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# RESEARCH DEGREE – EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Falmouth's expression of interest is an optional pre-application process where candidates who are interested in pursuing a research degree with us can introduce their ideas, and receive preliminary feedback, on a research proposal.

Candidates can choose to submit a formal application without completing an expression of interest first however, we strongly recommend prospective applicants take advantage of the opportunity to submit their proposal for preliminary review so that they may have the opportunity to strengthen their proposal, where relevant, ahead of the formal application.​

## Post Submission Review​

Once received, your completed expression of interest form is reviewed by the Postgraduate Research (PGR) team who nominate an appropriate academic member of staff as a point of contact to provide feedback on your proposal. ​

### Submission Deadline​​

An expression of interest can be submitted at any point during the academic year, and Falmouth has one intake point for the research degree, in September each year. Key application dates are available on the website on the how to apply page, and there will be a specific expression of interest deadline associated to each recruitment round.

**What to do next**

Please complete the form below and return to the PGR Team via email: pgr@falmouth.ac.uk There is guidance on how to structure your proposal at the end of this document.

**Surname: Forename(s):**

**1. Type of degree that you intend to complete**

|  | PhD - Text-based |
| --- | --- |
|  | PhD - Practice-based |

**2. Intended mode of study**

|  | Full-time |
| --- | --- |
|  | Part-time |

**3. Alignment to Falmouth Research Programme(s)**

Please indicate which of the Falmouth Research Programmes you see your research aligning to, and this can be more than one programme.More information on our programmes is available on our website under [Research Programmes](https://www.falmouth.ac.uk/research/programmes):

**4. Funding**

Please indicate how you plan to fund your Research Degree study. More information is available on the [Fund your PhD](https://www.falmouth.ac.uk/study/student-funding/fund-your-research-degree) pages of the website.

**5. Outline of proposed research**

The expression of interest is a summary of your proposed research project. Please try to structure your proposal into the following sections (this should not exceed a total of 1000 words):

| Proposed title of your research project: |
| --- |
| Proposed research question: |
| Subject area, aims, objectives of your proposed research: |
| Historical, Contemporary and Theoretical Contexts of your proposed research project: |
| Methodology (possible methods and methodology relevant to your research project): |
| Prediction of the form of the final presentation of your thesis: |
| Ethical dimensions of the research (are there any ethical considerations that need to be taken into account?): |

**5b. Indicative Bibliography** (max. one side of A4, and can be attached separately)

**6 Supplementary Evidence** (please include URLs such as websites, and videos, as appropriate

**7 Academic Qualifications**

Please state your higher education and professional qualifications in the table below, listing the most recent ones first. If you do not know the result of a course you are currently taking, please indicate when you expect to know the result and what result you are expecting to attain.

| **Institution / awarding body** | **Title of course** | **Main subject(s)** | **Result** | **Date(s)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**8. Other relevant experience**

You may provide here details of any publications, exhibitions, teaching, research or other professional experience that you consider to be directly relevant to your application.

**Guide to Research Proposal Structure**

The schematic outline below is a guide to the headings you need to address in your proposal. Some, like the section on theoretical context, may be open to a very wide range of approaches and interpretations and may not – especially in a mainly theoretical based proposal – be really distinguished from the historical or contemporary context. Others, like the survey of the contemporary context, are essential to all submissions.

Your research proposal should be **no more than 1000 words maximum** (not including your bibliography).

**Title:** This should express the main area of investigation, implying its questions and potential argument or standpoint. While being a working title, which will inevitably change over time, it is important that you are as specific and precise as possible. The title should be brief, and reflect the main question of the project. You should avoid over-long or technical words and phrases such as ‘an investigation into…’

**Subject Area, Aims and Objectives:** Define briefly your subject and the main concerns of the investigation, including a set of aims and objectives that will guide your research. If your proposal is primarily practice based, you should also use this section to describe your vision of your practice and the way in which you work in your practice on your preoccupations and concerns. It is worth thinking hard about this section, as it will form the basis of your study for the next few years (though it will inevitably evolve as you make progress). After defining your subject, you might find it helpful to think about the main concerns of the project as questions you are asking yourself, to which you hope to find the answer. The aims and objectives are important because they, in a sense, declare the criteria for your investigation, against which the success or failure of your project can be assessed. If you find it difficult to articulate your aims and objectives you might find it helpful to think of your aim as the most significant questions or problems you hope to tackle. Your objectives are the steps by which you will meet this aim. Your proposal should normally have one or two aims, followed by a series of around 6objectives. The idea is that by the time you have met all your objectives, you should have achieved your aim.

**Historical Context:** There is no single history that suits all investigations but you should identify the various strands of history that relate to your particular research. It may be a history of ideas and concepts that have influenced the development of a particular area of art and design, the history of the medium or technology in which you work, or a particular part of the history of Art or Design.

**Contemporary Context:** As far as you are able, define the contemporary work that relates to your field of investigation. You must do this for the following reasons:

1. to demonstrate that you are aware of the field in which you are working.
2. to demonstrate that your proposed research will have distinct feature which will make it potentially original.
3. to form the basis of links with other research work to which you will contribute or on which you will build.

**Theoretical Context:** There is a great choice of options in this area; none of them exclusive. An element of theoretical context is important for every kind of project, though the degree of theoretical content will vary, particularly for practice-based work. You should be able to demonstrate the ways in which you evaluate your own work and that of others, and the sources you use to inform your evaluation. A theoretical context will help you avoid simply asserting a position and support you in the reflective approach that is needed for a research degree. Three different kinds of theoretical context are outlined below (but these are not exhaustive, and you may prefer a different model). They are defined with a bias towards a practice-based proposal.

If your proposal is entirely theoretical and critical, only the first and possibly the second might apply:

* Critical Theory – definition of the critical concepts and terms you will use in order to evaluate or critique your experimental work.
* Parallel Theory – definition of theoretical fields which may share concepts with your experimental work but there is no simple, direct relationship. This acknowledges that practice and theory are seen as distinct discourses.
* Projective or Generative Theory – theory that is used to define intention and guide the experimental work you will do.

**Methodology:** Your research method and approach will need to be defined in all cases but in practice-based areas of study, methodologies are less well established, so you may like to think about the following:

* try to describe the basic methods and procedures you will adopt in discovering and recording research information.
* if it is a practice-based proposal, how does the theory relate to the practical experimentation?
* what is the theory for?
* what process of experimentation will you use?
* how will you record what you do and keep track of what you have done?

**Ethical Dimensions of the Research**: If you consider there are ethical considerations that need to be taken into account then you should address them briefly now. There is a comprehensive ethical approval process which is intended to safeguard researchers, participants and others on whom the proposed research might impact, directly or indirectly. If you are offered a place at Falmouth, then you will address any ethical issues formally when you apply to register your research proposal in your first year. In broad terms, the University expects all research to respect participants’ rights (commercial, intellectual, and civil, dignity (including privacy and confidentiality), safety and wellbeing.

**Work Plan:** Make a prediction of the major stages of the work (probably not more than 5) and the minor subdivisions (if appropriate). Take care if aspects of the research will run concurrently.

**Prediction of the Form of the Final Presentation:** Think about the form of the final presentation, for example:

-will it be a bound book with a CD-ROM or Internet element?

-will it be a book with video tapes?

-will it be an exhibition, a catalogue and a written thesis?

-will it be a bound book with images?

-will this be a wholly written thesis?

**Indicative bibliography** (not included in the word count)

List the main reference works which you will use for your research (no more than 1page of A4). These may be films, paintings, TV programmes, curated collections or websites as well as books or journal articles. Citations must be consistent and adopt a recognised standard system, for example, Harvard (with or without footnotes) or Numeric.