

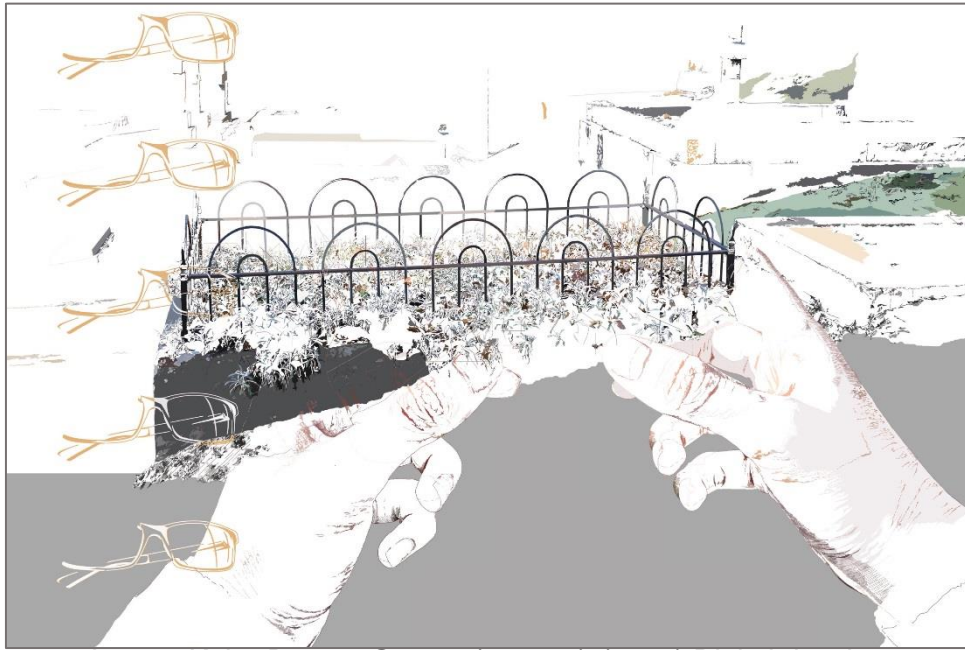
Department of Fine Arts

MASTER OF ARTS IN FINE ARTS

MODULE GUIDE
NQF 9

Compiled by

The Postgraduate Committee of the Department of Fine Arts and The Department of
Art History and Image Studies
2019



Lyrene Kühn-Botma. *Stages (stage 1)* (2018) Digital drawing.

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MASTER OF ARTS IN FINE ARTS

CODE	NAME OF MODULE	CREDITS
XMBK 8900	Dissertation: Fine Arts (Research Masters)	180
Programme code: B1825 Degree Code: 18251 Academic Plan Code: BC180025		

Introduction

The Master's degree in Fine Arts is considered a cohesive research project which is approached from different angles, and consists of both studio research and theoretical research. The reporting on the research project in its entirety is presented in different formats. It includes:

- the public exhibition or public visual presentation of a creative output that is representative of the studio research,
- the documentation of the candidate's portfolio,
- a catalogue accompanying the presentation of the creative output, which could take on various forms, and
- a dissertation or thesis.

1. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the admission requirements as stipulated in 1.4. (and Rulebook 2019, p.48), under the heading General Information, the following is required:

- The candidate must hold a four-year B.A. (FA) degree or equivalent (NQF level 8).
- A mark of 65% for creative work in the final year of undergraduate study is required. In addition, a mark of 65% for Art History 4 (NQF level 8) is required for the dissertation option and 60% for the thesis option.
- Alternative admission routes, such as recognition of prior learning or alternative assessment protocols, may be provided for students who do not meet the admission requirements, but who show exceptional potential in the fine arts.
- A portfolio of creative work (or documentary proof of alternative art actions), not older than five years, must be presented to the Department.
- A short-written research proposal must accompany the application.
- Admission to the course is subject to approval by the Head of Department/Departmental Chair, on advice by The Postgraduate Committee.
- In certain instances, an oral or written examination on a prescribed reading list could be requested.

- An academic literacy test is compulsory for all candidates.

2. THE COMPONENTS OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The research project consists of several components, including a creative output, a catalogue, the documentation of creative work, and the dissertation.

2.1 A public exhibition or visual presentation of a creative output which is representative of the studio research

The nature of the creative output is difficult to describe and quantify because there are so many art activities available to students. It may include the following, amongst others: a traditional exhibition, interior or exterior installations, performance, photography and/or film, land art, or any other medium which could be motivated in a meaningful way. The output must be representative of the study period. The exhibition must demonstrate that the core issue of the combined studio and theoretical research is addressed in a responsible way.

It is required that the creative output be presented in an impeccably professional manner.

2.2 Documentation of portfolio

The documentation of the portfolio involves a representative visual record (elucidated with relevant information) of a selection of work created during the study period and should be made available in digital format at the back of the dissertation. Photographs of three-dimensional artworks must include a variety of elevations and detail. Two-dimensional works must include photos that show the work in its entirety, as well as detail shots.

If the final presentation of the dissertation is not a paper copy (for example, a website) the information must still be accommodated in the presentation. All examples that are used must be dated and contextualised.

2.3 Catalogue

The catalogue has a durable format and is elucidated with visual material. Formats such as a printed, written document, a film or a website may be used, but argumentation, motivation, discussion and briefing must be the primary goal. The goal is to inform a public of peers about the visual presentation of the creative output, and must be made available to the assessors during the examination of the creative output. It is assessed as part of the creative output. Afterwards it is bound into the final version of the dissertation as an addendum.

2.4 Written component

There are different approaches with regards to the dissertation that a candidate may follow and these differences relate to the academic investigation.

The theoretical investigation is aligned with the studio work, but it may not necessarily focus on the creative component. However, in terms of content it must be related to the visual output. Or, the dissertation is strongly based on the studio research and there is inevitably a closer relationship between the two components. In this option, the core issue on which the studio research is addressed more specifically than is the case with the other option. It is the responsibility of the student to indicate their approach and argue the approach as part of the methodology followed in the dissertation.

2.4.1 Dissertation

The dissertation must adhere to all the requirements of a Master's degree dissertation in the Faculty of the Humanities. It is assessed on NQF level 9 of SAQA. The core issue of the combined studio and theoretical research must be addressed in a responsible manner. The dissertation must be at least between 70 and 100 pages of text.

All dissertations are assessed on NQF level 9. The dissertation does not include the catalogue, but the catalogue forms a separate document included as an addendum in the final version of the dissertation. The core issue of the combined studio and theoretical research must be addressed in a responsible manner.

A supervisor with the necessary interdisciplinary expertise (in the visual arts) must be appointed. Continuous interaction between the supervisor from the Department of Fine Arts and the co-supervisor is very important. It is advised that the co-supervisor be appointed from the fields of art history and image studies. Depending on the nature of the academic investigation, the co-supervisor and/or additional supervisors from different fields may also be involved.

2.4.2 The nature of the dissertation

Candidates complete their Master's dissertations under the tutelage of supervisors (co-supervisors) and must provide proof that the candidates have the ability to conduct scientific research and report on it in an academic manner.

<h2>3 Subject/Investigation</h2>

Candidates must provide proof of their understanding of, and insight into, the nature and goals of the investigation, and whether they are able to address the subject in a meaningful and acceptable manner at Master's level.

3.1 Research

Candidates have to provide proof of their:

- Knowledge of related literature and other scientific sources

- The application of this literature and other sources
- Understanding and knowledge of scientific research methods and techniques.

3.2 Content

The content must indicate:

- Scientific adaptation of the content with reference to the handling of applicable research methods/techniques, for example experimentation, systematisation, interpretation, support of statements, etc.
- Clear formulations.
- The presentation of a logically-responsible structure.
- Critical approach and independent insight.
- The ability to evaluate and interpret findings/results.
- A core summary of the relative meaning of the study.

3.3 Technical requirements

A high level of technical care is required with reference to:

- Table of contents.
- Chapter demarcation and balance.
- List of references.
- Abstract.
- Use of consistent and self-explanatory reference techniques.
- Documentation of visual material according to reference techniques.

3.4 Grammar and style

- Pay attention to all facets of language usage and style.

4. The appointment of a supervisor and co-supervisor

4.1 Postgraduate committee

The Postgraduate Committee, convened by the Departmental Chairperson, will identify supervisors with the necessary expertise with regards to the specific field of research. Should local expertise in a specific research field not be available, the option of an external supervisor should be considered.

The postgraduate committee will consist of the heads of department of Fine Arts and Art History, as well as representatives from these and other fields, as needed. A quorum is four members, of which one each must be from Fine Arts and Art History and Image Studies Department.

4.2 Student's involvement

Although students may make suggestions regarding supervisors, the decision regarding the appointment of supervisors remains with The Postgraduate Committee. The candidate may request to work with a specific supervisor, and should that supervisor be knowledgeable in the field involved, the request will be considered favourably.

4.3 Contracts

The supervisor and candidate must enter into a contract regarding practical arrangements, manner of work, ethical issues, title registration, handing in and other important issues.

- The supervisor must enter into a contract with the candidate,
- Co-supervisor(s) must enter into a separate contract with the student as the co-supervisor(s) would probably handle separate components,
- The supervisor and co-supervisor(s) must enter into a contract to agree upon the manner of work and expectations.

The contract form is attached.

4.4 Title registration

The planning of the research project as a whole must be explained when the student applies for title registration. The title registration should take place after six months to a year. The fluid relationship between studio research and theoretical research (or the theoretical and visual discourse) must be apparent in the formulation of the core research question of the project. The application must be accompanied by visual material from the candidate's own creative output. The relationship between the different components (as discussed in paragraph 1 above) is explained in the motivation at the title registration as a negotiated agreement between the candidate, supervisors, and the head of department. The candidate must also complete a question on ethics, which accompanies the title registration document. These documents must be submitted on the online UFS system.

5. ASSESSMENT

5.1 Marks

The dissertation receives a separate mark and the remaining research outputs are marked together with the creative output by internal and external assessors in order to obtain a combined mark. The studio research and the theoretical research carry an equal weight and the catalogue accompanies the exhibition and mark given for the exhibition.

5.2 Appointment of external and internal examiners

The appointment of external examiners is done by the supervisor and co-supervisor in co-operation with The Postgraduate Committee, and is approved by the Departmental Chairperson of the Department of Fine Arts. External and internal examiners are appointed with the greatest care. Assessors must be experts in the field of research that applies to the project and must be able to evaluate both the dissertation and the creative presentation. Language might create a barrier in instances where students use Afrikaans, and a compromise should be reached in these instances.

The supervisor may not be the internal assessor. In most cases, one internal assessor and two external assessors are appointed.

5.3 Supervision of assessment procedures

The rules regarding assessment procedures must be adhered to in order to avoid embarrassment for the department with external examiners and the university authorities. It includes amongst others that all deadlines and all prescriptive regulations regarding documentation and other requirements are met. In order to monitor the process and to prevent problems there will be an internal/departmental set of dates and procedures in place that supervisors and students have to adhere to. Assessment procedures of candidates are a confidential process. Candidates may not contact assessors on their own behalf.

6. INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS FOR ASSESSORS FOR EVALUATING EXHIBITIONS AND DISSERTATIONS OF M.A. (Fine Arts)

6.1. General

6.1.1 Assessors are required to view the student's creative output together and to assess it before the public opening of the exhibition or similar output. The creative output must prove that the candidate has the ability to create artworks at Master's degree level, and do scientific research and report on it in an academic manner.

6.1. 2 For the purpose of assessment, the candidate may hand in a final examination copy in a temporary binder and which is put together neatly.

6.1.3 An assessor may keep the copy of the dissertation handed to him/her for assessment, unless the dissertation is not approved, in which instance it must be sent back to the Head of the Department of the Department of Fine Arts as soon as possible. As soon as proposed revisions are made a revised final copy will be sent to the assessor which he/she may keep.

6.1. 4. Assessment reports are confidential. Only technical detail may be shared with the candidate by the supervisor without permission from the assessors.

6.1. 5. Accepting the role of assessor does not imply that assessors have to supervise a candidate in any way.

6.1. 6 Should an assessor require further information regarding the dissertation, he/she must contact the supervisor directly.

6.1.7 In the instance of a disagreement in the recommendations of the assessors, the University retains the right to appoint additional assessors. or submit a dissertation and reports for arbitration. The final decision in each instance rests with the UFS.

6.2. Allocation of marks and recommendation

6.2.1 An assessor is required to evaluate the dissertation in a professional manner and to make a recommendation and write a short, concise report following the viewing of the exhibition (see section 3).

6.2.2 Marks are allocated according to the following procedure:

Exhibition: Assessors individually allocate a mark (A) for the exhibition, or combined if requested by the Head of the Department of Fine Arts, UFS.

Dissertation: Assessors individually allocate a mark (B) for the dissertation.

6.2.3 A combined mark is determined collectively by combining marks A & B according to a 50/50 relation between the dissertation and the exhibition.

6.2.4 To pass the exhibition, as well as the dissertation, at least 50% is required, with at least 75% for a distinction.

6.2.5 The recommendation must be made according to one of the following:

- Accept without conditions – the exhibition is accepted as fulfilment/partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree.
- The exhibition is accepted, but revisions must be made to the content of the dissertation as stipulated with regard to technical revisions and/or grammar and/or content to the satisfaction of the Head of the Department of Fine Arts.
- Rejected – the dissertation and exhibition as a whole is rejected.

6.2.6 An assessor must also indicate whether the dissertation

- is only recommended as pass;
- or recommended as pass with a distinction

