

Arts Award: its value and position in today's education landscape



What is Arts Award?

Arts Award's unique qualifications support anyone aged up to 25 to grow as artists and arts leaders, inspiring them to connect with and take part in the wider arts world through setting personal challenges in an art form of their choice.

Through Arts Award, young people gain a nationally recognised qualification enabling them to progress into further education and employment. They not only gain art form knowledge and understanding but also develop leadership, creativity and communication skills.

In 2015, Arts Award will have been available for ten years. Since its launch, the award has grown from three to five levels and has increased its reach to children and young people in a range of settings, from schools to theatres; museums to secure units.



Cranborne Middle School

Arts Award is a great opportunity for students to develop independence, self-manage and take responsibility for their own learning. This award enables the students to focus on areas of the arts that they find interesting, and excel. A hugely rewarding and enriching experience for all the students and teachers involved.'

Kim Robertson, Deputy Headteacher, Cranborne Middle School

This resource has been designed to help identify the ways that Arts Award can primarily benefit secondary schools and young people aged 11 to 18. However, many of the areas discussed apply to different education stages, learning contexts and age ranges too.

How to use this resource

Designed for senior managers and arts specialists in schools, this resource offers an introduction to Arts Award, followed by

- **The headlines:** a summary of what Arts Award offers
- **In depth:** supporting evidence and examples of Arts Award in practice for each headline



Arts Award and the bigger picture

At the beginning of 2015, almost 3000 schools and colleges are registered as Arts Award centres. 56,000 awards have been achieved between April 2014 and January 2015 alone, with numbers growing fast. Arts Award is available across the UK, giving more young people the opportunity to achieve an award. Our aspiration is that every young person in the UK has the chance to work towards an Arts Award.

Arts Award has continued to thrive, despite arts education in schools being challenged by changes to curriculum priorities and accountability measures. Arts Award's flexible framework, which allows for its integration into the curriculum, its delivery as an extra-curricular offer and its success as a targeted intervention tool is key to its success, allowing schools to strengthen, and in some cases retain, their accredited arts offer across a range of opportunities available to students.

What's the value?

Arts Award can add value to students and schools in a number of ways. While the award is a personal learning framework that accredits students' individual development in the arts, its delivery enables professionals and the organisations they work within to demonstrate impact at both an organisational level and in terms of young people's achievement.

The examples outlined in this resource are grouped into key areas that show how Arts Award can be used to: introduce students to the arts, raise attainment, offer the arts across the curriculum, bridge the gap (both in achievement and between stages of education), and add value to the whole school.

The headlines: what Arts Award offers your school

1 Introduce students to the arts

Research from the Cultural Learning Alliance shows that arts and cultural experiences can raise the aspirations and life chances of young people. Arts Award can be delivered as part of a school's universal offer or as part of extra-curricular opportunities or targeted interventions to provide arts and cultural experiences to children and young people.

The award framework facilitates a range of arts and cultural experiences; from participating in arts activities, to experiencing the arts as an audience member, researching the work of artists, career pathways and different perspectives on arts debates, passing on arts skills to others and leading arts projects. It encourages links with local cultural organisations and the Arts Award Supporter programme facilitates young people's independent exploration of arts and cultural organisations.

2 Raise attainment

The award develops a number of transferable skills linked to attainment in all subjects, eg communication skills needed for employability. Enterprise is a possible component of Silver and Gold Unit 2, where students lead their own arts projects. The award also provides real life opportunities to develop numeracy skills, eg through budgeting in arts project management - and literacy, eg through writing for different purposes and audiences.

Arts Award is a portfolio based qualification. This assessment format, with built in structures to encourage review and reflection on artistic practice, clearly involves meta-cognition and self-regulation. These skills have an overarching impact on attainment.

3 Offer the arts across the curriculum

One aim of the National Curriculum is 'to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.' The arts are a powerful tool for achieving this across the curriculum and Arts Award can be delivered alongside all curriculum

subject areas where the arts can be linked to the subject matter.

The award can be used to structure cross-curricular projects and can support engagement in non-arts subjects. The flexible framework, especially at Discover, Explore and Bronze levels, lends itself well to curriculum delivery and can be embedded into schemes of work across subject areas. For example, Arts Award at all levels can be used to deliver writing for different purposes and audiences in English.

4 Bridge the gap

Arts Award can be used to support progression into further study or the next stage of education for young people who might not otherwise have progressed with their education, or for academic students who use Arts Award to support their wider development. It can be particularly useful when used as a transition tool between key stages or to support young people to consider staying in education in line with the new Raising the Participation Age (RPA).

Department for Education statutory guidance to schools and colleges which informs the provision of Independent Advice and Guidance aligns well to the Arts Award framework.

5 Add value to the whole school

The arts have long been recognised by many schools as a way of enhancing students' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development, as defined by Ofsted. Arts Award can help to demonstrate the SMSC development of students, the quality of teaching, the achievement of students and the quality of leadership of, and management in the school, as outlined in the July 2014 Ofsted framework.

Training as an Arts Award adviser can also help individuals to meet certain teachers' standards.

In Depth

Introduce students to the arts

Supporting evidence

We know that children from families with lower socio-economic status have less access to arts within their families. Schools provide a universal point of access for children, and are the only point for access for some.

Research shows children from lower socio-economic backgrounds who take part in arts activities at school are three times more likely to get a degree, twice as likely to volunteer and 20% more likely to vote.'

**Cultural Learning Alliance:
English Baccalaureate Research, January 2013**

Schools have a vital role to play in organising visits to local cultural venues both linked to the curriculum and extra-curricular. It is important that schools and clusters of schools are encouraged to welcome experts in arts fields to run workshops and short courses, for children to experience, take part in and develop critical thinking in relation to the arts - and many do.'

**Labour's Policy Review:
Young People and the Arts - A Consultation**

In practice

I became an Arts Award adviser because I could see the potential for the pure enjoyment of working in the arts with young people who did not have access to the enrichment this can bring... I am always amazed by the talents and skills of the young people we see on a daily basis and the potential they have being unlocked before me. It is one of the best frameworks I can think of to deliver so many positive aspects of cross curricular work and the other experiences of giving young people a sense of autonomy and greater self esteem.'

**Hazel Stewart, Learning Manager, EOTAS1 Northumberland
(Arts Award Good Practice Centre 2014-15)**



The Valley School

Arts Award allows our students to plan their own progress in arts disciplines that motivate them and see that they can be successful learners. It has broadened our students' horizons about what art is and has allowed them to work towards a meaningful qualification that recognises their achievements in the arts, regardless of their needs.'

**Felicity Kirk, Learning Leader
- Creative and Performing Arts, The Valley School
(Arts Award Good Practice Centre, 2014-2015)**



Clapton Girls Academy

This is a very positive experience for young theatre practitioners as it allows them to see the endless possibilities taking part in the arts can bring.'

Ishbel Nicol, Drama Teacher, Clapton Girls' Academy

Raise attainment

Danielle was a youth theatre member for three years, completing her Bronze and Gold Arts Awards. Although she had a strong interest in theatre, her dream was to be a surgeon and she began applying for degree courses in Medicine. She was expected to get all As in her A-levels and during her interview for medicine, the panel asked her about Gold Arts Award. She talked about her verbatim theatre piece and the zombie film that she had managed for her arts leadership project. The university said they were looking for someone who was well rounded, so had really enjoyed hearing about her experience with youth theatre and her Arts Award. She was accepted on to this highly competitive course.'

fiona Kelly, Cultural Development Officer, The Customs House

Supporting evidence

findings from Year 1 of the longitudinal Arts Award Impact Study show that the award supports students' meta-cognition - particularly in the areas of self-reflection and leadership. See the [summary of findings](#) for more information.

Key research findings from The Cultural Learning Alliance's '[The case for cultural learning](#)' illustrate the range of ways the arts impact on learning and its outcomes, including how learning through arts and culture improves attainment in all subjects.

finding 2 of [The Culture and Sport Evidence Programme \(CASE\)](#) found across a range of high quality evidence that taking part in structured arts activities could increase children's cognitive abilities test scores by 16% and 19% on average.

Labour's Policy Review's [Young People and the Arts](#) consultation asserts that evidence on the positive impact of the arts on young people is overwhelming, citing how creative subjects have a positive impact on young people's overall development and boost attainment across the board.

In practice

At Chingford Foundation School, students have acquired a range of skills through doing Arts Award, supporting their work in the wider curriculum. For example, members of the Young Writers Group worked on creative writing taking place during the first World War, which supports their learning in History. Arts Award has enabled students to become better communicators and gain confidence, with benefits for learning across the entire curriculum.



Aylesford School

Aylesford School worked with creative learning agency, Future Creative, to offer Bronze Arts Award through the Meeting the Challenge programme. This programme focused on improving students' attainment in Maths and English GCSEs. As well as achieving their Bronze Arts Awards, 65% of the participating students had improved their attainment in English and Maths by one GCSE grade or more by the end of the project.

The creative opportunities in this programme have made me want to work harder in lessons.

Year 10 student, Aylesford School

Offer the arts across the curriculum



Liskeard School and Community College

The impact of Arts Award at Mounts Bay Academy has been tremendous. Young people have developed creativity and leadership beyond all our expectations. The community is enriched by the variety and quality of events that has resulted from their work, and the self belief that has been engendered in the participants is palpable from Bronze to Gold arts leaders.

Sara Davey, Head of Mounts Bay Academy
(Arts Award Good Practice Centre, 2014 - 2015)

Supporting evidence

One aim of the National Curriculum is 'to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.' The arts are a powerful tool for achieving this across the curriculum.

In practice

At Blessed William Howard Catholic High School, Arts Award was delivered to all Year 7 students through the Learners to Leaders programme over the course of an academic year. The project was built on the theme of children at work during the nineteenth century and culminated in a public performance featuring music, drama and dance and a public exhibition of students' historical and literary work.

Twenty five Year 9 students from Haverstock School in London worked with a performance poet to write their own first World War poetry inspired by historical research at the British Postal Museum and Archive collection. Students worked with curators, took part in theatre workshops and were visited by a contemporary war poet. They performed their poetry at a professional arts venue.

**Partnership for Excellence,
West London: Arts Award Evaluation Report, Sam
Cairns, March 2014**

See the Arts Award resource: **Benefits for schools and links with the Key Stage 3 English and History curriculum**. For more examples of how schools have integrated Arts Award into the curriculum, see www.artsaward.org.uk/schoolstories

Bridge the gap

Supporting evidence

Students from low-income families who take part in arts activities at school are three times more likely to get a degree.'

**The Cultural Learning Alliance's
'ImagineNation: The case for cultural learning'**

The duty on schools to secure independent careers guidance for all Year 8 to 13 students is intended to expand advice and guidance for young people so they are inspired and motivated to fulfil their potential. Schools should help every student develop high aspirations and consider a broad and ambitious range of careers. Inspiring every student through more real-life contacts with the world of work can help them understand where different choices can take them in the future.

**Careers Guidance and Inspiration in Schools
- Department of Education**

Arts Award criteria can be used to support a number of benchmarks of good career guidance provision as outlined in the **Good Career Guidance report**,
Sir John Holman for Gatsby, April 2014

In practice

I think what has been successful with Silver Arts Award with our Year 11 Accelerated students is that it has proved as a bridging opportunity between GCSE and A Level Drama and it is allowing these students to already think about their future and what they want to do next, whether it is in the arts or not.'

**Kathy Hofmeyr, Drama Teacher, Glenthorne High School
(Arts Award Good Practice Centre, 2014-2015)**

Sawston Village College has developed a Summer School programme for transitioning Year 6's, based on completing Bronze Arts Award in a week. There is a particular focus on students receiving Pupil Premium, to help narrow the gap in outcomes.



Beverly Grammar School

Beverly Grammar School introduced a Bronze Pupil Premium project where Year 7 and 8 students on free school meals and Ever 6 (eligible for free school meals in the last 6 years) were selected to participate in Bronze Arts Award. As a result of the project, students achieved a qualification at the beginning of Key Stage 3. Some went on to take up peripatetic instrumental lessons, supporting their progression in music. Staff observed that self esteem improved for the majority of students and there was a positive impact on their arts subject behaviour scores.

Isambard School receive the highest number of Year 7 students on the Risk Of NEET Indicators (RONI) list in their local authority, yet have one of the highest success rates in securing positive destinations for their students. They use Arts Award within the curriculum with many of these students as a tool for engagement, motivation and achievement. It is also offered as a voluntary enrichment activity and as an option offered by the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) team.



Unitas Summer Arts College

The UNITAS Summer Arts Colleges participatory arts-based programme was designed to tackle the very low level of engagement in education, training or employment by young people in the community youth justice system. Arts Award is integrated into the Summer Arts Colleges, and virtually all (96%) of the young people who completed the programme achieved one, the first academic qualification achieved by 80% of them.'

**The Art of Engagement? Outcomes and Impact of the
Summer Arts College Programme 2007-2012**

Arts Award has helped those who have taken part to further develop a number of important skills, most notably: creativity, self-confidence, communication and leadership. For a number of our older students, it has offered an invaluable insight into, and preparation for, a career in the creative industries.'

**Lesley Turner, Assistant Principal, Ormiston Sudbury
Academy (Arts Award Good Practice Centre, 2014-2015)**

Add value to the whole school

Supporting evidence

In schools with good teaching, there is not a conflict between the National Curriculum, national standards in core subjects and creative approaches to learning.'

Learning: creative approaches that raise standards, Ofsted, January 2010

The Sutton Trust and the Education Endowment Foundation conducted a review of learning and teaching strategies and has provided a Teaching and Learning Toolkit which assesses the impact of a range of strategies on young people's attainment, the strength of the evidence supporting them and the cost.

There are a range of pedagogic strategies reviewed by the Sutton Trust which are fundamental to the Arts Award framework, including peer tutoring, metacognition, collaborative learning, one to one tuition, feedback, small group tuition and individualised instruction. These strategies align closely to the 10 key mechanisms of Arts Award in the **Summary of findings from Year 1 of the Arts Award Impact Study**.

In practice



Glenthorne High School

Arts Award is embedded within Glenthorne High School's arts policy, contributing to the opportunities students have to engage in the arts. The impact of the school's arts provision was identified by Ofsted:

Glenthorne's arts specialism drives students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development with a rich balance of enrichment activities, community performances and opportunities for reflective discussion across all aspects of the curriculum.'

**Glenthorne High School
Ofsted inspection report 30-31 May 2012**

Opportunities suggested by the school's work towards the Arts Award, for example, promote exceptionally high levels of community engagement in music and the arts.'

**Tunbridge Wells Girls Grammar School
Ofsted inspection report 2-3 November 2011**

Arts Award helps to address whole school priorities such as attainment by providing a framework for progress and assessment in the Performing Arts. It also leads to a recognised external accreditation.'

Helen Holford, Governor, The Valley School



Rawlins Academy

The arts are really important at Rawlins Academy and our results across the full range of genres and courses are excellent. Arts Award adds another rich dimension; it provides new and different opportunities for brilliant artists to flourish but also for reluctant learners to find purpose and clear direction in life.'

**Callum Orr, Principal, Rawlins Academy
(Arts Award Good Practice Centre, 2014-2015)**

At Greenfields we are able to involve students across the whole ability spectrum to participate in and enjoy art in its many forms. Arts Award supports the school's values through increasing independence and encouraging confidence. It supports students across the whole school and enables us to celebrate and recognise their successes, regardless of their ability.'

**Kate Wilson, Parent Governor,
Greenfields Specialist School for Communication**

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More information and resources:

www.artsaward.org.uk/schools

Information on running Arts Award in schools, including links to the following resources:

- ▶ Arts Award and the Teachers' Standards
- ▶ Arts Award and Key Stage 3 English and History
- ▶ Arts Award and the July 2014 Ofsted framework

www.artsaward.org.uk/schoolstories:

A range of case studies showing successful Arts Award delivery in schools

www.artsaward.org.uk/goodpractice:

Case studies and resources outlining effective delivery approaches produced by current Arts Award Good Practice Centres

www.artsaward.org.uk/furthereducation:

Information, case studies and resources to support delivering Arts Award in further education settings

www.artsaward.org.uk/sen

Information, case studies and resources to support delivering Arts Award to young people with Special Educational Needs

www.artsaward.org.uk/inyoursetting

Links to information, case studies and resources on delivering Arts Award in other settings including services for children and young people, youth justice organisations and libraries

www.artsaward.org.uk/supporter

Information on the Arts Award Supporter scheme, including the Supporter Map where you can find out Supporter organisations' offers in your local area

www.artsaward.org.uk/impactstudy

Information on the three year longitudinal Arts Award Impact Study, with a link to the interim findings

www.artsaward.org.uk/rpa

Information on how Arts Award can support the Raising the Participation Age policy

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