



April 2018

## **Association for Art History Statement on Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment A Level Announcement**

The Association for Art History is the subject association for art history in the UK. Since 1974 we have been committed to a broad and inclusive art history and visual culture for all. We continue to play a key role in championing the value of art history today.

The recent announcement from the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) regarding their decision to withdraw the GCE AS and A2 in History of Art from Summer 2021 is therefore of significant concern, particularly given the efforts of many within and beyond our sector over the last year to ensure the long term future of art history education across the UK.

CCEA's decision to discontinue History of Art will mark a loss to the art history ecology, particularly in light of their work to provide a revised specification that provided new opportunities and pathways to explore architecture, archaeology, curation, as well as the creative and cultural industries. As CCEA themselves acknowledge, for today's increasingly visual society, the specification helps young people develop skills in interpretation, analysis, critical appraisal and communication. The intention to make 2020 the last year that the examination can be sat by students signifies a pivotal moment for art history in education and the space that it occupies within Northern Ireland's school system.

While we recognise that the offer of any specialist qualification needs to balance the numbers of entrants and the associated costs of administration, we believe that CCEA should reconsider their decision to withdraw the specification. CCEA rightly point to some excellent alternatives in the market place, however CCEA's own specification provides its own unique take on art history, as well as signposting the subject as a future study option at under-graduate level and beyond.

We welcome CCEA's commitment to the context and historical understanding of art and design, through the Art & Design GCE and within their other qualifications, and we are committed to helping them in this regard. We recognise and understand many of the challenges faced by curriculum authorities, such as CCEA, as they consider the viability of their portfolio of subjects and qualifications. We are eager to work with CCEA to explore ways to mitigate some of the risks they may face with respect to the History of Art GCE.

Art history encourages study which is both scholarly in depth and inspiring in breadth. The subject offers students the insight into the problems and creative solutions found by past and present societies across the world. Our concerns regarding art history education are not unique, and are shared by many of our colleagues across the arts and the wider humanities.

As we work to secure the future of our subject with partners across and within our own sector, we continue to work with colleagues in many other sectors and subjects, united in our efforts to ensure the future vitality and importance of cultural education within the UK.

You can find out more about our advocacy and education work at <https://www.forarthistory.org.uk/our-work/advocacy/> or by contacting our Campaigns Manager Trevor Horsewood on 0207 490 3211 or by email at [Trevor@forarthistory.org.uk](mailto:Trevor@forarthistory.org.uk)

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