

GSA SUMMARY REPORT OF EQUALITY CONSIDERATION AND ASSESSMENT OF EQUALITY IMPACT

Date of Assessment:	October 2017	
School or Executive Group Area:	School of Design	
Department:	Interior Design	
Lead member of staff: e-mail:	Patrick Macklin Head of Department and Programme Leader p.macklin@gsa.ac.uk ext.4682	
Area of decision making/title of policy, procedure, programme or relevant practice:	Programme direction BA(Hons) Interior Design	
Please indicate if this is:	New:	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Existing/Reviewed:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>1.Summary of how equality, diversity and participation have been considered and due regard given to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED):</p> <p>The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires the elimination of unlawful discrimination, the advancing of equality and the fostering of good relations. Within this context each member of staff in the department looked in some detail at a particular aspect of the programme, the studio and the community of Interior Design, within the School of Design at Glasgow School of Art and framed their response within the scope of the PSED. The results of this activity have contributed directly to this document. The process is iterative, durational, reflective and ongoing, the document content is collaborative.</p>		
<p>2.Evidence used to make your assessment:</p> <p>Evidence used included reference to three prior sessions PMAR statistics, as well as programme level data. Statistical information was observed and drawn variously from GSA Equality Outcomes 2017–2021; Student Equality Monitoring Report (15/16); Staff Equality Monitoring Report (15/16) and Student Benchmark Report (14/15). In addition NSS was referenced from prior PMAR processes.</p>		
<p>3.Outline any positive or negative impacts you have identified:</p> <p>Admissions UG Interior Design operates an Associate Student scheme with Glasgow Clyde College HNC Art & Design and the department has worked closely with Open Studio in engaging with Glasgow City College and Edinburgh College. The intention of the Associate Student scheme is to widen access to GSA for students from underrepresented groups, including SIMD area.</p> <p>It has had the benefit of creating a clearer conduit for prospective students by virtue of demystifying HE and bringing students into the environments – both physical and intellectual – that they aim to join. Examples of this include FE students participating in GSA ID project reviews. Formats such as ‘Pitch and Pin’ facilitating inclusion by offering opportunities for non-verbal, ‘anonymous’ comment which is intended to address stereotypical perceptions of responses associated with a particular characteristic or identify. It also enables students to feel more confident in their responses. This has the potential to provide positive impact for all protected characteristic groups.</p>		

From the applications from FE colleges for AS 17-18 the following observations regarding protected characteristics were noted:

- Out of 86 applications 37 were invited for interview
- 84% of applicants identify as female and 16% as male
- 50% of applicants are defined as mature (21 years or older)

The **gender** balance of applicants is – not untypically for the subject at UK national level – predominantly female and translates directly to conversion numbers. There is, arguably, a gendered aspect to the perception of the discipline of interior design. Here it is worth noting that in Singapore the gender split is closer to 50/50. The staff team (50/50 female/male) is focused on understanding possible reasons behind this and addressing any issues or negative equality impact identified. This includes via staffing of interviews panels with male and female teams, and with engagement in Open Studio initiatives, where the same is true. There is more work to be done in this area, particularly at High School level pre-subject selection, and we seek to advance the understanding of the subject in this area over the next 3 years learning from existing successful examples such as Junk Couture.

Age - Half of applicants were aged 21+, and 8 out of 15 places were offered to mature students. This is comparable with UCAS application data for the School of Design (2015-16) with 49% of Students aged 21 or over. Age diversity within a cohort can be advantageous not only demonstrating positive impact for students in terms of access but also in respect of sharing experiences and perspectives, benefiting all protected characteristic groups. Students undertaking a change of career and/or return to education bring a different set of skills to the studio community, in some cases these can be invaluable additions to the collective knowledge base of that group and can range from tailoring skills to civil engineering being foregrounded in peer discussions and reviews.

All applicants to the programme submit an online portfolio for initial assessment. If selected applicants are invited to interview. For international students, in most cases, the interview is conducted by telephone or by Skype. The format of the interview is structured identically to that of on-site interviews; ie the applicant has a 15-minute timeslot and a series of questions constructed around selection criteria are offered. These are formatted in plain English. Timing of the interviews is carefully considered in order to suit candidates commitments and in acknowledgement of time-zone differences. This is intended to advance equality for international students.

Whilst the interview format is intended to take account of an applicant's context and background, a review of questions and selection criteria at interview stage to take account of equality consideration would support the advancement of equality for UK domiciled and international students from under represented protected characteristic groups, particularly those from BAME backgrounds.

The under representation of UK domiciled BAME students on the programme is recognised and work will be carried out with Open Studio and the Widening Participation Team, building on the success of the Associate Student initiative, to address this issue.

With the focus of the subject of interiors being keenly attuned to aspects of comfort and wellbeing matters concerning the suitability of spaces for pre-admission and throughout the student experience are uppermost. Interior Design studios are situated in open plan spaces adjacent to other departments and controlling acoustic transmission is difficult and can be problematic when teaching, in order to offset this we have allocated some studio space purely for the business of focussed discussion. The additional flexibility that the move from Haldane to Reid of PG offers will help extend choices of environment eg for students impacted by working in large groups, or who seek privacy, and for staff and students affected by the particular sound levels of Studio. The increased choice of environment is intended to provide positive equality impact by anticipating the needs of disabled students, for example those with hearing impairment, when attending for interview. However it is recognised that this situation needs to be monitored and the HoD will continue to represent the case for adjustments to the studio environment in order to provide oases

of quiet.

Curriculum Design

A major impact upon the consideration of diversity within the UG provision of ID GSA has been the Singapore partnership. This has drawn into sharp focus many aspects of diversity regarding culture, social and individual religious belief (religious holidays in Singapore reflect its predominant ethnic composition), sexuality and gender. The abiding principle has been a simple one, to offer an identical experience in terms of structure and observe closely the contrasting or harmonising impulses that result from this 'mirroring'. Context forms the foundation and all that follows is the illuminating content. This ranges from explicit contrasts eg the Tenement/HDB project where students compare and exchange observations on familiar (within their respective contexts) ways of living, through to regional contrasts regarding development, religious observance, community relations etc. In this way identity differences, and by extension, similarities, are brought to the fore in both staff and student experience. Staff in each location make regular visits to the 'other' place and students from Singapore visit Glasgow en masse as part of their Overseas Immersion programme. The outcome of this approach has been to organically advance equality and foster good relations through and between staff and students in both locations.

The impact of such activities on the cohorts involved is evidenced in substantial part, by the work that they have been producing since the partnership began and is a matter of significance in Design education. To this end the dept is drawing together the output of the last three years Tenement/HDB work and seeks to publish and exhibit the content while extending the narrative and reflecting on the dynamics of a twin site studio on design culture, contexts and communities.

Review: We seek to frame the teaching and learning ethos of GSA within the studio projects and encourage self-directed learning. In doing so the cultural background and type of formal education students have previously experienced is taken into account by the staff team. We appreciate that for some students this approach will be new to them and requires a shift in their own perception of pedagogies and their own practice. We acknowledge that being part of an Art School requires a period of adaptation, reconstruction, and often, particularly in the case of international students, displacement and isolation (during transitions into the programme, and when returning 'home', when this can be experienced from a reversed perspective). We have therefore created different formats for review to open up a critical dialogue within the cohort with the intention of facilitating exchange of personal and cultural perspectives, thus fostering good relations.

In order to encourage students to have confidence in sharing their work and critical position within a peer group various diverse methods of engagement to assist students who do not feel comfortable verbalising in a group scenario is a post-it note review. This normally requires the student do a short verbal presentation of their work in a group of approx. 10 students. Whilst a student presents the audience write comments or questions to then post alongside the work once all presentations have completed. This method helps when the students are not as confident in the language associated with the design critique and it provides an opportunity to see how their peers perceive their design proposal. In addition, this method is then enhanced a step further as the group gets to know one another by pairing students for presentations. The students take note during questions of the group and are required to verbally ask questions to the presenters in a panel review. Both methods we have found encourage the students to all participate in an equal manner counteract the reliance upon the same students (who maybe more confident in their English) to ask questions. This process supports the both the fostering of good relations by enabling students to learn from and develop their perspective within a diverse cohort and advances equality by providing all students regardless of protected characteristic with a real opportunity to participate.

Brief: Briefs embed equality and diversity issues in the context of the discipline of interior design as both a profession and a body of knowledge. Practitioners are bound by legislation to ensure a contribution to the creation of fully inclusive spaces which take account of culture and need. Briefs necessarily requiring insight on varying typologies, usage and/or ethical challenges. When citing suggested sources, areas where matters of diversity can be explored and opened up are

encouraged. This has included a student who interpreted a fashion shop brief to explore issues of gender representation and body image, student projects in Singapore looking at non-binary gendered clients and a design for aging populations project on both sites, and most recently a project which explored aspects of gentrification and inclusion. Each instance made central and explicit the importance of empathy in design, and encouraged students to develop their thinking and adopt a critical position relative to such matters both advancing equality and fostering good relations.

Events/Contact: Staff ensure that students are notified in the brief of the type and length of events. Changes to timetabled events are notified in advance, as students may have work, personal challenges or domestic responsibilities they need notice to plan for, and may not wish to disclose. A range of event types across the timetable of the project are offered, to accommodate variance in student learning styles, approaches or obstacles to learning and impact of social concerns, these facilitate a diversity of approaches to presenting and critiquing work. The briefs specify and clearly list minimum expected outputs enabling students to plan and prepare for deadlines and potentially seek support in advance for an output they have concerns about. This approach supports the anticipation of need for, for example, disabled students, students with caring responsibilities or religious commitments, therefore advancing equality.

Curriculum Delivery

The main operations of the programme are centred on supported and self-directed learning. This accommodates planning and scheduling from the students perspective. This enables flexibility and, as above, supports the anticipation of need for, for example, disabled students, students with caring responsibilities or religious commitments, therefore advancing equality.

Space(s): The Interior Design department in the Reid building has a dedicated studio space with adjacent space to host events such as critical reviews, presentations and exhibitions. Each year group has a hot desk area with approx. 10-12 fixed computers per year group and desk space to accommodate laptop use and/or making. There are spaces to make, and informal spaces to discuss things. Currently there is no dedicated space for confidential discussion, but these are available elsewhere onsite. Access to the two buildings which the programme is located in meets DDA requirements but access to some other buildings on campus is restrictive so assistance may be required. It is recognised that there is potential for negative equality impact in respect of available space, particularly for disabled students. The programme team will identify instances where this is the case and take anticipatory action to offset this.

Small Quiet Spaces for the use of individuals with needs related to a protected characteristic are available in a number of buildings across campus, however none is available in the Reid. This is an omission that the HoD will continue to seek a solution to.

Pedagogic Approach: The programme aims to offer equality of understanding and contribute to students' learning experience while responding to their needs. With regards to diversity, the department maintains an empathetic approach to learners. Based on the concept of critical pedagogy (Freire 1968; Hooks 1995) as mentioned in the 'Embedding equality and diversity in the curriculum: an art and design practitioner's guide', the academic team aims to foster good relationships through learning activities between the students and the team, help them enhance their critical skills and also enrich their learning experience as part of the understanding around the field of Interior Design. The positive impact of this is a rapid cohesion within the group, softening hierarchies and building relationships within what is still an intimately scaled community of practice.

As part of the teaching experience suggested sources are provided alongside the brief. The examples can be either through a visual presentation, after or during the brief has taken place, or a suggested bibliography. More specifically, these 'events' include presentations, audio and films, suggesting practitioners from diverse cultural sources, and increasingly inviting students to broaden this spectrum further. This usually affects students' motivation to explore the field of Interior Design and as a result, to 'redefine' the subjects sense of itself, broadening the students' perspectives and

cultural understandings which supports the advancement of equality and fostering of good relations for all protected characteristic groups.

An example of this is the introduction of an event called 'Book Group' to postgraduate students to support critical thinking as well as boost confidence in comprehension and garner input from alternative cultural strands. The staff team introduced these sessions as an attempt to openly talk about different aspect/approaches of the field of Interior Design while inviting students to share/discuss in small groups matters of cultural differences as part of Studio. The academic team uploads the sources on the VLE prior to each session. The texts range from Greek to Japanese philosophy; from French cultural theory and phenomenology to historical analyses of spaces that bridge architectural and interior design theory, from the current socio-economic situation in Europe and how this affects the field to the present growth in East Asia. Most of the books are written/translated in English language; nonetheless there are a few exceptions that books are in Greek, Spanish, French and occasionally in Mandarin. The introduction of Canvas will extend the capability and access to online resources for the studio.

Assessment and Feedback: The department operates a vertical teaching model and as feedback is a mainstay of art, design and architecture education, significant time and effort has been invested in considering the effectiveness of the feedback, in the form of the review in relation to learning and implicitly the accessibility to these events for all students.

The basic structure for reviews within the department are a minimum of one interim review per project; one concluding review not on the last day of a project to allow students to balance their reflection on discussion at the review with revisiting their work; reviews are timed and last no longer than two hours including a comfort break and their time, location and format are published in advance. At the start of the review the format is discussed with the students involved and they are invited to offer suggestions to tune the interaction based on project development. Key considerations for an effective review are: Punctuality, Preparedness and Participation. Key experiences within the review are security, engagement and learning with feedback obtained via QEQ's. Clearly defined time, duration, and location of reviews in advance, enable students to organise other commitments.

We offer a range of review types, these enable participants with different strengths and needs to be accommodated and to participate fully in a varied set of conditions. The panel format is a useful example in that it incorporates the role of the 'audience' as well as the 'performer' which helps broaden the perception of critical engagement, it is also a 'social' event, including different voices and comment giving each equal weighting and offers a supportive context in which to share work and develop skills in presenting.

Assessment and feedback is centred on ILO's, the code of assessment and SCQF levelness. These are discussed at induction and included in the student handbook. We return to them throughout the session and particularly at points of feedback. We seek student involvement in reshaping some of course level ILO's.

Development of VLE: GSA has used Blackboard as its VLE platform for over 10 years. There have been varying levels of activity and participation with the software within the department, and across other associated departments over that time. To date the VLE is primarily used for Information share (staff to student); Information share (students to students); Communication tool (staff to students); Submission of archive (students for staff). The impact of this is that it is opaque and inflexible with significant shortcomings in relation to diversification of content format and even customization capability.

However, the use of a LMS has the potential to provide positive equality impact for the following protected characteristic groups: disability, age, race, religion or belief. Dyslexia, visual stress, and related conditions in different situations can be assisted by the use of VLE/LMS systems allowing

students to work at their own pace, offering screen reader options, structured information, clear information, and always available content. Each programme in the School of Design has a dedicated VLE representative. The programme will continue to develop its online capability and engage students in discussions on the effectiveness of the platform, including its use as an additional vehicle for assessment and feedback.

Student Engagement

Students are encouraged to engage fully with all aspects of their involvement in the programme and beyond. The nature of the experience at a School of Art is one of critical enquiry, and cultural/ contextual investigation in the broadest sense. Within the specific specialism this is foregrounded in project work where students are encouraged to elevate particular thematic concerns and share these broadly with the community. This would include matters of cultural contingency as well as personal positions. Within a cohort that embodies diverse cultural experience this can bring challenging content to the fore and staff are keen to channel this through the broad discourse of the programme. This approach is intended to enhance students' learning experience, increase understanding of diverse perspectives and cultural norms, and result in a process of advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations both within the programme and more widely across GSA.

In AS 15/16 and 16/17 the dept introduced Wednesday Morning Discussion (WMD) for level 4 students to lead detailed dissection of matters including the formulation of a brief, and the logic of exhibiting work, (who is it for, why is it important, and in what context). This is an area where access and diversity discussion may be usefully brokered. Feedback on the success or otherwise of this is collected via Quality Enhancement Questionnaires, the structure of which are currently under review (at Dept and School level). We seek to gather more nuanced information regarding the particular focus of advancing equality. This would take the form of including questions which specifically highlight inclusive aspects of a project, by for example focussing on the centrality of DDA legislation to the subject, by considering the dynamic nature of caring which can be age related and can impact on time and availability or the consideration of religious or cultural customs.

SSCC's encourage feedback directly from the student group representation usually consisting of both deputy and rep. NSS has been useful for an overall picture of provision and the programme team will continue to respond to observable feedback from this to improve on the experience at programme level. Most recent feedback has indicated that areas of attention such as information circulation have had some impact. The NSS responses will be explored more fully in the PMAR. The Students' Association hosts a range of activities and has an increasingly important role in offering parallel 'curriculum' and opportunities for developing things in a neutral, or other space. This is a key component in building a community where all feel supported, the department will engage directly with the association in order to support this. These mechanisms provide an vehicle to develop discussions with students and staff in respect of equality and gain meaningful feedback and input from students in this regard.

4.Actions you have taken or planned as a result of your findings:

Action	Equality Impact	Person responsible	Time frame
Explore and make explicit learning from the Singapore partnership in respect of gender balance and the complexities of diversity, identifying areas of transferable of practice	Advancing equality and fostering good relations for staff and students across all protected characteristic groups through cultural exchange, pedagogic development	Staff team; HoD; Student Representatives, Singapore Academic Co-ordinator, Singapore Programme Director.	AS 2017-18
Internationalisation of curriculum to include broader cultural reference and embedding diversity explicitly in Studio.	Advancing equality for students from BAME backgrounds and fostering good relations across all protected characteristic groups	HoSoD; Staff team; HoD; Student Representatives. Academic Coordinator,	Implementation Sept 2018

		Interdisciplinarity.	
To use Design Domain as a portal for identifying complementary curricular elements that may be usefully explored via that courses thematic arch. and that address and support equality related perspectives.	Transdisciplinary practice and support for broader representation, visibility and direction for the disciplinary focus as it relates to equality.	Staff team; HoD; Student Representatives	AS 2017/18
Engage programme community in EIA on an on-going basis as a process of staff development and capacity building to increase understanding and engagement with equality issues, to be reflected in PMAR	Contribution to advancing equality and fostering good relations for all protected characteristic groups through greater understanding and engagement with equality in curriculum design, delivery and pedagogic approaches	TEL team, Staff team; HoD; Student Representatives	Ongoing with annual progress report with action plan to PMAR on annual basis.
Open dialogue with students well in advance of arrival, including the issue of preparatory material, reading lists and orientation material	Advance equality, particularly for disabled students and international students.	Staff team, post consultation with SMT and HoS	Implementation 2018 admissions cycle
Share successful pedagogic approaches to facilitate cross departmental connections, including through the delivery of Pecha Kucha across levels of study, eg between UG L4 and PG as well as intra-level between L1+L2, L2+L3	Advancing equality and fostering good relations through greater cooperation, sharing knowledge and understanding of context and broaden cultural references	Staff team	AS 2017/18 and onwards with annual reporting through PMAR
To extend use of LMS/VLE to broaden range of online resources available to students, including Lecture Capture.	As above	TEL representative, and staff team	AS 2017/18 and onwards with annual reporting through PMAR
To support effective assessment, continue to support students in developing understanding of nomenclature, expectations of level of study, ILO's and associated technicalities of assessment.	Advance equality for protected characteristic groups, particularly mature students and International students	HoD Staff Team in liason with Interdisciplinary Co-ordinator and DH&T staff	Start of AS 2017/18
Monitor the impact of open plan spaces and choice of environment for admissions and learning and teaching practice. Take mitigating action where negative impact identified.	Advancing equality, particularly for disabled applicants and students	Staff team, ASM and estates	Start of AS 2017/18

Work with Open Studio and the Widening Participation Team to address under representation of UK domiciled BAME students on the programme	Advance equality for potential UK domiciled students from BAME backgrounds	HoD, staff team; Progression Manager; WP Manager	Implementation recruitment cycle 2018
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5. Where/when will progress and the outcomes of your actions be reported and reviewed:

Through SSCC, DSMT, staff student feedback/engagement and documented and shared through PMAR.

6. How will your actions and intended outcomes contribute to the delivery of GSA's equality outcomes:

By making explicit and central to the GSA experience (for students, staff and broader constituents) the matters covered in this document. The experience of initially exploring such matters collectively has drawn into sharper focus areas where we might be more conscious of gaps in content and absent voices. This affords an opportunity to go some way to rebalancing things.

Actions will contribute to equality outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 5.

The outcome of your assessment:

- No action (no potential for negative or positive impact)
- Action to remove barriers/mitigate negative impact **X**
- Action to promote positive impact **X**

**Sign-off, authorisation and publishing
Review Lead**

Name	Patrick Macklin
Position	Head of Department and Programme Leader:Interior Design
Signature	Patrick Macklin
Date	23 rd October 2017

Executive Lead

Name	Barbara Ridley
Position	Head of School
Signature	Barbara Ridley
Date	8 November 2017

Equality Lead (Head of Student Support and Development)

Signature	Jill Hammond
Date	23rd October 2017