THE GLASGOW SCHOOL ᴼᶠ ARt

Glasgow School of Art Course Specification
Course Title: Professional Studio 5

Image Credit: Ollie Simpson, Mackintosh School of Architecture, Year 4 2023-24

Course Code	HECOS Code	Academic Session
PS5105		2025-26

Course Title	Professional Studio 5
Course Contact	Katherine McNeil

Credits	10
SCQF Level	Level 11
When Taught	Semester 1

Associated Programmes	Diploma in Architecture
Lead School	Mackintosh School of Architecture
Other Schools	N/A
Date of Approval	PACAAG April 2025

Course Introduction

The Professional Studio 5 course facilitates a student's command of the application of the business management and professional competencies required for contemporary architectural practice. The contractual and legislative frameworks are investigated to explore the agency of the architect and define a student's individual professional identity and potential for entrepreneurship within the profession. The wider social, political and ethical contexts are identified and their impact on the built environment and architectural practice are evaluated through reflective dialogue.

Students are encouraged to reflect on contemporary professional behaviours and practices, and to question how these can develop in the future to address the needs and desires of building users and society at large. Through consideration of ethical debates and critical analysis, students will identify their own career trajectory

Students are encouraged to evaluate and define their position as future architects within professional and societal contexts. The agency of the architect as an advocate of professionalism and societal entrepreneur within the built environment and architectural profession is explored.

Students are taught through a combination of seminars and workshops aligned with the Stage 5 Final Design Thesis project. This forms the scenario in which the architect's relationship with clients, communities and institutional systems is explored within the global context of contemporary architectural practice.

Throughout the course students are supported to develop and demonstrate the professional competencies and graduate attributes required to meet the standards for Exemption from the ARB and RIBA Part 2 Examination in Architecture.

Course Aims

The aims of the course are to:

professionalism: facilitate a student's command of the principles and practices of professionalism in terms of behaviour, business and contractual competencies, and statutory and regulatory frameworks in relation to the agency of the architect

design/create: facilitate a student's command of complex and coherent iterative design and procurement processes informed by professional values, competencies, and statutory and legislative frameworks

research: facilitate a student's command of research skills informing arguments in relation the business competencies required for architectural practice supported by appropriate evidence

communication: facilitate a student's command of the presentation of informed arguments using professional written, visual and verbal communication

skills: facilitate a student's command of the use of analogue and digital tools to express a student's individual professional identity in relation to design proposals

knowledge: facilitate a student's command of the knowledge of statutory processes, competencies, the role and relationships of built environment professionals within the construction industry relative to wider social, political, ethical and financial contexts

Course Intended Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the Professional Studies 5 course students will be able to **synthesise, speculate & articulate:**

professionalism: the principles and practices of professionalism in terms of behaviour, business and contractual competencies, and statutory and regulatory frameworks in relation to the agency of the architect

design/create: a complex and coherent iterative design process informed by professional values, competencies, and statutory and legislative frameworks

research: advanced research skills informing arguments in relation the business and contractual competencies required for architectural practice supported by appropriate evidence

communication: the presentation of informed arguments verbally and visually in a professional manner

skills: the use of analogue and digital tools to express a student's individual professional identity in relation to a design project

knowledge: developed knowledge of statutory processes, competencies, the role and relationships of built environment professionals within the construction industry relative to wider social, political, ethical and financial contexts

Indicative Content

Students will critically evaluate and assess the ethical and professional dimensions of architectural production. Students utilise the Final Design Thesis theme to define their ethical and professional perspectives, establish a practice profile and define a strategy to deliver a project.

During the course students will:

- undertake research on contemporary professional business and architectural practice
- analyse the final design thesis from an ethical and professional perspective with a focus on:
  - health and safety
  - risk management
  - fire and life safety design
  - sustainable design solutions
- research, consider and define an individual ethical and professional position

- undertake research and establish a strategy for project delivery
- present conclusions from an individual perspective, as an illustrated, written report

Description of Learning and Teaching Methods

Pedagogy:

The Professional Studio 5 course facilitates a student's command of the business and professional competencies and the contractual and legislative frameworks required for contemporary architectural practice. Student learning is developed through lectures, specialist workshops, critical thinking and discussion.

Delivery:

The course is delivered using a range of learning and teaching activities, including lectures and group workshops which are designed to foster collaboration, enhance communication skills and promote knowledge sharing, along with associated specialist talks. Staff-directed study is complemented by independent student-directed study. Students are supported in preparing groupwork through briefings on strategies for collaboration and provided with example submissions.

Timetable:

Weekly lectures and group workshops.

Canvas:

The virtual learning environment tool Canvas is used for the dissemination, discussion, and access to relevant course information, and to signpost students to other relevant teaching and learning platforms used by GSA.

Indicative Contact Hours	Notional Learning Hours
10	100

Description of Formative Assessment and Feedback Methods

Formative activities are provided during the course, offering students the opportunity to obtain staff feedback.

The lectures and workshops provide students with the opportunity to gain staff feedback during the workshop. Students are offered the opportunity for staff feedback on the outline of their individual written submission.

As such Formative feedback provided throughout the course fosters reflective learning while supporting the Summative graded assessment and feedback process, which generally happens at the end of the course.

Description of Summative Assessment arrangements

Summative assessment is undertaken at the end of the course and is designed and delivered to support student learning through evaluation of the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) for each course, aligned with the professional competencies required for architectural practice. Summative assessment is undertaken through an individual 2000 word written submission based on the course group workshop. Written feedback is provided on all summative assessments.

Reassessment opportunities where a student has not passed the course are outlined in the GSA Code of Assessment.

Description of Summative Assessment Method	Weight %	Submission week
Students are required to submit an individual illustrated written Report (2000 words) based on the course groupwork.	100%	Semester 1 Week 12

Exchange/Study Abroad	
Can this course be taken by Exchange/Study Abroad students?	Yes
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	

Reading and On-line Resources
Supporting the course, an indicative reading and on-line resource list is accessible via Resource Lists. This list will be reviewed and updated annually. Supervisors, tutors and peers will provide further recommendations appropriate to student's chosen research subject.