



Studio Handbook

Welcome! As a valued client, you are front and centre of this handbook.

We hope it contains everything you need to settle into the studio

and navigate our general processes and policies.

What's Included

- Health & Safety
- Cleaning
- Workflow
- Sustainability
- Being a good client

HEALTH & SAFETY

Dust and Silicosis

The biggest risk to all individuals working with clay is breathing in silica dust. All ceramic materials, clay, slips and glazes, include silica particles which are very fine and not always visible when it becomes dry and airborne. Silica dust is dangerous and exposure over time may lead to lung diseases, most commonly noted is silicosis.

Our studio practices work to minimise the amount of silica dust particles in the working environment, so we can all be safe as we work with clay. We also have particle respirators and rubber gloves available in the event of an incident.

- Dry activities are NOT permitted
 - Dry fettling and sanding clay, slip, and/or glazes
 - Sweeping
 - Vacuuming
- Hazardous Ingredients. Some glaze ingredients and oxides are hazardous, particularly in their powdered form due to their chemical make-up and/or inhalation risk. No one is permitted to access **powdered materials** (specifically ingredients, oxides, clays or stains) without prior permission from **TCE** (The Clay Effect) each time. A Particle respirator must be fitted properly prior to accessing any **powdered materials**. All handling of **powdered materials** must only be completed at the glazing bench next to the sink.
- Wet cleaning protocols are essential. These are covered in the cleaning section. If in doubt about cleaning a mess or spill, add water to the dry material using spray bottle, grab a bucket with some clean water and sponge, then use a wet sponge to collect the material and place it in the bucket. Use the water in the bucket to rinse the sponge free of particles as you clean. If concerned about potential hazardous ingredients then put on a particle respirator and a set of rubber gloves.
- Working with canvas mats. We use canvas mats and cloths for maintaining clay moisture consistency when making and storing clay works. Never shake or agitate dust from any mats or fibre cloth. If you encounter any mat or cloth that is dry and dusty, submerge it in water, before commencing any cleaning activity. Also, keep your canvas mat damp by using a water spray bottle. Cleaning fibre mats and cloths are covered in the cleaning section.

General

The studio is equipped with a first aid kit for minor and superficial injuries, a fire extinguisher and fire blanket. Listed below are several items specific to this studio for you to be aware of and act responsibly to ensure everyone's health and safety.

- Manual Handling. The heaviest item you may need to lift and carry is a 10kg bag of clay. If you are not comfortable with any aspect of manual handling, ask for help so no one is put at risk.
- Trip hazards
 - The studio floor is old and uneven in places
 - Personal belongings will be stored away from the work area
 - No horse play (fooling around), being careless increases risk in the work space
 - Ensure floor areas are kept clean and clear

- ***Sharp items.*** You will be working with sharp tools from time to time. Most common are fettling knives, rasps, stainless steel tools and metal ribs. Always cut away from yourself, outward from your body or slicing down towards a bench surface.
- ***Hot items***
 - **Kettle and hot water.** There is no need for boiling hot water. Hot water from the kettle is to be used to warm cold water. Always put some cold water into the container before pouring in hot water. This ensures no one is burned by hot water, and it is better for the life of the container.
 - **Heat gun/ Hair dryer.** Always pick up these items by the handle, and not by the nozzle. The nozzles retain heat for some time after use, so never put yourself at risk.
 - **Kiln.** No one is permitted to touch, open or operate the kiln. The studio is closed when the kiln is in operation.
- ***Managing your wellbeing***
 - **Personal health and well-being.** Please DO NOT ATTEND the studio if you are
 - Unwell, this includes sniffles, colds, and/or flu's regardless of a negative covid test.
 - Injured and cannot move independently and work with clay unassisted.
 - Under the influence of medication, drugs or alcohol which may impair your judgment, behaviours, and/or movement.
 - **Taking breaks.** There are no scheduled breaks during the three hour session. Take regular breaks by moving away from your work, having a stretch, and hydrating. This also helps to prevent "clay blindness", an old term referring to tired eyes and mental fatigue from concentrating on a single item for too long.
 - **Food and drink.** The studio is not equipped to include meals and beverages. There is no food safe kitchen area to prepare food or eat a meal. You may bring a water bottle and/or drink thermos, and a small snack you can eat outside the studio.
 - **Respecting Space.** Take note of your allocated work space, be respectful to others by not exceeding your working space, and be patient when wanting to work at a dedicated work station (such as the glaze bench and sink).
 - **Clothing.** Working with clay can get a little messy from time to time, so wear clothing that can cope with getting dirty. In saying that, wear clean clothes, and clean apron, so that additional dirt is not brought into the studio.
 - **Shoes.** Wear closed in shoes and flat heels.

CLEANING

Cleaning is required by all studio attendees and is undertaken during the last 15 minutes of every session. As mentioned previously, all cleaning is done using water and sponges to minimise any dust within the studio environment.

The largest silica dust risks in the studio are the following items because they collect clay particles and when dry can hold a lot of silica dust.

- **Canvas Mats** are cleaned by **TCE** to remove ground in dust. Canvas mats are used to keep clay at a constant moisture level, and can be lightly sprayed with a water bottle to minimise dust. Do not shake or agitate during use. When finished using a canvas mat, remove all loose particles and return mat to its location.
- **Fibre cloths, chux and sponges.** These can be rinsed in water at any time to release dust and clay particles. Any badly soiled cloths can be washed in **TCE's** mini washing machine in the studio.

- **Plastic bags and wraps.** All plastic bags are wiped inside and out before they are placed back into their storage bag. It is important that all individuals keep plastic clean, not only to minimise dust, but to ensure they are clean to cover work.
- **Clay.** Any residual clay must be cleared from all surface areas and treated as follows
 - **Unused clay.** To be returned to your bag and stored in your tub or **TCE** stock
 - **Dried out clay.** Clay no longer suitable to work with can be swapped for fresh clay. The dried out clay will be recycled and returned to **TCE** stocks.
 - **Clay waste.** Residual clay bits that can be picked up in hand can be added to communal slip buckets which are shared for all 'slip and score' activities.
- **Tools, containers, jugs, utensils and boards.** Regardless of whether items belong to you or **TCE**, rinse in water, wipe clean, dry and put away. All items have a home, and must be returned to its home once you have finished using it.
- **Storage tubs.** If you are allocated a storage tub, it must be deep cleaned at the last session each month. This means removing all contents, rinsing and wiping down inside and outside surfaces including lid ensuring all clay residue is removed and dust risk is minimised.
- **Work areas, benches and shelves.** All surface areas are to be wiped clean with water and sponge where you have been working. Where there is lots of residual clay, please wipe down twice. First to remove the clay waste, then clean sponge in clean water and complete second wipe down to ensure the space is clean for others.
- **Floors.** **TCE** will maintain the overall cleanliness of the floors. Any mess, dry or wet, created from your work must be cleaned by using sponge and bucket at the earliest opportunity.

WORKFLOW

- **Clay**
 - **Studio clay.** **TCE** holds stock of the following clays. The clay you receive from stock may include recycled clay.
 - Keanes White Raku
 - Keanes Toast / Raku T
 - Chris' Stoneware Earthenware blend
 - Keanes Stoneware 33 warm
 - **Alternative clays.** Non stock clays can be ordered via **TCE** and included in their monthly order. The price of bagged clay will be the supplier price on the day plus \$1.00 per bag.
 - **Your clay.** Unfortunately, only clays from **TCE** stocks or purchased via **TCE** monthly order will be accepted in the studio. We do this to protect the kiln, kiln equipment, and everyone's work going into the kiln.
- **Work dimensions.** Completed clay works must not exceed H40cm x W30cm x D35cm.
- **Storage**
 - **Work in progress.** All incomplete work must be stored in allocated shelf location for monthly skill session attendees, and in designated tubs for monthly studio attendees.
 - **Completed clay work.** When work is ready to drying and/or firing, they are moved to dedicated shelves.

- **Completed pieces.** All fired work will be stored on a dedicated shelf for attendees to collect at their earliest opportunity.
- **Unclaimed works.** Works not claimed within 4 weeks of being fired will be disposed of. For example, completed pieces fired in April must be picked up by the end of May. It is the responsibility of the owner to arrange an agreed time to pick up completed pieces.
- **Slips, and glazes.**
 - **Reasonable use.** Prior to use of any slips and glazes, together we plan with the end result in mind. This ensures that we use our finishes with care at the right time to achieve a good result.
 - **Stock list.** **TCE** has a list of slips and glazes available to monthly attendees suitable for Mid-fire functional and non-functional pieces. As **TCE** is a small studio, not all slip and glazes will be in stock and ready for use, and can be made upon request as required.
- **Bisque and Glaze Firing**
 - **Makers mark.** Before placing work on allocated shelves for firing, work must be clearly labelled and dated month and year (example 0624 = June 2024) on the bottom. Unlabelled work will not be fired.
 - **Monthly review.** At the end of each month, all work on drying and firing shelves will be reviewed before being accepted for firing. Work which is poorly glazed, cracked or damaged will be rejected. It is the discretion of **TCE** to reject work deemed not suitable for firing.
 - **Firing timetable.** Firing schedules will occur when there is a full load ready for the kiln. The studio is closed when the kiln is on, so firing schedules will be completed in alignment with other studio priorities. No special requests accepted.

SUSTAINABILITY

TCE works to be a closed loop studio, this means that we don't waste any ingredients, materials and water. For more information head to our website and check out our sustainability section. Water management and recycling is of critical importance ensuring that NO water is released into the drain.

BEING A GOOD CLIENT

By spending time in our Studio, you become a valued client and agree to the above terms and conditions set out in this document. This handbook is designed to ensure the **TCE** studio is a safe and enjoyable place for us all. **TCE** studio will not be responsible for the following:

- Injury and or damages resulting from NOT following the terms and conditions set out in this document. In the event that careless actions damage **TCE** property and equipment, you may be liable for the cost of repairs and rectification.
- The outcome of your work. This is part of the learning and development journey. Sometimes, particularly at the beginning, you will make items that you don't like or meet your expectations. Improving your results comes from a review process and another attempt.
- Unsatisfactory firing results, including cracking, breaking, poor glaze results or any other unsatisfactory result. This is the life of working with clay and ceramics. It is a life's love!
- Personal impacts due to the delay in firing. We have one kiln, and it is fired when there is a full load ready. We cannot commit to promises and deadlines you may set for yourself or with others, so please do not create deadline expectations.