InterAct

LEARNING PROGRAMME

Art Therapy Techniques

5-DAY COURSE

25 learning hours | Course programme

Art Therapy Techniques – 5-Day Course

Introduction and Description

Art Therapy Techniques is an intensive professional learning programme that investigates the theoretical foundations, pedagogical applications, and ethical considerations of integrating art-informed practices into contemporary educational settings. Positioned at the intersection of expressive arts therapies, developmental and cultural psychology, wellbeing education, and inclusive pedagogy, the course examines how artistic creation functions as a multimodal channel for meaning-making, emotional articulation, and identity negotiation within diverse school communities. While the programme does not prepare participants for clinical art therapy practice, it provides a robust conceptual and methodological grounding that enables educators to incorporate art-based wellbeing approaches responsibly, sensitively, and effectively within non-clinical contexts.

The course critically traces major intellectual traditions underpinning art therapy, including psychodynamic symbolism, humanistic theories of creativity, phenomenology of perception, and contemporary neurobiological accounts of affect regulation through sensorimotor engagement. Participants engage in close analysis of how colour, texture, gesture, rhythm, and compositional choices reveal subjective experience, cultural narrative, and developmental processes. Through hands-on studio workshops, teachers work with a range of media—drawing, painting, collage, clay, mixed-media assemblage—to explore the interplay between sensory engagement, emotional expression, and cognitive integration, reflecting on how embodied creativity supports wellbeing, resilience, and reflective learning.

Central to the programme is the examination of how art-based practices contribute to the formation of psychologically safe and inclusive learning environments. Attention is devoted to understanding the ethical boundaries of using expressive art in educational settings, particularly regarding safeguarding, trauma-sensitive principles, and the non-diagnostic stance required of educators. Participants analyse scenarios that illuminate the complexities of interpreting student artwork, learning to recognise symbolic patterns and emotional cues while maintaining a professional role that avoids therapeutic claims and ensures student autonomy, dignity, and agency.

The course foregrounds the relevance of art-informed routines—such as visual journaling, mandala work, emotion mapping, grounding patterns, and symbolic storytelling—to daily classroom practice. Participants investigate how such practices, when implemented consistently and developmentally appropriately, can foster emotional literacy, self-regulation, resilience, and prosocial interaction. These routines are examined in relation to broader educational frameworks including Social–Emotional Learning (SEL), trauma-sensitive schooling, reflective teaching, and whole-school wellbeing strategies.

Throughout the programme, participants engage in structured reflection, peer consultation, and critical inquiry, examining their own creative processes as a lens for understanding how learners make meaning through art. By synthesising theoretical perspectives with experiential learning, participants develop a nuanced capacity to design art-based wellbeing initiatives that are pedagogically sound, culturally responsive, and aligned with the specific needs of their learning communities. By the end of the course, each participant presents a context-specific proposal demonstrating how art-informed approaches can enhance emotional wellbeing, reflective capacities, and inclusive classroom climates within their schools.

Methodology and Assessment

The course is delivered through an experiential and enquiry-based methodology that combines theoretical lectures with intensive practical workshops. Participants engage in studio artmaking, guided reflective exercises, peer dialogue, and analysis of creative processes to deepen understanding of expressive and symbolic dimensions of art. Learning is scaffolded through collaborative interpretation, micro-teaching tasks, and iterative development of a school-based wellbeing initiative. Assessment is formative and continuous, based on active participation, reflective contributions, and the quality and coherence of the final project proposal. The closing presentations consolidate learning, enabling participants to articulate theoretical rationales and practical applications relevant to their professional contexts.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, participants will be able to:

Conceptual Foundations

• Analyse key theories underpinning art therapy and expressive arts practices, including symbolic communication, sensory integration, narrative construction, and emotional regulation.
• Distinguish between therapeutic, expressive, and educational uses of art while recognising the ethical and professional boundaries relevant to non-clinical school contexts.
• Evaluate the role of artistic processes in supporting wellbeing, identity development, and inclusive pedagogy.

Facilitation of Creative Expression

• Employ varied artistic media—drawing, painting, collage, clay and mixed media—to facilitate emotional exploration and reflective dialogue with learners.

• Integrate structured creative routines and micro-practices (visual journaling, mandalas, grounding techniques) into classroom environments to support daily wellbeing.
• Interpret colours, symbols, shapes, and compositional choices as non-verbal indicators of experience, culture, and self-expression, without making diagnostic assumptions.

Wellbeing & Reflective Practice

• Apply art-based strategies that promote stress reduction, self-regulation, resilience, and emotional awareness for both teachers and students.
• Design inclusive, culturally sensitive activities that foster belonging, participation, and psychological safety for diverse learners.
• Engage in reflective visual practices to deepen self-awareness, enhance professional judgement, and model wellbeing-oriented behaviours.

Project Design & Implementation

• Develop a sustainable, school-appropriate art-based wellbeing plan grounded in theoretical frameworks and practical experimentation.
• Critically evaluate the potential impact of art-informed activities on classroom climate, student engagement, and broader school wellbeing initiatives.

Preparation

After registration participants will receive pre-course questionnaire which will be used by the trainer to learn about participants' teaching backgrounds and to assess their exact needs. Before the beginning of the course a basic reading list will be suggested to participants to prepare for the training. Participants will also be asked to prepare a presentation about themselves, their professional context and their culture. The presentation will be presented on the first day of the course to facilitate networking opportunities. Participants will receive information about the country they are going to visit in order to prepare them for their cultural experience.

Follow up

After the course participants will be asked to share what they have learned with the rest of the staff in their schools. Further books and articles to deepen the topic and contacts with some other practitioners all over Europe and in the world will be suggested by the trainer. The methods shared and explored and the bibliography given will allow the participants to complete and improve their educational path.

Certificate

Certificate complies with the guidelines of the Erasmus+ programme and includes the topic, number of didactic hours, dates and location of the course. We can list the record of learning outcomes on the Europass Mobility Document on request of participants. In case a participant requires a specific format of certificate we can accommodate that if requested at least one week before the start of the course. It is necessary to attend at least 80% of the hours in order to receive the certificate.

Accommodation

We do not directly offer accommodation and subsistence and participants are responsible for organizing it by themselves.

Paperwork

We also provide all the support with paperwork you might need for your Erasmus+ project documentation such as mobility agreement and registration letter.

Fee: 400 €

Cancelation policy

We have a flexible cancellation policy in force at the moment and you can cancel your registration up to 30 days before the course and receive a full refund. In case you don't cancel the registration more than 30 days before you will not receive any refunds, but you will be able to choose to attend any other confirmed course session later (within 6 months) without any additional costs. In case you are not able to travel, your school can send someone else to take instead of you and you can change the details of the participant any time before the start of the course at no additional cost.

TENTATIVE PROGRAMME (25 didactic hours - 5*45min per day) Monday to Friday	
Day 1	Introduction, Group Formation & Foundations of Art Therapy

09.00 - 09.45	Introductions & Icebreakers
09.45 - 10.30	Course Overview & Learning Agreement
10.30 - 11.15	What is Art Therapy?
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Art Therapy in schools and educational organisations today
12.15 - 13.00	Creating personal visual metaphors to represent learning goals
Day 2	Artistic Media, Sensory Experience & Emotional Expression
09.00 - 09.45	Exploring media
09.45 - 10.30	Practical station-based rotation with different art materials
10.30 - 11.15	Sensory-based expression
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Colour–emotion associations and cultural considerations in interpretation
12.15 - 13.00	Creating “emotion maps” using abstract forms
Day 3	Creative Routines, Symbolic Meaning & Personal Development
09.00 - 09.45	The role of daily creative expression
09.45 - 10.30	Symbolism in art: developmental perspectives
10.30 - 11.15	Constructing personal symbolic dictionaries
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Identity and self-knowledge through art
12.15 - 13.00	Symbolic and identity-focused art processes that support resilience and belonging
Day 4	Stress Reduction, Relaxation & Wellbeing-Oriented Practices
09.00 - 09.45	Understanding the neuroscience of creativity and stress regulation
09.45 - 10.30	Developing daily habits: visual journaling, mandalas, morning sketches
10.30 - 11.15	Activities: patterned drawing, nature-inspired sketching, guided visualisations
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Designing daily 5–10 minute classroom routines to enhance wellbeing

12.15 - 13.00	Peer feedback: adapting micro-practices to diverse age groups and subjects
Day 5	Reflective Practice, Project Development & Closing Activities
09.00 - 09.45	Self-reflection strategies for ongoing wellbeing
09.45 - 10.30	Developing an art-based wellbeing initiative
10.30 - 11.15	Final presentations and feedback
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Evaluation & Reflection
12.15 - 13.00	Validation of learning outcomes and certification

*This is only a tentative timetable. The exact hours or the course might differ and will be announced for each session 2 weeks before the start. However, there will always be a total of 5 didactic hours per day and all will be in line with the Erasmus+ quality standards. The trainer might slightly modify the content in response to the needs of the group.
**Cultural and social programmes will be organized in addition to the academic programme. The exact cultural and social programme depends on the location, season, weather, etc.