



Programme Specification

1. General Information

Programme title:	Ceramics & Glass
Award:	Masters
Qualification Framework level:	Level 7
School/Department or equivalent:	School of Arts and Humanities
Campus location(s):	Battersea
Total UK credits:	180
Date valid from/to:	2023-24

2. Programme Philosophy

Ceramics and Glass is situated within the Applied Arts located within the School of Arts and Humanities. Applied Art disciplines are always at the convergence of things. Whether that's the cusp of art/design, material/ immaterial, digital/analogue, these are disciplines which demand multidirectional attention and which require empathic, thoughtful and considered interactions with materials and materiality. As we enter a 5th Industrial Revolution we encounter a dynamic time to be working with and through emergent possibilities that are presented by making, speaking to both studio practice and the rich histories of object-making and the new possibilities presented by technologies and global dialogues.

The spirit of Ceramics & Glass at the RCA springs from a belief in the transformative power of material thinking, research and making to enable a new generation of artists and designers to enrich our world in imaginative and meaningful ways. Core to our philosophy is an exploration of how we can make ideas manifest through a tacit exploration of active materials and the generative potential of process.

The programme provides a creative interface where personal concerns and global perspectives intersect - questioning, examining and responding to social, cultural and material challenges. The areas of research of both staff and students are diverse, arise from the broad scope of the two disciplines and inform what is taught on the programme. Advances in technology are explored, traditional methodologies are challenged to create new and unique approaches.

The spectrum of enquiry is driven by live and studio projects - archive and collections are explored in order to understand, question and reinterpret how histories and traditions of our disciplines inform contemporary culture - our relationship with site, communities and the built environment

provide a framework for developing proposals - specialist tutor led group work brings a focus to areas such as metaphorical and phenomenological meaning within materiality - while design led ideas are explored through object use, and the systems of production that they emerge from.

Drawing on our diverse network of contacts within the subject specialisms, lectures, artist talks and professional practice seminars from industry leaders, are combined with field trips and practical skill sessions to support independent learning. Studio culture is nurtured within dedicated facilities that offer opportunities for collaborative and cross disciplinary approaches - all aimed at developing the next generation of leading Ceramics & Glass graduates. Alongside programme specific delivery, theory and contextual studies will be delivered across the Applied Art disciplines, situating and contextualising the thinking (and making) of a material-led practice within the wider world.

You will be supported through 3 units of study. Unit 1 develops research skills and offers new intellectual positions to students, unit 2 focuses on theoretical and technical developments aiding you in situating their practice within the field, whilst the final unit (the Independent Research Project) prepares students for self-directed practice and research working towards a public exhibition and a portfolio of practice publication. Alongside programme specific delivery, theory and contextual studies will be delivered across the Applied Art disciplines, situating and contextualising the thinking (and making) of a material-led practice within the wider world.

3. Educational Aims and Outcomes of the Programme

Programme aims

- You will establish a dialogue between theory and practice through research, discourse and production in order to realise your creative, intellectual and critical potential.
- You will learn how to plan and produce challenging, innovative works of high quality and ambition, technically and conceptually.
- You will extend your understanding of the fields of Ceramics & Glass and the wider contemporary art and design communities in order to situate and contextualise your practice within their theories and practice.
- You will develop independent learning whilst actively contributing to community and collaborative discussions, fostering a positive studio culture of inclusivity and diversity in which we all reject discrimination and are anti-racist.
- You will evidence material approaches where ethical ideas of regeneration, circularity, sustainability, social and communal impact are subject to rigorous interrogation and adoption.

What will I be expected to achieve?

Upon successful completion of the programme, you will be expected to meet the requirements of both the College-wide Learning Outcomes and your programme-specific Learning Outcomes.

College-Wide Learning Outcomes

You should be able to:

- Interrogate and articulate the intentions of your work in relation to the critical and conceptual context of your field(s) of study;
- Independently plan and produce work that is informed by developments at the forefront of your field(s) of study;
- Evaluate and critique the principles and methods of research in your field(s) of study, and apply these principles to your creative, professional and/or scholarly practice;
- Demonstrate originality in how you translate knowledge into practice;
- Communicate your creative, professional and/or scholarly practice to a non-specialist audience;
- Critically reflect on the likely public impact of your creative, professional and/or scholarly practice, and on your responsibilities as a practitioner;
- Define your professional ambitions and identify the challenges involved in meeting them.

Programme-Specific Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this programme, you will be able to:

- Research and develop a practical understanding of the historical and theoretical context of the discipline in order to apply knowledge at the forefront of your discipline;
- Systematically and creatively design experimental methods, critically evaluate the results and apply them effectively to your practice;
- Develop, refine and produce work that integrates thought, creativity and technique in order to translate ideas and concepts into practice;
- Evaluate the necessary skills appropriate for you to develop, apply and command them within your practice;
- Critically reflect on the appropriate context and key platforms, in which your practice is situated, in order to define your professional identity;
- Critically debate the concepts, methods and qualities within your practice in order to articulate them to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

4. What will I learn?

Curriculum Map

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Interrogating Your Practice and Deconstructing Assumptions (45 credits)	Urgency of the Arts (15 credits)	Independent Research Project (60 credits)

	Developing Methodologies (30 credits)	
AcrossRCA (30 credits)		

Programme Structure

Unit Title	Term	Credit Value	Core or Elective?
Interrogating Your Practice and Deconstructing Assumptions	1	45	Core
AcrossRCA (College-Wide Unit)	1&2	30	Core
Developing Methodologies	2	30	Core
Urgency of the Arts (School-Wide Unit)	2	15	Core
Independent Research Project	3	60	Core

Interrogating Your Practice and Deconstructing Assumptions

Interrogating Your Practice and Deconstructing Assumptions, focuses on developing tools for deconstructing and critiquing your own practice and previous methods/approaches, as well as providing new contexts and directions for your work. Emphasis is placed on inviting new thoughts and progressive ideas through which to develop a ceramics and glass practice. During the unit you will be offered a series of opportunities to explore techniques, collections, environments alongside new modes of thinking aimed at challenging and expanding their current perception of Ceramics & Glass practice.

Developing Methodologies

Throughout this unit, *Developing Methodologies*, you will explore themes situated within wider material culture particularly those revealed by self-directed study via the lens of a Ceramics & Glass practice. Through experimentation and research, they will establish and develop the methodologies that will define their emerging practice. Developments and lines of enquiry formulated in *Interrogating Your Practice and Deconstructing Assumptions*, and through the Platform, will act as a background for the production of a body of work. You will be required to write your proposal and develop the summative project for the *Independent Research Project* by the middle of this unit.

Across **terms 1 and 2**, you will participate in **AcrossRCA**. This unit aims to support you to meet the challenges of a complex, uncertain and changing world by bringing you together to work collaboratively in interdisciplinary teams on a series of themed projects informed by expertise within and beyond the College. These projects will challenge you to use your intellect and imagination to address key cultural, social, environmental and economic challenges. In doing so, you will develop and reflect on the abilities required to translate knowledge into action, and help demonstrate the contribution that the creative arts can make to our understanding and experience of the world.

In **term 2**, School of Arts and Humanities Masters students will participate in a School-wide unit

called *The Urgency of the Arts*. In this unit we ask how arts and humanities research and practice can engage with our current socio-political climate, and how might it shape, be necessary and essential in contemporary cultural debates.

The unit introduces students to a diverse range of perspectives, approaches and methods relevant to contemporary practice and thought in the arts and humanities. The delivery, predominantly based on workshops and featuring specialist presentations by leading artists, aims to assist students in recognizing, questioning, expanding, and reevaluating their own artistic practices and disciplinary assumptions. Through interactions with staff and students from across the School, as well as through a variety of methodological approaches, students will develop an understanding of the contemporary concerns that shape and influence artistic practice.

Students will be supported in understanding the possibilities, complexities and impact of their own work. They will be encouraged to contextualise it within broad cultural landscapes to recognise and emphasise its potential and also the complex ways in which their work may be received and understood.

Independent Research Project

The 60-credit *Independent Research Project* (IRP) is an opportunity to build a body of work that addresses the key ambitions of your research and practice. You will work towards presenting a work or works in the IRP Public Exhibition, which enables you to explore how you can activate your work in a public context, experiment with the most appropriate forms of realising your ideas and gain critical feedback. The IRP exhibition takes place mid-way through the unit and will be followed by a period of reflection and further development, which emphasises planning for continued practice and research post-graduation.

The exhibition, which takes place at the middle of the IRP, is a valuable teaching and learning experience, prompting discussions and thinking around curatorial and logistic aspects of arranging and installing an exhibition.

The programme will support you in acquiring an advanced understanding of practice-led methodologies, critical reflection, production, and presentation. You will be supported in understanding practice-led methodologies, critical reflection, and presentation. The IRP supports you with the specific conceptual and material demands of exhibiting and sharing their work and uses this to prepare you for the diverse professional practices of contemporary art and design.

5. How will I learn?

Orientations

At the start of the first term, you will be given orientation sessions. These are specifically aimed at - contextually informing them of their cultural surroundings in London - outlining the facilities on the various RCA campus - understanding the programme handbook and a further session looks to strategies for negotiating your way through the programme.

Briefings

Students are briefed with clear key informative instructions at the start of teaching and learning experiences such as the practice projects and themed group strands.

Individual & Group Tutorials

You can expect individual tutorials located at specific points at each term with each term with your personal tutor to discuss your work, progress and any pastoral issues that might arise. They will also have the opportunity to receive additional individual and group tutorials from other staff and visiting lecturers at specific points during the programme.

Critiques

Critiques are an opportunity for you to engage in small group reviews of works-in-progress. These occur regularly throughout the programme and feature specifically at the end of the practice projects.

Lectures

you will take part in the *(Im)Material Culture Lecture Series* which looks at the disciplines of Applied Arts from a number of perspectives including philosophy, anthropology, material sciences, histories and culture.

Seminars:

seminars include the *(Im)Material Culture Seminar Series*, alongside seminars on a range of topics including professional practice, as well as the reoccurring "Thematic" seminars where you will work with other students in professionally aligned contexts.

Workshop Masterclasses

During the first term the programme offers a focussed selection of different skills sessions, these are delivered by a combination of core staff and guests who teach specialist sessions. You will engage experientially with the acquisition of practical knowledge ranging from, for example, glaze chemistry, 3D Printing clay and Pate de Vere glass techniques.

Study Trips

During the first term one of the projects offers the opportunity for you to visit a significant applied arts collection featuring ceramics & glass objects, which informs your studies, prompts research and ideas development. Study trips offer experiences to network and see the role of arts practices beyond the studio.

Industry Engagement

The programme seeks to engage with live projects and competitions with industry partners. A regular feature of these will take place in the second term when students can choose to participate in a glass project. This is delivered over a two-day study trip to a luxury glass manufacturer specialising in mouth blown and cut-glass vessels. You are given skills training and apply this knowledge to work towards a commercial design brief.

Teaching Project

The Teaching project offers the opportunity for you to gain professional practice experience and create valuable networking contacts. Discussions prepare you for sessions which vary from the

delivery of artist's talks and tutorials to the development of workshops.

Professional Practice Lectures

During this unit there are lectures specifically aimed at delivering Ceramics and Glass-specific professional practice content to support you in continuing to define your identity and cover approaches to supporting professional life after College.

Exhibition

The public exhibition, which takes place as part of the *Independent Research Project*, is a valuable teaching and learning experience, prompting discussions and thinking around curatorial and logistic aspects of arranging and installing an exhibition. It provides opportunities for you to engage and communicate your ideas and practice with different audiences. The exhibition continues to provide a crucial basis for critical reflection, opportunities for documentation and for professional practice sessions to be tailored to a current event.

Exhibition Support Workshops

For the final exhibition, you will be given specific advice and preparation to assist the planning, curation and logistics of putting on an exhibition. This is a crucial aspect of learning and assessment for Ceramics & Glass students, with professional practice sessions aligned specifically to and dependent on exhibition.

Technical Inductions

Technical inductions are mandatory for students wanting to use programme specific resources. They are delivered by technical staff when necessary and at points that are relevant to support a student's practice.

Technical Workshops

Over the first two terms the technical team deliver a number of general workshop skills sessions relating to ceramics, glass and mould-making processes.

Technical Negotiated Learning

Sessions can be scheduled throughout the programme, to provide technical support for your work.

Independent Study

You will be expected to work independently or collaboratively and unsupervised between project practice sessions and other timetabled programme activities.

6. Assessment and feedback

Regulations

Regulations for assessment and progression can be found [here](#). Please note that College regulations

are subject to annual updates and amendments.

Unit assessment

The types of assessment that a student can expect on the Ceramics & Glass programme are: -

Continuous Formative Assessment and Feedback

Informal assessment and feedback features throughout the programme curriculum. Regular personal tutorials allow a consistency of evaluation of your progress and verbal feedback gives guidance. Group critique discussions offer further peer feedback. Completion of the practice projects at different stages of *Interrogating Your Practice* and the themed group strands in *Developing Methodologies* offer defined opportunities for you to present your work for informal assessment and feedback.

Examples of work considered for informal feedback, prior to formal submission include but are not limited to – research - tests and trials informing the completion of a final work or works - proposal presentation supported by indicative qualitative tests and models.

Group Critique Discussions

These regular tutor-led student group sessions offer staff and peer feedback.

Group Presentations

Completion of the practice projects throughout *Interrogating Your Practice* and the group learning strands in *Developing Methodologies* give defined opportunities for you to present your work to receive verbal assessment and feedback from tutors and peers.

Summative Assessment

This is the formal completion of a unit, which may include a viva voce exam or being assessed by reviewing a number of different submitted materials essential for evaluating your progress. These may include but are not limited to assessment of:

- final works
- a curated display
- a portfolio of practice
- student presentations
- student proposals
- a self-reflective progress report
- tests - experimental and works-in-progress significant to your progress

Feedback is an important aspect of the summative assessment process. We aim to deliver written feedback within 3-weeks, following assessment completion. Feedback types used in the programme are verbal following a face-to-face Viva, and written in either report form or to accompany your results.

7. What award can I get?

To be awarded an RCA MA degree you need to gain 180 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 at resit 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 programme 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 programme 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 Student Visa 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 Masters 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.

Whilst there are still spaces available, successful candidates will be made an offer of a place. If there is no vacancy for a subsequent successful applicant, the candidate will be placed on a waiting list, and may be made a firm offer should a place become available.

Programme-Specific requirements

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:

<https://www.rca.ac.uk/study/programme-finder/ceramics-glass-ma/#requirements>