

# Camden Cultural Commissioning Project: GCSE Art at Camden Centre for Learning

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Ashley Summercorn

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To discuss this case study, please contact us via email [customersupport@camdenlearning.org.uk](mailto:customersupport@camdenlearning.org.uk)



## Key Points

- Central St Martin's College of Art works with CCfL students
- Practical outcome in terms of GCSE course work, as well as wider learning experiences

## Purpose

### **What were your reasons for doing this development work?**

At the Camden Centre for Learning, we wanted more access to the arts for our students. The Cultural Commissioning Project provided this opportunity. We surveyed the students to find out what art projects they were interested in and surveyed the teachers to see if there was any particular arts needs or priorities. Some of their priorities were already covered by other initiatives, but Art wasn't and therefore an art project was selected to meet our school needs.

We then completed the Cultural Commissioning Model initial school partnership questionnaire (see attached) and after sharing it with arts organisations within the pilot project we were paired with Central St Martin's College. They were currently looking for ways to expand their widening participation programme and give access to people unlikely to get involved in an art degree.

### **Who were the identified target learners?**

Three KS4 GCSE students, two in Year 10 and one in Year 11, who already had a GCSE in Fine Art and was working towards his second GCSE. One Y10 student was involved only at the start, so for most of the project there were two students.

### **What were your success criteria?**

- That the outcomes would become part of the students' GCSE coursework
- That the students would have the experience of working with Central St Martin's and be inspired
- Increased engagement in Art
- Students' increased aspirations for successful future art school entry

### **What did you do? (What success criteria did you use?)**

Louise Bernard, a Secondary Art teacher at CCfL, was the teacher working in the

project:

We had an initial visit to Central St Martin's and toured the college. The Graphics Tutor Oliver O'Keeffe gave the students a presentation 'What is Beauty?'. The three students responded well and found ideas to focus on, even though this was abstract for them.

In the Spring term, The Graphics Tutor, Oliver, made visits to the school, accompanied by a student ambassador. The student ambassador was a different second year student each time. This was ideal as our students related well to somebody close to their age range. There were weekly visits spanning ten weeks. The CCfL ArtTeacher commented: 'The tutor's teaching approach was very different to mine; looser, more open-ended, inviting more risk-taking and creativity. He was used to dealing with self-reliant art students, and it was a big ask for our students, who depend on a tighter more supportive structure. It worked because the Tutor built up a really positive relationship with the students, and encouraged them to achieve things outside their comfort zone.'

The Y10 student produced an art work on Gerard Way of My Chemical Romance (a US band).

The Y11 student produced art work 'Skateparks in Typography'.

Oliver O'Keeffe commented:

'It was one of those wonderful learning experiences where you have to think on your feet. We went in with a scheme of work but it developed into showing the students different types of art work, with a different student ambassador each week accompanying the Tutor. The student ambassadors, closer in age to the students, related well with the students and their contribution was immeasurable. The students initially couldn't see the point, but became very responsive, and by the end were more intrinsically motivated to create from their own ideas. We felt this work was really important, because although it wasn't the planned outcome, it was a situation where they felt safe enough to take risks with their art and so developed their thinking.'

**What specific teaching resources did you use?**

## Outcomes and Impact

**What has been the impact on pupil learning and teaching?**

Central St Martin's were able to work with students they would never normally work with and see the teacher role at CCL.

Louise: 'The Central St Martin's Tutor had high expectations of the students, as he would of his college students – expecting them to be independent learners, challenge themselves, and take risks. It made me realise that to some extent I

‘mother’ the students; now I’m willing to push them that much more.’

Working with Central St Martin’s and the Roundhouse Cultural Commissioning Project gave our students the chance to see other professional ways of life that they wouldn’t normally encounter.

They learnt the skill of annotating, which is a part of the GCSE criteria, whereby they comment on how the concept developed and the techniques used.

### **Evidence of impact on pupil learning and teaching/leadership**

The ultimate accolade was received from one of our students who, when asked about the Central St Martin’s tutor, commented: ‘He was all right.’

One year 11 student has gone on to a further education arts provision where previously he had thought this unattainable.

The two year 10 students applied and were accepted for a further education arts provision with aspirations to continue on to University and/or careers in the arts.

Pupil attainment in art GCSE has been excellent this year with all students involved receiving an A-E pass .One student achieved an ‘A’ Grade and a second one achieved a ‘B’ Grade.

These were some of our most challenging students and the positive outcomes they achieved were a real testament to the success of the project.