

**Glasgow School of Art Course Specification**  
**Course Title: Practitioner Enquiry**



*Image credit: Ben Lingard School of Fine Art 2022*

*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 2026-27 Academic Year.*

| Course Code | HECOS Code | Academic Session |
|-------------|------------|------------------|
|             |            | 2026-27          |

|                       |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Course Title</b>   | Practitioner Enquiry |
| <b>Course Contact</b> | Dr Maddy Sclater     |

|                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Credits</b>     | 20                |
| <b>SCQF Level</b>  | 11                |
| <b>When Taught</b> | Semesters 1 and 2 |

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Associated Programmes</b> | Postgraduate Certificate Learning and Teaching in the Creative Disciplines |
| <b>Lead School</b>           | School of Design   |
| <b>Other Schools</b>         | N/A  |
| <b>Date of Approval</b>      | Programme Approval July 2023   |

#### Course Introduction

This course is designed to support students to develop their knowledge, skills and expertise in the design and undertaking of scholarly enquiries into their learning and teaching practice. The course supports students to identify an area of their practice to investigate considering areas of interest, challenge or opportunity in order to identify future enhancements.

The course builds upon previous learning on evaluation of practice further exploring systematic evaluative approaches and exploring frameworks, methods and methodologies which can be used to investigate their chosen area of practice.

Through meaningful and authentic forms of assessment students apply their learning on the course undertaking their investigation and reporting outcomes and evaluations of the effectiveness of the investigation through either a journal article submission or conference style presentation. This approach allows students to demonstrate their learning whilst also producing a viable output able to be shared and disseminated within their wider professional learning communities.

#### Course Aims

The course provides students with the opportunity to:

1. Develop their critical capacities as reflective and reflexive higher education teachers and/or supporters of learning, evaluating their practice and identifying future enhancement plans;
2. Develop their knowledge, skills and approaches to undertaking educational enquiry in the creative arts and delivering a small-scale investigation into their own teaching and/or support for learning practice;
3. Cultivate their knowledge and understanding of the impact and inter-relationships of, policy, practice, research and scholarship upon higher education and their own practices as teachers in the creative arts.

### Course Intended Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Plan, execute and evaluate a small-scale investigation or development within their teaching practice demonstrating their understanding and application of relevant evaluative methods, methodologies, ethics and approaches;
2. Critically reflect upon, evaluate and develop actions to enhance their pedagogic approach to teaching and learning and future development needs;
3. Critically evaluate and synthesise concepts and theories of learning and teaching, research and policy in higher education and apply them to their own educational practice and development;
4. Evaluate learning and teaching practices through undertaking scholarship to enhance the student learning experience.

### Indicative Content

This course shall introduce students to:

- Scholarship of learning and teaching
- Practitioner enquiry
- Frameworks, methods and methodologies for evaluation of practice
- Ethical practices in research
- Data collection and analysis
- Research evaluation

### Description of Learning and Teaching Methods

This course is designed as a work-based learning course which supports students in their professional role and practice as teachers and/or supporters of learning. The course is taught online utilising a distance learning and work-based learning framework to support student to engage in meaningful and authentic learning relating to their teaching and/or learning support role.

The course is taught through a series of workshops, and individual and small group supervision which supports students to design and implement their practitioner enquiry. A flipped model of learning, providing asynchronous resources and learning activities to introduce core content, is used to prioritise discussion and interaction within live sessions exploring and consolidating knowledge within the student's practitioner enquiry.

| Indicative Contact Hours | Notional Learning Hours |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 20                       | 200                     |

### Description of Formative Assessment and Feedback Methods

Individual and group supervision is used to provide students with ongoing formative feedback throughout the course. A midpoint tutor and peer review is used to allow students to present on progress with their practitioner enquiry and receive feedback to help inform the development of the investigation and reporting.

#### **Description of Summative Assessment arrangements**

Summative assessment is designed to be authentic to each student's learning and teaching context and applicable to their role and practice. Assessment is designed to support students to reflect upon their role and practice of teaching and supporting learning. Students not only demonstrate their learning through assessment, but also meaningfully apply their learning to their practice as they progress through the course and programme.

Within the course there are two components of summative assessment, a core proposal and ethics assessment which all students are required to submit, and then a choice of two options for summative assessment, reporting the outcomes of their practitioner enquiry. Students are required to confirm their choice of summative assessment as part of their proposal and ethics assessment.

| <b>Description of Summative Assessment Method</b>   | <b>Weight %</b> | <b>Submission week</b> |
|---|-----------------|------------------------|
| <b>Proposal and Ethics</b><br>All students are required to submit a 750-word proposal for their practitioner enquiry including a project timeline and a completed ethics assessment.  | 20%             | Semester 1 Week 5      |
| And   |                 |                        |
| <b>Practitioner Enquiry Report</b><br>Students are required to submit a 3,000 word-journal article presenting the design, implementation, outcomes and evaluation of their practitioner enquiry.  | 80%             | Semester 2 Week 9      |
| Or  |                 |                        |
| <b>Practitioner Enquiry Presentation</b><br>Students are required to either deliver a conference style presentation or submit a pre-recorded presentation of the design, implementation, outcomes and evaluation of their practitioner enquiry. Presentations should be no longer than 15 minutes and include appropriate academic references and evidence. | 80%             | Semester 2 Week 9      |

| <b>Exchange/Study Abroad</b>  |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>Can this course be taken by Exchange/Study Abroad students?</b>              | No  |
| <b>Are all the students on the course taught wholly by distance learning?</b>   | Yes |
| <b>Does this course represent a work placement or a year of study abroad?</b>   | No  |
| <b>Is this course collaborative with any other institutions?</b>                | No  |
| <b>If yes, then please provide the names of the other teaching institutions</b> | N/A |

### Reading and On-line Resources

The following is an indicative list of resources for this course. To see the full reading and resource list see the Practitioner Enquiry [Resource Lists](#).

Bryman, A., 2012. [Social Research Methods](#), Oxford University Press.

Cleaver, E., Lintern, M. & McLinden, M. (2018) *Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: Disciplinary Approaches to Educational Enquiry*, SAGE.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K., (2018). *Research Methods in Education* 8th edition, London: Routledge.

Cousin, G. (2009) *Researching learning in higher education: An introduction to contemporary methods and approaches*, Routledge

Creswell, J.W. (2018) [Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches](#), SAGE Publications.

Fox, M. (2007) *Doing practitioner research*, SAGE.

Reason, P & Bradbury, H. (2013) [The SAGE handbook of action research: participative inquiry and practice](#), SAGE

Rennie, F. & Smyth, K. (2015) *How to Write a Research Dissertation: Essential Guidance in Getting Started for Undergraduates and Postgraduates*, eTIPS