

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 MDes 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): The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires due regard to be given to 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 summary document. The process is iterative, durational, reflective and ongoing, the document content is collaborative.</p>		
<p>2.Evidence used to make your assessment: 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 PTES was referenced as part of the PMAR process.</p>		
<p>3.Outline any positive or negative impacts you have identified:</p> <p>Admissions Application and recruitment to PG Interior Design is predominantly from overseas (OS) applicants. During AS 2017-18 recruitment cycle 163 OS and 8 Home/EU applicants. Positively the programme is attracting applications from a broad constituency. Home/EU may however need more targeted recruitment approaches and in common with the undergraduate programme men are underrepresented: less than 20% of the in each of the last four sessions. There may be advantages to the consideration of how GSA UG graduates perceive progression into PG– we will monitor the impact that the co-location in 2017-18 of PG and UG studio’s has on this.</p> <p>All applicants meeting the admissions criteria are interviewed, using a standard set of interview questions, and overseas applicants are given the choice of interview by telephone or skype meaning that many interviews that are mediated, which can impact on clarity of experience for the applicant. This can be offset via Skype’s instant messenger facility; allowing questions to be written live onscreen. We have also identified that it would enhance the experience of applicants to have two staff on such sessions to allow for a closer to onsite interview.</p>		

The cohort is culturally and linguistically rich (AS 16/17 21:2 ratio of ESL, with 10 nationalities represented), this breadth of experience and associated insights into urbanisation, emigration, and cultural identity is beneficial, but there are attendant factors, including the particular patois of a (Northern) European Art-School Studio being (opaque for those with English as a 2nd Language at least initially so). Semester 1 is therefore a place where such matters are opened up for attention and where the craft of teaching and learning as well as the 'point of departure/arrival' for each individual, including staff and researchers, is acknowledged, shared and built from as an integral aspect of the learning experience.

During session 15/16 and 16/17 the department benefitted from an Erasmus+ exchange which saw a member of staff from Tsinghua (Mandarin speaker) exchange with a member of staff in Glasgow (English speaker). This offered fresh insights into the cultural and educational contexts that students and staff operate within, and offered a diversity of representation in the studio dialogue in Glasgow which the department will seek to maintain through visiting lecturers and the providers of design projects/competitions.

Positive impact through Curriculum Design

Different formats for review have been introduced to open up a critical dialogue within the cohort and support the experience of students with varied cultural and prior educational experience. We seek to frame the teaching and learning ethos of GSA within the studio projects and encourage self-directed learning. For some students this approach is new and requires a shift in their own perception of pedagogies and their own practice. Stage1 of PG is acknowledged as a period of adaption, reconstruction, and often, particularly in the case of international students, displacement and isolation (during transitions into the programme, and when returning 'home', when detachment can be experienced from a reversed perspective). For example: building from the post it note review to pairing students for presentation of their work and peer panel reviews encourage student confidence in sharing their work and critical position within a peer group, assists students who do not feel comfortable verbalising in a group scenario, helps when students are not as confident in the language associated with the design critique and provides an opportunity to see how their peers perceive their design proposal. These methods encourage the students to participate and build community engagement through the availability and acknowledgement of a range of voices: counteracting any reliance or privileging of a minority of voices that may be more confident in their English or their critical position.

All briefs embed equality and diversity issues in the context of the discipline of interior design. Practitioners are bound by legislated responsibility to ensure a contribution to the creation of fully inclusive spaces. Each brief necessarily requires insight on varying typologies, usage and/or ethical challenges. Briefs research, as well as encourage further research, into these specifics and when citing information sources diverse content is offered. The author of a brief is required to assess and anticipate any potential issues individual students may have with the subject matter when students are working through a brief and are supported to do so through dialogue within the staff team.

Briefs explicitly describe contact format, timing and intention of events. Changes to timetabled events are notified in advance, and a range of event types across the timetable of each project anticipate diverse learning styles. The briefs specify and clearly list minimum expected outputs enabling students to plan and prepare for deadlines and seek support in advance of the deadline for an output they have concerns about.

Positive impact through Curriculum Delivery

As a Postgraduate level programme operations are centered on supported and self-directed learning. This supports planning and scheduling from the students perspective enabling flexibility regarding, for example, familial commitments or religious observance.

The programmes aim is to support equality of outcome regardless of protected characteristic and

contribute to students' learning experience by anticipating and responding to needs in the learning environment. 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 relations through learning activities where diverse perspectives, histories and experiences are shared, the skills of critical dialogue enhanced and the learning experience enriched as part of the understanding around the field of Interior Design.

As part of the teaching experience, the programme offers suggested sources with 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 screen based presentations, audio and films, suggesting practitioners from a diverse cultural span. This usually affects students' motivation to explore the field of Interior Design and express themselves more openly. The purpose of this is to contribute to the student's decision-making process and facilitate communication, dialogue and learning from different experience, perspectives and contexts.

An event called Book Group was introduced to postgraduate students to support critical thinking, boost confidence in comprehension and garner input from alternative cultural perspectives and practice. Acknowledging the diversity of the cohort these sessions were introduced to explicitly talk about different aspect/approaches to Interior Design while inviting students to share/discuss cultural differences and reflect on the impact of this on the subject. The academic team upload sources and content to the VLE prior to each session. Texts range from Greek to Japanese philosophy; from French cultural theory of phenomenology to historical analysis of spaces that bridges architecture theory with interior design; 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 with texts in Greek, Spanish, French and occasionally in Mandarin.

Assessment and Feedback

The department operates a vertical teaching model, thus much of the innovation in relation to Assessment and Feedback is common across PG and UG.

The review or crit is a mainstay of art, design and architecture education and there is significant literature and thought around the role, effectiveness and value 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 is : 1 (minimum) interim review per project; 1 concluding review not on the last day of a project; 2 hours including a comfort break; Time location and review type published in advance. The format or rules to be outlined at the start of the review. Key considerations for an effective review are: Punctuality, Preparedness and Participation. Key experiences within the review are: Security, Engagement and Learning. A range of review types and formats are offered enabling participants with different strengths and needs to engage fully in a varied set of conditions and formats.

The teaching team share clearly defined time, duration, and location of reviews in advance, enabling students to plan in relation to their needs and other commitments. Advance notification also enables all participants to prepare and facilitates attendance/participation for students who are working, have a disability or have other commitments.

Assessment and feedback to students is centred on ILO's, the code of assessment and levelness (SCQF). These are discussed at induction and returned to throughout the programme with student involvement in reshaping ILO's in particular.

Development of accessibility and flexibility of programme delivery:

VLE: Currently within the department the VLE is primarily used as/for: Information share (staff to student); Information share (students to students); Communication tool (staff to students);

Submission of archive (students for staff). At the time of writing the institution has transitioned to a new VLE platform which offers enhanced accessibility and additional features such as 'rich media'. This facilitates inclusion of Lecture Capture and online tutorial etc.

Hardware and operating systems all include support of use by disabled users. The school also provides assistive software to assist users. Dyslexia, visual stress, and related conditions in different situations can be assisted by the use of vle/lms systems. Allowing users to function at their own pace, with screen reader options; clear, structured information and always available content. The School of Design has dedicated 'Champions' for the LMS who will monitor the impact of its introduction throughout the session with reference to its application and potential to increase accessibility and flexibility of teaching and resources; reporting to the Design School Management Team (DSMT).

Student Engagement and feedback

Students are encouraged to engage fully with all aspects of their programme and beyond in order to develop 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 position. Within a cohort that embodies diverse cultural experience this can bring challenging content to the fore and this is explored through the broad discourse of the programme.

Student feedback on their experience is collected via Quality Enhancement Questionnaires. The structure of which is currently under review (at Dept. and School level). However at programme level the potential impact of more nuanced feedback with a particular focus of advancing equality is recognised as an area for development.

SSCC's encourage feedback directly from the student group; anecdotally PG participation in these is historically very strong. The weakness of this mechanism however, is clear in relation to the one year duration of the programme where the first involvement is too early in the process and legacy matters can be delivered out of context. This will be addressed by establishing a parallel set of dept level discussions which focus specifically on matters of inclusion and equality.

The GSA Students' Association hosts a range of activities and has an increasingly important role in offering parallel 'curriculum'. This provides opportunities for students to progress considerations of equality in a neutral, or 'other' space with a wider community of identity and discipline.

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. There are spaces to make, and informal spaces for discussion. The Interior Design studios are situated in open plan spaces adjacent to other departments where controlling acoustic transmission is difficult and can at times be problematic for some students : for example those with sensory or hearing related disabilities. Currently there is no dedicated space for confidential discussion, these are however available elsewhere onsite. The importance of different space and spaces for learning and their nature is an area of exploration relevant to advancing equality and fostering good relations that is rich with possibilities and a potential focus of activity within the department.

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

Action	Equality Impact	Person responsible	Time frame
Engage directly with EIA process on an ongoing basis, refining data and analysis to date.	Develop understanding of all members of the programme community of the centrality of equality consideration, and reflect on this formally via SSCC, Board of Study and PMAR.	PL and Team	AS 2017-18 and ongoing

Enhance interview process to include two staff members and open dialogue with students well in advance of arrival. Issue preparatory material, reading lists and orientation materials.		PL and Team	AS 2017-18
Foster greater cooperation between UG L4 and PG to share knowledge of context and broaden cultural referents	Foster good relations regardless of protected characteristic through cross level connection.	PL and Team	AS 2017-18
In consultation with students expand understanding of nomenclature and expectations of levelness, ILO's and associated technicalities of assessment.	Advance equality of experience and outcome for students from diverse cultural and educational backgrounds including international students.	PL	2017/18 Student Consultation to inform 2018 start
In consultation with students, embed consideration of equality and diversity in all aspects of delivery, from the brief to the build	Advance equality and foster good relations	PL	2017/18 Student Consultation to inform 2018 start
Broaden Cultural references: Internationalise curriculum and embed diversity explicitly in Studio.	Foster good relations and advance equality regardless of protected characteristic	PL, Staff team/Marketing/ Recruitment/Open Studio	AS 2017/18 and ongoing
Work with marketing and recruitment to develop positive initiatives to address underrepresentation of men.	Advance equality with regard to gender and gendering of the discipline.	PL, Staff team/Marketing/ Recruitment/Open Studio	AS 2017/18 and ongoing
Address Acoustic issues in open plan studio settings identify Quiet Spaces for learning and Quiet room for needs related to protected characteristics in Reid Building.	Advance equality in relation to disability and religion/belief.	DSMT/Finance/ Estates/GSASA/	AS 2017/18
Monitor impact of Canvas in relation to accessibility and impact on flexibility of access to teaching (eg: Rich media, Lecture capture)	Advance equality specifically in relation to disability and for students with caring or faith related commitments regardless of protected characteristic.	DSMT/T&L team VLE Champions	AS 2017/18 and evaluation included in Canvas transfer.
Support GSA Student Voice initiatives and introduce parallel discourse at programme level specific to equality and identity based issues.	Advance equality and foster good relations through involvement, consolidation of community and active inclusion	PL, Staff team, DSMT, GSASA and students	AS 2017/18

5. Where/when will progress and the outcomes of your actions be reported and reviewed:

Progress will be reported through SSCC, DSMT, evaluated through staff and student feedback/engagement and documented 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, differential experience and absent voices.

Actions will contribute specifically to the achievement of GSA Equality Outcomes 2017-21: EO 1, 2 and 3.

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	
Signature	
Date	

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	8 November 2017