THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

Equality Impact Assessment Form for Academic Programmes (EqIA)

As a public sector organisation, GSA has a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to assess the impact all of its academic programmes may have on protected groups (as defined by the Act).

The purpose of this assessment is to use relevant evidence and critical thinking to identify any impact (positive, negative or neutral) the programme that is being assessed may have on the students and staff members it applies to.

The EqIA is a tool which helps mainstream equality into everything GSA does. It requires us to consider how we can mitigate or eliminate negative impact and, in turn, advance positive outcomes. Therefore, it must be undertaken during the development / review of the programme and not after it has been finalised. Ideally, EqIAs should be a team effort of relevant parties to ensure a variety of perspectives have been consulted. All finalised EqIAs must be signed off by a senior lead, the Education Committee, and either the Head of Student Support and Development or GSA's Equality Officer. Support from the Equality Officer is available at any stage of completion.

Further guidance on how to complete an EqIA can be found on GSA's website and the Equality and Diversity section on the staff intranet. If you have any additional questions, please contact equality@gsa.ac.uk.

Name of Equality Impact Assessment (E.g. Title of Programme)	**Master of Fine Art (MFA)**
New or reviewed	**REVIEWED**
Owner/Review Lead and role	**Dr Roddy Hunter, Programme Leader**
School	**SCHOOL OF FINE ART**
Date of assessment	**6 March 2025**

1. Programme Outline and Characteristics	
Programme Outline (please provide a brief outline of the programme)	The Master of Fine Art (MFA) programme at the Glasgow School of Art is a multidisciplinary programme in which students integrate creative practice and contextual enquiry to explore new and emerging developments in contemporary fine art. Offered as a two-year full-time programme of study, the MFA provides students with an extended opportunity to reflect, develop and reposition their artistic practice and research in response to a range of issues and contexts. The programme's multidisciplinary learning environment and ethos ensure that developments in studio practice are productively explored and consolidated through critical appraisal and analysis. Experiential learning within a community of peers and the city's broader artistic and cultural context is fundamental to developing self-directed practice, initiative and enterprise in relation to broader cultural, theoretical and historical contexts. Guided by accomplished artists and researchers, teaching focuses on enabling the development of diverse practices and interests of students through focused feedback and critique aligned with an advanced awareness of professional practice across a range of arts and culture settings. In addition to programme-specific courses, MFA students follow a course in research methods and methodologies for artistic practice study alongside other postgraduate students in the School of Fine Art and extend practice further by choosing to study one of a range of interdisciplinary electives offered across GSA. The programme provides diverse and dynamic learning opportunities for students to synthesise and integrate various skills, knowledge and abilities to establish and extend their artistic practice confidently and purposefully.
Modes of Study	Full-time

2. **Evidence used when undertaking this assessment** – please make a reference to your programme-specific EDI data and any other relevant evidence

- please **ensure all data is either presented in percentages only, or that any numbers smaller than five are presented as '<5'** to allow for adequate data analysis and trend review without breaching any Data Protection Regulations

Note: *provisions for protected groups must be made regardless of current numbers, however, data is still used to inform action and measure progress*

Equality monitoring data suggests consistently diverse cohorts on this programme:

- Over this review period the age demographic is consistent with that of previous years with 76%, 69% and 78% in the age range 25-39 (previously 78% in 2016- 17). No students under 25 joined the programme. Regarding the 40+ category there was an increase from the 2019 percentage of 5% to 10% in both 2020 and 2021.
- From 2017-2022 (except for 2018) over 50% of the intake has been international (2017 (58%), 2018 (45%), 2019 (59%), 2020 (50%), 2021 (54%).
- The number of students identifying as from a Black, Asian or Minority ethnic background increased in 2019 and 2020: 31% (2019), 33% (2020). However, while this demonstrates a percentage increase on the last review (26% in 2017) it dropped to 24% in 2021. This may have been the result of the Covid 19 pandemic for in 2022 the 43% of students joining the programme

were from Black, Asian or Minority ethnic backgrounds.

- In 2019 41% of the cohort identify as male: and 59% identify as female (consistent with the stats of the last review period), however, in 2020 only 36% of the cohort identified as male and 61% as female and in 2021 28% of the cohort identified as male and 67% as female. Interestingly, in 2020 and 2021 2% and 4.5% respectively, identified themselves as other.
- A significant majority of students continue to indicate that they have no religion or belief (74%: 2019/72%: 2020/ 67%: 2021) although students of faith included Christian (3%: 2019), Jewish (3%: 2019/ 4%: 2020/ 5.5%: 2021), Hindi (2%: 2019), Buddhist (2%: 2020/ 5.5%: 2021) and spiritual (2%: 2019/ 2%: 2020/ 5.5%: 2021). Interestingly, several students identified themselves as being of 'any other religious belief' (3%:2019/ 6%: 2020/ 3%: 2021) whilst several students refused to provide the information requested (12%: 2019/ 14%: 2020/ 5.5%: 2021).
- The percentage of students disclosing disability has increased from 18% in 2016-17 to 26% in both 2020 and 2021. More than 80% of disclosures have consistently related to: two or more disabling conditions or specific learning differences.
- 20% (2019) 26% (2020) and 29% (2021) of the cohort identify themselves as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Other - Lesbian (2%: 2020/ 9%: 2021), Gay (5%: 2019/ 4%: 2020/ 7%: 2021), Bisexual (10%: 2019/ 18%: 2020/ 11%: 2021) or Other (5%: 2019/ 2%: 2020/ 2%: 2021). This demonstrates a modest increase in candidate from sexually diverse backgrounds joining the programme (22% of the 2016-17 identified as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Other). It is also worth noting that 31% (2019), 36% (2020) and 15% (2021) refused to provide the information requested.

The evidence used to assess the MFA Programme includes:
- Successive PMAR Equality and Diversity Statistical evidence relating to recruitment and the demography of students joining the programme from 2017-2018 to 2020-2021, with reference to the PSED.
- reflection on all aspects of the MFA programme (in view of the pending CAF and periodic review 2022-2023) including: the MFA programme ethos and position statement, applications and recruitment, the interview process, progression, inductions, curriculum design, progress through the programme, delivery and learning and teaching strategies, assessment, research, and professional practice.
- consultation with staff and students as the CAF and periodic review process has unfolded.
- Consideration of the recruitment strategy regarding protected characteristics.
- External Examiner's Reports (2017-2018 – 2020-2021).

3. a) Major changes introduced to the programme since the most recent EqIA (where applicable) – please provide an overview and make reference to how those changes have affected EDI issues (either positively or negatively)

- if the changes are substantive to the programme structure, please insert (or attach) two diagrams which illustrate:
  i) the programme structure before amendment
  and
  ii) the programme structure after amendments

No major changes have been made since the last EqIA

3. b) Please outline how you have advanced/are advancing the principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and how you have addressed any EDI-related issues within the following:	
Student Recruitment	Attempting wherever possible to offer places to a diverse range of applicants from the pool of applications received. While applicants will mainly have experience of successful undergraduate study in Fine Art, the programme entry requirements stress eligibility of equivalent academic award in a related subject or prior professional and/or life experience. The programme has a history of admitting students from a range of educational backgrounds. We also encourage applications for SoFA UG programmes. Promotional and induction materials use inclusive language and explicitly foreground the programme's pedagogical ethos of diversity in everything we do in both the range of practices and communities we encourage and support. Applicants are also offered access to the programme pages on the Pre-enrolment Gateway to help them prepare to join the course and understand the support available with relevant contact information.
Programme Academic Induction	Induction begins through the pre-enrolment gateway, followed by engagement with the GSA Central Induction canvas pages. These resources are signposted through the MFA programme induction presentation, which takes place in person, with presentation materials later made available for reference through the MFA programme canvas pages. Students also meet their designated Personal Tutor in the first weeks of the programme to ensure they understand and settle into the programme and studios environment well. Personal Tutors remain a primary point of contact for pastoral and academic support.
Curriculum (contents, diversification and decolonisation)	The curriculum focuses on enabling each student to identify and explore their personal interests through developing artistic practice informed and responding to broader cultural and social contexts. As a student-centred and driven studio community, the programme benefits from a diversity of approaches and perspectives. Programme reading lists respond to current trends and theories prevalent in contemporary art education and practice and wider societal factors and staff participate in professional development opportunities regarding decolonising the curriculum where appropriate and possible.

Learning and Teaching Approaches (activities and practices)	Teaching mainly takes place through in person individual and small group tutorials and we ensure students are seen by a range of different tutors throughout their time on the programme. Our teaching and learning approaches essentially dialogic, student centred and foster a sense of belonging in our student community. As we have a high percentage of international, students on the programme, we work with colleagues in Learning Support to offer additional English language support and additional help in preparing written submissions for those who have English as a second language. We always follow due process to ensure that measures outlined in Reasonable Adjustment Reports are implemented.
Assessment and Feedback Methods	Assessment is via PDF submission, via Canvas. Feedback is also accessible via Canvas. Tutorials are scheduled to take place after assessments to discuss feedback
Learning Resources	Students benefit from a dedicated studio, and supported access to workshops and facilities. Library and online resources are updated and accessible through Key Links.
Support for Students (e.g. implementing the Student Pastoral Tutor Scheme; signposting to Student Support services, etc)	The Personal Tutor scheme has had a positive impact on setting aside time for short, focussed tutorials with the emphasis on any aspects which may be affecting the students learning. This encourages the students to share any issues which could be affecting their studies or their health and allows staff the opportunity to discuss further and/or signpost students to Student Support Services for specific information and further support. Staff are also encourgared tio signpost links to student support in their email signatures.
Staff Development	HR have a series of online training courses for staff to undertake to assist them in their roles with dealing with staff and students, GDPR, Equality and IT security amongst others. First aid, Fire Safety and Mental Health First aid are all available for staff to be able to help and support all students.
Any other relevant areas	

4. How have you ensured the programme being assessed is advancing positive impact on the protected characteristics? – please address each protected characteristic individually	
Age	Direct progression from undergraduate is more common with younger candidates from international backgrounds e.g., those applying from China and Southeast Asia. Most candidates joining the programme have been in the 25-39 category.

Disability	Once a disability is disclosed students are advised of the support available to them. Once their needs are established reasonable adjustment regarding pace of work, deadlines for submissions are agreed with the student in question. Examples of this can be seen from our recent experience of supporting students working with notetakers, and we have ensured the availability of a mobile induction loop for use in crits.
Gender reassignment (covers Trans identities)	A small number of students identify themselves as other. There has been a small % rise in such candidates applying for the MFA and being offered a place on the programme. We are sensitive to students use of preferred pronouns and advise that these can be changed on Canvas. In response to the discourse arising from gender and sexuality studies the School of Fine Art has introduced a new elective: Queer Strategies in Arts and Culture. The School of Fine Art is based in the Stow building which has now introduced gender-neutral toilets.
Marriage and Civil Partnership (only applicable to staff)	As noted above the programme is open to candidates from all backgrounds without prejudice. See note above Re: introduction of a new elective: Queer Strategies in Arts and Culture.
Pregnancy and Maternity	The staff team works flexibly with all students and staff and introduces any measure that can be taken to assist access.
Race	The introduction of a new elective: Decolonising Strategies in the Creative Arts (2022-2023) has been welcomed.
Religion or Belief	The data provided is consistent with that of the previous review period. There continues to be a high number of students who identify themselves as non-religious. However, where students who are observant of a faith require not to be in attendance e.g., specific religious holidays or prayer the staff team accommodates this as requested.
Sex	Interestingly, in 2020 and 2021 2% and 4.5% respectively, identified themselves as other. There has clearly been a drop over the review period in those identifying themselves as 'men' joining the programme e.g., from 41% in 2019 to 36% in 2020 and 28% in 2021. This seems to align with patterns in art education more broadly but we will continue to review the application and conversion data.
Sexual orientation	• The introduction of the Queer Strategies in Arts and Culture Elective has been well received as well as the Queer Materialities Research Group for staff which feeds into teaching practices.

Any other groups (e.g. Care Experienced; Carers; Military Veterans; Low Socioeconomic Status (SES); Asylum Seekers; British Sign Language Users, etc)	We attempt to be flexible wherever possible in our timetabling to accommodate those with caring responsibilities and try not to change the advertised timetable to aid students in planning their additional responsibilities such as employment, caring, work/study life balance, availability of BSL support. We attempt to not work later than 5pm to ensure students can leave to attend any caring responsibilities, attend jobs etc. Students with childcare issues may request particular times for tutorials and staff contact to assist with this. Online tutorials/contact can at times be utilised if we feel this may assist any student who may be unable to attend onsite.

5. Have you identified any negative impact on the protected groups? How have you mitigated it? – please address each protected characteristic individually, providing details of any undertaken actions	
Age	None identified
Disability	None identified
Gender reassignment (covers Trans identities)	None identified
Marriage and Civil Partnership (only applicable to staff)	None identified
Pregnancy and Maternity	None identified
Race	None identified
Religion or Belief	None identified
Sex	None identified
Sexual orientation	None identified
Any other groups (e.g. Care Experienced; Carers; Military Veterans; Low Socioeconomic Status (SES); Asylum Seekers; British Sign Language Users, etc)	None identified

6. How does the outcome of this assessment and the actions undertaken support GSA's 2021 - 2025 Equality Outcomes
This issues identified and actions undertaken in this assessment fully support GSA's 2021 - 2025 Equality Outcomes to namely **1**: Actively foster and support an organisational culture in which dignity and respect for self and others is understood and practised, where confidence is encouraged and promoted, and where ignorance, prejudice and bias are challenged. **2**: Continue to evaluate our physical and digital environment, aiming to optimise accessibility and inclusivity by acknowledging and providing for the needs of our students, staff and stakeholders.

4: Improve lifelong outcomes for students by identifying and supporting those groups facing persistent inequality throughout and beyond their student learning journey into positive destinations.

7. How does the outcome of this assessment and the actions undertaken support the three main duties GSA has under the Equality Act 2010 Equality Act 2010 to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity;
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not?

The actions and outcomes of this EIA fully align with and will contribute to GSA's Equality Outcomes 2021-2025 by:

- Ensuring that the programme recruitment model reflects GSA's strategy for Widening Participation (EO: 3 and EO: 4)
- Ensure that the programme continues to be responsive to mainstreaming in its design and delivery further promoting ethical good practice as central to it. (EO: 1)
- Ensure that the programme maintains a balanced approach to the use of both physical and digital environments thus optimising inclusivity. (EO:2)
- Ensure that the programme continues to promote good practice in Health and Safety thus supporting the needs of all students. (EO:1 and EO:2)
- Engaging all staff and student in curriculum development in terms of scholarly and research activity and the potential for the enhancement of curriculum that further supports a diversity of perspectives thus enabling students to operate within an international context. (EO:1, EO:3 EO:4)

8. Action plan for positive impact on protected groups – please provide details on any outstanding actions for advancing EDI within your programme, which resulted from the above analysis

- please name an action owner and a timescale for completion

- please keep any completed actions from older versions of the EqIA and provide updates on any actions that have not yet been completed

Action	Equality Impact / Protected Group	Person Responsible	Time frame	Updates/ Completion
There are no outstanding actions for advancing EDI within your programme				

Next review date – please consider any outstanding actions outlined above; - the whole EqIA form would need to be revised at Periodic Reviews, when there is a major change introduced to the programme, or at intervals of no more than three years (whichever comes first)	As the programme is due to be revalidated in 2024/25 through the implementation of Common Academic Framework it would be appropriate to review the

- nevertheless, EqIAs must also be considered as part of the Programme Monitoring Annual Review (PMAR) process to ensure they are still relevant and the action plan is updated yearly	EqIA in 12 month's time, so January 2025.

Signed off by Owner/Review Lead (name and role): Dr Roddy Hunter, Programme Leader	6 March 2025
Signed off by Senior Lead Martin Newth, HoS SoFA	11th March 2025
Signed off by Equality Lead Ceit Mackintosh, Equality Officer	10th March 2025
Signed off by Education Committee	2nd April 2025