

**SCHOOL
OF FINE ART
THE GLASGOW
SCHOOL OF ART**



POSTGRADUATE APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Master of Letters in Contemporary Art Practice

(formerly MLitt in Fine Art Practice)

Applicant Guidelines 2025/26

MLitt Contemporary Art Practice Overview

The **MLitt Contemporary Art Practice** is a one-year postgraduate programme designed to both challenge and support students in exploring how their artistic practices can be activated, with the goal of building sustainable careers as artists or creative practitioners beyond their time on the programme.

Practical enquiry is central to the MLitt Contemporary Art Practice experience, where students engage with ideas, methods, media, themes, and contexts through the process of making and sharing artworks. This intensive, studio-based programme is driven by the ethos of *thinking through making* and *making things happen*, encouraging students to develop a critically supportive dialogue with fellow postgraduate artists.

The programme invites students to consider how contemporary art practice might respond to the conditions of today's world. Students and staff collaborate to envision what contemporary art could become, rather than merely adhering to established norms and conventions. It recognises that the definition of 'Contemporary Art' is constantly evolving. As such, the programme provides opportunities to situate one's practice within the diverse landscape of contemporary art, potentially extending or reshaping how these practices are perceived now and in the future.

A key feature of the programme is its emphasis on reaching external audiences. Taking full advantage of its location in Glasgow, the programme includes a range of student-led events and activities, such as exhibitions, performances, and presentations, designed to bring art practices to life. These activities not only draw inspiration from but also contribute to Glasgow's vibrant cultural heritage. This events-based approach helps students build a portfolio of live engagements and gain confidence in presenting their work to diverse audiences.

Pathways

The programme is structured around two distinct **pathways**. These pathways are designed to be creative and critical communities of practice where ideas, methods, and approaches are shared and challenged, expanding the possibilities for artistic development. The two pathways available to students are:

- **Material Engagements**
- **Expanded Media**

Material Engagements focuses on exploring the practical, philosophical, and ethical dimensions of materially based art practices. This pathway celebrates diverse approaches to making art, such as painting, printmaking, and sculpture, while also seeking to help students define the relevance of these disciplines within contemporary and future practice and research.

Expanded Media brings together artists exploring digital, photographic, filmic, and other time-based media. Students and staff come together to explore key questions, such as how technologies like machine learning and artificial intelligence influence the creation and reception of art. This pathway also includes artists with performative and relational practices, whose work may incorporate elements like sound, movement, projection, broadcasting, and publication.

As well as enabling deep exploration within these two pathways, the Contemporary Art Practice programme also facilitates close interaction and sharing of approaches between the pathways. In this way, students can explore how contemporary art may operate as both a broad-based interdisciplinary practice and within the context of a deep engagement in a particular approach or method.

Applicants will be asked which pathway they would like to be considered for within the application form.

Where can I find out more about the programme?

You can meet GSA in person and online for Advice & Introductions at In person Open Days and Virtual Open Days and during more informal Meet your Department sessions taking place throughout the year.

You can find useful information about the MLitt in Contemporary Art Practice programme via the weblinks below. You should be aware of the focus of the programme you are applying to, its structure and content, as well as the opportunities available to you during your studies. It is important to make sure that the programme you are applying to meets your expectations.

- [Programme overview on GSA website](#)

Please note: The programme is currently in the final stages of development and is subject to validation. Full details, including the final Programme Specification and course outline, will be available here upon validation in February 2025. Offer holders will be notified in writing of these changes after this time.

Academic Entry Requirements

Normally a UK Bachelors honours degree (or its international equivalent) in Fine Art or a related subject that gives appropriate grounding for postgraduate study.

If you do not meet these academic entry requirements, we may still consider your application on your portfolio and or relevant professional experience.

We seek to enrol self-motivated students who are determined critical thinkers, professionally orientated and understand that their commitment to the programme is a significant investment in their future.

English Language Entry Requirements

GSA expects applicants to demonstrate proficiency in the English language. International applicants will normally be expected to provide evidence of attainment equivalent to International English Language Test (IELT) for UKVI Academic from a UKVI approved test centre.

The MLitt in Contemporary Art Practice programme requires a score of 6.0 overall, with a minimum of 5.5 in each component.

GSA's preferred test is the IELTS for UKVI (Academic) test taken at a UKVI approved test centre. A full list of UKVI approved test centres and other tests that may be presented are available on the GSA website.

GSA also offer a Pre-sessional English course called 'English for Creative Disciplines'.

Entry requirements and course content can be found [on our website](#).

Application Deadline Dates

Guaranteed Review

All complete applications received by Round 2 deadline to apply of **14 January 2026** will be reviewed. Where programmes are over-subscribed, we cannot guarantee to review applications received after this date.

The final date for receipt of applications where a student needs a visa to study at the GSA will be **26 June 2026**.

Applications are reviewed on a cyclical basis from October – August as shown below. Your application will need to be complete (part 1 and 2) by the date shown to enter the next review.

GSA scholarships

Students wishing to apply for a GSA scholarship should ensure their application is submitted by the Round 3 deadline of **4 March 2026**. This ensures you have time to receive an offer of your place, this is required in advance of submitting scholarship application.

	Final date for applicants to submit application	Final date for decision to be issued to applicant
Round 1	5 November 2025	12 December 2025
Round 2	14 January 2026	6 March 2026
Round 3	4 March 2026	24 April 2026
Round 4	3 June 2026	17 July 2026

Applications received after 3 June 2026 will be reviewed on a rolling basis

Submitting an Application

Your application to study for a postgraduate programme at the GSA is in two parts;

Part 1 - Application form, personal statement, references and supporting documents

Part 2 – Submission of a Digital Portfolio and Portfolio Statement

You can submit an application on the GSA website. Once you have completed part 1 of the application process, GSA will acknowledge your application, and for programmes requiring a digital portfolio you will be directed to complete part 2.

You are advised to upload your portfolio prior to the next deadline date to ensure it is assessed as early as possible.

Structure of Application Process

- Applicants submit application form and 500 word personal statement and any supporting application documents to the **GSA website**.
- Applicants are then invited upload Supporting Visual Material (**Digital Portfolio**) and Portfolio Statement to the Digital Portfolio website
- Applicants are informed of one of two things:
 - i) They have been offered a place on the programme (either unconditional or conditional) OR
 - ii) The application has been unsuccessful

How is my application assessed?

All applications are assessed by Academic staff against the same criteria. A points system is used which ranges from 1 – 7 and is applied to the criteria for both the Digital Portfolio and the interview (if selected)

If you are unsuccessful, you can request feedback from admissions@gsa.ac.uk on how you scored in relation to the criteria of the portfolio and/or interview.

Scoring System

1. Unsatisfactory evidence of required ability
2. Very limited evidence of required ability
3. Limited evidence of required ability
4. Satisfactory evidence of required ability
5. Good evidence of required ability
6. Very good evidence of required ability
7. Excellent evidence of required ability

Assessment Criteria

Candidates for all pathways are assessed on their existing qualities as demonstrated in their:

DIGITAL PORTFOLIO AND APPLICATION FORM

- Qualifications/Relevant Experience
- Quality of Personal Statement
- Quality of Portfolio, including range of work, skills and research interests
- Potential for development within the MLitt Programme

Digital Portfolio & Portfolio Statement

- All applicants are required to submit a Digital Portfolio. Your portfolio will be assessed by academic staff and should contain examples of work that show an understanding and level of skill appropriate to the level of study you are applying to. The portfolio should also communicate your individual abilities, experiences and interests.
- You may include early work, but you are encouraged to focus on recent work made during the last 3 years. It is helpful to present your images in chronological order, beginning with the earliest.
- The Portfolio Statement is an opportunity to expand on your Digital Portfolio, highlight a specific project, further detail your interests or inspiration and tailor your application to your chosen programme at the GSA. It must not exceed 3000 characters (approx. 500 words).
- Academic staff will look at your portfolio for approximately 10 minutes. Make sure that you curate and pace the pages so they will be able to assess your portfolio in the way you wish to present yourself.
- Guidelines for the contents of your digital portfolio and how to upload are included on the following slides.

Uploading your Digital Portfolio

On receipt of your application form, you will be invited to upload your Digital Portfolio to our dedicated Digital Portfolio site.

Your Digital Portfolio should be a single PDF file, consisting of approximately 20 pages (please note portfolios that are longer may not be fully read).

If including moving image or sound work:

- These can viewed via a hyperlink (included in your PDF document) to Vimeo or YouTube. Access to these websites should not be password protected.
- These can be viewed by inputting a URL link into the designated field.
- The clips must be limited to a maximum of three minutes.

A link to your professional website can be included, however this should supplement the PDF Digital Portfolio.

Please note, you MUST upload your Digital Portfolio as a single PDF file as outlined above. Submitting your portfolio via a URL link to Dropbox folders or other external cloud services will not be accepted.

What should I include in my Digital Portfolio?

- Include fully resolved artwork with a focus on those pieces made in the past 3 years.
- You can also include some work in progress to show recent experiments and explorations.
- Do not try to fit too many images into the portfolio. Please keep it visually clear and simple.
- Please include titles, the year the work was made and information about the materials, dimensions and duration of videos or performances.
- If necessary, you can include very brief descriptions that help to explain aspects of the artwork. You should use the Portfolio Statement for any longer explanations of work or materials used etc
- The portfolio should demonstrate your individual interests, approach and creativity.

Personal Statement

Your statement should consist of no more than 500 words. Statements that are longer may not be fully read.

It should be a concise, critical, self-evaluation of your artwork, giving a clear sense of the key areas that your work explores, how you see your work developing in the future and how that relates to your application to the MLitt Contemporary Art Practice programme at the GSA. The statement should demonstrate that you have researched the programme and indicate the reasons why you think it is best suited to the future development of your practice.

You may choose to write about:

- your reasons for applying to the MLitt pathway
- your interests and experiences within your practice;
- what you hope to gain by studying on the programme;
- what you will contribute to the MLitt programme;
- how undertaking the programme corresponds with your future ambitions.
- **Please indicate which of the two pathways you are interested in.**

Further Information

- [How to Apply](#)
- [MLitt Contemporary Art Practice \(formerly MLitt Fine Art Practice\) Programme Page](#)
- [Fees & Finance](#)

If you need further information about applying to postgraduate level study, have a question about an existing application, please email admissions@gsa.ac.uk