

Glasgow School of Art Course Specification

Course Title: Writing in Art, Design and Architecture: Practice and Theory

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:
PELC256		2026-27

1. Course Title:
Writing in Art, Design and Architecture: Practice and Theory

2. Date of Approval:	3. Lead School:	4. Other Schools:
PACAAG August 2025		This course is available to students on PGT programmes which include a Stage 2 elective.

5. Credits:	6. SCQF Level:	7. Course Leader:
20	11	Prof Bruce Peter

8. Associated Programmes:
This course is available to students on PGT programmes which include a Stage 2 elective.

9. When Taught:
Stage 2, Taught online only

10. Course Aims:
The overarching aims of the stage 2 electives are as follows: • Encourage interdisciplinary, critical reflexivity from within an open set of choices; • Foster deep investigative approaches to new or unfamiliar areas of practice and theory; • Cultivate self-directed leadership and initiative-taking in both applied and abstract modes of practice/ study not necessarily associated with a student's particular creative specialism; • Enable flexible, ethical exploration and connection of diverse knowledge and understanding within a specialist programme of study. The course 'Writing in Art, Design, and Architecture: Practice and Theory' will deepen your knowledge about writing, develop your writing skills, and facilitate discussion about writing. It will help to increase your familiarity with different forms of writing, specifically those you use and encounter in the study and practice of art, design, and architecture. The course will enable you to evaluate what kind of writing is appropriate in what context, and exercise your critical and analytical skills in reading different kinds of writing. The course will support you in developing your ability and confidence in writing, and help you to think critically and reflectively about your own work. Through participation in class discussion you will gain confidence in verbally expressing

your ideas, and attending and responding to others' ideas. You will also develop your skills as a reviewer by reading and providing positive comments and constructive criticism on your peers' writing. These skills are integral to academic research.

The course is in two parts: the first involving reading and group discussion on different forms of writing on art and design; the second peer review of participants writing.

11. Intended Learning Outcomes of Course:

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Select and apply appropriate research resources and methods effectively in relation to writing in art, design and architecture;
- Articulate the key principles underpinning research at postgraduate level and specifically in relation to writing in art, design and architecture
- Evidence an understanding of the relationships between research and practice
- Organise, conduct and situate writing in art, design and architecture effectively in relation to relevant critical debates

12. Indicative Content:

- Introducing writing research skills to postgraduate students
- Enabling students to conceptualise a research question in relation to their writing practice
- Understanding the use of research resources in support of writing development
- Finding and managing information in relation to different forms of writing in art and design
- Mapping the context
- Developing and managing a small writing research project
- Understanding how practice can become research
- How to effectively disseminate research outcomes

13. Description of Summative Assessment Methods:

Assessment Method	Description of Assessment Method	Weight %	Submission week (assignments)
Written submission	3500 word written submission (see details below)	100%	Week 11, Stage 2

13.1 Please describe the Summative Assessment arrangements:

The summative submission comprises of one or more pieces of writing equating to 3500 words in total, thoroughly researched and situated in relation to relevant critical debates and themes connected to the student's interests. Students will be supported in choosing options of format for their written assignment, in discussion with the course tutor, with a formative assessment point supporting planning and preparation for summative assessment.

Written submissions should cohere to academic convention: i.e. sources should be documented with full references, correctly formatted. It is recommended that you use either the footnote

system or the author-date system of the Chicago Manual of Style referencing system:
http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

14. Description of Formative Assessment Methods:

A mid-point formative assessment provides feedback and diagnostic feedforward (verbal and written) to support summative assignment planning and preparation.

14.1 Please describe the Formative Assessment arrangements:

See above and Course Canvas page.

15. Learning and Teaching Methods:

Formal Contact Hours	Notional Learning Hours
20	200

15.1 Description of Teaching and Learning Methods:

Timetable: 2 hours per week for 10 weeks.

16. Pre-requisites:

Successful completion of PGT Stage 1

17. Can this course be taken by Exchange/Study Abroad students?	Yes
18. Are all the students on the course taught wholly by distance learning?	Yes
19. Does this course represent a work placement or a year of study abroad?	No
20. Is this course collaborative with any other institutions?	No
20.1 If yes, then please enter the names of the other teaching institutions:	
N/A	

21. Additional Relevant Information:

N/A

22. Indicative Bibliography:

- Glenn Adamson, *Thinking Through Craft*. London and New York: Berg Publishers.
- Sylvan Barnet. *A Short Guide to Writing about Art*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008, pp. 11-13, 159-163. Available on VLE.
- Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, extract in *Rethinking Architecture*, edited by Neil Leach. London: Routledge, 1997, pp. 84-7, 91-4. Available on VLE.
- Stephen Cheeke. *Writing for Art: The Aesthetics of Ekphrasis*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010, pp. 1-4. Available on VLE.

- Michael Clarke. "Language and Visual Artefacts." In *Verbalising the Visual: Translating Art and Design into Words*. Lausanne: AVA, 2007, pp.21-7. Available online from GSA library catalogue: <http://capitadiscovery.co.uk/gsa/>
- Dillon, Brian, *Essayism*, London: Fitzcarraldo Editions, 2017
- James Elkins. *What Happened to Art Criticism?* Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003, pp. 16-19, 26-32, 35-6, 49-53. Available on VLE.
- Lees-Maffei, Grace, (ed.) *Writing Design: Words and Objects*, London and New York: Berg Publishing, 2012.
- Peter Lia. 'Using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle'. Online: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/campuslife/services/disability/service/Using-Gibbs-Reflective-Cycle-in-Coursework.pdf>
- Edward Relph. "On the Identity of Places." In *Urban Design Reader*, edited by Matthew Carmona and Steve Tiesdell. London: Taylor & Francis, 2008, pp. 103-7. Available online from GSA library catalogue: <http://capitadiscovery.co.uk/gsa/>
- [Jane Rendell](#). *Site-Writing: The Architecture of Art Criticism*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2010, pp. 1-6, 14-17. Available on VLE.