

Glasgow School of Art Programme Specification

Programme Title:

Master of Letters in Curatorial Practice (Contemporary Art)



Curatorial Practice ((Contemporary Art))

**Outward
International
Destabilising
Recalibrating
Distinct
Hands-on
Cohesive
Empowering
Challenging
Consistent
Resilient
Independent
Practicing
Fluid
Adaptable
Flexible
Pliable
Varied
Proactive
Connecting
Now**

1. Programme Details	
Programme Title	Master of Letters in Curatorial Practice (Contemporary Art)
School	School of Fine Art
Programme Leader	Professor Omar Kholeif (GSA) Dr Alexandra Ross (UoG)
Award to be Conferred	Master of Letters
Exit Awards	Stage 1: PG Cert in Curatorial Practice (Contemporary Art) Stage 2: PG Diploma in Curatorial Practice (Contemporary Art)
SCQF Level	11
Credits	180
Mode of Study	Full-time
HECOS Code	100914

Academic Session	2025/26
Date of Approval	PACAAG August 2025

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

2. Entry Qualifications	
Highers	N/A
A Levels	N/A
Other	An undergraduate Degree with minimum 2:1 in a relevant subject area or equivalent professional practice. Additional entry requirements: Applicants are normally required to submit a personal statement, along with satisfactory academic references as parts of their applications. Applicants may also 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 6.5 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.
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3. Programme Introduction

The MLitt Curatorial Practice (Contemporary Art) is a 12-month Master’s programme run jointly between The School of Fine Art (GSA) and The School of Culture and Creative Arts (UoG), aimed at graduates wishing to develop a curatorial pathway within the field of contemporary visual arts and other cultural fields. The programme is structured to enable and support you to pursue independent and self-directed work, alongside the practical, intellectual, and professional foundations for future curatorial roles or contexts. As a CPCA student you are enrolled at both institutions and are able to access additional facilities as a result.

You will have access to highly regarded and experienced national and international professional curators and practitioners to acquire key skill sets and attributes alongside a peer network that is vital to the profession at all levels. The programme balances practice-based learning, contextual enquiry, and international professional perspectives, alongside a dynamic exploration of current developments, while supporting you to locate, articulate, and refine your curatorial interests and approaches.

- **Stage 1** focuses on situating practice and theory, guiding you to locate research collaboratively through connecting with peers and practitioners.
- **Stage 2** encourages the development of your curatorial research, with teaching that responds to the specific research interests within your cohort alongside professional practice.
- **Stage 3** shifts focus towards independent work, as you undertake a substantial curatorial project, dissertation, or a combination of both.

The programme proposes an exchange between curating as a process, connected to visual arts theory and practice, and its interdisciplinary expansion through curatorial discourse. Teaching consists of a constellation of lectures, tutorials, visits, practical workshops, and focused study days. There is an emphasis on independent work and peer dialogue, where the discussion of projects enables you to locate and describe your research and practice to develop a methodology of working that you can take forward post-Masters.

4. Programme Aims

The MLitt in Curatorial Practice (Contemporary Art) aims to:

- Enable the development of knowledge and expertise in the field of contemporary curation in relation to wider social, economic, geo-political, technological debates and arts practices;
- Encourage the application of research and practice in relation to contemporary curatorial discourse, through a critical engagement with key developments, debates, perspectives, texts and platforms;

- Provide critical frameworks for the evaluation of individual curatorial work in relation to the relevant field of practice as well as to peers and wider social contexts;
- Facilitate the enhancement of existing and new practical and professional skills and attributes, including methodologies of research and practice, care and understanding of materials and objects, installation good practice
- Enable engagement and understanding of audience development, communication and other forms of curatorial presentation and public programming
- Facilitate the application of knowledge and understanding of professional practice including aspects of health and safety, ethics and environmental good practice in an international context.

5. Programme Intended Learning Outcomes

After fully participating in and successfully completing the programme, you will be able to:

- Critically analyse and evaluate curatorial roles and contexts through diverse research methods and approaches taken by curators in relation to artists, institutions, collections, places, platforms, and audiences.
- Analyse and apply critical skills to curatorial practices, agendas, or interests, situating them within broader contemporary cultural environments.
- Create and implement creative and analytical responses to various contexts that inform curatorial practice, including policy, ethics, audience engagement, and public discourse.
- Create and develop innovative formats and contexts to advance curatorial thinking, practice, and delivery.
- Evaluate and apply advanced curatorial analysis and critical engagement through programme planning, effective communication, and creative problem-solving in professional settings.
- Apply creative attributes to collaborate and work independently and within teams across diverse platforms, contexts, and audiences to support the production and dissemination of curatorial work.

6. Description of Learning and Teaching Approaches

The programme integrates theory and practice, where methods of teaching and assessment explore these interrelationships, led by staff from the University of Glasgow and Glasgow School of Art. The programme is built around four core teaching strategies: lectures/presentations and seminars, professional skills training, discussion and presentation of your research and practice-based work (through tutorials and peer sessions), and workshops.

In Stages 1 and 2, these methods are supported and expanded through visits, study days clustered around particular subject areas, practical approaches, or critical topics, with contributions from visiting local and international guest speakers. Lectures and presentations inform critical, historical, and theoretical positions, alongside seminars focusing on selected literature and case studies. Professional skills sessions and workshops address different aspects of producing curatorial and professional work. Tutorials and peer sessions provide a platform for discussing your work. These approaches are further enhanced by study days and by SoFA's long-running and highly successful Friday Event talk series. In stage 2 there are also cross-course PGT professional practice sessions aimed at developing graduate attributes.

The development of your practice is supported by a series of core and elective courses, including the Practice as Research course (20 credits) delivered to all SoFA PGT students in Stage 1, and a self-selected GSA elective course in Stage 2 (20 credits).

For CPCA students, there is also a specific Work Placement option (20 Credits) hosted by the University of Glasgow, facilitated and assessed entirely through the School of Culture and Creative Arts (UoG), and introduced and managed by the UoG CPCA Programme Leader. Spaces are limited and you are supported to apply for placements that are relevant to your curatorial area. Submission includes of a statement of motivation (300 words max.); a CV; and an indicative list of three choices. This is reviewed through discussion with the host organisations and there may be an interview required. You track your progress through a work placement diary and portfolio (75%) and produce an academic poster (25%) for presentation at the University towards the end of the placement.

In Stage 3, you will fully realise a curatorial project or dissertation, supported by tutorials and workshops designed to prepare you for the transition into professional life.

7. Description of Assessment Methods

The structure of the MLitt comprises 80 credits of project work (CP1, 2, 3), a 20-credit PGT Elective course, and 20 credits of specialised Practice as Research training.

All courses within the MLitt Curatorial Practice (Contemporary Art) programme are assessed through a combination of formative and summative assessment methods.

Throughout the programme, you will receive formative feedback through your participation in workshops, peer-to-peer presentations, reading groups, and seminars, as well as through your engagement with professional practitioners. Formative assessment points also occur at mid-points in each semester.

There are summative assessment points throughout the programme. Summative assessment methods include a range of formats, as defined by the course, such as solo and group project portfolios, context reviews, extended essays/dissertations, and expositions, often accompanied by a self-appraisal report (Critical Reflection).

The 60-credit Masters Project in Stage 3 is individually supervised to support you in completing your work for a Masters Project. The outcome may be:

1. an individual curatorial project supported by a portfolio with a critical evaluation
2. A curatorial project/proposition and extended essay
3. an individual dissertation (15,000 words)

Projects are supported by regular supervisory meetings and feedback on your progress.

8. Programme Structure				
Stage 1				
Course	Credits	SCQF Level	Semester	Course Code
Curatorial Practice 1	40	11	1	PCUR101
Practice as Research	20	11	1	PCXS101
Total Stage Credits	60			

Stage 2				
Course	Credits	SCQF Level	Semester	Course Code
Curatorial Practice 2	40	11	2	PCUR201
PGT Elective (GSA/UoG)	20	11	2	
Total Stage Credits	60			

Stage 3				
Course	Credits	SCQF Level	Semester	Course Code
Master's Project in Curatorial Practice	60	11		PCUR301

9. Outgoing Exchange and Visiting Student Arrangements
N/A

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: https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements/ QAA Subject Benchmark Statements on Art and Design (2016), History of Art, Architecture and Design (2019). See also QAA Characteristics Statement for Master's Degrees.

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.