GSA SUMMARY REPORT OF EQUALITY CONSIDERATION AND ASSESSMENT OF EQUALITY IMPACT

Date of Assessment:	26/04/2017
School or Executive Group Area:	School of Fine Art
Department:	Fine Art Critical Studies
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Area of decision making/title of policy, procedure, programme or relevant practice:	Curriculum Design & Course Delivery, Recruitment & Research and Professional Practice MLitt in Art Writing Proposed start date: 2018-19

Please indicate if this is:	New:		☒
	Existing/Reviewed:		☐

1. Summary of how equality, diversity and participation have been considered and due regard given to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED):

The MLitt in Art Writing is a proposed 12-month (full-time) / 20-month (part-time) postgraduate programme of study offered by the School of Fine Art, with a start date of 2018-19. The programme is the only one of its kind in the UK and Europe and presents the potential of developing new learning and teaching models of art writing as a method for practice and research.

Undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment at this stage offers opportunity to mainstream equality into the programme conception and design, developing a robust pedagogical framework and set of related working practices.

This Assessment addresses three main areas:

- **Curriculum Design and Delivery**: reflecting on how the programme will advance equality and promotion of equality and diversity in addition to how the programme addresses the Public Sector Equality Duty: Equality Act 2010 (PSED);
- **Recruitment**: how the programme will widen participation for other representative groups in the promotion of good practice for equality and diversity;
- **Research and Professional Practice**: how the programme will meet the needs of a diverse student cohort and present routes for both professional practice and research.

2. Evidence used to make your assessment:

The MLitt in Art Writing is a proposed new programme, at this stage there is no quantitative evidence specific to the programme. However, a number of quantitative and qualitative assessments have been carried out, considering the programme design and delivery alongside assessment of current SoFA postgraduate provision, in particular the MLitt in Curatorial Practice and the MLitt in Fine Art Practice.

The following outlines how evidence will be gained during the running of the programme:

Feedback from students including opportunities to comment directly on their experience of working with others, diversity and equality relevant experience:
- Staff Student Consultative Committee (SSCC) meetings. In accordance with the UG cycle, PGT SSCCs occur in Stages 1 and 2 of the programme. Due to the programme running for a consecutive 12-months, it would be of benefit to hold an additional SSCC meeting in Stage 3;
- A group discussion inviting feedback from the whole cohort;
- Informal feedback gathered at individual and group tutorials;
- Quality Enhancement Questionnaire at the end of Stage 3;
- Module Surveys, administered via Survey Monkey and completed anonymously by students.

Review of recruitment and cohort protected characteristic data:
- The Programme Leader (PL) will work closely with the Widening Participation team in order to access students from diverse backgrounds and with varied experience;
- The PL will work closely with Marketing and Communication to ensure a broad recruitment strategy.

Other measures for additional collection of evidence:
- Programme Monitoring Annual Report (PMAR);
- External Examiner's Report;
- Periodic Review of Learning and Teaching methods involving all Programme Team.

3. Outline any positive or negative impacts you have identified:

1. **CURRICULUM DESIGN & COURSE DELIVERY**

Issues of equality will be firmly articulated in the Curriculum Design and Course Delivery to ensure that particular students or groups are not adversely impacted upon or discriminated against. A primary aim is that the programme is accessible to the widest body of students possible and that their needs are anticipated. The programme will utilise a range of learning and teaching methods to the benefit of all students, regardless of protected characteristic. These will include making full use of the VLE to provide timely and comprehensive programme and course information.

1.1 LEARNING & TEACHING METHODS

- *The Writing Studio*
Key to the programme is the studio-based nature of approaches to writing. A central aim of the programme will be to consider the 'studio' as both a physical and pedagogical space and as it pertains to writing and practice-led methodologies. The writing studio will be a flexible space that accommodates a number of core writing practices: writing; reading; editing; dialogue between writers, presentation/performance/readings and peer reviewing. The studio also accommodates a learning and teaching model that is distinctive to studio-based teaching, namely one rooted in experimentation, where students are encouraged to take risks and to reflect upon failure, and supported by group critiques/workshops, individual tutorials and seminars, all taking place within the making/writing space.

Encouraging self-directed exploration and practice and supported by valuable peer-learning situations, students will focus on the development of their own creative critical writing, reading, editorial and research practices. This will be supported by the principal studio teaching methods of the individual tutorial, the group critique, the seminar and the lecture. Each environment will promote diversity of opinion, independent thought and peer learning and place emphasis on critical

discussion and debate in the modification of one's own ideas. The programme will therefore look to foster good studentship and relations amongst different groups, and value diversity and equality including different ways of thinking, experience and skills of others. Students are encouraged to situate their own knowledge and understanding in broad contexts and within an ethical framework.

1.2 SELF-DIRECTED, COLLABORATIVE AND PEER-LED LEARNING

The MLitt Art Writing cohort will be accommodated alongside the MLitt Curatorial Practice students and MLitt Fine Art Practice students, allowing for discourse between students and fostering critical reflection and experimentation. The programme will offer students the opportunity to explore forms of writing as a studio practice and, as one of the significant benefits of being situated in an art school context, will encourage and support project-based collaborations with other SoFA graduate students.

The flexible art writing studio expects that students will self-direct their own learning whilst also fostering collaborative strategies for practice and research. The needs and demands of students are anticipated to vary and it is important that the programme's structure, ethos and ILOs promote the respectful concern for the rights and needs of others, alongside recognising that each individual's concerns are inseparable from wider cultural, intellectual and ethical issues.

This is addressed is the programme Intended Learning Outcomes, as demonstrated below, and will be reflected in the Programme Handbook which will define the pedagogical strategies of the writing studio and the ethos of the programme. Curriculum in Stage 1 will introduce students to the 'studio' and the cognate pedagogical aims. It is intended that these Learning Outcomes promote an approach to the development of practice which fosters good relations between all students, regardless of protected characteristic:

> ### Programme Aim:
> - Transferrable active-learning and interpersonal skills (e.g. group-work skills, study skills, presentation and communication skills)
>
> ### Intended Learning Outcome of Programme:
> - (At the end of the MLitt in Art Writing, students will have attained): The ability to apply a range of active-learning and interpersonal skills whether working independently, collaboratively or within an institution, including being able to work with others, debate effectively and modify one's own ideas in order to support and develop independent thought.
>
> ### Intended Learning Outcome of Stage 1:
> **Professional Practice: Communication, Presentation, Working with Others**
> - (By the end of this course students will be able to): Develop effective communication skills in order to negotiate and collaborate with others, valuing diversity and equality including different ways of thinking, experience and skills.
>
> ### Intended Learning Outcome of Stage 3:
> **Professional Practice: Communication, Presentation, Working with Others**
> - Demonstrate confidence, autonomy and initiative in determining an independent practice, alongside valuing reflexivity and being open to constructive peer critique.

1.3 CURRICULUM

The curriculum content, including reading lists and library resource, will be varied and reflect diverse social and cultural perspectives. Course material will be flexible and allow for adjustments according to a cohort's interests, experiences and intentions. It is foreseen that this pedagogical approach will

ensure individual student needs and project rationale, regardless of background or protected characteristic, are valued. Not only this but that they are formative in the development of their own independent practice and research and in the awareness and understanding of the work of others.

- **Studio**

Studio-based course curriculum (*Writing Practice I, II* and *III*) is largely determined by the project rationale and learning intentions of each student. Students will identify their own programme of study and tutorials and assessment feedback will offer the opportunity for individual guidance. Student critiques and seminars will encourage students to develop their knowledge, understanding and practice in response to a broad field of critical debate and discourse. Similarly, there is scope for bespoke learning as a result of the cohort's contribution to their critical forum.

- **Histories, Theories and Methods**

The lecture and seminar-based course in Stage 1 will foster the positive contribution of others. In seminars students will be encouraged to situate their work in a broad context and to gain an advanced appreciation of the critical perspective of their peers and of other contributors to their field of enquiry. Students will be invited to lead seminar groups, demonstrating an equality of opportunity.

The Stage 2 course, *The Genre-Bending Art of Essaying*, is delivered by the School of Critical Studies at the University of Glasgow and will offer students the opportunity to develop interdisciplinary understanding and approaches to art writing and criticism and to form cross-disciplinary networks. These networks will include UoG students from across the School of Critical Studies with diverse personal and professional backgrounds.

The Core Research Methods course in Stage 1 and Elective course in Stage 2 offer students further opportunity to diversify and advance their research and practice.

- **Other Teaching and Learning Methods**

Other Teaching and Learning methods will encourage students to attend public talks and other events, contribute to broadening their knowledge and understanding of varied approaches to art writing and criticism. Any departmental trips will be assessed to consider the equality of opportunity for all students. Necessary adjustments would be made for students whose IRF, linguistic competence or protected characteristic prevent them from verbal presentation or contribution.

1.4 INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

The programme Learning Outcomes correspond to the SCQF (Level 11) benchmark descriptors. In addition to this general framework, the specific nature of the programme ILOs is shaped by the particular ethos and identity of the curriculum, namely a curriculum which emphasises the development of alternative forms of critical writing in a practice-based research framework. The programme will introduce a broad spectrum of approaches to art writing and expect students to develop the skills to write effectively in alternative registers and forms. In focusing on the expanded field of art criticism and experimental art writing, students will be introduced to alternative texts representing gender and ethnic diversity, allowing for a range of voices and perspectives to be represented. This allows students to self-direct their own experimental modes of writing and to meet the ILOs in a number of forms.

1.5 ASSESSMENT

Formative and Summative assessment points are scheduled throughout the programme. Assessment briefs including course Aims and Learning Outcomes will be made available as each stage commences alongside a verbal class briefing. Assessment deadlines will be staggered across co-requisite courses and course timetabling will be made available before the start of semester

allowing for effective time management. Discursive and written feedback will be regular and timely in order to allow students to act upon suggestions made in advance of their next assessment. Written feedback will be presented on an assessment pro forma to ensure transparency of how a final mark was arrived at and areas for improvement. Stage 1 and Stage 2 work will be sampled for parity and Stage 3 work will be subject to moderation. The degree classification is awarded on the results achieved in Stage 3, rather than a weighed average of all three stages. This supports student transition and contributes to equality of outcome.

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1.6 FULL-TIME/PART-TIME STUDY

The MLitt Art Writing will offer a 12-month full-time programme of study or a 20-month part-time programme of study. This provision advances equality of opportunity in accommodation of individual circumstances, for example students with caring responsibilities.

Contact time for both programmes of study will be clustered over regular days to allow for students to manage their workload effectively, including independent study and placements alongside other personal commitments.

1.7 STAFFING

The programme will be taught by the Programme Leader and a diverse team of visiting staff. A central focus will be ensuring that the visiting staff team represent gender and ethnic diversity, allowing for a range of voices and perspective to be represented. The employment of visiting tutors will be informed by equality considerations.

1.8 ACCESS TO COURSE MATERIALS

Set readings related to course lectures and seminars will be made available at least one week in advance via the course's VLE page. All copyrighted material will be made available in PDF format and scanned from the original by the Library where necessary. Lecture presentations will be available on the VLE following lectures. Key texts for courses will be reserved in the Library for the course duration and additional copies will be ordered where deemed necessary.

2.   RECRUITMENT

2.1 MARKETING STATEGY

The Course Viability Report prepared in August 2016 indicated that key recruitment areas include Germany and the USA. It is important to note that this analysis is based on programmes that vary in terms of their comparability to the proposed MLitt in Art Writing. While the recruitment strategy will reflect the market research, it will be paramount to identify broad target recruitment that reaches beyond EU and North America. The recruitment strategy will look to eliminate discrimination and foster good relations with diverse geographical partners.

2.2 COMPETENCE STANDARDS

The programme will advance equality in welcoming students from a range of backgrounds and with varied experience. This will include specified entry qualifications _or_ relevant experience. The programme will comply with APEL policies in order to be accessible to applicants who do not have an undergraduate degree.

3.   RESEARCH & PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

The programme will meet the needs of a diverse student cohort and present routes for both professional practice and research. Supported by specialist staff in the SoFA and professional mentors in external organisations, students will have equal opportunity to develop skills and knowledge needed for pursuing an arts industry career or undertake practice-based research in art writing or a cognate area.

3.1 PROJECT PLACEMENT

The **Project Placement**, as part of *Writing Practice II* in Stage 2, advances equality of opportunity by offering a point-of-entry to external organisations and expertise in the field of art writing. It also presents students with a formal situation for professional development and a supported opportunity to build professional networks and the chance to bring new work to a diverse public audience or readership.

3.2 ART WRITING RESEARCH GROUP

The **Art Writing Research Group** will foster good relations between staff and students. The Group will offer staff and postgraduate students working within the expanded field of art writing to share knowledge and expertise. A key focus of the Group will be to consider how we might reassess the place of art writing in relation to the broader fields of contemporary art, creative writing and art criticism and importantly be concerned with how we might write well. Focusing on cross-from and transdisciplinary writing, the Group will emphasise the advancement of equality in considering how we encourage diversity and give platform to a range of voices, perspectives and forms of writing.

4. Actions you have taken or planned as a result of your findings:

Action	Equality Impact	Person responsible	Time frame
Ensure that the pedagogical aims of the studio are clearly defined in the Programme Handbook.	Provide positive impact for all protected characteristic groups, ensuring that student's expectations reflect the programme aims for the promotion of a generative, experimental and collaborative learning and teaching environment. The effectiveness of the studio is determined by the respectful concern for the rights and needs of others.	Programme Leader	Session 2018-19
Close consultation with Student Recruitment and the International Office to develop a marketing strategy.	Advance equality and eliminate discrimination.	Programme Leader with Student Recruitment and the International Office	November 2017
Develop robust systematic mechanisms for collecting and analysis of qualitative and quantitative evidence to include	Ensure that equality impact can be monitored, understood and reported for all protected characteristic groups in respect of access, progress, outcomes and experience.	Programme Leader	Session 2018-19

programme level statistics and student feedback.			

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5. Where/when will progress and the outcomes of your actions be reported and reviewed:

All future actions will be examined and reported as part of the Programme Monitoring Annual Report (PMAR) alongside reviewing Learning and Teaching methods as part of a Periodic Review with the Programme Team. All quantitative and qualitative data collated over the academic year will be reported and examined in the PMAR.

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6. How will your actions and intended outcomes contribute to the delivery of GSA's equality outcomes:

- Ensure that the programme anticipates mainstream adjustments in its design and delivery. This is to support all students including those with protected characteristics through inclusive learning and teaching practices. This includes a curriculum that fosters and encourages a diversity of perspectives and methodologies and promotes ethical practice and shared understanding. Therefore contributing directly to Equality Outcomes 1 and 2.
- Engaging all staff, including part-time and visiting lecturers, in the development and implementation of curriculum which reflects and supports diversity of perspectives will encourage and enable students to pursue diverse and challenging methods of practice and contribute to progress in relation to Equality Outcomes 3 and 5.
- Ensure that the programme recruitment model is reflective of GSA's strategy for Widening Participation and therefore supports achievement of Equality Outcome 3.

The outcome of your assessment:

No action (no potential for negative or positive impact)

Action to remove barriers/mitigate negative impact

Action to promote positive impact   **X**

Sign-off, authorisation and publishing
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