

Undergraduate Degree Study Guide

BA (HONS) FINE ART PHOTOGRAPHY

The Photography Programme at The Glasgow School of Art has an international reputation for excellence. Established in 1982, it was the first programme of its kind in Europe to award a BA(Hons) Degree in Fine Art Photography and has produced successive generations of successful graduates, many of whom are now leaders in their field.

For us, the invention of photography, and the birth of the modern age could be said to be simultaneous. The momentum of the industrial and post-industrial revolutions advanced photography at an incredible rate, from its low-tech photo mechanical beginnings to its current digital, state-of-the-art technologies.

So, photography is a medium for which a blend of art and technology is fundamental. A blend of conceptual, aesthetic and technological awareness makes the use of photography one of the most relevant artist's mediums of this age.

The power of photography - seen everywhere, used by everyone - is sometimes easy to forget. However, it would be hard to imagine a world without photography and we look forward to sharing that world with you.

Welcome to Fine Art Photography at the GSA.

Lesley Punton, Programme Leader (Acting)

OUR ETHOS

The broad aim of the Fine Art Photography programme is to enable and nurture artists whose interests are based upon, and developed through, technology and lens-based media, the materials of photography and other related disciplines in fine art.

The programme emphasises the full range of possibilities offered to an artist at every stage of the creative process: from the initial intention or idea, through to confrontation with subject, photographic materials, technology and darkroom techniques, then on to the public presentation of an independent artwork.

We believe in the tradition methods and the latest technology. Our students are involved with the early 19th century technologies of the cyanotype, kallitype and platinum/palladium print, on to the digital and moving image of the 21st century. There is also an involvement with audio-visual technologies, drawing, fabrication, installation, and with the possibilities of making artist book-works and publications.

EACH YEAR OF STUDY

The BA(Hons) Fine Art is a four year, full-time degree programme and students are recruited into one of three specialist departments (Photography, Painting + Printmaking, Sculpture + Environmental Art).

The Fine Art programme employs a variety of learning and teaching methods which may alter and adapt according to the perceived needs of students. The main methods of programme delivery are lectures, seminars, artists' presentations and group discussions, tutorials, progress reviews, projects, group crits, workshops, students' exhibitions, field trips, independent study, and formative and summative assessments. In addition to this, the School provides students with opportunities to take part in placements and exchanges. All students undertake a programme of study in the Forum for Critical Inquiry.

In addition to applications for first year level entry, the School also welcomes applications for second and, exceptionally, third year level entry from suitably qualified applicants.

The course aims to:

- Enable students to develop their intellectual and imaginative abilities;
- Guide students' critical and creative thinking through an understanding of philosophical, historical, social and economic contexts of art and culture;
- Encourage students' creative independence, as well as to foster their ability to work collaboratively;
- Develop students as self-critical, socially aware and responsible individuals;
- Develop in students a high level of technical skill and an integrated understanding of the fine art process;
- Cultivate in students high standards of visual articulacy linked to the ability to formulate ideas and concepts efficiently in both speech and writing and in the gathering and use of information;
- Stimulate in students an inquiring and imaginative approach in addressing formal, technical and conceptual creative problems;
- Encourage and enable students to experience the professional practice and application of their fine art skills in a broader cultural context.

YEAR 1

The First Year Fine Art programme is the first of the four years of the undergraduate course in Fine Art at the Glasgow School of Art.

The First Year of Fine Art differs from traditional diagnostic foundation programmes in that students are recruited on a subject-specific basis to one of the four specialisms: Painting & Printmaking, Sculpture, Environmental Art or Photography that are structured into the three academic departments of Fine Art Photography, Painting & Printmaking, and Sculpture & Environmental Art.

The First Year programme deals with the generic creative processes of fine art practice and with medium specific studies of the three academic subject areas is designed to develop confidence and understanding in the management, manipulation and resourcing of ideas from both observation and concept. A wide variety of learning and teaching methods are used to enhance, support and facilitate learning through practice both at a group and individual level.

YEAR 2

Year 2 is spent exploring discipline specific concepts and methodologies in photography in depth, through projects that encourage students to articulate their own particular interests within the context of contemporary photographic practice. A programme of lectures, practical workshops, seminars, tutorials and critical reviews (critiques) challenge and support students in their learning. Students examine how photographs work in photographic sequences, and this is developed in an artists' book project and a public class exhibition in one of the school's gallery spaces.

YEAR 3

Third year students are encouraged to broaden and challenge their practices as visual artists, perhaps utilising a wider range of media beyond the purely photographic, and are asked to explore time based media (primarily video) in term 1. By taking risks, trying things beyond their comfort zone, this a time where students begin to articulate and form their practices as artists. By third year, students are expected to have a greater sense of autonomy, and to gain confidence in the development of practical and critical skills. The studio environment becomes an increasingly important location for the testing out of ideas and the production of work. Year 3 students organise a group exhibition in a venue out-with the school, and create an accompanying catalogue. Additionally, students can opt to attend one of our partner institutions across the globe for a period of exchange in term 1.

YEAR 4

The 4th year is a year of independent study supported through an ongoing, intensive series of critiques/viewings and tutorials with a range of staff. Over the course of the year, students produce a substantial body of work in preparation for the end of year degree show, upon which the degree examination is primarily based. Students are encouraged to exhibit their work publicly as much as possible, to both try out their work in a public context, and to gain important professional practice skills. As with third year, each student's individual studio space becomes an increasingly important place for the testing, development, creation and manufacture of their artworks,

The curriculum of the Fine Art Photography programme is centred on studio practice and is augmented by lectures, seminars, group discussions, critiques and other academic events.

UCAS Information:

Institution Name: GSA Institution Code: G43 UCAS Code: W640