



Glasgow Caledonian University

MSc Cultural Heritage Studies

Introduction

Cultural heritage is a dynamic and ongoing process that reflects the people, place and time in which it is being interpreted. Heritage fields include oral tradition, community histories, artefacts, historic sites, monuments, landscape and the natural environment.

Distinctive Features

The MSc Cultural Heritage Studies is a research-led post-graduate programme, with a strong multi-disciplinary emphasis. The programme combines the development of management skills with a broader understanding of heritage contexts and policies. Its core aim is to produce graduates who are equipped with high-level skills and competencies to allow them to become active shapers of policy and practice in the cultural heritage field. The programme will also equip you to pursue further academic study routes in heritage, if you wish. Based upon a strong theoretical foundation, distinctive features include an emphasis on preparation for professional practice, including 'live' case studies and the organisation of the annual student conference. You will also be encouraged to grasp and apply the potential of ICT developments for the heritage sector.

Admissions Criteria:

Admission is by a variety of routes. Standard applicants will normally require at least a 2.2 Honours Degree (or international equivalent) in a related discipline. Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL) is also available. We will further consider admission to an appropriate point in a programme of study with credit on the basis of Accreditation for Prior Experiential Learning (APEL).

Educational Aims

The programme will develop your ability to:

- ❑ Appreciate the diversity of the international heritage sector, its locus in the wider cultural arena, and its broader social role and potential for economic regeneration.
- ❑ Recognise the interrelationships and interdependencies of natural and cultural heritage practices and concepts.
- ❑ Engage actively with a range of disciplinary perspectives relevant to cultural heritage principles and practice.
- ❑ Understand and apply key management concepts in relation to cultural heritage organisations, heritage sites and the historic environment.

- ❑ Analyse and evaluate the context and development of cultural heritage policy at an international, national and regional level.
- ❑ Develop a critical awareness of alternative interpretations and uses of the past.
- ❑ Demonstrate high levels of professional excellence through the pursuit of practical work and related theory at an advanced level.

In addition, the programme will stimulate:

- ❑ A creative and enquiring approach which draws on independent judgement and critical awareness.
- ❑ A high level of communication skills relevant to a range of audiences, client groups and industry professionals.
- ❑ An ability to apply theory to the assessment, negotiation and resolution of real-life problems and issues.
- ❑ A reflective and committed attitude to continuing professional development.

Learning Outcomes

You will obtain a knowledge and understanding of:

- ❑ The key organising concepts, principles and theories relevant to the study of heritage
- ❑ The main contributory disciplines in the field of heritage studies
- ❑ The current debates which surround the alternative interpretations and uses of the past, including the concept of heritage as a cultural construct.
- ❑ The importance of evidence-based policy development in the cultural heritage sector.
- ❑ The background themes which can be applied to management decisions in the cultural heritage sector.
- ❑ Issues of communication and interpretation as they relate to a variety of audiences, including an awareness of the potential of new technologies.

You will acquire and develop the ‘thinking’ skills which will enable you to:

- ❑ Relate theory to the assessment, negotiation and resolution of real-life problem and issues within the cultural heritage sector.
- ❑ Analyse and evaluate challenging policy and management issues in depth.
- ❑ Manage the creative process in self and others; analysis, synthesis and critical appraisal; learning through reflection on practice and experience.
- ❑ Solve problems and take decisions in a heritage context: establishing criteria; deploying appropriate decision-making techniques; evaluating objectives; the ability to implement and review decisions.
- ❑ Perform effectively in a group environment, including the ability to recognise and utilise individuals’ contribution in group processes.
- ❑ Engage creatively with a range of appropriate research instruments and techniques of enquiry.

You will acquire and develop the practical skills which will enable you to:

- ❑ Communicate effectively with a wide range of audiences, client groups and industry professionals.
- ❑ Deal with complex professional and ethical issues and make appropriate informed judgements.
- ❑ Practice in a range of unpredictable professional level contexts.

- ❑ Act independently in planning, executing and communicating a significant project of research investigation
- ❑ Take a self-directed approach to the need for life-long learning as a reflective practitioner and professional

You will acquire and develop the following key life skills:

- ❑ Critical thinking and problem solving
- ❑ Cognitive thinking and problem solving autonomous learning style and orientation to learning
- ❑ Planning, monitoring, reviewing and evaluating own learning and personal development
- ❑ Self-marketing and presentational skills
- ❑ Time management (organising and planning work)
- ❑ Independent working
- ❑ Information retrieval skills
- ❑ Group working
- ❑ ITC skills

Teaching Learning and Assessment Methods

The curriculum is designed to help you become an independent learner who is able on graduation to take an active role in developing and implementing heritage policy and practice.

As you progress through the programme you will be encouraged to: i) deepen your knowledge, understanding and critical faculties; ii) develop your intellectual skills, while building you capacity for reflexive professional practice; iii) gain a high level of analytical and professional competence to enable continued self-directed learning.

To help you achieve these goals, a wide range of teaching, learning and assessment methods have been built into modules at each stage of the programme. Learning is very much student-centred. All modules involve active student participation and engagement, through various practical exercises and student-led seminars.

The staff bring particular research expertise in a number of key areas (including but not limited to: identity, landscape, archaeology, the historic environment). The programme also has strong links to professional practice. Guest speakers, site visits and real-life case studies play an important role throughout the course.

A high premium is also placed on practical research and IT skills, and you will benefit from teaching with is based on staff's own research expertise.

Exam-based assessments have a fairly limited role on the programme. In most cases you will have a chance to demonstrate your skills and knowledge through coursework reports, presentations, real-life case scenarios, individual and group projects and portfolios.

Pathways, Modules and Credits

The balance of core modules and options throughout the programme is intended to allow flexibility and student choice, while ensuring a comprehensive grasp of essential knowledge and skills. The availability of electives, whose range will expand as the programme develops over time, is designed to offer students the opportunity to develop their interests from their first semester onwards. Options may be 'paired' to create a specialist thematic cluster – for example, in history and heritage or audience communication & ICT.

Students will be asked to choose their general Option Choices from the following modules:

- ❑ The Archaeological Resource: Holistic Approaches
- ❑ Collections Management
- ❑ History, Memory and Identity
- ❑ The Voice of the Past: Oral History Theory and Practice
- ❑ Digital Media and Application of Digital Resources
- ❑ Scotland in Statistics
- ❑ Expressing Heritage through the Arts

The programme was initially offered on a **full and part-time** basis for the first time in 2005/06. The aim is also to introduce the option of an increased distance learning element as the programme develops.

The University's semester system splits the academic year into two parts. Semester A and semester B are both approximately 15 weeks long.

Exit routes are included throughout the programme allowing students to choose the level that they wish to attain. Students who withdraw during the academic year can be credited with a recognised qualification.

- ❑ The *Postgraduate Certificate in Cultural Heritage Studies* is awarded for a minimum of 60 credits – 600 hours student learning.
- ❑ The *Postgraduate Diploma in Cultural Heritage Studies* is awarded for a minimum of 120 credits – 1200 hours student learning.
- ❑ The *Masters in Cultural Heritage Studies* is awarded for a minimum of 180 credits – 1800 hours student learning.

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