



**Wac Arts College
Curriculum Policy**

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1. Overview

The aim of this Curriculum Policy is to provide an over-arching framework which translates the values and aims of Wac Arts College into effective teaching and learning. We make a difference to our pupils' lives by providing a stable, creative, caring and consistent learning environment.

Wac Arts College provides alternative education for 14 – 19 year olds, delivered through a creative curriculum of arts and media. The school will consolidate over thirty years' experience of using arts and media education to turn disengaged young peoples' lives around.

Our ethos is founded on a number of principles, which we have embedded though our 34 years of practice in non-statutory arts and media education for those aged 5-25, specifically that excellence and engagement through the arts:

- unlocks individual talents;
- fosters aspiration and achievement;
- empowers young people to acknowledge and celebrate their heritage;
- develops transferable skills for employability such as communication, problem solving, team work, entrepreneurship, and leadership.

We believe passionately that learning can and should be enjoyable and that, particularly for those who have been alienated from or excluded by 'traditional' and 'mainstream' statutory education, the creative curriculum puts pleasure back into learning. Often, behaviour such as avoiding and resisting learning in school can in fact be signs of imagination and creativity and many young people in alternative provision are most suited for a career in the creative industries. Our curriculum ensures that young people are able to work towards meaningful accreditation which will enable them to access these industries, and other post-19 options in accordance with their aspirations.

The Wac Arts College curriculum has three strands: core, creative and extended. The core curriculum encompasses a range of traditional academic subjects, enabling learners to build the skills and knowledge they need in these crucial areas which may previously have prevented them accessing other learning. The delivery of this core curriculum is in most part subsumed into the delivery of the creative curriculum. Learners will develop the skills and knowledge required in experiential discovery based activities and projects. Furthermore the extended curriculum will provide opportunities for development of SMSC & PSCH as well as supplementing the delivery of the core & creative strands of the curriculum. Throughout all three strands of the curriculum we will have a keen focus on the personal development of our students helping them tackle the personal challenges our learners have faced and equip them with the mental and emotional toolkit to overcome these challenges in the future.

- We provide a holistic project-based creative curriculum that strives to challenge, stimulate and enable young people to progress further education and fulfilling employment.
- Each student has a personalised curriculum that is developed in conjunction with their needs and aspirations, allowing them to take control of their learning.
- At Wac Arts College we believe that forming significant and secure relationships with our students is the most effective way of affecting change in their lives.
- We work closely with the families and carers of our students making regular home visits to discuss progress and to offer support to parents/carers who are often in very challenging circumstances.
- We strive to identify any blocks to learning and to deliver a creative curriculum that appeals to all learning styles. Students are encouraged to reflect on how they learn best and why in the past they have struggled in mainstream education.
- Where possible we deliver cross-curricula project based work. All of the work we do is person-centred and designed to engage.

2. Accreditation, Target Setting, Reporting, Tracking and Focused Assessment for Learning

- We offer a full range of accreditations /qualifications from Entry level to Level 3.
Arts Awards (in partnership with The Roundhouse & Sadler Wells)
LOCN NVQs
GCSEs
BTECs
A-Levels
City & Guilds NVQs
- We use target setting, tracking and focused assessment to promote more effective, early identification of additional need, particularly in terms of special needs, pastoral care and extra-curricular activities. This is a simple process for the holistic assessment of a child's needs and strengths, taking account of the role of parents, carers and environmental factors in their development. In turn the continuous assessment of both staff and student performance facilitates timely and focused intervention.
- We are committed to giving all pupils every opportunity to succeed in reaching the highest of standards. Target setting is the means by which we identify specific and measurable goals that help to improve the standards achieved by all our pupils. Targets may relate to individual pupils, groups of pupils within classes or whole cohorts of pupils. Target setting also allows us to ask some key questions about the performance of our school. These are:
 - ❖ How well are we doing?
 - ❖ How well should we be doing?
 - ❖ What more should we aim to achieve?
 - ❖ What must we do to make it happen?
 - ❖ What action should we take and how do we review progress?
- Target setting is a significant strategy in our school for improving the achievement of pupils. It will only be effective if we remember that the child is at the heart of the process. The targets that we set are challenging, but realistic, and take into account each pupil's starting point for learning. We involve the children in the target setting process and, wherever possible, negotiate and encourage them to set targets for themselves. Pupil Progress Meetings take place every half term each pupil receives a one-2-one meeting to discuss their progress, review & update their ILP.
- Regular feedback from tutors/teachers, learning support assistants & mentors makes pupils aware of how they can improve their work and achieve their target. Target setting for our pupils means that they have to make decisions about their own learning. This helps pupils learn more effectively by making clear what it is that they need to do next in order to improve. Pupils are guided to explore different ways they can work to achieve their targets. We inform parents about the target setting process and the targets for their children during our termly review days and in their termly written reports. This helps parents identify the ways in which they can support their child with work and encouragement at home.
- Each year we identify targets for school improvement within our School Development Plan. The targets that we set for our pupils help to determine the

priorities within our school improvement plan. The actions that we then plan link to the targets that we have set. This ensures that what we plan really will have an impact on pupil learning. The governors of our school are involved in reviewing the targets of our School Development Plan on a regular basis.

- In our school the targets challenge all pupils to do better; take into account each pupil's starting point for learning; encourage pupils to regularly discuss and review their learning and progress with tutors/teachers, learning support assistants & mentors; involve parents in their child's learning; help governors to agree priorities for the school improvement plan; lead to focused teaching and learning through the tracking of targets; help us to make judgements about how well our school is doing when compared to all schools and similar schools.
- Process of target setting: we use the outcomes of assessments to identify strengths and areas for improvement in individuals and groups of pupils in the cohort.
- We use prior school attainment data & Fischer Family Trust data (when available) to establish a pupil's potential grade at the end of KS4, and to provide a starting point for our work with them. The tutors/teachers, learning support assistants & mentors then consider what the child could achieve when given an appropriate challenge. We make comparisons with the performance of similar schools in order to ensure that the targets that we set offer a real challenge. The governing body fully accepts that the targets that we set are based on the current attainment of each cohort of pupils. We do not necessarily expect targets to improve year on year. They must reflect the ability of each cohort and carry an appropriate level of challenge.
- Tutors/teachers, learning support assistants & mentors use the targets set for each pupil to develop activities that are designed to enable pupils to meet their targets. Planning will take account of this when identifying work for different groups of children. Planning takes account of targets identified on each pupil's ILP (ILP policy for more detail).
- We produce termly reports which site pupil targets for improvement in different areas of the curriculum.
- Target setting data: in our school we use a range of information to support the target setting process. We expect tutors/teachers, learning support assistants & mentors to be familiar with: examination results; the school's attainment data; the pupils prior attainment data.
- It is essential that we attempt to understand where our students are both educationally and emotionally when they join Wac Arts College.
- When students join us we conduct educational and emotional assessments, we use GL Assessment Group Reading & CAT tests, (*add in Maths test*) and the Boxall profile. These assessments are used to plan effective interventions and support activities. Testing takes place at the beginning of each term. This allows us to carefully track and monitor progress and give targeted support to the young people in our care.

- Pupil Progress Meetings - Every half term each pupil receives a one-to-one meeting to discuss their progress, review & update their ILP.
- Pupil/Parent Review Days - In line with their termly reporting cycle we hold a review day providing space and time to celebrate success and plan for further progress with the pupils and their parents/careers. These meetings are pupil led and provide an opportunity for the student to reflect on their progress and set meaningful targets. Students have a written report that details all the work done with that young person.
- We use Brom.Com MIS to record and monitor attendance, attainment and intervention data.
- We use the Boxall Profile, to assess and develop our students' SEBD.
- Our process of continuous reviews with students enables us to make regular progress reports to referral agencies and parents.
- Assessment for learning is a cornerstone of the curriculum. Students are expected to both self and peer assess and this principle is used to guide project work and refine the curriculum. Making students stakeholders in their own education is essential. The curriculum is designed with co-constructive learning in mind, with the teacher as facilitator.
- The Wac Arts curriculum will ensure that all of our students are able to discover what opportunities are possible for them in life. The curriculum will be reflexive and allow our students to have a say about the issues that affect them as individuals and collectively make sure they receive the help and support they need to achieve their potential.
- Overall the aim of our curriculum is to provide a creative, relevant, interesting and **fun** learning experience for all our students enabling them to re-engage with learning and fulfil their potential

3. The Curriculum

3.1 Linguistic

Wac Arts College is focused on improving and developing all students' functional skills. In terms of their linguistic capabilities we work in a number of ways. Primarily through the delivery of our creative curriculum which provides numerous opportunities to develop literacy skills. Literacy skills will also be developed by studying English GCSE or Functional Skills qualifications at KS4 and at KS5, our English schemes of work are designed to support pupil's linguistic development in speaking & listening, reading and writing. We also employ GL Assessment Group reading & CAT tests to provide a diagnostic element to our curriculum. Furthermore as all of the accreditations we offer are in some part assessed through course work/controlled assessment and/or a terminal examination our approach to developing pupils' skills in speaking & listening, reading and writing runs throughout the curriculum.

Students will also have access to other languages (MFL) through the creative arts curriculum, for example in the study of plays, poetry, music, films etc. Furthermore students with a particular proclivity for languages will have access to accredited courses delivered by subject specialists and in conjunction with their referring schools &/or in partnership with local mainstream provision.

3.2 Mathematical

Our curriculum provides our students with numerous opportunities to develop and refine their numeracy skills. Students are encouraged to use creative & practical activities, exploration and discussion to enhance their knowledge and understanding of maths. The delivery of numeracy is not just confined to "traditional maths lessons", but is embedded in the delivery of other appropriate subject areas and project based learning. Students' progress in both KS4 and KS5 is tracked by termly online maths assessments. We offer a range of Math accreditations depending on starting points.

3.3 Scientific

All students are offered access to a Science curriculum that is concerned with increasing their scientific knowledge. Using the Creative curriculum as a starting point we explore scientific concepts and knowledge associated with the creative subjects we deliver. For example we cover electronics and scientific theories associated with sound when teaching music and music technology. We pay particular attention to developing pupils' understanding of nature, the properties of materials and the nature of forces. In conjunction with this teaching & learning is focused on developing the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry, for example, observing, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments and recording their findings.

We also have partnerships with our referring schools to allow accredited Science opportunities for those students with a particular proclivity for the sciences

3.4 Technological

All pupils study ICT in both KS4 and KS5. We offer various accreditations dependant on student's starting points. Teaching and learning is also concerned with developing, planning and communicating ideas; working with tools, equipment, materials and components to produce good quality products; and evaluating processes and products. Design Technology work is delivered through project based activities as is our work in Digital Design & Music Technology.

3.5 Human & Social

All students are provided with lessons in Humanities. In KS4 we offer a GCSE course in Humanities which encompasses aspects of History, Geography and Citizenship. We also offer Media Studies GCSE. At Wac Arts College PSCHÉ is considered an integral part of the curriculum, and is planned for and implemented accordingly. PSCHÉ is an important tool for teaching and developing non oppressive practice.

- PSCHÉ is cross curricular, for example, within the Humanities GCSE course;
- We use the RSA Opening Minds Curriculum framework;
- External links and partnerships also provide PSCHÉ education.
- It is also linked to our IAG Framework

3.6 Physical

We offer students a wide range of physical activities on a weekly basis. Much of this forms part of the creative curriculum in dance & drama. All students have access to weekly physical activities. We provide a wide range of extra-curricula activities to supplement our physical education offer.

3.7 Aesthetic & Creative

At the heart of our curriculum are the creative arts and media. Students at KS4 will study; Art, Dance, Digital design, Drama, Film, Music & Voice. All creative courses will have be accredited either at GCSE or alternative (BTEC, OCN, ASDAN, Arts Awards etc.) depending on students' starting point. The curriculum will be delivered through project based activities, each project will last approximately two weeks. Students will be expected to try everything to begin with. However as the year progresses they will be offered choices so they can focus on the creative areas they enjoy most and in which they are achieving well. Year 10 and 11 students will be taught together and students will be divided into groups based on stage not age. Indeed, if appropriate in the second part of the year or for year 10 pupils returning for year 11, some will work in Year 12 and year 13 programmes.

Post 16 students with no or very poor qualifications will access our level 1 and 2 curriculum. They will select two disciplines from the following: drama vocals, dance/movement, digital design, music production and video production. Students will also have the option of a third discipline. They will work towards NOCN qualifications in these subjects at level one, two or three depending on starting point.

3.8 RSA Opening Minds

In addition to our creative & academic curricula we also use the RSA Opening Minds curriculum which promotes innovative and integrated ways of thinking about education. The Opening minds curriculum dispenses with traditional academic subjects and is instead based around the development of five key competences:

1. Citizenship
2. Learning
3. Managing Information
4. Relating to people
5. Managing Situations

A competence based approach enables students not just to acquire subject knowledge but to understand, use and apply it in the within the context of their wider learning and life. It also offers students a more holistic and coherent way of learning which allows them to make connections and apply knowledge across different subject areas.

3.9 Our Curriculum Delivery Model

The Wac Arts College curriculum has three strands: core, creative and extended. The core curriculum encompasses a range of traditional academic subjects, enabling learners to build the skills and knowledge they need in these crucial areas which may previously have prevented them accessing other learning. The delivery of this core curriculum is in most part subsumed into the delivery of the creative curriculum. Learners will develop the skills and knowledge required in experiential discovery based activities and projects. A style of curriculum delivery they have experienced in primary school, which is often the last time they enjoyed and engaged meaningfully with school.

Furthermore the extended curriculum will provide opportunities for development of SMSC & PSICHE as well as supplementing the delivery of the core & creative strands of the curriculum. Throughout all three strands of the curriculum we will have a keen focus on the personal development of our students helping them tackle the personal challenges our learners have faced and equip them with the mental and emotional toolkit to overcome these challenges in the future.

3.10 Family Work

At Wac Arts College we work very closely with the families of our students, and the importance of this work cannot be overstated. Exploring the narrative of the family provides a unique insight into understanding their needs, from their perspective. This is not a nine to five distanced professional approach but a more “human needs” led approach where we meet with parents and carers on their own terms and at their convenience. Our experience has taught us that often the key to unlocking issues with a young person can be found in the family dynamic, because of this we offer numerous opportunities for parents to get involved with school life, including attending regular performances to celebrate the achievements of the young people we work with, access to WAC Arts programmes and a wide range of support for parents. This is particularly effective in rebuilding trust and confidence in education the lack of which has often been present for generations in some families. Parents who themselves have had a negative experience of school often pass this onto their children and so this is passed onto their children. When appropriate we try to re-engage not only the young people but their parents and carers in education and/or employment.

3.11 Special Educational Needs

All Wac Arts College students have special needs; many have a formal statement of special education needs. The curriculum's primary focus is one of inclusion and opportunity. The identification of special needs and their effective management are a priority. The curriculum is differentiated appropriately to allow access for all students. This differentiation is generally by outcome, to provide an equality of access to educational tasks. To this end we provide highly trained learning support assistants & mentors to support students' learning. We recognise that there is a continuum of needs and a continuum of provision, which take a variety of different forms. Within Wac Arts College we recognise the value of close co-operation amongst our staff and external agencies to support our pupils. Please see our SEN Policy for further detail.

4. Progression

CAREERS EDUCATION & GUIDANCE

4.1 Introduction

A young person's career is their pathway through learning and work. We have a programme of activities to help them make choices that are right for them and to be able to manage their careers throughout their lives. We provide our students with access to careers information and guidance.

4.2 Objectives

The careers programme is designed to meet the needs of students at Wac Arts College. It is differentiated and personalised to ensure progression through activities that are appropriate to students' stages of career learning, planning and development.

Students are entitled to careers education and guidance that meets professional standards of practice and is person-centred, impartial and confidential. It will be integrated into students' experience of the whole curriculum and based on a partnership with students and their parents or carers. The programme will promote equality of opportunity, inclusion and anti-racism.

4.3 Careers Curriculum

The careers programme includes careers education sessions, career guidance activities (group work and individual interviews), information and research activities, work-related learning, work experience opportunities and individual learning planning/portfolio activities. Other focused events, e.g. a Higher Education Fair are provided from time to time. Work experience preparation and follow-up take place in appropriate parts of the curriculum. Students are actively involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation of activities.

4.4 Partnerships

An annual Partnership Agreement is negotiated between the school and *the local Connexions Service* which identifies the contributions to the programme that each will make. Other links are being developed, e.g. with *local 14-19 partners*.

5. The Wac Arts College Youth Council

Wac Arts College Youth Council provides another forum and a more formal space for students to influence the design and provision of the service.

Purpose:

- To provide the opportunity for students to voice concerns, or to raise issues regarding their role as students at Wac Arts College.
- To be active participants in the design and development of their school
- Challenge and develop thinking

Functions:

- Discussion
- Recommendation
- Dissemination

6. Residential, Extra-Curricular Activities, Projects & Links with Parents and the Wider Community

6.1 Residential

All pupils are given the opportunity to attend residential trips. This provides an invaluable opportunity for us to develop our relationships with the young people and provides an alien environment beyond the experience of most students, taking them outside of their comfort zone. They have the chance to “live as a family” and to negotiate both the positive and negative aspects of this experience. The residential experience helps them to learn to deal with conflicting feelings and promotes greater self awareness. We facilitate learning in groups, as individuals and by modelling desired behaviours. We generate a momentum of development through a variety of catalysts and orchestrate these.

6.2 Projects and Links

Wac Arts College strives to be a learning community and as such we are developing links with all our referring schools and Las.

Furthermore we are working in partnership with the Institute of Education & London Metropolitan University to provide initial teacher training. We are also very fortunate to be able to use the links established by Wac Arts over the last 30 years in the professional worlds of the creative arts & media.

7. Timetables

Exemplar timetables:

Pre-16

	9:30	9:50	10am	11am	11:15	12.30	13:10	13:15	15:00	15:30 – 17:00
	Breakfast Club	AM Reg	Session 1	Break	Session 2	Lunch	PM Reg	Session3	Break/ Tutor group time	Twilight Session
Monday			Digital Design		Digital Design			Digi/Creative Writing		Music instrument lesson
Tuesday			Drama		Drama			Dance		Film Club
Wednesday			Film		Film			Dance		Wac Arts Aerial
Thursday			Music		Music			Digital Design Creative Writing		Wac Nights Programme
Friday			Voice		Voice			Sports and Activities,		Sports trip (rock climbing)

Post16

	10:30	11am	11:15	12.30	13:10	13:15	15:00	15:30 – 17:00
	Breakfast Club	AM Reg	Session 1	Lunch	PM Reg	Session2	Break	Session 3
Monday			Music			Digital Arts		Vocals
Tuesday			Video			Digital Arts		Drama Vocals
Wednesday			Music			Video		Drama
Thursday			Digital Arts			Vocals		Drama
Friday			OFF			OFF		OFF