

# Policy and Procedure on Practice-Based- Research

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<b>OPERATIONAL OWNER:</b>	Academic Research and Publications Board (ARPB) in consultation with the Board of Studies (BoS)
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<b>POLICY VERSION:</b>	1

### Version History

VERSION	DESCRIPTION	AUTHORS	APPROVAL	EFFECTIVE DATE
1	Initial version	ARPB	2025	2025

### Related Policies and Guidelines

This policy is subordinate to P028: Policy and Procedure on Student Research

### External References

N/A

## Definitions

Practice-Based-Research	A mode of research that integrates practical activity with theoretical enquiry, whereby the creative or professional practice forms a central part of the research methodology and outcome.
Project-Based Dissertation or Thesis	A research project that includes a significant practical component as part of the fulfilment of academic qualification requirements.
Practical Component	The applied hands-on aspect of the dissertation or thesis that addresses real-world challenges and is aligned with the student's area of study.
Theoretical Component	The written part of the dissertation or thesis that frames the research within academic literature, research methodologies, and critical analysis.

## Abbreviations

PBR	Practice-Based-Research
ARPB	Academic Research and Publications Board
BoS	Board of Studies
MQF	Malta Qualifications Framework

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### A. Introduction

Undergraduate students at MQF Level 6 and postgraduate students at MQF Level 7 enrolled in any programme at ITS shall have the opportunity to include a substantial practical component as part of their dissertation or thesis, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for their qualification.

This practical component may be referred to as Practice-as-Research, Practice-Based Research, Practice-Led Research, or Project-Based Research. For the purposes of this policy, the term Practice-Based-Research (PBR) is adopted.

### B. Practical and Theoretical Components

The ratio between the practical and theoretical components (i.e., the written dissertation or thesis), the number of hours to be dedicated to the practical component, and the required length of the dissertation or thesis shall be determined by the study unit description outlined in the programme, as approved by the ARPB.

The ARPB shall issue the necessary guidelines for student-researchers, supervisors, assessors, and administrative staff.

### C. Core Principles

PBR must demonstrate meaningful integration between theoretical knowledge and practical application. This integration enables students to develop and showcase their academic understanding, alongside relevant professional, technical, and/or operational competencies.

PBR must be based on appropriate research methodologies, with clearly defined research questions or objectives guiding both the theoretical and practical components.

Students must uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. This includes accurate attribution of sources, honest reporting of findings, and adherence to ethical conduct throughout the research process.

PBR must offer an original contribution appropriate to the students' field and qualification level, whether through application, analysis, synthesis, or creation.

Both the written and practical components must function as integral and complementary parts of a unified project.

The PBR dissertation or thesis must comply with all relevant rules and regulations governing student research outputs, as set out by the ARPB and other pertinent ITS bodies.

Students proposing a PBR dissertation or thesis must demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the ARPB, their capability to undertake the practical component. They are also responsible for bearing any associated costs and for complying with all ITS Rules and Regulations during the process.

Approved supervisors must demonstrate to the ARPB that they possess the requisite experience and expertise to effectively supervise the practical component.

Approved assessors must likewise demonstrate to the ARPB that they have the necessary experience to competently assess the practical component.

Students undertaking PBR must fully adhere to all ITS Rules and Regulations, particularly those concerning safety and security, copyright, data protection, and knowledge transfer. Supervisors are expected to remind students of these obligations and to report any infringements to the ARPB.

ITS holds institutional responsibility for establishing clear policies and procedures, ensuring equitable access to supervision and resources, maintaining robust quality assurance mechanisms, implementing transparent assessment processes, and supporting students in carrying out the practical aspects of their work, particularly in terms of resource accessibility.

## D. Document Retention

Category	Retention Period
Academic Research and Publications	3 years

## E. Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if necessitated by regulatory or institutional changes.

## F. Document Control

Version	Purpose of Review/ Changes	Date Published	Date of Next Review
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1	Initial version	2025	2028
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