



**Faculty of Arts,
Humanities and
Social Sciences**

Digital Portfolio Guidelines – September 2023 Entry

BA Hons Fine Art

Thank you for your application to the BA Hons Fine Art course at Belfast School of Art, Ulster University. We seek applicants who are creative, dedicated and enthusiastic about Art, and open to new ideas and approaches. Our students are varied in their backgrounds, ages, personalities and interests, expressed through the art forms they work with.

Please submit a digital portfolio that best represents your artwork, interests and research.

Digital Portfolio (in PDF format only please)

Layout your portfolio in a PowerPoint or Word document.

Before saving as PDF, **check your file size**. To reduce the file size, go to: File – Reduce file size – Picture quality – select best for email. Then **Save as a PDF**.

Title it: PortfolioYourName e.g., PortfolioCharlieScott

In your portfolio you should include:

Short Statement (a single A4 page)

- Tell us about your work: the images, objects, and other artworks you have made, the media and materials you have used, the ideas and subject matter you have explored and why you want to study Fine Art.
- We would like to hear about artists or artworks that interest you and galleries and exhibitions you have visited. These could be 'virtual' visits to gallery and museum websites. You can tell us about art books, catalogues or films about art you have looked at.
- Also tell us about your wider interests, which may not seem directly related to art, e.g., films, books, sports, music, places etc. We'd like to know what things in the world or experiences inspire and fascinate you.

Images

- **20 to 24 images** of completed artworks, drawings, and source material (e.g., photographic references, printouts etc)
- Scan or photograph examples of sketchbooks and experimentation as well as documentation of more resolved pieces such as paintings, sculptures, objects, mixed media work, diagrams, and problem-solving drawings.
- If you have videos, animations, short films, websites, or online projects, include these by using screenshots, or by including web links to the sites or to YouTube/Vimeo.
- Photographs of work should be in focus without distracting backgrounds. A dry, overcast (but not too dark) day is usually the best light to document work under, either by a window or outside. Include the year, media used, dimensions (and title

if there is one) under the image of the work. Tips on sketchbook photography can be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FKgWlzvm3Hs>

Research Exercise

“Examine for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives a myriad impressions – trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel.” – Virginia Woolf

In addition to your own portfolio of work from your art studies so far, we would like you to respond to the following project:

- **5 pages** showing visual and other research. We are interested in seeing how you gather and make connections between images and ideas. Please show us how you have responded to the following research exercise over a week or so:

Step 1

Sit for a moment without distractions. **Let your mind wander.** Think of a word, or a thing, or a person, or a place. Don't worry about it being a 'clever' idea ... it is now what you do with it, to create an artwork.

Step 2

Gather **visual research** in response to your word. This should be a combination of sketches, your own photographs, found images and should include images of other artists' art works related to your word. Make some of your drawings directly from objects/things. (For example, if you chose 'table', you might go around your house and draw every table or table-like object. Or you might go to a café and draw a number of tables you can see). Make some of your drawings from other imagery you have found.

Step 3

Gather textual and contextual research in response to your word. Textual research can include a definition, quotations from books or online sources or poems or songs, something overheard, something from a conversation. Contextual research includes information related to your word from popular culture, history, personal/family anecdotes, folklore, mythology, the news, political associations and any other meanings and connotations. Textual and contextual research will overlap ... don't worry if you aren't sure which is which!

Step 4

Organise your research into a number of pages. Don't start selecting until you have gathered plenty of research.

Mix together the textual and visual research. Make connections. Put things together that connect in both obvious and obscure ways. Put things together that contrast. This a creative mind-mapping of the research you have gathered.

As you are doing this let your mind wander. Trust your intuition! Add additional comments or thoughts that occur to you. You can make drawings of ideas that occur to you during this process. You might sketch ideas for artworks. Use collage to

visually connect two or more things. You can also gather and add other visual, textual or contextual references, or leave things out.

Step 5

Add a list of all the sources and resources you used. It might look like this: Instagram / Tate Gallery online / BBC news / Objects in my garden / Visit to café / the park / Oxford Dictionary / title of a song / title of a poem / a conversation with somebody /something overheard on the bus.

Step 6

Put together 5 pages that best display the steps you have taken to produce work for this research project.

We look forward to seeing your application and portfolio. If you have any questions, please contact Course Director and Admissions Tutor, Dougal McKenzie at db.mckenzie@ulster.ac.uk