



National College of Art and Design
A Recognised College of University College Dublin

RESEARCH METHODS MODULE DESCRIPTOR

Credits	10	Programme	MA Design History and Material Culture
Level	9	School	Visual Culture
		Module Team	Postgraduate Coordinators – Design, Education, Fine Art, Visual Culture Head of Academic Affairs
Semester	1	Module Coordinator	Dr Anna Moran

OBJECTIVES OF MODULE

This module provides in its first part (Weeks 1-6) a generic introduction to a range of core research methods in the creative and visual arts for all masters’ students in NCAD and for PhD entrants. It aims to assist you in the conception, development, documentation, delivery and reporting of both your major creative projects and your dissertation activity. While the emphasis is on providing a useful toolkit of research methods and set of exemplars with application to both your practice and critical work, the module also addresses a broader set of concerns with the distinctive character of research in the visual arts. We explore how critical theory and studio and field practice might best interact within the visual arts, and how scholarship aligns with professional reflective analysis and creative impulse. We seek to enable you to more effectively plan, contextualise and report upon your individual studio or library based projects. The approach taken is an interdisciplinary one with students exposed to a range of different research approaches adopted within the visual arts and indeed across the broader field of the arts, humanities, social and natural sciences.

The second part of the module (Weeks 7-12) will address the specific research methods given priority within the School of Visual Culture and the MA Design History and Material Culture. The primary aims of this part of the module are to develop shared understanding of established research strategies and writing conventions pertaining to critical and historical research in the areas of Design History and Material Culture. Attention will be given to accepted approaches to writing, framing research and interviewing. Over the weeks, module participants will be able to test out preliminary research proposals and reflect on various research frameworks, developing their ideas with the help of staff and peer critique.

NB: This is also a core module for students enrolled in the structured PhD who follow the core programme weeks 1-6 then dedicated PhD methods provision weeks 7-11.

What will I learn?

On successful completion of this module students will:

1. Have a basic understanding of the challenges involved in developing a distinctive set of research methodologies for the visual arts, including practice based approaches.

2. Be aware of some of the major approaches adopted in the development of a research tradition within the visual arts and how these relate to broader currents of research practice in other knowledge fields.
3. Have engaged with a series of examples of research practice where advanced students have sought to provide a critical context for their studio or field practice.
4. Be aware of the forms of documentation and reflective analysis employed to assist in the task of reporting and evaluating work undertaken.
5. Be able to plan their master's dissertation and/or major studio project to meet the requirements of university level graduate work.

How will I learn?

	HRS
Lectures	10 hours
Seminar	0
Specified Learning Activities	90
Autonomous Student Learning	100
Total Workload	200

How will I be assessed?

	% of Final Module Grade	Timing
<p>ASSESSMENT TASK 1</p> <p>On the basis of an identified research topic agreed with your tutor produce an annotated bibliography (of at least 10 items) which you have consulted and which you might draw upon to address your research topic. Due 2 Nov 2015</p>	30%	2.11.15
<p>ASSESSMENT TASK 2</p> <p>Write a research proposal of 2,500 words approx for your proposed dissertation. Due 10am, 18 Jan 2015. Your proposal must detail the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The central research questions you aim to address — The sources you intend to use — The methods you plan to employ, including any theories you wish to apply. — An understanding of the existing secondary literature and gaps within it — A preliminary chapter plan. <p>Please use the following headings in your research proposal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Title 2. Abstract 3. Key Primary Sources 4. Methodology 5. Literature Review 6. Preliminary Chapter Plan [not included in word count] 7. Bibliography [not included in word count] 	70%	18/12/2015

What happens if I fail?

Resit Opportunities

End of Semester Exam

Remediation

If you fail this module you may repeat, resit, or substitute where permissible

Am I eligible to take this module?

Pre-Requisite:

Required :

Co-Requisite:

Incompatibles: n/a

Prior Learning

Requirements:

Excluded:

Recommended: Should be prepared to read extensively and participate fully in all course activities including visits

When and where is this module offered?

Timetabling information is displayed only for guidance purposes, relates only to 2015/16 and is subject to change.

WEEKS 1-5: Harry Clarke Lecture Theatre, 9.30 – 10.30 am, each Monday (excepting Bank Holiday),

WEEKS 7-11: HC 203, 9.30-10.30, Mondays.

WEEK 12: Harry Clarke Lecture Theatre.

RESEARCHER'S TOOL KIT:

- Concise Oxford English Dictionary, Oxford: Oxford UP
- Roget's Thesaurus
- Raymond Williams; *Key Words: a dictionary of culture and society*. This is not a neutral review of meanings. It is an exploration of the vocabulary of a crucial area of social and cultural discussion, which has been inherited within precise historical and social conditions and which has to be made at once conscious and critical – subject to change as well as to continuity. (Raymond Williams, 1976)
- NCAD Postgraduate Student Handbook (including Style Sheet for Written Work); (http://46.22.133.24/files/download/Postgraduate_Student_Handbook_2014-2015.pdf)

For further details on the content of your module and teaching arrangements, consult your course handout