

V&A Academy

CHINESE CERAMICS

V&A

Introduction

The V&A collection of Chinese ceramics is globally recognised for its scale and scope. Dating from the neolithic to the present, the history of ceramics can be mapped across the vast territories of China and beyond, charting the development of body and glaze and the evolution of porcelain as a global commodity. Chinese ceramics were enjoyed at home and abroad, as articles of daily use, ritual items and collectible artefacts. Colour, decoration and form reflect a diverse range of cultural and artistic influences, highlighting domestic fashion and taste as well as the influx of artistic motifs and aesthetics – through travel, trade and diplomacy – which stimulated and enriched the ceramic traditions of China.

This course offers an in-depth study of Chinese ceramics through a combination of lectures, object handling sessions and gallery visits at the V&A and British Museum. Led by V&A Course Director Dr Helen Glaister with guest lectures by Chinese ceramic specialists Rose Kerr, Xiaoxin Li and Ivy Chan.

Information

Mondays 15 June 2026- Friday 19 June 2026

10.30-16.45, V&A South Kensington

Your course leader

Dr Helen Glaister is an art historian who specialises in Chinese ceramics and decorative arts. She has been Course Director of the Arts of Asia Year Course since 2006 and previously worked at Birkbeck College and the British Museum. Helen was awarded her MA and PhD from SOAS (University of London) where she regularly teaches. Current research interests include cultural and artistic interactions between China and Europe in the late modern period, collection histories and Chinese lacquer..

Day 1- Monday 15 June 2026

Chinese Ceramics – Materials and Making in Early China

10.30 Lecture: Ceramics in Early China Helen Glaister

12.00 Lecture: Tang Ceramics Helen Glaister

13.00 - 14.00 Lunchbreak

14.00 Lecture: Innovation and diversity: the kiln wares of the Song
Rose Kerr

Day 2 – Tuesday 16 June 2026

Song Ceramics

10.30 Lecture: How Song Ceramics Were Used Rose Kerr

Group will be split into two for the afternoon sessions

12.00 Group A: Gallery talk Helen Glaister (Ceramics, Room 136-146,
Level 4)

Group B: Object Handling Xuyang Gao

13.00 - 14.00 Lunchbreak

14.15 Group B: Gallery talk Helen Glaister (Ceramics, Room 136-146,
Level 4)

Group A: Object Handling Xuyang Gao

15.15 Accompanied visit to the T.T.Tsui Gallery Helen Glaister and
Xuyang Gao (China, Room 44)

Day 3- Wednesday 17 June 2026

Yuan Ceramics

10.30 Lecture: Chinese ceramics under Mongol rule Helen Glaister
11.50-12.50 Lecture: Regional Ceramics Xuyang Gao

12.50-14.30 Lunchbreak – travel to V&A East Storehouse independently

14.30 Meet at V&A East Storehouse- meeting point to be announced
by course director

Group will be split into two for the afternoon sessions

Day 4- Thursday 18 June 2026

Ceramics in the Early Modern Period

10.30 Lecture: Imperial ware from an age of brightness: blue and white, monochrome and polychrome ceramics of the Ming dynasty Ivy Chan

12.00 Lecture: Ceramics for export: the ‘globalisation’ of porcelain Helen Glaister

13.00 - 14.00 Lunchbreak

14.00 Lecture: Contemporary Ceramics Xiaoxin Li

Day 5- Friday 19 June 2026

Qing Ceramics

10.30 Lecture: Early Qing ceramics: 1644-1735 Helen Glaister

12.00 Lecture: Ceramics of the late Qing: 1736-1911, Helen Glaister

13.00 - 14.00 Lunchbreak

Group will be split into two for the afternoon sessions

14.15 Group A: Gallery talk Xuyang Gao (Ceramics, Room 136-146, Level 4)

Group B: Object Handling Helen Glaister

15.15 Group B: Gallery talk Xuyang Gao (Ceramics, Room 136-146, Level 4)

Group A: Object Handling Helen Glaister