

Glasgow School of Art Course Specification

Course Title: Etching

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Please note that this course specification is correct on the date of publication but may be subject to amendment prior to the start of the Academic Year.

Course Code	HECOS Code	Academic Session
	100595	2026/27

Course Title	Etching
Course Contact	Gordon Webb, Head of Continuing Education

Credits	10
SCQF Level	7
When Taught	Open Studio programmes throughout the year.

Associated Programmes	None
Lead School	Fine Art
Other Schools	None
Date of Approval	PACAAG August 2026

Course Introduction

This is a 10-credit, level 7 course that introduces the basic concepts and techniques of Etching.

Students on this course can gain a wide range of practical knowledge, skills and experience whilst learning the theory and chemistry process associated with etching. Students will develop their ideas through the projects via the etching process including intaglio printing in monochrome and colour.

Course Aims

The aims of this course are to:

- Introduce students to the theory and chemistry of Etching.
- Line, tone and texture Etching
- The proofing and development of an etching
- Intaglio printing in monochrome and colour
- Students developing their own personal ideas and projects via the etching process

Course Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Demonstrate Etching on zinc, steel and copper using a variety of processes including hard and soft ground
- Apply tonal effects to their image using aquatint and burnishing/scraping
- Integrate brush marks with their image using sugar-lift and spit bite techniques
- Prepare paper for printing
- Print plates in the intaglio method to a good standard in monochrome and colour
- Identify and appreciate results of different applications to finished pieces

- Develop their own ideas and themes via the medium of etching
- Use the workshop tools and equipment safely and effectively

Indicative Content

This course will allow the student to gain a wide range of practical knowledge, skills and experience, whilst learning the theory and processes associated with Fine Art Etching. Initially students will be shown a selection of prints from the school's archive to indicate what can be achieved. Through discussion and demonstrations students will learn the various techniques required to create an etching. Students will use their ideas/drawings/source material as a starting point to etch them onto zinc/steel plates using hard/soft grounds. Using aquatint and burnishing/scraping techniques, students will learn how to create and alter tonal values to their image. The student will also learn about the application of other mark making techniques such as Sugar Lift, Spit Bite, Drypoint and the collage process of Chine Colle'. As the student gains confidence and experience of inking, registering, and printing using a large press they can then print a multi-plate image which allows the overlaying of several colours.

This course is project led with briefs set at regular intervals to challenge the students' abilities and knowledge. Students will be expected to carry out project work outwith the workshop as well as independent developmental sketchbook work

Description of Learning and Teaching Methods

Small group of students taught one-to-one within the studio. Group crits allow students the opportunity to assess their own work in relation to their peers. Students start to develop their sketchbook practice outside the timetabled class.

Indicative Contact Hours

33

Notional Learning Hours

100

Description of Formative Assessment and Feedback Methods

Engagement with formative assessment is a mandatory requirement. Formative assessment occurs during regular contact with the tutor, including informal tutorials and discussion within the workshop. Throughout the course students are supported in assessing their developing work and encouraged to make adjustments where necessary. Although it takes place in every class with individual critiques, over time they are able to evaluate their work in progress and learn to modify its development.

Feedback is provided via on-to-one tutorials enabling students to note feedback and critique remarks.

Description of Summative Assessment arrangements

The course will be internally assessed by studio work. Finalised collection of work and completed self-evaluation form will be assessed by the tutor and another member of staff and an assessment checklist will be completed. The student's technical ability will be assessed through their submitted final portfolio. Submitted work will be assessed and moderated in accordance with the GSA Code of Assessment.

Description of Summative Assessment Method	Weight %	Submission week
Studio Practice: Applied knowledge and understanding. Students will submit final edition prints and development work for assessment. Students will be assessed on the creativity and competency in how they responded to the projects	60%	12
Technical Ability in the workshop	30%	12
Completed Self-Evaluation Form	10%	12

Exchange/Study Abroad

Can this course be taken by Exchange/Study Abroad students?	Yes
Are all the students on the course taught wholly by distance learning?	No
Does this course represent a work placement or a year of study abroad?	No
Is this course collaborative with any other institutions?	No
If yes, then please provide the names of the other teaching institutions	

Reading and On-line Resources

Tallman, S., 1996. *The contemporary print: from Pre-Pop to Postmodern*, Singapore: Thames and Hudson.

Booth-Clibborn, C. & Elliott, P., 1995. *Contemporary British art in print: the publications of Charles Booth-Clibborn and his imprint* The Paragon Press 1986-95, London: Paragon Press.

Benjamin, W. & Underwood, J.A., 2008. *The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction*, London: Penguin Books