

# **EXAMINATION GUIDELINES FOR PhD RESEARCH DEGREES – THESIS BY CREATIVE PROJECT (CREATIVE WRITING, MULTIMEDIA, PERFORMANCE, VISUAL ARTS)**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Victoria University has offered creative arts research degrees at Masters and PhD level for more than ten years. The University has consistently maintained rigorous standards of scholarship and performance in the supervision, design and delivery of supervised postgraduate theses in these areas.

The following guidelines have been developed to accompany the University's general guidelines for examiners in order to clarify the expectations and processes for examiners of creative arts research degrees at the doctoral level, leading to the award of Doctor of Philosophy.

Victoria University recognises that research in the creative arts involves both the creative practice of producing new and original works in the candidate's chosen medium/media, and also engaging in critical reflection, examination and analysis of both their own processes of creative production in the chosen field and the wider social, cultural, theoretical and conceptual contexts in which this occurs.

As in all types of academic research, research in the creative arts is original, speculative and systematically pursues new knowledge. Victoria University recognises however, that while the outcomes of research in the creative arts can mirror the range of outcomes found in many different academic disciplines, it is the presentation of those outcomes that differentiates research in the creative arts from other disciplines

## **COMPONENTS OF A THESIS BY CREATIVE PROJECT**

A Thesis by Creative Project submission is presented as three interrelated components:

- (i) **A Thesis Abstract** (max. of 2 written pages) that outlines that nature, scope and intent of the creative project. The abstract must provide a brief description that locates the Creative and Analytical Written Components within their relevant fields of theory and practice. It must also outline the proportionate balance between the respective Creative and Analytical Written Components, and their preferred 'reading/viewing' order.
- (ii) **Creative Component** presented in a format that provides a durable record of the creative work undertaken for the creative project
- (iii) **Analytical Written Component** that provides a critical analysis or reflection on the creative project and its outcomes.

The form of the creative works and the balance between the Creative and Analytical Written Components is negotiated at the outset of candidature between the supervisor and the candidate and approved by the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee. However, the Analytical Written

Component must comprise no less than 30% (18,000—30,000) of the total work presented as the Thesis by Creative Project

The **Analytical Written Component** may take a number of forms dependent on the intent and conceptualisation of the overall creative project. In many cases it will take the form of an exegesis to elucidate the purpose of the creative product, reflect and comment critically upon its processes of production, and to place it into a broader disciplinary and research context. Such an exegesis is also intended to demonstrate the positioning of the creative artist as a researcher and not merely as a practitioner. The exegesis may also explicate the sequence of development in the creative work presented for examination. However, non-exegetical analytical scholarly writing may also be deemed appropriate to complement the creative work as part of the overall creative project.

The Creative Project and its associated creative practice is to be examined on the basis of the combination of the **Creative Component** and the complementary **Analytical Written Component**. These components are not to be examined separately, but as an integrated whole constituting the original and substantial contribution to knowledge required of research candidates at doctoral level.

## **EXAMINATION OF THESIS BY CREATIVE PROJECT**

The Examination will follow the normal University criteria and guidelines (see attached).

Examiners will be advised of the form of the examinable work at the time of their employment by the University.

For creative projects that require examiner attendance at an exhibition or performance, these additional guidelines are to be followed:

- Examiners will be advised of the requirement to attend a live performance or exhibition at the time of their appointment.
- One (1) reserve examiner is appointed in the event that one of the three original examiners is for some reason unable to attend the exhibition or performance or to complete other aspects of the examination process.
- All examiners will be provided with the Thesis Abstract no less than 14 days prior to their scheduled attendance at the live performance or exhibition. In addition, if the candidate has opted for the Analytical Written Component to be read prior to the viewing of the performance or exhibition, then this must also be provided no less than 14 days prior to the scheduled live performance or exhibition.
- All examiners including the reserve examiner are expected to attend the exhibition or performance of the candidate's creative work as a component of the thesis.
- The fourth examiner will be designated the Reserve Examiner whose report is required, but will only be called upon in the event that:

- A primary examiner is unable to attend a performance and the Faculty has been unable to contact another examiner; or
  - A primary examiner has been able to attend the performance but unable to write a report on the performance project; or
  - A primary examiner is late in providing a report on the performance project.
- The candidate receives only the examination reports of the first 3 examiners (or two plus the reserve if one of the original three has been replaced).
- After the performance or exhibition, if not previously submitted, the Examiners will receive the full 'Thesis by Creative Project' submission as outlined above. Receipt of the full submission normally occurs not more than 4 months from the attendance at the live performance or exhibition.
  - The Examiners will write independent reports on the creative project, including a short description of the Creative Component and its execution, and provide these with their grades according to the University statutes within two months of receiving the final 'Thesis by Creative Project' submission.
  - The Examiners shall not to communicate with each other or the candidate about the performance or exhibition until their independent examination reports have been submitted.