

# An Introduction to Research Methods

## PGVC1001

### MODULE DESCRIPTOR

<b>ECTS credits<sup>1</sup></b>	5	<b>Programme</b>	MA/MFA Art in the Contemporary World MA Design History & Material Culture MA Communication Design MA Design for Body & Environment MA Interaction Design MA Product Design MA Service Design MSc Medical Device Design MFA Fine Art
<b>NQF level</b>	9	<b>School</b>	Visual Culture, in association with Design, Education, Fine Art
<b>Stage</b>	1	<b>Module Co-ordinator</b>	Dr Francis Halsall
<b>Trimester</b>	1	<b>Module Team</b>	School of Design, School of Education, School of Fine Art and School of Visual Culture staff
<b>Contact</b>	Dr Francis Halsall: halsallf@staff.ncad.ie		

#### Introduction

This module has been designed to provide an introduction to the kinds of critical understanding of practice which are required for successful postgraduate study. It combines an opportunity for a wide range of postgraduate students from different disciplinary fields to understand common and topical matters of concern with opportunities for specialist and disciplinary-focused discussion and analysis.

It is also designed to introduce students to the kind of ethical, practical and conceptual issues which arise when scoping, conducting and deploying postgraduate research.

This module is organised in two phases:

#### **Phase 1:** weeks 1 to 6

In the first phase, students participate in a series of classes which combine lecture content and student discussion. In each class, at least two members of staff – with different disciplinary interests – reflect on different approaches to and perspectives on the matter in hand.

The content of these classes focuses on pressing issues in art, design, education and visual culture research today. The series is underscored by some broad ethical issues which are raised to encourage students to reflect on the choices that they will be making in the course of their postgraduate study regarding, for instance, the use of data; participation and collaboration; approaches to dissemination; originality.

<sup>1</sup> European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, where 60 ECTS credits equate to the workload of a full-time academic year

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Typical content in the first phase will be as follows: consent and participation; concepts of the experimentation in the arts, education and in science; the development of a methodology; the purpose of theory in the context of art, design and education; intellectual rights, etc.

Students will be required to prepare for these classes in advance (typically, by reading a key text or analysing some primary material). Classes will provide opportunities for discussion and student interaction.

**Phase 2: weeks 7 to 15**

In the second phase, students will participate in small group classes which will focus on particular approaches to research and dissemination. These may relate to particular programmes or disciplinary needs. For further detail see the module appendices attached.

The assessment task will relate to both phases of the module but, being conducted during or after the second phase, is outlined in the appendices attached.

The aims of this module are to:

- Support the student in understanding key research concepts, approaches and vocabularies in their field of practice.
- Provide an opportunity for students to share perspectives and understanding from different programmes and/or disciplinary fields.
- Support the design of research projects in later phases of study.

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**What will I learn?**

On successful completion of this module students will:

- Understand how to PLAN - namely structure and organise a complex research project.
- Understand how to APPLY concepts and critical thinking which have been developed by other researchers to their own projects, i.e. understand research paradigms and practices in their field of study as well as in adjacent fields of art and design.
- Understand key vocabularies and concepts to COMMUNICATE their practice as researchers.

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**How will I learn?**

Learning tool	Hours
Lectures	6
Seminars	6 (6 x 1 hour)
Specified Learning Activities	48
Autonomous Student Learning	40
Total Workload	100

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**What learning supports are provided?**

Learning will be supported through lectures, lecture notes, seminars, suggested readings appropriate to your discipline, tutorials, field-trips as appropriate.

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### How will I be assessed?

The assessment tasks for this module are described in Appendices 1 to 9 and are tailored to the research needs and modes of articulation particular to the student's discipline and/or programme of study. For PhD students, the particular lecture/seminar series followed in weeks 7 to 15 will be agreed with supervisors and notified to both the Module Coordinator and the relevant MA Coordinator.

### What happens if I fail?

#### Resit Opportunities

Resit opportunities will be provided during or at the end of Trimester 2 to students who do not complete all assessments. An appropriate timeframe and assessment task (enabling the student to demonstrate achievement of the outstanding learning outcomes) will be set by the MA Programme coordinator in consultation with the Module Coordinator.

### Am I eligible to take this module?

#### Module Requisites and Incompatibles

<b>Pre-requisites</b>	None
<b>Co-requisites</b>	None
<b>Incompatibles</b>	None
<b>Prior learning</b>	Where a student can demonstrate that they have achieved at least 80% of the learning outcomes of this module, by academic certified achievement, or through quantifiable and documented experience, they can apply to the School for that prior learning to be recognised. Applications must be received prior to the commencement of delivery of the module.
<b>Recommended</b>	None

### When and where is this module offered?

Autumn Trimester	<u>Weeks 1-6</u> : 9:30am Monday mornings in Harry Clarke Lecture Theatre for first 6 weeks. <u>Weeks 7-15</u> : Times & venues will be notified through MA coordinators.
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### How will I have the chance to evaluate the module?

It is important to NCAD that students inform the development of teaching and learning at NCAD. We encourage all students to communicate their concerns and their observations about their study to members of staff so that any changes can be made in a timely manner.

About two-thirds of the way through the trimester, a student forum will be convened to gather students' comments about their study and the delivery of the programme. In addition, at the end of Trimester 2, students have the opportunity to complete an online evaluation of their study and experience at NCAD. These evaluation events are important to current and future students, to ensure we can enhance the delivery of programmes at NCAD.

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In addition, you are invited to discuss your experience on the module with your lecturers at any point during the year. You can also relay your comments to the class student representative who will communicate your comments to the staff.

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**For further details on the content of your module and teaching arrangements consult the Appendix Particular to your Programme and your Programme Handbook**