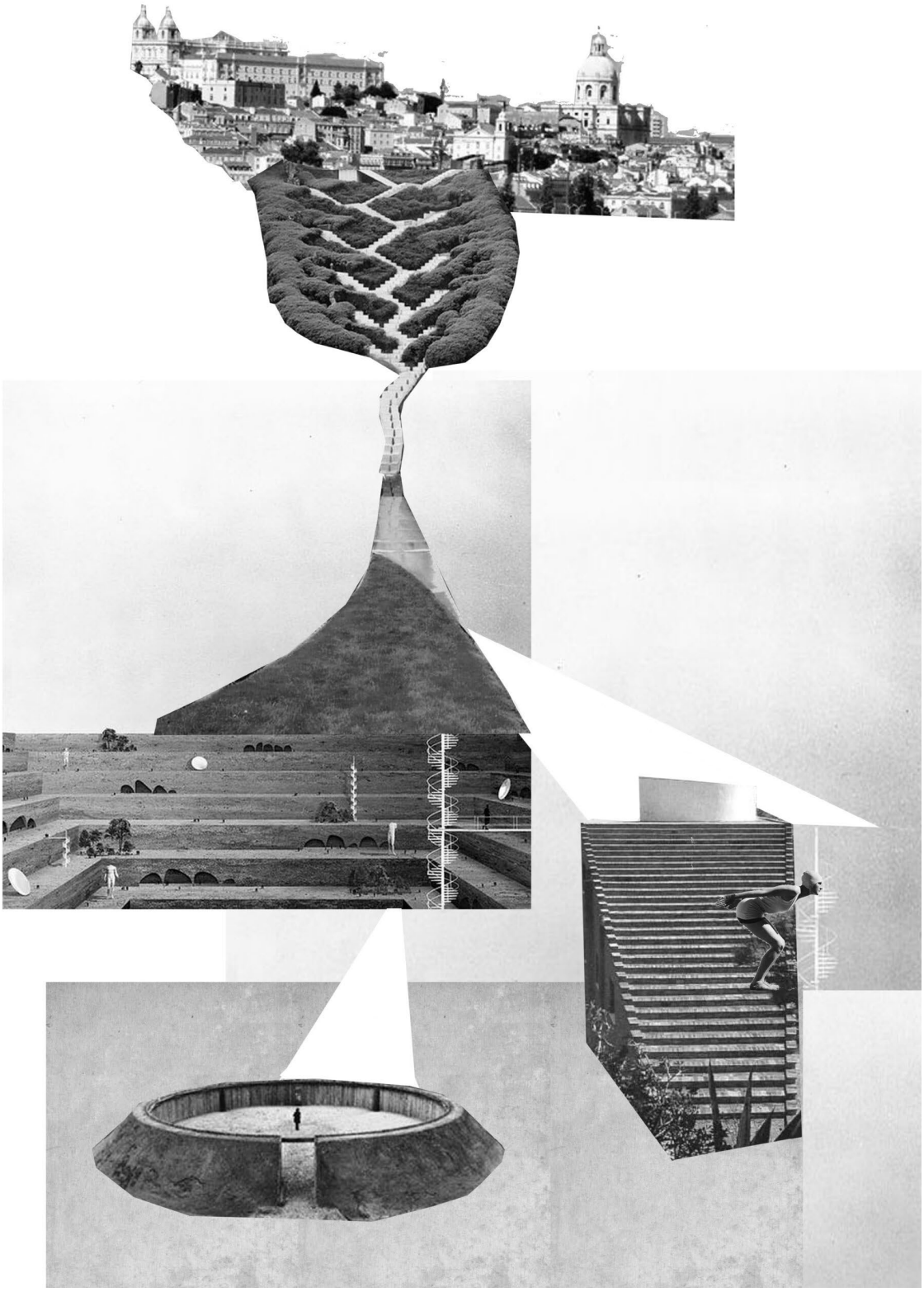
Glasgow School of Art Course Specification
Course Title: Core Research Methods: Research Primer for Architects



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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 Academic Year.

Course Code	HECOS Code	Academic Session
	100962 (70%); 100583 (30%)	2026-27

Course Title	Core Research Methods: Research Primer for Architects
Course Contact	Raid Hanna

Credits	20
SCQF Level	11
When Taught	Semester 1

Associated Programmes	Master of Architectural Studies in Creative Urban Practices Master of Architectural Studies in Digital Creativity Master of Architectural Studies in Energy and Environment Master of Architectural Studies in History and Theory of the City Master of Architectural Studies in Urban Buildings Master of Architectural Studies in Urban Design Master of Science in Sustainable Cities
Lead School	Mackintosh School of Architecture
Other Schools	N/A
Date of Approval	Programme Approval October 2025

Course Introduction

This course is designed to equip students with the skills to build an evidence-based knowledge in architecture, enable them to originate an architectural problem, frame a research question, formulate a hypothesis and devise systems to empirically test the hypothesis either quantitatively or qualitatively.

The Core Research Methods: Research Primer offers students from all six specialisms, the opportunity to gain knowledge in research skills and their application within architecture. Students can benefit from the extended discussion on research practice and develop a deeper understanding through lectures and tutorials.

The course provides an introduction to a range of research methods and supports students to develop skills in observation and deduction. Through this process students will critically reflect and draw conclusions from research and relate this to research in their own specialist study of architecture.

Students are taught through a combination of lectures and group tutorials. Through formative feedback, and peer sessions, students apply their learning on the course across the semester.

Course Aims

The aims of the course are to:

professionalism: facilitate a student's command of knowledge of professional ethics to develop a research question, and through defined systems and methodologies provide an appropriate response

design/create: facilitate a student's command to use a creative ideation process to develop a research question, and through defined systems and methodologies provide an appropriate response

research: facilitate a student's command of research skills to develop a research question, and through defined systems and methodologies provide an appropriate response

communication: facilitate a student's command of the integration of analogue and digital media to visually and verbally communicate structured thinking, and a research question through a research portfolio

skills: facilitate a student's command of critical reflection, communication and a structured methodology, with analogue and digital tools, to develop a research question, and through defined systems and methodologies provide an appropriate response

knowledge: facilitate a student's command of the creative use of advanced architectural theories, concepts, and techniques to address social, ethical and climate change challenges to develop a research question, and through defined systems and methodologies provide an appropriate response

Course Intended Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the Course students will be able to **appraise, integrate and articulate:**

professionalism: knowledge of professional ethics to develop a research question, and through defined systems and methodologies provide an appropriate response

design/ create: a creative ideation process to develop a research question, and through defined systems and methodologies provide an appropriate response

research: research skills to develop a research question, and through defined systems and methodologies provide an appropriate response

communication: the integration of analogue and digital media to visually and verbally communicate structured thinking to develop a research question, and through defined systems and methodologies provide an appropriate response

skills: critical reflection, communication and a structured methodology, with digital and analogue tools, to develop a research question, and through defined systems and methodologies provide an appropriate response

knowledge: the creative use of advanced architectural theories, concepts, and techniques to address social, ethical and climate change challenges to develop a research question, and through defined systems and methodologies provide an appropriate response

Indicative Content

The Core Research Methods: Research Primer offers students the opportunity to gain knowledge in research skills and their application within architecture. Students are able to benefit from the extended discussion on research practice and develop a deeper understanding through lectures and tutorials. This knowledge is designed to support a greater understanding of the broad field of architecture and allows students to relate this new knowledge to their own specialism.

During the course students will:

- Be introduced to research, measurements and tests
- Learn about Design Research, observation and statistics
- Recognise the relation of theoretical statements to a 'theory'
- Learn about the Hypothesis Method
- Be introduced to the types of research, types of design and research tools
- Develop and manage a project of research
- Understand empirical research and measurement
- Learn how to appraise buildings in use objectively

Description of Learning and Teaching Methods
Pedagogy: The course is intended to utilise, speculate and demonstrate students' ability to originate an architectural problem, frame a research question, formulate a hypothesis and devise systems to empirically test the hypothesis either quantitatively or qualitatively. Student learning is developed through self-directed research and analysis of a topic of the student's choice. **Delivery:** The course is delivered through regular lectures, using a range of learning and teaching activities, and 3 group tutorials. Private study consists of both staff-directed study and independent student-directed study. **Timetable:** Typically, 10 Lectures and 3 group tutorials. **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**
20	200

Description of Formative Assessment and Feedback Methods
Formative feedback is delivered during group tutorials, offering students the opportunity to obtain ongoing staff and peer feedback through discussion and review in relation to the course. 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. Students' work is assessed against the Intended Learning Outcomes

(ILOs) for each course. Summative assessment in this course is undertaken through a coursework assignment in the form of a 3,000-word essay. Coursework assignment submissions involve visual and text-based submissions utilising both digital and physical tools and formats. Written feedback is provided on all summative assessments.

All submissions will be assessed and moderated in line with the GSA Code of Assessment. 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
Essay Students are required to frame a research question, formulate a hypothesis and devise systems to empirically test the hypothesis either quantitatively or qualitatively and produce an essay (3000 words)	100	Semester 1 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	

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.