Serigraphy
Paper Stencil – Screenprint

Screenprinting with paper stencils allows you to make multiple prints in several layers of flat colour without having to expose artwork onto a screen. The paper blocks the ink except in the cutout areas, where ink can pass through. It should be possible to produce 10 - 20 prints from a paper stencil before it starts to deteriorate.

While reusable stencils can be cut from acetate, these tend to slip and allow ink to seep under the edges. Newsprint or photocopier paper can be used to create stencils however, baking parchment offers a durable and economic alternative.

When making paper stencils for screenprinting, not all parts have to be connected - you can have 'islands' that you put down in the correct place before printing. To aid registration of multiple colours it is best to cut your stencil material to the same size as the paper for printing.
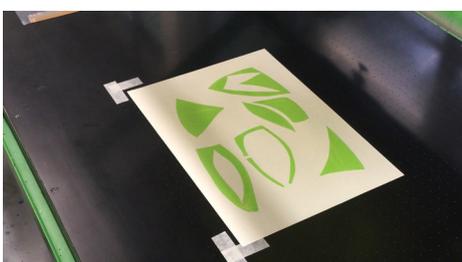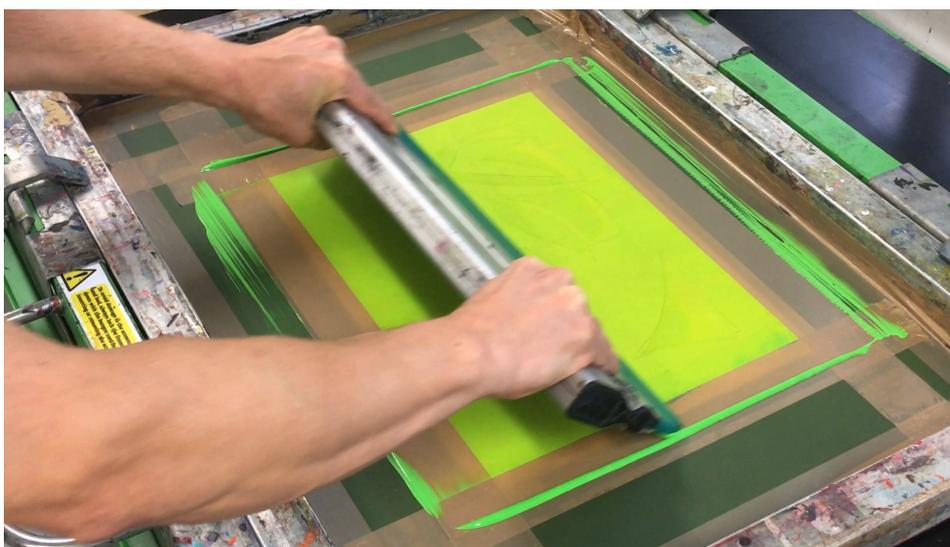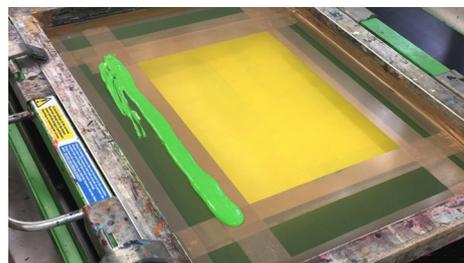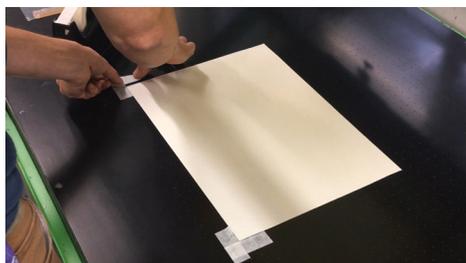
Stencils can be cut by hand, using a sharp scalpel or scissors. A lasercutter may also be employed to create stencils. This is particularly suitable when working with complex and or digitally generated imagery.

Before you begin:

- Cut your paper and stencil material to size. When printing multiple layers of colour, it is best to cut your stencil material to the same size as your paper.

- Use one of the 'flats' screens and adjust the size of the opening using the buff vinyl tape to allow at least a 10mm border on your paper/stencil material.

- Prepare and cut your stencils, marking each stencil and any related 'islands' to avoid confusion.

- Mix your inks and ensure you have evrything you need to hand before yo start printing.

Serigraphy
Paper Stencil–Screenprint

01. With your screen clamped in place, Lift up the screen and position a sheet of paper in registration on the bed underneath. Mark its position with masking tape or registration chips.

02. Place your first stencil in place on the printing paper. Gently lower the screen to ensure your design will fit within the screen opening.

03. Apply a bead of printing ink along the front edge of your screen just below the open area. Ensure the ink stretches just further than the width of the open area.

04. Raise the screen slightly to keep it away form the paper and flood the screen with ink by pushing the squeegee across the open area at a 45° angle.

05. Lower the screen and with firm pressure drag the squeegee down the screen at a 45° angle.

06. Lift up the screen to reveal the first print. The paper stencil will now be adhered to the underside of the screen.

07. Flood the screen again as before, with it slightly raised, this will help stop the ink drying into the screen.

08. Position the next piece of paper on the bed and print. Continue printing in this manner to make multiple prints.

Once you have finished printing, carefully peel off the stencil and immediately clean the screen to avoid causing blockages in the mesh.