

Case Study: Who are art history students and how can we remove barriers?

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THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art

History of Art at the University of Edinburgh



Friendly faces from
History of Art in ECA's
Sculpture Courtyard

- One of the largest Art History departments in the UK
- Located in a capital city
- Scottish Degree: 4 years, interdisciplinary, joint degrees offered
- Recruitment: SEU, RUK and OUS

Diversity and Relevance

- Early medieval to contemporary art
- Specialists in Western, East Asian, Southeast Asian, Islamic art
- Curatorship and Museum Studies
- Work placement courses on a large scale

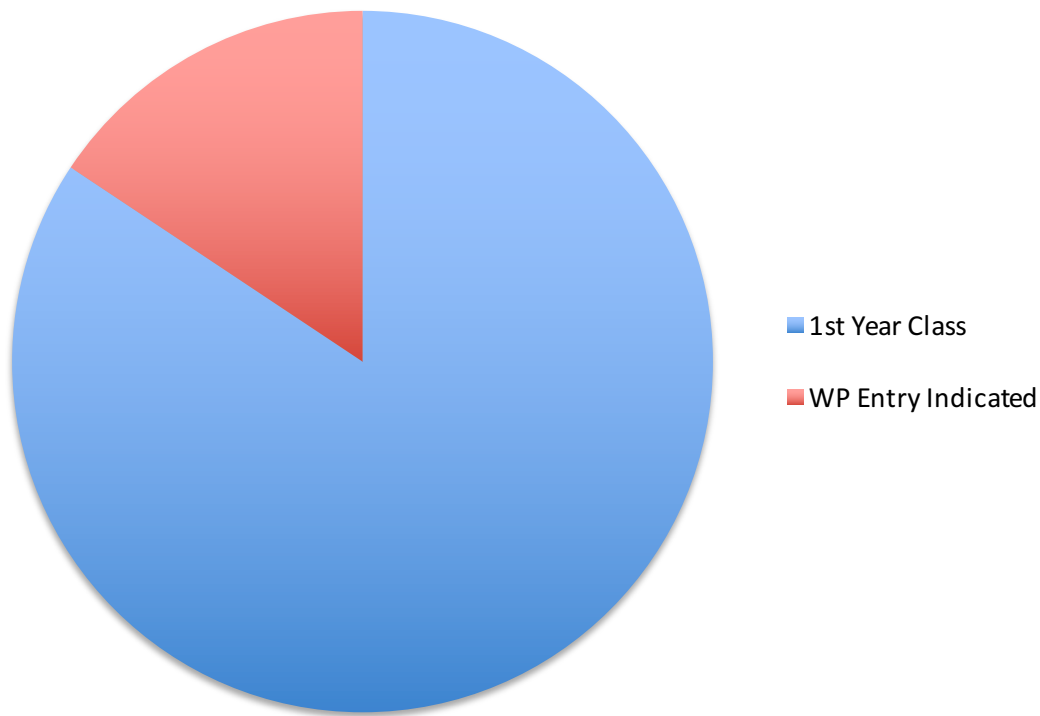
History of Art at University of Edinburgh

- Uniquely positioned within the Edinburgh College of Art
- Close ties to the Moray House School of Education

Hunter Building, ECA



The Devil in the Details



- About 18.6% of HoA students at WP Entry-Indicated schools
- About 30% of Students in comparable humanities subjects come from WP-indicated schools

WP Development

- 2013-14: Post of Widening Participation coordinator created (Dr Jill Burke)
- Spring 2014: Postdoctoral Assistant (Dr Emily Goetsch) brought on to deliver Early Years Classes, Kickstart sessions and LEAPS sessions; AAH-funded summer camp...
- September 2014: Introduction of undergraduate student Widening Participation Coordinators
- Spring 2015: PTAS Grant Project

Dear Obama, art history can earn you megabucks. But so what?

The US president has apologised to an art historian for saying her career choice isn't lucrative. But once you raise the issue of money, the deeper value of culture gets left behind



📷 Culturally rich ... Obama presents American contemporary artist Jasper Johns with the Medal of Freedom in 2011. Photograph: AP

Bigger Problem: Deep cultural prejudices and misconceptions

History of art: it's not just a subject for 'posh girls', say teachers

A campaign is under way to give more students access to Princess Kate's favourite subject



📷 'It's like learning how to analyse your own culture': art history students at Godalming college study Picasso's Guernica. Photograph: Graham Turner for the Guardian

Perception that Art History is impractical and doesn't provide employable skills

Students pursue other subjects that they perceive as more lucrative

Employers hire students from other disciplines and History of Art students don't find themselves in different types of roles

How can we break this cycle?

Research and Curricular Development.

Research Objectives:

- Find out *what students are getting* from their degrees in History of Art
- Find out *what they want* from their degrees in History of Art
- Find out *what employers want* from graduates
- Find out *how other departments/institutions have helped* students develop both professionally and academically

Main Research Tactics

- Interviews with institutions
- Surveys for students
- Student-led focus groups
- Collaboration with other Departments at Edinburgh (Moray House, Music, Biology, Fine Art, Widening Participation Team)
- Contact other universities and professional organisations



grassmarket
community project



Forrester
High School

Artlink creative thinking
positive solutions

Pre-Honours Survey Summary

- Q1: I am interested in taking a work placement course in the future.: **3.71**
- Q2: I would be interested in being involved in outreach programmes related to history of art.: **2.86**
- Q3: I am interested in learning about contemporary issues and concerns within HoA: **3.57**
- Q4: I feel that I know a lot about the job opportunities that come with a degree in HofA: **2.5**
- Q5: I am interested in working with students from other departments and schools: **3.93**
- Q6: I am interested in working within local communities: e.g.schools, retirement homes, etc.: **3.32**
- Q7: I am interested in taking a course in which speakers from different areas of the art world shared experiences.: **3.86**
- Q8: There are specific skills that I want to gain outside of the classroom which would benefit my CV and knowledge of the discipline.: **4.07**

Honours Survey Summary

- Q1: I am interested in taking a work placement course in the future.: **3.87**
- Q2: I would be interested in being involved in outreach programmes related to history of art.: **3.78**
- Q3: I am interested in learning about contemporary issues and concerns within HoA: **4.08**
- Q4: I feel that I know a lot about the job opportunities that come with a degree in HofA: **2.65**
- Q5: I am interested in working with students from other departments and schools: **3.75**
- Q6: I am interested in working within local communities: e.g.schools, retirement homes, etc.: **3.61**
- Q7: I am interested in taking a course in which speakers from different areas of the art world shared experiences.: **4.30**
- Q8: There are specific skills that I want to gain outside of the classroom which would benefit my CV and knowledge of the discipline.: **4.39**



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
School of GeoSciences

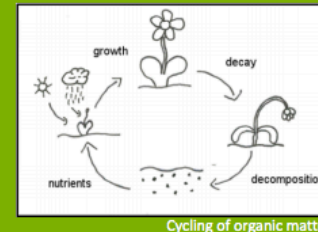
GeoScience Outreach Course Student Project Summary 2013-14

Nothing goes to waste in nature!

Organic matter cycling at Harmeny School, Balerno
Linda Gowans, Sophie Lawson and the Kestrels

Background

The Earth system is full of cycles – a strong contrast to the often linear product pathways in our society. The organic matter cycle is one of them, it is easy to grasp with lots of potential for hands-on science and outdoor learning!



WASTE BEAR
SYSTEM GARDEN HORSE
PRIMARY NATURAL SCHOOL OWL DENSITY GARDEN HELP HANDS
IRON SCHOOLS NATURAL SCOTLANDS FESTIVAL EXPLORE COMETS POWER
INTERACT METEORITE MAKING HANDMADE WEATHERS

Resources from Biology Department

Music in the Community

Students taking this optional course are able to broaden their musical knowledge and skills while experiencing, hands-on, the role music can play in a variety of learning and therapeutic situations.

Music in the Community is a long-established optional Honours course within The Reid School of Music at Edinburgh College of Art (ECA).

Led by the award-winning Programme Director, Dee Isaacs, the course has been very successful in responding to community needs, particularly in educational and healthcare settings.

Students taking this optional course - and, in particular, working with local schools - foster good working relationships with teachers and are able to broaden their musical knowledge and skills while experiencing, hands-on, the role music can play in a variety of learning and therapeutic situations, such as in the development of language and literacy skills within primary schools.



Dee Isaacs and students talk about Music in the Community at ECA

Results

- Proposed new course: Art History in the Community
- Amendments to existing Work Placement Courses—new placements, assessments and approaches
- Connections to other departments and institutions
- Further Widening Participation work

What does the future hold?

- Changes to the curriculum to be introduced for 2017-18 academic year
- Further connections with other universities, institutions and departments
- Potential publications, seminars and events
- More WP work and collaboration in Scotland
- Hopefully a greater variety of opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds

Questions



Thank you!

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