

GSA SUMMARY REPORT OF EQUALITY CONSIDERATION AND ASSESSMENT OF EQUALITY IMPACT

Date of Assessment:	Friday April 8th
School/Department:	DDS
Lead member of staff:	Daniel Livingstone/Brian Loranger
Location of impact assessment documentation (contact or web link):	Avril McAllister a.mcallister@gsa.ac.uk
Area of decision making/title of policy, procedure or relevant practice:	Suite of 4 Masters programmes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDes Sound for the Moving Image; • MSc Serious Games & Virtual Reality; • MSc Medical Visualisation & Human Anatomy; • MSc International Heritage Visualisation
Please indicate if this is:	Existing/reviewed
<p>Summary of how equality, diversity and participation have been considered and due regard given to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED):</p> <p>As a relatively small academic unit, with typically only 50-60 students in total in an academic year, we have produced a single EIA for the suite of Masters programmes in DDS.</p> <p>In conducting our Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) we worked with a wide range of statistical data, recent research and published materials relating to equality and diversity issues in our subject area, and through collating and sharing current practices, processes and outcomes across the DDS Masters programmes and courses. In addition a number of discussions and meetings have been held to include as many part-time academic members of staff as possible, and a number of individual discussions were held between the authors of this report and other academic members of staff to supplement meetings with broader groups of staff.</p> <p>A range of common principles of learning and teaching delivery and assessment have been identified across the DDS programmes and pathways which are illustrated in the documentation and summary of this equality impact assessment.</p>	
<p>Evidence used to make your assessment:</p> <p>The following documents were prepared during the EIA process, to support the collection of data and to develop a rounded view of current equality impact in curriculum development and delivery in these DDS programmes:</p> <p>EIA data 2016: A summary document on Equality Impact Assessments at the DDS collates key data and links to further information/data sources, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A review of our recent and existing student populations; provides an understanding of current environment ○ Summary of external evidence referred to. This includes statistical and demographic data from industry, as well as UK and international student data providing context for the specialist areas relevant to DDS teaching activity. Also included are recent papers and works relating to equality and diversity issues for computing and sound engineering. ○ An overview of the current DDS academic staffing. <p>DDS HEA Equality and Diversity Assessment: A self-evaluation of DDS current practice through the lens of the HEA Equality and Diversity Assessment framework for embedding equality and diversity good practice.</p> <p>EIA examples: A collection of examples from the DDS programmes and elective courses to illustrate current learning, teaching and assessment practice with respect to equality and diversity issues.</p>	

As a result of the analysis of evidence outlined above the following points are highlighted across programmes and electives:

- A consideration of gender representation in the DDS student population shows that the representation of male and female students is reasonably in line with the overall GSA student body. However it is noted that:
 - MVHA & Heritage both have greater female than male representation in the student cohorts which is contrary to current trends in a wide range of programmes and careers related to digital technology where women are generally under-represented. It should be recognized that this positive impact is likely to be due to the specific domains within which these programmes apply the use of digital technologies.
 - SfMI and SGVR have more male oriented cohorts, against the broader predominately (60%) female enrolment at GSA. This is typical of these disciplines, and does to a degree counteract the GSA enrolment. However, we are interested in achieving a better gender balance for future years.
- Currently, BME numbers are low. Action to improve international and home BME applications will be taken in the marketing of the current programmes in order to increase applications.
- Gender/BME bias in results: figures are mixed, but numbers are also quite low (in particular for BME) and it is accordingly difficult to draw strong inferences from this data. DDS to monitor and review.
- It is noted that the three full-time permanent members of academic staff are white European males. However, this is redressed through the inclusion of a much wider, and more diverse, range of tutors across the programmes. Further, guest lectures have included a broad mix of experts with a more balanced gender representation.

Outline any positive or negative impacts you have identified:

Note the following abbreviations: SfMI – MDes Sound for the Moving Image; SG&VR – MSc Serious Games & Virtual Reality; MVHA – MSc Medical Visualisation & Human Anatomy; Heritage – MSc International Heritage Visualisation

Through curriculum design and delivery across these programmes a range of common principles, processes and practices have been established which support the advancing of equality and fostering good relations for all students regardless of protected characteristic.

Curriculum Design:

- The design of ILOs has been anticipatory ensuring that students are not disadvantaged or discriminated against through the competency required for achievement, for example stating that students must be able to engage with audio (SfMI) and visual (all programmes) materials, and use digital technologies without being prescriptive as to how this should be achieved. This enables full participation and advances equality for students regardless of protected characteristic.
- Curriculum is designed to facilitate engagement with and discussion of a range of perspectives, reflecting the diversity of educational and social background of current cohorts and DDS's ambition to achieve further diversity and addressing under-representation in future cohorts. Examples include:
 - **Music for picture** (elective): This elective covers the canon of western-centric film music but also includes contextualised lectures on world film music, including key examples of Asian (e.g. Bollywood) and South American film music. The course leader is also developing content related to African cinema.
 - **SfMI** core classes include AV sequences from world cinema and LGBT cinema to demonstrate multiple approaches to sound design and narrative. Students are also encouraged to provide their own clips for class discussion in order to ensure maximum diversity of viewing experiences.

- **Sound Culture** (elective): inherently grapples with social, racial and class tensions worldwide since the industrial revolution (with weekly topics such as Sound and... the Self/Environment/City/Silence/Politics/Technology/Space/Emotion). Direct source examples are played, such as videos of the competing soundscapes of an Orthodox Cathedral and a neighbouring Mosque in Beirut. Essentially, students are reminded that many aspects of our lived sensory experiences are mediated: from the subliminal biases of news broadcasting, and pre-conceived notions of film sound conventions are challenged by showing counter-cultural examples, such as Jean-Luc Godard's subversive *Weekend* (1967), Abbas Kiarostami's *Close-Up* (1990)
 - In the **Heritage** programme, in order to embrace the diversity of students background's and interests and aspirations, exemplar content is selected to illustrate key course principles and is tailored to the students interests. For example while archaeological examples of visualisation are used, architectural examples are brought in to appeal to students with architectural/conservation backgrounds and mural visualisations (e.g. the Sistine Chapel) are used to encourage those from e.g. a Fine Art background.
 - **SGVR** students have an option in Stage 1 to choose to study interactive visualisation in either a MVHA or a Heritage based context delivery, working with students in respective programme, supporting cross fertilisation of ideas and fostering good relations across the student cohort.
- The structure of these programmes and electives make use of open briefs which encourage students to find their own approaches and solutions and which facilitate students pursuing their own interests, reflecting cultural, heritage or identity, supporting the advancing of equality and fostering good relations. For example, SfMI students are presented with a diverse array of examples from previous years and are asked to develop their own project proposal whilst in MVHA, SGVR and Heritage although students are presented with a long-list of project titles they are also able to propose their own projects. The Stage 3 dissertation demonstrates how students produce a wide range of final projects, including and/or discussing works involving sound, image and 3D visualisation from a range of technical and/or critical perspectives. Similarly in MVHA a project may place greater emphasis on the anatomical/life sciences domain or on technical issues. Within life sciences, previous projects have focused on a wide range of human medical and anatomical aspects – from the cellular or neuro-biology through to healthcare and management and veterinary science.
 - As high levels of technical ability are not a prerequisite for these programmes additional scheduled support is built into their structure for students with less technical backgrounds. This provides extra scaffolding for students with less previous experience with the digital tools and technologies used throughout the programmes thus advancing equality for students who may not have had the opportunity or been encouraged to develop these skills as a result of a protected characteristic, for example age, gender or disability.

Curriculum Delivery:

- Programmes have been designed to include a range of delivery methods which take account of different learning styles ensuring that students regardless of protected characteristic or previous educational experience are able to fully participate and achieve. These including lectures, guest talks and seminars, individual work, group work, student presentations and independent study, supported through scheduled studio and computer lab sessions.
- All programmes include a mixture of individual and group work, again responding to individual learning styles, ensuring students regardless of protected characteristic or previous educational experience are able to fully participate, whilst at the same time providing opportunities for students to develop collaborative working skills in order to foster good relations. This includes:
 - SfMI core courses are assessed through a portfolio of work, including individual and group projects
 - Interactive visualisation (SGVR, MVHA & Heritage) coursework is completed in pairs

- Game Audio (Core for SGVR, elective for SfMI & Heritage) coursework is completed in pairs. In each pair, a SfMI student is matched with a Visualisation (SGVR/Heritage) student.
 - MVHA students do group presentations during Stage 2
 - Several electives also focus on group work (e.g. Film Making Process)
- Programme delivery further facilitates collaborative working within and across cohorts and with alumni which provides opportunities to advance equality for all protected characteristic groups and foster good relations through engagement with different perspectives, for example:
 - The Serious Game Development project in stage 2 of SGVR is a mentored student-led project.
 - A SoundCloud account has just been set up and provides a means for promoting and engaging with audio works developed by students before, during and after their time at the DDS.
 - Twitter, Facebook, Vimeo and LinkedIn provide further avenues for engaging with students in the development of long term working relationships, and are actively used.
 - Students are offered mentors (or 2nd supervisors in Life Sciences) for Stage 3, providing students with additional opportunities to develop their professional networks while studying.
 - The DDS Blog (ddsgsa.net) regularly promotes and highlights the work of graduates of our programmes, regularly highlighting forthcoming performances, papers being published and other activities of our graduates.
 - External networking and development events are also promoted, for example eight students (MVHA & SGVR) took part in the Global Game Jam at Glasgow Caledonian University in January 2016. A group of the SGVR students were awarded a prize at this event, and have since shown the game they developed at further events in Glasgow and Edinburgh.
 - An Interim Degree Show in May provides an additional opportunity, alongside the final degree show, for students to show their work to an external audience and supports the development of professional networks.
 - The DDS is also exploring the use of online discussion forums to extend interaction and discussion beyond the classroom. The Audio for Games course uses a discussion forum on the VLE, and students are encouraged to engage in discussion using this forum. Use of this by students is more limited than would be liked, though we are hoping to build upon this.
 - All programmes are available for part-time study. This can be important for students who have ongoing work or family commitments or are unable to study full time.
 - The VLE is extensively used as a repository for course materials which supports access for students from protected characteristic groups, for example disabled students.
 - Systems are in place to maximise flexibility in delivery, for example individual student tutorials/supervision meetings are scheduled with agreement of staff and students to ensure that these are held at suitable times for both parties; limited resources such as the Dubbing Studios have online booking systems to allow students to schedule and plan their use of these resources. This supports protected characteristic groups, for example disabled students or those with caring responsibilities.

Assessment and feedback:

- Information with regard to assessment is provided in a timely and appropriate way for all programmes. Students are informed of the range of assessments required at the start of each course and detailed briefs are given for each practical assessment, which provide detail on the marking breakdown and criteria, including clear explanation of the 22 point marking scheme. This is beneficial to all students regardless of protected characteristic in order that they can plan their time effectively and are clear about what is expected in assessment and particularly for students for example whose first language is not English. The positive impact of this approach – in particular in repeating information on the 22 point marking scheme – has been demonstrated through the reduction of the number of queries received with regard to marks and grades.

- A range of methods of providing formative feedback to students is being used on the programme in order to ensure that students are engaged in their own learning and can benefit from engagement with their peers, thus fostering good relations by providing opportunities for exchange and cross fertilisation of ideas and perspectives. One innovative example delivered at the midway point on the Game Audio course required each student pair to give a 5 minute presentation of their proposed work for the course. An online feedback form was created and the tutor and all students used this to provide feedback on each presentation.

Student feedback shows that they had found this approach useful for their own planning, particularly seeing how other groups were approaching similar problems. It was felt that this was a particularly strong and effective formative feedback session, and DDS is looking to extend this approach to other courses.

- Methods of assessment are varied and designed to provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of ILOs regardless of learning style or protected characteristic, for example:
 - In *Data Acquisition and Processing* there is considerable freedom for each group to choose the detailed subject matter and form of representation to use in completing the assessment. Projects might involve interactive 3D simulations, pre-rendered animations, or could include 3D printed artefacts.
 - Stage 3 projects will generally include the creation of audio-visual works of some form, but could be focussed entirely on a critical appreciation and analysis of existing works or approaches.
 - The range of projects towards building a portfolio in *Sound for Moving Image 1 and 2* covers a variety of AV forms and written work.
 - In *Sound Culture*, students can submit essays or create original AV works that address the themes that they wish to explore.
- A range of methods are used across these programmes to provide formative feedback with details outlined in course specifications. This ensures that formative feedback processes are transparent, accessible and appropriate to all students regardless of protected characteristic:
 - Informal formative assessment is available regularly throughout the year and is integral to staff support during scheduled lab/studio support sessions.
 - Mentored courses such as the Serious Game Development course have contact hours focussed in mentoring sessions where students discuss their work and progress in an ongoing weekly process, and where formative feedback is part of the weekly review of work.
 - The Film Making Process includes sessions dedicated to formative feedback – where student groups discuss their work, scripts and plans for filming their scripts, and where tutors comment and provide supportive formative feedback to aid students in the successful completion of their films.
 - Opportunities exist during supported studio/computer lab sessions for students to discuss their progress and get feedback as well as support from tutors.

Student engagement:

DDS engages with student feedback through dialog with individual students, student representatives, Staff Student Consultative Committee meetings and student representation at Boards of Studies.

Student feedback is sought at the end of Stages 1 and 2 with feedback forms being sent to all students to collect feedback on the learning and teaching experience. Student feedback received is formative and supports the development of and engagement with the curriculum development, for example:

- In SfMI, students are encouraged to suggest AV examples for use in classes. This also happens

in other programmes, and through in class discussions and student presentations, student contributions form a key part of the curriculum across the programmes.

- In Game Audio, the VLE discussion board is actively used for student comments and suggestions for additional examples and materials to be considered by the class. Many of these examples were then explicitly referred to or highlighted in subsequent lectures.

Positive feedback has also been received as to the benefit of the relationship building which happens across the programmes in relation to the student peer network creates opportunities. It is anticipated that this will continue to advance equality and foster good relations for all protected characteristic groups.

There are some areas where DDS has taken recent action to reduce potential negative impacts:

- Review of contact hours. Recent work towards developing teaching norms revealed some courses missing contact hour details. This information is important for students who need to be able to plan ahead, and has been updated as required.
- Opening hours. DDS has relatively limited fixed opening hours compared to the GSA overall. Tutors provide extended hours where possible, with a rota amongst tutors to allow evening and weekend access to facilities where possible.

Summary of the actions you have taken or plan to take as a result: (Please attach your action plan)

This section sets out the actions which will be undertaken and embedded into the DDS QEAP. The intended outcomes of these actions, timeframe for achievement and responsibility for delivery are outlined in the section below.

Marketing and Recruitment:

- 1) Current marketing campaigns for SfMI focus on creative images and examples of work, and prominently feature work and quotes from female and BME students and graduates where possible and appropriate. A focus on creative outputs, rather than the technology used to create it, has been found to attract a more diverse student body in other institutions, and reflects the experience in recruiting to e.g. computing activities run by CoderDojo locally.



(Images from works by Yoonjung Lim, Donald Barr & Cavan Campbell, SFMI 2016, all featuring in the current advertising campaigns for DDS PGT programmes)

This action is already underway, led by DDS Head of Postgraduate Programmes, supported by other academic staff and marketing staff at GSA. SGVR marketing will also be adapted to focus on creative works and to try to include works that may encourage greater diversity in applications.

Curriculum Development & Delivery:

- 2) Consideration of equality and equality impact as part of learning, teaching and assessment to be embedded as an ongoing process within DDS. This report, and supporting documents, represents the start of this process in collecting information on the current ways in which our work addresses the PSED and DDS programmes' impact on students from protected characteristic groups
- 3) Course material to be reviewed and adjusted as an ongoing process. Impacts should be anticipated during the development and revision of programme specifications and when planning course delivery.
- 4) The design of course assessment will continue to offer a range of methodologies in anticipation of students' needs related to protected characteristics.

- 5) All student are assessed using the same criteria and in line with the GSA Code of Assessment. Criteria and ILOs will be reviewed and revised over time as part of programme development in order to monitor their equality impact.

Assessment and Feedback:

- 6) There is a need to ensure that good practice highlighted in this equality impact assessment with regard to timely and effective feedback is communicated to all academic staff including part-time staff and visiting lecturers in order to support reflection and further development of practice which anticipated student need regardless of protected characteristic.
- 7) Summative coursework feedback to students is primarily at the end of each stage. DDS to review the provision of summative feedback during each stage for coursework submitted at different points of the academic year in order to ensure that feedback is timely and can be built on.

Student Engagement:

- 8) With regard to for example a mixture of individual and small group tutorials to collect feedback from students on course delivery. End of stage online feedback forms are also used. These processes are to be continued and built upon.
- 9) Continue to engage students through SSCC, Stage 1 and Stage 2 feedback forms, BoS and tutorials, and ensure analysis of feedback is disseminated to all staff.

Staff Engagement:

- 10) In order to support equality consideration and further enhancement disseminate EIA report and support materials to all teaching staff.
- 11) Ensure that student feedback is disseminated to all teaching staff to support collaborative curriculum development.

Summary of what you anticipate will change as a result of your actions and where/when these will be reported and reviewed:

1. Change: Improved academic staff awareness of current and recent work, processes and examples of good practice and areas of improvement.

Action: The EIA report and supporting documents to be disseminated to all DDS academic staff & MVHA staff at GU.

Who: DDS Head of Postgraduate Programmes

When: May 2016

Reporting: PMAR, Annual

2. Change: Improved gender balance in SFMI and SGVR; Improved BME participation across programmes

Action: Adaptations to marketing content and activities & engagement for programme promotion with relevant groups (e.g. Scottish Women In Games)

Who: Programme Leaders

Reporting: PMAR, Annual

3. Change: Improved embedding of Equality & Diversity issues in curriculum planning & development. Through more explicit consideration of issues at key points in academic year, the considerations will become more embedded in ongoing processes.

Action: Equality & Diversity Impacts to be considered at Masters/RDSC committees. These meetings are for academic staff to discuss a range of issues, but do not have a specific item to focus on Equality Impacts.

Who: Academic Programme Manager

Reporting: PMAR, Annual

4. Change: Improved understanding of student perceptions of equality & diversity issues
Action: Add question(s) relating to equality and diversity to student feedback questionnaires.
Who: DDS Head of Postgraduate Programmes
Reporting: PMAR, Annual
5. Change: Updated Programme and Course Specifications, including consideration of Equality Impacts throughout the redevelopment process
Action: DDS PGT programme and course specifications are to be re-written during the next academic year as the GSA moves to 20 point courses as a standard for PGT programmes. The existing programmes will need re-written accordingly.
Who: This will involve a wide range of teaching and support staff, led by DDS Head of Postgraduate Programmes and programme leaders
Reporting: BoS, UPC

How will these changes contribute to the delivery of GSA's equality outcomes:

It is anticipated that these changes will contribute to:

Equality Outcomes (1) and (2) through improved specific exploration with students of equality diversity issues through feedback questionnaires.

Equality Outcome (3) through engaging all staff, including part-time, and visiting lecturers in the development and implementation of curriculum which reflects and support diversity of culture and identity.

Equality Outcome (7) through the continued development and delivery of curriculum which engages with diverse perspectives, encourages collaboration and enables students to pursue a diverse range of cultural and identify related interests.

Equality Outcome (8) through the review of programme marketing materials and strategies which it is anticipated will address areas of student under-representation.

The outcome of your assessment:

- No action – no potential adverse impact
- Amendments or changes to remove barriers/promote positive impact
- Proceed with awareness of adverse impact

Sign-off, authorisation and publishing

Review Lead

Name	Daniel Livingstone
Position	DDS Head of Postgraduate Programmes
Signature	
Date	11/4/16

Executive Lead

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Position	Acting Director of DDS
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Date	12.04.2016

Equality Lead (Head of Student Support and Development)

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