

Course Code:

PCRS105

Session:

2017/18

1. Course Title:

Core Research Skills: Design Process Journal

2. Date of Production/Revision:

April 2015

3. Level:

SCQF 11

4. Credits:

15

5. Lead School/Board of Studies:

School of Design

6. Course Contact:

Julia Maclean

7. Course Aims:

"...In essence, there are two ways of reporting a 'research' investigation:

- i. in the conventional logical format of an academic paper;*
- ii. in a chronological format as a narrative detailing the research journey..."*¹

The Design Process Journal course responds to the latter point and allows students to develop methods to systematically capture and articulate their individual design process as it evolves. Drawing upon a range of research and visualisation methods, the course supports students in terms of self-awareness and reflective learning, as well as analytical and presentation skills.

Most creative practitioners keep records of their process, usually in the form of sketch-books, drawings, notebooks, prototypes and suchlike. This aspect tends to be unsystematic, with much of the formative work (and thinking) often discarded. The recording tends to focus on 'significant' developments, leaving ephemeral elements, and those regarded as 'obvious' or mundane largely undocumented. To paraphrase Wittgenstein, *it is the aspect of things that are most important to us*

which are hidden because of their SIMPLICITY and FAMILIARITY.

In terms of understanding, informing and articulating practice, this approach is a problematic one. Incomplete and selective evidence leads to superficial understanding, and in recalling these early stages from memory, practitioners are more likely to rationalise and formalise their process – tidying-up aspects deemed ‘messy’ or ‘irrelevant’.

At the core of the Design Process Journal course is the Log described by students as a ‘personal archive’ or ‘sponge’ for their ideas, - or even as ‘Harry Potter’s pensieve’, where memories are stored - this is a personal, detailed account of creative activity. At times messy or incoherent, the Log reflects progress for each student. The final journal component forms a visual narrative, evidencing this developmental work in a more refined and edited form.

The aims of the course are to:

- Provide students with a variety of core research tools that are equally useful across a range of fields of postgraduate study
- Facilitate cross-disciplinary thought and practical connections, by bringing together students on different programmes of study
- Enable students to conduct and manage their own self contained research projects
- Interrogate the relationships between forms of research and modes of practice

1. Gillham, B and McGilp, H (2007) Recording the Creative Process: An Empirical Basis for Practice- Integrated Research in the Arts. *JADE*, 26.2

8. Intended Learning Outcomes of Course:

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Use appropriate research resources and methods effectively
- Understand the principles underpinning research at postgraduate level
- Demonstrate understanding of the relationships between research and practice
- Organise and conduct research projects effectively

9. Indicative Content:

- Introducing research skills for postgraduate students
- Conceptualising a research question

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- Understanding research resources
- Finding and managing information
- Mapping the context
- Developing and managing a project of research
- Practice as research
- Disseminating research outcomes

10. Description of Summative Assessment:

No.	Assessment Method	Description of Assessment Method	Weight %	Submission week (assignments) or length (exam)
1	Design Process Log and Design Process Journal	Annotated portfolio of research sources, including a 500 word contextualising statement	100	End of stage 1

10.1 Please describe the Summative Assessment arrangements:

A professionally presented visual portfolio evidencing and explicating individual Design Process. The Design Process Journal should provide a faithful account of how individual design outcomes are achieved which is clear to a notional outsider.

The Design Process Log should also be submitted alongside the Creative Process Journal. This will help to demonstrate the working methods of individuals.

Students on this course will be assessed on their ability to:

- Conceptualise and present research problems;
- Utilize appropriate methods and tools when conducting a research project;
- Situate their projects of research within a research context;
- Demonstrate a level of depth in the analysis of works, practitioners, ideas and/or debates appropriate to postgraduate level.

11. Formative Assessment:

One to one guidance and progress guidance during week 5 or 6.

11.1 Please describe the Formative Assessment arrangements:

One to one guidance and progress guidance during week 5 or 6.

12. Collaborative:

Yes

No

12.1 Teaching Institutions:

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13. Requirements of Entry:

None

14. Co-requisites:

Core Practice

15. Associated Programmes:

Available to students on a School of Design PGT programmes.

16. When Taught:

Stage 1

17. Timetable:

2 hours weekly over 10 weeks.

18. Available to Visiting Students:Yes No **19. Distance Learning:**Yes No **20. Placement:**Yes No **21. Learning and Teaching Methods:**

Method	Formal Contact Hours	Notional Learning Hours (Including formal contact hours)
Lecture		
Studio		
Seminar/Presentation	16	16
Tutorial	2	2
Workshop	1	1
Laboratory work		
Project work	1	1
Professional Practice		

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E-Learning / Distance Learning		
Placement		
Examination		
Essay		
Private Study		130
Other (please specify below)		
TOTAL	20	150

22. Description of “Other” Teaching and Learning Methods:

N/A

23. Additional Relevant Information:

This course introduces students taking taught postgraduate programmes at the Glasgow School of Art to a range of core research skills, from formulating research questions to methods of utilizing visual and written sources. The ways in which postgraduate study differs from undergraduate – and the significance of research to this distinction – will be explored. Central to the course is the importance of research for practitioners, and the notion of practice as a form of research.

24. Indicative Bibliography:

Gillham, B. (2000), Case Study Research Methods, London: Continuum
Moon, J. (1999), Learning Journals, London: Kogan Press

N.B. The primary source material is drawn from individual core practice.