

An Introduction to Research Methods: APPENDIX 4

MA Design History and Material Culture

Introduction

The second half of this module develops from the general discussion in the 'common' half of the Research Methods module and considers how to develop a research project particularly related to the themes and expectations of *Design History and Material Culture*.

This part of the module 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 Visual and Material Culture studies and Design History. In placing a focus on forms of rhetoric, the second phase of this unit will consider the ways in which ideas and arguments are constructed and evidence is deployed. This will complement classes in the first phase which are more concerned with research methods.

How will I learn?

Students will develop a critical understanding of different approaches to writing about design from promotional writing to forms of critical theory in a series of seminars based on reading key texts and by participation in crits. These classes will develop analytical skills required for close critical reading. Students will also be encouraged to test different modes of writing by means of practice in two or more practical workshops.

How will I be assessed?

Students will present two short texts for peer assessment in crits. They may include a 400 word lexicographic text reflecting on a current 'keyword' in design writing and a 800 word design polemic. Participating students will be required to read and comment on the work of other students in the crit. The tutor will then assess the work against published criteria, giving formative feedback.

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