

Graduate Diploma in Art

Programme Specification

Awarding Institution:

University of London (Interim Exit Awards made by Goldsmiths' College)

Teaching Institution: Goldsmiths, University of London**Name of Final Award and Programme Title:** Graduate Diploma in Art**Name of Interim Exit Award(s):** Not applicable**Duration of Programme:** 1 year full-time**UCAS Code(s):** Not applicable**HECoS Code(s):** (100059) Fine Art**QAA Benchmark Group:** Art and Design**Programme accredited by:** Not applicable**Date Programme Specification last updated/approved:** July 2020**Home Department:** Art**Department(s) which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:** English Language Centre

Programme overview

The Graduate Diploma programme is aimed at postgraduate students who need a year to develop or consolidate their artistic practice and/or language skills in academic English, and to familiarise themselves with critical studies in a contemporary art context, ways of working in UK academic culture and in the standards required at Master's degree level. Students who successfully complete the programme at the required level are guaranteed a place on a relevant Goldsmiths' Department of Art Masters level degree. Students who wish to go on to study elsewhere within Goldsmiths or the UK will be given the appropriate one-to-one tutorial support in their applications. The Graduate Diploma is open to Home/EU and Overseas students.

Programme entry requirements

- Students must normally be 18 years of age on admission.
- A minimum score of 6 in IELTS overall with a 6 in writing (with no sub score lower than 5.5) or equivalent in other English Language examinations. Students with 5.5 overall or 5.5 in writing will be required to study a pre-session English programme and achieve the required levels to progress.

- Students must normally have already completed (or be about to finish) an undergraduate degree or equivalent in their own country. Typically this will be in Art or Fine Art although other subjects are acceptable if they are accompanied by a portfolio displaying an independent commitment to artistic or curatorial practice.
- Selection is by submission of a portfolio of work or equivalent material and interview.

Aims of the programme

The programme consists of four major components:

A: **Studio Practice and Critical Studies**; (90 credits); B: Academic Writing and Professional Communication in Art (15 credits); C: Language Training: Academic Listening & Speaking (15 credits from English Language Centre). Or D Artists' Research Methods (15 credits) for students who have already achieved level 7.0 overall in IELTS or equivalent qualification.

The Graduate Diploma in Art is intended for students who want to study visual art, curating or artist filmmaking at a Masters level. It offers a unique introduction into the pedagogical methods and standards we offer at the Masters level at Goldsmiths, and constitutes a route into one of the three PGT courses we offer in the Department of Art. Successful completion of the programme prepares the student to benefit from our PGT courses and guarantees admission to PGT course most suitable to the applicant's development.

The studio practice element of the course provides a context in which artistic and/or curatorial practices can develop in a studio based critical environment. Students will spend more than 50% of their time working in their studios and in the Art Practice Areas exhibitions spaces we provide, developing their own individual practice. Strong emphasis is placed on developing an understanding of the interrelationship between theory and practice in artistic and curatorial production, through the application of critical thinking, writing and research methods to practice. This is shared activity from the outset; the studio environment encourages shared learning and provides opportunities for informal peer discussion and evaluation. At Goldsmiths we insist on studio provision for our practice-based students in order to promote this community of learning.

The Critical Studies element of the Programme, which accounts for 40% of the final grade, is designed to familiarise students with the intellectual context of contemporary art, in order to support their practical work making art or exhibitions. Students can expect to engage and extend their powers of critical reflection, and to gain the intellectual tools to discuss, write about, analyse and evaluate contemporary art, including their own.

Students will also have access to the art practice areas, which are equipped with specialist equipment and staffed with highly qualified technicians who can help them develop the technical skills and understanding necessary to the development of their individual practice.

Students who need to develop their proficiency in English will do so through two additional course elements. These are Academic Listening and Speaking offered through the EAP and the Academic Writing and Professional Communication in Art module. Students will be expected to get to IELTS Level 7 or equivalent for entry onto one of our PGT programmes. Those starting the course with IELTS Level 7 English proficiency will forgo Academic Listening and Speaking for a module entitled Artists' Research Methods. This course will introduce students to various critical research methods employed by artists and curators in contemporary art.

The generic aims of the programme are for students to:

- Undertake Art practice and critical studies in UK higher education in a way that is both authentic and challenging;
- Learn what is expected of students studying art in a UK university and to communicate your artistic practice in a relevant way and one that links individual practice to contextual events and movements;
- Learn what is expected of Art students in seminars and class discussion at a UK university at such a level that you are prepared for master level study in art;
- Learn what is expected of students in written work at a UK university, including a range of text types and assessment criteria;
- Learn to engage with and respond to teachers as artists and fellow students practicing in a range of different approaches and from different countries.
- Develop the skills necessary to become a professional artist, curator or art filmmaker with independent, critical and capacity to research subject areas and communicate in art environments.

What you will be expected to achieve

Students who successfully complete the programme will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	Demonstrate knowledge of key artists and familiarity with the historical and contemporary contexts in which art is made and understood.	Studio Practice and Critical Studies

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A2	Demonstrate a clear understanding of how critical and theoretical debates support your practice and writing.	Studio Practice and Critical Studies
A3	Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the materials, processes and practices relevant to your own practice.	Studio Practice and Critical Studies

Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	Develop a capacity to consider your own work and the work of others in relation to relevant historical and critical contexts within the field of contemporary art.	Studio Practice and Critical Studies
B2	Identify relevant historical and contemporary models for understanding and developing your practice and writing.	Studio Practice and Critical Studies
B3	Consider and use feedback on your own work and offer constructive feedback on the work of others.	Studio Practice and Critical Studies
B4	To communicate and discuss orally and in writing issues arising from texts, interpretive writing, critical discourse and forms of practice.	All Modules

Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	Develop and understanding of the different materials, processes and research methods relevant to your practice.	Studio Practice and Critical Studies
C2	Be able to speak, write and read the English language at a level suitable for postgraduate study in a UK university.	Art Writing and Academic Listening and Speaking
C3	To interact with a range of academic staff as well as students in a socially and culturally appropriate manner.	All Modules
C4	To present systematically organised arguments orally to groups, and to defend them in critical discussion.	All Modules

Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Develop a commitment and responsibility for your own practice, research and collaborative working methods through regular attendance and active participation in all tutorials, seminars and lectures.	All Modules
D2	Develop the skills necessary to present your work to others in a variety of contexts.	All Modules
D3	To work constructively with others.	All Modules
D4	To work independently.	Studio Practice and Critical Studies
D5	To be able to explain both orally and in writing complex ideas in relation to your work in a way that others can understand.	All Modules

How you will learn

Students reach the above Learning Outcomes through a combination of studio work, individual tutorials, seminars and lectures, as well as work in the art practice areas. The Department of Art is committed to an open and inclusive teaching and learning environment, and to student centred learning, in which the student's practice and the academic issues arising out of that practice form the core curriculum. The various interactions they have with academic and technical staff, as well as each other, support their aesthetic and intellectual development through an egalitarian environment in which constructive criticism and discussion supports the development of their own work and that of their colleagues.

The course provides different modes of teaching and learning. These include:

Art Practice Areas (APA): Technical staff introduce and support students in the use of our technical facilities. In general, student use of the technical facilities should be driven by their work. If they want to make something with metal or with a 3D printer or use textiles, they are encouraged to take their ideas to the appropriate APA and are there shown how to use the facilities to realise their idea.

Individual tutorials: Every student is assigned a tutor who is responsible for supporting their academic development throughout the year. The tutorials give the student the opportunity to discuss the practical and critical concerns they have about their work and develop their awareness of other examples of work from the wider field of art practice. Students are expected to prepare for their tutorials through independent research.

Individuals tutorials help students to take responsibility for their own learning, and to develop important skills such organising their interests, intentions and influences into coherent communication about their practice. Students normally have scheduled tutorials with those responsible for their summative assessment, and are allowed to request tutorials with artists, curators and writers from other programmes or outside the institution.

Group Tutorials: All students will meet regularly for group tutorials in which they will present their work to each other and to staff. These allow students to benefit from each other's critical engagement, and to develop presentation and communication skills.

Lectures Seminars: Lectures and seminars will form the basis of the students' critical studies teaching. They will attend the PGT wide 'Monday Night Lectures' with all the students from the MFAs, and then break into their own seminar groups to discuss the issues raised in the lectures. They will also receive their own lectures on the historical and critical contexts of contemporary art, and have seminars after these in order to explore the themes and ideas introduced in the lectures. Lectures and seminars provide the most traditional academic form of pedagogy offered by the course, and will help the students develop the intellectual grounding in contemporary art necessary to move to the MA or MFA level. It will also support their verbal, written and reading skills, by giving them the opportunity to work in a concentrated and guided way on specific subjects with the support of their tutors. Again, the critical studies lectures and seminars will also feed into and support their practice-based work.

Collaborative learning: Collaborative learning is an important aspect of this element of the module, and this extends the students' focus towards a critical engagement with the art world system and the creative industries more generally. Students will make visits to museums and galleries and other visual arts institutions in London, led by tutors and facilitated by arts professionals in these institutions. We expect these visits to help in each students professional development by introducing them to the professional art world, and we will be asking students to develop virtual projects in association with institutions they've visited as a means of getting them to think through their relation to the professional worlds. We expect that these (formative) projects will feed into their portfolios of art writing.

Academic Writing and Professional Communication: students will do a 15 credit module in art writing, which will consist in lectures and seminars on writing, combined with tutorials in support of portfolios of writing about their work and their collaborative projects. Students will have individual and group tutorials with tutors and with visiting professionals. The goal is to improve the students writing skills and also to enable them to communicate more about their own work more effectively in both academic and professional contexts.

How you will be assessed

1. **Coursework:** Studio practice work will be reviewed and evaluated throughout the year. Work presented in individual and group tutorials will form the basis of this assessment. The coursework of each student is subject to interim reports and specific written feedback from their individual tutor. Students will make presentations about their coursework to the Programme staff at the end of the Spring Term. This will take the form of a viva voce.
2. **Presentations:** In the Summer Term each student will make a year end presentation of selected coursework, which may include art works, curatorial projects and art writing projects. These will be graded by staff and a provisional grade established, which will then be overseen by the External Examiner, who checks for parity and ensures that national standards are maintained.
3. **Essays:** students will be assessed on two critical studies essays of 1,500 and 2,500 words respectively on topics of their own choice, one in the first term and one in the second.
4. **Portfolios:** students will be assessed on portfolios of writing developed over the year on subjects such as their collaborative projects, off site visits and tutorial reports (500 word assessments of their individual tutorials). These portfolios will be monitored throughout the year, and submitted for assessment at beginning of the Summer Term.

Continuous evaluation measures student performance over the course of the year, providing a framework for student centred learning. Each student's level of achievement is monitored through staff meetings in which provisional grades are determined against learning outcomes. This process of continuous assessment considers:

- Studio practice coursework as it evolves over the year and is reflected in original examples, plans and supporting documentation.
- Active participation throughout the curriculum and their developing ability to begin to communicate critical and contextual issues relevant to their studio work and broader issues that related to the art system.
- Students' ability to sustain independent study.
- The staging of a selected presentation of their work.
- Their essay writing and more general writing skills.

Individual and group tutorials support student learning through regular formative assessment by tutors and are the basis of the student's self-directed learning. Students will use these formative assessment moments to write their tutorial reports as part of their art writing portfolios. These in turn become part of the summative assessment of their Academic Writing and Research Methods summative assessment. Regular progress reports give the student a clear indication of their current level of achievement and individual

feedback reports advise them on how to improve their performance. Coursework marks are reviewed at a formal meeting of core staff and then presented to the External Examiner for moderation against a sample of student work.

Summative assessments occur throughout the year. This process includes: Studio Practice work, Critical Studies, Academic Writing and Research, English Language Training: Academic Listening and Speaking (ELC) and Art Research Methods (for those with IELTS levels of 7 or above).

Marking criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	Distinction (Exceptional)	Work that reflects an exceptional level of achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes. The work demonstrates original research and a rigorous conceptual understanding of the chosen subject. The decisions made in the use of visual or material or conceptual frameworks begin to challenge existing contexts and make an initial contribution to the field of contemporary art.
70-79%	Distinction (Excellent)	Work that reflects an excellent level of achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes. The work demonstrates wide research and evidence of a clear understanding of the chosen field. It shows a high level of conceptual rigour that indicates sustained independent study together with an original and imaginative interpretation of contemporary art, and begins to challenge the current limits in the field.
60-69%	Merit (Very good)	Work that reflects a very good standard of achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes. Work that shows evidence of very good critical reflection with considered use of visual material and/or conceptual frameworks. It is highly imaginative and indicates that an artistic or curatorial project has been developed, albeit within the known and expected boundaries of the field of study.
50-59%	Pass (Good)	Work that reflects a good standard of achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes, and demonstrates an initial understanding of the field of study, coupled with good overall ability. There is evidence intentional manipulation of chosen visual material or conceptual frameworks, indicating critical reflection and technical

		competence that will require further sustained development.
40-49%	Pass	Work that reflects a threshold standard of achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes and demonstrates a limited understanding of the field of study. The work demonstrates some manipulation of the chosen visual and/or conceptual material indicating a predictable and unimaginative response to the boundaries defining the field.
30-39%	Fail	Work is unsatisfactory and represents an overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes. The work shows scant attention to the critical and practical demands of the student's practice, with no apparent judgement in the manipulation of material or conceptual resources. The module or element must be retaken.
10-29%	Bad fail	Work that represents a significant failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes. The work shows no attempt to address the practical or intellectual demands of the practice, and demonstrates no judgement or critical reflection in the use of material or concepts. The module/elements must be retaken.
1-9%	Very bad fail	Work that does not even attempt to address the learning outcomes. The module/elements must be retaken.
0%	Non submission or plagiarised	A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for plagiarised assessment.

How the programme is structured

The Graduate Diploma consists of three elements in Studio Practice and Critical Studies, Academic Writing and Professional Communication and English Language. If a student has achieved the equivalent of IELTS 7 or above, they will be offered the option of a course in Art Research Methods, which consists in one of a number of courses offered throughout the BA Fine Art Critical Studies programme that are based on artists' research. Successful completion of these elements leads to admission to the PGT course most suitable to the student's continued artistic or curatorial development.

It requires full time study over one year during which the student takes each element of the course to the total value of 120 credits. It is an intensive course of studio and laboratory practice supported by individual tutorials, Laboratory workshops and group tutorials, together with an introductory series of Critical Studies lectures and seminars, collaborative assignments and a portfolio of Art Writing. Each student with an art practice

is allocated a studio working base which is the focal point of their activities for the duration of their studies. The student is responsible for determining the specific nature of their practice with guidance from the tutorial staff.

1. All students take the equivalent of 120 credits during the year. Those students with an IELTS score of less than 7 must take 30 credits in English Language and those students whose first language is English or whose IELTS score is above 7 must take 15 credits of course designated within the Artists' Research Methods element. It is necessary to pass the programme at Level 6 in order to progress to Level 7 (the first-year of our three PGT taught programmes: the MFA Fine Art, the MFA Curating and the MA Artist Film and Moving Image). The module elements, contributory parts, their value, weightings and the examination are listed below:

A. Studio Practice and Critical Studies

Studio Practice and Critical Studies 90 Credits = 75% of overall programme mark

Term 1: (Studio Practice assessed through studio coursework and performance in: tutorials, group tutorials (formative); Critical studies lectures and seminars, one essay (formative)).

Term 2: Studio Practice assessed through Studio Coursework and performance in: tutorials, group tutorials and a presentation of work at the end of the Spring Term (Summative); Critical Studies lectures and seminars and a 2,500 word essay handed in at the end of the Spring Term. (summative).

Term 3: Presentation of Work in the form of a degree show or an agreed project format, developed through individual and group tutorials over Term 3 (summative). This final presentation/project constitutes 40% of the grade for this this module.

Either: Academic Listening and Speaking

If a student's main language is not English and their IELTS score is below 6.5 then the Extension Degree will include three contact hours a week studying specific-purpose classes in English for art students. The language module enables non-native speakers to develop the language skills and confidence needed to meet the demands of an undergraduate degree. This includes practice in academic writing and giving presentations, two skills that are essential for study at University. In addition, they will develop their overall language level (vocabulary, awareness of grammar, accuracy, reading and listening) through a project based on key themes in western cultural studies: modernity and modernism. Students will also develop your note-taking, summarising and critical thinking skills in this module. Each term students will be expected to write a researched essay, give a short presentation and submit a language portfolio of their language learning. At the end of the year they will be

examined in four sub-tests to gauge their listening, speaking, essay writing and reading skills. The general recommendation for students proceeding to undergraduate study is that they gain a minimum score of 40% in each sub-test (reading, writing, speaking and listening).

English language (if IELTSs lower than 7 = 12.5% of the overall Programme Mark

Term 1: Essay, Presentation and language Portfolio (formative).

Term 2: Essay, Presentation and language Portfolio (formative).

Term 3: Exams on essay writing, listening skills, reading skills and speaking skills (100% summative).

OR: Artists' Research Methods (15 CATS)

Term 2: Students whose English is IELTSs 7 or above will have the option to do one of 7 courses offered in the Spring term offered by the BA Fine Art Critical Studies programme. These courses are based on artists' research interests and will provide the student with a good grounding in how artists research, write and understand their interests and projects. Subjects range from 'The Everyday' to 'Colour' to 'Post-Criticalities' and 'Post-Colonialism. Assessment occurs through an essay (100% summative).

Academic Writing and Professional Communication in Art (15 CATS)

This course is designed to help students gain skills and confidence in presenting their work in both academic and professional contexts.

Term 1: Students will develop a collaborative project supported through group tutorials. They will write diaries about the collaborative project and tutorial reports about their tutorials. This will be marked and feedback provided by staff (formative).

Term 2: The collaborative projects will be presented to staff and students and graded (50% summative). Tutorial reports will be written and submitted (for both Term 1 and 2 tutorials) at the end of Term 2 (50% summative).

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
Studio Practice and Critical Studies	TBC	90	6	Compulsory	1,2,3
EITHER Academic Listening and Speaking	LS61003A	15	6	Optional	1,2,3
OR Artists' Research Methods * (for students who	TBC	15	6	Optional	1 or 2

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
have already achieved level 7.0 overall in IELTS or equivalent qualification)					
Academic Writing and Professional Communication in Art	TBC	15	6	Compulsory	1,2
*Option see above					

Academic support

Support for learning and wellbeing is provided in a number of ways by departments and College support services who work collaboratively to ensure students get the right help to reach their best potential both academically and personally.

All students are allocated a Personal Tutor (one in each department for joint programmes) who has overall responsibility for their individual progress and welfare. Personal Tutors meet with their student at least twice a year either face-to-face, as part of a group and/or electronically. The first meeting normally takes place within the first few weeks of the autumn term. Personal Tutors are also available to students throughout the year of study. These meetings aim to discuss progress on modules, discussion of the academic discipline and reports from previous years if available (for continuing students). This provides an opportunity for progress, attendance and assessment marks to be reviewed and an informed discussion to take place about how to strengthen individual learning and success.

All students are also allocated a Senior Tutor to enable them to speak to an experienced academic member of staff about any issues which are negatively impacting their academic study and which are beyond the normal scope of issues handled by Programme Convenors and Personal Tutors.

Students are provided with information about learning resources, the [Library](#) and information available on [Learn.gold \(VLE\)](#) so that they have access to department/programme handbooks, programme information and support related information and guidance.

Taught sessions and lectures provide overviews of themes, which students are encouraged to complement with intensive reading for presentation and discussion with peers at seminars. Assessments build on lectures and seminars so students are expected to attend all taught sessions to build knowledge and their own understanding of their chosen discipline.

All assessed work is accompanied by some form of feedback to ensure that students' work is on the right track. It may come in a variety of forms ranging from written comments on a marked essay to oral and written feedback on developing projects and practice as they attend workshops.

Students may be referred to specialist student services by department staff or they may access support services independently. Information about support services is provided on the [Goldsmiths website](#) and for new students through new starter information and induction/Welcome Week. Any support recommendations that are made are agreed with the student and communicated to the department so that adjustments to learning and teaching are able to be implemented at a department level and students can be reassured that arrangements are in place. Opportunities are provided for students to review their support arrangements should their circumstances change. The [Disability](#) and [Wellbeing](#) Services maintain caseloads of students and provide on-going support.

The [Careers Service](#) provides central support for skills enhancement, running [The Gold Award](#) scheme and other co-curricular activities that are accredited via the Higher Education Achievement Report ([HEAR](#)).

The [Academic Skills Centre](#) works with academic departments offering bespoke academic literacy sessions. It also provides a programme of academic skills workshops and one-to-one provision for students throughout the year.

Links with employers, placement opportunities and career prospects

The Graduate Diploma in Art prepares students for study at the MFA level. It enables them to develop their intellectual and practical skills to a level 7 academic level, but also to a professional level that will support their work as artists and curators in the professional art world. Students on the course will be introduced to professional artists through tutorials and studio visits, professional curators and gallerists through tutorials and visits to galleries and museums. The intention is to make professional development and employability a key component of the course, and to utilise our extensive contact throughout the professional and academic art worlds to facilitate this.

The requirements of a Goldsmiths Graduate Diploma

Graduate Diplomas normally involve one academic year of full-time study and have a value of 120 credits. Programmes are composed of individual modules, each of which has its own credit value. If a programme has a part-time pathway, the structure will be set out in the

section “How the programme is structured” above. Normally, all modules are at level 6 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

More detailed information about the structure and requirements of a Goldsmiths degree is provided in the [Goldsmiths Qualifications and Credit Framework](#).

Modules

Modules are defined as:

- “Optional” – which can be chosen from a group of modules
- “Compulsory” – which must be taken as part of the degree

Progression

Where a programme of study extends beyond one calendar year, students may be required to pass specific modules in their first year of study before progressing to the second year. Where this is the case, these requirements will be set out in this Programme Specification.

Award of the degree

In order to graduate, students must successfully complete all modules specified for the programme, as set out within the section “How the programme is structured” above.

Classification

Final degree classification is calculated on the basis of a student’s mean average mark (based on credit value) across all modules on the programme.

Graduate Diplomas are awarded with the following classifications:

- Distinction – 70%+
- Merit – 60-69%
- Pass – 40-59%

More detail on the [calculation of the final classification](#) is on our website.

The above information is intended as a guide, with more detailed information available in the [Goldsmiths Academic Manual](#).

Programme-specific rules and facts

If a student passes all elements of the programme and achieves an overall average mark of 50% or above, they will be guaranteed progression onto the relevant postgraduate programme.

General programme costs

In addition to your tuition fees, you will be responsible for meeting standard costs associated with your study. Find out more information at gold.ac.uk/programme-costs.

Specific programme costs

The course is for international students, though exceptions may be made for Home/EU if we think they can both benefit and contribute to the course. There are no programme specific costs other than materials for making art works. Tuition will be in line with our PGT courses.

How teaching quality will be monitored

Goldsmiths employs a number of methods to ensure and enhance the quality of learning and teaching on its programmes.

Programmes and modules are formally approved against national standards and are monitored throughout the year, such as in departmental committees, a variety of student feedback mechanisms and through the completion of module evaluation questionnaires. Every programme has at least one External Examiner who reviews comments annually on the standards of awards and student achievement. External Examiner(s) attend Boards of Examiners meetings and submit an annual written report.

Modules, programmes and/or departments are also subject to annual and periodic review internally, as well as periodic external scrutiny.

Quality assurance processes aim to ensure Goldsmiths' academic provision remains current, that the procedures to maintain the standards of the awards are working effectively and the quality of the learning opportunities and information provided to students and applicants is appropriate.

Detailed information on all these procedures are published on the [Quality Office web pages](#).