



## Student Transitions: Example of transitions practice

**Title:** Design Domain – at Glasgow School of Art (GSA)

**Transition(s) the practice supports:** *discipline related & professional practice:* 'generating awareness of design in the broader cultural and professional field'.

**Abstract:** Design Domain is a course for first, second and third year students from across the School of Design. It runs across two three-week blocks in terms one and two and there is option to gain additional professional experience in non-assessed satellite events in term three. The course aims to make students aware of the broader cultural and professional field of design and consider the relationship between their specialist subject area and other design disciplines. A set of overarching themes links the course's activities: these include a symposium with professionals from across the field of design in term 1; a set of distinct studio projects, workshops and talks devised by each school in terms 1 and 2; and the optional non-assessed satellite events in Term 3. This year the theme was *A Midsummer Nights Dream*, inspired by the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Shakespeare's death.

### **Description:**

Design Domain is an in-studio 20 credit course for around 550 first, second and third year students from across all subject areas in the School of Design at GSA (Silversmith & Jewellery, Fashion & Textiles, Communication Design, Interior Design, Interaction Design) and for third year Interior and Communication Design students from GSA Singapore. The aim of the course is to generate student awareness of design in the broader cultural and professional field and encourage students to think about the relationship between their specialist subject area and other design disciplines.

The course takes place over two three-week blocks in Terms 1 and 2, after which there is an option for students to participate in non-assessed satellite events including one high profile cultural event in Term 3. A set of overarching themes links the course's activities.

This year the overarching theme was Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Nights Dream* (a theme chosen to mark the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Shakespeare's death) and there were four sub-themes: Order/Disorder, Liminal Spaces, Narratives and Performativity. In term 1 the project began with a symposium for all Design School students that invited internal and external academics and creative practitioners from across the field of design to respond to one of these themes. For the rest of the term each studio would operate their own programme of workshops, studio projects and talk in response to a project brief, which they had devised. In term 2 all students work towards a portfolio. Throughout terms 1 and 2 students and staff from all areas can view briefs and pool resources via a shared project VLE. An open studio

event at the end of each term encourages students and staff to view the work of other departments.

In Term 3 there is an opportunity for students to collaborate with staff and students from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, the University of Glasgow and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra to create costume, light sound and projection as part of a high profile cultural event in April 2016 *The Lunatic the Lover and the Poet*. This is a non-assessed component but provides strong opportunity for professional practice experience. This year around 25 students are involved in this project.

*Aspiration/ key points/ principles:*

The course aims to generate student awareness of design in the broader cultural field and to consider the relationship between their specialist subject area and other design disciplines.

The extra curricular project requires extra commitment but has a significant professional practice component and opportunity for collaboration and networking across discipline areas – something students will likely encounter in the professional world once they graduate.

*Observations/ challenge/ evaluation:*

Evaluations of the project will be gathered in at the end of term two, however initial feedback indicates a positive that both staff and students have gained a lot from the project – despite staff having to put in some additional hours. There is currently no large cultural event planned for the third term of next years project: it is hoped that the evaluations will to what extent this is a core part of the experience worth keeping.

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**All examples provided will be posted to the Enhancement Themes website with the intention of including them in the National Transitions map.**