CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL OF VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS

CURRICULUM POLICY (INCLUDING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE)

Date of Policy	September 2026
Next Review Date	September 2027
Key Staff	Rector, Dean of Student Experience
Lead for Review	Dean of Student Experience

Table of Contents

Course Delivery 3
Ethos and Values 3
Research Base 4
Teaching Environments 4
Programmes of Study 4
Provision for Students with English as a Second Language (ESL) 5
CSVPA Extended Diploma and Foundation Pathways 6
Students needing Additional Learning Support 6
Students not Meeting Targets 6
Careers Guidance 7
Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education 7
Request by A Student to Move from One Course to Another 7
Progression Policy 8
Monitoring and Evaluation 8
APPENDIX A Lesson Distribution 9
CSVPA weekly lessons 9

Course Delivery

Students' knowledge and understanding is developed through a blend of classroom lessons, coursework (assessed and non-assessed) and personal sessions. Emphasis is placed on developing the students as confident, independent learners able to reflect on their learning, recognise, and react appropriately to, their own strengths and weaknesses.

All teaching is conducted in English and students are encouraged to use English whenever possible on school premises. In relation to all programmes, we specify a minimum level of English language ability, usually expressed in terms of the IELTS score, that we believe is necessary for students to succeed on the course that the student is proposing to join. These minimum levels are published in the prospectus which is available to download from the following website:

https://www.csvpa.com/about/downloads.htm

The priority for academic staff is to select and implement teaching methods that are most appropriate to each module and group, while preparing the students for the methodologies and techniques to which they will be exposed at university. Course delivery will include classroom and studio lessons, augmented with lectures, workshops, seminars and one to one sessions, group-work, discussions and self-study.

Ethos and Values

CSVPA is dedicated to providing a transformative educational experience that empowers every student to achieve their full potential. Our curriculum is built upon the following core principles:

- Inclusive Excellence and Holistic Wellbeing: We are committed to ensuring all students, regardless of background or learning needs, achieve significant progress. We foster an inclusive and supportive environment that prioritises the holistic wellbeing of each student, addressing their emotional, social, and academic needs comprehensively.
- Intellectual Curiosity and Academic Rigour: We cultivate a culture that values intellectual curiosity, encourages academic risk-taking, and promotes rigorous scholarly inquiry. Students are empowered to explore new ideas and challenge assumptions.
- Lifelong Learning and Responsible Citizenship: We prepare students to be active, engaged, and responsible members of society. Our curriculum equips them with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for lifelong learning, enabling them to thrive in a dynamic world.

Our lessons promote respect for diverse cultures and individuals, aligning with the protected characteristics outlined in the 2010 Equalities Act. CSVPA ensures students are effectively prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of life in British society. We

uphold fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of diverse faiths and beliefs.

Furthermore, in accordance with The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, we provide comprehensive Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), detailed in a separate RSE policy document.

Research Base

We recognise that a positive and supportive learning environment is essential for student success. We adhere to all relevant teaching standards and inspection frameworks, ensuring that our curriculum meets the highest quality standards to promote positive behaviours for learning, fostering a culture of respect, responsibility, and engagement.

Teaching Environments

We strive to create teaching environments that are conducive to effective learning, characterised by:

- A calm and purposeful environment that is tailored to the specific stage and age of the students.
- An environment that challenges students intellectually and creatively while providing the necessary support to ensure their success.
- Strong, positive relationships between students and between students and adults.
- A mutually supportive and safe environment where students feel valued and respected.
- Effective exposition and modelling of new ideas and skills.
- Clear and consistent behavioural expectations that promote a positive learning environment.
- Functional and engaging learning spaces that support student learning and provide visual aids.
- Corridors which praise and display student work, celebrating their achievements and fostering a sense of pride.

Programmes of Study

We offer the following programmes of study:

CSVPA:

- UAL Level 3 Extended Diploma in Creative Practice: Art, Design and Communication
- UAL Level 3 Extended Diploma in Performing and Production Arts

- UAL Level 3 Extended Diploma in Music Performance and Production
- UAL Level 3 Foundation Diploma in Art & Design
- UAL Level 4 Foundation Diploma in Art & Design
- UAL Level 4 Professional Diploma in Performance

The distribution of lessons for subjects with our various programmes of study is provided in Appendix A.

Provision for Students with English as a Second Language (ESL)

As an international school, ESL provision forms the cornerstone of all that we do. All students provide evidence of their English language level as part of the application process. This is then used to place each student in a class at the most appropriate level to support the student's general academic development, and/or meet the requirements of the undergraduate courses to which they aspire.

Students are expected to follow the relevant ESL course until they obtain a minimum IELTS result of 6.0 with nothing below 5.5 as this is the level required by most undergraduate degrees in creative and performing arts disciplines. This is in order to prepare them fully for the demands of further studies and to maximise their chances of securing a place on their chosen university courses. Students may only stop studying English with permission from both the Pathway Leader and the Academic English Manager. If a student has already achieved the minimum IELTS result (above) prior to arriving at CSVPA, they are not required to participate in English classes. They are welcome to continue if they choose to, for the purpose of their ongoing English language development.

ESL staff also provide support in a number of subject classes across the School to assist students in their understanding of the complex demands of studying certain courses.

CSVPA also provides an Academic English Programme for students aiming to study on a Foundation or Extended Diploma programme. These students follow a rigorous programme of general English and IELTS preparation for 20 hours per week.

If they want to improve their English further, students can choose to remain in English classes after they reach the minimum required IELTS grade. The typical arrangements for ESL at CSVPA are as follows:

- AEM, 20 hours of English and IELTS preparation every week
- L3/L4 Foundation Diploma, 5 hours of English and IELTS preparation every week
- L3 Extended Diploma, 5 hours of English and IELTS preparation every week
- L4 Foundation or Professional Diploma, 5 hours of English and IELTS preparation every week

The School will ensure that all employees and users of its facilities are made aware of the legal obligations and rights bestowed by the Equality Act 2010 legislation. All staff have a duty to observe the provisions of this Act. Teachers must ensure that they adjust their teaching strategies and that they differentiate sufficiently to provide equitable opportunities for learning to all students given the individuals' standards of English. Teachers must also systematically analyse a student's progress in the context of their standard of English to ensure that no student is being disadvantaged as a result.

CSVPA Extended Diploma and Foundation Pathways

CSVPA offers a range of L3 Extended Diplomas and Foundation Diplomas, and Level 4 Diplomas in Art & Design and Performance. Primarily these courses are delivered from September to June; January start options are available in a number of Art & Design subjects. The L3 and L4 Foundation Diplomas, and L4 Professional Diplomas in Performance provide 1-year learning experiences that develop specialist subject knowledge and skills, an understanding of the contexts of practice and an appreciation of different audiences. L3 Extended Diplomas provide a 2-year structure which builds on core skills and provides a focus for the development of specialist knowledge and attributes to facilitate progression to higher levels of study and creative practice. Some students decide to undertake these qualifications in place of A-levels or completion of secondary school in their home country. The programmes are foundation experiences which enable students to develop the skills and knowledge required to gain entry to specialist arts undergraduate courses at university, drama school or conservatoire.

Students needing Additional Learning Support

Students with additional learning needs are identified through a variety of means – see the SEND Policy for further details. Individual Support Plans (ISP) at CSVPA are created in conjunction with students' key staff detailing the adaptations to teaching strategies, access requirements and pastoral provision needed for these students to thrive. Individual sessions may be timetabled with the SENCo as necessary. A central register is maintained with the list of students, their specific needs, and the support/reasonable adjustments required.

Students not Meeting Targets

Progress and attainment data is analysed regularly by teachers, middle and senior leaders. Students who are underachieving are identified and provided with bespoke support, starting with support from individual subject tutors and Pathway Leaders. Senior staff address the issues with students who do not engage with subject level support and both academic and pastoral intervention is initiated. Parents / primary contacts are notified of any major concerns affecting progress. Students may be referred to the SENCo for internal screenings, to determine whether there is an underlying learning difficulty.

Careers Guidance

Our Careers Guidance is laid out in the School's Careers and Educational Guidance Policy. Careers education also forms part of the PT Sessions at CSVPA.

CSVPA students are given particular guidance from specialist tutors about progression routes and appropriate course choices at the time of University, Conservatoire, or Drama School application preparation, based on the student's skills, aptitude, and career goals. Portfolio and audition preparation play a significant part in the curriculum at the College, and students receive weekly 1:1 support throughout their time at CSVPA. Portfolio Preparation classes are included in curriculum for Art & Design students, to ensure they have proper knowledge of necessary software and portfolio theory.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education

The delivery of PSHE (including relationships and sex education (RSE)), is covered in separate policy documents.

In CSVPA, Students under the age of 18 on Extended Diploma have a discrete PSHE syllabus. This is led by Head of Welfare (DSL), which covers topics such as British values, sex education, healthy lifestyles, drugs and a range of other key areas. Please refer to the CSVPA PSHE and Personal Development Policy.

Request by A Student to Move from One Course to Another

On occasion, a student, parent or agent will request a transfer from one course to another. This can be done provided that there are reasonable grounds for the request and that it is possible with the constraints of the School's timetable and UKVI regulations, and that all of those concerned agree with the proposed change.

Changes after the first two weeks of the commencement of the course are usually discouraged. As of 28 September 2026, registration on courses is finalised, as the impacts on student learning and attainment are too high. On Art and Design foundation courses, students may request to change pathway at any point in the course, though they are discouraged after the first unit. Requests are reviewed by senior staff and are decided based on available space, aptitude and progression intentions.

It is important to note that if changing courses affects a student's visa, they may be required to return to their home country and apply for a new visa with the appropriate course title.

Progression Policy

At CSVPA, as per UAL awarding body guidance, students may only progress to subsequent units if they pass their current unit(s) of study. Students that don't attain a minimum Pass level at summative assessment are issued a Referral and given a fixed period of time, 1 or 2 weeks in which to meet the minimum standard required. At the end of the referral period the work is reassessed and if it does not meet the required minimum standard, the work is awarded a Fail. Students that received FAIL grades cannot continue to progress within the cohort and must leave the program. Students may (at the Rector's discretion) be offered the opportunity to restart the program with a different cohort.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The School will review this policy and evaluate its effectiveness annually. This policy takes account any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation of the policy include:

- Assessment results are analysed by the Provost, Dean, and Pathway Leaders.
- Students with SEN/D are tracked through the ISP as well as academic results.
- Parents and staff feedback surveys are conducted on an annual basis.
- Schemes of work are regularly updated and monitored by the Pathway Leaders. These are designed for progression across the subject and are specified for the particular age group / student cohort.
- Work scrutiny is undertaken by the Provost and Dean on a termly basis.

APPENDIX A Lesson Distribution

CSVPA WEEKLY LESSONS

	Ext Dip Perf Arts Drama Year 1	Ext Dip Perf Arts Acting Year 2 L4 Prof Dip Acting	Ext Dip Perf Arts MT Year 2 L4 Prof Dip MT	Ext Dip Perf Arts or Music Year 1	Ext Dip Perf Arts or Music Year 2 L4 Prof Dip Music	Ext Dip CP Year 1	Ext Dip CP Year 2	Level 3 FAD	Level 4 FAD
Art & Design									
Contextual & Thematic Studies						3	3	3	3
Art & Design Practical Workshops						12			
Reflective Studies						2	3	3	3
Experimental Studies						1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Pathway- Animation & Film*							9	9	9
Pathway Fine Art & Photography *							9	9	9
Pathway 3D Design *							9	9	9
Pathway- Architecture & Interior *							9	9	9
Pathway- Fashion Communication *							9	9	9
Pathway- Fashion Design*							9	9	9
Pathway- Games Art & Design*							9	9	9
Pathway- Graphics & Illustration*							9	9	9
Performing Arts									
Acting	8	8.5	6						
Aural Skills				1	1				
Composition				1	1				
Dance	3-7	3-4	8						
Developmental Play	1.5	1.5	1.5						
Ensemble	4.5	4.5	4.5	5-6	5-6				

History	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.5	2.5				
Individual Lessons	1	1	1	1.5	1.5				
Movement	1.5	1.5	1.5						
Physical Warm Up	3.5	3.5	3.5						
Project Research	1.5	1.5	1.5	1	1				
Recording / Sequencing				2.5	2.5				
Singing/Voice for the Actor	2	2	3.5						
Text	1.5	1.5	1.5						
Theoretical Study	1.5	1.5	1.5	6	6				
All Students who have not met university IELTS entry requirements									
ESL	5	5	5	5	5	5	5		

* Students following Level 3, 4 Foundation in Art & Design or Extended Diploma in Creative Practice Year 2 follow 9 hours per week of one chosen pathway workshops only.