

**Glasgow School of Art Course Specification**  
**Course Title: Introduction to Acrylic Painting**

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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 |
|-------------|------------|------------------|
|             | 100589     | 2026/27          |

| Course Title   | Introduction to Acrylic Painting          |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 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 Acrylic Painting.

This course will introduce students to the key terminologies, concepts and applications of acrylic painting and equip students with good practical skills in handling appropriate equipment and materials using primary and secondary sources.

#### Course Aims

The aims of this course are to:

- Introduce students to the key terminologies, concepts and applications of Acrylic Painting.
- Develop the students' knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of Acrylics.
- Equip students with good practical skills in handling appropriate equipment and materials.
- Develop drawing skills using primary and secondary sources.
- Encourage students to become engaged in the contemporary context of Acrylic Painting.
- Develop a sketchbook practice.

#### Course Intended Learning Outcomes

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

- Demonstrate and apply techniques to create successful composition and form.
- Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate colour and tonal mixing
- Select and handle different acrylic brushes and paint effectively
- Develop skills and application in response to project briefs
- Begin to develop knowledge and understanding of artists working in the medium of Acrylics.



#### **Indicative Content**

This course will provide students with solid knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of Acrylic painting and its application. Students will learn practical skills in handling materials and equipment appropriately. Each student will receive one-to-one tuition from the tutor on the choice of subject matter, the rendering of their drawing and the application of paint.

Students will be encouraged to improve upon their technique whilst working to develop their practice and enhance their skill set. Students will be asked to pay particular attention to their practices away from the canvas, including making preparatory sketches, employing colour studies, how they manage their palette and how they approach their subject matter.

Students will be required to look at the work of historical and contemporary painters during the course in order to gain heightened critical awareness. They will be encouraged to utilise the techniques of other artists in their own work and will be required to develop a contextual awareness of artists, styles and movements. In addition, students will be encouraged to visit art galleries and permanent exhibitions.

#### **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 studio. 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. 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. Curated submission of final and preparatory work to be assessed on the competency and creativity of the student. Attention will be given to the student's development from the first project to the final work | 70%      | 12              |
| Self-directed Study. Assessment of sketchbook work from outside the studio.                                                                                                                                                                                          | 20%      | 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**

Acton, M., 2009. Learning to look at paintings, New York: Routledge.  
Thompson, J., 2006. How to read a modern painting: understanding and enjoying the modern masters, New York: Abrams.  
Schwabsky, B., 2011. Vitamin P: new perspectives in painting, London: Phaidon.