

**Glasgow School of Art Programme Specification**

**Programme Title: Master of Design in Sound for the Moving Image**

*Please note that this programme specification is correct on the date of publication but may be subject to amendment prior to the start of the 2021-22 Academic Year.*

**1. Programme Details:**

<b>Programme Title</b>	Master of Design in Sound for the Moving Image
<b>HECOS Code</b>	100890/100222/100717/100862
<b>School</b>	Simulation and Visualisation
<b>Programme Leader</b>	Ronan Breslin
<b>Minimum Duration of Study</b>	12 months, registered study
<b>Maximum Duration of Study</b>	24months, registered study
<b>Mode of Study</b>	Full-time, Part-time
<b>Award to be Conferred</b>	Master of Design in Sound for the Moving Image (M.Des)
<b>Exit Awards</b>	Postgraduate Certificate (Pg Cert) Postgraduate Diploma (Pg Dip) Master of Design in Sound for the Moving Image (M.Des)
<b>SCQF Level:</b>	11
<b>Credits:</b>	180

<b>Academic Session</b>	2021-22
<b>Date of Approval</b>	PACAAG April 2020 (updated UPC September 2020)

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

<b>7. Entry Qualifications</b>	
<b>7.1 Highers</b>	N/A
<b>7.2 A Levels</b>	N/A
<b>7.3 Other</b>	<p>All applicants should normally have a good honours degree in a relevant subject area or equivalent professional experience. The admissions requirements for the MDes in Sound for the Moving Image programme are:</p> <p>Submission of a 500 word written text outlining their motivation for undertaking postgraduate study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submission of a portfolio of work according to the guidelines specified in the postgraduate application form</li> <li>• Demonstration of critical awareness at interview</li> </ul> <p>Overseas applicants who are unable to attend for interview must submit the proposal and portfolio work (where appropriate). In</p>

	<p>addition, a telephone or Skype interview will be required. Overseas applicants for whom English is not their first language should normally obtain a minimum score of 6.0 in the IELTS test or equivalent.</p>
<p><b>7.4 English Language Requirements</b></p>	<p>All students will have to provide evidence of English language proficiency when applying.</p> <p>International Students</p> <p>Students who require a Tier 4 visa to study in the UK must meet one of the following requirements in order to gain entry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IELTS for UKVI Academic with an overall score of 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in all components;</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul> <p>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.</p>

## 8. Programme Scope:

The MDes in Sound for the Moving Image provides an academic framework for postgraduate students to engage with the craft and the creative practice of sound production applied to film, animation, television, new media, electronic games, theatre and visual art as well as equipping students with the tools required to develop a research project within this field. The programme promotes production of original work, through individual or group-based research, that is conceptually-driven, aesthetically challenging and wide ranging in its use of sound design and music production/composition.

The programme of study is aimed at postgraduate students who wish to explore and develop their creative practice through the medium of sound design and music composition/production for the moving image. Students completing the programme will have developed the capability to respond confidently to conceptual challenges that arise through their creative practice as well as having attained a high level of technical ability in the application and use of tools for sound production. Students will also have achieved a grounding in the theoretical and historical framework of sound for the moving image in tandem with the ability to contextualise their own work within this framework.

The programme is delivered via a series of taught workshops, set and elective projects, lecture and seminar based sessions and self-directed learning. The emphasis of the programme rationale is the interplay between creative practices underpinned by theoretical research, mediated through the craft elements of sound production within a visual environment. Students will be expected to engage in a high level of self-directed learning, research and independent critical reflection, as well as participating in the taught elements of the course of study.

This programme prepares students for two pathways: entry into a professional sound production environment or further academic study by research. Opportunities for further research can be accessed within The Glasgow School of Art or in the greater academic community and will be driven by the ethos of research underpinning the programme. Current trends and emerging methodologies in professional practice will be defined by a visiting lecturer timetable bringing students into contact with established practitioners within the field of sound for picture.

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**9. Programme Structure:**

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

In Stage 2 students choose 2 electives. One of these must have a sizeable audio/sound component (e.g. Sound Culture, Music for Picture, Interactive Audio with Max MSP)

<b>Stage 1</b>	<b>Credits</b>	<b>SCQF Level</b>
PSMI102 Sound for the Moving Image 1	40	11
PCXS102 Research in Sound and Film	20	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	
<b>Exit Award</b>	<b>Pg Cert</b>	
<b>Stage 2</b>		
PSMI204 Sound for the Moving Image 2	20	11
2 x cross-school or SimVis electives (20 credits each)	40	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	
<b>Exit Award</b>	<b>Pg Dip</b>	
<b>Stage 3</b>		
PSMI328 Masters Project	60	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	
<b>Exit Award</b>	<b>Masters</b>	

**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 programme aims to promote the production of theoretically grounded, aesthetically challenging work that explores the limits of sound manipulation and evaluates personal and audience perceptions of sound design and/or music production for the moving image. The programme is conceptually-driven and will stimulate the development and realisation of cogent, original ideas within the field of sound production and post-production for the moving image. The programme also aims to provide a comprehensive grounding in the professional practice of sound production for visual environments, including film, animation, television, web, interactive media, electronic games, theatre and art installations.

The MDes in Sound for the Moving Image aims to offer each student the opportunity to:

- Engage with the theoretical underpinnings and language of sound design and composition for the moving image through lectures, seminars, viewings and project work.
- Develop an understanding of the contextual and historical framework of Sound for the Moving Image and relate this to current theories and practice in the field.
- Investigate the conceptual and aesthetic basis of current and/or historical sound for the moving image methodologies through the evolution and realization of original work, both individual and group-based.
- Develop and demonstrate an understanding of research methodologies and research processes within the expanded field of sound for the moving image
- Experiment with the boundaries of sound and/or music production through the application of technology and the development and realisation of challenging, concept-driven research projects.
- Explore how sound design and/or music enhances and interacts with narrative structures and concepts through either individual or group based research projects within the field of Sound for the Moving Image
- Develop a research project that explores personal and universal themes and ideas within the field of sound design and/or music composition for the moving image
- Acquire and demonstrate an understanding of professional practice within the field of sound design and composition for the moving image, and articulate this through a practical research project

#### **11.1 Stage 1 Aims:**

Stage 1 (Pg Cert) – Week 1 to 15: 60 Credit points

The programme aims at Stage 1 are designed to allow students the opportunity to acquire and understand the key principles of production, craft and theory within the field of Sound for Picture.

The Postgraduate Certificate in Sound for the Moving Image aims to offer each student the opportunity to:

- Acquire and develop an understanding of the key principles of sound and vision production methodology and articulate this through the production of a small scale practical project(s) in relation to sound design for picture
- Acquire and develop an understanding of the key theoretical principles of sound design and articulate this through the production of a small scale practical project(s)
- Acquire an understanding of the key principles of digital sound production and articulate this through the production of a small scale practical project(s) in relation to location sound recording, foley design and sound manipulation
- Acquire an understanding of the key principles of sound for picture within post-production methodology and articulate this through the production of a small scale practical project(s) in relation to audio dubbing, editing and mixing processes
- Acquire an understanding of the key principles of soundtrack composition for the visual environment and articulate this through the production of a synchronous non-diegetic piece of music appropriate to a visual scenario.
- Acquire core skills in advanced critical and historical studies of film form, meaning and industry as they relate to contemporary creative practice in image and sound.
- Acquire and develop an understanding of research methodologies and ethical approaches to working with sound and the moving image

#### **11.2 Stage 2 Aims:**

Stage 2 (Pg Dip) – Week 15 to 30: 60 Credit points

While there is no formal progression requirement, the programme aims at Stage 2 are designed to build upon and develop a greater understanding of the production processes, craft skills as well as the conceptual and research components acquired in Stage 1. Students will be expected to develop a proposal of study outlining their intended area of research at Masters Level. Students additionally choose two elective classes – these do not build on Stage 1, but rather provide additional breadth to the programme, allowing students to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in complementary areas of study. Students successfully completing this stage of the Masters will have the option to progress to the Masters stage, Stage 3.

The Postgraduate Diploma in Sound for the Moving Image aims to further offer each student the opportunity to:

- Develop and demonstrate a critical knowledge of sound for the moving image theory and principles articulated through the production of practical project(s)
- Acquire and demonstrate a critical knowledge of audio recording, mixing and editing methodologies both in stereo and surround formats and articulate this through the production of practical project(s)
- Acquire and demonstrate a critical knowledge of production and post-production processes in relation to sound for picture
- Through electives, allow students to further explore study and/or practice in chosen specialisms such as:
  - Acquire and demonstrate a critical knowledge of interactive sound design and manipulation methodologies and articulate this through the production of a practical project(s)
  - Acquire and demonstrate a critical knowledge of music production in relation to sound for picture and articulate this through the completion of practical project(s)
  - Acquire and develop a critical knowledge of the history and cultural context of sound for the moving image and relate this to their own creative practice
  - Through cross-school electives, explore theory and/or practice in areas apart from sound for the moving image
- Develop and demonstrate through a research proposal a suitable project for Masters level, Stage 3, in relation to sound design or music production for the moving image

### **11.3 Stage 3 Aims:**

Stage 3 (MDes) – Week 30 to 45: 60 Credit points

Stage 3 programme aims are designed to offer the student the opportunity to develop a practice led project that demonstrates a conceptually considered, research derived understanding of the language and aesthetics of sound design for picture or music production for picture or both. Students at this stage of the programme in, consultation with staff, can elect to work either individually, in a group or with an external collaborator (eg film-maker).

The MDes in Sound for the Moving Image aims to offer each student the opportunity to conduct a deeper exploration of theory and practice according to a set of self-directed research goals. These may allow the student to:

- Demonstrate through the realisation of a research project a deep and professional understanding of production and post-production methodologies and techniques in the field of Sound for the Moving Image
- Demonstrate through the production of a research based conceptually driven project an understanding of the aesthetics, theory and practice within the expanded field of Sound for the Moving Image
- Demonstrate through a written report, critical and analytical reflection on the processes and

research embodied in the research project

## **12. Intended Learning Outcomes of Programme:**

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

- Apply advanced production methodologies within a range of professional environments related to sound for the moving image.
- Apply advanced post-production methodologies within a range of professional environments related to sound for the moving image.
- Evaluate and critique the use of sound within a range of moving image contexts.
- Generate high-quality audio content that is of a professional standard both technically and aesthetically.
- Reflect critically on self-produced audio content and identify and remedy any perceived weaknesses within this audio content.
- Outline and analyse historical and theoretical developments within sound for the moving image contexts.
- Plan and execute a research project that reflects their academic or professional aspirations.

### **12.1 Intended Learning Outcomes of Stage 1**

Knowledge and Understanding

- Demonstrate an understanding of historical contexts in the development of sound recording and sound for picture paradigms
- Demonstrate an understanding of key concepts in sound theory, film and television studies
- Demonstrate an understanding of ethical practices in sound and film research and/or creative practice
- Demonstrate an understanding of a range of relevant qualitative and quantitative research methods, e.g. interviewing, surveys, critical analysis, critiquing existing films using established analytical lenses, for research in sound and film.

Applied Knowledge and Understanding

- Appraise and analyse AV material using fundamental theory of film sound and sound terminology
- Demonstrate and apply an understanding of audio and video technology and technical theory to sound & moving image post-production practice
- Conceptualise and design a soundtrack appropriate to a visual sequence and appraise the soundtrack in terms of technical quality, strength of concept and aesthetic synergy with the visual
- Conceptualise, produce and critically reflect on an abstract or narrative-based audio-visual piece using standard professional production and post-production tools
- that Demonstrate an understanding of production and post-production processes in sound for the moving image through the completion of a set of practical projects

Professional Practice: Communication, Presentation, Working with Others

- Prepare a practice or academic based sound/film research project proposal including identifying appropriate literature and methods
- Develop group working skills through the completion of practical projects
- Demonstrate and apply an understanding of production development, craft and location sound methodologies via a group-based project;

## 12.2 Intended Learning Outcomes of Stage 2

### Knowledge and Understanding

- Demonstrate an understanding of broadcast production environments
- Demonstrate a well-developed understanding of 5.1 (surround sound) practice
- Demonstrate an understanding of spatial audio and its relationship with the moving image
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding in a chosen elective area relating to the expanded field sound for the moving image
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding in a further elective, which may be related to the expanded field of sound for the moving image or from a different field of study

### Applied Knowledge and Understanding

- Create an engaging 5.1 soundtrack for a moving image sequence that adheres to clearly defined technical standards, and critically reflect on creative and technical decisions regarding their final mix
- Using functional block diagrams, describe and design a broadcast production environment
- Demonstrate and apply an understanding of spatial audio and its relationship with the moving image via the creation of ambisonic or similar soundscapes with a visual element

### Professional Practice: Communication, Presentation, Working with Others

- Communicate to others a critical knowledge of production methodology within sound recording, design and production for surround sound with a visual element
- Demonstrate written and critical reflective skills through the submission of written reports
- Through electives, demonstrate an ability to communicate, present ideas and/or work with others as appropriate in areas within the expanded field of sound for the moving image (such as music for picture, the film making process, interactive audio, etc)

## 12.3 Intended Learning Outcomes of Stage 3

### Knowledge and Understanding

- Plan and execute a significant self-directed research project
- Demonstrate and reflect upon an original and creative application of sound design or music production for picture or both through an elective Masters project (Practical)
- Demonstrate of a process of a critical and analytical reflection on a self-directed project through a written thesis

### Applied Knowledge and Understanding

- Plan and execute a significant research project that investigates individual or group themes through the medium of sound design for the moving image or music production for the moving image or both.
- Application and management of a research project in relation sound design and/or music production for the moving image
- Demonstrate a critical and analytical review of the theoretical processes and concepts employed during the development and production of a self-directed research project.

### Professional Practice: Communication, Presentation, Working with Others

- Present a creative work in sound and/or film that communicates ideas, themes or content to a selected audience according to a set of self-directed project goals
- Present a written thesis that communicates to others a critical reflection on the aims, objectives and achievements of a self-directed research project

### **13. Learning and Teaching Approaches:**

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

Students will be expected to take significant responsibility for the management of their learning. Emphasis will be placed on self-reliance and personal academic development. The principle teaching strategies employed on this programme are:

#### **Digital and Craft Workshops**

These workshops are designed to develop new and enhance existing skill sets where these will form the main focus for creative practice. Emphasis will be placed on the acquisition of key practical skills along with an in-depth understanding of the technical standards of sound for the moving image.

#### **Lectures and Seminars**

Lectures and seminars are used to disseminate theoretical, contextual and historical knowledge and address specific issues underpinning practical studio work. Lectures will be a two-way process with opportunities for discussion and group work. Further subject research will be carried out by students working within small groups and their analysis presented at subsequent seminar sessions. Lectures will also have the broad aim of generating further debate in seminars, tutorials or studio sessions or further enquiry in self directed learning or research.

#### **Critiques**

The critique is an important learning device used to generate peer debate regarding the overall success of concepts, their practical realisation within the context of the project brief or proposal. Although facilitated and guided by staff, critiques allow students to fully explore all aspects of practical submissions. Critiques will take place both at the end of an assessments and prior to submission of an assessment.

#### **Tutorials**

The tutorial system is designed to provide academic support through individual meetings with staff. At these meetings, an individual discussion on progress overall will be held than is generally appropriate within group seminars or critiques. Tutorials are also a means where feedback from students concerning all aspects of the programme can be raised.

#### **Self Directed Learning and Research**

Emphasis is placed on enabling students to develop confidence with technical processes as well as pursuing lines of academic enquiry pertinent to your personal goals. Further support will be provided to individual students via informal one-on-one sessions within the teaching studio. During these sessions students can discuss progress issues and highlight any minor problems they are experiencing with coursework. These one-on-one sessions are not designed to replace tutorials.

#### **Guest Speakers**

A Visiting Lecturer Programme supporting the lecture programme is run principally to link the academic or personal backgrounds of students to contemporary and commercial contexts. Visiting lecturers will provide additional depth in specialist areas.

#### **Dissertation Support & Arrangements**

Dissertation projects are significant and challenging student-led projects, and the following

arrangements are to ensure that students are provided appropriate support in adequately preparing and planning for their projects, and in completing them.

During stage 2 a range of support is provided to help students prepare research proposals for stage 3. A lecture on dissertation projects given during stage 2, and presents dates, deadlines and administrative and practical guidance for the dissertation projects and proposals. Students are asked to submit draft proposals during Stage 2 to allow initial feedback to be given at the beginning of Stage 3. Additional talks on a range of relevant topics (ethics, referencing, etc.) are also offered by school and Learning & Teaching staff during stages 2 and 3.

Students may propose their own projects, or work from lists of projects suggested by tutors. Students are expected to meet with possible tutors obtain agreement from a tutor for project supervision. Project proposals are signed by both supervisor and student accordingly. The Programme Leader can assist in helping students find suitable supervisors.

All student projects are assessed through consideration of both practice-based and written work, with students able to choose projects with different weightings on written and practical work, as detailed in the research project course specification. This weighting is to be discussed in initial supervision meetings in Stage 3. The chosen weighting can be amended with a supervisor's agreement, but no change to the student's chosen weighting is possible after the fourth week of stage 3.

#### **14. Assessment Methods:**

Assessment on the MDes in Sound for the Moving Image will be both formative and summative. The summative assessments for the core course – Sound for the Moving Image - will consist of six separate coursework projects for each stage – PgCert and PgDip. One of these projects at each stage will require groupwork. Practical projects will be based on professional scenarios within the sound for picture industry and/or require demonstration of key technical skills for audio production – recording, mixing, synchronisation, editing, conforming to technical standards, layback and delivery. They will be assessed on two main criteria - technical competency and strength of concept on an aesthetic level. Weighting will be 50/50 in most cases.

Assessment of group projects will be based on the total mark achieved by the group and an individual mark based on the student's overall contribution to the project. For example, an individual group member will be required to write a report detailing their contribution to the group project and reflecting on the effectiveness of their contribution to the group. The report will not be marked unless the other members of the group sign off on its veracity. In more presentation based activities 40% of the mark will be assigned to an individual student's effectiveness in communicating the group's ideas to an audience. Each member of the group will be responsible for motivation, organisation and delegation of tasks to other group members. Close attention will be paid to the dynamics of the group and the effectiveness of this dynamic will form part of the assessment.

A key element of the formative assessment strategy will be peer review sessions conducted within the main studio space. Individual students will be invited to show their work to the group and verbally describe the concepts underpinning their work along with the technical and creative processes deployed in its realisation. Following their presentation, the group will discuss and constructively critique the work, offering opinions, suggesting alternative methodologies and examining the context and aesthetics of the work. The course tutor will also have an input at this stage, mainly in the role of encouraging comment from the group and summing up discussions once they have finished.

The one-on-one tutorial is another important element of formative assessment. The tutorial system is designed to provide academic support through individual meetings with staff. At these meetings a more individual-based discussion on overall progress will be held than is generally appropriate within group seminars or critiques. Tutorials are also a means where feedback from students concerning all aspects of the programme can be raised. Following the formal tutorial, a report will be prepared by the tutor responsible and sent to the student. This report will be a description of key points raised and discussed at the tutorial and will form part of the student's academic record. The student will have the opportunity ask for amendments, omissions or additions to the prior to the report entering record.

There will be three formal assessment points throughout the academic year. Students may exit the programme with a Postgraduate Certificate after successfully completing 60 credits (including Core Research Methods), or a Postgraduate Diploma after successfully completing 120 credits. 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 assessment is expected to take place (Full time).

Stage	Formal assessment Points
Stage 1: PgCert	Weeks 13-15
Stage 2: PgDip	Weeks 28-30
Stage 3: Masters	Weeks 43-45

Students enrolled part time will be assessed at the end of each post-graduate term (with dates corresponding to the full-time stages) in each year, with final project submission in the summer of the second year.

The process for the assessment of the 3 stages will comprise internal assessment and the Final Exam Board to agree awards. In addition, Stage 3 will also comprise an external assessment stage, which will be reported to the Final Exam Board.

The assessment of the Masters in Sound for the Moving Image is regulated by the GSA Code of Assessment, and the GSA section of the Glasgow University Academic Calendar.

The criterion of assessment is linked directly to the learning outcomes for the Pg Cert, Pg Dip and Masters stages of the programme.

Formative assessment will take the form of group discussions, peer group sessions, one-to-one tutorials. These provide the opportunity to refine and develop work, and to prepare for submission in the summative assessments. There are no formal examinations.

Engagement with formative assessment is a mandatory requirement.

For all three stages of the programme, students will normally be assessed on the presentation of practical work set and/or elective, written work and/or verbal presentations. Each course will be examined against its specific Learning Outcomes as outlined in the curriculum section.

Masters: At the end of Stage 3 an assessment consists of a review of practical work and written research report. Interviews with the External Examiners will be requested if the student has been

selected as part of the sample representing a cross section of work.

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

The programme accords with the QAA statement regarding Masters level education available at the following link: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/master's-degree-characteristics-statement.pdf>

Furthermore the programme is aligned with the Level 11 Descriptors provided by the SCQF governing attainment during Masters level study, available at: [https://www.sqa.org.uk/files\\_ccc/SCQF-LevelDescriptors.pdf](https://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/SCQF-LevelDescriptors.pdf)

**16. Additional Relevant Information:**

Students on the MDes Sound for the Moving Image programme are taught and supervised by professionally and research active staff. Staff research and professional interests directly inform curriculum content, enhancing research-teaching linkages and employability. Employability is at the heart of the programme and students will undertake projects with direct relevance to current professional practice. The course curriculum will continue to be informed by direct consultation with leading industry practitioners.

The students have access to state-of-the-art software and facilities including 5.1 post-production dubbing suites, a variety of portable recording equipment and a highly-specified ambisonic soundlab.

Each student also has access to a workstation for the academic year.

**Part-Time Study**

Part-time study is offered through a day-release mode, with part-time students taking the same classes at the same time as full time students. Part time study will generally require two days of attendance per week during the teaching period, and schedules will be provided in advance of each term to allow students to plan their time accordingly. Contact hours are supplemented through the use of online support through, e.g., virtual learning environments.

Part time study availability is dependent on timetabling and ability to provide equivalent experience to full time students, and is not available for study in academic year 2020-21

**Facilities**

Access to studios and GSA facilities is generally limited to the regular opening hours, with extended hours available at key points of the year. SimVis offers standard access hours year round. Reduced hours for access to workshops and library are in operation during the summer.

**Exam Boards**

Results from each course will be presented at the postgraduate exam board immediately following submission of summative assessment. Resits are to be normally completed before, and presented at, the next postgraduate exam board. (Postgraduate exam boards take place typically at the end of January, May and August each year, corresponding to the full-time study stages.)

Please refer to the GSA Code of Conduct and regulations published by the University of Glasgow Senate for Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates awarded in conjunction with The Glasgow School of Art.

<b>Programme Leader:</b>	Ronan Breslin
<b>Programme Title:</b>	MDes Sound for the Moving Image
<b>School:</b>	Simulation and Visualisation.

**1. Summary of amendments to Programme Specification for 2021/22 as a result of COVID-19 and list of Academic activities affected:**

Throughout academic year 2020/21 Covid-19 necessitated significant amounts of learning and teaching be conducted entirely remotely, with significantly limited access to teaching studios, specialist facilities and fieldwork, including periods of Government mandated closure of campus. As a digitally focussed school which had already embraced online learning technologies, the pivot to online and remote learning within The School of Simulation and Visualisation was successful, albeit still challenging.

For 2021/22, there has been very significant progress with vaccination in the UK and in reducing the spread of Covid-19. We accordingly anticipate that the coming year will see the return of a range of academic activities that were curtailed in 2020/21.

However, Covid-19 is still with us, and as such it remains necessary to keep in place contingencies for learning and teaching. These contingencies necessarily reflect a worst case scenario, where campus based activities again have to cease.

In the event of future campus closures there would be, be a shift to blended and/or online learning and teaching to enable a safe environment for students and tutors. This is primarily a shift in the *modes and timing of delivery*, rather than a change to programme or course aims or learning outcomes. Even without campus closures, there may be a need to reduce the amount of campus based teaching to enable and allow greater social distancing in taught activities.

As part of this shift, there may also need to be changes to contact hours, with the introduction of more asynchronous learning activities including video and discussion based online learning. This may result in a reduction in formal contact hours across the programme, but synchronous classes and activities will remain one of the key components of teaching and learning, supplemented with prepared videos, and online asynchronous based learning activities (discussions, practical exercises, assessments, etc.). Over AY 2020-21 MDes Sound staff have developed skills in the deployment of a range of online tools and approaches for promoting engagement in learning across synchronous and asynrhonous learning activities. We hope to will build on this in the coming year. It has been quite gratifying to note that MDes Sound students have engaged with the online learning environment in such a positive manner so this bodes well for future engagement should the need arise for fully online teaching again.

Additional outdoor learning activities such as soundwalks and location recording may also be introduced into the curriculum. If necessary, online support will be extended to allow students unable to attend in Glasgow in person to complete the first semester (or part of the semester) in a purely online mode if required, with alternatives in place for in-person activities that will be taking place.

In the previous iteration of this document there had been some concern that students would be unable to fully address learning outcomes in spatial sound and surround sound without access to specialist facilities. However, this past year has seen the release of a plethora of useful, and in many cases free, software tools that allow for spatial and surround sound to be produced on a basic laptop set-up. Students working remotely have succeeded in producing excellent work without access to soundlab or surround sound dubbing studio, and we were able also to allow students controlled access to these specialist surround sound facilities as Covid-19 guidance permitted. As noted in introduction, we anticipate improved access for 21-22, but have software tools and processes in place if this is not possible, and to support individual students unable to attend in person.

**Specific Course and Programme measures:**

**Software, Technology and Specialist Facilities**

By deploying blended learning, the course can still cover the use of the specialist sound, image and interactive technologies, as detailed in course specifications. Where it is not possible to conduct studio-based or in person activities, these will be adapted for online delivery.

Usage policies and booking systems have been developed to enable access AV equipment loans and to the stereo. surround dubbing studios and ambisonic sound lab.

Should a further lockdown be necessary, this access would have to cease. However, the programme teams' experience of the second lockdown earlier this year has prepared us for this potential problem. Between January and mid-April, we successfully delivered course content for surround sound remotely, supporting students in use of relevant software tools and processes to achieve this and adapting our assessment briefs to reflect a remote mode of working. This was achieved without any changes to the course learning outcomes.

Prior to the last academic year tutors produced a series of instructional videos describing the operation of the dubbing studio and SoundLab facilities and these have proven to be a useful resource for students using these facilities for the first time.

Going forward into the next academic year, where guidance indicates that there is still the need, we will maintain Covid-19 studio protocols:

- Students using dubbing/sound may be required to work alone with support from tutors provided remotely or via intercom.
- Access to facilities will be controlled to ensure an appropriately safe environment for students and staff, including strict hygiene measures and in advance booking and access.

Students are assessed on their employment of relevant technical workflows, so access to these workflows should be enabled. However, there is also significant focus on aesthetic and conceptual development, and assessments can increase focus on these where there is restricted access to specific technical facilities.

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:**

These contingencies are adapted from those for AY 2020-21, which were themselves subject to consultation. Student feedback through AY 2020-21 was generally positive.

Contingency pro-forma was shared with all class and lead reps for consideration and discussion with students, and discussed at extra-ordinary board of studies. The Lead Rep for PG provided the following summary of student feedback and comments:

“This year has been tough for everyone, and the Postgraduate students at SimVis are extremely grateful for the effort put in by staff to ensure that teaching was able to continue as smoothly as possible. Whilst purely online teaching was not ideal for anyone, generally speaking it was effective, and students are keen to see some of the most successful aspects of online learning (such as pre-recorded lectures and video tutorials for software) continue next year. The stress on blended learning in the plan reflects this. Students have also expressed the desire for greater use of a formalised digital platform for student/tutor questions and answers to prevent the same questions being asked multiple times. This could be done via an existing platform, such as Canvas or Discord. Students also appreciate that staff are placing a high value on in person teaching going into next semester. Whilst some teaching will inevitably be done online, the plan put forward by staff places an emphasis on teaching practical and technical elements in person, which echoes the opinion of students. It is also appreciated that staff have plans for a worst-case scenario where entirely online delivery will resume, as this will allow for a smooth transition into digital teaching. Once again, students would like to thank staff for their hard work this year.”

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

The proposals were shared with the external examiner who approved the plans. commenting:

“This looks thorough, well considered, and responsible. It is particularly good to see the embracing new tools for spatial and surround sound and some outdoor activities for those on campus.

As you point out there are some positives such as online and flexible learning reducing the challenges for some members of the student community.

I am particularly glad to read about the consideration given to mental health, as online and even blended learning with reduced personal contact does need to be mitigated with other activities.”

**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.**

The principle change across all courses are changes to the contact hours and method of delivery to support *blended learning delivery* as a result of Covid-19 and the need for social distancing. A significant number of in-person contact hours are being replaced with a mixture of online asynchronous (e.g. readings, activities, videos, forum based discussions) or synchronous (virtual classroom, zoom, tutorial) activities.

In relation to individuals with protected characteristics, there may be some with specific learning or anxiety related issues who may find this reduced personal contact challenging. This will be mitigated with online synchronous and asynchronous tutorial activities. Video materials will be captioned wherever possible – initially using automatic captioning, with manual editing and corrections applied at a later date.

We also note that in relation to individuals with learning related challenges, these changes may bring some benefits, e.g.:

- Online, flexible learning may also reduce challenges for students with a range of learning or mobility related issues, mental health difficulties or additional commitments such as caring responsibilities.
- Automatic captioning/manual captioning

We note that the most significant challenges are not in relation to protected characteristics, but to access to home IT resources and study spaces. We will be working with GSA to provide as much support on this as possible.

An institutional EIA has been completed.

<b>Name of Convenor of Board of Studies:</b>	Prof Paul Chapman
<b>Date of Board of Studies Approval:</b>	06/05/2021
<b>Name of Convenor of PACAAG:</b>	Vicky Gunn
<b>Date of PACAAG Approval:</b>	01.06.21

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