

Queen's Gallery

The ceiling here is plaster, decorated in relief with white moulded plaster leaves and gold roses. The room is almost 20 metres long and six and a half metres wide. It has carpet of blue and gold, and dusky blue damask silk on the walls. There are five large windows along the left hand wall, hung with curtains of a matching fabric. Three enormous crystal chandeliers hang from the ceiling. There are silver sconces on the walls, each for one candle.

This gallery was created as an area where visitors could wait to be admitted to The Queen's most private rooms. About a hundred years later it became known as the Queen's Ballroom when it became the best space in the castle for the new fashion for dancing together in long lines.

Nowadays this room displays an unrivalled collection of paintings by Sir Anthony Van Dyck, a Flemish artist who became a leading court painter in England. There are usually about nine of his works hanging in this room. They are of varying sizes, some almost two metres high, set in ornate gilded frames. They include portraits of Royalty of the Stuart Court, including Charles I and his children.