

Glasgow School of Art Programme Specification

Programme Title: Master of Letters (MLitt) in Fine Art Practice

1. Programme Details:

Programme Title	Master of Letters (MLitt) in Fine Art Practice
HECOS Code	
School	School of Fine Art
Programme Leader	Mick McGraw
Minimum Duration of Study	12 months, registered study
Maximum Duration of Study	24 months, registered study
Mode of Study	Full Time
Award to be Conferred	Master of Letters
Exit Awards	Stage 1: PG Cert in Fine Art Practice Stage 2: PG Diploma in Fine Art Practice Stage 3: MLitt in Fine Art Practice
SCQF Level:	11
Credits:	180

Academic Session	2020-21
Date of Approval	PACAAG April 2020 (updated UPC September 2020)

2. Awarding Institution	University of Glasgow
3. Teaching Institutions	The Glasgow School of Art
3.1 Campus	Glasgow
4. Lead School/Board of Studies	School of Fine Art
5. Other Schools/Board of Studies	N/A
6. Programme Accredited By (PSRBs)	N/A

7. Entry Qualifications	
7.1 Highers	N/A
7.2 A Levels	N/A
7.3 Other	A good honours degree in the relevant subject area (Photography and the Moving Image, Painting, Drawing, Print Media, Sculpture or Performance) or equivalent professional practice.
7.4 English Language Requirements	All students will have to provide evidence of English language proficiency when applying. International Students Students who require a Tier 4 visa to study in the UK must meet one of the following requirements in order to gain entry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IELTS for UKVI Academic with an overall score of 6.0 with a minimum of 5.5 in all components; • complete an acceptable Pre-sessional English Language Programme taught from within the UK with an outcome that equates to the IELTS scores as stated above. Students who have a degree from an English speaking country, or are a national of an English speaking country as listed in the UKVI Guidance, may use this as proof of English language ability.

8. Programme Scope:

The Master of Letters (MLitt) in Fine Art Practice is a postgraduate programme in the School of Fine Art at GSA. It is a one year taught programme, with the following six specialist pathways:

- Photography and the Moving image
- Painting
- Drawing
- Print Media
- Sculpture
- Performance

Applicants to the MLitt will identify in advance which pathway they would like to study. Students will be based within, and supported by, staff from the appropriate department of the School of Fine Art. The programme is studio-based and centred on practice, and is intended to provide opportunities for students to pursue in-depth subject specific study in fine art practice at postgraduate level.

MLitt Fine Art Practice Specialist Pathways

Painting Pathway

The specialist pathway is primarily focused on the study and practice of painting. The course aims to provide a stimulating environment that both fosters discourse between students and encourages critical reflection and experimentation. A series of lectures and seminars, reflecting a variety of theoretical and historical perspectives on both painting and the other pathway specialisms, are designed to inform debate. Other issues the course will engage with include the significant realignment of painting in response to the proliferation of fine art media that has occurred in recent decades. Students are provided with dedicated, shared studios and will have access to the School's technical workshops. An introduction to research concepts and skills will enable students to approach their studio projects with assurance, founded on a coherent, personal methodology. On completion of the course students are expected to have achieved a high level of maturity, confidence and professionalism that will sustain them in their future careers

Print Media Pathway

For students on the Print Media pathway, the emphasis throughout the programme will be the development of ideas related to the techniques and applications available through print media, grounded in a firm knowledge of the history and traditions of print and connected media. Students will undertake advanced, self-directed study based on the ability to critically engage with ideas through exploitation of print media. A lecture series and seminar programme will enhance and challenge the theoretical methodologies of print media in a fine art context and foster dialogue around the importance and relevance of the use of print in our everyday surroundings and culture. By the end of the programme, students will be expected to demonstrate their learning through innovative and original means, with an emphasis on research and contextual investigation via thorough interrogation of the subject. It is anticipated that students will exploit the range of media offered within the department.

Sculpture Pathway

This specialist pathway offers students opportunity to engage with the expanded field of theory and practice of Sculpture, specifically with emphasis on place and context. Through a combination of studio practice, access to specialist workshop facilities, critical discourse, as well as potential

links with Sculpture and Environmental Art's external partners, it offers a challenging and motivating environment through which to experiment, reflect and develop new individual directions. The Sculpture pathway will culminate in a self-directed enquiry, which, through practice, will test and investigate theoretical approaches to making, collaboration and social engagement. The Sculpture pathway provides unrivaled studio and workshop facilities in the centre of the city, with access to high-end workshops and exhibition spaces, offering ambitious working opportunities in terms of scale, space and install. As such, it offers opportunity for students to hone and develop professional skills in relation to the specific challenges presented by each particular context, offering a unique catalyst for learning, dialogue, development and production.

Drawing Pathway

This specialist pathway is aimed at Students from a wide range of academic and creative backgrounds who have in common a desire to further develop drawing as a core activity. The course is founded on the individual exploration of drawing as a means of discovery, expression and analysis conducted in a supportive and challenging educational environment. Through practice, criticism and exposure to contemporary and historical contexts students are encouraged to identify the most appropriate methodologies for articulating their ideas. Whilst the studio will be the base from where most individual and collective approaches to drawing will take place, opportunities to take part in residencies, field trips, and workshops will also be available. Through the various aspects of the course students will consider methodologies both historical and contemporary and explore the potential for experimentation afforded by specific contexts and environments.

Students will explore drawing as the armature for interrogating both process and its transformatory capacity whilst engaging with drawing as a conceptual, observational, tactile and visual activity. One of the core aspects of this pathway is the acquisition of key transferable skills fundamental to a robust and professional drawing practice. By the end of the programme the students will have consolidated a working archive that demonstrates an informed, personal, and highly developed drawing practice that will be sustainable in the graduate's professional practice.

Photography and the Moving Image Pathway

This specialist Pathway offers students the opportunity to develop their Fine Art Practice through different modes of lens-based media, including: digital and analogue photography as well as the moving image. The course is structured in order to enable exploration of these areas within the broader context of Fine Art Practice. With access to excellent technical facilities students will have the opportunity to construct and investigate different potential methodologies for practice. The course also approaches methods for display through print, projection, screen and other inter-related forms.

Students will be able to use these media in order to interrogate the conceptual and image related aspects of their practices. The development of ideas in relation to practice and the expanded forms of practice are integral to the course, and students will be informed by wider debate around contemporary Fine Art, through the context of the specific media in order to develop, and structure, both the practical and theoretical underpinning of their work.

By the end of the programme, students will be expected to demonstrate their learning through innovative and original means, with an emphasis on research and contextual investigation via thorough interrogation of the subject areas.

Performance Pathway

This specialist Pathway is primarily focused on the study of performance. Whilst performance, for some, will always occupy an avante garde role, it has gained, for many, both in importance and

independent significance through the work of major international artists, collectors, curators and educators. The challenge to the Fine Art curriculum, since the liberalising of art education in the 1960's, has been to maintain the connection with 'craft' and its history whilst opening up to the opportunities of expanded 'international practice'. With the advances in materials and technologies the 'technical' aspect of Fine Art practice for both the student and the professional has generated new formats for production and exhibition. Performance, as much as any other process, has undergone a transformation that is, among other things, 'site specific', 'installational', 'narrative', 'conceptual', 'interactive' and has utilised a wide range of techniques and technologies. An indication of these developments and the interest of artists and audiences can be found in the number of galleries, major exhibitions and publications devoted to performance over the last 20 years. It is a studio based course which may encompass all elements related to performance; sculpture, installation, lighting, sound, interactivity, all elements which draw from an expanded practice within Fine Art. By the end of the programme the students will be expected to demonstrate their learning through a personal approach and exploration of a range of media associated with performance via a thorough theoretical underpinning of the subject.

Applicants to the MLitt in Fine Art Practice will normally submit a portfolio of their recent work accompanied by an outline programme of study proposal for the chosen pathway (up to 500 words). This proposal will form the basis of a developing practice and research programme of study. This proposal will be reconsidered and re-configured through critical reflection at all three stages of the programme.

The programme promotes and develops the importance of self-directed practice and learning.

Over the year each student will progress through 3 stages of studio practice:

- Origination (in which the first exploration of the content and themes are made);
- Investigation (in which testing, sampling and experimentation are key);
- Consolidation (the resolution of a cohesive body of work).

Students on the programme will study within their specialist area, supported through tutorials, critiques, and specifically focused lectures and seminars. They will also have the opportunity to interact with peers from other subject areas of the programme, principally through lectures and workshops that address research methods and other more generic, conceptual and philosophical issues. A balanced curriculum will ensure that students are able to fully devote themselves to their chosen field of study, whilst supporting their learning through the provision of a range of interdisciplinary opportunities for critical reflection and personal development.

9. Programme Structure:

The MLitt is a one-year Programme, structured into 3 Stages, leading to the accumulation of 180 credits. The programme runs from September to September. The first two Stages of the programme comprise a combination of Core courses available only to MLitt students, and additional courses available to all GSA PGT students. In exceptional circumstances it may be possible in the early stages of the programme to consider an alternate Core Research methods course in Stage 1. The final Stage of the programme comprises one single core course that is available only to MLitt students. All courses are assessed at the end of each Stage.

It is possible for students to exit the programme with an award before commencement of Stage 3 (MLitt) if they have successfully gained the necessary credit points as follows:

- Postgraduate Certificate: 60 credits
- Postgraduate Diploma: 120 credits.

Stage 1 (Postgraduate Certificate).

Duration: 15 weeks

Total credits: 60

Stage 2 (Postgraduate Diploma).

Duration: 15 weeks

Total credits: 60

Stage 3 (MLitt).

Duration: 15 weeks

Total credits: 60

Stage 1	Credits	SCQF Level
PLIT102 Studio Core One: Origination	40	11
PCXS101 Core Research Methods: Research Methods And Methodologies In Practice	20	11
Total	60	
Exit Award	PG Cert	
Stage 2		
PLIT103 Studio Core Two: Investigation	40	11
GSA PGT Elective course	20	11
Total	60	
Exit Award	PG Dip	
Stage 3		
PLIT323 Studio Core Three: Consolidation <i>This course comprises 2 elements: Presentation of studio work Positioning statement</i>	60	11
Total	60	
Exit Award	MLitt	

9.1 Programme Structure – Exchange In/Exchange Out/Study Abroad:

N/A

10. What are the requirements for progressing from each stage?

A student will be permitted to progress to Stage 3 only if they have obtained a grade point average of C3(12.0) or above in the taught courses (Stage 1 & 2) with at least 75% of the credits at grade D3(9) or above and all credits at grade F3(6) or above.

11. Programme Aims:

The Master of Letters in Fine Art Practice aims to provide a programme of study which will enable students to:

- Critically develop a body of practical work in the context of a rigorous and supportive intellectual environment;
- Develop practical work that allows exploration of individual research interests;
- Develop an understanding of the contextual and historical evolution of contemporary fine art, and relate this to current critical and philosophical debates;
- Develop the confidence, maturity, intellectual and interpersonal skills necessary to function successfully and professionally within the field of fine art;
- Develop and demonstrate an understanding of research methodologies and processes within the professional fields of contemporary fine art.

11.1 Stage 1 Aims:

Stage 1, (PgCert), Weeks 1 to 15: 60 Credits

The Postgraduate Certificate aims to offer each student the opportunity to:

- Develop an understanding of the historical evolution of fine art, including contemporary practice, in the context of the chosen specialist pathway;
- Acquire and develop knowledge of some of the key theoretical and conceptual discourses of contemporary fine art practice, and pursue this through studio practice, tutorials, crits and seminars;
- Work with a critical and reflective approach to the methods and techniques of the chosen pathway in relation to contemporary fine art practice;
- Acquire and develop an understanding of research methodologies, including the use of archival sources, and the ethics of fine art practice.

11.2 Stage 2 Aims:

Stage 2 (Pg Dip), Weeks 16 to 30: 60 Credits

The programme aims at Stage 2 are designed to develop the studio, conceptual and research skills acquired in Stage 1.

The Postgraduate Diploma aims to offer each student the opportunity to:

- Develop and demonstrate a critical knowledge of the chosen specialist pathway, its theories and discourses, represented through practice and other forms of outcome;
- Further develop a critical understanding of practice that is relevant to the condition of contemporary art;
- Demonstrate an empirical approach to studio practice and critical review.

11.3 Stage 3 Aims:

Stage 3 (Masters), Weeks 31 to 45: 60 Credits

Stage 3 programme aims are designed to offer the student the opportunity to realise their individual project in a way that demonstrates a reflective practice alongside a developed understanding of the theories, methodologies and practicalities of their chosen specialism. This will be represented through a presentation of resolved work accompanied by a reflective report.

Stage 3 of the MLitt Fine Art Practice aims to offer each student the opportunity to:

- Demonstrate, through practice the realisation of a comprehensive and professional understanding of methodologies and techniques involved in the production of contemporary fine art;

- Demonstrate through the work & supporting study a synthesis of the intellectual, practical and theoretical issues that arise from developing a specific art practice in a contemporary context;
- Demonstrate, through presentation, both a critical and analytical reflection on the processes and research embodied in the project.

12. Intended Learning Outcomes of Programme:

After full participation in and successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:

Knowledge and Understanding

- Identify and evaluate those issues that are fundamental to their work;
- Employ research skills and techniques in order to continue the development of these issues in their work;
- Have a clear and informed understanding of the relation of their work to wider issues within contemporary fine art practice and society at large.

Applied Knowledge and Understanding

- Employ the relevant technical and intellectual skills in order to produce work that clearly articulates those issues that it addresses;
- Employ a range of research based skills and techniques in order to produce work that is both original and assured;
- Produce work of a high standard that is informed by and contributes to its disciplinary specialism.

Professional Practice: Communication, Presentation, Working with Others

- Employ the relevant skills, aptitudes and attitudes that are necessary to produce and exhibit work in professional contexts;
- Work effectively and efficiently, both independently and with others, in a variety of professional situations;
- Demonstrate high levels of competence in the public presentation of their work and research.

12.1 Intended Learning Outcomes of Stage 1

Knowledge and Understanding

- Apply the principles and rationale for re-appraisal of previous work;
- Express an understanding of fine art production in relation to the subject pathway;
- Recognize the critical issues relating to the chosen subject pathway;
- Identify the current issues in contemporary fine art production;
- Demonstrate knowledge of the principles and rationale of independent research.

Applied Knowledge and Understanding

- Use a range of the technical skills, processes and practices associated with the subject pathway;
- Recognize the link of own artistic/cultural intentions to critical issues arising from the chosen pathway.

Professional Practice: Communication, Presentation, Working with Others

- Identify and analyse complex problems and issues;

- Demonstrate appropriate responses to the views and positions of others, including offering substantial, constructive criticism;
- Exercise autonomy and initiative;
- Communicate critical self-evaluation to peers and specialists using a range of appropriate methods including ICT and original work.

12.2 Intended Learning Outcomes of Stage 2

Knowledge and Understanding

- Develop a critical understanding of the principles and rationale for re-appraisal of previous work;
- Distinguish how art production can contribute to the discussions of some of the critical issues of contemporary thought and experience;
- Evaluate the critical issues of the chosen pathway and how they could more broadly relate to fine art production;
- Appraise the current issues in contemporary fine art production in relation to the chosen pathway;
- Differentiate the critical balance between research and practice in the planning of a significant project within fine art practice.

Applied Knowledge and Understanding

- Apply a range of the principal skills, processes and practices associated with your subject pathway;
- Contribute to the discourses around current issues in fine art through tutorials, crits and seminars.

Professional Practice: Communication, Presentation, Working with Others

- Demonstrate originality and creativity in dealing with complex problems and issues;
- Develop an awareness of own position within, and contribution to, the wider contexts of art and cultural practice, including the ability to present and discuss own work;
- Make informed choices regarding the development of individual learning experiences;
- Make formal presentations about specialised topics to informed audiences using a range of appropriate methods including ICT and original work.

12.3 Intended Learning Outcomes of Stage 3

Knowledge and Understanding

- Integrate a significant and informed understanding of the principles and rationale for re-appraisal of previous work;
- Summarise the inter-relationship between fine art production and the philosophical discourses around critical issues of contemporary thought and experience;
- Relate how fine art production can address critical, political, theoretical and ethical issues;
- Resolve how the proposed project relates to the wider context of contemporary fine art;
- Determine how research in and through the arts contributes to art production and the discourses around contemporary issues.

Applied Knowledge and Understanding

- Consolidate and synthesise a range of the principal skills, processes and practices associated with the subject pathway and resolve ideas in a final presentation of art works;
- Combine research methods and findings in a presentation supporting the realisation of art works.

Professional Practice: Communication, Presentation, Working with Others

- Implement informed judgment in relation to complex problems and issues;
- Maintain good practice and co-operation when working in professional contexts, including working constructively with others in a variety of pedagogical and institutional situations;
- Show significant responsibility for consolidating independent enquiry;
- Use a critically informed range of presentation and communication methodologies appropriate to underpin studio practice.

13. Learning and Teaching Approaches:

- Studio Practice
- Seminars
- Lectures
- Workshops
- Critiques
- Tutorials
- Independent study
- Presentations

Students will be contacted in the pre-arrival period to access additional material about their programmes.

14. Assessment Methods:

General statement

The Glasgow School of Art Code of Assessment aligns with a Code of Assessment that has been developed by Glasgow University. The code includes grade descriptors which assign a level of attainment in relation to the Level Learning Outcomes, to each grade. The code designates eight grades, from A to H.

The definitive statements regarding all aspects of assessments (including progression) on the MLitt programme at GSA may be found at http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_477762_en.pdf (see especially pp. 18-21).

Assessment on MLitt programme

Formative and summative assessment strategies are used throughout the Fine Art Practice programme. Formative and summative assessment operates to guide students in the development of all aspects of work and studies.

Formative:

Formative assessment is essentially diagnostic, which is to say that it takes the form of critical feedback on each student's progress in relation to relevant course Learning Outcomes. Such feedback is offered in a variety of contexts, including the following:

- seminars
- critiques
- tutorials

Grades are not awarded during formative assessment: the intention is to offer guidance to enable students to reflect upon their progress and levels of achievement as they move towards Summative assessment.

Engagement with formative assessment is a mandatory requirement.

Summative:

The following elements of students' work will be considered during Summative assessment, and grades will be awarded in accordance with The Glasgow School of Art Code of Assessment:

- Practical work
- Presentations
- Written work

There will be three summative assessment points throughout the programme, each representing an exit qualification. Students may exit the programme with a Postgraduate Certificate after successfully completing Stage 1, or a Postgraduate Diploma after successfully completing Stage 2. Interim awards will need to be surrendered if a student resumes their studies and successfully achieves a higher exit award.

The table below details the points in the programme where formal (Summative) assessment is expected to take place.

Stage	Summative assessment points
Stage 1: PgCert	Week 15
Stage 2: PgDip	Week 30
Stage 3: Masters	Week 45

The process for the assessment of the 3 stages will comprise:

- Internal assessment;
- Internal exam board to agree awards and progression between Stages.

In addition, Stage 3 will also comprise an external assessment stage, which will be reported to the Final Exam Board.

Assessment Criteria

The criteria of assessment are linked directly to the learning outcomes for the PgCert, PgDip and Masters stages of the programme.

The programme provides two forms of assessment, formative and summative. Formative assessment will take the form of seminars, tutorials, and so on, which provide the opportunity to refine and develop key principles in fields of enquiry, and to prepare for submission in the summative assessments, i.e. in assessed projects and coursework, and in the final submission for the Research Project, or in the case of those exiting at Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma level, for the assessed projects and coursework.

For all three stages of the programme, students will be assessed through the presentation of practical work, written submissions and at stages 2 and 3, a presentation. Each course will be examined against its specific Learning Outcomes.

Pg Cert: At the end of Stage 1, for those wishing to exit with a PgCert, assessment will be based on practical and written work.

PG Dip: At the end of Stage 2, assessment provides a point for those wishing to exit with the PgDip. Assessment will be by a review of all practical work, supporting studies and a presentation. At this stage of the programme, students can elect to continue their study at Masters Level. All students selecting this option must complete a proposal of study.

Masters: At the end of Stage 3, assessment will be by a review of all practical work, supporting studies, a reflective report and a selected exhibition. Interviews with the External Examiner may take place.

15. Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statements and Other External or Internal Reference Points:

None

16. Additional Relevant Information:

Please refer to the University Calendar for the full PGT regulations:
<https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/senateoffice/policies/uniregs/regulations2019-20/gsa/genericpgt/>

Programme Leader:	Mick McGraw
Programme Title:	MLitt in Fine Art Practice
School:	School of Fine Art

1. Summary of amendments to Programme Specification for 2020/21 as a result of COVID-19 and list of Academic activities affected:

With the proposed blended learning model due to social distancing measures it is anticipated that students will have limited time in the buildings. This will have an affect on use of studio and workshops facilities. It is anticipated that tutorial delivery, lectures and seminars, may be a mix of online and face to face although this is unresolved at the time of writing.

Given this is a practice-based programme, the emphasis is on studio and making. Some of the terminology in the Programme spec reflects this and states access to “Studio”, “Studio Practice”, “Access to specialist workshop facilities”, “Use a range of the technical skills, processes and practices associated with the subject”. The new document/Covid Handbook to be circulated to new students explains the differences in studio and what the permutations of studio can be to mitigate the information in the Programme Specs. It is hoped that the blended model of delivery will be able to allow some form of restricted access to specialist workshop facilities and to be able to engage in the specialist nature of the technical support available.

In addition to the programme specification the **COVID-19 Response Student Guide** outlines the overarching principles the GSA has established to ensure that in the current COVID-19 context, learning remains the priority and is adapted in the light of changes to the public health demands resulting from the pandemic. [You can read the guide here.](#)

2. Details and outcomes of consultation with students regarding the changes detailed in question 1:

This was discussed with new applicants to the Programme via a zoom meeting where we spoke about the potential for blended learning (this was before GSA emailed its most recent information regarding ‘hybrid-flexi’) but outlined very similar information.

3. Details of consultation with External Examiners and PSRBs regarding the changes detailed in question 1:

At the time of writing we are awaiting feedback from the External Examiner but expect this to happen very soon and can be updated to this document. We will be having our External Examiners in zoom meetings in two weeks and this will be discussed in detail.

The Contingency Actions Pro Forma will be updated once feedback is received.

4. Details of how the changes detailed in question 1 meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty and how any potential for negative impact for students from protected characteristic groups has been or will be mitigated.

Student Access to Learning Inputs/Materials: In the event of a hybrid curriculum delivery arrangement all on-line curriculum content and material will be made available to MLitt Fine Art Practice students primarily through GSA’s Canvas platform to include announcements, timetabling, studio activities, lectures, seminars and electives. On-line content and delivery will be based on a blend of scheduled student/staff contact and students being able to interact with online resources using a range of digital software as appropriate, including Zoom, Padlet, Virtual Classroom, etc. Blended physical and on-line curriculum delivery will help mitigate the potential impact of a range of Covid19 restrictions on students including travel to Glasgow, access to GSA Campus and facilities, students with health issues necessitating shielding and students with carer responsibilities.

The timetable will clearly set out when students should send work to staff in advance of any online contact to enable staff to see/hear work before the commencement of the tutorial on zoom. Scheduled one to one tutorials will allow dialogue between staff and students either face to face or on zoom.

Zoom ‘open surgeries’ will be available for one hour in weeks outwith tutorial contact for students to be able to access a member of staff.

Staff will ensure that students are aware that the majority of our contact will focus on practice and not on ‘digital learning or production’. We have had many confused students who seem to think that they will now need to make ‘digital art’ but this has now been addressed and we will encourage students to continue to focus on practice in a practice-based programme. Online resources will be there to further enhance their learning but their main focus should be in the production of art works.

Pathway staff: The MLitt pathway staff will continue to be the main point of contact for students, offering them a subject specific point of contact as well as a pastoral role.

IRF’s: As currently happens, as soon as the programme are informed of an individual requirement form, the pathway staff arrange a meeting with the student to identify any reasonable adjustments to their study and any additional arrangements.

Name of Convenor of Board of Studies:	Alistair Payne
Date of Board of Studies Approval:	11 August 2020
Name of Convenor of PACAAG:	Vicky Gunn
Date of PACAAG Approval:	19 August 2020

Following approval by Board of Studies and PACAAG, the pro forma will be published with the Programme Specification as an addendum.