ISA ARTS



ISA ART COMPETITION

Open to all ages
Final Tuesday 18 & Wednesday 19 November 2026
Chesford Grange Hotel, CV8 2LD

2026

SCAN HERE

isaschools.org.uk | isaarts@isaschools.org.uk
Competition open to ISA Members Schools only

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMPETITION

The ISA National Art Competition is an annual event that invites all pupils from ISA member schools to participate. It is an excellent platform for schools to showcase their students' artistic talents and for teachers to share innovative practice and ideas.

The competition is held in two stages – the Area Art Competitions and the National Final. There are dozens of categories which cover all age groups and multiple genres, including 2D and 3D art, textiles, drawing, fashion and photography.
Please note, this is not an online competition, schools must bring each artwork to the events.

This competition includes regional qualifying competitions events. Not sure which area your school is in? Check here by clicking 'Map View'.

At ISA, we are committed to making our opportunities accessible, we welcome applications from all pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities. If your pupil(s), those with an EHCP or on the school's SEND register, are working at a level that differs from their age group's key stage, or if your school or student focuses on development and skills rather than year groups, please contact us.

Alternative formats of these guidelines are available on request. Please notify us at the earliest opportunity so we can provide the document accordingly, if required.

This competition allows a broad range of entries, instead of specifying subjects for each category, providing teachers with the freedom to choose the artwork they submit. However, specific criteria must be met for each class, meaning that not every piece of art created in school can be entered. Please carefully read this handbook before submitting your entry.

In this handbook you will find the information below:

- **Competition rules – Page 3**
- **Area Competitions – Page 4**
- **Entry Form – Page 6**
- **National Finals – Page 7**
- **Competition categories – Page 8**

If you have any questions, please contact isaarts@isaschools.org.uk
We look forward to receiving your entries.

Competition Rules

General Criteria

- It's important to consider the size of the artwork submitted as if successful in the regional competition these will need to be transported to the finals. It is the schools' responsibility to organise delivery and collection of their artwork for the regionals events as well as the finals.
- Only individual pieces of artwork are accepted, including photographs and group work. (**no group works or co-mounted diptychs/triptychs**). Group items should reflect collaborative work on a single piece, not a group of individual pieces.
- **No previously submitted works** from prior ISA competitions will be accepted.
- The judges' decision at both the regional and national levels is final.
- **Age Categories:** Ensure artwork is entered under the correct age category. If work is submitted to the wrong category, the competition organisers reserve the right to transfer the work to the more suitable category or disqualify it, if it does not meet the guidance given in this handbook. Submitted work should be submitted for the age group applicable when the work was created.
- **Authentication:** Staff must confirm that all artwork submitted is the student's own work, and any assistance from staff must be clearly noted on a sheet attached to the piece, and on the online entry form.
- Actual pieces of artwork (not photographs) must be submitted in all competition categories at regional and national levels. Photographs are only eligible in the photography classes.
- **No joint winners** will be allowed.
- Each piece of artwork can only be entered in **one category**.
- Works should not have been previously submitted to the ISA Art Competition. The work should have been produced within 18 months before the National Finals Exhibition (November 2026), by a student currently attending or who attended the school during that time. Artwork submitted to a previous ISA competition will be disqualified.
- It is very important to retain artwork intended for exhibition in the Autumn Term; and ensure it is not taken home by pupils at the end of the Summer Term.
- Please ensure to take a photo of each of your artwork as these will be asked if your pieces make it to the final. It is very important to submit a good quality photo as it will be used for the virtual art gallery and for the ISA art brochure. Please submit **only one** photo per artwork. Photos won't be required for the entry form.

Display and Transportation

- All winners from the Area Competitions must be sent to the National Final. This is a condition of entry to the area competition. **Schools are responsible for making the necessary arrangements.**
- Display boards will be provided by ISA. It is the schools' responsibility to ensure that each piece can be displayed with the correct hanging mechanism provided (with instructions if necessary).
- **2D works** should be prepared with Velcro on the back (**no picture frames**).
- **3D work** must sit securely on a floor or table and schools must provide all the display materials (e.g. mannequin/acrylic stand). Please note that the national exhibition is held in a hotel conference room: items cannot be hung from the ceiling or wall. **No electrical plugs will be available.**

Area Art Competitions

The Area art competitions will take place **in person** and will be organised by **the ISA Area Art Coordinators** during either summer or autumn term. Most areas combine the art competition with a Headteacher's meeting.

ISA Members (Headteachers) will receive information about the competition to be shared with their Art teachers.
For additional details, please contact your Area Art Coordinator. Entries submitted to the regional competitions must adhere to the rules and guidelines outlined in this national handbook.

All ISA member schools are encouraged to submit artwork for the first stage. Schools must bring artwork to the events (this is not an online competition). If your artwork wins first place in any category, ensure you retain it to send to the National Final. **It is also the school responsibility to arrange collection of their artwork after the event.**

Entries must be submitted via the entry forms on the ISA website https://www.isaschools.org.uk/arts/art/art-competition2.html. Include the **full name** of your school on all entry forms Please ensure to take a photo of each of your artwork as these will be asked if your pieces make it to the final for the printed art brochure and the virtual art gallery. Photos won't be required for the entry form.

Number of Entries: Areas allow only **one entry per age group** per school. Schools are encouraged to hold internal competitions to select the best piece for submission. Certificates and prizes for the Area Competitions are at the discretion of each area.

The winning pieces from the regional competitions **must be sent to the National Final** at the Chesford Grange Hotel, Kenilworth no later than 11am on Wednesday 18 November. Practical arrangements for the area competitions are determined locally.

Area Art Competitions 2026 – Dates & Contact Details

This handbook will be updated with competition details.
Please visit the Art Competition page of the ISA website for the latest version

It is important to note that the area competitions are organised by Headteachers and/or art staff who have generously volunteered their time.
If you have any queries, reaching out via email to your Area Art Coordinator is usually the best way to communicate.

East:
Date & venue: Friday 6 November 2026, New Hall School, The Avenue, Essex, CM3 3HS
Deadline for online digital entries: Wednesday 30 September 2026
Deadline for deliveries: Friday 2 October 2026
Contact: Christopher Lonsdale - C.Lonsdale@newhallschool.co.uk

London North:
Date and venue: Thursday 1 October 2026, Marriott Hotel, Waltham Abbey, EN9 3LX
Deadline for entries: Friday 18 September 2026
Contact: Sally Fairbairn - sfairbairn@sthildasharpenden.co.uk

London South:
Date & venue: Friday 18 September 2026, LVS Hassocks, London Road, Sayers Common, West Sussex, BN6 9HT
Deadline for entries: Friday 5 June 2026
Contact: Mady Yazdi - mady.yazdi@lvs-hassocks.org.uk

London West:
Date & venue: Tuesday 6 October 2026, Norden Farm Centre for the Arts, Altwood Road, Maidenhead, SL6 4PF
Deadline for entries: Tuesday 29 September 2026
Contact: Lauren Moorhouse - lnm@clairescourt.net

Midlands:
Date & venue: Thursday 15 October 2026, Priory School, Sir Harry's Road, Edgbaston, B15 2UR
Deadline for entries: Friday 2 October 2026
Contact: Corinne Keeber c.keeber@prioryschool.net

North:
Date & venue: Thursday 24 September 2026, Abbotsford Preparatory School, 211 Flixton Road, Urmston, Manchester, M41 5PR
Deadline for entries: Friday 18 September 2026
Contact: Helen Stephenson – hstephenson@qe.org

South West:
Date and venue: Friday 9 October 2026, Bournemouth Collegiate School, College Road, Dorset, BH5 2DY
Deadline for entries: Thursday 1 October 2026
Contact: Tui Harris - tui.harris@bcschool.co.uk & Jenna Howell - jenna.howell@bcschool.co.uk

Entry Form

Entries for the Regional Competitions **must be submitted via the online entry form** on the ISA website https://www.isaschools.org.uk/arts/art/art-competition2.html

In addition, print out and complete all parts of the form in CAPITALS below and fix it **to the back** of each entry, bottom left-hand corner.

Complete all parts of this form in CAPITALS, FIX **to the back** of each entry, bottom left-hand corner. Printed at this size – please do not reduce. Entry to the regional competition is conditional on agreement to submit any and all class winners to the National Finals. Failure to do so will lead to disqualification from the final.
ISA Area:
School:
Pupil Name:
Class Category Code: *For example, for Drawing Key Stage 2: D2*
Title of Piece:
Confirmation of authenticity statement below (Signature of Staff):
We understand that the Association and its representatives cannot be held responsible for loss, damage or breakage of this art piece. Should this piece be submitted to Nationals we undertake to be responsible for its arrival and collection. *We confirm that this piece was completed under supervision with limited input from staff.* *If the pupil(s) had assistance from teaching staff or art technicians at any stage in the process, this must be clearly detailed on an attached sheet.*

National Finals

The National Finals, second stage of the competition, will coincide with the ISA Autumn Leaders Conference on 18-19 November 2026 at the Chesford Grange Hotel, Kenilworth.
All first-place artworks from regional competitions must be submitted to the National Finals at **the Chesford Grange Hotel, Kenilworth no later than 11am on Wednesday 18 November**, and will be judged by two independent adjudicators.

In addition, a photo of each artwork will be required from finalists before the event. It is very important to submit a good quality photo as it will be used for the virtual art gallery and for the ISA art brochure. Please submit **only one** photo per artwork.

Delivery

- Winning schools will receive instructions for sending work to the National Final by ISA HQ. Schools do not need to attend the final exhibition but must ensure entries reach the conference in time for display.
- Schools are responsible for transporting artwork to and from the National Competition. ISA HQ and the Area Art Coordinators must be informed but cannot take responsibility for any items lost or damaged work or left in the care of the venue.
- ISA HQ **won't take responsibility** for undelivered artwork to the finals and **cannot advise schools on the day if their artwork is missing.**
- ISA HQ must be aware in advance of any heavy / large piece of artwork with photos and details (2D or 3D).
- Remove any **area prizes labels** from the artwork before sending to the final and ensure the entry form remains attached to avoid confusion with the final results.

Collection

- Schools must ensure their pieces are collected by the end of the conference on **Thursday 19 November** at the end of the conference between 12-2pm. **ISA takes no responsibility for lost or damaged artwork or left in the care of the venue.**
- ISA HQ must be informed **one week in advance** regarding collection arrangements.
- ISA HQ cannot print return labels – these MUST be sent with the artwork, and ISA must be informed of this in advance. **Return labels must be from a courier company with a bar code, no stamped envelope.**
- If the artwork is collected by a courier, **ensure the driver has the relevant information for collection:** Include the name of school and add your name and email address as the prior contact for the courier, not ISA's contact details. (example of courier: DPD, Parcel Force, Evri, Royal Mail, UPS).

Categories

Category	Class Code	Age Group	
Art 2D Individual	2D0	EYFS	All 2D work excluding drawings and textiles. 2D art must be mostly flat without large protrusions. Includes painting, collage, printmaking, 2D mixed media etc.
	2D1	Key Stage 1	
	2D2a	Key Stage 2a (yrs 3 & 4)	
	2D2b	Key Stage 2b (yrs 5 & 6)	
	2D3	Key Stage 3	
	2D4	Key Stage 4	
	2D5	Key Stage 5	
Art 2D Group	2DG0	EYFS	2D work as above, made by 2 or more students. Please note the piece should NOT be a group of works, but should be a single collaborative piece made by more than one person.
	2DG1	Key Stage 1	
	2DG2	Key Stage 2	
Art 3D - Individual	3D0/1	EYFS & Key Stage 1	All 3D work including soft sculpture, ceramics, wood, plastic, metal, mosaics and 3D mixed media. Excludes flat textile works.
	3D2	Key Stage 2	
	3D3	Key Stage 3	
	3D4	Key Stage 4	
	3D5	Key Stage 5	
Art 3D - Group	3DG0	EYFS	3D work as above, made by 2 or more students. Please note the piece should NOT be a group of works, but should be a single collaborative piece made by more than one person.
	3DG1	Key Stage 1	
	3DG2	Key Stage 2	
Drawing	D0/1	EYFS, Key Stage 1	All drawings in pencil, charcoal, chalk, ink etc.
	D2	Key Stage 2	
	D3	Key Stage 3	
	D4	Key Stage 4	
	D5	Key Stage 5	
Fashion and Accessories	F0/2	EYFS - Key Stage 2	All items designed to be worn or display as a piece of clothing or accessory. Either group or individual entries
	F3/4	Key Stage 3 & 4	
	F5	Key Stage 5	
Photography	P0/2	EYFS, Key Stage 1 & 2	All photography excluding any images with significant digital editing, special effects or images created on a computer. These are not eligible for the National Art Competition and should instead be entered into the ISA Digital Art Competition. No diptych or triptych.
	P3	Key Stage 3	
	P4	Key Stage 4	
	P5	Key Stage 5	
Sketchbook	S0/1	EYFS, Key Stage 1	For ease of judging two double-page spreads should be flagged with a post-it note (three for KS5) to show refinement and progress.
	S2	Key Stage 2	
	S3/4	Key Stage 3 & 4	
	S5	Key Stage 5	
Textiles - Individual	T0/1	EYFS & Key Stage 1	All textile and fabric-based works excluding clothing (unless the piece is designed for display only) and soft sculpture (should be entered in the Art 3D categories).
	T2	Key Stage 2	
	T3	Key Stage 3	
	T4	Key Stage 4	
	T5	Key Stage 5	
Textiles - Group	TG0/1	EYFS & Key Stage 1	Textile work as above, made by 2 or more students. Please note the piece should NOT be a group of works but should be a single
	TG2	Key Stage 2	