Glasgow School of Art Course Specification
Design Studio - Foundations of Design Process and Practice

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Please note that this course specification is correct on the date of publication but may be subject to amendment prior to the start of the 2025-26 Academic Year.

Course Code	HECOS Code	Academic Session
UPRD107		2025-26

Course Title	Design Studio - Foundations of Design Process and Practice
Course Contact	Irene Bell

Credits	40
SCQF Level	7
When Taught	Stage 1, Semester 1

Associated Programmes	BDes/MEDes Product Design
Lead School	Innovation
Other Schools	N/A
Date of Approval	Programme Approval February 2024

Course Introduction

This course introduces students to the fundamental elements of the Product Design creative process.

A key feature of this course is experimentation, iterative making and reflection. Through exercises in 2D visualisation and 3D making methods, students will develop core skills through the exploration of forms and material qualities to unlock imagination, demonstrate divergent thinking and to generate multiple designed outcomes (or interventions).

The process of iterative discovery will be documented and presented through production of a curated portfolio of 2D and 3D elements.

Course Aims

This course provides students with the opportunity to:

- Engage directly with materials and processes to explore visualisation and materialisation methods.
- Introduce the importance of the design process as the core methodology underpinning the practice of product design.
- Understand the role that design plays in our engagement with people, products and places.
- Develop a range of visualisation methods to represent and communicate the function, interaction with and use of designed artefacts.
- Introduce team-working skills alongside a capacity for autonomous, self-initiated progress.
- Introduce reflective practice through iteration and the documentation of process

Course Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Demonstrate the application of the design process in response to a studio project, through experimentation with materials and form.

- Demonstrate divergent thinking and resourcefulness to explore and test design concepts and outcomes.
- Draw from a range of contemporary design examples and source materials to inform the production of a body of work.
- Communicate the design process through the documentation and presentation of work.

Indicative Content

This course covers the following content:

- Primary and Secondary research
- Product autopsy
- Experimentation with materials
- Speculative drawing
- Modelmaking
- User testing
- Presentation skills (Visual & Verbal)

Description of Learning and Teaching Methods

In this course, students will be expected to increasingly take significant responsibility for the management of their learning. Emphasis will be placed on the gradual encouraging of self-reliance and personal academic development.

This course is designed as a practice-based experience which supports students in their introduction to studio-based learning and practice. This is further supported by TSD (Technical Services Department), who provide workshop and material-based learning.

The principal teaching strategies employed on this course are:

Tutorial (group and individual) - designed to provide academic support through individual or group meetings with staff to discuss the different directions and aspects of projects or course-based activities as well as progress on the programme/course overall.

Review (group and individual) - enables the development of key presentation skills and encourages students to receive and give constructive feedback regarding each other's work, and an opportunity to debate project input. These may be tutor-led, tutor-facilitated, or peer-led allowing students to fully explore all aspects of practical submissions within a reflective discursive framework.

Presentation (visual and verbal) - an important learning device used to generate peer debate regarding the generation, development or overall success of concepts, and their practical realisation within the context of a project brief or proposal. Students present work to their peers, tutors and stakeholders when relevant through appropriate visual and verbal means (including: models or mock-ups, portfolios, videos, slideshows, etc.).

Self-Directed Learning - self-directed study emphasises the importance of autonomy, reflection upon personal learning and project work within an individual and/or a collaborative environment.

Guest Speaker sessions (when relevant) – include input from visiting lecturers/guests from industry and academic staff enabling students access to, and understanding of, relevant contemporary practice, research and commercial context. Talks arranged at the School of Innovation and Technology are often open to all students regardless of year group or programme.

Lectures - often used to introduce key knowledge to support practical work project development

This course is supported by a virtual learning environment tool (Canvas) for the dissemination, discussion and access to relevant course information, and signpost to other relevant teaching and learning platforms used by GSA.

Indicative Contact Hours	Notional Learning Hours
40	400

Description of Formative Assessment and Feedback Methods
Students are supported in their learning through a range of formative assessment activities that enable students to reflect on their learning as they progress through the course. This includes: • Regular feedback from tutors through engagement in individual and group tutorials, reviews and presentations • Class discussion and peer input

Description of Summative Assessment arrangements
Summative assessment is designed to support students to reflect upon their learning on completion of a course. It provides an evaluation of progress made and the level of achievement identifiable in the work submitted. Following an assessment presentation, students will submit a body of work for assessment. Grades will be awarded using the GSA marking scheme following/adhering to the assessment regulations in the Code of Assessment.

Description of Summative Assessment Method	Weight %	Submission week
Annotated portfolio: Students are required to submit an annotated portfolio of work (2D & 3D) that responds to a given project and that includes the prescribed deliverables.	100	Week 12

Exchange/Study Abroad	
Can this course be taken by Exchange/Study Abroad students?	No
Are all the students on the course taught wholly by distance learning?	No
Does this course represent a work placement or a year of study abroad?	No
Is this course collaborative with any other institutions?	No
If yes, then please provide the names of the other teaching institutions	N/A

Reading and On-line Resources
An on-line resource list will be provided to students at the start of the course. This will be reviewed annually to remain relevant and current for the course and subject specialism. An indicative list of resources is accessible via Resource Lists.