

Supporters' Update

Art History for Everyone at the Wallace Collection and National Gallery: 2017-2018



Teaching at the Wallace Collection

Art History for Everyone: free fast-track AS Art History for state maintained sector students taught at the National Gallery and The Wallace Collection on term-time Saturdays, September 2017-May 2018

Key Facts:

Thirty-three students were enrolled on the AS Art History courses at the National Gallery and Wallace Collection from 26 state maintained schools. Of this number 18 were from Widening Participation (WP) backgrounds. Students swiftly became enthusiastic about the subject and the course and attended regularly each weekend: the course took place on term-time Saturday mornings at the Wallace Collection and on Saturday afternoons at the National Gallery. The students were supported with homework club after class by Art History post-graduates.

Twenty three students sat the AS exams in May – probably the largest cohort in the country - from 19 schools, 14 from WP backgrounds. Over half say they now wish to study Art History at FE/HE and/or pursue careers in the arts as a result of taking the course.

Work experience was arranged for students at a wide range of host organisations including Art UK, the Ben Uri Gallery, the Geffrye Museum, HENI Talks, Royal Collection, Scala Arts and Heritage Publishers, the Society of Antiquaries, the Victoria & Albert Museum, and the Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum. Three students attended the Courtauld Institute of Art's Summer University and one student was awarded a place at Oxford University's UNIQ Art History Summer School. Several students are starting their own Art History societies at their own schools.



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What our students say:

“You’ve helped transform me from an absolute novice to someone who can spot Classical references in buildings, talk about paintings with confidence, and an absolute Art History fan girl!”

“As someone who typically doesn’t enjoy school I really appreciate how very interesting and enjoyable this course has been: it has had me re-think further education as an option for me.”

“The lessons changed the way I look and the way I think about art, and opened a whole new door for me, towards a subject I never dreamed I’d like this much and now will study at university!”

“Every week I look forward to our lessons at the National Gallery and can’t believe it has gone so quickly. It has not only helped to cement my aspirations of an art world career but given me a knowledge and enthusiasm which I will take with me in all my further studies and career.”

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Outcomes



There were many highlights of the academic year for the students, with experts coming to class to support and inspire students with accounts of their own career paths, and the opportunities that could be open to them. Highlights also included attending the Association for Art History's Ways of Seeing conference at the National Gallery in November 2017, with tickets kindly donated by The Worshipful Company of Arts Scholars.

In March 2018, two students of Art History for Everyone at the National Gallery, Aidan and Kira, were presented to HRH The Prince of the Wales by the Director of the National Gallery, Dr Gabriele Finaldi, as part of The Prince's visit as Royal Patron.

All the students were invited to the launch of HENI Talks in April 2018 at the National Gallery where they met Sir Simon Schama. In May 2018 students were invited on a post-exam half-term visit to the Royal Collection at Windsor Castle, with a tour of the State Rooms and a behind-the-scenes visit to the Print Rooms accompanied by curators.

Students were based at the Wallace Collection and National Gallery on term-time Saturdays, although sessions were hosted by other museums and galleries as appropriate to the topics being studied, with teaching space being given by the National Gallery, the Victoria & Albert Museum and the Courtauld Institute of Art for these purposes.

James Allen's Girls' School (JAGS) hosted the students for a day of mock exams, generously entered the students for their exams at the School, and offered students support with Oxbridge applications – Three of our students were awarded places at Oxford University.

The students have started their own alumni organisation, and have been involved in plans for next year's courses and for future Art History Link-Up activities. Alumni students were invited to give a tour of the Wallace Collection to the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution whose members said, "A very special tour: we were so impressed by the students' confidence, poise and love of their subject."



Art History Link Up students discuss the importance of arts in education with HRH The Prince of Wales during his visit to the National Gallery as Royal Patron in March 2018 (photographs by Flo Brooks) and with Sir Simon Schama at the launch of HENI Talks at the National Gallery in April 2018

Art History for Everyone at the National Gallery and Wallace Collection 2018-2019



In September 2018 the Art History for Everyone course format will change as a result of AS Art History being withdrawn this summer. From September 2018, students will have the opportunity to study for a taught Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) - equivalent to half an A level in UCAS points - on term-time Saturdays. This will be taught alongside two modules of the new Pearson A Level Art History course. Students will have the option to study a further two modules and sit the A level exam at the end of a second year. The modules taught alongside the Extended Project Qualification course at the Wallace Collection will be "Nature in Art and Architecture" and "Power and Persuasion: the Baroque in Catholic Europe 1597-1685". The modules taught as part of the EPQ course at the National Gallery will be "Identities in Art and Architecture" and "Invention and Illusion: The Renaissance in Italy 1420-1520"

Our colleagues will support students and teachers with delivery of the EPQ course, in collaboration with James Allen's Girls' School who will again enter the students for their external assessments. A team of independent school volunteers will act as EPQ mentors to the students, including JAGS's head, Sally-Anne Huang. As a result of delivering an A level course the course will run for a longer period of time, from September to July. The format will remain essentially the same, with students supported by homework club and teaching assistants. They will again be making visits to see examples of works being studied first hand, in other museums and galleries, as appropriate to the course.

We plan to recruit up to 40 students, so 20 at each venue. Information about the course is again being shared in a wide range of ways, including by Westminster Council to schools across London, by personal contact with teachers and alumni students, through supporters, and by a targeted social media campaign.



Thank you from us and from our students.



These achievements would not have been possible without your support and we are very grateful for your continuing involvement, as are our students:

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What our students say:

“We began the year expecting to be taught an AS Level, but we have gained much more. The study of Art History in such locations, with such artworks, and contact with such inspiring individuals, has given us skills and interests that go far beyond. We would like to thank you for your continuing support of state school students who are passionate about Art History.”

“I had no idea that Art History was offered as an A level until this course was recommended to me, so just being able to have this opportunity is really important. Being able to head to London’s best galleries to learning inside their walls, and something completely new, and then to head out to put into a real life context is such an effective way to learn. I’ve been leaning French since Year 1 and until this day, at Y13 I still can’t speak it... But if you ask me to analyse a painting or describe the formal features of a sculpture/building, then I can talk for hours.”

“Art History really seems to have been the missing piece in my puzzle, combining my interests and opening my eyes to see the world around me differently each time I go outside. This course has without a doubt been the best opportunity I have been given, not only have I learnt vast amounts and will continue to do so, it has given me a focus and stability. This truly has been an immeasurably valuable experience.”

“I don’t think I have enjoyed anything as much ever – it turned out to be a combination of all my passions and interest – art, ancient history and just learning!”

“This course has really opened my eyes and helped me to appreciate the incredible art heritage in our museums and galleries. The breadth and scope of the course equipped me with the skills and curiosity to continue in the world of Art History.”

“It is so refreshing that we are not taught with the sole purpose of doing well in an exam but because there is a shared interest and enthusiasm for Art History. It doesn’t feel like going to school on Saturdays: it is actually fun!”



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Art History for Everyone at the Wallace Collection is generously supported by the Wallace Collection, the Band Trust and other supporters.

Art History for Everyone at the National Gallery is generously supported by the National Gallery, the Rothschild Foundation, the Duke of Devonshire's Charitable Trust, the Foyle Foundation, the Worshipful Company of Grocers' and other supporters.

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