

7.10.2025 – CRITICAL STUDIES & RESEARCH METHODS – ICA

From Experience to Research Area: Discovering Your Dissertation Focus

Course:

Name:

Date:

Identify a **research area** for your dissertation by reflecting on your **personal experiences, creative interests, and questions** that matter to you.

Personal Interests

“Interest Map”

Create a **mind map** with three branches:

1. **Personal experiences** - Things that have shaped how you see the world - *film, music, books, fashion, travel, identity, community, social issues, hobbies, struggles...*
2. **Creative practice / design interests** - What kinds of creative work or themes excite you - *typography, digital art, sustainability, AI, storytelling, character design, animation, webdesign, editorial design...*
3. **Questions / curiosities** - What puzzles or excites you about these areas? - *“How can design address loneliness?”...*

Personal Experiences:

Creative Practice Interests:

Questions or Curiosities:

Possible Research Area

Choose **two** areas from your map that seem most interesting or meaningful.

1. What draws you to this area personally or creatively?

2. Why might this area matter to others (society, culture, design, etc.)?

3. What would you like to find out or explore further?

Write a **working statement** of your potential research area - *"I am interested in how sustainable materials can communicate brand authenticity in packaging design."*

Research Area Statement: