

Norwich University of the Arts

Undergraduate Year 3

Research Report Guidelines 2024-25

For the BA3a/BSc3a unit you are required to produce a 5,000-word Research Report. The Research Report gives you the chance to explore an area of interest to you and your practice. It should build on the ideas you laid out in the Research Report Proposal you handed in as part of the BA2b/BSc2b unit.

Your report will:

1. Identify a problem or question as the main topic of your report
2. Where relevant, explain the link between your creative practice and chosen report topic
3. Use appropriate research methods (visual analysis, interviews, case studies, etc) to enable you to investigate your topic
4. Be analytical – evaluating and reflecting on evidence and research, and coming to a conclusion at the end
5. Be carefully structured with an introduction, chapters or sections and a conclusion
6. Be referenced correctly using Norwich University of the Arts Harvard referencing

These guidelines provide you with information on the four different styles of report you can choose from to submit, and detail how you should lay out your Research Report. If you have any questions about your Research Report or these guidelines, please contact your Course Tutor(s).

Types of Research Report

You will need to choose one of the Research Report styles below that is suitable for your topic and agree it with your tutor:

1. Extended Essay



The extended essay involves researching a theoretical or historical topic and considering contemporary social and cultural issues, in order to address an aspect of visual culture. If you choose this style, you will identify a research question that you will then attempt to answer through discussion and analysis of your research. Your research would usually be based around reading and understanding secondary and primary texts on your subject and, where appropriate, visual analysis.

The extended essay usually involves an academic writing style.

Topics could involve areas such as: fine art and post-colonial theory; contemporary film and narrative; globalisation and cultural identity; gender and practice; games and architecture.

This is a very text-based option, and your research will explore connections between theory, history, society and practice.

2. Industry report

The industry report involves investigating aspects of industry practices related to your area of study. You would choose a research question exploring an aspect of industry practice that interests you.

Your research will require an investigation into your chosen industry, and may include researching trade journals, financial reports, marketing data and industry statistics as well as books/journals related to your industry.



Your research might also include visits to particular businesses or locations relevant to your chosen industry, and/or interviews with people already working in the industry. You would analyse what you have learned from this primary research and include it in your report to enhance your argument.

Examples might include: a report considering viral advertising techniques; the ethics of the British textile industry; the homogenisation of the high street; sustainable fashion.

This style requires research into business and marketing information, as well as the history and development of the industry you are exploring, and takes an investigative, questioning and analytical approach. This style could also be presented as a business report or case study.

3. Technical report



A technical report uses experimentation to analyse processes, techniques and/or materials that you use in your studio practice. If you choose this style, you will identify a research question related to a particular process or technique, which you then try and answer through experimentation.

You will also need to research your chosen process or technique, to provide an overview and analysis of current and/or historical practice using the techniques or materials in question.

Your report will need to refer to your research into your chosen process and provide a rationale for your experiments.

Your report should document and analyse the results of your experimentation. The experiments need not all be successful in order to complete your report.

Examples might include: looking at natural dying methods; printing substrates; digital technologies; lighting techniques; casting techniques; sustainable materials.

This style enables you to conduct practical research rooted in your research into the process/technique, analyse and discuss your findings and present your conclusion.

4. Editorial

Involves writing an article suitable for a specific magazine, newspaper or journal. If you choose this style, you will identify a topic to form the basis of your research question, which you then explore in the article you write.

The article is accompanied by a supporting text that details your research on the subject chosen, and your rationale for the style and topic of the article for the publication you have chosen.



You can present your editorial as one chapter of your research report, using the other chapter(s) to discuss your research into your topic and why your choice of publication and style is effective.

The overall word count remains 5,000, with your article ideally being no longer than 2,000 words and the supporting text taking up the remainder of the word count. The article should, of course, be an appropriate length for the publication. The supporting text would be written in an academic style, including references and a full bibliography.

Example articles might be: review of London Design Week for Wallpaper; innovative spaces for wellbeing for BluePrint; profile of a VFX studio for 3D World.

This style enables you to experiment with writing in different voices on a topic of importance to you, bringing together your research into the topic as well as into different writing styles and means of communication.

Schedule and Submission

Please consult your course timetable for details of taught sessions related to your Research Report. You will be guided in your study through lectures, seminars and tutorials and these may be digital, hybrid or on campus. You will find final submission details for all Research Reports on the VLE.

How to lay out your Research Report

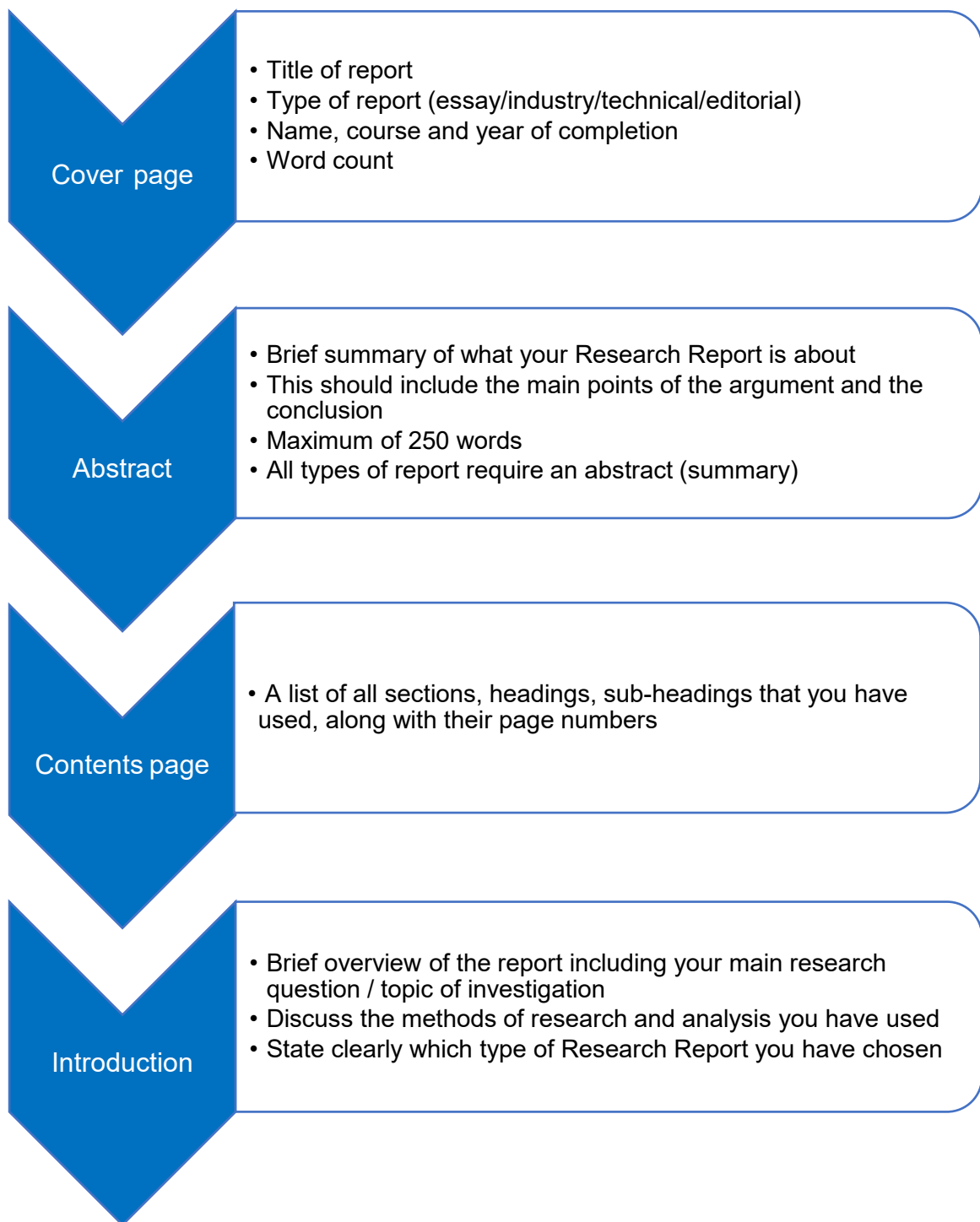


Chart continues on next page

Main sections/ chapters

- Chapters/sections are used to divide up your report - you choose how you want to do this
- The type of Research Report you are writing may help you decide which sections you need
- Use each section to discuss a particular aspect of your topic/investigation
- Usually three sections/chapters will be sufficient for a report of this size

Conclusion

- Summarise the issues you have discussed throughout the report
- Critically evaluate what you have discovered
- Make clear your own personal position/view on the topic (as a result of the analysis conducted in your report)

Appendix or Appendices

- Additional material that you would like to submit with your report but which does not belong in the main text, for example a sample questionnaire you used, or a transcript of an interview
- One document would be referred to as 'Appendix A'
- If you have more than one document continue to number them - B, C, D etc.
- Never include anything that you do not refer to in your main text

Bibliography

- List every source that you have used in creating your report
- List sources alphabetically by author's surname
- Include ALL sources, not just books and journals
- Use Harvard referencing

How to format your Research Report

1. Ensure line spacing is set to a minimum of 1.5 throughout the body of your text
2. Make sure you include page numbers (you can suppress the page number of the contents page if you wish but this is not essential)
3. All images should have a figure number e.g. 'Figure 1', 'Figure 2' and a caption that provides the author/creator, title and date of the work. Use italics for the *title* of the image only
4. Try to avoid using contractions e.g. 'can't', 'don't', instead use the full words e.g. 'cannot', 'do not'
5. Use inverted commas ' ' to show where you are directly reproducing the words/work of someone else. Where a quote is less than two lines, you can use inverted commas to include it within a paragraph, for example:

David Crystal (2008, p.82) argues that people should be able 'to adapt language to suit the demands of diverse settings'. This suggests that language can be flexible and alter for different situations and audiences.

If a quote is longer than two lines it is easier to read if you split it out and indent it from the rest of the text, for example:

According to Rojek:

It is an enormous paradox that democracy...cannot proceed without creating celebrities who stand above the common citizen and achieve veneration and god-like worship (Rojek, 2001, p.198).

This view suggests that democracy itself is responsible for the creation of celebrity culture.

6. Use three dots ... (called an ellipsis) to show where you have missed out a section of a quote (as in the example above)
7. If you need to insert your own text into a quote to ensure it makes grammatical sense you can do this by writing your words [in square brackets] to distinguish them from the rest of the quote. E.g. Booth (2003) explains 'it's simple and effective to use [colour] to make your work stand out'.
8. If a quote contains an error that is the author's and not yours, you can make this clear by adding [sic] after the error. E.g. 'They made there [sic] beds.'
9. Ensure correct Norwich University of the Arts Harvard referencing is used throughout your work – guidance can be found online: <https://library.norwichuni.ac.uk/get-started-with-referencing/>, via email library@norwichuni.ac.uk or by asking for help in the Library.

Ethics Checklist

If your research project involves human or animal participants, and / or sensitive subject areas, and / or personal or confidential data, and / or use of methodologies with the potential to induce physical or psychological stress you must complete the Ethics Checklist, which can be found on the intranet [here](#). You should complete the Ethics Checklist, please in consultation with your Unit Leader or Course Leader. This will help you to identify whether a project requires a formal application for ethics approval and receive support in planning your project appropriately. Further information can be found within the University's Code of Ethics,

Frequently asked questions

How do I calculate my word count?

The aim is to submit a 5,000-word report – but you can have a 10% variance, so the minimum you can submit is 4,500 words, and the maximum is 5,500 words. You should count everything from the start of your introduction to the end of your conclusion – this includes all quotations and in-text citations. You DO NOT count the contents page, abstract, image captions, your appendices or your bibliography.

Can I include the word 'I' in my report?

Yes – depending on your chosen report style, you may find you need to use different types of voice when writing your report. Traditionally academic work is written in the third person (he/she/they), however at Norwich University of the Arts you are encouraged to explore your own thoughts and opinions, especially in relation to your own practice, so you are encouraged to use the first person (I/me/my) in your writing where appropriate.

How do I submit my Research Report?

Your research report should be saved as one PDF file. You do not need to print any hard copies. Please remember to keep back-up copies of your work, for example saving copies on a hard drive or cloud-based storage. Detailed guidance on submitting your report is available from the VLE.

How many images should I use?

Images should be used in your work where they are relevant to a point you are trying to make in your text. You can include images wherever you think they are relevant to enhance your discussion. Do not include images that you never refer to in your text and ensure all your images have a figure number, and a caption.

What is plagiarism, and how can I avoid it?

Plagiarism is when you refer to a source, or quote from it, without referencing it correctly. This makes it seem like you are passing off the thoughts/ideas of other people as your own. The University takes plagiarism, academic misconduct and cheating, very seriously, and you can find more information about this in the Student Regulations and Procedures.

In your Research Report we expect you to make sure all your sources are referenced, so there are no sentences or paragraphs of text that are copied from books, the internet or other sources without an in-text citation and full reference in your bibliography. It's important to remember this includes images, stills and other visual sources as well as written text.

Even if you are not directly quoting word-for-word, you should still provide a reference to the source that you are drawing from. When taking notes be careful to write down the origin of your sources of research (i.e. page numbers, precise URL etc.) so that you don't forget where you got your information from and can reference it in full. Never copy and paste chunks of text from the internet into a Word document – this can easily lead to plagiarism if you forget to reference the source.

You may want to use generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (such as ChatGPT) to assist you with your academic research and writing. Please ensure you refer to the [Artificial Intelligence Guidance](#) to help you understand when it is appropriate to use AI within your written work.

Where can I get more help with Norwich University of the Arts Harvard referencing?

The Norwich University of the Arts Library website has loads more information on how to reference correctly, including a list of example layouts for the vast majority of source types you are likely to use: <https://library.norwichuni.ac.uk/get-started-with-referencing/>.

You can also ask in the Library for more help, or make an appointment with your Subject Librarian to talk about it in more depth. Email library@norwichuni.ac.uk

How many quotations should I use?

Quoting is when you reproduce the words of another author exactly in your work. You should only do this when you want to use the words of an author to reinforce a point you are making, or when you wish to make a counterargument to the point they are making. Where you have used direct quotations, these should take up no more than 750 words of your total report. Try to keep quotations reasonably short – more than four lines and it is probably too long.

How many references should I have in my bibliography?

There is no fixed number of references for a 5000-word report. However, do remember this is a substantial piece of written work and a very important element of your year three assessment, so you must draw on a variety of reliable, academic sources. Your tutors will be looking for you to include good quality evidence in your discussion, and evidence the research you have done in your bibliography.

What does a Contents page look like?

Here is an example of a Contents page:

CONTENTS

Introduction.....	2
Chapter One: Tradition vs. technology.....	3
Chapter Two: Handmade.....	4
Chapter Three: Mass produced.....	9
Appendices.....	13
Bibliography.....	16

How do I reference images?

At Norwich University of the Arts we do not apply the rules for Harvard referencing to images, as this can be difficult and confusing, especially if you are using a lot of images of your own work. So, when you include an image in your work, you need to ensure you give it a figure number, and a caption that provides the author/creator, title and date of the work. Use italics for the title of the image only. For example:



Figure 1. Dorothea Lange, *Migrant Mother*, 1936

The first time you refer to the image in your text you should refer to the title and date and include the figure number in brackets. This makes it clear to your reader which image you are referring to. For example:

In *Migrant Mother*, 1936 (Figure 1) Lange poignantly captures the desperation and despair suffered during the Great Depression.

For any further references to the image in your work you can simply use the title.

You do not need to include any details about the image in your bibliography. Citing the image as shown above is enough. However, if you refer to any text or ideas from the same source as the image, then you would need Harvard reference this as normal.

How do I know the title, date and author of my image?

Title

Most works will be given a title by their creator, and this should be clear alongside the work. However, a lot of the time you may find images on the internet which may have been taken from other places and may not have their author and title information displayed with them. In these cases, it is important to make sure you try and find the original image, so you can properly credit the author. If you cannot find this, then we suggest that you should not use the image. If you are using an image bank such as Pixabay the image author, date and title will

always be displayed alongside the image, so it should be easy to find. If there is no title given then you may write untitled in your caption instead.

For images you have created yourself, you can create a meaningful title or add descriptive text – this may be required if you are using a film still, or a screenshot, or a photograph you have taken yourself. For example:

Nintendo, Screenshot of Link inside the Deku Tree, *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time*, 1998.

If you are taking a photograph of someone else's work then you should use the title, date and author of the work you have photographed.

Author

The author is the artist/creator of the work. This may be one person, or several people. Please credit them all. If you do not know the author of the work then it is important you try and find this out. Online image banks often display the author/creator as a username e.g. Valiphotos. If you cannot find a full name then you may use the author username. However, please be careful when using social media – are you sure that the person who posted the image is the author? If you are not sure, then we suggest you should not use the image.

For screenshots or film stills, remember to use the author of the work you are representing – so for a film this would usually include the director, or for a game this would be the studio. Where no author/artist is named, use the corporate author, i.e. the organisation responsible for the resource being published. For example Tate, or BBC.

Year

The year is usually the year in which the work has been published or shown for the first time. For physical artworks this information is usually given alongside the work. For films or games this would be the year of release. For photographs this will be often be the year the photo was taken, or you may have to use the date the photo was uploaded if you are using an image from the internet. If you are using an image from a book, and the image does not have an individual date, then you would use the copyright date of the book itself. For webpages try scrolling down to the bottom of the webpage to look for the copyright date for the whole site, and use this date instead. For photos you have taken of other artworks, remember to use the date of creation of the artwork you have photographed.

Make every effort to accurately date your image. For instance, if you are showing game art you can use the date of the release of the game, or for an advertising campaign you can use the date the advert was first run. If you still cannot find a date, you can use 'no date', but use this option with caution – do you have enough information about where it came from and who created it to accurately attribute the image in your work?

I'm writing an editorial report – how do I link the Editorial and Supporting Text?

For the editorial style, all the sections of the Research Report are still required and should be included in your supporting text. You can include your editorial either before or after your supporting text. Alternatively, you can follow the Research Report structure for your whole report and include your editorial as one of your chapters.