

Introducing the MLitt Contemporary Art Practice (Formerly MLitt Fine Art Practice)

For entry in September 2025, the School of Fine Art is introducing an exciting evolution of its postgraduate portfolio. Our one-year, studio-based art programme will have a dynamic new focus, alongside a new name: MLitt Fine Art Practice will become **MLitt (Master of Letters) Contemporary Art Practice**.

This reimagined programme builds on its successful legacy, retaining its emphasis on studio-based making and fostering a vibrant, diverse community of students from across fine art disciplines. It has been redesigned to meet the needs of today's graduate artists, placing greater focus on how artistic practices can be activated to build sustainable careers beyond the programme.

The MLitt Contemporary Art Practice (CAP) encourages and challenges students to explore their practices in depth, equipping them with the skills and confidence to navigate professional pathways as artists or creative practitioners.

Please note: The programme is currently in the final stages of development and is subject to validation. Full details, including the Programme Specification and course outline, will be available here upon validation in May 2025.

The CAP Programme Ethos

A central feature of the programme is its focus on engaging audiences. Taking full advantage of its location in Glasgow, a city with a rich cultural heritage, the programme incorporates a range of student-led events and activities. These include exhibitions, performances, and presentations that bring artistic practices to life.

This events-based approach supports students to build experiences of live engagements and gain confidence in presenting their work to diverse audiences. Alongside creating a substantial body of work, students will develop the knowledge and agency to embark on professional careers as artists, whether in Glasgow or beyond.

Programme Structure

The MLitt Contemporary Art Practice offers two distinct pathways, designed as creative and critical communities of practice:

Material Engagements

This pathway explores the practical, philosophical, and ethical dimensions of materially based art practices. It celebrates diverse approaches to making, such as painting, printmaking, and sculpture, while considering their relevance in contemporary and future contexts.

Expanded Media

This pathway focuses on digital, photographic, filmic, and other time-based media. It examines how emerging technologies like machine learning and AI shape the creation and reception of art. It also supports performative and relational practices incorporating sound, movement, projection, broadcasting, and publication.

While these pathways allow for deep exploration within specific areas, the programme also encourages interaction and collaboration across pathways. This enables students to engage with contemporary art as both an interdisciplinary practice and a specialised discipline.

Programme Courses

The programme comprises three core studio courses and two collaborative courses, culminating in the 180 credits required for the MLitt degree.

Investigation, Activation, and Consolidation (Core Studio Courses):

These three courses form the foundation of the CAP programme. They support the development of a studio practice, the creation of a new body of work, and its presentation to public audiences. Students will also participate in regular dialogue sessions to critically engage with their peers' work, pushing the potential of their practice to new heights.

Research Methods (Semester 1):

This course is shared with other postgraduate students from the School of Fine Art, such as those on the MFA and MLitt Curatorial Practice programmes.

Elective Course (Semester 2):

Students can choose from a range of postgraduate electives offered across the GSA schools (The School of Fine art, School of Design, The Mackintosh School of Architecture, and The School of Information & Technology). These electives provide opportunities to expand the scope of practice and collaborate with peers from other disciplines.

Teaching Team

The programme is delivered by a dedicated team of practising artists from a wide range of disciplines. These lecturers are actively engaged in research that pushes the boundaries of contemporary art.

Students will also benefit from visiting artists, guest lecturers, and one-to-one tutorials, exposing them to a variety of ideas, perspectives, and practices.

Key Features

Community and Collaboration:

Connect with an international network of artists, peers, and tutors.

Professional Development:

Gain hands-on experience presenting your work to diverse audiences and develop the skills needed to thrive in a professional art career.

Technical Facilities:

Access a wide range of technical workshops, including woodwork, metalwork, and print studios, with tailored inductions based on your portfolio and practice.

Glasgow School of Art Programme Specification

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

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 2024-25 Academic Year.

1. Programme Details:

Programme Title	Master of Letters (MLitt) in Fine Art Practice
HECOS Code	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Photography and the Moving Image 100063/100887/100059/100962 2. Painting 100589/100059/100962 Drawing 100587/100059/100962 Print Media 100595/100059/100962 3. Sculpture 100592/100059/100962 Performance 100071/100059/100962
School	School of Fine Art
Programme Leader	Mick McGraw
Minimum Duration of Study	12 months, registered study
Maximum Duration of Study	24 months, registered study
Mode of Study	Full Time
Award to be Conferred	Master of Letters
Exit Awards	Stage 1: PG Cert in Fine Art Practice Stage2: PG Diploma in Fine Art Practice Stage 3: MLitt in Fine Art Practice
SCQF Level:	11
Credits:	180

Academic Session	2024-25
Date of Approval	PACAAG August 2024

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

7. Entry Qualifications	
7.1 Highers	N/A
7.2 A Levels	N/A
7.3 Other	A good honours degree in Fine Art or equivalent professional practice.

7.4 English Language Requirements	<p>You will have to provide evidence of English language proficiency when applying.</p> <p>International 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"> • IELTS for UKVI Academic with an overall score of 6.0 with a minimum of 5.5 in all components; • complete an acceptable Pre-sessional English Language Programme taught from within the UK with an outcome that equates to the IELTS scores as stated above. <p>If you are a student who has a degree from an English speaking country, or are a national of an English speaking country as listed in the UKVI Guidance, you may use this as proof of English language ability.</p>
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8. Programme Scope:	
<p>The Master of Letters (MLitt) in Fine Art Practice is a postgraduate programme in the School of Fine Art at GSA. It is a one-year taught programme, with the following disciplinary pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Painting, Drawing and Print Media • Photography and the Moving Image • Sculpture and Performance <p>Applicants to the MLitt in Fine Art Practice will identify in advance which pathway they would like to study. You will be based within, and supported by staff from the School of Fine Art. The programme is studio-based and centred on practice, and intended to provide opportunities for you to pursue in-depth study in fine art practice at postgraduate level.</p> <p>MLitt Fine Art Practice Pathways</p> <p>Painting, Drawing and Print Media Pathway</p> <p>This pathway is focused on the study and practice of painting, drawing and print media in contemporary fine art practice. The pathway aims to provide a stimulating environment that fosters discourse between students and encourages critical reflection and experimentation. The pathway course includes lectures and seminars, reflecting a variety of theoretical and historical perspectives of painting, drawing and print media and these practices expanded materially, performatively, spatially and conceptually in contemporary fine art practice. You are provided with dedicated, shared studios and have some access to all the School's technical workshops including, but not limited to, printmaking, wood, metal and digital media as required. An introduction to research concepts and skills will enable you to approach your studio projects with assurance, founded on a coherent, personal methodology. You are provided with access to project spaces to test ideas, offering ambitious working opportunities in terms of scale, space and installation. By the end of the programme, you are expected to demonstrate learning through your practice outcomes, and to have achieved a high level of maturity, confidence and professionalism to be brought into your ongoing professional life.</p> <p>Sculpture and Performance Pathway</p> <p>This pathway offers you the opportunity to engage with the expanded field of theory and practice associated with Sculpture and Performance as contemporary fine art practice. Through a combination of studio practice, access to all workshop facilities, including but not limited to, wood, metal, casting and digital media, the pathway aims to provide a stimulating environment that fosters discourse between students and encourages critical reflection and experimentation. The</p>	

pathway course includes lectures and seminars, culminating in a self-directed enquiry through practice to test and investigate theoretical and practical approaches to materiality, making, the environment, site specificity, performative sites and forms. You are provided with dedicated, shared studios and with access to project spaces to test ideas, offering ambitious working opportunities in terms of live and durational performance, screen-based works, scale, sculptural space and installation. An introduction to research concepts and skills will enable you to approach your studio projects with assurance, founded on a coherent, personal methodology. By the end of the programme, you are expected to demonstrate learning through your practice outcomes, and to have achieved a high level of maturity, confidence and professionalism to be brought into your ongoing professional life.

Photography and Moving Image Pathway

This pathway offers you the opportunity to develop your fine art practice through different modes of lens-based media, including digital and analogue photography and the moving image. The course is structured in order to enable exploration of these areas within the broader context of fine art practice and how lens-based works are situated within an expanded contemporary art context. With access to excellent technical facilities, you will have the opportunity to construct and investigate different potential methodologies for practice. The course investigates methods for display through print, projection, screen and other inter-related forms. The development of ideas in relation to practice and the expanded forms of practice are integral to the course, and you will be informed by wider debate around contemporary fine art, through the context of the specific media in order to develop, and structure, both the practical and theoretical underpinning of your work. You are provided with dedicated, shared studios and with access to project spaces to test ideas, offering ambitious working opportunities in terms of scale, space and installation. An introduction to research concepts and skills will enable you to approach your studio projects with assurance, founded on a coherent, personal methodology. By the end of the programme, you are expected to demonstrate learning through your practice outcomes, and to have achieved a high level of maturity, confidence and professionalism to be brought into your ongoing professional life.

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

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

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

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

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

9. Programme Structure:

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

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

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

Stage 1 (Postgraduate Certificate).

Duration: 15 weeks

Total credits: 60

Stage 2 (Postgraduate Diploma).

Duration: 15 weeks

Total credits: 60

Stage 3 (MLitt).

Duration: 15 weeks

Total credits: 60

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

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

N/A

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

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

11. Programme Aims:

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

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

11.1 Stage 1 Aims:

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

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

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

11.2 Stage 2 Aims:

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

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

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

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

11.3 Stage 3 Aims:

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

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

report.

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

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

12. Intended Learning Outcomes of Programme:

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

Knowledge and Understanding

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

Applied Knowledge and Understanding

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

Professional Practice: Communication, Presentation, Working with Others

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

12.1 Intended Learning Outcomes of Stage 1

Knowledge and Understanding

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

Applied Knowledge and Understanding

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

Professional Practice: Communication, Presentation, Working with Others

Identify and analyse complex problems and issues;

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

12.2 Intended Learning Outcomes of Stage 2

Knowledge and Understanding

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

Applied Knowledge and Understanding

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

Professional Practice: Communication, Presentation, Working with Others

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

12.3 Intended Learning Outcomes of Stage 3

Knowledge and Understanding

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

Applied Knowledge and Understanding

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

Professional Practice: Communication, Presentation, Working with Others

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

13. Learning and Teaching Approaches:

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

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

14. Assessment Methods:

General statement

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

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

Assessment on MLitt programme

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

Formative:

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

- seminars
- critiques
- tutorials

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

Engagement with formative assessment is a mandatory requirement.

Summative:

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

- Practical work
- Presentations
- Written work

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

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

Stage	Summative assessment points
Stage 1: PgCert	Week 14 (Stage 1)
Stage 2: PgDip	Week 14 (Stage 2)
Stage 3: Masters	Week 11 (Stage 3)

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

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

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

Assessment Criteria

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

None

16. Additional Relevant Information:

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