

Programme Specification

MA by Research in Typography and Graphic Communication (full-time) PFTZTYPOGRHS

MA by Research in Typography and Graphic Communication (part-time) PPTZTYPOGRHS

For students entering in 2027/28

This document sets out key information about your Programme and forms part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

Awarding Institution	University of Reading
Teaching Institution	University of Reading
Length of Programme	MA by Research in Typography and Graphic Communication (full-time) - 12 months MA by Research in Typography and Graphic Communication (part-time) - 24 months
Accreditation	N/A
Programme Start Dates	September
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	N/A

Programme information and content

This programme aims to provide students who may be considering a higher degree by research in Typography and graphic with the knowledge and skills to pursue this goal. The programme is designed with the diverse audience that PhDs in typography tend to attract, in terms of prior educational trajectory, professional experience, and specificity of focus within the broader typography & graphic communication discipline. The programme therefore provides a broad historical and theoretical perspective, as well as specialist knowledge in particular areas such as printing and design history, and empirical and theoretical approaches to typography. The programme also aims to develop fluent, articulate, and reflective researchers with an independent approach to learning. The programme introduces methods relevant to either historical or theoretical approaches to the subject, and equips graduates with an understanding of how typographic discourse interacts with current practice, with explicit reference to global developments in typographic discourse and practice.

The guided topics of the seminars establish core knowledge, while the more freely selected topics in the Research Methods and the Self-directed Research Project foster independent working skills, a critical approach to the discipline, and a deeper engagement with primary and secondary sources. The Self-directed Research Project is designed around the structure of an actual PhD proposal, which enables students to develop the specific skills in discipline review, research question development, and project planning required for a swift transition to a higher degree by research.

Programme Learning Outcomes

-MA by Research in Typography and Graphic Communication (full-time)

During the course of the Programme, you will have the opportunity to develop a range of skills, knowledge and attributes (known as learning outcomes) For this programme, these are:

	Learning outcomes
1	Identify and engage critically with current discourse in typographic design.
2	Draw on broad historical and theoretical perspectives in selected areas of typographic design to formulate well-argued research questions.
3	Identify research methods appropriate for and relevant to their topic.
4	Critically evaluate competing interpretations, policies, and practices.
5	Identify, describe, organise, and interrogate primary sources and archival material relating to typographic design and production.
6	Connect discourse in related fields to research in typography and graphic communication.
7	Recognise the influence of different technologies on design, production, distribution, and evaluation of documents.
8	Articulate arguments clearly and effectively in writing, making judicious use of illustrations.

You will be expected to engage in learning activities to achieve these Programme learning outcomes. Assessment of your modules will reflect these learning outcomes and test how far you have met the requirements for your degree.

To pass the Programme, you will be required to meet the progression or accreditation and award criteria set out below.

Module information

The programme comprises 180 credits, allocated across a range of compulsory and optional modules as shown below. Compulsory modules are listed.

Compulsory modules

Module	Name	Credits	Level
TGMDIS	Dissertation	100	M
TGMRS	Discourse in Typeface Design	40	M
TGMSRP	Self-Directed Research Project	40	M

All modules are compulsory for this programme.

Part-time or flexible modular arrangements

The programme can be taken part-time over two years. In the first year of study, a student will normally be required to complete the modules TGMSRP and TGMRS. In the second year of study, students will complete the module TGMDIS. The programme may not be completed over more than two years.

Placement opportunities

N/A

Study abroad opportunities
N/A

Optional modules
N/A

Teaching and learning delivery
Teaching is by means of lectures and seminars, oral presentations and writing assignments, sessions with archival material, and selected workshops. Weekly seminars consider key concepts in typographic design, spanning the range of research and practice in which the Department is active. Seminars focus on discourse areas, key texts, original artefacts, and theoretical topics relating to typography and graphic communication. The structure of seminars combine more formal presentations with informal guided discussions, which encourage students to be reflective and apply critical thinking to each topic. Research methods sessions include lectures and discursive sessions on specific aspects of academic practice, scaffolding skills towards the full complement required for successful independent work at a dissertation level. They cover critical reading, evaluation, interrogation and interpretation of primary and secondary sources, the construction of arguments, clear writing techniques, and approaches to visual documentation. Seminars and research methods sessions make use of visual aids. These may be electronic resources or artefacts. Students are encouraged to explore both online and artefactual resources, and are provided with support for locating information in physical collections, online, and within the Department's Collections & Archives. Research project and dissertation assignments are supported more through small group discussions or individual feedback sessions, especially so as student work progresses. Students work closely with the Programme Director to identify subjects for their assignments, drawing on topics from the seminars, research briefings, and Collections sessions. Students share all core and research methods sessions with other postgraduates in the Department, and can participate in practical workshops that are relevant to their research areas. In addition to regular and visiting members of staff, PhD students, visiting lecturers and researchers contribute with sessions or lectures on specific topics. Elements of your programme will be delivered via digital technology. The scheduled teaching and learning activity hours and amount of technology enhanced learning activity for your programme will depend upon the precise combination of elements undertaken within modules. On average, the total overall study time will be 1800 hours with

360 contact hours. In addition, you will undertake some self-scheduled teaching and learning activities, designed by and/or involving staff, which give some flexibility for you to choose when to complete them. You will also be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module study hours including contact hours and the amount of independent study which a student is normally expected to undertake for a module is indicated in the relevant module description.

Accreditation details

N/A

Assessment

The programme will be assessed through a combination of written assignments, including coursework and a dissertation. Further information is contained in the individual module descriptions.

Progression

N/A

Classification

The University's taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:

Mark Interpretation

70 - 100% Distinction

60 - 69% Merit

50 - 59% Good standard (Pass)

Failing categories:

40 - 49% Work below threshold standard

0 - 39% Unsatisfactory Work

For Master's Degree

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Master's degree:

Award of a Master's degree

- (i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 180 credits
- (ii) a mark of 50% or more in at least 120 credits
- (iii) no credits with a mark below 40%
- (iv) a mark of 50% or more for the Dissertation

In addition to the threshold conditions for the award of a Master's degree, the following **further** conditions must be satisfied for a classification of Distinction or Merit:

Distinction

An overall weighted average of 70% or more over 180 credits

OR

an overall weighted average of 68% or more over 180 credits and marks of 70% in at least 90 credits

AND

Where the dissertation is included in the conditions for the award of a Master's degree, a mark of at least 60% in the dissertation

AND

No marks below 40%.

Merit

An overall weighted average of 60% or more over 180 credits

OR

an overall average of 58% or more over 180 credits and marks of 60% in at least 90 credits

AND

No marks below 40%.

For Postgraduate Diploma

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma:

Award of a Postgraduate Diploma

(i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 120 credits

(ii) a mark of 50% or more in at least 80 credits

(iii) not more than 20 credits with a mark below 40%

In addition to the threshold conditions for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma, the following further conditions must be satisfied for a classification of Distinction or Merit:

Distinction

An overall weighted average of 70% or more over 120 credits

OR

an overall weighted average of 68% or more over 120 credits and marks of 70% in at least 60 credits

AND

No marks below 40%.

Merit

An overall weighted average of 60% or more over 120 credits

OR

an overall average of 58% or more over 120 credits and marks of 60% in at least 60 credits

AND

No marks below 40%.

For Postgraduate Certificate

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate:

Award of a Postgraduate Certificate

(i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 60 credits

(ii) No credits with a mark below 40%

Details of the classification method is given in detail in the [Assessment Handbook](#) under:

- Section 19: Awards: Postgraduate Master's, Postgraduate Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate

Please note that there may be a specific version for your year of entry.

Additional costs of the programme

Students are expected to have their own laptops with the relevant software licenses for the assignments they are working on. Printing facilities are available in the Department, and printout expenses will be incurred.

A series of optional field trips may be offered, which may imply travel, accommodation, and subsistence costs. Field trips may range from evening or day trips to London for specific events like lectures and library visits, or trips to relevant conferences in the UK and abroad.

Costs are indicative and may vary according to optional modules chosen and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. Estimates were calculated in 2026.

Students may consider purchasing a laptop to help support their learning. Information on recommended device specifications can be found on the [DTS Student Hub](#).

For further information about your Programme please refer to the Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions, which are available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/module/>. The Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions do not form part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

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23 July 2026

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