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### **Collaboration and collective engagement: developing practice through Praxis**

The Graduate Diploma Fine Art at Chelsea is a course that caters for students who do not have a first degree in Fine Art, but a BA (or more) from another subject field and who intend to do an MA Fine Art or enter into professional practice as artist. The course is now in its second year and as such has raised interesting questions about the Fine Art curriculum, which in turn connects to contemporary Fine Art's role and position in society more broadly. For instance, how do we develop a student centred approach *together* – as a group. As a group that can critically include and draw on previous education and experience. Furthermore we have to ask how could this approach affect what we teach and learn to become artist today, also for Fine Art students who come to art education straight from school. How can forms of collaboration facilitate this approach and how can students be encouraged to be curious about and engage with the knowledges and experiences each of them bring to the table.

The curriculum in Fine Art has shifted away from teaching 'the arts' (using a skills-based approach) (Beech 2014) to a student-centred model of teaching art which aims to equip students with the critical awareness to identify and develop/mobilise the skills necessary for their own individual mode of practice. There is an increasing emphasis on students as partners within this process, and on collaboration as a key to partnership. Fine Art courses are uniquely placed to draw on a wide range of collaborative models, since discourse and open-ended interdisciplinary enquiry form the basis of so much of art's practical and discursive production. This presentation will highlight some of the ways in which The Graduate Diploma has drawn on subject-specific models of engagement in order to expand the curriculum to encourage and inform student-led collaboration and engagement.

This will be an academic paper delivered with a PP presentation.