



**Watford Grammar School for Girls**  
**Department Information**

**Art Department**

The Art Department at Watford Grammar School for Girls is a large, multi-skilled and diverse one, with three members of staff each specialising in up to three art subjects, including Fine Art, Textiles, Photography and Graphics. We offer two subjects at A level and four subjects at GCSE. We have a reputation for exceptionally high achievement across all levels, whilst maintaining creativity and individualised outcomes with the students work, and this is very much the priority in our GCSE and A Level teaching. Our success relates to being a close knit, communicative and reflective department. We regularly review our own approaches and adapt courses to suit the personalised needs of the students. We also enthusiastically share skills, ideas and expertise which has resulted in highly experimental, mixed skill courses.

There are two part-time and one full-time experienced staff, and we are supported by an Art technician, who helps with all day to day running and preparation for projects.

We follow AQA at A level because of the importance placed on critical analysis and deeper thinking, and we follow Edexcel at GCSE. Our exam results are frequently amongst the highest in the school. We hope to continue this achievement by maintaining support structures including catch up clubs, clear support documents, structured learning, aspirational standards, project examples and regular constructive feedback in tutorials. Pupils are also offered extra-curricular opportunities to develop their skills and understanding of the arts beyond the classroom; these include life drawing workshops, gallery visits and talks from ex-students employed in the creative industries. Our efforts to educate and support the students have encouraged successful entry onto highly regarded Degree courses at the Courtauld, Oxford University and St Martins. Previous students have gone on to secure roles at Ted Baker, Liberty of London and the National Theatre.

Within KS3 each member of staff creates their own themed starting points and contextual links, however, these are underpinned with focus skills and techniques. In Year 7 we study tone, mark making, painting, drawing skills and cultural art of the teachers choosing. In Year 8 we study perspective, surrealism, pop art and silk painting and in Year 9 we all follow a shared taster SOW on rotation which offers an insight into the courses we run at GCSE. Within this, we do a mini project in Graphics, Textiles, Fine Art and Photography. All lower school teaching includes common approaches to three-point lesson structure, regular marking and constructive feedback and pupil target setting and skill review. Observational drawing skills are paramount to a pupil's progression, and we also ensure that critical thinking and writing skills on artists' work are explored in all years at KS3.

We always aim to promote the arts and involvement in extra-curricular events through a weekly specialist Art club and competition entries including the Queen's Jubilee, the King's Coronation, Black History Month and World Mental Health Day. All these initiatives promote the idea that the pupils' artistic efforts are an integral part of the school environment as well as having a relevant function in the outside world.