What is research?
“The value of research is seen to be the capacity to create new knowledge...

AKA: Finding insights
...that is individually and culturally transformative"
David Kolb’s Learning Cycle
Source: http://johnmill.wordpress.com
What is visual research?
“Visual research for graphic artists is to prepare, collect and build up a catalogue of inspiration creating a foundation for design development. Visual research frequently takes the form of a sketchbook filled with visual information, but may also consist of more loosely collated material or three-dimensional objects.”

“Visual research may be defined as whatever is selected to contribute to the development of ideas.”

Torunn Kjølberg
Visual Research will often form a story or ‘narrative’ of images that are linked together by a central theme.

Image source: Ki Yeung
Visual Research is a body of images that provides you with inspiration and ideas to inform your design process.

Image source: William Allen
The aim of the creative process of design is to extract and interpret your Visual Research in order to innovate and inform new ideas.

Image source: Zahra Warsame
Producing visual research
“Design is very much a process, its not as if you have a fully formed idea that simply needs to be realised, its an investigation that yields clues and direction”

Architect: Michael Handel
What are the qualities of a good investigator?
Creative investigation

BRIEF

VISUAL RESEARCH

IDEAS

DEVELOPMENT

OUTCOME

Source: Stephen Dell http://www.arts.ac.uk
“Creative development is dependent on quality and depth of visual research. Which can be emotive, detailed, directional, and informative”

Source: Stephen Dell http://www.arts.ac.uk
Other types of research

**VISUAL RESEARCH**
What are the images that provides you with inspiration and ideas to inform your design process?

**CONTEXTUAL**
What are the historical, social and cultural contexts relevant to the work you produce?

**TECHNICAL**
What are the technical methods, processes, techniques and materials you will be using?

**MARKET/AUDIENCE USER**
Who is your audience? Where will the work exist? How will the work be interpreted?
Q. How do I know if my research is any good?

A. Ask yourself what have learnt that I didn’t know before?
Tips
Move beyond ‘like’ towards informed criticality
Tips for a good Blog:

Care about it
Care about the visual presentation
Ensure your opinions are informed
Attribute your sources
Follow the task instructions carefully
Reflect on what you are doing
Make connections and write about them
Look and comment on each others posts
Blogs
Some blogs relevant to graphic arts to get started with

http://designobserver.com
http://www.eyemagazine.com
http://www.swiss-miss.com
http://www.creativereview.co.uk/cr-blog
http://johnsonbanks.co.uk/thoughtfortheweek/
http://redtape.rca.ac.uk/blog.html
http://designatlas.wordpress.com/
http://jacobinmag.com/category/blogs/
http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog