

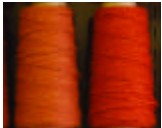
the handweavers diploma



a two-year course for weavers who want to take their weaving to another level



the handweavers diploma will provide you with an excellent grounding if you want to pursue a career as a designer-maker or a teacher of handweaving, or simply for your own satisfaction with no immediate career plans to use it professionally

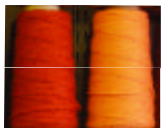


- ten-day initial summer school
- project-based learning
- quarterly teaching weekends
- regular tutor contact

helping you to



- gain an intermediate to advanced knowledge and understanding of a wide variety of weave structures
- develop your weaving skills to an expert level
- build your creative skills and confidence to be innovative in your weaving



the handweavers studio & gallery

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We all know that excellence in weaving is about more than straight selvages! A good weaver should:

- be able to design an attractive product
- have the technical knowledge to translate that design functionally
- have the craft skills to produce a finished item to a high standard

The Handweavers Diploma addresses all these areas.

Who is it for?

This is not a course for complete beginners. As a minimum, you should have made, beamed and woven off five or six warps independently and be able to read a straightforward draft.

If it's not clear whether you are at the right level when you apply, we will ask you to supply samples of your weaving and talk through your experience to date.

We will want to be sure we understand what everyone who applies is aiming for. The most important qualification is a strong desire to improve your weaving, and your willingness to make a clear commitment to spending two years doing so.

How many hours a week will it take?

There isn't a fixed number of hours students will be required to put in, other than attending the summer school and the quarterly contact weekends. But as a rough guideline, if the Diploma were delivered in an academic institution it would be a reasonably intensive one-year full-time course.

What equipment will I need?

You will need access at home to a (minimum) eight-shaft loom. A table loom would be preferred for its greater creative flexibility, but a floor loom or dobbie loom would be acceptable.

What sort of level will I reach?

The overall level of core weaving knowledge attained will be somewhat beyond the Certificate of Achievement (overseen by the Association of Guilds of Weavers, Spinners & Dyers) and the erstwhile Bradford Certificate in Woven Textile Design. It will be focused clearly on shaft-weaving - it will not be covering jacquard design nor the non-weave components one would expect in a BA.

Who is the course tutor?

Melanie Venes. She has vast experience of teaching at all levels from beginner to advanced, as well as her own highly regarded weaving practice. In addition to the summer school and contact weekends, she will be setting aside time on a regular basis for Diploma students to keep in touch and talk through problems.

How does the course work?

The Diploma consists of seven modules, each with a period of tuition, individual feedback sessions, and a weaving project. The course starts with a ten-day summer school during which you will:

- review the basics as a firm foundation for future work
- be introduced to design concepts and practices that will be useful throughout the course and beyond
- receive instruction and practical experience in selected weave structures
- be introduced to the first project

You will then return every three months for a contact weekend with the following typical structure:

Friday afternoon - presentations of the project you have just completed

Saturday - a full teaching day, sometimes with a visiting tutor, sometimes with the course tutor

Sunday - exploring new weave structures on the workshop looms and having individual tutor sessions

Some weave structures will be taught during the summer school and contact weekends, but students will be encouraged and expected to explore others independently, with guidance as necessary from the course tutor.

What happens in the summer school?

The summer school is an intensive kick-start to the course - expect to have your head spinning by the end! The programme will cover:

- technical knowledge
- design theory and practice
- working practices
- presentation techniques
- a range of weave structures
- practical sampling and exploration

What are the projects?

The projects lie at the heart of the Diploma. Every module, with the exception of the very last one, has a new project, and students will design, weave and present a swatch collection for each one. Some will be typical of commissions that handweavers may expect to receive as designer-makers; others will be based on a design studio's approach to collection development, for example using trend forecasts with directional colours, visual inspirations and moods of the moment.

Over the course of all the modules, students can expect - and will be expected - to produce work in a range of weights for a variety of functions, from lightweight for scarves and clothing, through to heavyweight for interiors, including optionally rugs, and to work in a variety of materials.

What will the modules cover?

Each module will start with a teaching day at the contact weekend, and the workshop looms will be set up with related warps. Topics will include block weaves & profile drafting, distorted wefts and lace weaves, network drafting, multi-layer cloth, collapse and other 3D techniques, and various tied weaves. Students may choose to use those weaves in their project for that module, but there's no restriction on the structures that may be used.

How much design work will I have to do?

You will be introduced to aspects of design theory and to various design techniques to help you design the kind of cloth you want to weave, but this is not a design course per se. You will be advised on how to mount and present your project swatches in a professional way compatible with long-term re-usability. For your final project, though, you may want to devise a more creative presentation.

How will my work be assessed?

Feedback and informal assessment will be given on a module-by-module basis by the course tutor throughout the course.

At the end of each year students will compile a portfolio from the work they have done through the year (reworked or augmented if they wish) to be formally assessed by at least two external assessors. Marks will be awarded equally for technical proficiency, appropriateness of design, and understanding and use of weave structures.

The external assessors will be highly reputed individuals drawn from the community of professional weavers, weave teachers, and weave design professionals.

Is the Diploma affiliated to any awarding body?

No. We want to be free of the constraints imposed by the various awarding bodies so that we can concentrate on offering what our students want to learn. Our external assessors are however expected to be rigorous in ensuring the standards are high!

What will it cost?

Fees are payable annually, but we need you to make a firm commitment to both years. The fees for the first year include the ten-day summer school.

Year 1: £1,750

Year 2: £1,350

Fees include all teaching and studio visits, and sampling yarns used during teaching weekends and the summer school. They do not include project yarns.

Fees are inclusive of VAT.

What are the dates?

Summer school

Fri 2 - Sun 11 September 2011

Contact weekends

Fri 2 - Sun 4 December 2011

Fri 9 - Sun 11 March 2012

Fri 22 - Sun 24 June 2012

Fri 5 - Sun 7 October 2012

Fri 4 - Sun 6 January 2013

Fri 5 - Sun 7 April 2013

Final presentation

Fri 19 - Sun 21 July 2013

For further information, contact Wendy Morris, wendy@handweavers.co.uk