

Choosing the right workspace for you - Checklist

If you decide to work in an office or studio, there are a number of issues to consider:

Think about your requirements

- What kind of space are you looking for and how often will you actually use it
- How much space do you need and what will you use it for – office, retail, storage, creating
- Can you install your specialist equipment or is there access to equipment you need
- Do you need water and gas, natural light
- Is there a kitchen facility
- Is there 24-hour access, seven days a week (particularly important if you plan to work part-time)
- Do you need a meeting space for clients
- How hot or cold does it get in winter or summer
- Does it permit the process and raw materials you use, such as firing a kiln
- Do you need desk space, meeting space, a professionally run work space, retail space.

Think about which of these requirements are absolutely essential for you and which would be beneficial but not crucial.

Think about location

- Where do you want to be
- How accessible is it from your home or for visitors
- Are there good public transport links
- Is there parking space
- Do you feel safe, especially after dark
- Is it secure – particularly important if working with valuable materials
- What impression would potential clients have of the space
- How important is it to be in a particular postcode area, such as Shoreditch
- What are the council rates and insurance rates in that area – these can vary a lot.

Consider whether you want to work alone or with others

- Do you want to work by yourself or with others
- Do you want to be part of a community
- Does the studio provider give additional business or marketing support or other services
- Can you cope with the legal and financial commitments
- What are the costs and charges
- What are the running costs, including rent, business rates, tax and VAT, electricity, insurance, heating, service charges

- How much is the deposit, and are there any legal or administration charges.
- Are there any low cost or subsidised spaces for people starting out.
- Are there cheaper alternatives, and can you sublet to or from others.
- What restrictions and legal obligations are there.
- Who is responsible for repairs and damage.
- Has the local council granted permission for the space to be used as a business.
- How long is the lease.