

-SQA-SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

**Hanover House
24 Douglas Street
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NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE DESCRIPTOR

-Module Number-	8190071	-Session-1991-92
-Superclass-	KH	

-Title-	PRINTMAKING: ETCHING 1
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-DESCRIPTION-

Purpose	This module is designed to enable the student to acquire a basic understanding of etching techniques and to express and communicate visual ideas creatively through the medium of printmaking. This module will be of interest to potential art students, printers and technicians and could be used within a range of educational and vocational programmes eg. in Art Colleges, in the Study of Reprographic Techniques, in Graphic Design Studios, F.E. Colleges and Schools.
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Preferred Entry Level	No formal qualifications needed but students will find it an advantage to have a previous knowledge of or interest in drawing, design or photography.
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Outcomes	The student should: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. clean and prepare a plate for etching;2. transfer image to plate;3. stop-out the plate and time the etching process for gradations of tone and bite;4. achieve tone through the application of aquatint;5. take a proof and print an edition.
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Assessment Procedures	Acceptable performance in this module will be satisfactory achievement of all the Performance Criteria specified for each Outcome.
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The following abbreviations are used below:

PC Performance Criteria
IA Instrument of Assessment

Note: The Outcomes and PCs are mandatory and cannot be altered. The IA may be altered by arrangement with SQA. (Where a range of performance is indicated, this should be regarded as an extension of the PCs and is therefore mandatory.)

OUTCOME 1 CLEAN AND PREPARE A PLATE FOR ETCHING

- PCs
- (a) The edges of the plate are smoothed and rounded with a file, to ensure clean printing and safety of handling.
 - (b) The surface of the plate is degreased and cleaned and polished with a suitable agent to ensure that the ground will take smoothly.
 - (c) The polished and cleaned plate is protected from scratching or marking with dirt, dust or grease, to ensure an appropriate surface for the wax ground.
 - (d) The method of application of the wax ground ensures that the surface of the plate is hardened and of dark and even density.

IA Practical Exercise

The student will be presented with a practical exercise to demonstrate his/her ability to file and clean his/her plate and prepare it for etching (hard ground). The exercise will be designed to ensure that all Performance Criteria are covered.

Satisfactory achievement of the Outcome will be based on all Performance Criteria being met.

OUTCOME 2 TRANSFER IMAGE TO PLATE

- PCs
- (a) The design or composition of the image shows consideration and suitability for the medium to be used.
 - (b) The image is successfully transferred to the plate either by free-hand drawing, tracing or photo-process.
 - (c) All drawn lines, dots and cross-hatchings are clean and exposed ready for etching.
 - (d) The line work is not too open to ensure that no under cutting takes place when the plate is exposed to the action of the acid.

IA Practical Exercise

The student will be presented with a practical exercise to demonstrate his/her ability to transfer their image or design to the plate. The exercise will be designed to ensure that all Performance Criteria are covered.

Satisfactory achievement of the Outcome will be based on all Performance Criteria being met.

OUTCOME 3**STOP-OUT THE PLATE AND TIME THE ETCHING PROCESS FOR GRADATIONS OF TONE AND BITE**

PCs

- (a) All surface scratches, errors or marks are stopped-out to prevent foul-biting and the edges of the plate are similarly stopped-out and protected.
- (b) The back of the plate is protected by stopping-out with straw-hat varnish, where appropriate.
- (c) The timing and action of the acid is carefully monitored to achieve the appropriate depth and sensitivity of bite.
- (d) Fine lines and light tones are achieved by progressive and careful stopping-out and immersion.

IA Practical Exercise

The student will be presented with a practical exercise to demonstrate his/her ability to stop-out the plate and to time the etching process.

This assessment may be integrated with the assessments for Outcomes 1 and 2 if wished, ie. the same plate may be used to demonstrate competence in cleaning and preparation, drawing up the plate and the etching process.

Satisfactory achievement of the Outcome will be based on all Performance Criteria being met.

OUTCOME 4**ACHIEVE TONE THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF AQUATINT**

PCs

- (a) The cleaning and degreasing of the plate provides an appropriate surface for the application of aquatint.
- (b) Aquatint is evenly applied over image and plate surface.
- (c) All areas where tone is not required are carefully stopped-out before initial immersion for aquatint.

- (d) Gradations of tone are achieved by careful stopping-out and progressive immersions in acid.

IA Practical Exercise

The student will be presented with a practical exercise to test his/her ability to achieve tone through the application of aquatint. The exercise will be designed to ensure that all Performance Criteria are covered.

Satisfactory achievement of the Outcome will be based on all Performance Criteria being met.

OUTCOME 5

TAKE A PROOF AND PRINT AN EDITION

PCs

- (a) Drawn and aquatinted plate is cleaned and polished ready for the printing process.
- (b) Ink is applied and wiped correctly ready for printing.
- (c) Paper is soaked and prepared and printing procedures correctly carried through to produce a trial or proof print.
- (d) Alterations and corrections are made to the proof where appropriate to ensure the required strength of image and effect are achieved.
- (e) The image printed on the edition is clean and of uniform quality.

IA Practical Exercise

The student will be presented with a practical exercise to test his/her knowledge of the etching process. The exercise will be designed to ensure that all Performance Criteria are covered. The student will be required to take a proof and print an edition to a brief which will be agreed between the student/tutor.

(The size of the edition should be at the tutor's discretion but a minimum of ten prints is suggested).

Satisfactory achievement of the Outcome will be based on all Performance Criteria being met.

**The following sections of the descriptor are offered as guidance.
They are not mandatory.**

CONTENT/CONTEXT

Safety regulations and safe working practices and procedures should be observed at all times.

Corresponding to Outcomes 1-5:

1. Use of a file to round off edges and corners of the plate. Use of a cleaning agent to degrease and prepare the plate so that the ground will take smoothly. Application of a wax ground (hard) and where necessary smoking of the plate with waxed tapers so that the surface is hardened and of dark and even density.
 2. Use of a variety of line, dot and etching to draw up the image where a hand-drawn effect is required. Methods of ensuring that line work is not too open so that undercutting would take place when exposed to the action of the acid. Use of stop-out varnish to correct any drawing mistakes.
 3. Use of straw-hat varnish to protect any areas required such as sides and back of plate. Methods of ensuring that varnish does not spread onto the drawn image.
 4. Application of an aquatint using either spray paint or resin and/or liquid preparation and masking with stop-out varnish to achieve graded areas of tone by controlled immersions in the acid bath.
 5. Use of the press, taking a proof or trial print, soaking the paper and drying it off beforehand and then inking up and wiping off the plate. Having satisfied that the required strength of image and effect is achieved, taking a proper edition, limited to ten or twenty, showing the ability to print a uniform quality of image.
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SUGGESTED LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES

It is recommended that safety regulations and safe working practices should be reinforced by the tutor on an ongoing basis throughout this module.

The learning approach should be activity-based and centred on practical exercises with a well-defined brief.

It would be useful if the student's knowledge of the etching process, immersion times and printing procedures was re-inforced, where possible, by giving him/her the opportunity to observe these procedures in operation by other experienced students.

Assessment for Outcomes, 1, 2 and 3 may be integrated if wished as the same plate may be used to demonstrate competence in preparing and cleaning the plate and drawing-up the plate and stopping-out and etching the plate.

Slide shows, visits to exhibitions or printmaker's studios should be arranged where possible, so that students may have some idea of the range of styles and techniques practised by etchers and printmakers.

It is recommended that students compile a work-book. This should include sketches of ideas for images and designs, notes on terminology, materials, working practices and processes.

The student should retain all work in this module as part of a portfolio.

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