

'A lot of what making art is, is just being open, and empty. And putting yourself in the right place for things to, literally, come together.'

Bill Viola (2007)

'The artist is always beginning. Any work of art which is not a beginning, an invention, a discovery is of little worth.'

Ezra Pound (1913)

Practice 5

In this first Level 6 module, you will be asked to further develop your creative, construction and production skills within your self-identified area of interest. The clearer you are about what your area of interest is the better you will answer the module.

You should, by now, be fairly certain of your area of interest, the materials and processes you want to work with, the ideas you are developing, what excites you. You must also be fully aware of the technical skills, the knowledge of materials and processes, that you need to develop and extend still further in order to fully engage with your ideas. For example, you may be aware that your drawing skills need to be developed and are preventing you from fully exploring your work in figurative sculpture in ceramics. You may now realise that you need to use photography in your work, and that this is an area that you have successfully managed to avoid until now. You may already have the basic skills and knowledge in small metals but need to perfect your technical skills in soldering to be able to produce work of the necessary quality.

The theme you are working with is likely also to require further research and thought and work in order to develop it as creatively and as imaginatively as possible. You may also need to develop your technical skills in the presentation of your work.

This module gives you the opportunity to develop in these self-identified areas so that you can begin your final module of work confident in your knowledge that you are working with the right themes, materials and processes and able to work at the right technical level to be able to produce the work you want to produce.

Though, obviously, you will be producing pieces of work in this module, the object is not the finished piece but the technical skills mastered, the knowledge of materials and processes gained and the certainty that you are working in the right area, with the right ideas and the right materials and processes to develop those ideas as rigorously and as imaginatively as possible.

You are asked to write a proposal of your intended work for this unit. Take time to consider your ideas and intentions. Your ideas may already have started to develop in a new area. Don't rein back your ideas, write a proposal that allows them to fully develop.

Remember, this proposal marks the beginning of the module. It shows you where you started. It is important! It's not intended to restrict your progress but to clarify where you are going and why. It's a map, but one that you have to fill in during the journey.

The more thought you can give to writing this proposal and the more research you can begin to be involved in, the more successful this module is going to be.

Guidance for writing your Practice 5 Proposal

Write a draft proposal for your first studio project of the year using the Level 6 project proposal form.

Think about the things you find exciting, the things that inspire you, and the things that you are curious about. What questions can you ask yourself about what excites you? How would you find the answers?

For example: *'I'm really intrigued by what happens to time. Where does it go? How can I have forgotten all the things I found exciting when I was a child? What happened to the 'me' that was ten years old? Would it be possible to produce work about the way that things change and disappear? How could I do that? Could I make a piece of work that ran backwards?'*

Now consider what you will need to learn if you are to produce the work you want to produce.

For example: *'I want to make a video that runs backwards. I'll need to develop my editing skills as well as my video making skills.'*

Consider what other practitioners are working in the same sort of area. Where can you see their work? Have they written anything about their own work? Or been interviewed about it? Can you get hold of the book? The video? Consider the following:

- What ideas are you exploring? And why?
- What will you have to find out in order to clarify these ideas and develop them?
- What materials will you be working with? And why?
- What skills will you need to develop? And why?

This draft proposal is important. It helps your tutors to understand something of your practice right from the start. Please don't forget to do it. Remember that this is only a draft proposal. It's meant to be changed, developed and even totally rewritten. It's the starting point not the polished end result.