

Open Arts Referral Guide

OPEN ARTS is a community arts and mental health project that aims to promote confidence, skills, self-esteem and positive mental health. The project offers 12 week creative courses that act as a springboard for people to move on in their progression pathways, onto other forms of community involvement, learning, training, or work. We aim to increase social inclusion, diversity, prevention and wellbeing, by using the creative arts as a tool from which participants can focus and learn from. Courses also offer optional accreditation and further volunteer opportunities.

Practicalities:

- Groups are held in community based venues (community centres, church halls etc.)
- Groups consist of around 15-20 people
- Sessions usually last 2 hours
- Participants have to make their own way to the group but can be accompanied by a support worker or carer if preferred
- Travel or childcare expenses cannot be covered
- Materials are provided
- The groups are facilitated by professional arts facilitators, with support from volunteers. The groups focus on the creative arts as opposed to mental health
- If a participant needs support to get them to the course, and to support them in settling in, that is fine with us but will need to be arranged by the referrer or Care Co-ordinator. The Arts Co-ordinator should be informed if a support worker, or member of family will be accompanying the participant
- Some courses are FREE to participants, thanks to external funding, some have a cost to the participant of £250 per participant. Course costs – free or other – are clearly stated on the course information available to participants before they sign up.
- Funding for participants can be obtained through Personal budgets, Recovery budgets or Carers budgets and participants can apply for this through their Care Co-ordinator/support worker.

Who is it suitable for?

- Adults aged 16 and upwards who identify with having a mental health need
- People in recovery from mental ill health
- Carers
- We can work with any level of ability – beginners and participants with experience in art are all welcome
- Participants need a level of self-management within the group
- Open Arts offers a stepping stone between statutory services and mainstream services, so it is suitable for those who are keen to work on creativity, learning, art, and social interaction, but are not quite ready to sign up at their local college or community centre on their own.

Referring procedure

- Please refer using the Open Arts referral form
- Participants can be referred by someone working with them (mental health professional, support worker, doctor) or a family member
- Participants can self-refer
- Referrals to be sent to Open Arts by telephone, email (if within a secure email system) or by post using a referral form.
- Once referral is received we will make contact with the Care Co-ordinator to discuss how the place will be funded.
- Once their funding is agreed, participants will receive a letter with course programme, details of the time and location and a map.

- Referrals may take up to one month to process.

What will happen in the course?

- Taster sessions in a variety of arts subjects. Our standard course is in Fine Art (e.g. painting, printing, pastels and clay at an introductory level). We can run courses in Digital Art, Drama, Film, Percussion, Yoga, Music, Photography or Tai Chi if there is enough demand.
- Creative Arts Tutors will demonstrate techniques and show examples, and participants will be given time and space to use the ideas suggested in their own way.
- Individual creative support is also offered within the group if required.
- Space and flexibility to work at your own pace.
- People will not be judged on their level of ability.
- The work is not explored in the same way it may be in the Arts Therapies. This is not a therapy session.
- A studio environment is created to facilitate freedom, experimentation and social interaction.
- Students are provided with all materials they need whilst on the course.
- Information, advice and guidance input is also available.

Course fees

Depending on our project funding, places may be free or they are open to those on recovery/personal/carers budgets at a cost of £250 for a 2 hour 12 week course or £350 for the course and a studio placement at Hadleigh Old Fire Station on completion of the course.

What happens after the course?

- Participants are signposted onto other opportunities in their area, including community groups and classes and volunteer opportunities
- Other optional next steps for participants are:
- Exhibitions
 - Gallery visits
 - Studio Space
 - Voluntary work

PLEASE SEND REFERRALS:

Email: epunft.open.arts@nhs.net

[When emailing referral forms please use password protection](#)

Or post to: Open Arts, The Art house, next to Hadleigh Old Fire Station, High Street, Hadleigh, Essex SS7 2PA

FURTHER ENQUIRIES TO:

Phone 07903 188673 or email: epunft.open.arts@nhs.net

Jo Keay, Open Arts Manager 07580 982 462 email: Jo.Keay@nhs.net

Please visit www.openartsessex.com and <https://eput.nhs.uk/our-services/essex/essex-mental-health-services/adults/open-arts/>

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Thank you