

# STUDIO HANDBOOK

**Tasmanian Ceramics Association**

B Block, Elizabeth College  
North Hobart, TASMANIA

## SECTION A PROCEDURES:

### WELCOME TO THE TCA STUDIO!

This handbook, consisting of Section A: Procedures and Section B: Work Place Health and Safety, is provided in order to give you the rules and a guideline for the Studio facilities and the expectations in relation to use of the Studio.

The TCA Studio is available for use by TCA Members only. It is a cooperative space that is facilitated by the Association's Volunteer Team. **Please remember that the Studio Team are volunteers and give their time to keep the Studio operating at an affordable price.** The Studio facilities are provided by the Association so that an inclusive and productive workspace is created for everyone.

Please be respectful of all members who use the Studio, including the Studio Team who are also TCA members. The Studio encourages creativity in each individual's ceramic practice and expects that all members respect each individual's artistic integrity. The sharing of information is encouraged however, tuition is not to be expected from other members outside the context of classes.

### CONTACT

GENERAL ENQUIRIES: If you have any queries in relation to the Studio please contact the TCA studio team on [tcastudiohobart@gmail.com](mailto:tcastudiohobart@gmail.com) and a TCA member will contact you.

In the case of a **STUDIO EMERGENCIES such as fire, bomb threat, accident or injury please contact the following:**

**FIRE BRIGADE/AMBULANCE/POLICE – 000**

**SCHOOL OFFICE (8am – 4pm school days) – 6235 6500, 6235 6504 or 6235 6587.**

**MATT RHODES (Business Manager) – 0421 174404**

**STEPH KELLEHER (Office Manager) - 0418 588709**

In the event of a fire or bomb threat evacuate the building immediately and exit through the Warwick Street gates to await further instructions from staff/ Police/ Fire Brigade. If there are emergency or security issues during school hours(8am – 4pm) the Elizabeth College School office can be contacted on the numbers above.

Staff cleaners are on site between the hours of 6am – 10pm and would be able to assist with taking action in an emergency. If you need to contact a staff member for advice on an urgent matter outside of school hours you can contact Matt Rhodes or Steph Kelleher on the numbers above.

These emergency numbers are also located on the Noticeboard above the slab roller.

## STUDIO ACCESS

The studio is currently available 4pm to 8 pm, Wednesdays and Thursdays and at other times by arrangement for specific workshops or classes.

## SIGNING IN/OUT

When you use the Studio you must SIGN IN on arrival and SIGN OUT on your departure. This is a requirement of our public liability insurance policy.

## WHEN CAN YOU USE THE STUDIO/STUDIO BOOKINGS

Members can use the studio during studio access hours from 4pm to 8pm from Wednesday and Thursday evenings. Bookings for the use of the Studio are made online at the Studio Booking page on [www.tasmanianceramics.com](http://www.tasmanianceramics.com). This is a Studio Members only page. Once your induction procedures are completed, you will be issued with a confidential password. You must agree to abide by the Procedures and Workplace Health and Safety sections of this document and complete the Induction Procedures online prior to commencing work in the studio.

If you wish to use the studio you must book a Studio spot, even if you are just using the studio for an hour, with a min fee of \$10. Please pay for your booking online when you make your booking. Payments are non-refundable. We ask that you make every attempt to use the time you have booked in the Studio.

Bookings can be made for either a wheel-throwing or a hand-building spot to ensure that there are adequate wheels available for those who book one.

## KEYS & GYM GATE ACCESS

The key for the studio will be collected from the school office before 4pm by the rostered volunteer on the evening of studio access. The door to the studio will be unlocked by the volunteer and the key returned to the office. At the end of the session the rostered volunteer will ensure that the external door has been pulled closed which will mean it is locked.

A spare set of keys will be held by Jodi Harrison at the Reception of New Town Swim Centre at 149 New Town Road (open 7 days per week) if required when the school office

is closed. Directions for dis-alarmed/ re-alarmed the building and the protocol for opening/ closing up will be held with the spare set of keys. These keys are only to be accessed by prior arrangement with the studio team via email.

## ALARM SYSTEM

All fire alarms and panels throughout the College are monitored directly by the Tas Fire Comms room. If the alarm is activated in B Block the alarm will sound throughout the building and Tas Fire will attend. In this instance you should vacate and leave through the Warwick Street gates to await further instructions from staff or Tas Fire.

## GATES

The gates to the College on Warwick Street are open from 6am – 8pm during school days. Members can park inside the school grounds whilst visiting the studio. In order to exit through the gates after 8pm the rostered volunteer will need to unlock the gate.

## STUDIO FEES

Use of the Studio incurs very affordable fees. These fees contribute toward the cost of running the Studio and the Association. Payment of these fees are to be made online at time of booking, so please ensure that you do book in appropriately so that we may continue to grow the Association and provide the Studio, improvements to equipment and maintenance to the kilns. Please note that the fees listed below are a minimum set fee, regardless of the time spent in the Studio.

Fees for the Studio are as follows:-

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### STUDIO FEES

Evening session	4pm to 8pm	\$10 Flat rate
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### FIRING FEES

There are no fees associated with firing, however **only work that is made in the TCA Studio, by members** is to be fired.

In order to get work fired at the Studio it must be made in the Studio. We do not provide a firing service for work not produced in the Studio.

A system for managing firings is being developed and will be updated here once established. You will be able to book ahead a whole kiln of your own work, please contact the rostered volunteer from the Firing Group a month ahead to ensure we can

fit you in to the firing schedule. You will be required to pack and unpack this kiln with supervision.

## CLAY

Members are responsible for providing their own clay and are required to take away any left-over clay and recycle or dispose of it themselves.

## STUDIO VOLUNTEERS

Two volunteers will be in attendance during each studio session. Their role is to open and close the studio each evening, ensure that users have cleaned and packed up the studio prior to leaving and be a point of contact if there are any issues or queries each evening. It is NOT the responsibility of volunteers to clean up the studio after it is used, or to provide lessons or give advice about ceramics or use of equipment.

## EQUIPMENT - GENERAL

The studio is well equipped with a variety of equipment, which is available for use by TCA members. Everything must be cleaned and returned to where you found it before leaving the studio.

## EQUIPMENT - SLAB ROLLER

To adjust the slab thickness you add and subtract boards at the base of the rolling deck. Multiple sheets are provided for the purpose of rolling out your clay. There is one sheet that is specifically for white clay only and is clearly marked. If the sheets are becoming very soiled and dusty please place them in the laundry trolley for cleaning. Please be aware that the roller is designed to compress large amounts of clay and poses a CRUSH RISK FOR YOUR FINGERS. Ensure that if you keep your fingers clear of the roller once it is motion. Please ensure that the slab roller is cleaned thoroughly after use including the handle, the rolling drum and canvas.

## STORAGE

Storage for TCA members' work and any items will be identified within the studio, primarily in the Glaze Room and adjacent to the TCA kiln. No work is to be stored in the damp cupboards, on the shelves in the main studio or in the store room opposite the entry door as this is all reserved for the school. There is not currently a damp cupboard for TCA members so if required you will need to wrap work in progress in plastic to keep it damp.

## KILNS

Kilns are dangerous and expensive equipment. A team of firing volunteers will be responsible for coordinating firing bookings for studio members who have been inducted into the use of the kilns. The kiln room is out of bounds to members during

firings. The door to the kiln room is to be kept shut whilst the kilns are firing so that the fan extraction system releases poisonous gases.

## WORK FOR FIRING

We do not fire half empty kilns. Accordingly, sometimes you will be waiting a lengthy period of time for your work to be fired. Sometimes we are waiting for enough work to fill a kiln that is being fired to a particular temperature and at other times there are other mitigating factors such as break downs. Packing and firing a kiln is a skill that can take some years and training to acquire, and is often more complex than the novice expects.

As we have limited space in the Studio work needs to be kept moving through the different ceramic processes. Please don't let work pile up in the Studio. Bisque work should be promptly glazed, and collected after the final firing.

All work must be on a board when placed on the drying and firing shelves. This helps to keep the shelves contaminate free and stems the spread of harmful dust. It also makes work easier to handle and less prone to damage.

If you are making lots of tiny pieces for firing please also make a plate to fire them on. This plate can then be re-used by you in further firings. This also applies to work that has either oxides or underglazes on the base that touches the shelves. This practice does leave deposits on the shelves that must be cleaned by the person whose work has been fired as it will leave marks on other people's work.

## BISQUE FIRING

When your work is DRY and ready for a bisque firing place it on the BISQUE SHELF on a BOARD, clearly MARKED WITH YOUR NAME and the word BISQUE. Work not clearly labelled will not be fired.

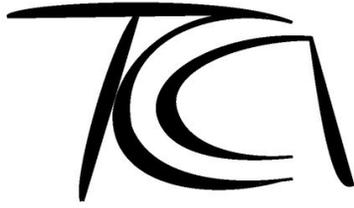
DO NOT place work on this shelf that is not fully dry, this can lead to kiln explosions, damage to the kiln, your work as well as the work of others. Only you can know how long your work has been drying for and if it is ready for a bisque firing. Shelves are provided in the Studio for drying purposes.

## GLAZE FIRING

When your work is glazed and ready for a glaze firing YOU MUST ENSURE that the bottom of the work is fully cleaned of glaze. There must be no glaze residue remaining on your work. Place work on the glaze shelves, on a BOARD, CLEARLY MARKED WITH YOUR NAME AND GLAZE TEMPERATURE. It is not enough information to label your work "Earthenware" "Midfire" or "Stoneware". The glaze temperature information must be included. Work not clearly labelled will not be fired.

Any damage to the kiln shelves resulting from glaze attaching work to the shelves will need to be cleaned by the person causing the damage. In extreme circumstances, when a shelf is damaged beyond rescue, the replacement of the kiln shelf or shelves will be required by the person who's work has caused the damage.

Please always remember the type of clay you are using. Earthenware fired to stoneware temperatures will melt and cause major damage to the kiln, shelves and other people's work. ***The cost to repair any damage caused by the ceramic work of a member must be borne by that member, this includes damage to kilns as well as all other equipment in the Studio.***



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## SECTION B:

### STUDIO WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is the responsibility of every ceramicist using the Studio to understand and undertake safe ceramic work practices in the studio at all times.

Please be careful, observant and thoughtful. Most accidents can be avoided through careful practice.

This information is intended as a guide and it is expected that the individual take measures to ensure the safety of themselves and others when using ceramic materials in the Studio and that material data safety sheets in relation to ceramic materials are researched, read and understood.

Ceramic dust is extremely carcinogenic and should be taken very seriously. The following instructions are essential for health and safety.

- 1) It is the responsibility of each member using the studio to clean up the mess that they make, including the floor.
- 2) The floor should be moped after every session and the mop water changed regularly.
- 3) Always work with a clean container of water, a sponge and work towel. Wipe down all work surfaces with a clean damp sponge and then dry with the wipe down cloths provided.
- 4) When using the pottery wheels please ensure that the area surrounding your wheel is thoroughly cleaned of splashes and clay residue, including the sides of the wheel, throwing benches, floor and walls.
- 5) Work boards and throwing bats are to be thoroughly cleaned and dried before returning to the cupboard.

- 6) Covered shoes are to be worn at all times in the studio, no exceptions. Hair must be tied back and no loose clothing is allowed.
- 7) If you are making glazes, **you must** wear a fine particle respirator. An ordinary dust mask does not filter fine ceramic materials. Check that the cartridge is for dust particles and change it according to specifications. Glaze materials can be very dangerous.
- 8) Plaster weighing and mixing is to be done outdoors, **never in the studio**. A folding trestle table is provided so that you can work comfortably outdoors. Remember to always wear a fine particle respirator when mixing plaster.
- 9) If you are scratching or carving into clay, always work over sheets of newspaper that have been dampened with a spray bottle. When the pieces fall they will be trapped on the wet newspaper. Dispose of newspaper in the bin. This method avoids creating dust in the studio.
- 10) All works in progress and work placed on the shelves for firing must be on a work board. This helps to keep shelves clean of dust and glaze residue.
- 11) Members and visitors to the Studio must comply with any COVID related safety requirements as directed by TCA Committee, Elizabeth College or the Tasmanian state government.
- 12) Ensure that you have been inducted in the use of any equipment such as wheels, slab roller, pug mill and extruder before you use them.

## CLEANING THE STUDIO

It is your responsibility to clean up any mess that you create while working in the Studio so that we can maintain a healthy and clean Studio conditions. Members using the Studio must undertake to clean the Studio as you go while working in it. As we are a co-working space run by volunteers we always appreciate your input in the Studio. If you see a mess left by another person please make an effort to contribute and clean up. This creates a clean and happy work environment for all.

## SANDING CERAMIC

Ceramics are not permitted to be SANDED WITH SAND PAPER in the Studio. A folding trestle table is provided so that you can work comfortably outdoors. Remember to always wear a fine particle respirator when mixing plaster.

If you need to sand your work, please use the WET AND DRY SANDING PROCEDURES as follows:-

- Place a towel in your work area.
- Dip your work in clean water or wet down larger work thoroughly with a sponge.
- Using wet and dry sandpaper, dip this into your clean water bucket and commence sanding.
- You will notice a sludge coming off your work instead of dust.
- If your work is becoming dry re-wet and continue sanding.
- All drips containing clay will collect on the towel.

## MIXING RAW MATERIALS

If you are mixing up your own ceramic materials and clay bodies you should be aware of any toxic properties in the ingredients you are using. Please read and understand the material data safety sheets for each component and avoid creating any dust cast offs. These can be accessed online.

PLASTER weighing and mixing is to be done outdoors, NEVER IN THE STUDIO. A folding trestle table is provided so that you can work comfortably outdoors. This table is stored in the kiln room. Remember to always wear a fine particle respirator when mixing plaster. Dust masks are completely ineffective in the application of ceramics.

If you are MAKING GLAZES, CLAY BODIES, SLIPS, WASHES etc from RAW MATERIALS you must wear a FINE PARTICLE RESPIRATOR and GLOVES. Gloves are provided by the Studio however, the respirator will need to be purchased at your own expense. These can be bought in the tool section of Bunnings for around \$50.00. Check that the cartridge is for fine dust particles and fumes and change it according to the specifications provided on the cartridge.

Raw ceramic materials can be very DANGEROUS. It is your responsibility to obtain the Material Data Safety Sheet and understand the correct method of handling this material and the risks involved for yourself and others.

Any SPILLAGES IN THE GLAZING AREA are to be thoroughly cleaned up with a wet sponge, mop and bucket and all surfaces thoroughly dried with a wipe down cloth. It cannot be overstated the importance of this process. NO DUST MUST REMAIN ONCE THE SURFACE HAS DRIED.

## COMPLAINTS PROCESS/WORK HEALTH & SAFETY REPORTING

If you have any complaints regarding the Studio or WHS matters to report, please put them in writing and email them to [presidenttasmanianceramics@gmail.com](mailto:presidenttasmanianceramics@gmail.com)

If you feel your issues need mediation please also email them to the Secretary of the TCA Committee via email [enquiries.tca@gmail.com](mailto:enquiries.tca@gmail.com) Your concerns can then be mediated at a TCA Committee Meeting which is held on the second Tuesday of each month at the Studio. Members are welcome to attend Committee meetings if they wish to do so.