# Preparing for Interview

### Postgraduate Taught Degrees
### School of Design

MDes Communication Design
MDes Graphics
MDes Illustration
MDes Photography
MDes Fashion and Textiles
MDes Interior Design
MSc Product Design Engineering

Image: Nadja Andersson

## Contents

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THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

# Why does GSA interview?

The interview is a two-way process.
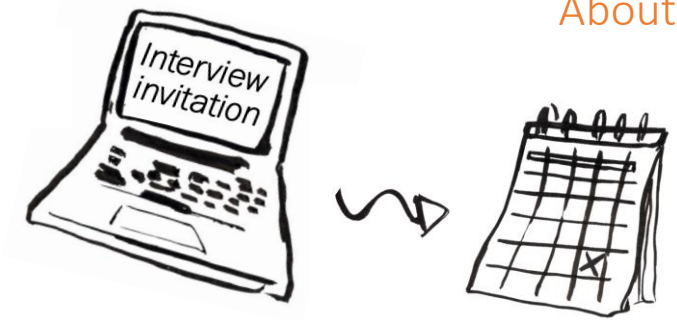
## For you
It's an opportunity for you to gain a better understanding of what it is like to be a student at the Glasgow School of Art. Studying a postgraduate degree is a big commitment, so it is important to make sure we meet your expectations.

## For us
We want to discuss the work in the digital portfolio as well as your passion for the subject. The interview is an important opportunity for us to confirm you know what studying the programme entails and that you are ready to study at postgraduate level at GSA.

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# Shortlisting

If you have been shortlisted, you will receive an email from GSA inviting you to an interview. Check the email address listed on your application regularly.

Open the weblink provided to access the interview booking website. We conduct interviews during specific dates as detailed below.

Shortly before your appointment, you will receive an email with details of a Zoom meeting to access the interview online.

| Round | Deadline to apply | Interviews taking place | Decision on application by |
|---|---|---|---|
| Early * | 10 November 2023 | 27 November – 8 December 2023 | 19 January 2024 |
| Standard 1 | 26 January 2024 | 20 February – 1 March 2024 | 8 March 2024 |
| Standard 2 | 8 March 2024 | 1 April – 19 April 2024 | 26 April 2024 |
| Late | 7 June 2024 | 1 July – 12 July 2024 | 19 July 2024 |

**\*** Communication Design, Graphics, Illustration and Photography do not hold an early round.

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# Interview Process

Scoring System

1 – Unsatisfactory evidence of required ability
2 – Very limited evidence of required ability
3 – Limited evidence of 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

**1.** An interview takes place online with a staff member from your chosen programme. You will be asked set questions and your digital portfolio will be discussed.

**2.** The staff member reviews your performance scoring it out of 7 for each assessment criteria.

**3.** Each programme sets its own threshold, this is the score that your application needs to reach in order to be offered a place on the programme.

**4.** Your score is totalled up and if it equals or exceeds the threshold GSA Registry will issue either an unconditional or conditional offer.

Congratulations!

**5.** If your total score is below the threshold, GSA Registry will let you know your application has been unsuccessful.

*Upon request, your assessment criteria scores can be provided as feedback.*

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# Interview format

All interviews will take place online via Zoom within the working hours of GSA. It will be conducted by a tutor from your chosen programme and will usually take about 20 minutes.

The interviewer will have your digital portfolio available. They will have set questions prepared to ask you and they might take notes.

You will also have time to ask questions. If you would like to know more about anything now is a really good time to ask. It also shows you're interested.

Following the interview, your interview performance will be numerically scored against the assessment criteria.

✳ Answering Questions ✳

Listen carefully to the questions you are asked.

Try to answer them directly and as fully as possible.

If you don't understand a question, ask for clarification.

If you don't hear the question, ask for it to be repeated.

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# Assessment criteria

**\*** All programmes except MSc Product Design Engineering

Your interview will be numerically scored against specific assessment criteria. It is important to know what this assessment criteria is, and you should try to respond to this criteria when preparing for interview.

The assessment criteria is listed to the righthand side and explained in more detail on the next page.

1. Ability to communicate your analytical and conceptual skills

2. Critically reflect on your research informing your project

3. Identify possible themes or areas of interest you would like to explore during your studies

4. Communicate your our motivation and ambitions for the subject area applied for at The Glasgow School of Art.

**\*** The Assessment criteria for MSc in Product Design Engineering programme is explained on

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## * Criteria 1

Ability to communicate your analytical and conceptual skills

We want to understand your design thinking, process and critical choices to inform your final outcome/s.

Evidence of research informing project development
How was this idea explored and experimented with?
How did you analyse the effectiveness of your design choices?
Evidence of the design decisions that determined the final outcome/s

At interview you will have the opportunity to articulate your research process and design decisions.

## * Criteria 2

Critically reflect on your research informing your project

We are keen to understand your research and how it informed the critical development of your projects and learning. The creative process is a journey, what did you learn and what areas did you find to be the most successful or challenging and how did you address them.

Show that you understand where to position your work within your design specialism by explaining this at interview. For work-in-progress you could describe what you hope to achieve, what sources you will be looking at, and how you hope to explore these.

## * Criteria 3

Identify possible themes or areas of interest you would like to explore during your studies

Prepare to discuss the identified themes and areas of interest informing your study.

## * Criteria 4

Communicate your motivation and ambitions for the subject area applied for at The Glasgow School of Art

At interview you will have the opportunity to communicate your enthusiasm and ambition for the specialist subject area that you have applied for and why you chose The Glasgow School of Art.

# Assessment criteria – MSc Product Design

Your interview will be numerically scored against specific assessment criteria. It is important to know what this assessment criteria is, and you should try to respond to this criteria when preparing for interview.

The assessment criteria is listed to the righthand side and explained in more detail on subsequent pages.

1. Demonstrate evidence of conceptual, engineering/technical awareness and evaluation skills through your projects

2. Critically reflect on your project development and learning

3. Identify an individual area of interest for exploration during your studies

4. Your enthusiasm, motivation and potential for being involved in Design Engineering and the subject area applied for at The Glasgow School of Art and the University of Glasgow

## * Criteria 1

Demonstrate evidence of conceptual, engineering/technical awareness and evaluation skills through your projects

We want to understand your design thinking, process and critical choices to inform your final outcome/s

- What was the initial starting point?

- How were the concepts explored and experimented with?

- What decisions and evaluation determined the final outcome/s?

At interview you will have the opportunity to communicate confidently about your working process.

## * Criteria 3

Identify an individual area of interest for exploration during your studies

At interview, you should identify a possible area of individual design engineering interest.

## * Criteria 2

Critically reflect on your project development and learning

The creative process is a journey, what did you learn and what areas did you find to be most successful or challenging. We want to see the sources and what inspired the theme of your projects.

Demonstrate the relevance of your work to your chosen design specialism by discussing this at interview. For work-in-progress you could describe what you plan to achieve, what sources you will be looking at, and how you will explore these.

## * Criteria 4

Your enthusiasm, motivation and potential for being involved in Design Engineering and the subject area applied for at The Glasgow School of Art and the University of Glasgow

At interview you will have the opportunity to communicate your enthusiasm and passion for design engineering and specifically the subject area that you have applied for. Who or what has motivated or inspired you to apply for the programme and why The Glasgow School of Art and the University of Glasgow?

# City of Glasgow

Think about what makes Glasgow a great place to study **for you**. There is no right answer, but it should be personal. Some broad ideas, that could be expanded upon include:

- Architecture
- Diversity of people
- History and culture
- Access to green spaces and proximity to nature
- Lots of students, good for socials
- Art and music scene
- Exhibition spaces, studios, galleries, museums



*Click here to view a Google Map-based guide to GSA's global creative networks, connections, and the city at our heart, Glasgow.*

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# Glasgow School of Art

Think about what makes GSA the right place **for you**. There is no right answer, but it should be personal. Some broad ideas, that could be expanded upon include:

- Only independent art school in Scotland
- Studio based teaching
- Self-directed learning
- Workshop facilities
- Practical work underpinned by history and theory
- Studying interdisciplinary courses

You can meet GSA online for advice and introductions at Open Days and during more informal events taking place throughout the year. Find out more about events taking place and register an interest.

Choosing GSA because it is prestigious, top rated, or due to the Mackintosh building doesn't tell the interviewer about **your** motivation. Avoid using generic statements.

# Programmes

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.

Think about what makes this the right programme **for you**.
- Read everything you can about the programme.
- Note down specific aspects that appeal to you.
- Look at student projects available through our digital Degree Show. Note work you are interested in and why. You could mention it during your interview.

Programme information is available via the weblinks below.

Programme Websites
MDes Communication Design, Graphics, Illustration, Photography
MDes Fashion and Textiles
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GSA website
Programme listings
Programme specifications

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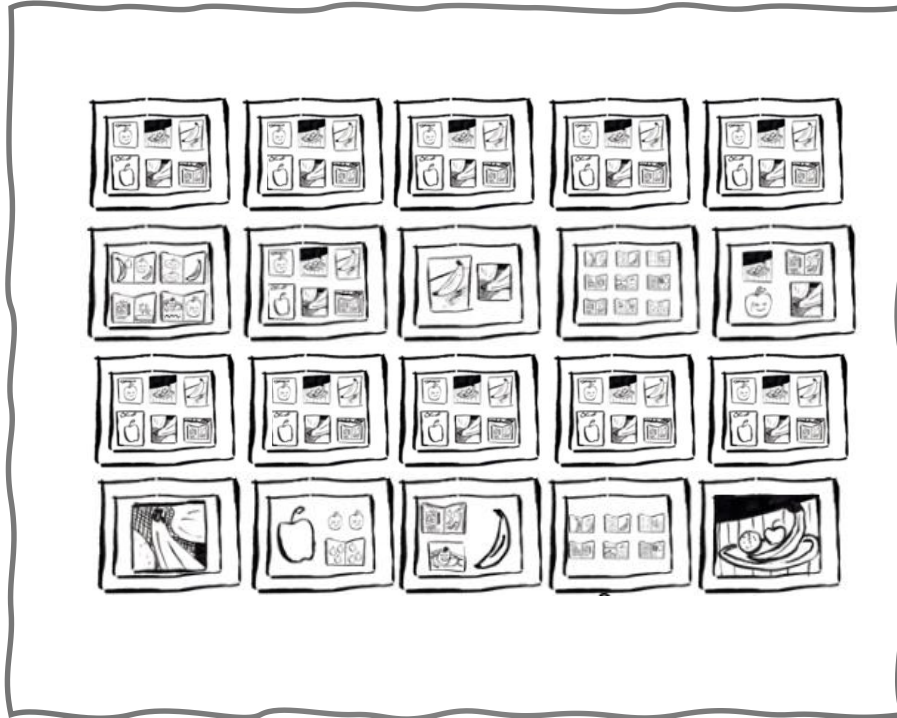OF DESIGN
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# Application

In advance of the interview review your application form and personal statement.

- Be prepared to talk about your interests and your experiences to date.

- Highlight any sections you think the interviewer could ask you to explain further.

- Is there anything missing you'd like to say at interview?

*You can have notes beside you to refer to during the interview.*

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# Digital Portfolio

In advance of the interview review your digital portfolio.

- The interviewer will ask about the work within it. Be ready to talk confidently about your work and interests.

- Know where everything is in your portfolio. You may need to direct the interviewer to look at a particular page.

- Be ready to discuss artists/ designers/ makers included.

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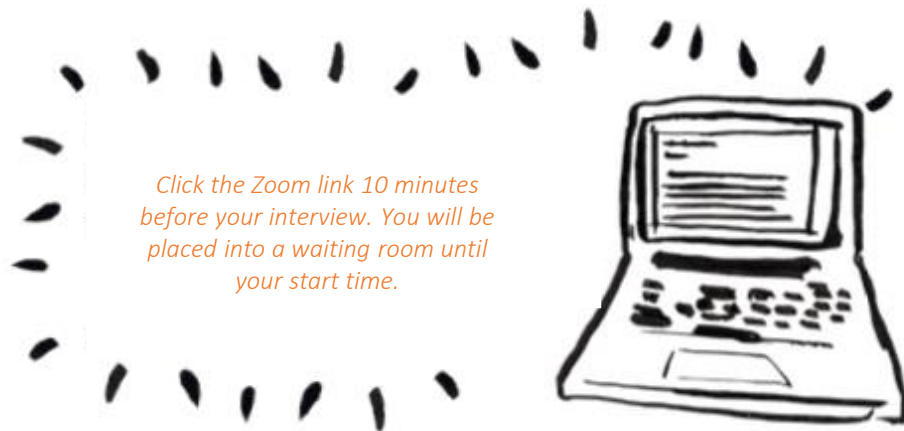SCHOOL OF ART

# Minimise distractions

- Find a quiet, well lit, private space for your interview.

- Let others around you know when your interview is and ask not to be interrupted.

- Consider using the blur feature or use a background image to ensure privacy .

- Try using earphones to minimise noise from your home.

- Use the mute button when you are not speaking.

- If you are distracted during the interview:
    - apologise and ask for a moment,
    - turn off your camera and mute your microphone,
    - resolve the issue,
    - take a few deep breaths,
    - return to the interview.

# Getting connected & Good impressions

Some simple steps taken beforehand will help to minimise any issues that could occur during the interview.

- Test using Zoom with a friend or family in advance.

- Update your device beforehand if required.

- Make sure your device is fully charged or plugged in.

- Ensure your Wi-Fi signal is strong.

*Click the Zoom link 10 minutes before your interview. You will be placed into a waiting room until your start time.*

## Good impressions

Dress as if you were attending in person.

Try to smile, keep an open posture, and positive tone.

Make use of non-verbal communication (for example head nodding).

Express your enthusiasm, no need to 'play it cool'.

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# Further Information

**Programme websites**

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**GSA website**

Programme listings
Programme specifications

**Open Day**

You can meet GSA online and on campus for advice and introductions at Open Days and during more informal events taking place throughout the year. Find out more and register an interest.

**Need help or have a question?**

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

**Useful weblinks**

How to apply to Postgraduate programmes at GSA

GSA Degree Show to view work of our graduates

Fees, Funding and Finance information

Accommodation information

Country guides

Guides for parents of international students

English for Creative Disciplines

Glasgow and Scotland

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