Glasgow School of Art Programme Specification
BDes/MEDes Product Design

Credit: Nella Piatek 2021

1. Programme Details	
Programme Title	BDes/MEDes Product Design
School	Innovation and Technology
Programme Leader	Irene Bell
Award to be Conferred	BDes/MEDes
Exit Awards	<u>Core</u> Stage 1: Certificate of Higher Education Stage 2: Diploma of Higher Education <u>BDes/MEDes</u> Stage 3: BDes Stage 4 : BDes(Hons) Year 4 (MEDes) BDes Hons Stage 5 : MEDes
SCQF Level	BDes 7-10 MEDes 7-11
Credits	BDes 480 MEDes 600
Mode of Study	Full time
HECOS Code	

Academic Session	2025-26
Date of Approval	Programme Approval February 2024

Awarding Institution	The University of Glasgow
Teaching Institutions	The Glasgow School of Art
Campus	Glasgow
Lead School/Board of Studies	School of Innovation and Technology
Other Schools/Board of Studies	N/A
Programme Accredited By (PSRBs)	N/A

2. Entry Qualifications	
Highers	Standard: ABBB, including a literate subject Minimum: BBCC, including a literate subject
A Levels	Standard: ABB and GCSE English at A/7 grade or above Minimum: BBC and GCSE English at A/7 grade or above
Other	International Baccalaureate: 30 points overall in the Diploma, including 18 at Higher Level, normally including English and Maths. Irish Leaving Certificate: Four Highers at H2 or above - subjects required as per Scottish Highers. Other eligible qualifications for entry include Foundation Diplomas in Art & Design, Higher National Certificates (HNC), Higher National Diplomas (HND), Foundation Degrees, Level 3 Diplomas, and other Further Education and Higher Education qualifications in related subjects. Entrants may begin their studies in Stage 2 or Stage 3

	depending on the level of prior qualifications and other entry criteria. Detailed information about the required grades for individuals holding or studying these qualifications can be access on the website. Applicants from outside the UK and Ireland should also consult our International student pages for details of accepted qualifications from specific countries. Applicants who do not meet entry requirements through formal qualifications but can demonstrate experience, skills and abilities at the appropriate level can also be considered. Additional entry requirements: Applicants are normally required to submit a portfolio or work and may be required to attend an Interview as part of their admissions assessment.
English Language Requirements	Applicants who are not a national of, nor have obtained a degree in one of the countries on the approved UKVI exemption list or those who require a Student Visa, will need to provide evidence of their English language ability. GSA's preferred test is the IELTS for UKVI (Academic) test taken at a UKVI approved test centre. GSA require all students, who require a student visa, to meet the following requirements to gain entry: • IELTS for UKVI Academic with an overall score of 6 with a minimum of 5.5 in all components; • An alternative Accepted English Language Test which can be found on the Postgraduate 'How to Apply' page of the GSA website.

3. Programme Introduction
The programme spans over 4 years (BDes) or 5 years (MEDes – Master of European Design) in duration, with the two-degree pathways sharing a common "core" in years One and Two. The programme covers the spectrum of making practices associated with design across two, three or four dimensions, including the design of products, tangible services and experiences. Throughout the programme, the studio component is complemented by courses that offer critical writing opportunities. Across years 2 and 3, students will be offered choice through elective courses where they can select from a range of thematic strands and methodologies pertinent to the broader study of 'product design'. In the third year of study students will be given the opportunity to diversify their study by following one of the degree-pathways, each having the named award of Bachelor of Design in Product Design and Master of European Design in Product Design. Each pathway offers a very distinct experience and a chance to pursue an exit trajectory with a stronger disciplinary focus. Product Design within The Glasgow School of Art provides a creative and critical learning environment that produces highly skilled graduates that are confident, imaginative, articulate

critical thinkers who can navigate complex social, environmental, political and technological topics through their emerging design practice. Our graduates are well placed to extend their study onto Masters or PhD, or enter the profession through public sector organisations such as the NHS and Scottish Government, and through multi-scale private sector organisations and consultancies such as EY Seren, and New Commercial Arts.

BDes Product Design
The disciplinary skills and expertise that constitute Product Design as a practice are taught with an emphasis upon experience, either that of individuals, groups, or user-types as appropriate. This embraces the methodological and analytical tools developed within the Social Sciences, to the disciplinary expertise of studio practice at both a pedagogical and a philosophical level. The B.Des/MEDes programme seeks to encourage thinking through design, the use of materials and images to forge an intellectual engagement with the world and our lived experience, by combining research, critique, communication of complexity and exploration of divergent possibilities, multiple material decisions, leading to innovation-led design propositions. Product Design as a practice is taught as an experimental method for engaging with and evaluating the world and its constituent components, which, in turn, offers the opportunity for its modification, manipulation or transformation. Consequently, the context of PD (Product Design) practice is crucial – social, economic, cultural, environmental or technological – in shaping the application of disciplinary expertise. Studio projects reflect this by challenging critical and creative skills that forge innovative design propositions for now and for the future.

MEDes Master of European Design (MEDes)
The Master of European Design pathway sets the school's trans-disciplinary approach to product design in an international context, providing an opportunity for immersion in different cultures and experiences through exchange with our six partner institutions: Aalto University Finland, KISD University in Cologne Germany, Politecnico Di Milano in Italy, ENCSI in Paris, University of Aveiro in Portugal, Konstfack University of Arts, Crafts and Design in Sweden. Students will have the opportunity to explore social, ethical and environmental issues as subjects for design projects, and learn how to apply research methods and analytical skills from the social sciences in an international context. Through exchange partner specific programmes of studio-based learning, students will acquire a wide range of visualisation, communication and material-making skills that bring together user insights, expert input and ethnographic information to drive the design and innovation process. Students will forge connections throughout their two years of exchange that create vital professional international networks. As part of the programmes international outlook, students will study a foreign language in year two to support their integration and orientation into a new educational and social culture, although most of our partner schools deliver courses in English. The MEDes degree-pathway shares its first two years with the BDes Product Design programme, at which point you can choose which of the directions best suits your academic objectives. MEDes students spend the following two years studying in two different European Schools, before returning to GSA to complete their final year of study. Years three and four of the MEDes pathway are specific to the "host" institution in which the student is then situated as part of the two-year academic exchange component.

4. Programme Aims

The programme provides students with the opportunity to:

BDes
- Acquire the theoretical and practical design skills underpinning a personal design perspective, to operate successfully within a professional environment.

- Respond to emerging social, economic, technological and environmental challenges.
- Integrate social science approaches and research methods into product design practice.
- Demonstrate an informed, ethical, and critical position regarding design practice and their role within it
- Demonstrate an awareness of the global climate crisis through sustainable and regenerative design practice in the development of project outcomes
- Manifest their thinking as new, desirable, and challenging products, services, and experiences
- Develop theoretical and practical design skills underpinning a personal design perspective, to operate successfully in cross-cultural and inter-disciplinary professional environments

MEDes
- Acquire an individual design perspective in response to contemporary living and wider society through the exploration of a theme or topic of interest utilising theoretical and practical design skills and competences.
- Engage a range of academic, professional, and civic stakeholders in the research, development and design of a thematic body of work.
- Demonstrate confidence in the articulation, reflection, and evaluation of design practice, outcomes, and the thinking that underpins these.
- Achieve a coherent and professional level of production, communication, and presentation of a body of work.
- Articulate an intentional relationship between a written element, research, and designed outcomes.
- Work collaboratively towards the production of a compelling body of work in response to a collaborative design challenge.

5. Programme Intended Learning Outcomes

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

BDes
- Apply a diversity of resources to formulate and respond to design challenges within an individual design practice.
- Demonstrate a research-led, user-focused approach to social, environmental and cultural issues through the application of design process and skills.
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of the global climate crisis through sustainable and regenerative design practice in the development of design project outcomes.
- Develop and define a large-scale self-directed project that incorporates a research component that drives the design development of 'studio' practice-based outcomes (artefacts, services, or experiences).
- Communicate the value of such a design process to an audience of designers, professionals, and industry stakeholders.

MEDes
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of a range of research methods to engage with diverse communities and stakeholders.
- Design and develop collaborative and participatory approach to the development of innovative future propositions.

- Demonstrate originality in the application of conceptual and semantic refinement to the resolution of a body of work derived from contextual and theoretical research of the chosen topic.
- Apply advanced principles of critical writing and discourse in the generation of a written thesis.
- Interpret, analyse and synthesise insights from social, contextual and theoretical research on a chosen topic, through the application of design practice
- Communicate and articulate an identifiable contribution to the creation of new knowledge and value through the delivery of a self-directed project.

6. Description of Learning and Teaching Approaches

The programme is designed as a studio-based learning programme which supports students in the development and acquisition of a range of skills. Through projects both individual and collaborative, students will engage with a range of activities (presentation, exhibition, performance, workshop) that will build towards a graduate profile that will scaffold their trajectory into future employment. Much of that experience will happen within the physicality of the studio through tutorials and reviews of project work with the teaching team, supported by Canvas for synchronous contact points, asynchronous online resources, guidance and information. Students will also engage with peer support through dialogue and peer feedback.

7. Description of Assessment Methods

Assessment is undertaken through both formative and summative activity.

Formative assessment provides ongoing tutor and per feedback throughout and at interim points in a course. Formative assessment includes peer and tutor review of work towards the summative assessment of the course.

Summative assessment is an evaluation of student performance at the end of a course. Assessment methods refer to a portfolio of work that could include presentations, annotated portfolios, practice-based and written outputs.

All summative assessments are marked and graded in line with the GSA's Code of Assessment. Students are provided with assessment guidelines and briefings to support the assessment process.

8. Programme Structure

The BDes Product Design and the MEDes (Master of European Design) share a common "core" in the first two years of study. During the second year of study, students can choose which of the directions best suits their academic objectives: BDes or MEDes.

MEDes students spend the following two years studying in two different European Schools completing 120 credits in Stage 3 and 120 credits in Stage 4 before returning to GSA and finalise their degree in Stage 5. Students pursuing the MEDes path will study a foreign language in year two to support their integration and orientation into a new educational and social culture.

Stage 1 – BDes Product Design				
Course	Credits	SCQF Level	Semester	Course Code
Design Studio – Foundations of Design Process and Practice	40	7	1	
Co-Lab	20	7	1	

Design Studio – Product Interactions	40	7	2	
Introduction to Critical Studies	20	7	2	
Total Stage Credits	**120**			

Stage 2 –BDes Product Design				
Course	**Credits**	**SCQF Level**	**Semester**	**Course Code**
Design Studio – Human-Centred Narratives	40	8	1	
S.I.T. Elective 2A	20	8	1	
Design Studio – Exploring Context	40	8	2	
S.I.T. Elective 2B or Languages (mandatory for MEDes)	20	8	2	
Total Stage Credits	**120**			

Stage 3 – BDes Product Design / MEDes on exchange out				
Course	**Credits**	**SCQF Level**	**Semester**	**Course Code**
Future Ecosystems	40	9	1	
S.I.T. Elective 3	20	9	1	
Exploring Design Identities	40	9	2	
Critical Writing	20	9	2	
Total Stage Credits	**120**			

Stage 4 – BDes Product Design / MEDes on exchange out				
Course	**Credits**	**SCQF Level**	**Semester**	**Course Code**
Creating Future Experiences	40	10	1	
PD Dissertation	20	10	1	
Developing Practice (Self-initiated)	60	10	2	
Total Stage Credits	**120**			

Stage 5 – MEDes Product Design				
Course	**Credits**	**SCQF Level**	**Semester**	**Course Code**
Creating Collaborative Futures	40	11	1	
Advancing Practice (Combined Practice and Thesis)	80	11	1 & 2	
Total Stage Credits	**120**			

9. Outgoing Exchange and Visiting Student Arrangements
BDes (Hons) Product Design students may be able to undertake a period of exchange with one of our international partner institutions in their third year of study. Outgoing International exchanges will normally take place in Stage 3 of study (SCQF Level 9) and will normally be for the duration of one Semester (15 weeks) either Semester 1 or Semester 2. All outgoing BDes (Hons) exchange students will be expected to achieve the equivalent of 60 SCQF/30 ECTS academic credits for one semester at their host institution. BDes (Hons) Product Design students will apply for international exchange in their second year of study. To be eligible for consideration for international exchange the student will normally have achieved a minimum grade of C3 at the formative assessment stage of the studio course component in stage 2. Where a student has not met the level of attainment specified a case can be made under

'Good Cause', the Programme Leader can re-consider their application and discretion may be exercised.

Incoming visiting students on exchange can enter the programme at SCQF level 8 or SCQF level 9 of the programme. These exchanges are normally for the duration of 1 semester and these students will follow the set courses for the programme depending on the which SCQF level they are entering into.

Stage 2 Exchange and Visiting Student Courses				
Course	Credits	SCQF Level	Semester	Course Code
Design Studio – Human Centred Narratives	40	8	1	
S.I.T. Elective 2A	20	8	1	
Design Studio – Exploring Context	40	8	2	
S.I.T. Elective 2B	20	8	2	

Stage 3 Exchange and Visiting Student Courses				
Course	Credits	SCQF Level	Semester	Course Code
Future Ecosystems	40	9	1	
S.I.T. Elective 3	20	9	1	
Exploring Design Identities	40	9	2	
Critical Writing	20	9	2	

10. Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statements and Other External Reference Points
Subject Benchmark Statements describe the nature of study and the academic standards expected of graduates in specific subject areas. For further information relevant to this programme see: QAA (2019) *Subject Benchmark Statement: Art and Design*. Gloucester: QAA. Available from: https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/sbs-art-and-design-17.pdf?sfvrsn=71eef781_22

11. Programme Regulations and Requirements for Progression
All GSA Degree programmes are validated by the University of Glasgow and the GSA's Programme Regulations are published in the University of Glasgow University Regulations. These regulations include the requirements in relation to: (a)   Award of the degree (b)   Progression requirements (c)   Early exit awards In referring to regulations for degree programmes, students should consult the University Regulations which were in force in the academic session in which they first registered for the degree programme in question.