

'Making a Mark'

Gold Mark Holder Social Impact Declaration

Plymouth College of Art

Plymouth College of Art is a specialist independent Higher Education Institution, which offers a range of Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Pre-Degree study across Art, Design and Media.



Our purpose is to provide a distinctive, innovative and supportive learning community in contemporary arts practice; to add value to the cultural, social and economic life of Plymouth and the South West region; and to develop our distinctive profile of our work nationally and internationally.

We were awarded the Social Enterprise Gold Mark in June 2017, joining a growing network of 'gold standard' social enterprises. The Gold Mark criteria includes a requirement for all applicants and renewing Mark Holders to answer a set of social impact questions, which illustrate how they are striving to meet their social/environmental objectives.

Our social impact aims

We seek to achieve social impact on two levels; organisationally and individually. This means that not only do we support our own students to achieve individual transformation, but we also innovate as an organisation to effect social impact within our wider community.

Our social Impact aims include:

- **Creating agency** – we seek to instil our students with a level of confidence and social justice that means they feel they have

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agency to make positive change and impact within their chosen field and communities

- **Place making** - we take our role as a small, specialist anchor institution seriously and seek partnerships and projects that support our wider community through place making initiatives
- **Broadening horizons** - a core strand of our creative arts ethos is about broadening horizons for our community, by exposing individuals to inspirational people, places and ideas

How we create social impact in practice

- **Creating agency** – we launched a new innovative MA in Creative Education, which facilitates new models of making learning
- **Place making** - we have established Makers HQ CIC, to support employment and training opportunities for the area of Stonehouse and the wider city through the provision of fashion and textile manufacturing
- **Broadening horizons** – we support the National Saturday Art and Design Club by offering free access to the programme for 20 young people aged 14-16 each year

Creating benefits for a range of stakeholders

Our students have benefited from being directly involved in these innovative projects:

- Some develop new works and others have been able to showcase and experiment within new settings, such as Tate Exchange
- This engagement and exposure encourages students to push their own boundaries and challenge societal norms.

The opportunities we create via the Saturday arts programmes gives young people an opportunity they would not otherwise be able to access and, as a result, confidence levels soar as well as their creative abilities. This in turn has a positive impact on relationships with peers and their wider academic achievements.

We also seek to achieve greater impact through partnership, which includes leveraging funding, reaching new and greater audiences and sharing best practice for the benefit of all involved.

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