



Conservation of Ceramics and Related Materials

Postgraduate Diploma Programme

Programme Summary	
Awarding body	University of Sussex
Teaching institution	West Dean College
Programme title	Conservation of Ceramics and Related Materials
Final award / FHEQ level	Postgraduate Diploma / level 7
Mode of study	Full-time, 36 weeks
Subject Leader	Lorna Calcutt
External reference points/benchmarks	<p>The UK Quality Code for Higher Education Chapter A1 Qualification Descriptor for Level 7 Subject Benchmarks Statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archaeology • Art and design • History of art, architecture and design <p>Institute of Conservation PACR Standards</p>
Criteria for admission to the programme	<p>Successful completion of West Dean's Graduate Diploma in Conservation of Ceramics and Related Materials, or appropriate relevant experience, or a good first degree in a relevant subject.</p> <p>English language: CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) Level B2 or IELTS 6.5.</p>

Programme Aims

The aims of the programme are to provide:

Practical

1. A context for the analysis, assessment and treatment of ceramic and related material objects
2. The opportunity to develop sophisticated specialist conservation skills
3. A research environment for the development and public dissemination of innovative approaches to the conservation of objects

Theoretical

1. The opportunity to contribute to the development of historical, cultural and technical understanding of objects and their conservation through primary research and investigation
2. The opportunity to evaluate methodologies, develop critiques and propose new hypotheses
3. A context for individual inquiry and group debate across the conservation specialisms

Professional

1. A context for the development of a range of verbal, written and visual skills appropriate for the communication and documentation of conservation projects and research
2. A context for the development of, and critical reflection upon, personal and professional codes of practice
3. Opportunities to plan and implement a range of projects that are either increasingly technically more complex, or have issues that are of a compounded or more complex nature

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the programme students have:

Practical

- The ability to independently handle, assess and make reasoned proposals for the treatment of complex conservation problems
- A sophisticated and fluent competence in a range of materials, techniques and skills for the conservation of ceramic and related material objects
- The ability to contribute to current research and technical innovation in the conservation of ceramics and related materials

Theoretical

- The ability to investigate and interpret objects within historic, cultural and technical contexts using an advanced understanding of underlying concepts and competence in primary research
- The ability to critically evaluate theories, apply ethical reasoning and propose new hypotheses
- An advanced understanding of material types and their conservation needs as applied to the analysis and treatment of ceramic and related material objects

Professional

- The ability to independently generate comprehensive research and project documentation to a professional standard
- Developed informed professional attitudes including awareness of currently accepted codes of practice and the relevance of continued professional development
- Developed the ability for informed and reasoned decision making in relation to complex, conflicting or high risk professional situations

Alignment to External Reference Points

The programme is aligned with QAA and FHEQ frameworks and models of good practice. The programme design and student work is overseen by Programme Advisors drawn from industry and the conservation profession. Students are exposed to a range of professionals in both public and private sectors, institutions and models of good practice within the arena of conservation.

Programme Structure

Postgraduate Diploma – Programme Diagram

Semester 1 (18 weeks)				Semester 2 (18 weeks)			
Study Block 1	Formative Review/	Study Block 2	Stage Assessment	Study Block 3	Formative Review/ Easter Vacation	Study Block 4	Final Assessment
Unit CE PG 1A – Extending Practice 45 credits				Unit CE PG 2A – Professional Practice 45 credits			
Unit PG 1B – Science Analysis 10 credits				Unit PG 2B – Professional Perspectives 15 credits			

Unit PG 1C– Research Methods for Conservation – 5 credits			
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Distinctive Programme Features

- Students learn through working on real objects
- Students are exposed to a range of ceramics and related materials and allied experiences through lectures, live projects, visiting practitioners and study tours
- Immersive environment encourages joint learning and interdisciplinary practice
- Students are given opportunities to build professional contacts and networks
- Workshops are open seven days a week, 07.00 to 22.00, giving extended opportunities for practical work
- The programme has a low student to staff ratio
- Staff have a broad range of professional experience from commercial to museum and heritage contexts

Learning and Teaching – methods and strategy

West Dean is committed to providing a distinctive, high quality teaching and learning environment for practice-led study and research. The College is also committed to continuous improvement of teaching and learning to nurture a deep engagement with practice and its integration with historical, theoretical, cultural and contextual frameworks. The College seeks to ensure that teaching and learning activities and associated resources provide every student with an equal and effective opportunity to achieve intended learning outcomes. Our overriding intention is that, on successful completion of their programme of study, West Dean students become practically accomplished, theoretically aware and professionally autonomous practitioners.

Our continuing priorities are to:

- Provide students with opportunities to learn and develop their skills through working on a diverse and informative range of objects
- Further develop practice-led study and research within a stimulating and creative cultural environment
- Promote the integration of theory and practice where each is tested and informed by the other.
- Increase opportunities for students to engage in professional practice through engagement with live projects involving liaison with clients

- Enhance and further develop a range of specialist learning resources
- Support staff development by encouraging opportunities to engage in high-profile consultancy and research projects

At Postgraduate Diploma level students are expected to work more independently; to assume a certain level of autonomy; and to engage in personal research.

In Ceramics, students work on historic objects from the beginning of their course developing their skills in relation to a range of materials and body types in projects of increasing complexity.

Subject specific resources include a well-equipped workshop with individual work spaces for students. Specialist facilities for cleaning, retouching and finishing. A pottery studio for making, firing and finishing new work.

Practical Experience & Work Placement

Students:

- Initially, undertake a range of bespoke practical exercises to further develop conservation skills
- Continue to build a portfolio of work in the form of a range of treatments to ceramic and related material objects and their documentation
- May negotiate a work placement of up to six weeks duration (not mandatory). Previous work placements have included The British Museum, The Victoria and Albert Museum, Plowden and Smith
- Have the opportunity to contribute to research and consultancy projects

Assessment – methods and strategy

- Work is assessed on a continuous basis independently by at least two members of staff (normally the programme leader and a programme tutor). This assessment is fed to students informally on an on-going basis through discussion and formally at assessment and review points (mid-term and final assessments)
- Assessors use a pro-forma prompt sheet to ensure a consistent range of elements of work required is assessed
- Essay work is assessed independently and graded according to the assessment definitions
- All assessment is formalised in grades as set out in the assessment definitions
- Assessment is reviewed and moderated by the external examiner