

Glasgow School of Art Programme Specification

Programme Title: BA (Hons) / MDes Silversmithing & Jewellery Design



Image: Siri Hansen

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

1. Programme Details	
Programme Title	BA (Hons) /MDes Silversmithing and Jewellery Design (Integrated Masters)
School	School of Design
Programme Leader	Anna Gordon
Award to be Conferred	BA (Hons) / MDes (Integrated Masters)
Exit Awards	Stage 1 – Certificate of Education Stage 2 – Diploma of Education Stage 3 – Bachelor of Arts Stage 4 – Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Stage 5 – Masters of Design (Integrated Masters)
SCQF Level	SCQF Level 7 – 10 (BA Hons) and Level 11 (MDes)
Credits	BA (Hons) 480 MDes (Integrated Masters) 600
Mode of Study	Full time
HECOS Code	100725 100048 100721

Academic Session	2026-27
Date of Approval	Programme Approval September 2025

Awarding Institution	University of Glasgow
Teaching Institutions	The Glasgow School of Art
Campus	Glasgow
Lead School/Board of Studies	School of Design
Other Schools/Board of Studies	n/a
Programme Accredited By (PSRBs)	n/a

2. Entry Qualifications	
Highers	Standard: ABBB, including a literate subject Minimum: BBCC, including a literate subject
A Levels	Standard: ABB and GCSE English at A/7 grade or above Minimum: BBC and GCSE English at A/7 grade or above
Other	International Baccalaureate: 30 points overall in the Diploma, including 18 at Higher Level, normally including English and Maths. Irish Leaving Certificate: Four Highers at H2 or above - subjects required as per Scottish Highers. Other eligible qualifications for entry include Foundation Diplomas in Art & Design, Higher National Certificates (HNC), Higher National Diplomas (HND), Foundation Degrees, Level 3 Diplomas, and other Further Education and Higher Education qualifications in related subjects. Entrants may begin their studies in Stage 2 or Stage 3 depending on the level of prior qualifications and other

	entry criteria. Detailed information about the required grades for individuals holding or studying these qualifications can be access on the website. Applicants from outside the UK and Ireland should also consult our international student pages for details of accepted qualifications from specific countries. Applicants who do not meet entry requirements through formal qualifications but can demonstrate experience, skills and abilities at the appropriate level can also be considered. Additional entry requirements: Applicants are normally required to submit a portfolio or work and may 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 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.

3. Programme Introduction

The BA (Hons) / MDes in Silversmithing and Jewellery Design at The Glasgow School of Art cultivates independent thinking, technical skill, and critical engagement with materials and ideas. Delivered within a distinctive specialist learning environment, the programme embraces a broad disciplinary approach, enabling students to explore traditions, innovations, and future possibilities of silversmithing and jewellery design. Students engage with key themes such as identity, memory, ritual, and storytelling and consider the cultural, historical, and societal roles of objects and adornment. The programme supports students in developing strong material awareness and the ability to articulate their ideas through both practice and writing in ways that engage contemporary debates and contexts.

Rooted in material enquiry and critical reflection, the programme supports the development of individually focused creative practices, ranging from work for commercial jewellery and silverware industries to expressive, conceptual outcomes for gallery or exhibition contexts. Graduates emerge

with a strong creative voice, prepared for professional practice, postgraduate research, or entrepreneurial and academic pathways in the field of contemporary jewellery and metalwork.

The programme is offered over four years leading to a BA (Hons) award or five years leading to an MDes award. All students follow a shared curriculum across Stages 1 to 4, with opportunities for advanced entry into Stage 2 or Stage 3, subject to entry requirements. To be eligible to progress to Stage 5 MDes, students must normally achieve a minimum grade point average of at least C3 (12) across all Stage 4 courses that contribute to the programme.

Within the programme, Studio courses incrementally build core processes, materials, and design methods through projects that encourage students to take creative risks, critically reflect on their work, and establish a personal direction through craftsmanship, experimentation, and an open, research-informed approach to making.

In **Stage 1**, Studio courses encourage students to explore design ideas through creative and critical reflection, with attention to ethical and contextual factors. This Stage also introduces core silversmithing and jewellery techniques. **Stage 2** expands technical and conceptual skills through 3D making and sampling. Students critically evaluate their approaches to designing contemporary artefacts, including jewellery, body adornment, and functional objects. In **Stage 3**, students refine and apply technical skills in projects that support professional practice, curation, and advanced making, fostering experimentation and risk-taking. **Stage 4** supports a self-directed creative process in which students develop a coherent body of work aligned with their personal interests, deepening professional and critical capabilities. **Stage 5 (MDes)** offers a focused, autonomous environment for students to consolidate and advance their practice through a bespoke project. Emphasis is placed on critical reflection, iterative making, material exploration, and research integration, positioning work within global cultural, theoretical, and ethical contexts.

Alongside Studio, shared courses support expanded disciplinary perspectives by connecting broader domains of learning and knowledge. In **Stage 1**, Semester 1, Co-Lab brings together students from all four GSA Schools to explore creative sustainability, collaboration, critical thinking, and reflection. In Semester 2, Designed Objects: Ideas, Contexts, Histories encourages students to think about the emotional, social, and cultural meanings of designed objects through creative and critical responses. In **Stages 2 & 3**, Design Domain gives students a space to explore wider design ideas through a shared theme and discipline-specific project briefs. Design History and Theory (DHT) courses help students build confidence in critical thinking and connect contextual knowledge to their design practice and interests. In **Stage 4**, students choose either a 20- or 40-credit DHT option for a substantial piece of critical research. If students choose the 20-credit DHT option, they also take a course named Extending Design: Reflective Encounters, which supports students in extending independent research and exploration and developing new ways to communicate their ideas to diverse audiences. In **Stage 5**, students pursuing the MDes also undertake Design Research Methods, a cross-disciplinary core course, and Extending Design: Consolidating Creative Practice, where they can pursue directions that may include research-led visual proposals, speculative design portfolios or critically framed concepts that articulate the next stage of their creative and professional development.

Opportunities for student international exchanges, collaborative learning, live industry projects, competitions, and careers and enterprise experiences help support how students develop skills and attributes towards a diverse range of graduate destinations.

4. Programme Aims

The programme aims to:

BA (Hons)

1. Equip students with the curiosity and creative skills to sustain life-long learning.
2. Encourage imagination, innovation, reflection and risk-taking within design practices.
3. Develop critical, practical, and technical skills to provoke new insights and to expand the discipline of Silversmithing and Jewellery.
4. Build personal and professional skills to enable independent and collaborative learning.
5. Engage with ethical practices and socially responsible design that respects people and the environment.
6. Develop professional communication skills to exchange, present ideas, and interests with a variety of audiences.

MDes (Integrated Masters)

1. Foster the development of an autonomous and reflective creative practice through research and critical enquiry.
2. Facilitate the application of advanced critical analysis and reflection to inform the development of a resolved final collection.
3. Enhance technical and conceptual skills through reflective practice to articulate a distinctive creative identity.
4. Support self-direction and professionalism in identifying and pursuing future opportunities within the creative industries.
5. Develop the ability to position creative practice within broader social, cultural, and ethical contexts with a global perspective.

Promote clear and critically informed communication of ideas, processes, and contexts, demonstrating advanced academic and professional standards.

5. Programme Intended Learning Outcomes

After full participation in and successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:

BA (Hons)

1. Inform and enrich their silversmithing and jewellery practice through contextual research skills.
2. Speculate, through structured experimentation and play, generating ideas and employing critical reflection through the design process
3. Apply analytical, critical, and technical skills appropriate to their silversmithing & jewellery design interests.
4. Manage their learning, working both independently and in collaboration with peers, GSA staff and external partners.
5. Critically engage in complex ethical, societal, and environmental discourse, within and out with the discipline of silversmithing and jewellery design
6. Communicate to a range of audiences, including peers, staff and partners engaging with perspectives and professional practices.

MDes (Integrated Masters)

1. Demonstrate the ability to independently conduct and critically evaluate research, integrating findings into a reflective creative practice.
2. Apply advanced critical analysis and reflection to develop a cohesive and innovative final collection.
3. Evidence advanced technical and conceptual skills appropriate to silversmithing & jewellery design.
4. Effectively manage project work by employing self-led and professional skills to work with peers, staff and external partners.
5. Critically position creative practice within broader and complex social, cultural, and ethical contexts, demonstrating a global perspective.
6. Effectively communicate complex ideas and processes to a diverse range of audiences using appropriate methods and formats.

6. Description of Learning and Teaching Approaches

A range of teaching and learning approaches are employed to direct student learning with the curriculum to achieve the intended learning outcomes. These include:

- briefings
- studio-based practice and material experimentation
- individual and group tutorials
- technical and process workshops
- peer critiques and collaborative evaluation
- self-directed learning and independent study
- lectures, seminars, presentations
- staff, student, and peer reviews of student work
- critical reflective methods
- reflective self-evaluation of progress and learning

Students are introduced to skills, including analogue, digital, software, material and technical knowledge through a series of introductions, inductions, demonstrations, and workshops.

Independent learning skills will be developed and supported through guided activities and digital online learning resources available on Canvas.

A variety of teaching and learning approaches, including in person, blended and online learning and delivery, are employed to support student engagement with the curriculum and the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

Throughout the programme, facilities including studio and workshop spaces are used adaptively and flexibly to support making and other learning activities, fostering professional skills and outcomes.

7. Description of Assessment Methods

Formative feedback offers students the opportunity to obtain ongoing tutor and peer feedback through the development of their summative submissions over the length of each course. Students

are supported in their learning through a range of formative activities with staff and peers, such as workshops, reviews and tutorials offering ongoing formative feedback as they progress through each course within this programme.

Courses spanning two semesters (Studio 4, DHT 40 credits, Studio 5) include an additional formative assessment point in which students' formative assessment submission receives an indicative grade and feedback, made available to the student to inform and support their summative assessment submissions.

Summative Assessment is designed to support students to review, collate and communicate work produced in response to project briefs and learning and teaching activities associated with the programme and its courses. Submissions will be assessed and moderated in line with the Code of Assessment.

8. Programme Structure

Stage 1

Course	Credits	SCQF Level	Semester	Course Code
Studio 1A	40	7	1	
Co-Lab	20	7	1	
Studio 1B	40	7	2	
Designed Objects: Ideas, Contexts, Histories	20	7	2	
Total Stage Credits	120			

Stage 2

Course	Credits	SCQF Level	Semester	Course Code
Studio 2A	40	8	1	
Design History and Theory 2A	10	8	1	
Design Domain 2A	10	8	1	
Studio 2B	40	8	2	
Design History and Theory 2B	10	8	2	
Design Domain 2B	10	8	2	
Total Stage Credits	120			

Stage 3

Course	Credits	SCQF Level	Semester	Course Code
Studio 3A	40	9	1	
Design History and Theory 3A	10	9	1	
Design Domain 3A	10	9	1	
Studio 3B	40	9	2	
Design History and Theory 3B	10	9	2	
Design Domain 3B	10	9	2	
Total Stage Credits	120			

Stage 4 Option 1

Course	Credits	SCQF Level	Semester	Course Code
Studio 4	80	10	1 & 2	

Stage 4 Option 1				
Course	Credits	SCQF Level	Semester	Course Code
Design History and Theory 4 (40)	40	10	1 & 2	
Total Stage Credits	120			

Stage 4 Option 2				
Course	Credits	SCQF Level	Semester	Course Code
Studio 4	80	10	1 & 2	
Design History and Theory 4 (20)	20	10	1	
Extending Design: Reflective Encounters	20	10	2	
Total Stage Credits	120			

Stage 5 – MDes (Integrated) only				
Course	Credits	SCQF Level	Semester	Course Code
Studio 5	80	11	1 & 2	
Design Research Methods	20	11	1	
Extending Design: Consolidating Creative Practice	20	11	2	
Total Stage Credits	120			

9. Outgoing Exchange and Visiting Student Arrangements

Students on the programme can apply to undertake a period of exchange with one of GSA's international partner institutions. International exchanges will normally take place in Stage 3 of study and be for the duration of one full semester, either Semester 1 or Semester 2. The programme welcomes incoming exchange students studying at a registered exchange partner who may apply to GSA for a period of exchange, usually one full semester, either Semester 1 or Semester 2.

In Stage 2, advanced entry students may apply for exchange in Stage 3. Students who are advanced entry into Stage 3 do not have the opportunity to apply for international exchange.

Study Abroad (Visiting Students) is open to applications for full-year, Semester 1, and Semester 2 entry on Stage 2 and Stage 3 on the programme. Study Abroad students will be entered into the most appropriate year entry point based on their portfolio and application.

Stage 2 Exchange and Visiting Student Courses				
Course	Credits	SCQF Level	Semester	Course Code
Studio 2A	40	8	1	
Design History and Theory 2A	10	8	1	
Design Domain 2A	10	8	1	
Studio 2B	40	8	2	
Design History and Theory 2B	10	8	2	
Design Domain 2B	10	8	2	

Stage 3 Exchange and Visiting Student Courses				
Course	Credits	SCQF Level	Semester	Course Code
Studio 3A	40	9	1	
Design History and Theory 3A	10	9	1	

Stage 3 Exchange and Visiting Student Courses				
Course	Credits	SCQF Level	Semester	Course Code
Design Domain 3A	10	9	1	
Studio 3B	40	9	2	
Design History and Theory 3B	10	9	2	
Design Domain 3B	10	9	2	

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:

QAA (2019) Subject Benchmark Statement: Art and Design. Gloucester: QAA. Available from:
<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement--art-and-design>

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.