaking would further my technical development and support my practice at university level and beyond.

The intensity of the course has allowed for the investigations of three personal projects while reinforcing my skills in drawing, painting, printmaking, photography, sculpture, animation, architecture, and textiles. The quantity of work produced has revealed many new avenues of interest as I build a body of work for portfolio use. I have been offered a place to studying BA Fine Art, Painting at Edinburgh University, which I am delighted about.

The Diploma Year's emphasis on artmaking itself, the journey to an outcome, as a valuable expression in its own right has transformed my practice and perception. The resources available allow for wider experimentation and development in personal projects. Weekly personal tutorials and tutor-led crits have enabled discussions that aid my artist research, technical ability, and the support and guidance for education and careers beyond the course.

Workshops on intaglio printing have become my most favoured; both soft and hard ground etching have continued to reinstate my own ideas of printing as a primary mechanism of visual art, supporting the vehicle of thought that is painting. I have widened my artistic approach and developed a further understanding of the continuing relationship between reproduction and expression through these periods.

Elective masterclasses offered by the course continue to reinstate its attention to skill-developing study. After enrolling in the 'Tints & Glazes' and 'Paint, Surface, and Beyond' tutorials, I saw the quality of my painting develop rapidly. Learning how to make damar resin and utilise it as both a varnish and a medium has propelled my work with a consolidation of the construction of oil paint and its capacity for vitality. Life drawing and painting sessions continue to be invaluable periods of resolution between seeing and understanding.

As part of contextual studies, we were introduced to the independent galleries around London allowing for greater insight into the commercial art market. The daunting prospect of asking for entry into these exhibitions became less so after familiarisation with them. For a student seeking a career in the arts, with the hope of selling work, this introduction made the sector accessible. Each gallery study day elevates my mark-making, sight measurement, and observation skills.

I believe the course to be singular in its quality of both teaching and resources. Building a foundation for future study, being guided through the university application process, and having routine one-on-one tutorials with tutors are all priorities for The Diploma Year. For any student searching for balanced traditional teaching methods and contemporary approaches to artmaking, the course offers more than it promises.



KADIJAH DUMBUYA

As a student and developing artist I was drawn to the fine art emphasis that the course provided and how concentrated the course appeared. Amongst the emphasis on life drawing, there was an opportunity to develop skills such as sculpture, photography, printmaking, and painting. The course offered me not only the specific fine art skills that I aimed to develop but also allowed me to challenge how I thought about the visual arts alongside the unique Contextual Studies days. The access to individual spaces for drawing, printing, textiles, sculpture, and photography at a stage before a degree was the perfect opportunity for me to become familiar with how to produce quality work in those spaces. The location of The Diploma Year meant that I remained in London and close to home before I made the decision to attend university elsewhere.

The Diploma Year encouraged the development of personal projects alongside intense workshops that allowed for constant reflection and experimentation. I enjoy working very figuratively and it was so refreshing to be guided through various techniques and focuses when looking at the human figure and understanding its nuances. It further instilled in me how dedicated time can alter the state of what I'm working on. It allowed me to constantly be familiar with my own personal ethos when it came to working as well as produce work that would later be used within portfolios for undergraduate applications. Over the course I really benefited from having my own dedicated studio space to create my work as well as being adjacent to my peers, giving each other feedback and watching each other grow. Weekly tutorials and reflections also provided the most crucial feedback and deliberation on my art that I will hold and carry with me for the rest of my life.

Paired with the weekly Contextual studies days, reflecting on the history of the visual arts and putting the learning to practice in a dedicated sketchbook was a new experience that granted me the ability and confidence to not just look but experiment with how I translated what I saw on to a page in a plethora of ways.

I am going on to study Fine Art at The Ruskin School of Art at Oxford, I feel so much more confident going on to my degree having done a Foundation year first. I feel that the course gave me a surge in confidence in how I approach my work, following advice from my peers and the tutors over the year. Being able to be much more deliberate with how I navigate my ideas and understanding of how to use a variety of mediums and techniques to draw me closer to my outcomes. Before the course I was hesitant on doing just Fine Art and intended to do Art History alongside it but now I realise I have a stronger desire to develop as an artist and through the Contextual Studies days I can experiment with my love for art history and theory in other ways.

I would recommend the course to those who want a very hands-on and tactile approach to their work who previously haven't had the chance to do so. Not only to develop amidst the quality education and staff available but also the immense aid through navigating plans for the future, whether its within the Arts or not, the offer of a unique space by the River Thames and scholarship opportunities would contribute highly to any developing artist.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

THINKING THROUGH MAKING

THE CULTURE FOSTERED BY THE PROGRAMME HAS THE STUDENT'S EXPERIENCE FIRMLY AT THE CENTRE OF ITS PEDAGOGICAL PHILOSOPHY.

We believe that students need a nurturing environment in which their confidence and skill-base can flourish. The programme's curriculum is intensively taught by experienced artists, craftspeople, designers, architects and makers.

The cohort is capped at 60 students, ensuring one-to-one tuition. Studio spaces for each student and regular weekly tutorials add to the transformative educational experience. The teaching is delivered by a team of Senior Core Tutors with extensive teaching experience at Foundation Course level. Many of the tutors are Faculty from our sister charity the Royal Drawing School, who deliver drawing tuition and Fine Art workshops.

Teaching and Learning is conducted in three ways. The first is group teaching, whereby the tutor is assigned a group of students to deliver a set project, workshop or lecture. The second is one-to-one teaching, where students are assigned a personal tutor. Personal tutors meet with students regularly to discuss and guide the development of their personal practice throughout the year. The third is the collective experience of peer-on-peer learning, whereby cohort members champion each other's progression and ideas, based on a supportive and studious work ethic.

WORKSHOPS

A defining component of the Diploma Year are the skills-based workshops that run throughout the year allowing students to develop a foundation of essential skills. Workshops are often delivered in rotation, which means the groups never exceed 20 students at one time. This means that students get individual teaching and the support they need to improve and progress. Life drawing is delivered in our purpose built Drawing studio – a generous life room with space to accommodate 40 students with two models. Life drawing is an essential part of the Diploma Year and is taught weekly.

PERSONAL PROJECTS

During the Diploma Year, students produce three Personal Projects, supported by guidance and advice from their Personal Tutors. The work students create during Personal Project days is informed by contextual studies lectures and gallery visits and will be the work they present in portfolio for progression to Higher Education and exhibitions.

ELECTIVES

Elective workshops are additional workshops and skill sessions that students can sign up to, to enrich their personal practice or interests. Electives take place each term and usually run for a day or half a day, and are led by tutors who are experts in their field. These sessions are often centred around highly skilled processes or materials that are not usually included in a foundation year curriculum. These might consist of the following:

- Tints and Glazes for Oil Painting
- Hand Embroidery for Fashion
- Book Binding
- Experimental Pattern Cutting
- Gilding
- Stone Carving
- Sacred Geometry
- Architecture Drawing
- Fashion Drapery
- Working with Wood for Contemporary Furniture Design

CONTEXTUAL STUDIES

THESE SESSIONS ARE A UNIQUE FEATURE OF THE DIPLOMA YEAR CURRICULUM, HELPING TO BUILD CONTEXTUAL AWARENESS, EVALUATION, CRITICAL, ANALYTICAL AND REFLECTIVE SKILLS.

Students develop a confident subject-specific discourse and cultural understanding. Contextual studies sessions are designed to complement students' practical workshop sessions and facilitate the independent visual research they will utilise when developing Personal Projects. The sessions are focused on and committed to recognising and incorporating global dialogues that encourage new modes of representation and thinking.

We believe that the processes of looking and making strengthen each other, and for this reason the day is split into two parts: a morning talk and discussion followed by an afternoon session drawing in museums and galleries. Drawing directly from an artwork allows students to learn about the processes of making. It is an opportunity to unravel the practical problems that arise, and the solutions applied by artists and makers, past and present. Spending each Thursday afternoon drawing from a work of art enables students to familiarise themselves with different creative practices. Eventually, this experience will be a useful resource for their personal work and provide them with points of reference for discussion during critiques and UCAS interviews.



TERM 1

During this first term, students analyse works from the London collections to understand the purpose of pictorial construction both in painting and sculpture. Each week's session considers one of the fundamental elements: geometry, colour, composition, materials, space and proportion.

TERM 2

In the second term, students explore artists' practices and consider how these are shaped by processes, materials and technologies, popular culture and institutions. Lectures and visits cover the widest range of materials, processes, painting and sculpture as well as ceramics, furniture and textiles. Students examine questions that arise from these artistic practices, for example, 'how does form follow function,' or 'how do optical aids change our ways of seeing?'

TERM 3

In the third term, contextual sessions support the emergence of the Final Major project through a different lens, via a series of tasks involving students and their peers, creating new 'filters' and employing creative strategies that ensure students are not closing their projects down prematurely. One of the ambitions of the Diploma Year is to equip students with the beginnings of a methodology for their practice that supports innovation and serves them for life.

Over the year, students will look at the practices of both contemporary and historical artists, architects and makers. Finding out about their approach to methods and materials and what motivated and influenced their work can help students understand their own work better. Initially, students observe works rooted in the context of European art history so that we can identify some of the key ideas that have formed western artistic practices and aesthetic appreciation. We will also ask students to actively participate in visual comparisons with images from other cultures and civilisations, to allow our minds to become familiar with creative practices beyond the limits of European art history.

We are excited to practise visual analysis with students during contextual sessions; their personal observations and experiences are integral to the development of meaningful conversations.





STUDENT SUPPORT

PASTORAL SUPPORT

In addition to weekly tutorials with Personal Tutors, students have access to experienced staff in the Diploma Year office. Because of our small size we are able to operate an open-door policy, which means that students can drop by at any time throughout the day to discuss issues, whether they are academic or more personal. Catch-up sessions with the Director and Programme Manager are scheduled for each term, and access to professional counsellors is available upon request when student needs fall outside our areas of expertise. Throughout the year we also offer wellness sessions in both group and individual settings online, led by our professional wellness team based at Dumfries House.

UCAS SUPPORT

Our experienced staff and tutors support students through the UCAS process, helping them devise the right kind of Personal Statement for access to the top Arts Schools and Universities, or conducting practice interviews for Oxford, Cambridge or the Slade, for example. Digital portfolios for UCAS progression are viewed and supported by both Personal Tutors, the Director or our UCAS advisor, to ensure the content promotes students to the highest level. Our Technical team shows students how to photograph and light their work in a professional manner for inclusion in their digital portfolios.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Personal Tutors are fundamental to the success of our students. Personal Tutors are assigned to students in Week 4 of the programme after we have had the opportunity to observe their needs and gauge who would be the most suitable tutor in terms of their specialism. Personal tutors will guide student Personal Projects throughout their time with us. Students may also request extra tutorials as and when needed. The Director has tutorials with students each term, making sure that they are on track. Any students who require educational support for specific educational needs are offered IEP's (Individual Educational Plans) and have review meetings throughout the year to monitor progress and adapt support as and when needed.

ALEX DEAN

I chose the Diploma Year as it offered a fantastic creative 'bridge' between sixth-form education and university. Having participated in and enjoyed the Young Artists Programme from the Royal Drawing School since the age of 10 and appreciating the ties between The King's Foundation and the Royal Drawing School, I was confident this would be a great place to learn as part of my own journey.

One of the excellent aspects of the course and what genuinely surprised me was the range and depth of experience from the many different full-time and visiting tutors, who were keen to offer their advice to help progress one's education in the arts. I found this mentoring to be invaluable.

Before joining the Diploma Year, I was at school doing A-Levels, which included Pre-U Art. The main overarching difference I noticed was the freedom and opportunity that the Diploma Year allows for you to delve into and blossom your own creative desires and ideas versus school-based art which has more of a prescriptive syllabus. It is also worth saying that the Diploma Year is an intensive academic year! This allows one to become completely involved in their artistic world and free from other distractions. It has the potential to be an immersive experience that is highly rewarding.

My favourite workshops were those involving life drawing or any relating to the human form or figure, as these are critical for developing observational drawing skills. Although a traditional approach, the skills these workshops developed are relevant and applicable in many avenues of fine art and beyond.

My Final Major Project was an architectural, conceptual, and spatial investigation and response to the interior of the Sir John Soane Museum. I was concerned with producing a work that celebrated both the heritage of the museum as well as exploring a new avant-garde approach to the world within the architecture. I am now studying Architecture at the Bartlett, UCL where my projects have already included individual and group work ranging from making a short film about retrofits and sustainability to working on a collaborative architectural installation project at St Pancras New Church, researching the Bridge of Aspiration in Covent Garden to my current design project which is designing a new church or pavilion on top of the historic foundations of the original Whitechapel in Altab Ali Park, East London.



At the moment, I am thoroughly enjoying my time at UCL. I have the opportunity to continue my learning and explore my creative practice in familiar but also undeveloped areas, which is very exciting. In terms of my future plans, I have a number of options I could explore, as the skills developed on my course are easily transferrable to other creative areas. Aside from architecture, film and advertising are interesting options and I look forward to seeing how my work develops over the next few years and the direction in which this might take me.

The Diploma Year was a critical stepping stone for me personally from Pre-U Art to studying Architecture in a university setting, particularly after the interruptions caused by Covid in my final school years. During my year at Trinity Buoy Wharf, I was able to really focus on consolidating my work and as a result my creative skills and conceptual and historiographical thinking in art and design matured. The practice and discipline of drawing on a daily basis was important to me and it is an approach that I have continued.

The contextual studies element of the course is an invaluable opportunity for students to develop their aptitude and appreciation for the culture and history of all things art and design. Linking practical work and approaches to these contexts allowed greater understanding and a circularity to emerge as the knowledge and thinking gained would feed back into and strengthen your creative practice.

I absolutely would recommend the Diploma Year. The unique setting of Trinity Buoy Wharf is matched by the inspiring and distinctive teaching which creates the perfect conditions for an artist to flourish and cultivate their own artistic identity within a varied and supportive peer group.

THE QUALIFICATION

The Diploma Year gives learners a regulated outcome to support their progression within Fine Art, Applied Art, and Design. It is recognised and respected by Higher Education providers and provides a thorough grounding in a broad range of skills and disciplines within the field of artistic practice. Through expert advice and guidance, the course provides a rigorous and dynamic experience that is designed to prepare students for entry to all creative degree-level programmes both nationally and internationally.

The programme provides a stimulating, creative, and thought-provoking environment, which prepares creatively independent learners to meet present and future demands of BA degree courses.

QUALIFICATION AIM

The Diploma in Fine and Applied Art qualification enables learners to:

- Develop an understanding of fine art as a means of communicating ideas and problem solving.
- Have a critical and contextual awareness of different approaches within art and design subjects.
- Understand the role of 'process' in the development of ideas.
- Respond creatively to a range of visual and theoretical proposals.
- Understand, adapt and safely use appropriate practical methods and skills for creative production.
- Gain an understanding of a wide variety of practices and methods to develop their skill base.
- Take responsibility for the research, planning, time management and actions to access progression opportunities.
- Critically review the effectiveness and appropriateness of methods and results.
- Use evaluative and reflective skills to take responsibility for own learning, development, decision-making and problem solving.
- Effectively present themselves and their work to appropriate audiences.

PROGRESSION

The disciplines, skills, techniques and processes that learners experience through the qualification enable them to make an informed decision about their progression route. This preparation supports learners' progression, enabling them to meet the demands of challenging degree and apprenticeship programmes, or gives them a good grounding for different work environments. The qualification enables learners to be independent, well informed, creative thinkers prepared for the modern creative industries.



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HOW TO APPLY

PLACES ARE OFFERED TO STUDENTS KEEN TO EXPLORE THEIR CREATIVE PRACTICE THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS, CRAFTSMANSHIP AND ARTISTIC ENDEAVOUR.

Applicants will need to demonstrate potential and an interest in progression into a related subject in Higher Education or vocationally in Fine Art, Applied Arts or Crafts. Students will be required to have an excellent work ethic, an open-minded attitude, and a readiness to explore and experiment with different processes and materials in an interdisciplinary manner.

The first step is to complete the online application form and submit a digital portfolio. Both the digital portfolio and the application form must be submitted before the application deadlines publicised on our website.

Shortlisted applicants will then be invited to interview and should present their physical portfolio and sketchbooks for discussion. Interviews will take place in person at our Trinity Buoy Wharf studios. The interview is a 20-minute friendly conversation about you and your portfolio, and an opportunity for you to ask us questions.



DIGITAL PORTFOLIO SUBMISSIONS

For your digital portfolio you will need to create a PDF containing 20 high-resolution photographs of your work. The works should include:

- 10 drawings in dry media (e.g. graphite, charcoal, chalk, pastel, Conté, pencil).
- 10 additional works in other media (e.g. painting, photography, sculpture, animation*, print).

These works must have been created within the past three years.

Within the 20-image limit, you may include images from sketchbook pages. However, if possible, please try to limit this to 4 images.

*Animators may submit 2 short video files included within their additional works via a link (that does not require a password). Please limit each video file to 2 minutes / max 8MB per video.

Each image must be labelled in the following way:
Title of Work, Dimensions, Medium,
e.g. Untitled, 25cm x 25cm, Pencil on Paper
(dimensions should be given in centimetres).

Please be prepared to present these works along with further sketchbooks at interview if you are shortlisted.

SHORTLISTED APPLICANTS

Applicants will be shortlisted by our interview panel which includes the Director, Core Tutors, and Programme Manager. They will present a physical portfolio of their work, including the digital submission. Applicants should present sketchbooks and 3D works if appropriate.

PORTFOLIO FOR INTERVIEW

The portfolio should display a sense of personal investigation through a range of drawing, painting, and mixed media. Your work should demonstrate an interest in skill and process and include examples of:

- Drawings that express a sustained interest in the world around you.
- Works that demonstrate an ability to apply ideas across a range of materials and media. You should include photographic evidence of any 3D work, sculpture, or larger pieces where applicable.
- You are encouraged to include sketchbooks in your portfolio.
- Evidence of an interest in developing skills.
- Information on the materials you have used, scale and size of the work.

If you are invited for interview, we will ask to see the work presented in your digital portfolio along with new work, sketchbooks and evidence of inspiration and research.



[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FEES

SCHOLARSHIPS

- The King's Foundation offers scholarships and fee reductions to ensure that the programme is available to the widest range of students, regardless of their financial circumstances. Up to 50% of the student cohort is awarded a full scholarship or fee reduction each year.
- Students awarded a full scholarship pay no course fee and receive a study support allowance for travel and materials. We accept scholarship applications from students who have attended a state school.
- Students requesting a scholarship or fee reduction should indicate this on their application form. Scholarships and fee reductions are means-tested and take account of personal circumstances and artistic potential.



THE STEPHEN LAWRENCE DAY FOUNDATION

The King's Foundation, in partnership with The Stephen Lawrence Day Foundation, offers two full scholarships to attend The King's Foundation Diploma Year at its Trinity Buoy Wharf site in East London. This partnership is designed to assist under-represented young people in their progression to study Architecture, Design, Fashion and Fine and Applied Arts at university. The Diploma Year has a proven track record in supporting students' applications to some of the top Art, Design and Architecture schools in the UK, including The Bartlett UCL, London College of Fashion, Slade UCL, Goldsmiths and The Ruskin, Oxford University.

The Stephen Lawrence Day Foundation scholarships include full fee waiver on tuition fees, termly study support allowance to cover travel and materials, individual guidance and support with university applications, portfolio preparation and mock interviews, weekly tutorials to nurture and support skill and creative development, residencies at Highgrove and Dumfries House, including travel and accommodation.

To register your interest, please contact diplomayear@kings-foundation.org

FEES

- The course fees are heavily subsidised and substantially lower than our competitors, thanks to the generosity of The King's Foundation donors, partners and supporters. This enables us to keep the fee as low as possible whilst ensuring a first-rate educational experience can be delivered.
- The course is fee-paying. Students can apply for a reduction of between 25% to 75% off the full fee during the application process, depending on financial circumstances and potential.
- The fees cover the cost of all tuition, materials used in workshops, exhibitions, the residency at Dumfries House (excluding travel) and the elective stone carving residency at Highgrove.
- Domestic fees will need to be paid in full within 10 days of a written offer, including a non-refundable administration fee of £500.
- For up-to-date fee information and to view our refund policy, please visit our [website](#).

LORENZO WOOLLETT

I chose to study on the Diploma Year as I wanted to dedicate my time to an intensive course that would improve my skills in traditional arts. On the course, I've had amazing experiences working with artisans across a broad range of applied and fine arts.

I was given the opportunity to work with and learn from Lesage embroideries in the masterclass workshops, it was an amazing experience as it gave me an insight into haute couture embroidery and dressmaking. This experience deepened my interest in working in the fashion industry and allowed me to then gain the additional support I needed for a fashion-based application for higher education. I was connected with many designers and industry people on the course who gave a stupendous amount of amazing advice for my application this year; culminating in an offer from Central Saint Martins to study on the BA Womenswear course.

I would recommend the course to people interested in fashion and textiles as, while the course is predominantly fine art based, this course offers students the opportunity to have a wider depth of skills and knowledge. It's important that fashion students specifically, take everything they learn on this course across all mediums and apply it to their practice in fashion design as that's what makes you stand out as a candidate in the application process for higher education. Moreover, the course has diversified my way of thinking artistically; being around like-minded students over the past year has done a lot in shaping who I am as an artist and creative.





EXHIBITION AND RESIDENCIES

THE PROCESS OF EXHIBITING WORK IS A CRUCIAL PART OF THE DIPLOMA YEAR. STUDENTS LEARN PRESENTATION SKILLS, HOW TO HANG AN EXHIBITION AND GAIN CURATORIAL EXPERIENCE.

THE SUMMER EXHIBITION

Held at The King's Foundation's prestigious Garrison Chapel in June, The Diploma Year Summer Exhibition celebrates the cohort's successes and achievements. This curated exhibition showcases students' personal practice to a wide audience in the London borough of Chelsea, alongside a selection of workshop outcomes that demonstrate the skills they have learnt throughout the academic year. The evening private view is an opportunity to show work to friends and family and where a selection of prizes and awards are presented.

VISITS TO ART GALLERIES, MUSEUMS AND COLLECTIONS

On Thursday afternoons, students visit galleries and exhibitions as part of their Contextual Studies sessions. These include The National Gallery, The V&A, The British Museum, Tate Modern, Tate Britain, The Royal Academy, The Courtauld, The Serpentine, plus a plethora of contemporary private galleries. London constantly offers exciting opportunities to discover new modes of expression.





OPEN STUDIOS

In the spring term students organise and open their studios to exhibit work in progress. This event is designed to give students an opportunity to discuss and present their work to a wider audience and gain experience in setting up an exhibition.



RESIDENCY AT DUMFRIES HOUSE SCOTLAND

At the end of the academic year, following assessment and the Summer Exhibition, students are invited to a residency at Dumfries House in East Ayrshire, Scotland. The week-long painting residency, in the beautiful gardens and stunning scenery of the estate, provides a welcome rest after the rigours of the Diploma Year. Students attend a celebratory dinner and have an exhibition of their work at the end of the week. All meals, materials and accommodation are included in the course fees. Students are required to cover the cost of the train journey to Scotland.



ELECTIVE STONE CARVING RESIDENCY HIGHGROVE

This three-night residency at The King's Foundation's Highgrove location offers students the opportunity to discover stone carving through intensive teaching by master craftsmen. The residency includes on-site accommodation, travel, meals and a Highgrove Garden visit.



SHREE KAINTH

The Diploma Year has been transformative, enriching, and remarkable, to say the least. Through attending this course, I have been exposed to so much within the art world and have progressed immensely with both practical and conceptual knowledge of the subject.

I knew I wanted to pursue fine art and was recommended by many to do the Diploma Year for its unique course that it provides. What specifically drew me to choosing it was its small cohort size ensuring me I'd be surrounded by others dedicated to the arts; the selectivity also allowed for more intimate one-to-one sessions with tutors which is something I was specifically looking for as I wanted that individual attention to help guide me in my practice. The tight knit community created through the cohort alongside its intensive 5-day structure was what I found best for me.

This course has taken me through a journey of self-discovery, I have learnt so much about my interests through the exposure of mediums such as photography and printmaking which I would have never known if it wasn't for the amazing workshops that were given throughout the year. Among the various workshops, I found myself particularly enjoying the Life Drawing sessions. I had never done life drawing before attending the Diploma Year and felt these sessions were pivotal in honing my observational skills and understanding of proportions when it comes to the anatomy of the human body. The discipline in these workshops meant my attention to smaller details allowed for life and emotion to emerge from these drawings, further leading to my even deeper appreciation for fine art.

I strongly recommend this course for everything it provides: workshops, personal project days, Contextual Studies lectures, and other amazing opportunities. The King's Foundation has helped me grow immensely as an artist with the support and guidance from the amazing tutors, technicians, and administration team. I felt extremely grateful to be surrounded by such talented individuals who taught me so much. Reflecting on this year with The King's Foundation, I can confidently say that it has been an invaluable steppingstone in my artistic development. The experiences, knowledge, friendships and memories I gained have impacted me and will be cherished entirely. I will be going on to study a BA Fine Art at Central Saint Martins.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. How many students are on the programme?

The Cohort is limited to 60 students each year. The high tutor-to-student ratio and small group sizes guarantee high quality one-to-one teaching in a supportive and creative environment.

Q. How much teaching will I receive on the programme?

This skills-based intensive programme is taught 5 days per week including weekly Contextual Studies lectures and tutor-led gallery and museum visits. The course runs for 36 weeks and includes opportunities for residencies at Dumfries House in Scotland.

Q. What skills will I learn?

Workshops covering drawing, painting, carving, textiles construction, printing, animation, photography, sculpture and casting are core to what we offer. You will also learn how to apply these newly acquired skills to your own practice in a confident and successful manner.

Q. Is there life drawing on the course?

Life Drawing from models is an integral part of the programme. We consider drawing from observation as the foundation for all the Visual and Applied Arts. It is crucial to understanding structure and form whilst training the eye to observe our environment. You don't need to have any experience of life drawing to enrol; we will teach you everything you need to know.

Q. Who teaches on the programme?

The programme is directed by Daniel McAuliffe. The teaching is led by a team of Core Tutors with extensive experience. The curriculum is further supported by visiting skilled tutors from The King's Foundation and the Royal Drawing School.

Q. What are the fees for The King's Foundation Diploma Year?

The programme awards up to 50% of the cohort full scholarships or a reduced tuition fee each year. Students awarded a full scholarship pay no course fees and receive a bursary for termly travel and materials costs. For up-to-date fee information, please visit our website. If you cannot afford the full fees and do not qualify for a full scholarship, you can apply for a reduced fee of between 25% to 75%, subject to circumstances and availability.

Q. What qualification will I receive at the end of The Foundation Year?

Students will receive a Level 3 or Level 4 Diploma in Fine and Applied Art. This qualification is recognised by all UK and international universities.

Q. Do I get UCAS points?

Yes, Level 3 provides additional UCAS tariff points on completing the course.

Q. Who is the programme for?

To apply you must be 18 or over on 1st September in the year that you embark on the course. We welcome applications from mature students who feel that the course might help them to realise their ambition to progress to higher education or into a relevant career.

Q. What do our students go on to do?

The programme provides a transitional period in students' creative and skill development, preparing them for either a place in higher education or vocationally elsewhere. Support and guidance for progression is an integral part of the programme structure. You will be given individual tailored guidance on suitable degree-level courses and careers in the creative industries, Applied Art, and Fine Art practices.

Students can progress to a wide variety of BA courses in subjects ranging from Architecture, Fine Art, Painting, Sculpture, Photography, Animation, Fashion Design, Costume and Theatre Design, Prop Making, Illustration, Technical Arts and Special Effects, Crafts and many more.

The King's Foundation is also uniquely placed to offer placements and progression from this programme into Traditional Arts, Heritage Craft Skills, Architecture and Design.

Q. Can I apply as an international student?

We are able to accept applications from students with Tier 1 and Tier 2 visa status. It is hoped that from 2025 onwards, we will be accepting applications from students with a Tier 4 (General) visa.

Q. Do you run courses for students who might be thinking about applying?

The King's Foundation runs a Summer portfolio preparation course at Trinity Buoy Wharf designed to prepare students for entry to the Diploma Year and other foundation courses. Please contact us for more information.

Q. How do I apply to the programme?

The first step is to complete an application form (which can be found on our website) and submit a digital portfolio. Shortlisted applicants will then be invited to interview and should present their physical portfolio and sketchbooks for discussion. The interview is a 20-minute friendly conversation about you and your portfolio, and an opportunity for you to ask us questions.

Q. What should I submit in my portfolio?

The portfolio should display a sense of personal investigation through a range of drawing, painting and mixed media. Your work should demonstrate an interest in skill and process and include examples of:

- Drawings that express an interest in the world around you.
- Works that demonstrate an ability to apply ideas across a range of materials and media. You should include photographic evidence of any 3D work, sculpture or larger pieces where applicable.
- You can include sketchbook pages in your digital portfolio but try to limit this to 4 examples.
- Information on the materials you have used and the scale and size of the work.
- If you are invited for interview, we will ask to see the work presented in your digital portfolio along with new work, sketchbooks and evidence of inspiration and research.

Please email diplomayear@kings-foundation.org for more information.



ALDO MCKINNEY

I chose the Diploma Year for so many reasons, but the first thing that stood out to me was the rich smell of paints, inks and shellac. On my first visit there, all I could think about was the hard, yet passionate, artwork that was being made. The smells of the building stayed with my experience throughout the course, in a hopeful and comforting way. I knew that I was in the right place by that alone. My favourite aspects of the course include: the smaller cohort size and longer working week compared to other foundations, our own studio spaces, and the one-to-one tutoring that takes place weekly. Building a personal connection with my tutor has been a great joy for me, and has benefited me greatly; in my thinking, my practice and my understanding. Pairing this with weekly contextual studies lectures to discuss the art world has changed the way I see my own art, and existing art. More importantly, it's developed my personal knowledge that I can utilise as I delve further into my practice at University, and beyond!

Before I started the course, I was a little bit lost but from being taught in workshops across a broad spectrum of artistic disciplines and methods, learning about my own expression and style within personal projects, I unlocked something within myself. I had momentum, and a way forward. I'm going on to study Animation at the University of the West of England in Bristol, I feel more prepared and couldn't be happier.

A standout of the year for me has to be the Highgrove stone carving residency which took place in the first term. Four days spent in the Cotswolds with about 10 of my classmates, learning something I'd never thought I would enjoy as much as I did. The beautiful English countryside and the meditative act of chipping away at a block of stone was like a holiday retreat and a workshop all in one for me. I couldn't recommend applying for it enough, even if you aren't sure about it. It's the perfect time to get to do things you wouldn't normally get to do. This is also true about a lot of what is taught on the course: I wouldn't have done a lot of it if it wasn't for all that is offered here. I am so grateful for all the opportunities I've been given, and they won't be forgotten.

As a whole, my time on The King's Foundation Diploma Year has been a transformative one. I made good friends, learnt a lot, inspired myself, understood my practice, and had a large quantity of fun. I would highly recommend the course to anyone and everyone who wants themselves and their art to flourish!

STAFF AND TUTORS

Daniel McAuliffe: **Education Director**
Jennifer Garland: **Senior Education Manager**

SENIOR CORE TUTORS:

Robert Fawcett: **Lead Senior Tutor, Drawing, Painting, Sculpture, Gilding**
Antje Southern: **Lead Contextual Studies Tutor**
Joshua Bilton: **Photography: Analogue and Digital, Performance, Film**
Sophie Charalambous: **Painting, Drawing, Print, Set Design for Theatre and Screen**
Amelia Power: **Drawing and Painting**

VISITING TUTORS:

Silke Dettmers: **Sculpture, Mixed Materials**
Will Martin: **Ceramics, Contextual Studies**
Ella Wright: **Printmaking**

CORE TUTORS:

Jasmine Pajdak: **Print, Interdisciplinary, Performance, Dance**
Samuel Hanner: **Animation, Interdisciplinary, Painting**
Shanti Bell: **Textiles, Fashion, Furniture Design**
Sun Ju Lee: **Textiles, Mixed Media**





THE KING'S FOUNDATION

The King's Foundation is a charity founded by His Majesty King Charles III in 1990. Inspired by the vision and values of His Majesty, the Foundation builds and supports communities where people, places and the planet can coexist in harmony. The charity runs a range of education courses across the country at its diverse sites, supporting over 15,000 students annually, with a focus on learning in and from nature.

HOW TO FIND US

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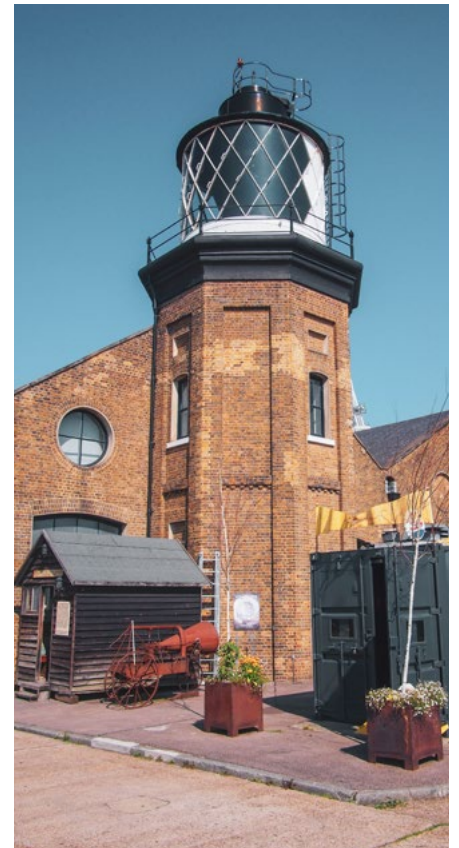
Follow us on Instagram [@kfdiplomayear](https://www.instagram.com/kfdiplomayear)

Tube

Canning Town, take the London City Island exit, across the red bridge and a 10-minute walk to Trinity Buoy Wharf.

DLR

East India DLR station, south exit. Then a 10-minute walk to Trinity Buoy Wharf





THE
KING'S
FOUNDATION

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www.kings-foundation.org

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