



## Royal College of Art

### Ceramics & Glass MA Specification 2018–19

#### 1. General Information

| Award    | Programme Title    | Duration | Mode of Study |
|----------|--------------------|----------|---------------|
| MA (RCA) | Ceramics and Glass | 2 Years  | Full-time     |

|                                       |                      |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Awarding Institution</b>           | Royal College of Art |
| <b>Teaching Institution</b>           | Royal College of Art |
| <b>Professional Accreditation</b>     | N/A                  |
| <b>Qualifications Framework Level</b> | M                    |
| <b>Credit Value</b>                   | 240 UK credits       |
| <b>Date of most recent validation</b> | December 2013        |
| <b>Programme Specification Date</b>   | 2018/19              |

#### 2. Philosophy of the Programme

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 and global perspectives intersect. We work to extend the possibilities and perspectives of the 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.

The MA spectrum of enquiry includes the creation of unique art works, emerging experimental practices, design for manufacture and the built environment, emerging experimental practices and applications related to ceramics and glass. Curiosity is



## Royal College of Art

### Ceramics & Glass MA Specification 2018–19

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 purpose, and to foster new understandings of our interaction with 'things'.

The programme provides a creative interface - questioning, examining and responding to social, cultural and material challenges. The areas of research of both staff and students is diverse and arises from the broad scope of the two disciplines. We see our students as creative thinkers who engage in a combination of individual personally driven work, collaborative and cross-disciplinary projects.

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 that are invented, borrowed and even stolen. 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



## Royal College of Art

### Ceramics & Glass MA Specification 2018–19

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 of the Programme

The programme aims to:

- provide a learning environment which privileges experimentation and self-reflexivity in order to develop both a personal vocabulary and advance practice
- provide a centre of excellence in the postgraduate study of ceramics and glass to meet national and international requirements in the subject
- provide postgraduate education, supported by staff research and practice, for students of proven ability from a variety of international, undergraduate or professional backgrounds
- teach how to plan and produce works of high quality and ambition technically and conceptually
- provide a learning environment which encourages diversity, creativity and independent study leading to future practice, research and continuing development after graduation
- enable the development of the student's creative, intellectual and critical potential and to encourage new perceptions and innovative work
- place contemporary mediums within the context of contemporary art practices and theories
- establish a dialogue between theory and practice and to produce a practice which negotiates received theories



## **Royal College of Art**

### **Ceramics & Glass MA Specification 2018–19**

- promote education and training at postgraduate level in the skills required for a variety of relevant professional practices
- maintain and progress the practices of ceramics and glass and to advance knowledge within the discipline
- enrich the students' experience by facilitating participation and involvement in the postgraduate culture of the School of Arts & Humanities
- engender an awareness of sustainability and the ecological impact of our discipline.



## Royal College of Art

### Ceramics & Glass MA Specification 2018–19

#### 4. Intended Learning Outcomes of the Programme

| 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.      | Effectively articulate 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. Professionalism</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.                                       |



## Royal College of Art

### Ceramics & Glass MA Specification 2018–19

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| C3. | Define your professional identity through self-reflection and an understanding of the opportunities available within the creative economy. |
|-----|--|



## Royal College of Art

### Ceramics & Glass MA Specification 2018–19

#### 5. Programme Structure and Curriculum

##### First Year

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 be guaranteed 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. Students produce work for studio critiques that take place throughout term one and two. The first year consists of three projects, that will explore different intellectual themes and contexts. The autumn term students work from museum collections to explore the role that an object might fulfil and build research skills. The spring term students explore Design methodologies and related production processes and a third short project is concerned with notions space, place and site.

There is a critique at the end of each project; an opportunity to reflect on personal achievement and participate in group appraisal and discussion. At the beginning of the spring term, first year students contribute to the Work in Progress Show. Their work is not expected to be resolved at this stage. It is an opportunity to take risks, trying new materials and ideas. As this is in a public context it includes the question of spectatorship. This enables students to reflect upon the efficacy of the visual forms and concepts with which they have been working.

Students can select a number of short courses, designed to widen their skill base and material/process understanding.

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:



## Royal College of Art

### Ceramics & Glass MA Specification 2018–19

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Unit 1A:</p> <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> </ul> <p>Learning Outcomes: A1. A2. A4. B2. B3. C1. C2.</p>  | <p>Unit 1B:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 Credits</li> <li>• Self-assessment (Continuous assessment) and Exam feedback (Final Examination) from 1B exam panel.</li> <li>• May.</li> <li>• Learning Outcomes: A1. A2. A4. B2. B3. C1. C2.</li> </ul> | <p>CHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 Credits</li> </ul> <p>Delivered to the 7 Studios-based SoAH MAs, as before.</p> |
| <b>Critical &amp; Historical Studies</b>   |   |   |
| <p>The RCA provides a unique environment for postgraduate art and design students to reflect upon their own practice, and to engage with students from their own and other disciplines. The role of Critical &amp; Historical Studies (CHS) is to support the studio programmes in enabling these critical engagements to take place. The courses offered by CHS to first year studio-based MA students propose an intellectual framework within which they can begin to establish a coherent relationship between theory and practice.</p> <p>In the autumn and spring terms there are a series of College-wide seminars and lectures. The autumn term series will relate to your particular discipline (though it is possible to elect to join a series being offered to students on other programmes) whereas the spring term series will be more broad-based and cross-disciplinary in nature.</p> |   |   |



## Royal College of Art

### Ceramics & Glass MA Specification 2018–19

#### Second Year

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:

| <b>Unit 2A:</b>  | <b>Unit 2B:</b>  | <b>SoAH School Unit:</b>   |
|--|--|--|
| <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)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 60 Credits</li> <li>● Self assessment (continuous assessment) and Exam feedback (Final Examination) from 2B/School Unit Joint Panel.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 20 Credits</li> <li>● Assessed Portfolio at 2B/School Unit Joint Panel. (Final Examination).</li> <li>● May School Exam Board then</li> </ul> |



## Royal College of Art

### Ceramics & Glass MA Specification 2018–19

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p>(continuous assessment)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>December</li> <li>Learning Outcomes: A1. A2. A4. B1. B2. B3. C1. C2.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>June.</li> <li>Learning Outcomes: A2. A3. A4. B1. B2. B3. C1. C2. C3.</li> </ul> | <p>reviews marks from all units and recommends pass or fail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning Outcomes: B2. C2. C3.</li> </ul> <p>This is delivered to all 10 SoAH MA programmes.</p> |
|---|---|--|

## 6. Learning and Teaching Methods

| <b>Introduction</b>  |
|--|
| <p>It is expected that students' will learn from the range of teaching activity through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engaging in the making and designing of work in ceramic and/or glass.</li> <li>a Progress Report written by the student, which contributes to their own evaluation of their progress.</li> <li>conducting research of a visual, academic and technical nature.</li> <li>involvement in tutorials, lectures, exhibition visits and participation in collaborative projects.</li> <li>Participation in discussions, seminars, forums and critiques.</li> </ul> <p>The range of teaching activity is designed for you to draw out what you find relevant or useful. Each student is expected to develop the ability to select and initiate activities that are appropriate. It is expected that you learn from the range of teaching activity through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engaging in the making and designing of work in ceramic and/or glass;</li> <li>your Progress Report written by you, which contributes to your own evaluation of your progress;</li> <li>conducting research of a visual, academic and technical nature;</li> <li>Active involvement in tutorials, lecture attendance, site and exhibition visits and participation in collaborative projects.</li> <li>Participation in discussions, seminars , forums and critiques to inform and share ideas, and to help you understand a context for developing your specialist practice .</li> </ul> |



## Royal College of Art

### Ceramics & Glass MA Specification 2018–19

#### **Personal Tutorials**

Students are allocated a personal tutor and will meet with them twice each term. 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. At the end of each Unit of study, the student's personal Tutor writes an evaluative feedback report in response both to the students' self-assessment and to the considered and moderated assessment of their work.

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

From time to time, 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 and Lectures**

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



## Royal College of Art

### Ceramics & Glass MA Specification 2018–19

#### 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

**Most students come from a wide range of undergraduate programmes, with very different expertise. In the autumn and spring terms 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.**

#### Short Courses

During first year a range of short courses are offered to introduce you to a range of equipment, studio processes and materials available for use in the ceramics and glass workshop. These courses are aimed to inspire you and to provide a brief introductory level of skill training and the opportunity for more experienced students to undertake new challenges.

#### Master classes

From time to time eminent practitioners are invited to work in the programme for short periods of time. As well as being an opportunity to demonstrate their particular working process, they will also discuss their approach to work, and may well give a lecture and hold one-to-one tutorials.

## 7. Assessment



## Royal College of Art

### Ceramics & Glass MA Specification 2018–19

|  |
|--|
| <b>General</b>   |
| Regulations for assessment and progression can be found in the College Regulations, sections 2.7 – 2.10  |
| <b>Continuous Assessment</b>   |
| <p>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. This assessment is validated through a structure that ensures that student performance is evaluated from a range of perspectives and by a range of different tutors who are able to triangulate their experience of the student and enable parity of assessment across the cohort.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>All Studio based Units (1A, 1B, 2A &amp; 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.</li></ul> |
| <b>Final Examination</b>   |
| <p>Final Examination 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.</p> <p><b>Unit 1B</b></p>   |



## Royal College of Art

### Ceramics & Glass MA Specification 2018–19

The Final Examination for Unit 1B is held at the beginning of the third term 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 and the Unit Assessment Meeting will recommend one of the following outcomes to the School Exam Board for further reference to ABCD: Pass, Referral, Fail.

A pass entitles students to be awarded the credits pertaining to the relevant unit; If the board concludes that their work is not developed enough, they will be referred and be asked to submit new work by a set date. A fail indicates that work and studentship do not meet the required criteria for the continuation of studies.

#### **Unit 2 B**

The Final Examination for Unit 2B is held at the beginning of the third term 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. The students' self evaluation report will be read and considered in relation to their performance in the viva and the Unit Assessment Meeting will recommend one of the following outcomes to the School Exam Board for further reference to ABCD: Pass, Referral, Fail.

A pass entitles students to be awarded the credits pertaining to the relevant unit. If the Unit Assessment Meeting concludes that their work is not developed enough, they will be referred and be asked to submit new work by a set date. A fail indicates that work and studentship do not meet the required criteria for the continuation of studies.

#### **SoAH School Unit**

Students will be required to produce a pre-formatted digital professional practice portfolio, documenting selected work and practice, and articulating it in relation to



## Royal College of Art

### Ceramics & Glass MA Specification 2018–19

some of the key concerns raised in the unit. This should encompass a 1500-2000 word statement, to include:

- a record of participation in school crits (500 words per crit), with images of work presented, reflection on conversations that took place and key references.
- an additional 500-1000 words on contextualised practice in economic and social context, referencing work in MA school group and what's next series.

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.

#### CHS

Students will receive individual tutorials to support the development of a dissertation which is submitted at the end of their first year, and which will be the element on which this unit is assessed. The dissertation should be between 6,000 – 10,000 words in length.

## 8. Admissions

#### Cross-College Requirements

Refer to the College Prospectus for details of cross-College entrance and portfolio requirements for the MA Entrance Examination.

Candidates for all MA courses are assessed on their existing qualities as demonstrated in their work and in their interview, as well as on their potential to benefit from the course and to achieve MA standards overall. The assessment will consider: creativity, imagination and innovation evident in the work; ability to articulate the intentions of the work; intellectual engagement in relevant areas; appropriate technical skills; overall interview performance, including oral use of English.



## Royal College of Art

### Ceramics & Glass MA Specification 2018–19

#### Programme-Specific Requirements

MA entrance requirements for Ceramics & Glass are:

- A good undergraduate degree in ceramics or glass or equivalent professional experience.
- Applications are welcomed from candidates from related backgrounds, for example, textiles, sculpture, architecture and industrial design.
- Work experience, either before or after a first degree, is a great advantage.
- Students are selected on the basis of their talent, ambition and will to succeed as well as for their potential to contribute to the breadth and vitality of the programme.

#### Portfolio:

- All candidates are required to submit an online portfolio of work to be assessed by the programme's senior staff team. The folio should illustrate the whole range of their creative work and give an insight into both the way they think, develop and research ideas, and to what excites them visually.
- Online portfolio submission:
  - Applicants should submit up to 10 digital images of finished work or work in progress. Each main image can be accompanied by up to 6 supporting images of relevant visual research or preparatory work, such as drawings, sketchbook scans or contextual references that are relative to their creative thinking.
  - Images must be in JPG or PNG format (2MB max, and 1024 x 768 pixels or greater are preferred) or videos in MOV, MP4 or M4V (80MB max) format.

#### If you are invited for an interview:

- Applicants should bring a selection of their online portfolio submission in its physical form, as well as their most recent work or work in progress.
- Candidates should bring a minimum of four finished pieces of work.
- Candidates should bring an image of another artist or designer's work in ceramics or glass for discussion.



## Royal College of Art

### Ceramics & Glass MA Specification 2018–19

#### 9. Quality Indicators

*Refer to the RCA Quality Handbook for more details of the College's quality and standards procedures.*

- All academic programmes at the Royal College of Art are revalidated on a six-yearly cycle. Revalidations involve external subject experts and internal panel members appointed by the College's Academic Standards Committee (ASC).
- Programmes are required to submit an annual Review, the primary purpose of which is to evaluate the experience of students enrolled on both its MA and MPhil / PhD courses.
- External Examiners are appointed for a maximum of three years to ensure that:
  - the academic standard for each award is set and maintained at an appropriate level and that student performance is properly judged against this;
  - the standards of awards are comparable with those of other UK higher education institutions;
  - the process of assessment and examination is fair and has been fairly conducted.
- An Internal Moderator is appointed by the Senate on the recommendation of ASC to ensure that there are appropriate mechanisms in place for the objective assessment of student work and to ensure comparability of examination practices between programmes within the College.
- Students have the opportunity to provide feedback through regular programme-level meetings (at least one each year considers the delivery of the MA programme and the External Examiner report); and through an annual College-wide MA student survey. A Student Representative Council brings forward issues from Course Forums and programme-level meetings to the President and Vice-President of the Students' Union who then, where appropriate, present these issues at College committees or to the Senior Management of the College.