Research Thesis with a Creative Component Procedure

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) This document provides information for candidates, supervisors, schools and examiners on the expected standards of a research thesis with a creative component, and sets out the process for presentation and examination.

(2) The thesis consists of two parts: the creative component and the exegesis.

(3) This procedure supports the Higher Degree by Research Policy and Higher Degree by Research Procedure, and should be read in conjunction with those documents.

Section 2 - Audience

(4) Higher Degree by Research candidates, Supervisors, Examiners, Heads of School and Deputy Heads of School.

Section 3 - Creative Component

(5) The creative component must:

a. be a substantial, coherent and resolved body of work that demonstrates a comprehensive exploration of the artistic form and content;
b. demonstrate a professional level of knowledge and understanding of contemporary work in the field;
c. use appropriate methods and techniques in the execution of the work;
d. identify and address the research aims and objectives;
e. demonstrate a high standard of literary, visual, digital, musical or performance literacy and quality;
f. meet professional presentation standards; and
g. only include work that has been created during the formal candidature period, unless the supervisor agrees that previously created work informs the research. Any work created prior to the formal candidature period should be clearly identified.

Section 4 - Exegesis

(6) The exegesis must:

a. be a scholarly written work of critical analysis that rigorously argues the case of the overall thesis and provides a critical context for the contribution to knowledge made through the creative component;
b. provide a rationale for the techniques and strategies adopted in the creative component and situate them in a theoretical and/or cultural context; and
c. be of an appropriate length. The length of the exegesis should be discussed with the supervisor. As a guide the

accompanying exegesis should comprise 15,000 - 25,000 words for a Masters Degree (Research) and 30,000 - 40,000 words for a Doctoral Degree (Research).

Section 5 - Synthesis of the Creative Work and the Exegesis

(7) There must be an appropriate and substantiated interface between the creative work and the exegesis.

(8) The combined work must be scholarly, coherent, and rigorous.

(9) As per the Masters Degree (Research) - Awards and Programs Schedule the thesis as a whole must make a significant contribution to the subject area with which it deals.

(10) As per the Doctoral Degree (Research) - Awards and Programs Schedule the thesis as a whole must make an original and significant contribution of merit to the subject area with which it deals.

Section 6 - Presentation of the Creative Component

(11) The purpose of a presentation is to allow the examiners to assess the creative component in a professional setting. The creative component does not need to be presented in a public forum, unless agreed by the candidate, supervisor, and Head of School or Deputy Head of School.

(12) Where it is agreed that a presentation is required, the format will be agreed between the candidate and supervisor and must be approved by the Head of School or Deputy Head of School by the time of the candidate's Confirmation and recorded on the Thesis Examination Application Form.

(13) The costs associated with the presentation and the source of funding must be approved by the Head of School.

(14) It is the candidate's responsibility to organise the use of any required presentation space and to complete any application forms required by the administrator of the presentation space in the appropriate timeframes. It is expected that twelve months would be the required lead time required by the space. When a delay in submission is identified, it is the responsibility of the candidate to contact the administrator and negotiate new dates.

Section 7 - Recording the Creative Component

(15) A good quality, enduring, digital record of the creative presentation must be included as part of the thesis. The purpose of the digital record is to inform and assist the examiners and to provide a permanent record.

(16) The School is responsible for providing the candidate with assistance in producing the digital record and in ensuring the highest possible standard for the digital record is obtained.

(17) In cases where all relevant creative presentation elements are embedded in the exegesis there is no need for a digital recording.

(18) Digital records are to be provided as follows:

a. where the examiners will attend a presentation:
    i. 3 copies of the exegesis must be submitted to Graduate Research six weeks prior to the visit by the examiners.
    ii. A digital record is to be provided to each examiner by a representative of the School on the day of the

presentation.

iii. A copy of the digital record must also be submitted to Graduate Research.

b. where the examiners will not attend a presentation, or for performances that take place over time (e.g. a series of recitals):

i. The complete digital record is to be submitted together with the exegesis as a single submission.

ii. The number of digital copies will be the same as the exegesis requirements (3 copies).

(19) Suitable media to provide the digital record to the examiners include electronic storage, CD, DVD, or website. In exceptional circumstances the recording may be paper-based printed material.

(20) One enduring copy of the digital record is to be provided with the final thesis following examination outcome advice.

Section 8 - Examination

(21) The examination procedures, including the appointment of examiners, must comply with the provisions of the Higher Degree by Research Policy and Higher Degree by Research Procedure.

(22) Where appropriate, examiners may attend the creative presentation. Both examiners must assess the same presentation.

(23) The administration and costs associated with bringing examiners to the University rests with the School/College in which the candidate is enrolled and these costs must be approved in advance by the Head of School.

(24) Except in the case of a presentation, examiners are not permitted to conduct a viva voce (oral) examination with the candidate.

(25) Following a presentation, the examiners are permitted to confer with each other, but not with the candidate or the supervisor.

(26) Examiners will submit an independent, written report on the merits of the thesis and are requested to report on both the creative component and the exegesis, and to provide feedback on the extent to which both components meet the required standards.

(27) No weighting or percentage of the total assessment is assigned to the creative component or the exegesis.

(28) Examiners may request that creative works are re-presented or re-documented if it is considered that the creative work does not meet the criteria as prescribed.

Section 9 - Discipline Requirements

(29) In each discipline, the size and scope of the body of work is to be determined between the candidate and the supervisor.

(30) The following are broad definitions of the discipline requirements. There may be other components that are acceptable. The appropriateness of the type of creative component should be established by the time of confirmation.

a. Architecture - a substantial body of creative project work to be presented in digital or printable format, or as an artefact or a design project executed to an industry/professional standard or, where appropriate and with the approval of the Head of School, as an exhibition.

b. Communication - a substantial body of creative work equivalent to a program or a series of programs suitable for broadcast television, radio or multimedia presentation.
c. Creative writing - a substantial body of creative prose (fiction or non-fiction) equivalent to a substantial novel, or the equivalent in other forms: one substantial collection of poems; one substantial specimen of dramatic writing or a collection of short plays; libretti, or any other form of writing that can be regarded as equivalent to these established genres.
d. Design/illustration - a substantial body of artwork to be presented in digital or printable format, or as an artefact or a design project executed to an industry/professional standard or, where appropriate and with the approval of the Head of School, as an exhibition.
e. Fine art – a substantial body of art work produced within the context of a contemporary visual art practice, to include but not be limited to, work produced through drawing, making, composing, designing, producing, performing, writing or curating.
f. Music, composers - a substantial body of compositions, recordings, presentations or performances.
g. Music, performers - a substantial body of live or recorded performances. Normally live recordings of complete recitals will be submitted for examination, with minimal editing.
h. Performance - a substantial body of work in the form of performance, a performance script, site-specific performance realisation, media time-based work or video multimedia work.

Status and Details

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Enquiries Contact	Graduate Research

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Candidature" - The period of time between acceptance of offer and termination, withdrawal from, or completion of a higher degree by research program, including periods when a candidate is not enrolled.

"Candidate" - With regard to Higher Degree by Research it has the same meaning as student. For all other instances it is a person considered for appointment to a position.

"Research" - As defined in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, or any replacing Code or document.

"School" - An organisational unit forming part of a College or Division, responsible for offering a particular course.

"Thesis" - A dissertation involving research by a candidate for the award of a Higher Degree by Research (HDR) qualification.

"College" - An organisational unit established within the University by the Council.