Postgraduate Taught Study Innovation School

Guidelines for making an application to postgraduate programmes

Programmes

This document includes guidelines for making an application to postgraduate taught programmes within the Innovation School at the Glasgow School of Art (GSA).

One-year programmes

- MDes Design Innovation and Circular Economy (new – subject to validation)

- MDes Design Innovation and Citizenship

- MDes Design Innovation and Collaborative Creativity

- MDes Design Innovation and Environmental Design

- MDes Design Innovation and Future Heritage (new – subject to validation)

- MDes Design Innovation and Interaction Design

- MDes Design Innovation and Service Design

- MDes Design Innovation and Transformation Design

These programmes focus on several fields within the broader context of design innovation. The courses are structured to allow you to receive the same preliminary teaching before diversifying into a chosen specialism. Our student-led approach is designed to provide a rich and personal experience, which is supported by a network of staff, researchers and industry experts. At our campuses in Glasgow and the Highlands, we aim to create unique environments for learning and cross-disciplinary collaboration that help to nurture design projects and research that engage with complex issues.

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Glasgow Campus

The Haldane Building is a recently refurbished facility containing open-plan studio spaces, staff rooms and meeting areas that form the heart of The Innovation School. Originally constructed in 1897, it has a rich history as a drill hall used by several infantry battalions prior to its conversion for academic use in 1967. The building is located within the Garnethill Campus in Glasgow city centre, close to amenities including The Glasgow School of Art's Reid Building and library. The Haldane Building is also used for teaching the BDes and MEDes undergraduate programmes in Product Design, as well as The Innovation School's postgraduate suite.

Citizenship helps people take control and exert influence on problems and decisions that affect them.

Collaborative Creativity works with partners and stakeholders in industry and the public sector to address key social, political, and economic issues.

Service Design places human experience at the heart of everyday experiences, engaging with complex social challenges to communicate preferable, alternative scenarios that have a positive and ethical contribution and impact to a wide range of stakeholders.

Highlands Campus

These programmes are delivered at GSA's Highlands and Islands Campus, 170 miles from Glasgow. The campus occupies a stunning cluster of heritage-listed buildings near the town of Forres which is home to 12,000 people. The Italianate buildings, constructed in the 1830s on the Altyre Estate, have been converted into a world-class creative campus, providing inspiring studio, workshop and exhibition spaces, as well as state of the art areas for research, teaching, prototyping and flexible lab work. The campus is a centre for research and postgraduate study, where dedicated staff deliver Masters and PhD programmes that engage with complex issues facing the region and beyond. Learning opportunities are supported by digital and remote teaching methods.

Circular Economy envisions and works towards more sustainable and equitable society. One that eliminates waste while creating social, economic and ecological value. Achieving circularity requires working collaboratively and recognising the roles governments, industry and citizens can play in a more environmentally conscious future.

Environmental Design examines space, place, and community – reimagining the potential and possibilities the offer. The outcome may be community development, focus on sustainability, or be practical such as wayfinding.

Future Heritage makes an early and important impact on heritage practice and cultural policy, recognising the relationship between heritage, community wellbeing and sustainability. This course encourages us to think how we can re-interpret and be inspired by the past in a way that is speculative and culturally relevant to future heritage.

Interaction Design focuses on human interaction to improve quality of life, community wellbeing, and interpersonal communication. This may be facilitated by technology – but it may also use low-tech approaches.

Transformation Design aims to identify emerging areas of design practice, stimulate innovative thinking in response to these areas and to develop theoretical, methodological and practice-based approaches that will assist designers in responding to the challenges presented by contemporary society, economy and technology.

Where can I find out more about the programmes?

You can find out more about about each of the Innovation School programmes through the links below. You should be aware of the focus of the programme you are applying to, its' structure and content, as well as the opportunities available to you during your studies. It is important to make sure that the programme you are applying to meets your expectations.

- [Innovation School website](#)

- Programme listing on [GSA website](#)

- Programme specifications on [GSA website](#)

Alternatively, questions can be directed to innovation@gsa.ac.uk

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Academic Entry Requirements

Normally, a UK Bachelors honours degree, or its international equivalent, in the subject you are applying to, or a related subject that gives appropriate grounding for postgraduate study. The MDes in Design Innovation welcomes applicants from non-design disciplines, but you should demonstrate knowledge of the subject and its contemporary practice. If you do not meet the academic entry requirements, we may still consider your application on the basis of your portfolio and / or relevant professional experience.

GSA expects applicants to demonstrate proficiency in the English language. International applicants will normally be expected to provide evidence of attainment equivalent to IELT for UKVI (Academic) from a UKVI approved test centre. Innovation School programmes require a score of 6.5 overall, with a minimum of 6.0 in each component.

Innovation School seeks to enrol students who are self-motivated, determined critical thinkers, passionate about their subject, curious, independent, professionally orientated, and understand that their commitment to the programme is a significant investment in their future.

English Language Entry Requirements

- GSA expects applicants to demonstrate proficiency in the English language. International applicants will normally be expected to provide evidence of attainment equivalent to International English Language Test (IELT) for UKVI Academic from a UKVI approved test centre.

- All School of Design postgraduate programmes require a score of 6.5 overall, with a minimum of 6.0 in each component.

- GSA's preferred test is the IELTS for UKVI (Academic) test taken at a UKVI approved test centre. A full list of UKVI approved test centres and other tests that may be presented are available on the GSA website.

- GSA Pre-sessional English course called English for Creative Disciplines is recommended to PGT applicants applying to postgraduate programmes in the School of Design. Further information is also available in this Student Guide.

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Applications

Your application to study for a postgraduate taught degree at GSA is in two parts:

Part 1.   Application form, <u>personal statement</u>, references and transcripts

Part 2.   <u>Digital portfolio of your work</u> (optional)

Innovation School believes that our post-graduate programmes in design need not only be for designers. Therefore a design portfolio is not a mandatory element of your application. However, it is always advised that if you have such a body of work that it is better to include it.

You can start an application by clicking this link: <u>http://www.gsa.ac.uk/study/graduate-degrees/how-to-apply/</u>

Once you have completed part 1 of the application process, GSA will acknowledge your application via email, and if you are uploading a digital portfolio you will be directed to do so. You are advised to upload your portfolio prior to the next <u>deadline date</u> to ensure it is assessed as early as possible.

Deadline dates

- Programmes begin in September. Although there are no application deadlines early application is encouraged in order to ensure a place on the programme. We guarantee to review all applications received before **18 March for 2022 entry**. Early application is encouraged in order to avoid disappointment.

- Applications are reviewed on a cyclical basis from November – August as shown below. Your application will need to be complete (part 1 and 2) by the date shown to enter the next review.

	Final date for applicants to submit application	Final date for decision to be with applicant
Review 1	3 December 2021	28 January 2022
Review 2	28 January 2022	18 March 2022
Review 3	18 March 2022	6 May 2022
Review 4	6 May 2022	24 June 2022
Review 5	10 June 2022	22 July 2022
Review 6	Applications received after 22 May	Rolling basis after 18 June
	5 August 2022 for international applications	

Timeline

Your completed application will be assessed at the next review round. There are four stages to your application.

1. Apply through GSA website with application form, statement, transcripts, references and digital portfolio.

2. GSA specialist staff will assess your application.

3. You may be invited to interview.

4. The outcome of your interview will be communicated to you through GSA Registry.

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1

Application Form +
Personal Statement

Digital Portfolio

2

Specialist staff
assess application
against criteria

Unsuccessful

3

Unsuccessful

Invited to Interview either
in person or telephone / skype

4

Unsuccessful

Conditional
Offer

Unconditional
Offer

How is my application assessed?

Candidates for all programmes are assessed on their existing qualities as demonstrated in their:

- application form and personal statement
- references and transcripts
- digital portfolio (if applicable)
- interview
- as well as on their potential to benefit from the programme and to achieve Master standards overall.

The assessment will consider: creativity, intellectual curiosity, ability to demonstrate an advanced understanding of the subject and sufficient skillset to realise intentions, the ability to articulate the intentions (context) for the work, evidence of commitment to the subject, the ability to engage in sustained and consistent study.

Personal Statement

Your statement should consist of no more than 500 words. Statements that are longer may not be fully read.

It is important that your statement is individual; reflecting your interest and suitability for the specialism being applied to. When addressing the list below you should evidence that you have researched and understood the focus of the programme you are applying to, the opportunities available to you, and importantly how this programme meets your expectations and ambitions.

Within your statement you should ensure you address part A and B below:

A. Explain why you wish to study for a Masters in Design Innovation at GSA. Explain your interests and experiences within Design Innovation
   - What you will contribute to the specialist programme?
   - What do you hope to be able to do with this qualification?

B. A short statement about a situation you are interested in investigating on the programme. Who will be affected? How? And why?

You may also use the statement to expand upon a particular project or piece of work included in the digital portfolio.

Digital Portfolio

Your portfolio will be assessed by academic staff and should contain examples of work that show an understanding and level of skill appropriate to the postgraduate programme you are applying to. It is also important for the portfolio to reflect your individual abilities, experiences and interests.

Academic staff will look at your portfolio for approximately 10 minutes. Make sure that you curate and pace the pages so they will be able to assess your portfolio in the way you wish to present yourself.

We strongly discourage the use of external companies to prepare portfolios as the outcome can often be generic. Such portfolios are less likely to be shortlisted. Instead we would recommend you use the guidance within this document to produce an **individual**, digital portfolio representing your specific interests, skills, experiences and knowledge.

Guidelines for the contents of your digital portfolio and how to upload using the GSA application website are included on the following slides.

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What to include in your digital portfolio

The digital portfolio should:

1. demonstrate your individual interests, approach and creativity

2. clearly present your research methods and routes

3. show the links between your research and development of ideas

4. include evidence of your working process, from project inception to resolution, demonstrating experiments and explorations

5. demonstrate technical knowledge and skills used to realise intentions

6. show an awareness and understanding of the professional context for the work
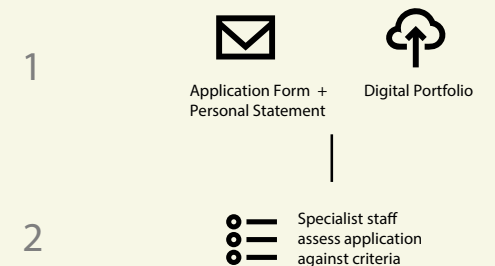
Criteria used at first review

At the first review, academic staff will look at your application form, statement, references and digital portfolio (if applicable).

The criteria listed below will be used to assess your suitability for the programme and whether you should be invited to interview. You should include evidence of meeting these criteria within your application form, personal statement, references and digital portfolio (if applicable).

Criteria:

1. Understanding of / interest in design innovation (e.g. via examples of own work or discussion of other people's)

2. Awareness of the potential impact of design innovation on people's lives (based on part B of personal statement)

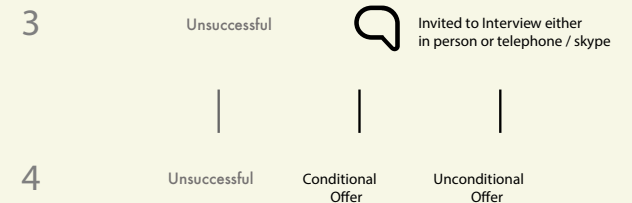3. Potential demonstrated through academic achievement, employment/voluntary work or other personal interest

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1

Application Form +
Personal Statement

Digital Portfolio

2

Specialist staff
assess application
against criteria

Criteria used at second review

If successful at the first review, you will to be invited to an interview with academic staff, either in person or via video call.

The criteria listed below will be used to assess your suitability for the programme and whether you should be offered a place on the programme. During the interview you will be asked questions which will enable you to evidence your ability to meet the criteria.

Criteria:

1. Understanding of / interest in design innovation (e.g. via discussion of own work or other people's)
2. Awareness of the potential impact of design innovation on people's lives (based on discussion of part B of personal statement)
3. Ability to work collaboratively with others as well as independently
4. Ability to verbally communicate your motivation for the discipline and study at GSA

3   Unsuccessful   Invited to Interview either in person or telephone / skype

4   Unsuccessful   Conditional Offer   Unconditional Offer

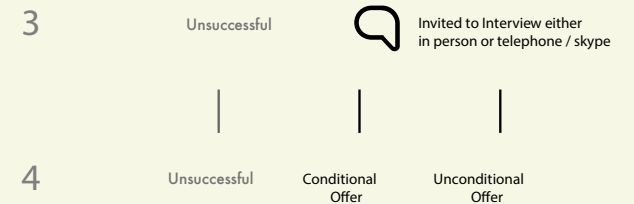INNOVATION
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How we evaluate your application

For each of the criteria at both stages we apply a simple scoring scale.

To be selected for interview you must score at least 15 out of 21. To be offered a place you must score at least 20 out of 28.

1:          Unsatisfactory evidence of required ability

2:          Very limited evidence of required ability

3:          Limited evidence of the required ability

4:          Satisfactory evidence of required ability

5:          Good evidence of required ability

6:          Very good evidence of required ability

7:          Excellent evidence of required ability

3   Unsuccessful   Invited to Interview either in person or telephone / skype

4   Unsuccessful   Conditional Offer   Unconditional Offer

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Uploading your portfolio

Innovation School accepts two formats for uploading a digital portfolio:

1. **a single PDF file,** consisting of approximately 15 pages (portfolios that are longer may not be fully read)

2. **or 15 individual images**

Your digital portfolio should consist of a minimum of 3 projects.

If including **moving image or sound work:**

• these can viewed via a hyperlink (included in your PDF document) to Vimeo or YouTube. Access to these websites should not be password protected.

• these can be viewed by inputting a URL link into the designated field. Please make sure the link will remain live and accessible.

• the clips must be limited to a maximum of five minutes.

If including a link to your **professional website** this can be inputted into the URL field.

*Please note, URL link/s to Dropbox folders or other external cloud services will not be accepted.

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Interview

We will contact you if you have been shortlisted and invite you to interview. You will be interviewed via video call (Zoom or Skype). If you are able to travel to our Glasgow or Highlands campus we will interview you in person. In both cases you may be asked to supply additional work for the interview.

The interview is a two-way process; for you to gain a better understanding of GSA and your chosen programme, and for GSA staff to ask you questions about your work and your interest in your chosen specialism. The interview will normally take approximately 20 minutes and will be conducted by academic staff from your chosen programme.

How to prepare:

- Know where everything is in your portfolio. You will be expected to talk confidently about your work.
- Prepare to talk about your interests and your experiences. Please don't read from a script, interviewers want to know you can talk freely about your work.
- Have questions to ask the interviewer about the programme, GSA or life at the Glasgow or Highlands campus.
- Read the guidance document provided with your invite to interview.
- Relax! Everyone wants you to do well.

Interview practicalities

In advance of a telephone or video interview please ensure we can get in touch with you at the agreed day and time.

How to prepare:

- Ensure you have confirmed the interview and provided a telephone number and email address to be contacted with.

- Ensure that you have a strong internet connection which will support video calling.

- If something goes wrong (for example the Zoom link does not work), please check your email for instructions.

- Make sure you are in a quiet space where you will not be disturbed.

- Ensure your digital portfolio is accessible so you are able to talk about it during your interview.

- If you have been provided with staff contact details, add these to your account in advance. Please note, that following the interview staff will not communicate with applicants through video calling software (e.g. Skype). Instead, queries should be directed to innovation@gsa.ac.uk or registry@gsa.ac.uk

- Please note, that all interviews will be conducted within the working hours of GSA, Monday-Friday 9am-5pm (GMT).

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Further Information

[Innovation School website](#)

[How to apply GSA webpage](#)

[List of Postgraduate degrees at GSA](#)

[GSA Open Events](#)

[Fees, Funding and Finance](#)

[Accommodation](#)

[Individual country guides](#)

[Guides for parents of international students](#)

[UKVI Requirements - Tier 4 Student Visa requirements](#)

[English for Creative Disciplines](#)

If you need further information about applying to postgraduate level study, email admissions@gsa.ac.uk

If you have a question about an existing application, email registry@gsa.ac.uk

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