

**SCHOOL
OF DESIGN
THE GLASGOW
SCHOOL OF ART**



Qingge Zheng, MDes Fashion and Textiles, 2025

POSTGRADUATE APPLICATIONS GUIDELINES

MDES FASHION DESIGN

Master of Design (MDes) in Fashion Design (Pathways in Surface, Silhouette and Knitwear) *

**subject to approval*

Application Guidelines for 2026 Entry

Application guide

This guide takes you through the application process and what to include in your application to Master of Design in Fashion Design (pathways in surface, silhouette and knitwear).

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Entry Requirements

All applicants should normally hold a UK Bachelors honours degree (minimum 2:2), or an international equivalent, in a relevant subject area or equivalent professional practice.

Entry Requirements

Applicants who require a Student Visa, and who are not a national of, nor have obtained a degree in one of the countries on the approved [UKVI exemption list](#), will need to provide evidence of their English language ability through the use of a standardised test. The GSA's preferred tests are:

IELTS for UKVI (Academic) test taken at a [UKVI approved test centre](#).

Score of 6.5 overall, with no less than 6.0 in each component.

A full list of alternative English Language tests that may be presented can be found [here](#).

or

GSA's [pre-sessional English language programme](#)

A full list of other tests that may be presented can be found [here](#).

Applications

Your application to study for a postgraduate degree at the GSA is in four parts:

Part 1. Application Form including Personal Statement (500 words max), qualification and references

Part 2. Digital Portfolio (20 slides as a PDF)

Part 3. A Short Video About You

Once you have completed Part 1 of the application process, we will acknowledge your application via email and invite you to upload parts 2 & 3 to the GSA digital portfolio site.

Application Process

Your completed application will be assessed at the next review round. There are four stages to your application:

- * Apply through GSA website with your application, evidence of qualifications, references and upload your digital portfolio and short video about you via the GSA digital portfolio site.
- * GSA academic staff will assess your application
- * If successful, you will either be invited to an interview or offered place on the basis of the strength of your application
- * The outcome of your application will be communicated to you through the GSA Admissions department.

Application Timeline

Completed applications will be processed in four rounds: Round 1, Round 2, Round 3 and Round 4. Key dates for each round are included below:

Round	Deadline to apply	Decision on application by
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

Guaranteed Review: All completed applications received by the Round 2 deadlines above will be reviewed. After this date, programmes can become full and close to applications in advance of Round 3 and Round 4. Early application is therefore encouraged to avoid disappointment.

*Applications made after 3 June 2026 will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

Writing Your Personal Statement

The 500 maximum word count Personal Statement is your chance to explain clearly and honestly why you want to study your chosen programme at the GSA.

Before you start writing, read the information published on the GSA website about the programme you are applying to. Make sure you understand what the programme focuses on, how it is structured, and what kinds of opportunities it offers. In your Statement talk about the specific aspects and parts of the programme that interest you the most and explain **why** they matter to **you** – in **your own words**.

General reasons like the GSA's reputation, high ranking or history can't tell us very much about *you* or your personal motivation. We want to understand who **you** are, what inspires your creative practice, and **why this particular programme is the right fit for you**.

Writing Your Personal Statement

We have included some writing prompts below, which you might choose to use. It is unlikely you will be able to cover all of these in 500 words, focus on the ones you feel most important. *Personal statements that are longer than 500 words will not be read.*

- Why have you decided to apply?
- Your awareness of the specific programme applied to.
- Your motivation and rationale to study your chosen programme at the GSA.
- What makes you a good fit for the programme?
- How may you contribute to the studio culture and peer learning?
- Evidence of your experience and commitment through participation in relevant study, employment, work experience, or extracurricular learning.
- What do you hope to achieve through your study?
- Where you hope the successful complete of study at the GSA may take you next in your future career?

What is a Digital Portfolio?

The digital portfolio is a very important part of your application to study at The Glasgow School of Art. It is a collection of images of your design work laid out clearly to demonstrate your ideas, skills, interests and suitability for the programme you are applying to.

Your digital portfolio should show recently completed and/or work-in-progress including research, development work, evidence of exploration, as well as resolved pieces.

The format should be a single PDF file that contains a **maximum of 20 pages**. Digital portfolios that are longer may not be viewed fully. We are looking indicatively for 3-5 differing projects.

There is a limit of 2 images or 2 spreads per page. No other text should be on the page except for a project title (if relevant). If there is a moving image, include a still image and URL hyperlink to view the video (youtube or vimeo only). Access to links should not be password protected or have an expiration date.

Images should be at a reasonable resolution to be able to view as a pdf. We recommend 2000 pixels wide or images at 200 dpi.

What is the Short Video About You?

The short video about you is an opportunity for our assessment team to find out more about you, your interests and why you have chosen to apply to the programme and to the GSA.

Your *personal statement* and *short video about you* should be different. Please do not read out your personal statement.

Your video should show you speaking directly and clearly in English. It must be a maximum of 3 minutes in length **and should concentrate on 3D pieces**. You may wish to hold garments up to the camera or talk through a garment displayed on a mannequin or worn on a body.

Due to file size limits, please submit your short video by providing a URL to a host site such as YouTube, Vimeo, GoogleDrive, DropBox. Please ensure these are not password protected and there is no expiry date so our assessment teams can view these. We recommend saving the settings as private and only allowing those with the link to view your video. The video should be at a natural speed (x1) and not speeded up.

Please note that your short video will be viewed where appropriate.

General Guidance: Short Video About You

We have included some prompts below, which you might choose to use. It is unlikely you will be able to cover all of these in three minutes, so focus on the ones you feel most important.

AI may not be used for video or audio in the presentation.

- If you are applying to more than one programme at the GSA, you must provide a different statement and video for each – remember it is about you, your interests and why you have chosen to apply to the particular programme at the GSA, so you need to be specific.
- **Focus on 3D pieces:** You may wish to hold garments up to the camera or talk through a garment displayed on a mannequin or worn on a body.
- Your ambitions for the programme – what do you hope to learn and do? What is your dream project, and how does that align with this specific programme?
- Discuss your motivation for pursuing a Master's degree.
- Share highlights from your undergraduate studies of research (include examples of theories or precedents).
- Describe the ways in which you hope to broaden your understanding and perspective within your chosen subject area, and explain your motivations behind your decision to apply to this programme.

How we assess your application

Admissions staff assess your Application Form and Digital Portfolio together. Your short video about you will be viewed where appropriate.

Your application will be numerically scored against specific assessment criteria (see [next page](#)) set by the programme you are applying to. It is important to know what assessment criteria is, and you should try and respond to this criteria when creating your digital portfolio, writing your personal statement and if selected, preparing for interview.

The scoring is between 1-7 (7 being 'excellent evidence of' and 1 being 'unsatisfactory evidence of'). Applications may be unsuccessful at this stage or you may be invited to attend an interview by email.

Stage 1 Criteria – Application and Portfolio

1. Evidence of ability to demonstrate practical skills

We would like to see your practical skills.
You can demonstrate these in a variety of ways in your digital portfolio pdf.
These *may* include:
drawings, collage, physical work, 3D work, computer generated work, interactive works, photography, publications, prototyping, print making, typography, moving image, film etc. Practical skills can be shown through finished pieces and development work. It's important to show all the practical skills that are relevant and transferable to your chosen programme.

2. Evidence of relevant research, analysis and conceptual skills

We want to see evidence of your design thinking, process and critical choices to inform your final outcome/s.

A brief contextualising introduction (100 words maximum) for each project
Evidence of research informing project development?
How was this idea explored and experimented with?
How did you analyse the effectiveness of your design choices?
Evidence of design decisions that determined the final outcome/s?

Your digital portfolio process should be organised and presented with a clear iterative process and conclusion.

Stage 1 Criteria – Application and Portfolio

3. Evidence of ability to position your work within the specialist field

Through your digital portfolio pdf and personal statement, you should demonstrate that you have researched your chosen programme and be able to position your practice within the specialist field.

4. Explain your motivation and rationale for applying to the specialist area at Glasgow School of Art

Through your personal statement expand and contextualise on your motivation and rationale for applying to the specialist area at The Glasgow School of Art. Consider how you would contribute to the studio culture at GSA.

Stage 2 Criteria – Interview

1. Ability to communicate your analytical and conceptual skills

We want to understand your design thinking, process and critical choices to inform your final outcome/s.

Evidence of research informing project development
How was this idea explored and experimented with?
How did you analyse the effectiveness of your design choices?
Evidence of the design decisions that determined the final outcome/s
At interview you will have the opportunity to articulate your research process and design decisions.

2. Critically reflect on your research informing your project

We are keen to understand your research and how it informed the critical development of your projects and learning. The creative process is a journey, what did you learn and what areas did you find to be the most successful or challenging and how did you address them.

Show that you understand where to position your work within your design specialism by explaining this at interview. For work-in-progress you could describe what you hope to achieve, what sources you will be looking at, and how you hope to explore these.

Stage 2 Criteria – Interview

3. Identify possible themes or areas of interest you would like to explore during your studies	Prepare to discuss the identified themes and areas of interest informing your study.
4. Communicate your motivation and ambitions for the subject area applied for at The Glasgow School of Art	At interview you will have the opportunity to communicate your enthusiasm and ambition for the specialist subject area that you have applied for and why you chose The Glasgow School of Art.

Interviews

An offer may be made without interview. If you receive an offer without interview, there will be opportunities to meet staff and discuss this programme.

If you are invited to an interview this will take place online via Zoom. It will be conducted by a tutor from your chosen programme and will usually take about 20 minutes.

The interviewer will have your digital portfolio available. They will have set questions prepared to ask you and they might take notes. We want to discuss the work in the digital portfolio as well as your passion for the subject. The interview is an important opportunity for us to confirm you know what studying the programme entails and that you are ready to study at postgraduate level at the GSA.

Interviews

You will also have time to ask questions. If you would like to know more about anything now is a really good time to ask. It's an opportunity for you to gain a better understanding of what it is like to be a student at The Glasgow School of Art. Studying a postgraduate degree is a big commitment, so it is important to make sure we meet your expectations.

Following the interview, your interview performance will be numerically scored against the assessment criteria.

Further Information

Open Days and Campus Tours

You can meet us online and on campus for advice at Open Days and our campus tours. [Find out more](#) and register an interest.

Need help or have a question?

If you need further information about applying to postgraduate level study, email admissions@gsa.ac.uk

Useful weblinks

- [MDes Fashion Design](#)
- [How to apply](#)
- [GSA Degree Show](#)
- [Fees, Funding and Finance](#)
- [Scholarships](#)
- [Accommodation](#)
- [International Students](#)
- [GSA Pre-sessional English](#)
- [Workshop and Facilities](#)
- [GSA Live Map](#)
- [Glasgow and Scotland](#)