

# A Level Fine Art



# Bridging Pack 2026

# Introduction and Purpose of the Bridging Project



## **Purpose of the Project**

Supports transition from GCSE to A-Level Fine Art focusing on skill development over perfect outcomes.

## **Encouraging Independence**

Promotes independent work, creative decisions, and responsibility in idea development.

## **Exploration and Reflection**

Emphasises deep idea exploration, material experimentation, and thoughtful reflection on work.

## **Personalised Artistic Growth**

Helps teachers understand student strengths and areas for growth to tailor future support.

## Bridging task - Overview and Expectations

### **Explorative Creative Process**

The project encourages visual exploration through drawing, photography, and experimentation, not rigid planning.

### **Range of Work and Risk Taking**

Produce diverse works showing exploration, mistakes, and refinements while embracing creative risks.

### **Written Annotations and Reflection**

Annotations are essential to explain intentions, reflect progress, and evaluate learnings throughout the project.

### **Presentation and Ambition**

Organise and label work clearly; ambitious students should exceed requirements with extra studies and details.

# Tasks



**We will be looking at the theme **EXPRESSION** to start us off.**

## **Task 1**

Start by visiting some art galleries, Birmingham is a great place for this! Most galleries are also free entry to their main collections. Collect some gallery booklets and postcards keeping your focus on portraits and expression.

Whilst at the gallery you should do some loose sketches of art pieces that have caught your eye or make a note of specific artists that have inspired you whilst there. Fill an A3 page with this.

## **Task 2**

At home, create a least 1 x A3 page of drawings of features of the human face. These could all be the same feature that shows a range of expressions or a mix of features. Some drawings could be more detailed than others, show your creativity in the way you cover your page with your drawings.

## **Task 3**

Create an A3 page of a few artists that create portraits, annotate the images of their work with short bullet point key information relating to their style, materials and techniques. These should where possible be linked to the art seen on your art gallery visit.

## **Task 4**

Select one of your artists and complete an artist analysis, use the handout in this booklet to help you organise the information.

## **Task 5**

Organise your work ready to present the pieces during your first lesson in year 12. This will be your opportunity to show us your ideas, what you are interested in related to this theme and what has inspired your first thoughts for this theme.

# Course Expectations



A Level Fine Art is a **dynamic, thought-provoking and wide-ranging course** that will allow you opportunity to **develop your own creative voice**. The more you invest in your ideas, experimentation and independence, the more rewarding the course will be.

To succeed, you will need to develop **resilience, independence, motivation and curiosity**. The transition from GCSE to A Level can feel like a big step, but your teachers will support you every stage of the way.

Below are the key expectations for the course:

## In Lessons You Will Be Expected To:

- **Bring your A3 sketchbook and assessment booklet to every lesson.**

These are essential for recording your ideas, development and feedback.

- **Be prepared with materials.**

Basic materials are available in the art room, but as your work becomes more personal and independent, you will need to build your own set of materials. Many students find it helpful to organise these in a toolbox.

- **Listen carefully and take meaningful notes.**

Ideas explored in class can be developed later in your project. Detailed annotations and notes will support your progress throughout the course.

- **Engage actively in discussions.**

Be open to different viewpoints and willing to share and debate ideas. This is a key part of developing as an artist.

## Outside of Lessons You Will Be Expected To:

- **Research artists and relevant sources.**

Investigate artists, styles and ideas that can inform and inspire your work.

- **Analyse the work of others.**

Understanding how and why artists create work will help you develop your own ideas.

- **Draw regularly.**

Consistent practice is essential to improving your technical and observational skills.

- **Take your own photographs.**

Working from original images helps make your work more personal, meaningful and unique.

- **Develop independent work in your sketchbook.**

Use study time effectively—you will have access to art rooms and materials to support this.

- **Stay organised and manage your time carefully.**

Keep up with annotations, development work and presentation. This will help you meet deadlines and fulfil course requirements.

## Assessment and Organisation

- You will receive an **assessment booklet for each project**, which includes:

- Project guidance
- Checklists
- Feedback and targets

- **Large-scale work will be stored in the art studios.**

You will be allocated storage space to help you organise and manage your portfolio efficiently.

# Course Overview



|                        |                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| September<br>– January | Foundation<br>project                             | <p>During the first part of the course, you will be introduced to A Level standard skills through a series of practical workshops. This work will be linked to the theme <b>“Expression.”</b></p> <p><u>The purpose of this project is to:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce new materials and techniques not covered at KS3 and KS4</li> <li>• Encourage experimentation and creative risk-taking</li> <li>• Challenge your understanding of what art can be</li> <li>• Begin developing your independence as an artist</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| February -<br>January  | Personal<br>Investigation<br>(Component 1)        | <p>This is a practical investigation supported by written material (1000–3000 words).</p> <p><u>You are required to:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a personal project based on an idea, concept, issue, or theme</li> <li>• Independently select and refine your starting point</li> <li>• Produce a sustained body of practical work</li> <li>• Create a final outcome or series of related outcomes</li> </ul> <p><u>Throughout this component, you will be assessed on your ability to:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>AO1:</b> Develop ideas through investigation and artist research</li> <li>• <b>AO2:</b> Experiment with materials, techniques and processes</li> <li>• <b>AO3:</b> Record observations (drawing, photography, annotation)</li> <li>• <b>AO4:</b> Present a personal, meaningful response</li> </ul> <p><u>You will also:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyse and respond to the work of other artists</li> <li>• Produce high-quality drawings and photographic studies</li> <li>• Demonstrate clear development and refinement of ideas</li> </ul> |
| February -<br>May      | AQA Externally<br>Set Assignment<br>(Component 2) | <p>You will be provided with an <b>exam paper from AQA</b>, which includes a choice of starting points.</p> <p><u>You must:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select <b>one starting point</b></li> <li>• Complete a <b>preparatory period (approximately 12 weeks)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artist research</li> <li>• Experimental work</li> <li>• Drawings and photography</li> <li>• Idea development</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>This component concludes with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>15 hours of supervised exam time</b> (usually over 3 school days)</li> <li>• During this time, you will produce your <b>final outcome</b></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

# Assessment



This work will be configured into your foundation project and will be assessed against the relevant assessment objectives:

A01:

Develop ideas through sustained and focused investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and critical understanding.

A02:

Explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes, reviewing and refining ideas as work develops.

A03:

Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions, reflecting critically on work and progress.

A04:

Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and, where appropriate, makes connections between visual and other elements.





# Helpful Handouts

## How to Complete an Artist Reference Sheet\*

### 1 Start with the artist name as a title

Include one/two main images

**Write in the first person**

\*Listen to specific instructions from your teacher for each sheet

### WHAT are you writing about? Explain the piece/s of work that you are annotating.

Describe the **Style of work** - Realistic/Representational/Figurative/Still Life/Abstract/Observational/Portraiture  
**Subject Matter** – Portrait/Still Life/Natural Form – Now be specific – what exactly is the image of?

**Main Colours/How does it make you feel/What is it made of?**

**You can include scale, media, date etc. Examples:** From my research I have discovered... This is a first-hand drawing of a... This is a series of photographs that the artist took of..... This is a preparation study for.... This is an oil painting by....

### 2 WHAT

### 3 WHY did the artist make it? Explain what inspired the artist. Does it link to any of the artists' other work? Is there a historical context?

**Your opinion is important! Your ideas must be supported by reasoned argument. Examples:** This forms part of a set of portraits the artist produced inspired by.... The artist produced this work in response to.... The artist tried to capture mood inspired by.... The work is like.... I think that the artist produced the work because.....

### 4 HOW did they make it? Explain how you think they created the piece of work.

**Your opinion is important! Your ideas must be supported by reasoned argument. Examples:** I think that.... The artist drew/painted it using.... It is constructed from.... The artist built it up by collaging.... The artist photographed/drew it from life.... I researched information that.... The artist says that.....

### 4 HOW

### 5 QUALITY How Good is it? Do you have any criticisms? How could it be improved?

This is a **really important** element of the sheet—You need to evaluate the work now—This links with the work you will make as a result of studying this work

**Your opinion is important! Your ideas must be supported by reasoned argument.**

Examples: One good element of the work is... The best feature of this work is... One area that could be improved is... The least successful part of the work is....

### 6 LEARNING What did you LEARN? What have you found out/discovered? How could this inform the work you produce next?

This is the **most important** element of the sheet—Saying what will influence you/how you will use the artists ideas to influence your future work is essential

Examples: I have a better idea of... I have a clearer understanding of... I feel more confident about... Next I will try... To follow this up, I will.... To build on this research I hope to....

### 6 LEARNING

## CHECK LIST

- Have you written in the first person and made it clear that these are your words and ideas?
- Are the images appropriate—is the media linked to the artists? For example if they are a photographer do you draw the images or put copies on the sheet
- Have you focused mainly on the Quality and Learning as the most important elements of the sheet
- Remember, you can make mistakes and don't have to write out the text beforehand. Some mistakes show that the work is honest and you have modified your thought process

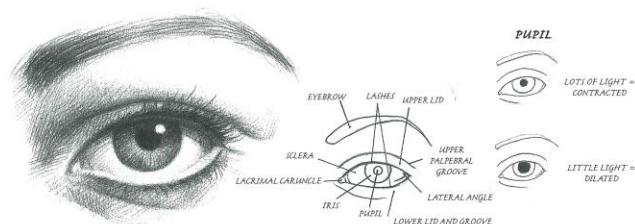


# Helpful Handouts

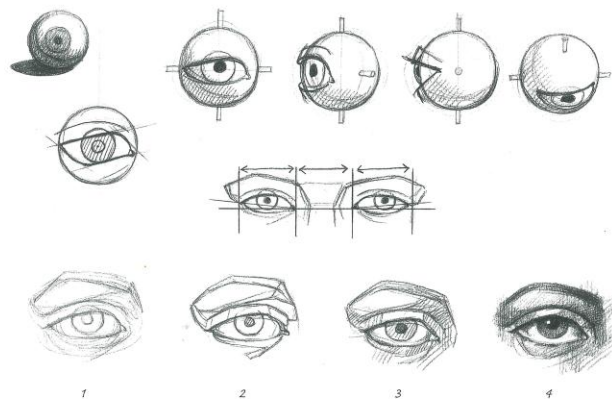
## THE EYE

Once you have examined the overall structure of the head, you need to analyse carefully the individual details of the face, i.e. the nose, mouth, eyes and ears. It makes sense to be able to recognise the basic morphological, i.e. 'constructive' characteristics of each one, as by following them and precisely reproducing individual variations you will obtain a very good likeness.

The eye is, perhaps, the most expressive element and it is therefore essential to draw it in the correct position and to the exact shape. Notice that the white section of the eyeball (the sclera) is not pure white but actually changes colour due to the effect of its own shadow and the one cast by the eyelid. Be careful to draw both eyeballs (and therefore both pupils) looking in the same direction as the expressiveness of the eyes depends on this.

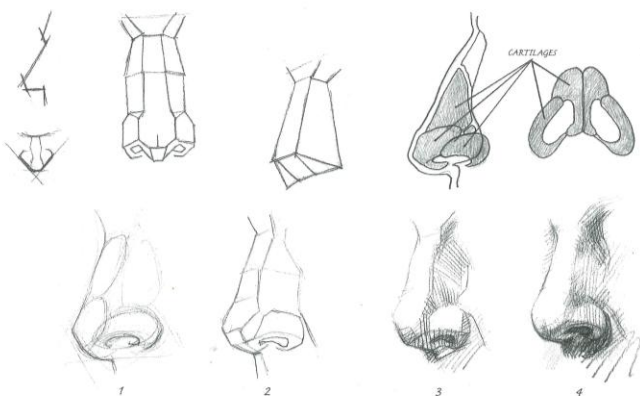
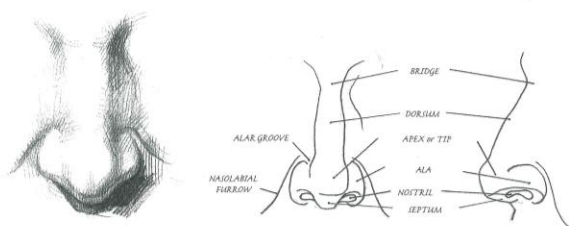


The diagrams below should be sufficient to show the spherical structure of the eye, how the eyelids rest on it and, finally, the stages to go through to draw it correctly.

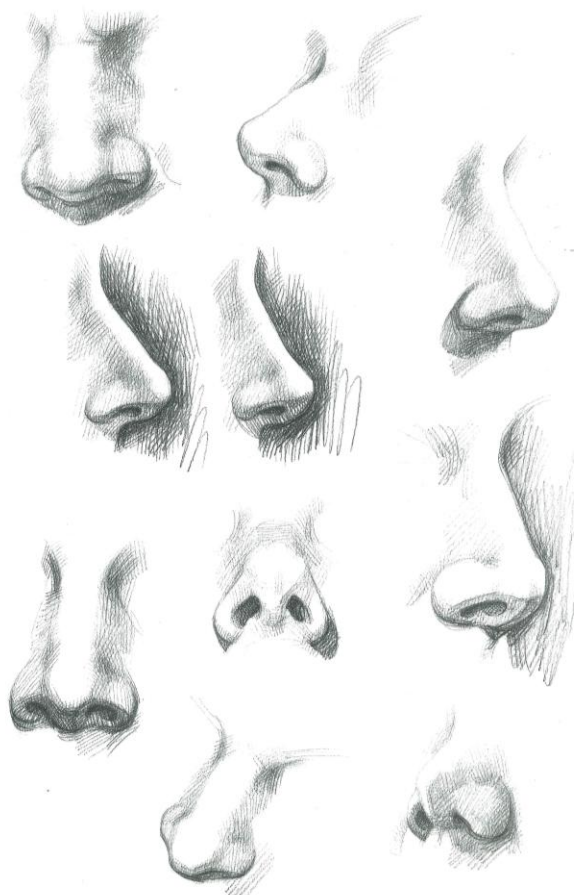


## THE NOSE

The nose is rather difficult to represent as it sticks out of the face and therefore its appearance varies depending on the viewpoint. Its pyramid-like shape is partly due to two small, close together bones and partly to cartilages, and this can be seen clearly on its dorsum. Observe the sketches shown on these two pages and practise drawing the nose in various positions, referring to photographs if it makes it easier to understand its structure. Notice that the dorsum moves away from the bridge to reach maximum projection at the tip and its sides slope towards the cheeks. The triangular base hosts the nostrils, oval-shaped and slightly converging towards the tip, and delimited by the alae of the nose. Try to work out the most important areas of light and shadow (the maximum amount of light is usually on the dorsum and the tip, while the most intense shadow is at the base, near the nostrils) and indicate just those, to avoid making the drawing too 'heavy'.



Practise drawing eyes in various positions and from different viewpoints, as shown by the examples on this page. The female eye usually has long and thick eyelashes, while eyebrows are well outlined and thin. The iris of a child looks very big compared to the eyelids. Elderly people show several deep wrinkles radiating from the corners of the eyes, the lower eyelids become 'baggy', and eyebrows become irregularly thick and bushy.

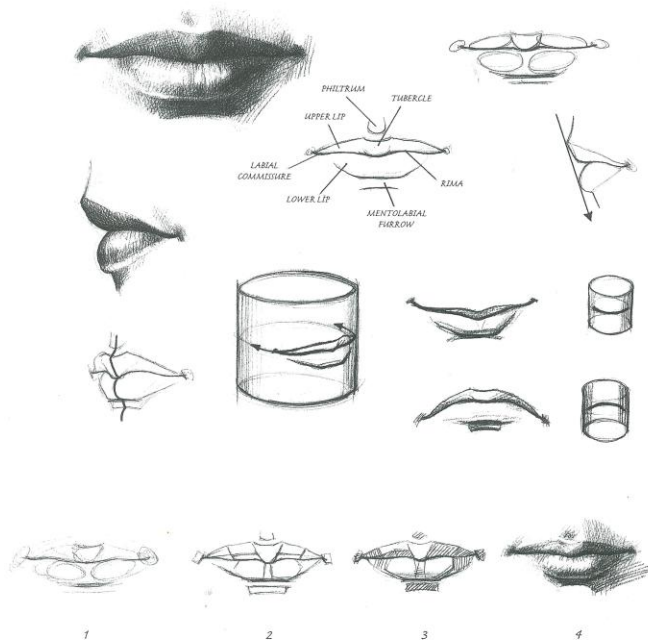


# Helpful Handouts

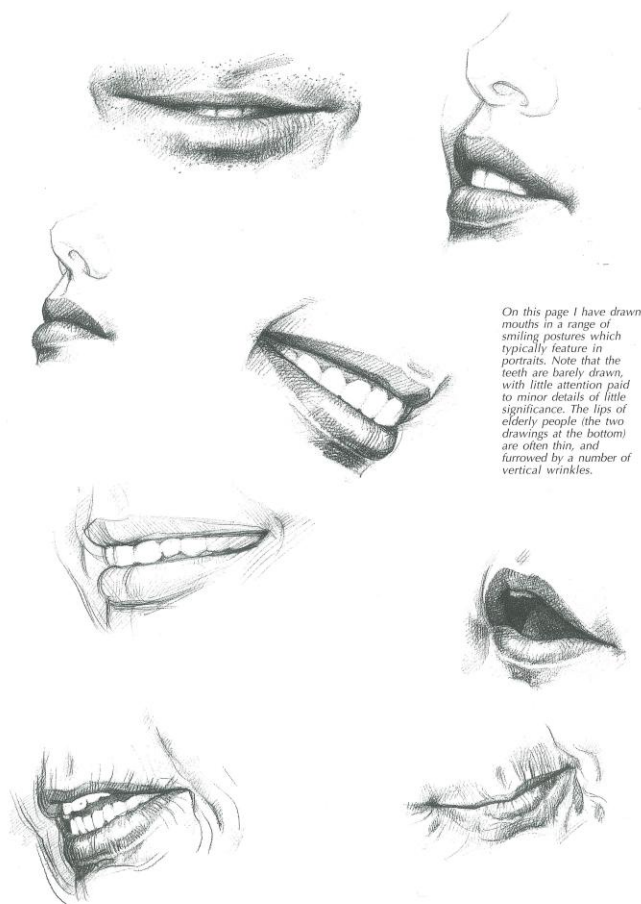


## THE MOUTH

After the eyes the mouth is the second most expressive element of the face. The pinkish colour of the lips is due to the tissue they are made of, transitional between the mucous membrane (found inside the mouth) and the skin. When drawing the lips make sure that, above all, you carefully draw the line which separates them - ensure that it lies on the semi-cylindrical surface of the jaw bones and follows the rules of perspective I have already mentioned. The simple sketches shown below indicate some of the basic characteristics of labial morphology. Notice, for instance, that the upper lip is usually thinner and more protruding than the lower.



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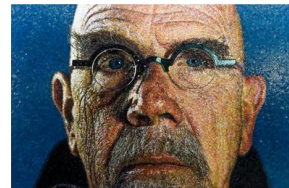
On this page I have drawn mouths in a range of smiling postures which typically feature in portraits. Note that the teeth are barely drawn, with little attention paid to minor details of little significance. The lips of elderly people (the two drawings at the bottom) are often thin, and furrowed by a number of vertical wrinkles.

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Ernst Ludwig Kirchner



Franz Xaver Messerschmidt



## Facial Expressions



AKrone, Kansas

Mark Powell

