

Glasgow School of Art Course Specification

Course Title: Research Project 4

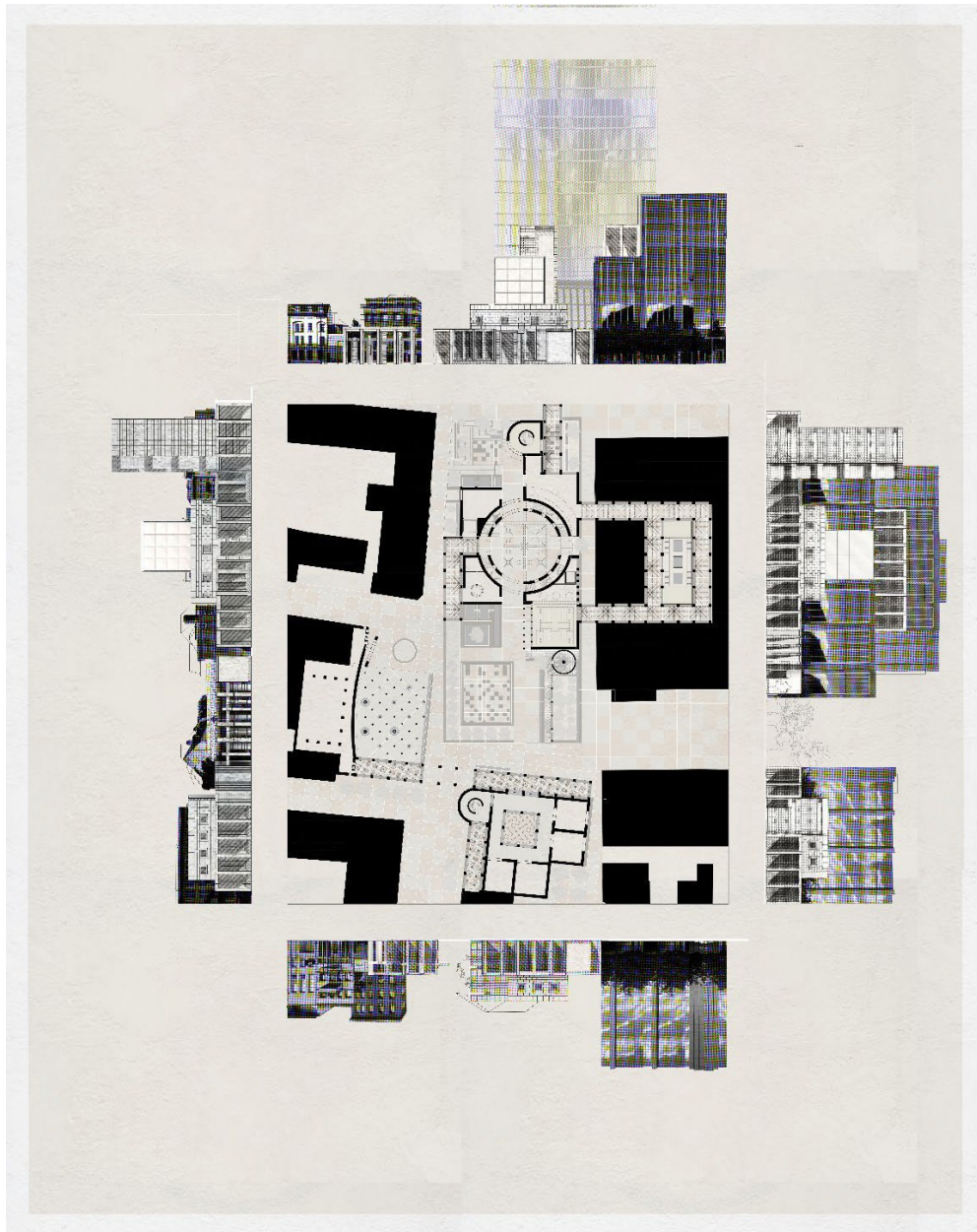


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Please note that this course specification is correct on the date of publication but may be subject to amendment prior to the start of the Academic Year.

Course Code	HECOS Code	Academic Session
	100583 (50%); 100962 (50%)	2026-27

Course Title	Research Project 4
Course Contact	Florian Urban

Credits	20
SCQF Level	Level 10
When Taught	Semester 1 and 2

Associated Programmes	Bachelor of Architecture with Honours BSc in Environmental Architecture with Honours BSc in Interior Architecture with Honours Diploma in Architecture
Lead School	Mackintosh School of Architecture
Other Schools	N/A
Date of Approval	Programme Approval September 2025

Course Introduction

The Research Project 4 is a self-directed research project, on a topic of the student's choice related to the field of architecture. It is designed to refine a student's research methods and communication skills and to support students to develop and test a research hypothesis based on appropriate sources and utilising established research methodologies.

The course is designed to enable students to appraise, integrate and articulate their critical thinking, research skills and specific knowledge in the field of architectural history, architectural technology, professional studies and creative practice to produce an academically rigorous, comprehensive and coherent research output. The investigation and communication of this research can be undertaken through a written output or through a visual response with accompanying text.

Students are designated a research supervisor and supervised through a combination of group and individual tutorials. Formative feedback delivered over two semesters enables students to formulate and develop their research output in dialogue with both their supervisor and their peers.

Course Aims

The Research Project 4 (RP4) course enables students to undertake a self-directed research project with the guidance of a supervisor, focusing on a research question of their choice from the fields of architectural practice, architectural technology, professional studies, history of architecture and urban studies or related fields.

The aims of the course are to:

professional: refine a student's ability to deploy the principles and practices of research and ethical behaviours to inform a research output

design/create: refine a student's ability to make relevant, well informed architectural hypothesis in relation to their chosen research topic.

research: refine a student's research skills and tools required to undertake and deliver a self-directed research output

communication: refine a student's ability to deploy the visual and verbal modes of architectural communication in relation to their chosen research topic

skills: refine a student's ability to deploy analytical and rhetorical skills to make research informed architectural hypothesis in relation to their chosen research topic

knowledge: refine a student's utilisation of architectural knowledge in relation to a specific research topic

Course Intended Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the RP4 course students will be able to **appraise, integrate and articulate:**

professional: the ability to deploy the principles and practices of the research and ethical behaviours to inform a research output

design/create: the ability to make relevant, well informed architectural hypothesis in relation to their chosen research topic

research: research skills and tools required to undertake and deliver a self-directed research output

communication: the deployment of the visual and verbal modes of architectural communication in relation to their chosen research topic

skills: the deployment of analytical and rhetorical skills to develop a research informed architectural hypothesis in relation to their chosen research topic

knowledge: the utilisation of architectural knowledge in relation to a specific research topic

Indicative Content

The Research Project 4 (RP4) is a self-directed work on a topic of the student's choice. The investigation and communication of a research project is commonly undertaken through a written piece, but other media can be used. There are two main options:

1. A textual research project will be a 7,000-word dissertation.
2. A visual research project is based on other media (graphics, models, drawings, designs etc.) It must be accompanied by a 3,500-word text that contextualises, describes and references the work.

For their research project, students will engage in making an informed argument about a topic of their choice, based on appropriate sources and scholarly accepted methodologies. The purpose of the RP4 is to develop a student's research skills; to enable students to generate specialised knowledge in an area that they have chosen; and to contribute to the body of research produced by the school.

During the course students will:

- undertake fieldwork and/or desktop/library research to analyse a topic of their choice
- produce a literature review and set their own approach in a scholarly context
- sustain an individual line of inquiry
- test a hypothesis on the basis of appropriate sources

Description of Learning and Teaching Methods

Pedagogy:

The RP4 course is intended to refine a student's research skills, in this case in relation to a self-directed research output. Students are supported to identify an area of research along with an appropriate research methodology and output. Students can elect to undertake a text-based research project, or a combination of a practice-based research project supported by an accompanying text.

Delivery:

The course is delivered through group and individual tutorials with their supervisors and supported through lectures and skills workshops.

Timetable:

Minimum of three tutorials over two semesters.

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

This course is taught over two semesters, as such formative work will be marked with an indicative grade and feedback will be given at an appropriate mid-way point.

Formative assessment and 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 generally undertaken at the end of the course. Students' work is assessed against the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) for each course which are aligned with the professional competencies required for architectural practice. Summative assessment is undertaken through a 7,000-word assignment or the production of an artefact with an accompanying 3,500-word text. The coursework assignment is submitted in a digital format, supported by an artefact where appropriate. 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
Students are required to submit an assignment of 7,000 words or an artefact with an accompanying 3,500-word text. Students develop a self-selected research project, with supervision from a staff member.	100%	Semester 2 Week 10

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.