



**Royal College of Art**

Postgraduate Art & Design

## Programme Specification

*Please note that this specification is subject to change, in line with the national guidance on the response to the Covid-19 pandemic.*

### 1. General information

<b>Awarding institution:</b>	Royal College of Art
<b>Programme title:</b>	MA Ceramics and Glass
<b>Award:</b>	Masters
<b>Qualification framework level:</b>	Level 7
<b>School/Department or equivalent:</b>	School of Arts and Humanities
<b>Programme duration:</b>	2-years
<b>Total UK credits:</b>	240 credits
<b>Mode of study:</b>	Full time
<b>Date valid from/to:</b>	2020-21

### 2. Programme Philosophy

The spirit of Ceramics & Glass at the RCA springs from a belief in the transformative power of material thinking, research and making to enrich our world in imaginative and meaningful ways.

The programme is a site for contemporary practice and discourse where personal concerns intersect with societal and global perspectives. We work to extend the possibilities and perspectives of the Ceramic & Glass disciplines within and beyond their traditions, informed by a rich provenance of materials, processes and practices, and the idea that thinking and making are inseparable and inform one another. This MA's spectrum of enquiry includes; the creation of unique art works, emerging experimental practices, design for manufacture and the built environment and all ideas that can emerge to be made manifest in ceramics & glass.

Curiosity is nurtured through the imaginative exploration of concepts, the investigation of material properties and technologies, the potential of interdisciplinary practice and collaboration. Making, thinking and writing skills are integrated to develop critical perspectives of practice, and to foster new understandings of our interaction with 'things'. We embrace the potential for new technologies, whilst being grounded in the development of a deep tacit and experiential understanding of ceramics and glass materials and processes.

The Programme has a reputation for leading research projects, involving collaboration with partners such as the V&A Museum and Royal Crown Derby (subject to availability). The design and delivery of the course extends from the pioneering research undertaken by programme staff. This includes the exploration of new digital technologies for restoration and ceramic decoration; materials as a tool for community engagement and the possibilities offered through global exchange.

Our approach to teaching is premised on an understanding that artists, makers, writers, curators,

critics and historians today are neither constrained by their discipline, the medium they use nor by a sense of what content their work should address. Practitioners in the Arts & Humanities are valued for their contribution to culture and the broader economy because they test and reflect upon the way in which we try to engage with our rapidly changing world; exploit the possibilities of new technologies while also engaging with the value of traditional approaches; they enact new philosophical positions as well as reflecting upon how our thinking has led us to where we are. And they often adopt stances informed significantly by the past to antagonise our assumptions about society.

We also conceive of the Arts & Humanities as a range of subjects that are accessible to collaboration with other fields and disciplines; subjects that celebrate the deployment of diverse methods of research and production. At the Royal College of Art, we enjoy an environment that is supportive of the varied research enquiries that the Arts & Humanities can enable. We support customary methods and processes whilst enabling others that we cannot even anticipate. We are committed to examining and researching both the means by which enquiries in the Arts & Humanities emerge – the rich array of positions, techniques, methods and materials used by practitioners to develop their research – as well as the subjects, ideas and issues that are successfully articulated, with a view to understanding a broader cultural, societal and economic impact.

Teaching in the school is organised around programmes that provide specific material and historical co-ordinates as points of reference from which students are encouraged to consider the development of their own work. Regardless of their programme of study, students interact across the broad area of the Arts & Humanities and are also encouraged to engage with other areas of the College. Research in the School of Arts & Humanities often leads staff and students to less immediately cognate fields of the Arts & Humanities as well as the sciences, and the school works with a range of significant partners such as the V&A and Imperial College to further its ambitions in this regard. We therefore view all our programmes in the School of Arts & Humanities as useful pedagogical structures, in that they focus specific areas of activity within an ever-expanding field. The programmes enable directed study within an environment that is ambitious not to proliferate and perpetuate what we know but to generate new practices and insights.

### **3. Educational Aims and Outcomes of the Programme**

#### **Programme aims**

The programme aims to:

- To inspire and cultivate a culture of creativity and innovation, which enables students to realise their full creative potential
- Provide a learning environment which focusses on experimentation and self-reflexivity in order to develop both a personal vocabulary and advance practice
- Enable students to plan and produce challenging, innovative works of high quality and ambition, technically and conceptually
- To enable the development of students' creative, intellectual and critical potential through encouraging new perceptions and the production of innovative work, supported by staff research and practice
- Stimulate a dialogue between theory and practice, through research, discourse and production, to engender thinking through making and making through thinking

- To situate and contextualise practice within the context of the contemporary Ceramics & Glass field, and wider contemporary art and design communities, their theories and practice
- Instil an awareness and greater consideration of sustainability and the ecological impact of our disciplines
- To provide inclusive postgraduate education for students from a variety of international, undergraduate, professional and diverse identity backgrounds.

### **What will I be expected to achieve?**

The MA is designed to provide a programme of studies allowing students to learn through theory and practice. This enables those on the course to; challenge discipline conventions; innovate methods and ideas in order to produce objects, artworks, installations; and make their ideas become manifest through the materials and processes of ceramics and glass.

Students will engage with a number of projects and opportunities over their two-years of study, which offer a range of experiences to allow them to develop their working and research methodologies, personal creative voices and develop into professionals, defining their future careers.

### **Programme-Specific Learning Outcomes**

Able to:	<b>A. Intellectual Engagement</b>
A1.	Develop innovative ideas that challenge your understanding of their practice and discipline.
A2.	Demonstrate an advanced understanding of historical and contemporary debate of both a theoretical and practical nature and how it relates to your practice.
A3.	Demonstrate an advanced understanding of the principles and methods of research and apply them effectively to your own practice.
A4.	Articulate effectively and debate the intellectual and technical processes involved in the production of your work.

Able to:	<b>B. Technical Skills</b>
B1.	Produce work at an advanced level that integrates thought, creativity and technique.
B2.	Experiment in your use of materials, processes and environments in order to translate ideas into practice.
B3.	Display a mastery of the technical skills required in the creation, exhibition and documentation of your work.

Able to:	<b>C. Professional Development</b>
C1.	Take responsibility for directing your studies through setting goals and managing time and resources effectively.

C2.	Participate as an active, thoughtful and responsible member of a community.
C3.	Define your professional identity through self-reflection and an understanding of the opportunities available within the creative economy.

#### 4. What will I learn?

##### Year One

During the first year of the programme students undertake three units of study: Unit 1A, Unit 1B and CHS. These Units are each worth 40 credits and assessed through a combination of continuous and summative assessment methods. To support their progress in Units 1A and 1B students are assigned a personal tutor with whom they discuss their work in tutorials twice a term. Students will also have a set number of tutorials from other members of the programme team each term and will have the opportunity to request tutorials from other staff on the school and a broader range of visiting tutors.

Although working primarily on their own practice, there are also throughout the year, group critiques, seminars, lectures, workshops and tutorials with other members of the Programme team and more widely with staff and students from throughout the broader school.

The first term uses a number of projects and briefs to explore different themes and contexts relevant to the Ceramics & Glass programme. In the first term students explore collections to interrogate the role that objects fulfil and build research skills. Later in the term there is a project which asks students to establish and work towards a proposal for a site commission, developing a professional presentation to articulate the logistics, creativity and appropriate relevance to that site.

In the second term students have the choice to participate in one of a number of different groups that explore contexts and build methodologies associated with Ceramics & Glass thinking and making. This group work is conducted through different teaching and learning experiences including seminars, critiques, text readings that look to themes such as, Metaphor, Phenomena, Time & Place.

There is a critique at the end of each project; an opportunity to reflect on personal achievement and participate in group appraisal and discussion.

Throughout the year the programme and school will offer technical inductions and introductions, which may take place online, according to local circumstances.

Students will be expected to attend and participate in the guest lecture series and the staff lecture series at the beginning of the year.

Independent and critical thinking, self-reflection, and professional development are encouraged through staff and student led discussions, seminars, presentations and debate with members of the Programme team and more widely with staff and students from throughout the broader school.

Each unit is assessed in full at its conclusion as per the following table:

Unit 1A:	Unit 1B:	CHS:
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 Credits</li> <li>• Self-assessment then progress feedback from programme unit assessment meeting (staff double marking meeting) (continuous assessment)</li> <li>• December.</li> <li>• Learning Outcomes: A2, A3, A4, B2, C1, C2, C3</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 Credits</li> <li>• Self-assessment (Continuous assessment) and Exam feedback (Summative assessment) from 1B exam panel.</li> <li>• May.</li> <li>• Learning Outcomes: A1. A2. A4. B2. B3. C1. C2.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 Credits</li> </ul>
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## Curriculum Map

### Ceramics & Glass Year One

<i>MA Ceramics &amp; Glass MA1</i>		
<i>Term One</i>	<i>Term Two</i>	<i>Term Three</i>
<i>Unit 1A Studio (40 Credits)</i>	<i>Unit 1B Studio (40 Credits)</i>	
<i>Critical Historical Studies (CHS) – (40 credits)</i>		

### CHS Information

Critical & Historical Studies is the cross-College platform that delivers teaching and activities aimed at enabling critical engagement to take place within, and between, the different disciplines at the RCA.

All studio-based first year MA students have a CHS unit as a core part of their programme of study, designed to enable this critical dialogue and enhance each student's development. Led by a team of dedicated, highly skilled and deeply engaged staff, CHS delivers a programme of lectures, seminars, workshops and tutorials (both small group and one-to-one). Students will be encouraged to engage with vital and challenging ideas that relate to their practices. This both enriches and

provides a broader intellectual framework within which to establish a coherent inter-relationship between theoretical and practice-based approaches to art and design.

As a team, our disciplinary interests span the fine and applied arts, architecture, design (including fashion, graphics, interior and product design), craft, communication, film, humanities, photography, digital media, science and technology.

CHS provides:

- contemporary, thought-provoking lectures by CHS staff and visiting tutors
- the opportunity for students to explore the theoretical background of their chosen discipline through a taught dissertation process
- individual and group tutorial support from our Programme's team of expert tutors

The CHS Handbook sets out the broad principles of CHS at the RCA. It outlines what you can expect of us and what we require of you to engage and produce work to your best ability. On the Moodle pages you will find details of the scheduled programme and the broad areas to be covered in each term, details about the tuition and assessment of your CHS dissertation, and information on resources that will help you during your studies.

Your main points of contact for CHS will be your group tutor and your School Liaison Tutor for your School. You will be assigned your group tutor at start of the Autumn Term.

We hope that you will enjoy working with the CHS team and use all the opportunities offered to you as a student at the Royal College of Art.

## **Year Two**

During the second year of the programme students undertake three units of study: Unit 2A (40 credits), Unit 2B (60 Credits) and SoAH School Unit (20 Credits). These Units are assessed through a combination of continuous and summative assessment methods.

In their second year students are assigned a relevant personal tutor who supports their practice throughout the year. They produce a self-initiated body of work, which is evaluated and discussed in group critiques and tutorials throughout the year.

In the third term the work students exhibit in the graduating show is part of the examination of their final unit 2B - the Independent Research Project. It consists of a major project undertaken in the second year of the programme. Their art practice should now demonstrate that they are able to make, develop and realise work at Masters level. Students' work should now have a clear direction and resolution, demonstrating a level of conceptual and technical competence appropriate to their own aims and objectives. Students' practice is expected to be self-initiated and thoroughly researched. They will be asked to articulate this process of producing work in their viva voce examination.

Alongside their participation in programme-based units, students will also participate in the SoAH School unit, which, through study groups, lectures, symposia, crits and tutorials will support students in discussing and evolving their work against a broader frame of reference.

Each unit is assessed in full at its conclusion as per the following table:

Unit 2A: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 40 Credits</li></ul>	Unit 2B: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 60 Credits</li></ul>	SoAH School Unit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>20 Credits</b></li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self assessment then progress feedback from programme unit assessment meeting (staff double marking meeting) (continuous assessment)</li> <li>• December</li> <li>• Learning Outcomes: A1, A2, A3, A4, B1, B2, C1, C2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self assessment (continuous assessment) and Exam feedback (summative assessment) from 2B/School Unit Joint Panel.</li> <li>• June.</li> <li>• Learning Outcomes: A2, A3, A4, B1, B2, B3, C1, C2, C3.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessed Portfolio at 2B/School Unit Joint Panel. (summative assessment).</li> <li>• May School Exam Board then reviews marks from all units and recommends pass or fail.</li> <li>• Learning Outcomes: B2, C2, C3.</li> </ul>
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**Curriculum Map  
Ceramics & Glass Year Two**

<i>MA Ceramics &amp; Glass MA2</i>		
<i>Term One</i>	<i>Term Two</i>	<i>Term Three</i>
<i>Studio Unit 2A Studio (40 Credits)</i>	<i>Studio Unit 2B Independent Research Project (60 Credits)</i>	
<i>Portfolio (20 credits)</i>		

**5. How will I learn?**

*Please note that these are subject to change, in line with the national guidance on the Covid-19 response.*

Teaching consists of individual and group tutorials, workshops, reading groups, group critiques, symposia and lectures by leading artists and theorists.

**Tutorials**

Students are allocated a personal tutor and will meet with them a minimum of five times over the year. There are opportunities to arrange tutorials with other members of the school team. Tutorials may also include a small group of students discussing work in progress with a tutor or visiting artist.

Students will also have a tutorial each year as part of their integrated school-wide group.

At the end of each studio Unit, students write a self-assessment form, which is a critical account of their practice, its development and reception in tutorials and critiques. This enables students to articulate and clarify in writing what their work attempts to achieve and the direction it takes.

### **Group and Joint Tutorials and Seminars**

Occasionally, group tutorials are arranged. These consist of two or more students coming together with one or more tutors to discuss work and ideas and to engage in constructive criticism.

Joint tutorials consist of two tutors meeting with a student to discuss work and review progress. Normally, your Personal Tutor will invite another tutor to join a tutorial. They can occur at any time through the course when it seems appropriate.

Seminars are the occasion for a group to come together to discuss and share views on a predetermined theme. This will normally require some preliminary thought and research and may involve a short presentation.

### **Lectures**

Lectures are a formal presentation of ideas and information, normally to the whole programme. Lectures are given by specially invited speakers and from time to time by programme staff and visiting lecturers.

### **Critiques**

Group critiques take place throughout the school and programme and may also involve guest tutors. The group critique collectively appraises and evaluates the reception and processes of students' work. Students are encouraged to plan and lead their own informal discussion and critique groups. Staff may help to organise regular discussion sessions and help with facilitation. Critique is not the same as 'criticism'. It refers to a constructive discussion of the subject of interest. This might be finished work or work in progress, an exhibition, course topic or other issue.

### **Demonstrations**

Students are introduced to new techniques and processes by demonstrations given by academic and technical staff. These might be on a one-to-one basis or in a group situation.

### **Workshops**

Students come from a wide range of backgrounds, with very different expertise. In the spring term the programme provides workshops primarily for first year students. As part of their school-wide group, students will participate in a yearly workshop around a particular theme.

### **Personally Directed Study**

A great deal of time is spent on personally directed study. Much of the work of a postgraduate student is self-directed. Students are expected to show considerable individual responsibility and



initiative, discovering and following up personal avenues of exploration. This ensures that the creative dialogue is driven by personal needs and ensures that the teacher-student dialogue is real and constructive. This is also important in preparing the student for the demands and strategies of professional life.

## 6. Assessment and feedback

### Assessment

#### **Continuous Assessment**

Continuous assessment enables the student's performance and progress to be understood and accounted for through a wide variety of academic contact points, recognising that students are able to perform in different ways and through different means and aspects of the curriculum while still achieving the requisite performance standards.

All Studio based Units (1A, 1B, 2A & 2B) are assessed wholly or in part through a process of continuous assessment. This relies on staff who have had experience of the student coming together at the end of the unit in a Unit Assessment Meeting, chaired by the Head of Programme or a Senior Tutor, to review the student's self-evaluation and to share their experience of the student in relation to the relevant learning outcomes.

#### **Final Examination**

Summative assessment examines the students' ability to synthesise their learning and to express it in a formal exam context, either through their performance in a live event, such as the viva voce examinations (previously interim and final exams) at the conclusion of Units 1B and 2B, or through the submission of a formal assessed element such as a dissertation or portfolio at the conclusion of the SoAH School Unit and CHS.

#### **Unit 1B**

The Summative Examination for Unit 1B is held as a Viva Voce. A Unit Assessment Meeting chaired by the Head of Programme or a Senior Tutor reviews the work produced by the student on the unit. Students will be asked to demonstrate that their practice is evolving and that they are able to position your work within the context of contemporary art practice and theory, as per the relevant Learning Outcomes. The students' self-evaluation report will be read and considered in relation to their performance in the viva.

#### **Unit 2B**

The Summative Examination for Unit 2B is held as a Viva Voce. A Unit Assessment Meeting chaired by the Head of Programme or a Senior Tutor reviews the work produced by the student on the unit. Students will be asked to demonstrate that their practice is evolving and that they are able to position their work within the context of contemporary art practice and theory, as per the relevant Learning Outcomes.

#### **SoAH School-Wide Unit**

Assessment: Critical Reflection

Students will be required to produce a 1000-2000 word critical reflection on their learning from the

School Unit. This written response offers the opportunity to consider the question of The Urgency of the Arts in relation to your own thinking and practice. The critical reflection should contextualise your work in relation to contemporary debates and needs to include:

- A reference to at least one speaker from the SoAH School Unit Lecture Series
- A reference to a text / concept / theme that was covered during the MA School Group that you attended
- Up to 3 images (max. 5mb each) relating to your participation in the School Crit with some evaluative commentary

This will be submitted to the joint assessment panel for the Joint Unit 2B / School Unit Exam, taking place toward the end of academic year.

**Information regarding individual assessments will be included in the Unit Descriptors and will be available to students at the beginning of the academic year.**

## 7. What award can I get?

To be awarded an RCA MA degree you need to gain 240 credits at level 7 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ). This will involve successfully completing all units.

If you fail a unit at the first attempt, you will be offered an opportunity to resit the unit. If you are successful you will be awarded the credits for that unit. If you are unsuccessful, you cannot progress further in your programme.

Exit awards:

If you have gained at least 120 credits at level 7 of the FHEQ, you may be eligible for the exit award of Postgraduate Diploma. An exit award is a final award from the College and cannot be rescinded.

For more detailed information about the College's assessment, progression and awards policies see the Regulations.

## 8. Admissions

### Cross-College requirements

#### **Academic Entry Requirements**

Candidates must normally have obtained a good relevant undergraduate degree or an equivalent qualification. The College recognises as an equivalent qualification any degree, diploma, certificate or other evidence of formal qualification awarded by a university or other higher education establishment where the award is made following the successful completion of a course of at least three years' study, the programme of study being open, as a general rule, only to persons holding a certificate awarded on the successful completion of a full course of upper secondary education.

Other qualifications may be approved, providing that the College's Academic Board for Concessions and Discipline (ABCD) is satisfied that the applicant has the ability to pursue the programme of study successfully. The ABCD is empowered to make judgements about the extent to which

qualifications or experience gained elsewhere may be accepted in partial fulfilment of its requirements.

### **Portfolio**

All applicants are required to submit a portfolio as part of the application process. A portfolio is a showcase of an applicant's work as an artist or designer and can be made up of images, videos or writing examples. The portfolio helps us to better understand the applicant and allows them to show evidence of their ability and motivation to undertake a given programme.

Each programme is looking for different things in a portfolio; each Head of Programme provides specific advice on portfolio requirements in the online application system. We advise prospective students to consider these requirements carefully before submitting their application.

### **Applicant Qualities**

Generally, we are looking for applicants to demonstrate their:

- creativity, imagination and innovation;
- ability to articulate the intentions of the work;
- intellectual engagement in areas relevant to the work;
- technical skills appropriate to the work;
- potential to benefit from the programme and achieve MA standards overall.

### **English Language**

Applicants who are not a national of a majority English-speaking country will need to demonstrate their English language proficiency. The College accepts a range of English language qualifications. The full list can be seen at <https://www.rca.ac.uk/studying-at-the-rca/apply/entrance-requirements/english-language-requirements/>

Applicants are exempt from this requirement if they have received a 2.1 degree or above from a university in a majority English-speaking nation within the last two years.

If a student would need a Tier 4 visa to study at the RCA, they will also need to meet the Home Office's minimum requirements for entry clearance.

### **Admission Process**

Applications must be made directly to the College through our online application portal: <https://www.rca.ac.uk/studying-at-the-rca/apply/application-process/ma-application-process/>

Upon completion of that first stage of the application process, candidates will be invited to submit a portfolio of their work, a 300-word statement of intent and a video communicating clearly their motivations, personal interests and why they are pursuing a Master's degree at the Royal College of Art. These materials are reviewed by members of the programme team who will communicate an academic decision to the College Registry, who manage the process of offer-making in line with the College's recruitment targets. In some cases, where the programme team is not able to make an admission decision based solely upon the work submitted by the applicant, we may invite the candidate to undertake an interview with us.

Applications are considered chronologically by date and time of final portfolio submission. Whilst a programme still has vacancies, successful candidates will be made an offer of a place. Once a programme becomes full, subsequent successful applicants will be placed on a waiting list, and may be made a firm offer should a place become available for them.

<b>Programme-Specific requirements</b>
Specific advice on programme portfolio requirements is provided by the Head of Programme in the online application system. Please consult the College website for further information on programme-specific admission and portfolio requirements: <a href="https://www.rca.ac.uk/study/programme-finder/ceramics-glass-ma/#requirements">https://www.rca.ac.uk/study/programme-finder/ceramics-glass-ma/#requirements</a>