



National College of Art and Design
A Recognised College of University College Dublin

FAQ MFA IN FINE ART

What is an MFA?

An MFA is a Level 9 master's degree that is studio or practice based. At NCAD MFAs are two year, taught studio programmes offered in both Design and Fine Art.

What is the MFA Fine Art?

The MFA Fine Art is constructed around an art practice based spine with lectures in research methods, contemporary art practices and critical theory. Elective modules are also available through other MA/MFA programmes in Visual Culture, Design and Education. The MFA is structured through the pathways of Media, Painting, Print and Sculpture with significant interdisciplinary interaction across the programme. The MFA students are based in a postgraduate hub, the Annex, James Street with dedicated MFA studios, a seminar room and project space. The School of Fine Art also hosts an annual Studio Award for a professional contemporary artist who contributes to the programme. Recent artists include Alan Phelan, Jaki Irvine and Niamh McCann. The Studio Award artist for 2020-21 is Lee Welch. Erasmus study abroad is also possible as a semester option.

Who is eligible to apply for the MFA Fine Art?

NCAD graduates, students and external applicants who have successfully completed, or expect to complete, an honours undergraduate degree in Fine Art or a related discipline and who have achieved, or expect to achieve, a minimum grade of 2.2 in their degree are eligible to apply.

What will I study on the MFA Fine Art?

Building on the knowledge and skills developed at undergraduate level, students on the MFA Fine Art will be supported to deepen and broaden their inquiries and professional knowledge. Students will develop self-directed themes of practice based inquiry. It is expected that research through both practice and the development of appropriate theoretical co-ordinates will produce new forms of work, investigation and communication. There are also written components, presentations and regular study visits to major exhibitions like the Turner Prize and the Liverpool Biennial.

An MFA is a significant and advanced platform for professional art inquiry. This platform offers support in developing vantage points across the moving landscapes of the Fine Art field. There are opportunities to engage with other fields of knowledge and networks. The MFA cohort is drawn from NCAD students and from those applying from outside the college offering a diversity of experiences, motivation and perspectives. There are regular opportunities to exhibit and test work.

What sort of opportunities and engagement does the course offer?

Engagement means fully participating in the course and being an active driver of scholarship rather than being a passive recipient of it. This applies to both content and forms of art practice and in contextual frames for these practices. Learning to communicate effectively through and about artwork is a means of eventing professional research and creating opportunities. These elements are taught and facilitated by the MFA course team: the programme leader Dr Sarah Durcan and the Heads of Departments: Brian Hand, Mark O'Kelly, Dr Andrew Folan and Dr Feargal Fitzpatrick. The programme has a regular lecture series on Contemporary Art Practices and MFA Art Seminars on a range of key topics in contemporary art with contributions from visiting artists, writers, curators and other art professionals. This expands both the depth and breadth of professional awareness and networks. There is a weekly commitment to crits and discursive forums, trialling forms of student presentation in a peer environment. The course also has links to hospitals, science and participatory contexts. The School of Fine Art is formally involved in funded contextual research on Thomas Street with three European partners.

What facilities are available to MFA students?

MFA Fine Art Students have access to studio space and workshops as appropriate. Students also have access to College technicians and other facilities including the Edward Murphy Library and NIVAL.

Can I switch between Fine Art and Design or change my area of specialisation within Fine Art or Design?

It is expected that most students will stay within the area of their undergraduate degree specialisation, building on knowledge and skills developed during their BA. Where students wish to change discipline, or change areas of specialisation within a discipline, each request will be reviewed on an individual basis.

When does the programme run?

The MFA runs from September to mid-June when the graduate degree show closes.

How do I apply?

Applications should be made through the NCAD Admissions Office on the Postgraduate Application Form at <http://www.ncad.ie/study-at-ncad/postgraduate/>

What should I submit with my application form?

You should submit a statement of interest (300-500 words) outlining the area of inquiry that you are committed to exploring, you should make reference to contemporary practitioners and critical co-ordinates informing your thinking. Where appropriate you should indicate a subject/discipline area that you believe can best advance your practice and support this with visual documentation of your recent, most relevant work as a portfolio.

<https://www.ncad.ie/study-at-ncad/postgraduate-application/entry-requirements-taught-masters/>

Will there be an interview?

Applicants who submit a successful application and portfolio can expect to be called for interview in May/June.

Is there a deadline?

NCAD operates a rolling deadline for postgraduate programmes with offers made to applicants following interviews. Where places are still available we will continue to accept applications until the programme fills. You are advised to apply early as places may be limited.

What fees will be charged?

The tuition fee rate is €5,400 per academic year for EU students and €16,500 for non-EU international students.

For further information please contact:

MFA Fine Art Programme Co-ordinator – Sarah Durcan durcans@staff.ncad.ie or Head of School – Philip Napier napierp@staff.ncad.ie
Admissions – admissions@staff.ncad.ie

Programme structure

MFA YEAR 1	MFA YEAR 2
Semester 1 MODULES	Semester 3 MODULES
MFA Research Methods	Major Practice Project
ACW Contemporary Art Practices 1	Major Research Project/Thesis or
MFA Practice Lab	Exploring Exhibition Dimensions
MFA Art Seminars 1	
Semester 2 MODULES	Semester 4 MODULES
ACW Contemporary Art Practices 2	Major Practice Project
MFA Practice Pathways	Professional Development of the Artist
MFA Art Seminars 2	