Glasgow School of Art Programme Specification
Programme Title: Master of Design (MDes) Interior Design
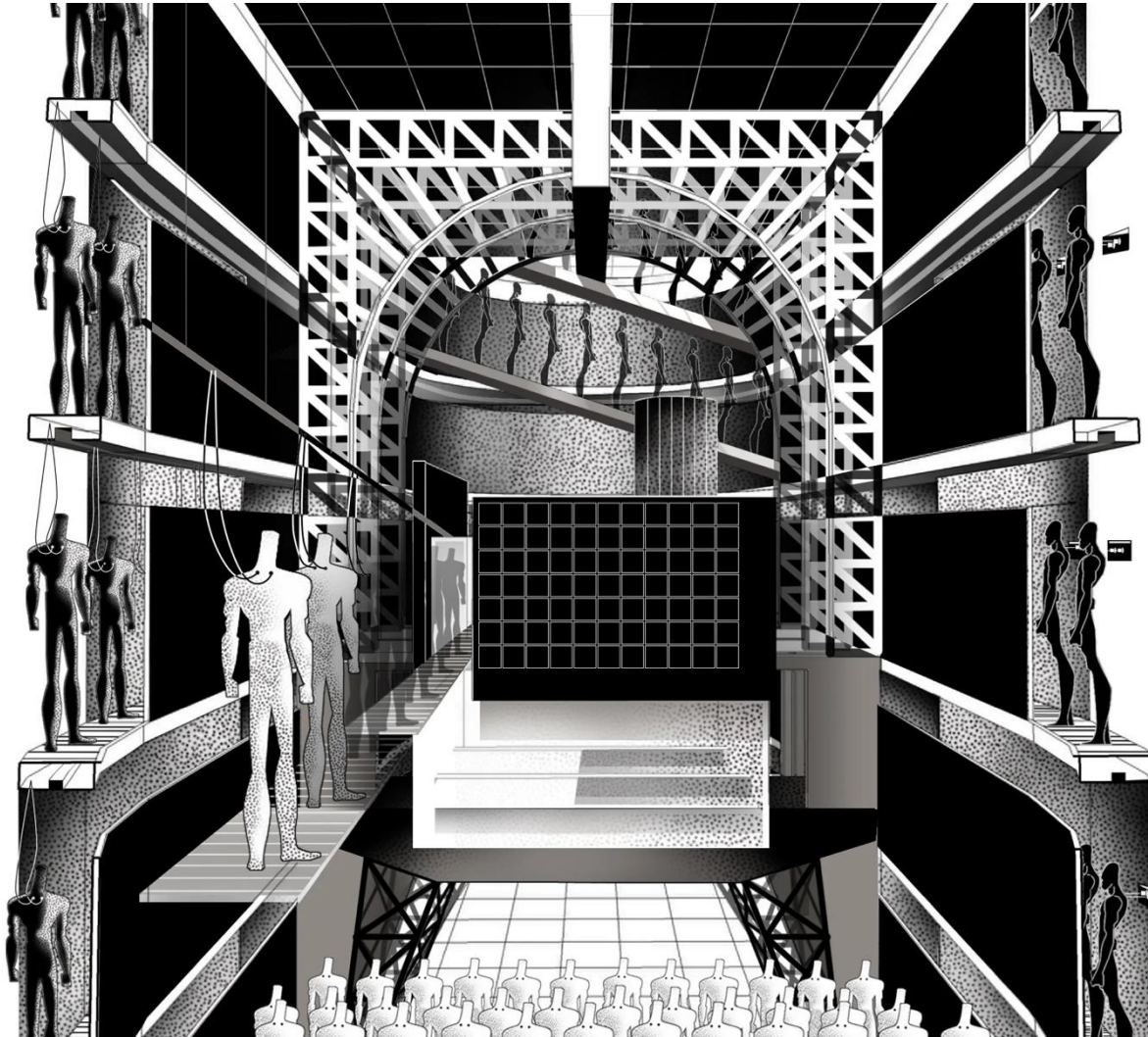

Image: Yanqui Zhou

1. Programme Details	
Programme Title	Master of Design (MDes) Interior Design
School	School of Design
Programme Leader	Thomai Pnevmonidou
Award to be Conferred	Master of Design (MDes) Interior Design
Exit Awards	Stage 1: Postgraduate Certificate in Interior Design Stage 2: Postgraduate Diploma in Interior Design Stage 3: Master of Design (MDes) in Interior Design
SCQF Level	11
Credits	180
Mode of Study	Full-Time (12 months)
HECOS Code	

Academic Session	2025-26
Date of Approval	Programme Approval February 2024

Awarding Institution	University of Glasgow
Teaching Institutions	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	N/A
A Levels	N/A
Other	An undergraduate Degree with minimum 2.2 or equivalent in a relevant subject area or equivalent professional practice. Additional entry requirements: Applicants are normally required to submit a portfolio of work, along with satisfactory academic references and a personal statement as parts of their applications. Applicants may also 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 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 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 MDes in Interior Design at Glasgow School of Art focuses on practice and research-based learning, developing independently-minded designers who challenge society and interrogate the field of interior design in new and innovative ways. The programme frames studio learning as a pedagogically stimulating space that fosters critical reflection and experimentation within a vibrant community of professionals. The programme encourages students to take risks, reflect on their creative process, engage in peer learning, and utilise GSA's various technical, library, and archive resources. The programme's structure focuses on the designer's role in shaping relationships to technology, process, sustainability, digital and augmented realities, the consumer high street, accessible design, and the 21st-century design studio.

The programme employs a range of pedagogical approaches focusing on practiced-based research and critical analysis in the field of interior design, enabling students to acquire key skill sets and attributes, enhance design thinking, develop innovative strategies, and reflect on their professional practice. Students take significant responsibility for managing their learning, and the programme emphasises self-reliance and personal academic development.

Independence, creativity, experimentation, and critical thinking are viewed as educational methods that enable students to address the evolving needs of society with empathy, social awareness, conceptual mindsets, and diverse forms of expression. The curriculum explores existing disciplinary territories and pushes their boundaries, asking *why* interiors are produced rather than how, while encouraging the exploration of emergent aspects of the discipline and linking with the expertise and research interests of departmental staff.

Operating in an academically rigorous environment and engaging with a range of methods, skills, and tools, Stage 1 of the programme focuses on the key principles of theory, research, and practice, Stage 2 on multidisciplinary production, craft, and conceptual approaches, and Stage 3 on undertaking a project merging research, practice, and students' own expertise.

The MDes in Interior Design explores a range of themes grouped around historical and theoretical frameworks encouraging reflective and analytical approaches. The projects draw from territories such as recent histories of UK interior design, technologies, utopias, re-purposing buildings, and user-centred design, and the psychology of enclosure, people, places and things. Indicative themes also include surrogate space, virtual and actual space, hard and soft methods of visualisation, analogue and digital representation of constructed space, archaeology of the recent past, re-imagining erased space, place and memory, the interior in cinema and theatre, materiality, and sensorially visualising the unseen.

The programme reflects the importance of disciplinary autonomy and interdisciplinary dialogue and approaches via studio-based practice, cross-school elective courses, and its location within a supportive and diverse postgraduate community. The programme aims to emphasise formal and informal cross-disciplinary discourses within the Stage 1 core course on design research methods

and Stage 2 PGT elective courses and reflects a sharing and collaborative ethos, including in exploring and developing relationships with external partners. Whether an interior designer, a designer from another discipline or with related, relevant work experience, students are encouraged to position themselves within the broad creative arc of the discipline, to emerge as advanced practitioners with a hand in shaping its central tenets, facilitating professional pathways or research at PhD level.

4. Programme Aims

The aims of this programme are to:

1. acquire understanding of the current contextual and historical evolution of interior design practice and techniques through the engagement with the theoretical underpinnings and the language of interior design through a variety of learning methods

2. investigate and conceptualise with current interior design philosophies and working practices through participation in a diverse range of inclusive, studio-based, collaborative, and interdisciplinary interactions and work autonomously

3. develop an understanding of research methodologies and realisation processes within the field of interior design, motivated by curiosity, individuality, reflection, and self-expression to communicate and inform ideas

4. challenge the traditional disciplinary boundaries of design practice through a range of creative processes, materials, and technologies to innovate concept-driven research projects

5. encourage self-direction and ethical responsibility to inform a research project using critical thinking and experimental methodologies, including thinking through making

6. reflect on role and responsibilities as a designer through the communication and exchange of ideas with a wide range of audiences and contexts

5. Programme Intended Learning Outcomes

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

1. evidence a critical engagement with the theoretical underpinnings and the frameworks (conventions, language) of interior design to evidence an understanding of the contextual and historical evolution of the practice and current debates related to the subject field

2. integrate research and investigate design methodologies to evaluate and produce critical modes of practices in interior design

3. explore the disciplinary boundaries of interior design practice through a range of individual and collaborative practices and scenarios to synthesize new innovative work

4. develop and manage a research project that demonstrates exploration and reflection of individual research interests

5. evaluate your personal and professional practice across a range of contexts to communicate new knowledge and understanding in the discipline of interior design

6. Description of Learning and Teaching Approaches

A variety of teaching and learning approaches are employed to support student engagement with the curriculum and the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. These can include:

- briefings
- inductions and demonstrations
- technical and design workshops
- studio activities
- individual and group tutorials
- talks, seminars, and study visits
- group critiques and reviews, peer review, peer learning, and presentations
- presentations and writing
- reflection and self-evaluation
- live projects

Skills, including digital, material and technical resources, are introduced through 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.

7. Description of Assessment Methods

Formative assessment 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.

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**
Interior Design Studio 1: Interface Context and Cooperation	40	11	1	
Design Research Methods – Core Course	20	11	1	
Total Stage Credits	**60**			

Stage 2				
Course	**Credits**	**SCQF Level**	**Semester**	**Course Code**
Interior Design Studio 2: Critical Strategies Scope and Intention	40	11	2	
Postgraduate Elective	20	11	2	
Total Stage Credits	**60**			

Stage 3				
Course	**Credits**	**SCQF Level**	**Semester**	**Course Code**
Interior Design Studio 3: Graduation Project	60	11	3	
Total Stage Credits	**60**			

9. Outgoing Exchange and Visiting Student Arrangements
Not applicable.

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/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/sbs-art-and-design-17.pdf?sfvrsn=71eef781_22

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.