

# GUIDELINES FOR EXAMINERS – MASTER BY RESEARCH, CREATIVE PRACTICE FORMAT



## Section 1: General Information

The Graduate Research School will provide each examiner the following items examination:

- Thesis (Adobe PDF or link to multiple files)
- Examiner Report
- Information for HDR Examiners (as applicable)
- Honorarium Claim

The email will also include a link to the relevant course rules or handbook. Theses may contain multiple digital files, which will be sent as a OneDrive link.

### Thesis Length

The HDR thesis should not normally exceed 100,000 words for a Doctoral degree and should not normally exceed 50,000 for a Masters degree, considering discipline standards.

### Printed Copy

Should an examiner require a printed copy of the thesis, the request must be sent to the Graduate Research School on [hdrexam@une.edu.au](mailto:hdrexam@une.edu.au).

### More Information

More information about the examination process and requirements is available in the [HDR Thesis Submission and Examination Policy](#).

## Section 2: Time for Examination

Each examiner is given six (6) weeks to examine the HDR thesis unless an extension has already been agreed to. If during the examination this deadline is not possible, examiners are to contact the Graduate Research School as soon as possible to request an extension. Extension requests will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

## Section 3: Conflicts of interest

During the selection of examiners all efforts would have been taken to avoid or manage any perceived or actual conflicts of interest. If an examiner identifies a conflict of interest in relation to the examination, the Graduate Research School must be notified.

## Section 4: Questions During Examination

All questions and/or concerns should be directed to the Graduate Research School by emailing [hdrexam@une.edu.au](mailto:hdrexam@une.edu.au).

We request that examiners do not contact either the supervisor(s) or candidates in relation to any material that is under examination. If an examiner requires clarification or has questions, these must be directed to the Graduate Research School.

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## Section 5: Examiner's Report

Each examiner is asked to submit a completed Examiner Report form to the Graduate Research School ([hdrexam@une.edu.au](mailto:hdrexam@une.edu.au)) addressing the criteria and a recommended outcome.

Each examiner is able to provide additional comments that merit comment but that aren't captured by the criteria (for example, relevance to policy or social contexts, potential implications of the work to other disciplinary or professional fields that the researcher may benefit from having highlighted, strength of argument, nuanced insights, elegance of writing, etc.).

## Section 6: Examiner Anonymity

Examiners may indicate to request anonymity on the Examiner Report form. By selecting this, the Graduate Research School will not release the examiner name or institution to the candidate once the examiner reports and outcome are released to the candidate, supervisor(s), and the Associate Dean, Research or delegate (for example HDR Coordinator).

## Section 7: Release of Examiner Reports

Once an examination outcome has been determined, copies of examiners' reports will be made available to candidate, supervisor(s), and the Associate Dean, Research or delegate (for example HDR Coordinator).

## Section 8: Annotated Thesis

To better assist the candidates, if examiner(s) wish to annotate the thesis, printed and/or digital format, this must be returned to the Graduate Research School for dissemination to the candidate.

## Section 9: Confidential Disposal

The thesis and all related items sent to the examiners are confidential documents and must not be disclosed.

All thesis and associated documents must be either destroyed or deleted from any computer storage system used by the examiner. If a printed thesis has been provided, this must either be returned to the Graduate Research School or confidentially destroyed.

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## Section 10: Creative Practice Information

The Master by Research, Creative Practice format is one of several forms of the Research Masters degree at UNE. Creative practice projects may be undertaken at UNE in any discipline.

Though it has a distinct emphasis and structure, the Master by Research, Creative Practice format shares with UNE's other forms of Research Masters the common objectives of qualifying candidates who understand and apply an advanced body of knowledge and have specialised cognitive, technical, communication and creative skills for research and/or professional practice. This is in line with the learning outcomes of the Masters Degree (Research) in the *Australian Qualifications Framework*.

These objectives are pursued through practice-based research that results in two components constituting the overall thesis: a creative work and a written exegesis. In a context of wider discussions about the relation between a creative work and an exegesis, candidates are encouraged to see these components as interrelated means to pursue research and present findings on their topic.

Candidates are advised that, while its format may vary, an exegesis requires more than wholly personal reflection on, or recounting of, their own creative work and practice. They are informed that for the Master by Research, Creative Practice format it should articulate an argument growing out of the practice-based inquiry, or otherwise show how the thesis applies knowledge, skills and techniques at an advanced level within a disciplinary field. For this purpose, they are advised, an exegesis can do many or all of the following:

- Explain the subject, objectives, rationale and context of the creative work, which should normally include articulating a central question or problem that both components of the thesis investigate;
- Situate the project in its field of creative practice and in relation to pertinent disciplinary concerns, problems or aspects of scholarship;
- Document and reflect on the principles, methods and processes of their research and inquiry into the subject;
- Explain opportunities and/or problems they have encountered, and how they have responded to them, in the course of the project;
- Reflect on the structure and themes of the creative work, or decisions involved in finding its form;
- Document interactions with others that inform the creative work; and
- Comment on ethical considerations where relevant, and cite or present material (e.g., ethics clearances, interview questions) that helps to understand the research framework.

## Section 11: Creative Work and Critical Exegesis

While both components of the thesis are significant, UNE does not prescribe set proportions for them, or separate 'assessment weightings'.

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The appropriate scale of the **creative work** may vary according to the nature of the artefact or performance, its medium, genre or style. This work should demonstrate substantial knowledge of the expressive form of communication in which it is situated. It should be the main basis for the design, research and communication of outcomes of the Research Masters project.

The critical **exegesis** is expected usually to be approximately 10,000 words, exclusive of preliminary and end matter such as acknowledgements, reference lists, etc. By approval of the Principal Supervisor and the School Higher Degree Research Coordinator, the length of the exegesis may vary according to particular discipline contexts and modes of creative practice.