

# You are... a Sixth form college

**Artsmark works with an ever-growing network of schools and alternative education settings to develop and celebrate their commitment to arts, culture and creativity.**

Your  
Artsmark  
journey  
starts here

We support a wide range of education settings, including **sixth form colleges**, to achieve an Artsmark award.

While we consider the unique context of every setting, we understand that there may be additional considerations or challenges for your sixth form setting that you feel could affect your Artsmark journey.

The guidance below is designed to reassure you that:

- the Artsmark framework is **relevant** and **adaptable** to your setting
- we have an **awareness** and **understanding** of the key issues you may face on your Artsmark journey
- our assessment will be **sensitive** and **sympathetic** to the broader context of your setting
- we have a range of **support options available**, including resources, partnerships and networking opportunities, to support you through your Artsmark journey

For more information on how to embark on an Artsmark journey and what it involves, go to **Your Next Steps**

## Will Artsmark work for us?

Yes! Artsmark provides a **flexible framework** to help educational settings champion arts, culture and creativity in their learning and teaching environments, and sixth form colleges are no exception.

Artsmark is an effective tool to help your setting to broaden and enrich its arts offer, particularly across arts subject specialisms.

With increasing independence at sixth form, there is potential for students to:

- have **greater input** into their learning experience and **personal progression** within the arts
- to **act as advocates** in your setting and the wider community.

There is also rich scope to integrate creative approaches in **pastoral and extra-curricular spaces** to support all students' wellbeing, personal development and career progression.



## Your sixth form setting and the Artsmark criteria

We understand that some of the recommended steps outlined in our Artsmark criteria may pose some additional considerations or initial challenges for your setting, such as:

### Values and Ethos

We appreciate that this criterion makes recommendations particularly directed at primary and secondary settings.

As a sixth form setting, we understand that the scope to promote career paths in the arts and offer creative industry opportunities would most likely be limited to students specialising in arts subjects, rather than across the entire student body.



“Our Artsmark journey has enabled us to raise the profile of the arts across all aspects of our diverse provision, demonstrating our commitment to enabling all students to successfully access an Arts curriculum.”

**Prior Pursglove and  
Stockton Sixth Form Colleges,  
Guisborough**

We recognise that embedding a setting-wide culture of placing high value on the arts may be more challenging for your settings considering:

- the short time period students are enrolled at your setting and strong focus on attainment
- students' subject specialisms, which may or may not include arts subjects

However, we know that students of all disciplines respond positively to creative activities and high-quality cultural experiences. The value your setting places on arts, culture and creativity will also be demonstrated by the strategic ways in which you ensure arts opportunities and cultural experiences are available to *all* students.

**Our assessors will take into account that evidence of the role of arts and culture in your setting's values and ethos may be most strongly demonstrated within arts-based faculty teams, whilst opportunity exists for all**

“Using the Artsmark framework has provided students with employability skills and helped them to solve problems in creative and independent ways.”

**East Norfolk Sixth Form College,  
Great Yarmouth**

## Curriculum Design

Due to the level of subject specialisation of both students and staff and a strong drive towards attainment over two years, we understand that opportunities for cross-curricular working may be more limited for your setting. While there is ample scope to demonstrate the strength of your arts and cultural provision in the associated subject areas, there may be less scope for your offer to connect across all subjects as a whole setting pedagogy.

**Our assessors will recognise innovative use of extra-curricular spaces to provide opportunities for events, clubs, visits and performances for all students, that offset gaps in cross-curricular work**

## Continued Professional Development

We ask settings to demonstrate a clear commitment to arts and culture CPD for all members of staff, and to allocate the appropriate resources to do so.

We understand that the priority for specialised arts CPD provision may be primarily directed at arts subject faculty teams rather than the whole staff body.

**Our assessment will take into consideration that arts-based CPD may be delivered on a faculty or departmental basis rather than a 'whole school approach'**



## Awarding a level

Our assessment process reflects our commitment to support all educational settings to engage in arts and cultural learning:

- We give every submission an assessment that is equitable across all setting types.
- We ensure that the Artsmark award criteria are applied with a sensitive understanding and awareness of the broader context of your setting.



## Your next steps

Sixth form settings can be sources of highly innovative practice in arts and cultural education, with a demonstrable impact on young people's wellbeing and onward development. We hope that this guidance reassures you that Artsmark offers a flexible framework that is right for your setting, and we look forward to following and supporting you on your unique Artsmark journey.

Find out more about Artsmark and the support on offer below, or to start your journey, [register for Artsmark](#) today.

## How we will support you

### Resources and Guidance

We have a wide range of [resources and guidance](#) to help get you started and to support you throughout your Artsmark journey.

- [Download our Artsmark booklet](#)
- Use our [Self-Assessment Framework](#) to consider your current arts and cultural provision and reflect on the areas you may wish to develop
- Read our [Artsmark application guidance booklet](#) to understand the process

Our full range of resources and application templates are always available on our [website](#).

### Your Bridge organisation

Your regional Bridge organisation offers ongoing support throughout your Artsmark journey, including 1-to-1 support sessions and practical resources. Your Bridge can also help you to connect with other Artsmark settings and with your local network of leading cultural organisations, including our Artsmark Partners.

Find your local [Bridge organisation](#) here.

### Artsmark Partners

Artsmark Partners are our network of arts and cultural organisations that understand the Artsmark criteria and can support schools and education settings on their Artsmark journey.

Find your local [Artsmark Partners](#) here.

### Contact us

If you have any questions or require further information and guidance, visit our website [www.artsmark.org.uk](http://www.artsmark.org.uk) or email us: [artsmark@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:artsmark@artscouncil.org.uk)

“*Combining the arts through other traditional subjects has enhanced creativity and excellence.*”

**East Norfolk Sixth Form College,  
Great Yarmouth**