Nail Faculty.

NAIL FACULTY / INDEPENDENT CREATIVE EDUCATION

The Independent Nail Artist.

Programme handbook
Craft. Art. Identity. Independence.

Four schools · 28 courses · 24 weeks
Foundational edition / 2026



ORIGINAL EDITORIAL STUDY · AI-GENERATED IMAGERY

VOLUME 01 / CONTENTS

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This is a proposed professional development curriculum, not an accredited qualification or licence. Technical content and local requirements must be reviewed before delivery.

CHAPTER 01

Manifesto.

Nail artistry is a form of applied art. It brings design, colour, material and touch into a deeply personal space. A strong practice demands more than keeping up with a trend: it asks for care, technical judgement, curiosity and a point of view.

The Independent Nail Artist is designed as a pathway from foundational knowledge to an original creative practice. We teach the discipline as four intertwined movements: the craft that protects the client; the art that gives the work meaning; the artist who develops a distinct voice; and the business that makes independence possible.

Success is not defined by a certificate or a promise of income. It is demonstrated by safe practice, repeatable skill, thoughtful creative choices, honest presentation and a credible plan for serving real clients.

CHAPTER 02

Learning philosophy.

Learning begins with understanding, develops through deliberate practice, and deepens through critique. Every course connects a principle to an exercise, an assessed outcome and a portfolio artefact.

Care before speed.

Safety, client consent and the integrity of the natural nail take precedence over completion time or appearance.

Practice with intent.

Repeat a skill with a specific improvement target. Record outcomes and review the difference, rather than count repetition alone.

Originality through study.

Study art, culture and fashion with attribution; transform references into work that expresses your own judgement.

Independence with integrity.

Present work truthfully, price transparently, respect limits and grow only when competence and systems support it.

The learning cycle

1. Understand the principle and its limits.
2. Observe a qualified demonstration where technical work is involved.
3. Practise on a suitable training surface.
4. Apply to an original brief or simulated service.
5. Receive specific critique and correct errors.
6. Document results and reflect on the next improvement.

LEARNING MODE	SUGGESTED SHARE
Practical craftsmanship	50%
Creative projects	20%
Theory & demonstrations	15%
Business development	10%
Critique & reflection	5%

CHAPTER 03

Programme overview.

A proposed 24-week curriculum for aspiring and practising nail artists. Plan for 8–12 hours of learning and practice per week (approximately 192–288 hours across 24 weeks); actual supervised hours, assessment timing and local requirements must be set by the provider. The pathway is competency-led, not a guarantee of qualification.

SCHOOL	WEEKS	COURSES	FOCUS
The Craft	01–06	6	Nail science and safe professional conduct
The Art	07–14	8	Colour, composition and drawing
The Artist	15–18	6	Signature style and digital exploration
The Business	19–24	8	Independent practice and client experience

Entry and placement

Beginners enter School I. Practising artists may request recognition of prior learning, providing evidence of product-system training, safety practice and recent work. An instructor must validate prerequisites before placing a learner beyond the foundation.

Programme formats

FORMAT	DURATION	RECOMMENDED AUDIENCE
The Foundation	6 weeks	Beginners
The Creative Nail Artist	8 weeks	Technicians with verified foundations
The Signature Artist	12 weeks	Experienced artists with verified technical competence
The Independent Nail Artist	24 weeks	Full pathway

> **Important programme status**
>
> This handbook is a proposed curriculum. The provider, training dates, fees, supervision plan, qualifications and legal requirements remain to be confirmed. It is not a licence, accredited qualification or invitation to practise before competence is established.

CHAPTER 04 / SCHOOL 01

The Craft.

Excellence begins with understanding.



Learn to work with care, control and respect for the natural nail. Develop the technical judgement that gives every beautiful design a safe, durable foundation.

School outcome

Demonstrate assessed, safe preparation, product application, structure and removal under qualified supervision.

6 courses · 6 weeks · practice-led

THE CRAFT / COURSE C01

Nail Science, Anatomy & Health

Identify the principal nail structures and recognise when a service must be deferred or referred.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	01	None; beginner entry

Lesson topics

- Nail plate, bed, matrix, folds and protective cuticle
- Growth, variation and common non-diagnostic observations
- Contraindications, allergies, pain, inflammation and damaged skin
- Client history and limits of professional scope

Studio assignment

Label a nail anatomy diagram and work through eight simulated intake scenarios, distinguishing safe-to-proceed from defer-and-refer cases.

Assessment

Anatomy identification and scenario-based referral assessment; no diagnosis or medical treatment.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Annotated anatomy sheet and consultation decision log

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE CRAFT / COURSE C02

Professional Hygiene & Safety

Demonstrate a safe workstation setup, infection-control workflow and chemical risk awareness before live practice.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	02	C01

Lesson topics

- Hand hygiene, clean/dirty separation and single-use items
- Cleaning, disinfection, sterilisation where required, and contact time
- Safety data sheets, local exhaust, dust control, PPE and storage
- Blood or injury incident protocol, waste handling and ergonomics

Studio assignment

Set up and reset a mock workstation; audit product labels and SDS; rehearse a stop-service incident without real blood exposure.

Assessment

Instructor-observed safety gate: all critical checks must pass; correct errors before proceeding.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Signed safety checklist and studio risk register

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE CRAFT / COURSE C03

Natural Nail Care & Preparation

Prepare and finish natural nails while protecting surrounding tissue and preserving nail integrity.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	03	C01–C02 safety gate

Lesson topics

- Consultation and hand/foot service boundaries
- Natural nail shapes and conservative filing
- Non-invasive cuticle-area care
- Classic polish, clean edges and aftercare
- Pedicure hygiene and referral boundaries

Studio assignment

Practise shaping and polish on training tips; progress to supervised natural-nail services only after approval.

Assessment

Observe handling, hygiene, even shape, finish and tissue protection; stop for pain or injury.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Five documented preparation and finish studies

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE CRAFT / COURSE C04

Gel Systems & Product Chemistry

Select and apply a compatible gel system, following manufacturer instructions and avoiding uncured product exposure.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	04	C01–C03; instructor approval

Lesson topics

- Base, colour, builder and top systems
- Matching manufacturer-approved lamps and curing schedules
- Skin-contact prevention, safe storage and sensitisation
- Application control, overlay balance and removal planning

Studio assignment

Compare system instructions, record a compatibility sheet and practise thin, controlled application on training tips before supervised application.

Assessment

Check system selection, application boundaries, cure protocol documentation, finish and safe removal plan.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Gel system reference sheet and five application studies

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE CRAFT / COURSE C05

Extensions & Nail Architecture

Plan a balanced enhancement appropriate to the natural nail, product system and intended wear.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	05	C01–C04; approved supervised practice

Lesson topics

- Soft-gel tips, hard gel, acrylic and hybrid-system overview
- Length, apex, sidewalls, symmetry and structural balance
- Form and tip fit
- Product-specific application and removal
- Maintenance and rebalancing

Studio assignment

Compare structural profiles on training tips; complete supervised extension work only for systems covered by a qualified instructor.

Assessment

Evaluate suitability, architecture, symmetry, structural integrity and safe working; no unsupervised e-file use.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Four architecture studies and system comparison sheet

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE CRAFT / COURSE C06

Professional Finishing & Troubleshooting

Evaluate service quality, identify likely technical causes of faults and respond within professional scope.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	06	C01–C05; demonstrated safety

Lesson topics

- Finish inspection and lighting
- Lifting, chipping, unevenness and structural faults
- Maintenance, repair versus removal, and referral
- Product-specific safe removal and aftercare
- Service records and reflective critique

Studio assignment

Review six simulated fault cases; complete a supervised service and documented removal according to the chosen system.

Assessment

Technical checkpoint: correct stop-service decisions, approved removal and consistent finish; repeat if needed.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Assessed craft portfolio and improvement plan

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

CHAPTER 05 / SCHOOL 02

The Art.

Beyond decoration. Towards expression.



Treat each nail as a miniature canvas. Explore composition, colour, mark-making and dimensional materials, then bring those experiments together into a personal visual language.

School outcome

Create original, cohesive nail designs with considered colour, construction and a documented creative process.

8 courses · 8 weeks · practice-led

THE ART / COURSE A01

Colour Theory for Nail Artists

Construct deliberate palettes suited to scale, skin-tone context, occasion and finish.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	07	School I safety gate for product handling

Lesson topics

- Hue, value, saturation and temperature
- Colour relationships, balance and contrast
- Opacity, translucency and layered colour
- Palette translation under different lighting
- Colour accessibility in presentation

Studio assignment

Create 30 palette combinations on paper or tips; test six in different lighting and document results.

Assessment

Assess palette coherence, contrast, colour accuracy and rationale.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Curated colour library

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE ART / COURSE A02

Drawing, Brushwork & Precision

Use controlled marks to translate ideas into repeatable miniature designs.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	08	A01 recommended

Lesson topics

- Brush types, posture and mark control
- Line weights, curves and dots
- Negative space and edge precision
- Scale reduction and repetition
- Practice routines and tool maintenance

Studio assignment

Produce 20 line studies, from straight and curved marks to repeated fine motifs, on practice surfaces.

Assessment

Assess clean lines, consistency, controlled edges and documented improvement.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Precision brushwork library

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE ART / COURSE A03

Composition, Geometry & Patterns

Organise shapes and motifs across individual nails and coherent sets.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	09	A01–A02

Lesson topics

- Focal point, balance and visual rhythm
- Geometric construction and proportion
- Pattern repeat and variation
- Negative space, framing and scale
- Designing across a five-nail sequence

Studio assignment

Build 20 motif studies and three coordinated five-tip patterns, varying composition rather than copying references.

Assessment

Assess visual hierarchy, intentional repetition, spacing and coherence across each set.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Pattern and geometry library

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE ART / COURSE A04

Miniature Painting & Illustration

Adapt illustration techniques to a small curved surface with a legible narrative.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	10	A01–A03

Lesson topics

- Simplified forms and silhouettes
- Botanical and organic motifs
- Miniature light, shadow and texture
- Layer planning within compatible products
- Original references and attribution

Studio assignment

Create ten hand-painted studies, including organic, object-based and narrative motifs; photograph progression.

Assessment

Assess legibility, detail control, originality and safe material practice.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Miniature canvas collection

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE ART / COURSE A05

Textures, Materials & Special Effects

Use finishes deliberately, while following product compatibility and safe handling requirements.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	11	A01–A04; product-specific supervision

Lesson topics

- Matte and gloss relationships
- Marble, stone, tortoiseshell and translucent effects
- Chrome, metallic, magnetic and gradient finishes
- Embellishment planning and wearability
- Material testing and cure constraints

Studio assignment

Create 12 swatches across six finishes; record the product system, visual result, limitations and comparison photographs.

Assessment

Assess reproducibility, material judgement, finish control and safe use.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Material and finish reference library

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE ART / COURSE A06

Sculptural & Three-Dimensional Art

Translate sculptural concepts into wearable or explicitly editorial dimensional pieces.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	12	A05; supervised product handling

Lesson topics

- Volume, silhouette and proportion
- Low-relief and dimensional forms
- Placement and wearability
- Compatible materials and cure limitations
- Removal planning and practical constraints

Studio assignment

Develop six dimensional tip studies, marking which are wearable and which are display-only; document material choices.

Assessment

Assess visual construction, stability, suitability and documented safety limitations.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Sculptural study collection

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE ART / COURSE A07

Fashion, Culture & Contemporary Aesthetics

Interpret fashion and cultural references with context, attribution and original creative judgement.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	13	A01–A06 recommended

Lesson topics

- Fashion/editorial briefs and audience
- Visual movements and material references
- Trend interpretation versus copying
- Cultural context and respectful inspiration
- Collaborative moodboards

Studio assignment

Research three distinct visual directions and produce two five-tip concept boards, including a reference attribution log.

Assessment

Assess contextual research, transformation of references, cohesion and presentation.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Editorial research dossier

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE ART / COURSE A08

Creative Direction & Collection Design

Create a cohesive collection with a clear concept and repeatable visual language.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	14	A01–A07

Lesson topics

- Brief, audience and design intent
- Moodboards, palettes and motifs
- Hero designs and supporting variations
- Prototyping, critique and revision
- Collection documentation and naming

Studio assignment

Design a five-piece bridal or occasion collection and a five-piece editorial collection; develop a first signature direction.

Assessment

Critique concept, cohesion, originality, execution and fitness for intended use.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Two curated collections and creative direction boards

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

CHAPTER 06 / SCHOOL 03

The Artist.

Become unmistakably yourself.



Build a practice that is recognisable for what you see, what you make and how you present it. Translate creative judgement into a distinctive portfolio and professional identity.

School outcome

Publish a curated portfolio, a signature style guide and an honest, coherent brand presentation.

6 courses · 4 weeks · practice-led

THE ARTIST / COURSE P01

Discovering Your Signature Style

Identify recurring creative choices and define an original artistic direction without narrowing experimentation prematurely.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	15	A08; existing portfolio for experienced entrants

Lesson topics

- Self-audit and reference mapping
- Personal values and artistic themes
- Signature colour, motif and material vocabulary
- Recognisability without repetition
- Style guide and critical feedback

Studio assignment

Review past work, identify three strengths and create a ten-design signature collection with a short style manifesto.

Assessment

Assess coherent visual language, original decisions and evidence of iteration.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Signature style guide and collection

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE ARTIST / COURSE P02

Digital Design & AI-Assisted Creativity

Use digital tools for planning, ideation and client communication without misrepresenting generated work as executed skill.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	16	P01

Lesson topics

- Digital templates and sketching
- Palette and reference boards
- Concept variants and AI-assisted exploration
- Privacy, consent, attribution and copyright
- Separating conceptual renders from actual portfolio work

Studio assignment

Sketch five designs digitally, explore two alternate directions and translate at least two into photographed physical studies.

Assessment

Assess translation from concept to craft, original judgement and transparent labelling of generated content.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Digital concept-to-craft case study

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE ARTIST / COURSE P03

Nail Photography & Art Direction

Photograph nail work accurately and create a consistent editorial presentation.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
Half week	17A	P01; completed physical work

Lesson topics

- Lighting and exposure
- Macro focus, hand posing and composition
- Backdrop, styling and shot lists
- Colour accuracy and restrained editing
- Consent and image rights

Studio assignment

Shoot one collection in three lighting setups; curate six accurate images and document editing choices.

Assessment

Assess focus, colour fidelity, composition and truthful representation.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Six-image editorial shoot

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE ARTIST / COURSE P04

Video & Creative Content Production

Produce short-form content that communicates creative process clearly and ethically.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
Half week	17B	P03 recommended

Lesson topics

- Shot sequencing and story arc
- Stable capture and close-ups
- Editing, captions and accessible text
- Audio and usage rights
- Publishing cadence and analytics basics

Studio assignment

Create a 30–60 second process film and a short educational clip; add captions and a clear consent record where relevant.

Assessment

Assess narrative clarity, accessibility, authenticity and visual consistency.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Two captioned videos and content plan

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE ARTIST / COURSE P05

Personal Branding & Positioning

Define a professional proposition and coherent visual identity for a chosen audience.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
Half week	18A	P01–P04 recommended

Lesson topics

- Audience and market positioning
- Naming and identity basics
- Tone of voice and artist statement
- Service promise and brand boundaries
- Consistent digital touchpoints

Studio assignment

Build a one-page brand guide with audience, promise, name or working title, palette, typography and image principles.

Assessment

Assess specificity, credibility, consistency and suitability for target clientele.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Personal or studio brand guide

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE ARTIST / COURSE P06

Professional Portfolio Development

Curate and publish a focused portfolio demonstrating technical ability, creative range and signature style.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
Half week	18B	P01–P05

Lesson topics

- Portfolio selection and sequencing
- Case studies and process documentation
- Image quality and truthful labels
- Accessible online presentation
- Feedback and periodic updates

Studio assignment

Curate 25–40 images from assessed work and assemble three case studies with clear authorship and process.

Assessment

Review range, coherence, image accuracy, consent and navigation; remove unverified work.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Portfolio and artist biography

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

CHAPTER 07 / SCHOOL 04

The Business.

Create on your own terms.



Learn to operate an independent creative practice with clear pricing, thoughtful client experiences and disciplined studio systems. Build a commercial path that respects both the artist and the client.

School outcome

Prepare a realistic business plan, service menu, client journey and 90-day launch plan, subject to demonstrated competence and local compliance.

8 courses · 6 weeks · practice-led

THE BUSINESS / COURSE B01

Independent Business Models

Choose a realistic practice model based on skills, demand, capital and constraints.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
Half week	19A	P06 recommended

Lesson topics

- Home studio, mobile, salon partnership and independent studio
- Appointment versus product revenue
- Audience and competitor research
- Capacity, costs and risk
- Local registration and insurance research

Studio assignment

Compare three models and write a one-page decision memo, assumptions and validation questions.

Assessment

Assess fit, realism, risk awareness and evidence rather than revenue promises.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Business model decision brief

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE BUSINESS / COURSE B02

Pricing, Profitability & Finance

Set defensible prices using time, consumables, overheads, margin and market positioning.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	19B–20A	B01

Lesson topics

- Fixed and variable costs
- Time and capacity planning
- Service costing and contribution margin
- Deposits, cancellations and discounts
- Bookkeeping, tax questions and cash-flow planning

Studio assignment

Build a costing model for three services and one press-on set; test a low-booking scenario and revise pricing.

Assessment

Assess complete cost assumptions, arithmetic, viable pricing and separation of revenue from profit.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Pricing calculator and draft service menu

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE BUSINESS / COURSE B03

Client Experience & Consultation

Design a safe, respectful client journey from enquiry to aftercare.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
Half week	20B	B01; C02 and technical gate for live work

Lesson topics

- Consultation, preferences and informed consent
- Contraindication and allergy screening within scope
- Scope, timing and pricing confirmation
- Privacy and image permissions
- Aftercare, complaints and referral

Studio assignment

Role-play an enquiry, a declined service and a change request; write a consultation and aftercare template.

Assessment

Assess clear boundaries, consent, safe escalation and professional communication.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Client journey and template pack

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE BUSINESS / COURSE B04

Marketing & Customer Acquisition

Build a repeatable, ethical approach to attracting suitable clients.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	21	B01–B03; P05 recommended

Lesson topics

- Audience, positioning and channels
- Portfolio-led local discovery
- Content themes and referral partnerships
- Enquiry-to-booking funnel
- Basic measurement, reviews and advertising boundaries

Studio assignment

Prepare a four-week content calendar, three outreach messages and a simple enquiry tracker with consent-conscious fields.

Assessment

Assess relevance, clarity, non-misleading claims and measurable goals.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Marketing and acquisition plan

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE BUSINESS / COURSE B05

Press-On Nail Product Development

Prototype a product collection with sizing, care, packaging and unit economics.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	22	A08; B02; safe product instruction

Lesson topics

- Design brief and sizing approach
- Material compatibility and product safety
- Packaging and care instructions
- Quality control and order fulfilment
- Costing, shipping, returns and jurisdiction-specific requirements

Studio assignment

Create a five-set prototype collection, packaging mockup, sizing guide and costing sheet; test fit communication with volunteers without unsafe application.

Assessment

Assess finish, sizing clarity, safe instructions, cost completeness and honest product claims.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Press-on product prototype and specification

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE BUSINESS / COURSE B06

Studio Operations & Management

Create reliable systems for appointments, materials, safety and quality.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
Half week	23A	B02–B03; C02

Lesson topics

- Booking, deposits and client records
- Inventory, expiry and batch tracking
- Clean/dirty workflow and incident logs
- Ventilation, ergonomics and equipment maintenance
- Privacy, local compliance and backup plans

Studio assignment

Design a studio opening/closing checklist, inventory register and mock booking calendar.

Assessment

Assess operational completeness, safety gate coverage and feasible daily capacity.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Studio operations playbook

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE BUSINESS / COURSE B07

Collaborations & Business Growth

Develop a measured growth strategy and professional collaboration practices.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
Half week	23B	B04–B06

Lesson topics

- Collaboration briefs and usage rights
- Fashion, bridal and beauty partnerships
- Proposal and scope negotiation
- Capacity and service quality limits
- Repeat clients and referral relationships

Studio assignment

Draft one collaboration proposal, usage agreement outline and a quarterly growth hypothesis.

Assessment

Assess value exchange, clarity, realistic scope and client protection.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Partnership proposal and growth plan

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

THE BUSINESS / COURSE B08

Professional Launch Project

Integrate the technical, creative and business portfolio into a practical launch plan.

DURATION	PROGRAMME WEEK	PREREQUISITES
1 week	24	All required gates and courses; evidence review

Lesson topics

- Readiness and compliance review
- Portfolio and service menu
- 90-day priorities and budget
- Supervised client simulations or practice
- Feedback, launch decision and revision

Studio assignment

Present the full capstone: three collections, portfolio, safety evidence, service pricing, product prototype and 90-day roadmap.

Assessment

Panel review against published rubric; safety must independently pass. If not ready, agree remediation rather than launching.

> **Portfolio deliverable**
>
> Professional launch dossier

STUDIO NOTES / CRITIQUE

Record an observation, an improvement target and the next practice exercise.

CHAPTER 08

Specialisations.

After completing appropriate foundation gates, select a primary track and one complementary track. These are focus areas within the core curriculum, not additional accredited qualifications.

TRACK	FOCUS	RECOMMENDED COURSES	PORTFOLIO PROJECT
Minimalism & Luxury	Restrained colour, exacting lines and understated finishes.	A01, A02, A03, P01	A five-set premium minimalist capsule.
Contemporary Fine Art	Abstract composition, painting and material-led exploration.	A03, A04, A05, A06	A gallery-inspired miniature art collection.
Bridal & Occasion	Design around attire, occasion, wearability and client preferences.	A01, A04, A08, B03	A coordinated occasion collection and consultation brief.
Fashion & Editorial	Interpret a fashion brief into expressive, campaign-ready work.	A06, A07, A08, P03	An editorial shoot and fashion concept board.
Japanese & Korean-inspired Artistry	Study selected contemporary techniques with attribution and respect for their varied cultural contexts.	A04, A05, A06, A07	A translucent or sculptural study collection.
Press-On Entrepreneurship	Create an original, sized and costed product range.	A08, P05, B02, B05	A five-set product prototype, sizing guide and packaging.

CHAPTER 09

Studio practice.

The studio project library turns technical learning into demonstrable evidence. Practise on suitable training materials, progress only under approved supervision, and document what changed after critique.

PROJECT	DELIVERABLE	COURSE
Colour library	30 palette combinations; six tested in lighting	A01
Line study	20 mark-making studies	A02
Pattern library	20 motifs and three coordinated sets	A03
Miniature canvas	10 painted studies	A04
Material study	12 finish samples and notes	A05
Sculptural study	6 dimensional tip studies	A06
Bridal collection	5 original coordinated designs	A08
Editorial collection	5 original coordinated designs	A08
Signature collection	10 designs and a style guide	P01
Portfolio	25–40 selected photographs; three case studies	P06
Press-on collection	5 product prototype sets	B05
Independent studio	Safety, pricing, operations and 90-day launch plan	B08

Weekly studio rhythm

Allocate time to demonstration, deliberate drills, an original application, feedback and documentation. A practice log should record the date, technique, product system, surface or model (with consent), learning objective, observations, feedback and next step.

Critique protocol

1. Describe what is visible without judging the person.
2. Identify one technical improvement and one artistic strength.
3. Explain the design or safety decision that needs revision.
4. Agree on a repeatable exercise and review its outcome.

CHAPTER 10

Assessment.

Assessment is designed to evaluate evidence of professional competence, not only the look of a finished set. Suggested weights are below; the provider must validate the rubric and define course-specific pass criteria before delivery.

COMPETENCY	WEIGHT	EVIDENCE
Technical craftsmanship	25%	Suitability, structure, product instructions, finish and removal.
Health, hygiene & safety	25%	Safe workflow, consent, contraindications, prevention and escalation.
Creativity & originality	20%	Original interpretation, concept and intentional decisions.
Consistency & precision	10%	Repeatability, control and attention to detail.
Professional presentation	10%	Accurate photography, clarity and portfolio coherence.
Business readiness	10%	Realistic cost assumptions, client experience and operations.

Suggested performance scale

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
1 · Not yet demonstrated	Unsafe, incomplete or insufficient evidence; remediation required.
2 · Developing	Can perform elements with prompts; consistency and judgement need work.
3 · Competent	Meets stated criteria with appropriate supervision or independence for the task.
4 · Advanced	Repeatable quality, well-justified choices and thoughtful adaptation.

> **Safety is a separate, mandatory pass gate.**
>
> Unsafe chemical handling, inappropriate service on a contraindicated nail, tissue injury, hygiene breaches, unsafe removal or unapproved equipment use cannot be offset by artistic or business scores. Stop the activity, document the issue and remediate under qualified supervision.

Suggested overall target: at least 75% and Level 3 on each required technical competency, with all critical safety checks independently passed. Final thresholds and supervision arrangements are subject to educator review.

CHAPTER 11

Materials & equipment.

Use products selected by the qualified instructor for a specific system. Do not mix products, lamps or curing schedules unless compatibility is established by the manufacturer. Do not purchase advanced equipment before training and suitability are confirmed.

CATEGORY	EXAMPLES / PURPOSE
Practice	Training hand, practice tips, swatch sticks, palette cards and sketchbook.
Natural nail care	Appropriate files, buffers, non-invasive preparation tools and classic polish.
Product systems	Manufacturer-compatible base, colour, builder, top, lamps and removal products.
Artistry	Detail brushes, dotting tools, suitable pigments and approved decorative materials.
Safety	SDS library, suitable gloves and eye protection, hand hygiene, approved disinfectants, single-use items and safe waste handling.
Studio	Local exhaust/dust control, ventilation, ergonomic seating, clean/dirty zones, lighting and storage.
Digital	Camera or smartphone, optional sketching software, portfolio storage and consent records.

Budget and procurement

Separate essential foundation tools from optional specialist products. Track consumable cost, maintenance, batch information, expiry where specified and approved suppliers. Ask for product safety documentation before purchase.

CHAPTER 12

Professional safety.

This chapter gives educational safety principles, not medical advice or a substitute for professional instruction. Nail professionals must not diagnose or treat nail disease. Seek qualified guidance and follow local health, licensing, occupational and waste requirements.

Before a service

- Obtain informed consent, review relevant allergies and ask about symptoms or previous reactions.
- Defer and refer for suspected infection, unexplained nail changes, inflammation, pain, damaged skin or a previous adverse reaction.
- Prepare a clean workstation; wash hands; separate clean and used equipment.
- Check product labels, safety data sheets, compatible systems and the intended curing or removal instructions.

During and after

- Prevent uncured gel or reactive product from contacting skin; follow product-specific controls and lamp instructions.
- Use suitable local extraction and ventilation, avoid unnecessary dust and vapour exposure, and follow the SDS for protective equipment.
- Avoid cutting the protective cuticle or aggressive filing. Stop if there is pain, injury, irritation or another concerning symptom.
- Clean and disinfect reusable instruments using validated methods and required contact times; sterilise where local rules or instrument use require it. Discard single-use items safely. A UV storage box is not a replacement for disinfection.
- Provide product-specific aftercare and advise medical review for concerning reactions. Document incidents and follow local exposure and reporting procedures.

> **Supervision boundary**
>
> Beginners should practise on training materials first. Live services, advanced chemical systems and electric files require appropriate practical instruction and approval. This handbook deliberately does not provide universal cure times, removal recipes or electric-file settings.

Further reading: OSHA nail salon safety (chemical and biological hazards), FDA nail care products and CDC nail hygiene. See the source directory in Chapter 13; these US resources are general references, not jurisdiction-specific law.

CHAPTER 13

Creative resources.

Start with qualified in-person or supervised technical education, and use reference material to supplement—not replace—practice and feedback. The following resources are selected for further reading; availability, fees and local accreditation are not assessed.

OSHA — Nail salon health hazards ↗

Occupational hazards and ergonomic risks; US reference, not local law.

OSHA — Chemical hazards ↗

Ventilation, SDS, handling and exposure controls.

OSHA — Biological hazards ↗

Infection prevention and instrument handling.

FDA — Nail care products ↗

Product ingredients and sensitisation context.

CDC — Nail hygiene ↗

Hygiene and protection of the cuticle.

NailKnowledge ↗

Suggested technical education; course availability and recognition not evaluated.

Procreate ↗

Optional digital sketching tool.

Adobe Learn ↗

Optional software learning.

CHAPTER 14

Graduation.

Graduation readiness means having evidence across all four schools. These deliverables are proposed completion requirements, not professional licensing. An educator must sign off technical and safety competence before client-facing practice.

- Pass the independent safety gate and all required technical checks.
- Demonstrate assessed safe applications and removals in the chosen systems.
- Complete the core projects and three coherent collections.
- Publish a curated, truthful portfolio and artist statement.
- Complete a service menu, cost model and client communication templates.
- Prepare a studio risk register, operating procedures and local compliance checklist.
- Complete the capstone review and 90-day launch plan.
- Address any instructor-identified remediation before paid client work.

Capstone dossier

Present the three collections (occasion, editorial and signature), portfolio with documented physical work, assessed technical evidence, business model, pricing, consultation/aftercare forms, product prototype, studio risk register and 90-day launch plan. Present your rationale and answer critique. Agree remediation if any gate is not met.

CHAPTER 15

90-day launch.

After technical sign-off and local compliance review, use the first 90 days to test a focused practice rather than maximise bookings. Track quality, time, costs and client feedback; do not take on work beyond your demonstrated competence.

PERIOD	PRIORITIES	EVIDENCE
Days 01–30 · Establish	Confirm legal and safety requirements; choose positioning, service scope and pricing; publish truthful portfolio and set up booking systems.	Service menu, risk register, consultation form, portfolio, cost model.
Days 31–60 · Validate	Run a limited number of appropriate appointments; gather consented feedback; test one acquisition channel and track real service times.	Booking and cost records, repeat enquiries, feedback and quality checks.
Days 61–90 · Refine	Review margin, retention and incident records; improve service workflow; test a suitable collaboration or small product range.	Updated pricing, capacity decision, quality review and next-quarter plan.

Simple financial principles

Price from the cost of materials, labour time, overhead allocation, payment fees, target margin and applicable taxes. Revenue is not profit. Record assumptions, compare actuals and revise rather than promise income.

CHAPTER 16

Glossary.

TERM	MEANING
Apex	The area of structural support in an enhancement; location depends on design and system.
Builder gel	A gel product intended to build or reinforce nail structure; use within the specified system.
Contraindication	A condition or circumstance that requires service modification, deferral or referral.
Cuticle	Protective tissue associated with the nail plate and proximal fold; avoid harmful cutting.
Curing	Product-specific hardening process; follow the manufacturer’s validated equipment and instructions.
Disinfection	A validated process for reducing specified microorganisms on cleaned items; not equivalent to sterilisation.
Enhancement	An applied product system that changes or reinforces nail appearance or structure.
Infills / rebalancing	Maintenance procedures to restore a suitable enhancement as the natural nail grows.
Lifting	Separation of an enhancement from the underlying surface; assess safely and do not conceal.
SDS	Safety data sheet: hazard, handling, storage and exposure information.
Sensitisation	Development of an allergic sensitivity to a substance.
Signature style	A recognisable set of creative decisions, not a requirement to repeat the same motif.