

Membership Guide

Session booking

As a Clay Studio member you can access the studio for up to four 3-hour sessions (12 hours) per week. These are booked through the membership section of our website. The link is at the bottom of the page and takes you through to our Setmore booking page.

Bookings are made on a first-come basis and can be made any time up to 1 hour in advance. Session cancellations must be made no later than 48 hours in advance for the session to be transferable to another session later the same week. Sorry, unused sessions are not carried over from week to week.

Purchasing Clay Studio materials

Clay can be purchased through the website and collected from the main studio. (You can also order our free, mixed reclaim clay which is available via the members kiln hire page of our website.) Access to our house glazes is paid for as part of the kiln hire service, also accessed through the members kiln hire page (password *Claystudio11*).

Firing charges are currently:

60p per litre for bisque

90p for stoneware with your own glazes, our free reclaim glazes (labelled on the buckets) or no glaze

£1.70 per litre for stoneware with house glazes

Self-sourced/self-made materials

You may source clay, glazes and other materials independently or make your own. However, these must not be used in the studio until approved by a member of staff. In some cases a test-firing may be required to ensure there will be no damage to the kilns, kiln furniture or other members' work.

Glazed work should be fired on a bat to prevent damage to the kiln furniture. Firing bats are easily made from a slab of clay with the edges turned up.

Members are liable for any damage to the kiln or furniture caused by poorly produced ware or poorly applied glazes.

Technicians have the right to refuse firing items they deem to be unsafe.

Please familiarise yourselves with the firing temperatures below. You should also have a clear understanding of the differences between earthenware and stoneware materials and processes.

Our firing temperatures

Bisque: **1000°C** First firing for all work

Earthenware: **1140°C** (Main studio only. If using house glazes you will need to book a glaze session in the main studio. Leave all work for earthenware firing in the main studio as we only fire to stoneware in the member space)

Stoneware: **1250°C**

Tools and storage

You should purchase your own hand tools which can be kept, along with your materials, in your own dedicated storage space. Please don't over-fill these. If necessary, take overflow with you rather than risk it falling out and possibly damaging someone else's tools or work. You may consider using plastic storage boxes - transparent are best.

We have shelves around the main member space for you to store work in progress. Please make sure any work left here is clearly named and well wrapped so that it doesn't dry completely. And please don't leave work on the shelves for prolonged periods. Anything that becomes bone dry on these shelves may be removed and reclaimed.

Once your work is ready for firing, please leave it on the appropriate shelf in the kiln room. There are shelves for bisque and for stoneware. If you are working with earthenware it can be bisque fired in the members kiln room but you will need to leave it in the main studio for the glaze firing.

Cleaning (please note big size font, extra emphasis, super important!)

Most materials used in ceramics are hazardous and some are toxic. Silica dust is present in many ceramic materials. It is so fine that it is undetectable. If it gets airborne and inhaled it causes silicosis: a serious, incurable and often terminal disease. To maintain acceptable Health and Safety standards it is essential that all members adhere to the following guidelines.

Avoid Silica dust

Do not sand any unfired or bisque pieces in the space. If you want to sand you need to make sure that you do it outside, and use wet and dry (with water). Also we'd recommend you invest in a good respirator mask (please ask us if you want any advice on this).

Do not scrape dry glaze off your pots.

Do not carve, scratch or scrape any dry materials even when cleaning up (see below).

Glazes and other materials

Make sure any materials such as glaze are returned to the bucket immediately after use. Anything left in jugs can't be accurately identified and will have to be reclaimed (more later). This makes unnecessary waste, work and expense.

When cleaning glaze from pots or cleaning glazing tools (e.g. spoons, tongs, sponges), do this into a clean container and return to the appropriate glaze bucket. You must make sure you are only removing one glaze. If you are using multiple glazes, clean each separately. If you are wiping back a mix of glazes then it should be emptied into the glaze reclaim bucket. This then gets remixed into our reclaim glaze which is free for members to use as its properties vary from mix to mix.

Replace glaze lids immediately after or in between use. Uncovered materials (especially glazes) are easily contaminated causing unsatisfactory results in your work. Use and replace glazes one at a time to help avoid contamination.

Wear disposable gloves and a mask when handling colouring oxides and powder stains.

General cleaning

You should use at least the last 20 minutes of your final session to clean and you must comply with the studio's cleaning system:

Tools, tables & hands: Always wash up in a jug first for preliminary cleaning. This is in order to

remove the majority of materials. Dispose of this material in the correct reclaim bucket before using some fresh water to clean again.

The sink should only be used for washing or rinsing hands after all materials have been removed from them. No materials are to be disposed of in the sink or drain. Any slip made from throwing can be reclaimed.

The floor around where you have worked must be cleaned at the end of your session(s) using the wet mop first followed by the dry mop.

Please also make sure that communal areas such as around the sink / storage are clean for the next session.

If you are moving to a different part of the studio, e.g. from a wheel to the glaze area, it is important that you clean immediately and don't leave a mess for other members to walk through, work in or clean. Do not wait until the end of your session.

If you have used any communal tools, clean them and wipe over the shelf where they live when returning them.

Electrical equipment

Please turn off at the wheel before cleaning. If you are the last person in the studio, please also turn off at the wall.

Any other electrical equipment such as hairdryers should be turned off at the wall and removed from the socket before cleaning.

General conduct

Members must conduct themselves with consideration and respect for all other studio users and staff. Anyone not following the above recommendations clearly fails to do so. Any member who consistently fails to clean sufficiently or who does not wish to clean the studio after their sessions will be required to pay a 20% surcharge on their membership fee to pay for staff cleaning.

The Work For Change communal space incl kitchen and toilet

You are welcome to use the kitchen and toilet in the WfC communal space outside the studio but please note you should not use the sinks there for cleaning tools or clay clogged hands. You should clean all the clay from your hands before leaving the studio. This is to avoid blocking the plumbing with heavy, sedimentary materials.

Fire procedures

Please familiarise yourself with the fire safety procedures which can be found on the wall opposite the storage shelves. You should sign a copy and leave it in the envelope in the rack.

On leaving the studio

If you are the last person to leave the studio: please shut the windows, check that all power points are off and lock the studio door.

If you are the last person to leave the evening session (6.30-9.30pm), please also lock the door between the communal area/kitchen and the entry.

Please also note: neither the company nor its staff are responsible for personal belongings or work being damaged, lost or stolen.

WhatsApp

If you would like to join any of the members WhatsApp groups and you haven't received an invitation, you can scan the QR codes on the wall immediately to the left of the studio door.

Many thanks for your co-operation!