

# MASTERS OF RESEARCH IN CREATIVE PRACTICES

## GUIDANCE NOTES

These guidance notes are intended to give you information on the Masters of Research in Creative Practices programme at the Glasgow School of Art. It will provide you with an overview of the programme and its five pathways, details of the visual / textual material and documentation you will need in order to apply, and the admissions criteria for the programme.

If you are intending to apply to the programme, please ensure you have a copy of the Postgraduate Application form. In the MRes Appendix, downloadable from the GSA website (<http://www.gsa.ac.uk/gsa.cfm?pid=1968>), you will also find information on our Admissions and Equal Opportunities policies.

## FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE MRES PROGRAMME

If you need further information on the MRes (Creative Practices), research degree programmes or research activity at the GSA, please contact **Laura González, Research Degrees Coordinator** by email ([L.Gonzalez@gsa.ac.uk](mailto:L.Gonzalez@gsa.ac.uk)) or telephone (+44 (0) 141 566 1109)

## PROGRAMME

A cross-GSA initiative, this 45 week intensive programme focuses on developing the understanding and capabilities of students in architecture, design, digital design, fine art, and historical and critical studies to undertake substantial further research including doctoral study. It also offers a research experience in its own right that will enable graduates to apply new knowledge in a range of professional contexts.

Students will be supported to develop skills and contexts for research, critical judgment and academic competencies, including the ability to devise and manage a research project. They will have the opportunity to explore their research interests and develop a grasp of current research issues in their chosen field, a range of related creative disciplines and/or other areas relevant to their research.

Students participating in the programme will have the opportunity to explore their research interests and develop their knowledge of current research issues in their 'home' discipline, a range of related creative disciplines, and/or other disciplines that may be relevant to their area of research. The programme has been devised for graduates with maturity, focus and independence. We will support students in making research degree applications and enhancing proposals that require development for direct entry onto a research degree programme.

Through progression from generic research methods and investigative contexts, via the application of subject specific knowledge, towards an independent research project, the programme aims to support the deepening of students' research interests, while strengthening their understanding of specific research issues.

## PATHWAYS

The proposed programme is structured in three stages delivered over 45 weeks.

- The first stage focuses on generic research skills and procedural issues.
- The second stage, delivered locally, concentrates on subject specific methods and contexts.
  - This second stage is structured around five pathways, which are described below.
  - Students admitted on the programme will have the opportunity to choose two courses, from the same or different pathways, from their home discipline or an area they would like to explore.
  - Courses will run on a minimum of two students.
- The third stage is centred on the development of an individual project of research.

### ARCHITECTURE PATHWAY

#### Architectural Theory and Analogies

The aim of the course is to develop an awareness and understanding for the role of analogies both as a tool and as a conceptual structure for architectural research, to examine the relationship between induction, as a means for knowledge acquisition, and arguments from analogies, to highlight the difference between positive and negative architectural analogies and to assess the role of critical observation in the refutation of arguments by induction. Examples on the use of analogies in architectural theory will also be covered. The course will be delivered in a series of lectures and reading seminars and assessed through research-based assignment(s).

#### Architectural Design and Design Theory

The course aims to impart students with necessary knowledge and understanding of design theory at various levels including the structure of the architectural design process, the demystification of the design activity and knowledge domains of design. The course will also examine various models of the design process starting with the classical model of analysis-synthesis and ending with the conjecture-refutation model. The relationship between design and other areas of knowledge will be explored with special emphasis on studies of the design behaviour and the analysis of design 'protocols'. The course is mainly assessed by written assignments and delivered through a number of lectures and reflective reading seminars.

### DESIGN PATHWAY

#### Design & Technology Research

This course aims to develop students' awareness and knowledge base in the history of design and technology, to provide a historical, social, cultural and trends context for current practice, to introduce students to a range of design philosophies, movements, insights into design futures and trends forecasting, and to reflect on the purpose and application of design and technologies in relation to society. The course is assignment-based with lecture content.

#### Inclusive User Research

This course aims to develop an understanding of the concept of inclusive design, to develop an awareness and knowledge of inclusive user research methods, methodologies, and typologies, in relation to developing a comprehensive understanding of end users of designed products, to undertake research utilising appropriate user research methods, and to analyse the research to compile a user-centred inclusive product design specification. The course is assignment-based with lecture content.

**DIGITAL DESIGN PATHWAY****The Film Making Process**

This (pathway/unit/course) is intended to introduce students to the totality of the digital film making process from idea through various production and post-production phases to final digital film. A research project will be central to this where the medium of film will be used to explore a particular research question. Input will take the form of workshops and practical assignments.

**Digital Compositing**

This pathway explores the nuances of message that can be derived from the digital editing and compositing process. Using the same footage or a combination of film stock, emphasis will be placed on creating sequences which convey differing messages. A series of workshops will be offered to acquire necessary skills supported by tutorial sessions while open seminars will discuss the theory behind the processes of compositing.

**FINE ART PATHWAY****Objective Analysis and Subjective Interpretation of Visual Art and Artefacts**

This pathway aims to equip students to systematically analyse and interrogate their understanding of visual material and related texts. It also is intended to help students attain a sophisticated knowledge of the research methods inherent in the working processes of fine artists.

**Excavation of the Contemporary Art Context**

This pathway offers the opportunity for students to develop planning and organisational skills in the process of researching and gaining in-depth knowledge of the cultural, political and economic context underpinning the UK art world. A practical exercise, tailored to individual students' research context, provides the means by which these factors can be discussed.

**HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL STUDIES PATHWAY****Using Historical and Critical Writing**

This course surveys the taxonomy of writing on art, design and architecture. This includes an advanced exploration of the problems of writing art and design history, the methodologies of historical analysis, as well as the role of critical writing to the culture and industry of art and design. The course reintroduces students to writing *as a practice* inherent in the research of art, design and architecture, a practice intimately related to the objects, methods and outcomes of the studio.

**New Media**

This course explores a range of recent critical debates and innovations in new media, particularly those relating to art, design and architectural practice and education. The course identifies the researcher as an observer of technology and its impact, but one embedded within this same social sphere. The course broadens to consider the political, social and economic impact of new media, as well as focusing on the role of gameplay and narrative in the socialisation of technology.

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

All application to the MRes (Creative Practices) should include:

- Completed Postgraduate Application Form, including two academic references;
- A 500-word typed statement indicating the area(s) you propose to develop as part of the programme and your preliminary choice of pathway (see below for details);
- A submission of:
  - Visual material (see below for details) **and/or**;
  - An extract from a previously written essay or dissertation of up to 3,000 words (this is a requirement if applicants have indicated an interest in the Historical and Critical Studies pathway);
- Copy of academic qualification certificates. For pending certification, applicants should ensure that referees reports contain an indication of the predicted result;
- Transcripts / Mark sheet. For pending certification, applicants should ensure that referees reports contain an indication of the predicted result;
- Registration fee (see Postgraduate Application Form).
- In addition, overseas applicants for whom English is not their first language should normally obtain a minimum score of 6.0 in the IELTS test or equivalent.

Applicants can expect to receive an acknowledgment of receipt of their application. No correspondence will be entered into regarding the submission of visual material and therefore full responsibility will be placed on the individual to deliver his/her visual work to the School on/before the submission date.

## 500 WORD STATEMENT GUIDELINES

We would like applicants to demonstrate critical and imaginative thinking in their 500-word statements. You may want to address the following questions:

- What is your overall aim for undertaking this programme?
- What do you hope to achieve as part of the programme?
- Why are you interested in research as a subject?
- What are your research interests?
- What is your understanding of the contexts of your proposed research areas?
- Which two courses (from the same or different pathways) are you interested in?

We understand that both your proposed area(s) of research and indicative pathway may change as part of your initial investigations. Students on the programme will have an opportunity to consider and review their interests and choose, if appropriate, a different area of specialisation;

## VISUAL MATERIAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

In addition to the completed application form, applicants are asked to submit visual material in support of their application using one, or a combination of the following formats;

- 35mm slides in an A4 slide sheet or box
- CD Rom
- Video

**35mm slides**

20 x 35mm slides of work: each slide must bear your name, the title and year of the work and should be marked to indicate which way is top. Slides should be arranged in chronological order and must be numbered 1-20 to correspond with a typewritten slide list. Please make sure that the slide container is also labelled with your name and address to ensure the safe return of your submission. UNDER OR OVER EXPOSED AND OUT OF FOCUS SLIDES SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED.

**CD Rom**

A CD Rom containing 20 x 72dpi images of work on jpg format arranged in a PowerPoint or QuickTime presentation: each PowerPoint slide should bear the title and year of the work. Slides should be arranged in chronological order. Please make sure that the CD and CD container are also labelled with your name and address to ensure the safe return of your submission. UNDER OR OVER EXPOSED AND OUT OF FOCUS SLIDES SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED.

**Video**

Applicants wishing to submit material on video should do so in VHS (Pal) or DVD format. All tapes or DVDs should be accompanied by a play list, giving detailed information on the title, date of work, playing time and whether the work contains sound or is silent. Extracts of multiple works should not exceed 5 minutes each and the whole tape should not exceed 20 minutes in length.

**DEADLINE**

The deadline for the receipt of applications (including references) is **Friday 23 June 2006 at 5.00pm.**

Completed forms, together with documentary evidence specified in the application requirements section should be submitted to:

Julia Nouillan  
The Registry  
The Glasgow School of Art  
167 Renfrew Street  
GLASGOW  
G3 6RQ  
Tel: +44 (0)141 353 4517 Fax: +44 (0)141 353 4408 Email: [j.nouillan@gsa.ac.uk](mailto:j.nouillan@gsa.ac.uk)

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## ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

Admission to the MRes takes place at the beginning of the programme of study, which extends from September to the following September.

### Minimum entry requirements

All applicants should normally have a good honours degree in a relevant subject area or equivalent industrial or professional experience.

### Admissions Criteria

Candidates will be selected for a place on the programme on the basis of:

- Meeting the minimum entry requirements specified above;
- Providing all the elements of the application, including submission of visual and/or written material of a suitable standard for Masters Level study, completed and submitted by the closing date, as specified above;
- Demonstrating their ability to undertake the proposed study in their application, referees reports and at interview;
- Demonstrating their critical awareness, conceptual understanding of research and imaginative thinking in their 500-word statement and at interview;
- Demonstrating the potential to undertake a supervised research project in any of the indicated pathways;
- Demonstrating the potential to contribute to the group dynamic of the MRes programme, through the interview (desired).

### Deferred Offers

The School will consider requests for deferred offers, however each case is assessed on an individual basis and such offers are normally only made in exceptional cases.

## THE INTERVIEW

The interview process will be explained to all candidates in detail prior to the event; however, the procedure is summarised below:

### Interviews in person

The interview panel will consist of a minimum of 2 members of the teaching team. The panel will ask each candidate to talk about their work for approximately 10 minutes. This will be followed by a question and answer session. The interview process should take approximately 40 minutes.

### Telephone Interviews (International Applicants)

Overseas applicants who are unable to attend for interview must submit all application requirements specified above. In addition, a telephone interview may be required. This will take a similar format to that outlined above. If an applicant would prefer to attend the interview in person, please contact The Glasgow School of Art for further discussion.

Notification of decisions will be made as soon as possible after interview; this will normally be within two weeks. Students admitted onto the programme will be sent a confirmation letter, a programme handbook and details of the GSA induction programme and other events.