

Nottingham Trent University Course Specification

Basic Course Information

1.	Awarding Institution:	Nottingham Trent University
2.	School/Campus:	School of Art and Design/City Campus
3.	Final Award, Course Title and Modes of Study:	BA (Hons) Fine Art FT
4.	Normal Duration:	FT 3 years
5.	UCAS Code:	W100

6. Overview and general educational aims of the course

The Fine Art course is concerned with imaginative and inventive making and thinking. It reflects the diversity of contemporary Fine Art practice and the critical discourses surrounding it, incorporating practices from the newest technologies to the most traditional. These may challenge the boundaries of medium and technique, concept or expectation. Within this framework, you will be able to develop a specific focus to your practice and studies according to your individual needs and abilities. Whilst primarily focused upon making, the study of Fine Art also requires participation in critique, the exploration of relevant contexts and theories of art in order to develop criticality within your practice.

The course aims to provide the necessary critical and practical skills to enable your engagement in the diverse discipline of contemporary Fine Art and to encourage an exploration through different media relevant to the development of your own work. Media areas through which students work may include: drawing, installation, painting, curating, performance, photography, printmaking, sculpture, web-design, sound, moving image and writing. The course also aims to enable each student to formulate their own personal practice and to prepare for professional life in a broad range of cultural and creative industries. As well as developing subject specific knowledge, you will develop relevant professional attributes such as problem solving, critical analysis and communication skills, gained through professional experiences embedded into the design, learning and assessment of your course, in preparation for general graduate employment. The course will equip you with the necessary practical, critical, learning and research skills to progress to a range of postgraduate studies.

The Fine Art course is located within an internationalised school of art and design and offers you many opportunities for collaboration and exchange between disciplines and other institutions. The course curriculum aims to look outwards from the university to engage with the surrounding culture and society, and you will be strongly encouraged to participate in a variety of local, national and international external initiatives. Through the professional work of the course team, along with the input of graduates and current students, the course is continually responsive to new developments within the discipline and beyond: it aims to remain mobile and flexible in order to address emerging creative, social and critical issues. The course aims to develop the practical and social sustainability of making and exhibiting practices within and beyond the college environment.

You will acquire skills by attending short practical workshops throughout the course and be able to follow up on what you have learnt in these sessions with a substantial amount of self-directed studio practice. You will learn how to integrate theory and practice in diverse ways including through the *Context Lecture* series, the *Live Lecture series* and the staged writing tasks for the *Module Portfolio*.

7.	<p>Course outcomes Course outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of your course if you take advantage of the opportunities for learning that we provide.</p>
<p>Knowledge and understanding By the end of the course you should be able to:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a self-initiated practical and professional approach within the field of contemporary Fine Art. (B) • Research and evaluate relevant practices and their context • Propose a relevant critical position through the integration of conceptual and practical skills. (B) • Identify the relevant context for staging your work appropriately. (B) 	
<p>Skills, qualities and attributes By the end of the course you should be able to:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate the ability to independently initiate and manage your own learning, using the critical judgments of others. (B) • Communicate appropriately and effectively (B) <p>All outcomes marked (B) are from the Art and Design Subject Benchmark Statement 2017 which can be found at: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/SBS-Art-and-Design-17.pdf</p>	
8.	<p>Teaching and Learning Methods</p>
<p>The Fine Art course teaching, learning and assessment strategy is informed by the principles, policies, practices and regulations detailed in the University's Quality Handbook and uses a range of teaching and learning methods to help facilitate the course learning outcomes. These methods include independent studio practice, feedback tutorials, studio seminars, individual and group presentations, skills workshops, exhibitions and projects, briefings, lectures and presentations, study visits and international exchange, self-directed research, workshop inductions, technical surgeries, self and peer evaluation, e-learning and the NTU Online Workspace (NOW).</p> <p><u>Research enhanced teaching within the BA Fine Art course</u> All the staff who teach you on the Fine Art course are active practitioners, scholars and/or researchers. Their practice extends from exhibiting, performing, screening and writing into a range of art and critical practices in the wider cultural domain.</p> <p><u>Practice-led teaching</u> Throughout your course the Fine Art staff run practical and theoretical workshops emerging from their own on-going artistic and/or scholarly enquiry. You may use these workshops to enhance the way you already work or to change the media and direction of your practice.</p> <p><u>Contexts talks and Live lectures</u> All staff in Fine Art are actively engaged in research, which is made visible to you through the Contexts Talks Programme that all year groups attend. Mirroring the specific tasks, you engage in over the year, staff are asked to interrogate the critical contexts for their own practice.</p> <p>These talks arise from current research and take varied forms. They are intended to demonstrate ways in which you might develop and contextualize your own practice and their changing focus mirrors that of the written tasks you will encounter through the year. The Live Lectures, which invite external artists, curators, writers, etc., offer other contemporary and historical perspectives alongside the Contexts talks to support the development of your own research and critical thinking.</p>	

The Summer Lodge

After the summer term, all staff are invited back into the fine art studios for a ten day period, together with recent graduates and guest artists, to make and share work. You will be invited to work with them as an intern helping out with the development of work and participating in debate and discussions. During each year's Summer Lodge there is a day of conversation including 'Pecha Kucha' presentations on a theme related to artistic and research enquiry.

The Winter Lodge

Over the Christmas break the Fine Art team interrogate one another's artistic and/or research enquiry over a few days. The themes and issues arising from this work form the basis for both future projects and the Contexts talks over the spring term.

The Module Portfolio (Staged writing tasks)

The Module Portfolio is a distinctive and well-established feature of the Fine Art course. It brings together and structures your study across practice, theory and professional skills. The Module Portfolio is where the students at all levels evidence an on-going engagement with the synthesis of theory, practice and criticality. It includes documentation of completed art works, evidence of on-going research and self-reflection through practice, the articulation of proposed work, attention to project-planning, and critical engagement with the work other artists/theorists/cultural practitioners. The emphasis of this visual and textual dossier is modified for each stage of study in order to best support and enable the focus appropriate for that level. These staged writing tasks facilitate a robust and intellectually rigorous interrogation of your contextual understanding.

9. Assessment Methods

Assessment is 100% Coursework and involves the presentation of practical work and an associated Module Portfolio. There are 3 modules which run sequentially, one at a time, on the BA Hons Fine Art course. There is one module in each year. All modules are assessed holistically which means you get one mark for all the work completed in that module. In each module, the Module Portfolio evidences the on-going documentation of work in development. It is a visual and textual dossier that includes documentation of your practice, the communication of your research and critical analysis and evidence of self-evaluation. At each stage of study, the emphasis of the Module Portfolio is modified in order to focus your attention to particular issues within art practice. Assessment methods can include exhibition, individual and group presentations, seminars and submission of written/visual material.

There is a deliberate setting of similar but different tasks for assessment within each year of the course. These tasks move from skilling you to be curious, through to developing the critical skills to speculate and challenge before arriving at resolution through making and critical reflection. Towards the end of the course, you will undertake synoptic assessment. This requires you to reflect on the range of activities and experiences across the entirety of your course in relation to your future employability aspirations.

Assessment is conducted according to the School policy 'Assessment and Feedback Strategy and Principles and Guidelines' which ensures the academic standards, and their appropriateness, are made clear to you. The course annually updates its own 'Assessment and Feedback Strategy Plan' which includes the details of how you will be assessed and the hand in dates etc. and this is available on NOW and will be introduced to you during induction. The final degree award is based solely on the work produced during the final year of the course.

All the modules on this course contain formal formative feedback sessions where you will receive written feedback on your progress.

You will be provided with written Summative Feedback on all of your module assessments.

The course is designed so that you will receive continuous feedback on your progress. Continual feedback is one of the most important learning and teaching strategies within the course, enabling you to develop as an independent learner. You will be encouraged to reflect on your work and undertake self and peer assessment, developing a clear understanding of the assessment criteria. The purpose of assessment is to enable you to demonstrate that you have met the learning outcomes of the course and reached a specified standard to attain the award.

The course conforms to the Common Assessment Regulations for undergraduate courses (Section 16A of the University's Quality Handbook).

Parity Marking

In the first and second year your work will be graded by your module tutor and will only be moderated if it is on the border of pass/fail. In the final year your work will be moderated as follows:

Practical work: All practical work is graded by your tutor and two other members of the teaching team and a grade and comments agreed. These grades and feedback are combined onto one feedback sheet which is available to you. A nominated parity marker will also grade/ moderate a selection of the work.

External examiner: Part of the external examiner's role is to review the processes to ensure that your work has been assessed and moderated fairly by the staff on your course and to confirm that the standards reached are comparable with similar courses across the UK.

Failing a module

If for any reason you fail a module, you will be provided with referral and retrieval options as determined by the Board of Examiners or the Progression Board. These decisions are informed by the University's Common Assessment Regulations and the course team's academic judgment.

Progression to the next level requires the successful completion of 120 credit points (with the potential for carrying a maximum of 20 credits only through to level 5 that would need to be recovered during that academic session). If a student does not meet the course learning outcomes then, in line with the school's holistic assessment policy, the body of work will be reassessed against the interim (fall-back) award learning outcomes for an ordinary degree (equivalent to a minimum of 60 credits being achieved in the final year of the degree).

10. Course structure and curriculum

The course is full time (3 years) and modular.

The course is based on a core of practical studio skills and research methods underpinned with a critical understanding of your work within the contexts of contemporary fine art practice. The field of fine art practice is characterized by its diversity. Media areas through which students work may include: drawing, installation, painting, curating, performance, photography, printmaking, sculpture, sound, moving image and writing. You will be encouraged to re-negotiate what fine art practice is for your own context. You will work through practical engagement and experimentation which may take place within a critical and supportive studio and workshop environment, or through the development of work in/from specific sites. You are encouraged to test out your ideas through a variety of media in order to discover what is most effective and appropriate; many students work across the boundaries between media, developing a critical interdisciplinary practice. The course has a strong tradition of supporting collaborative practice and includes a number of opportunities for you to engage with external/professional-led opportunities; subsequently you will be prepared for and produce work that is appropriate for professional contexts.

At Year One (curiosity) the emphasis is upon an imaginative experimentation with the possibilities of fine art practice.

At Year Two (speculation) we emphasise the exploration of the contexts within which your work exists. The course embeds employability throughout; early in the course you will be engaged in learning core employability skills and engaging in professional development activities.

By Year Three (resolution) you will be working to define the remit for your own practice in relation to the professional discipline of contemporary practice. You will also reflect on your experiences, activities and skills in relation to your future professional aspirations.

Module Map

There are 3 modules in the Fine Art course. You will work through these 3 Modules (see below) sequentially, one at a time.

Year One (Level 4)	Curiosity: Introducing Fine Art practice
Year Two (Level 5)	Speculation: Developing Fine Art practice
Year Three (Level 6)	Resolution: Final Practice and Reflection

Year One: HE Certificate 120 credit points

Compulsory

Curiosity: Introducing Fine Art practice

To complete Year One (Level 4), you will have: developed an awareness of specialist practical skills and generated a range of appropriate responses to unfamiliar problems, evaluated information and used it to plan and develop investigation strategies and responses, explored a range of contexts involving self-directed research and non-routine activities and undertaken an increasing amount of self-directed study.

Year Two: HE Diploma 240 credit points

Compulsory

Speculation: Developing Fine Art practice

To complete Year Two (Level 5), you will have: generated ideas through a range of specialised making and conceptual skills, formulated appropriate responses to resolve unfamiliar problems, accepted responsibility and accountability for determining and achieving group and individual outcomes and demonstrated a progression away from the closer guidance at Year One (Level 4) through developing an extended repertoire of skills and applying them in less familiar and more complex situations.

Year Three: BA Hons 360 credit points

Compulsory

Resolution: Final Practice and Reflection

To complete Year Three (Level 6), you will: show the ability to reflect on and analyse your own critical position in order to maintain and develop it, demonstrate a practical and professional approach to the production and presentation of your own practice, address the reception of your practice by an audience in the relevant cultural context(s) and research, analyse and evaluate artworks in order to propose your own critical context.

11. Admission to the course

Application is through UCAS. Minimum entry requirements follow the University's Code of Practice for Admissions. Fine Art adheres to NTUs principals around widening participation. Applicants are admitted if it is evident that they will be able to fulfil, and benefit from, the objectives of the course and achieve the standard required for the award. The entry requirements are a creative portfolio with evidence of commitment to innovation and experimentation, plus the following:

- A-levels - BBC; or
- BTEC Extended Diploma - DMM; or
- 112 UCAS Tariff points from three A-levels or equivalent qualifications; and
- GCSEs - English and Maths or Science grade C.

UCAS points

The 112 UCAS tariff points for entry to this course should be taken from a minimum of three full A-levels or equivalent qualification (such as a BTEC Extended Diploma). International applicants are interviewed with regards their experience, qualifications, language IELTS and e-portfolio. The IELTS grades needed for this course are 6.0 with minimum of 5.5 in each component

The Fine Art Team recognise the benefit of students applying from Art & Design Foundation or BTEC course with regards to the quality of work, preparation for Higher Education and student retention. The course is also suitable for international students. In terms of equality and diversity, students with disabilities will need to be assessed with regards to our commitment to provide an effective service to all students regardless of disability and the demands of the course and wherever possible reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates will be made.

All applicants who achieve the minimum requirements are invited for interview for a place on the course. This involves an interview with staff asking questions and viewing the applicant's portfolio. Applicants are supported in the interview process prior to the event and can access the portfolio and interview criteria from the NTU website.

As it is unreasonable to ask overseas applicants to attend interview, students are required to send examples of work in the form of photographs and/or slides and a written piece of work (from their current/previous course) to demonstrate to the admissions tutors how they express themselves in English.

To transfer onto BA (Hons) Fine Art at Year Two (Level 5) a student would need to demonstrate the necessary transferable skills which would be decided after careful consideration of a student's portfolio by the Fine Art staff. This transfer could be from other courses within the school of Art & Design at NTU or another institution.

APL (Accreditation of Prior Learning)

The course welcomes applications from prospective students with non-standard entry routes, either certificated or experiential, who can demonstrate that they have had appropriate and relevant learning experiences that align with the general aims and outcomes of the course. It is important that the potential benefits in undertaking the course can be demonstrated in the application process. We are actively interested in mature and non-standard entries.

12. **Support for Learning**

The course operates several positive learning support systems. The staff team treats your experience holistically and is actively involved in coordinating and monitoring of pastoral support alongside academic work. You will be assigned a personal tutor who is your first line of support.

The focused tutorial system offers timetabled contact points with sustained on-going evaluation/formative feedback from staff and peer group. Module leaders offer support on matters relating specifically to each module. Year leaders offer support across the cohort and maintain an overview of issues at that level. Peer group sessions enable students from different levels to come together for support and discussion. Specific technical support and Project Planning Forms support the safe fabrication and installation of artworks.

The School is committed to assisting you to achieve the best results possible during your studies with us, providing a wide range of academic help and advice. In addition to the support that the lecturers on your course will offer, you also have access to a wide range of specialist staff to support a variety of issues that might arise, e.g. financial, health, wellbeing, disability etc. Language and academic support is also provided by for international students who require additional study support.

Your Course Handbook will contain details of the support available to you should there be an interruption in your studies, due to circumstances outside of your control, or through other factors affecting your academic performance. The School provides three options for requesting consideration and these are found in the section on Exceptional Circumstances.

At the start of your course you will be invited to participate in an 'induction' where you will undertake a range of activities that will introduce many of the key facilities available within the University and will also provide you with an essential introduction to the course. You will meet the staff and your fellow students and will be able to find out more about how you will be taught and assessed on your course. At the same time, the Students' Union organise their social events in 'welcome week' that will encourage you to become involved in and meet people from the wider NTU community.

NTU's Online Workspace is referred to as 'NOW'. All course and module information is posted on this site for you to access at any time. The NOW is used extensively for communication, distribution of the course information and the use of online learning materials. Students in Fine Art continually challenge and develop the relationship of practice to existing and emerging technologies. They utilise digital technologies in diverse ways for research, the making of their work & its documentation. Many students pursue practices that include web design, non-linear video and other new media. There is a strong desire within Fine Art to continue the role and remit of e-learning with the use of drop boxes for written work, on-line year meeting presentations and reading groups. The location of IT resources within the studios is a key feature of the subject approach to learning and complements the close proximity of more highly specified equipment in dedicated resources.

To ensure that you have a clear understanding of the way in which you are progressing within the modules, you will receive feedback on the progress that you are making on a regular basis. Some of the feedback that you will receive is formal and will occur both during and at the end of the module and may be written. During each module you will receive an indicative grade and at the end of the module a summative grade which is confirmed by the Board of Examiners. Group tutorials are also an important opportunity to note the feedback that you are getting from your tutors and fellow students and are seen as an important part of the feedback mechanism in the School of Art and Design. These sessions are to support you with both academic and pastoral matters. You might also discuss other issues including ways in which you might continue to develop your general skills and preparing ahead for your next career steps.

Academic guidance is given in tutorial and seminar sessions and is tailored to individual student needs. For international students, the Language Centre provides tailored sessions that all students whose English isn't their first language are encouraged to attend.

13. **Graduate destinations / employability**

The course is continually responsive to changes in employment opportunities. You will be prepared for work in a broad range of cultural and creative industries, through the range of opportunities within the course for you to engage with a range of relevant professional activities.

Our graduates work as artists, designers and curators, within journalism, media and education, often combining different working practices into a portfolio of employment. Graduates from the Fine Art course also have a well-deserved reputation for self-motivation, independent thought and initiative as evidenced by the relationships with galleries, institutions, companies and other collaborations with which students engage upon graduation: such skills are highly sought within diverse professions and self-employment. Graduates frequently progress to Postgraduate study in Fine Art and a variety of related disciplines within high profile institutions and courses.

Work Experience /Placement

As part of the course you may be able to undertake a short professional experience opportunities that may occur during term time to allow you to translate theory into practice.

The School's Professional Experience Policy supports your course in developing a flexible approach that enables some professional experience activity to occur within modules and is negotiated with your tutors.

14. **Course standards and quality**

Quality management of the course is in accordance with the University's Quality Handbook and is monitored by the School's Academic Standards and Quality Committee. Responsibility for maintaining an overview of and managing the course lies with the course committee which meets three times a year. There are opportunities for students to become course representatives. Their role is to engage their fellow students in debate about the course and bring these collated views to the course committee meeting for discussion.

An External Examiner is appointed whose job it is to make judgements about the course and report on the standards achieved in relation to other comparable courses in the UK. Part of their role is to review samples of assessed work and confirm at the Board of Examiners that the internal assessment and moderation practices are fair and in line with the School's and NTU's policies. The external examiner also writes a report at the end of each academic year and this will be available to you via NOW, together with a response to this written by the course team and the Course Committee.

We would like you to contribute to the continuing development of this course and we welcome all feedback and have a number of ways in which we can formally and informally receive this.

You will have an opportunity to put yourself forward to be considered as a course representative at the beginning of each of your years of study. As part of this role you will be invited to attend the course committee meetings that occur three times a year and contribute to the conversations and debate to support the continuing health of the course. Any issues brought up at the course committee meetings are reported to the school academic standards and quality committee and actions identified from thereon in with responses reported back to you either via the next course committee meeting or via the NOW.

There are also a number of ways that you will be asked for your views either informally or formally. The module feedback that you will be asked to complete is in the form of a digital questionnaire. In addition to this, you have other formal channels where you can give feedback and these are at Student/staff liaison meetings, Course Committee Meetings CCM and via school-level meetings.

At the end of each year the course team write an evaluative report which is received at School level and contains an action plan to ensure that the development of the course continues.

15. Assessment regulations

Course Outcomes are referenced to the Quality Assurance Agency's benchmark statements for subjects in Art and Design. This course is subject to the University's Common Assessment Regulations (located in its Academic Standards and Quality Handbook).

16. Additional Information

Collaborative partner(s):	N/A
Course referenced to national QAA Benchmark Statements:	Courses are referenced to the Quality Assurance Agency's Benchmark Statements for Art & Design.
Course recognised by:	N/A
Date implemented:	01 September 2017

Innovative features of this course

All fine art academic staff are research active. The academic team share their practice with each other and students through the Summer Lodge and Winter Lodges. Research Informed Teaching, (RIT) is embedded throughout the course through the Context Lectures and skills workshops.

Throughout the course intellectual rigour is embedded, within an integrated approach to making and thinking, and is exemplified in the *Module Portfolio*. This is used for holistic assessment of practice, theory and professional skills.

Students learn criticality in an innovative seminar series called 'Show and Listen', through which they perform the space between the intention for their work and its reception through interpretation.

Specialist skills are acquired through an embedded workshop programme at each level, and there is a close working relationship with the excellent technical team, many of whom are engaged in professional creative practice.

Students learn to work collaboratively through group projects within Year One (Level 4) and Year Two (Level 5), and group presentations in Year Three (Level 6) from which many graduates form networks that sustain them beyond the university experience.