

School of Art
Mdes / BA(hons) 3D Design and Craft

Level 6 – Research Framework Document - expandable template

See separate PDF on studentcentral: Notes and Guidance for writing your L6 Research Framework Document.

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Summary Sentence or Research Question:

How to utilise psychogeographic methods to address apathy among young people and encourage re engagement with their community.

Summary Statement: My project intends to address the prevalence of apathy among young people. The effects of apathy have been linked anxiety and depression. Research has shown that encouraging people to engage in group outdoor activities promoting mindfulness is a proven method of addressing these issues. I would like to build on this further by incorporating psychogeography and participatory design into my approach.

Psychogeography by my own definition is remapping an urbanised area; usually navigating in a way that is an alternative to the way that the city was designed to be behaved in.

I believe psychogeography would be a suitable lens in which to look through for solutions in addressing apathy as it encourages the participant to react directly to their surroundings and can be adapted to any location. It also stimulates reflection and is equally successful as a group or individual endeavour.

In addition, the subversive nature of psychogeography is a really exciting aspect to explore and I hope to equally advocate this for the participants. I hope that my project can be a reaction to a generation addicted to social media. The access to platforms in which to express opinions and ideas is immeasurably vast; like never seen before. Yet it is striking that people have a megaphone but nothing to say. What is important to people? What have they noticed? What would they change? These are difficult questions to answer when people are encouraged to be distracted and switch off from their surroundings. I want to incorporate technology so that the ideals of psychogeography are packaged in an interface that is familiar or expected by the participants.

The importance of wellbeing and mindfulness also lends itself well to incorporating a participatory dimension. I want to provide a toolkit for the participant to build upon, adapt and ultimately build for themselves; encouraging them to be present and focus on what is happening in the moment.

I have chosen to use Brighton as my location to focus my research as it is easily accessible and has a large community of students who do not identify Brighton as “home” leading to a decreased interest in local issues.

Key Words:

1. Site specific
2. Psychogeography
3. Community
4. Printing
5. Tools
6. Hand Held
7. Portable
8. Participatory
9. Wood
10. Subversive

Research Methods: Visual Research

What: I will research existing hand held or portable tools for cartography or printing.

How: I will record this through a series of photographs and collating a file containing relevant secondary images. I will also research products in a design context like ones featured in Clerkenwell Design Week (May 2017) Furthermore, I will identify the specific functions of each printing tool and investigate how these functions are expressed in a broader sense than just printing. This will be recorded through sketches.

Why: This will be of benefit to my project as it will inform the logistics of the tools that I make; how my tools can be carried, stored, held, reused etc.

Contextual Research

What I will research current psychogeographic societies and their methods. I will also research into existing participatory design practices to see what kind of outcomes they produce under similar criterium.

How Practices that I have identified as having a strong aspect of participatory design include Assemble, Us creates, and Community 21. I will also attend Inspiral London Segment walks to meet ordinary people who engage with psychogeographic activities. I shall record my interactions with other participants as well as notes from the walk. These will be accompanied by a series of photographs and reflections.

Why To understand how people already interested in psychogeography express their ideas and how they perceive my interpretations. It will also be beneficial to find out how more design based participatory activities operate and if this would translate well into my project.

Social Research

What The social issues that I intend to address include apathy in society, a disconnect between people who actively attend council planning meetings vs the people it affects and the issue of co designing. There is a strong element of participation and co designing in my project meaning social research will be a direct consequence of my contextual and visual research too.

How I will be attending two discussions in the following weeks as part of Clerkenwell Design Week which include: "You're going to Leading the Way: Design in the Public Realm" (May 2017) "Sadie Morgan: Can Architects Have a Social Impact?" (May 2017) I will record the talks and write up notes. The other social research will be conducted through reading articles.

Why This will benefit my project as it will ground my project by showing the importance of a project like this in the local community.

Material and Technical Investigation: I plan to have a structured and thorough approach to my material and technical investigation. I will first identify the type of site specific making I will focus on; for example, taking plaster moulds in a suburban area. I will then conduct material experimentation to test practicality. For example, its suitability in different weather conditions, the weight of the material and whether it is suitable to be re used or if it would provide a "one time" application. I would then make maquettes to determine the most appropriate form for the intended function. Aspects that would be considered would include size and shape. I also intend to use technology to communicate theoretical context and instructions of how to use the product. Due to the nature of co design, the reflections of my technical investigations will be heavily influenced by how it is understood by the user and how they adapt the tools for themselves.

Identify potential professional contexts for your work: I hope that my work could go on to inform a post graduate research project in participatory design.

I also hope that I could use my project as a case study to demonstrate re engagement with the local community to potentially reapply this formula to other locations. For example, pitching to local councils.

3D Outcomes, Presentation & Display: I intend to produce a series of tools that can be used whilst outside as a way to remap their environment through making. I would like to make as many of these tools either with the materials from the site I am exploring or use these tools whilst on site themselves. At this point, I envisage this being demonstrated through an accompanying film.

Portfolio / Publication: I intend to produce a publication documenting the process of site specific making and participatory design.

Ethical considerations - If you answer YES to any of these questions then email Patrick IMMEDIATELY

Will you be asking anyone questions (interviews and or questionnaires)? **YES**

Will you ask people to test or physically evaluate your work for you? **YES**

Do you intend to run a workshop that involves a group of people? **YES**

Do you intend photographing, videoing or sound recording anyone? **YES**

Does your work involve children? **NO**

Brief outline of ethical considerations: Working with a group of individuals to assess the effectiveness of tools for site specific making.

BA(hons) Dissertation Title / MDes Essay Titles: Vernacular Architecture and Tents: From the Berber Black Tents to Housing Counter Culture.