

# GUIDELINES FOR EXAMINERS – MASTER BY RESEARCH INNOVATION PORTFOLIO FORMAT



## General Information

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

- Thesis (Adobe PDF or link to multiple files)
- Examiner Report Form
- Claim Form

Theses may contain multiple digital files, which will be sent as a OneDrive link.

### Thesis Length

The HDR thesis should not normally exceed 80,000 to 100,000 words for a Doctoral degree and should not normally exceed 40,000 to 50,000 words for a Masters degree, considering discipline standards.

### More Information

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

## 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.

## Conflicts of interest

During the selection of examiners all efforts are 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.

## 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.

## 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 following criteria and a recommended outcome:

- a. The degree to which the candidate shows sufficient familiarity with, and understanding of, the relevant literature and/or professional context of practice;
- b. The degree to which the thesis provides a sufficiently comprehensive investigation of the topic;

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- c. The degree to which the methods and technique adopted are appropriate to the subject matter and are they applied suitably;
- d. The extent to which the results are set out clearly and logically and accompanied by adequate exposition and interpretation;
- e. The extent to which the conclusions and implications are developed appropriately and linked clearly to the nature and content of the research framework and finding;
- f. The degree to which the literary quality and general presentation of the thesis are of a suitably high standard; and
- g. Doctoral Only - The degree to which the thesis as a whole constitutes a substantive original contribution to knowledge in the subject area with which it deals.

Examiners may include additional comments 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, strength of argument, nuanced insights, etc.).

## 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.

## Examiner Anonymity

Examiners may request anonymity on the Examiner Report form. By selecting this, the Graduate Research School will not release the examiner's name or institution to the candidate.

## 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.

## Examiner's Recommendation and Outcome

Primary Examination	
<b>1. Award</b>	There are no errors or omissions that need amendment or checking by an examiner. The thesis meets all required standards and the degree can be awarded to the thesis as presented. The candidate may undertake typographical edits to the thesis as specified by the examiner.
<b>2. Amendments</b>	There are amendments, additions or parts of the thesis that require revising or rewriting as specified by the examiner. The candidate can be awarded the degree subject to making amendments as specified after being reviewed and

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	<p>verified by the Principal Supervisor and the Head of School or delegate. The candidate has up to six (6) months to submit their amended thesis.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> in some cases the Examiner Report form may have additional options of minor and major amendments. In this case the following information is applicable:</p> <p><i>Minor</i> - There are amendments and/or additions that require revising as specified by the examiner. The candidate can be awarded the degree subject to making minor amendments that do not make a material difference to the argument and outcomes. Amendments must be reviewed and verified by the Principal Supervisor and the Head of School or delegate. The candidate has up to three (3) months to submit their amended thesis.</p> <p><i>Major</i> - There are major amendments, such as structural changes, additions or parts of the thesis that require significant revision or major rewriting as specified by the examiner. The candidate can be awarded the degree subject to making amendments that must be reviewed and verified by the Principal Supervisor and the Head of School or delegate. The candidate has up to six (6) months to submit their amended thesis.</p>
<b>3. Re-Examination</b>	<p>The thesis does not yet meet all required standards and the degree cannot be awarded without re-submission and re-examination. The thesis requires significant structural or content changes resulting in major revisions that cannot be overseen by the supervision team and must be re-examined. The candidate must complete a further period of research and/or writing of up to twelve (12) months and submit a revised thesis for re-examination.</p> <p>The amendments to the thesis must be based on the examination reports and sent to the examiners for re-assessment to check that the candidate has addressed all of the examiners' concerns. In this case, the original examiners are requested to re-examine the revised thesis if possible. Each examiner will be provided with the reports of all original examiners when reviewing the resubmitted thesis. A revised thesis can only be submitted for re-examination once.</p>
<b>4. Non-Award/Fail</b>	<p>The thesis has substantive, irredeemable flaws in scholarship, research or argumentation that render it inadequate for the award of a higher degree by research.</p> <p>Non-Award/Fail is normally only available following a revise and resubmit outcome. Please refer to the Examiner Report form for possible examination outcomes.</p>

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Re-Examination	
<b>1. Award</b>	There are no errors or omissions that need amendment or checking by an examiner. The thesis meets all required standards and the degree can be awarded to the thesis as presented. The candidate may undertake typographical edits to the thesis as specified by the examiner.
<b>2. Amendments</b>	<p>There are amendments, additions or parts of the thesis that require revising or rewriting as specified by the examiner. The candidate can be awarded the degree subject to making amendments as specified after being reviewed and verified by the Principal Supervisor and the Head of School or delegate. The candidate has up to six (6) months to submit their amended thesis.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> in some cases the Examiner Report form may have additional options of minor and major amendments. In this case the following information is applicable:</p> <p><i>Minor</i> - There are amendments and/or additions that require revising as specified by the examiner. The candidate can be awarded the degree subject to making minor amendments that do not make a material difference to the argument and outcomes. Amendments must be reviewed and verified by the Principal Supervisor and the Head of School or delegate. The candidate has up to three (3) months to submit their amended thesis.</p> <p><i>Major</i> - There are major amendments, such as structural changes, additions or parts of the thesis that require significant revision or major rewriting as specified by the examiner. The candidate can be awarded the degree subject to making amendments that must be reviewed and verified by the Principal Supervisor and the Head of School or delegate. The candidate has up to six (6) months to submit their amended thesis.</p>
<b>3. Award Master by Research Degree</b>	<p>The candidate has not demonstrated the contribution to knowledge that is of sufficient significance or originality for a Doctor degree but meets the standard expected for a Master by Research degree. Prior to the Master by Research degree being awarded, the candidate may be required to undertake revisions as specified in the examination reports.</p> <p>This is only available for some Doctoral theses, not Masters degrees. Please refer to the Examiner Report form for possible examination outcomes.</p>
<b>4. Non-Award/Fail</b>	The thesis has substantive, irredeemable flaws in scholarship, research or argumentation that render it inadequate for the award of a higher degree by research.

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## Examiners Consult to Achieve Consensus (Re-examination Outcome)

The Graduate Research Committee consider the examiners' reports and recommendations following revision and resubmission for re-examination. In cases where an outcome is unable to be determined due to divergent recommendations among the examiners, the examiners may be asked by the Graduate Research School to review each other's de-identified secondary examination reports and consult with one another to agree on one outcome.

## Master by Research Innovation Portfolio Information

The Master of by Research innovation portfolio is a unique, project-based across all our schools and disciplines, linking professional and industry expertise with academic theory in creating innovation.

It involves contextual research on a project that identifies one or more tangible or process-based innovations that have identifiable impacts when implemented.

It is crucial that examiners consider the candidate's portfolio solely on its merits as an independent piece of supervised research, irrespective of whether the candidate's approach to the research is the same as that which the examiner might have used in such a study.

## Project Portfolio Structure

The innovation portfolio is the assessable research output. It shows how the innovation project:

- is relevant to a specific context that constitutes an original, scholarly contribution to a field of work or learning,
- bridges the boundaries between the academic research community and practice-based communities relevant to their Innovation,
- conducts highly contextual developmental and evaluation, based on research principles and methods applicable to that Innovation project,
- produces evidence-based research surrounding the Innovation development and its realised or potential consequences,
- communicates, critically analyses and reflects on the entire innovation process including its role in innovation development and implementation,
- produces an Innovation project Portfolio for examination based on empirical evidence and critical analysis.

This innovation portfolio should comprise of three distinct, but interwoven knowledge pillars:

- a) innovation conception,
- b) evidence for impact or potential impact of the innovation,
- c) critical and systemic reflection upon the process of development and what this innovation means to the person, profession/industry and more broadly.

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## Examiner's Report

Each examiner is asked to submit a detailed independent report (usually no less than two standard pages) together with a completed summary recommendation form. In their report, examiners are requested to include comments on both the strengths and weaknesses of the Innovation project Portfolio. Please consider the following elements in your report:

- (i) The degree to which the Portfolio shows sufficient familiarity with, and understanding of, the relevant literature and scholarly theorizing, balanced with an industry/ profession and practice/policy emphasis, such that the Portfolio speaks effectively and convincingly to the relevant industry/profession and academic audiences;
- (ii) The degree to which the Portfolio and the process surrounding its emergence around an innovation, demonstrate clear originality, accessibility, potential for scalability and/or commercial application or viability including due consideration and responsiveness to implementation/application for an identified user or user context;
- (iii) The degree to which the Portfolio provides clear and convincing research to support credible claims about demonstration of impact or potential for innovation impact as well as the quality of the innovation and development process; feeding into creative, systemic and strategic forward thinking and learning about the innovation;
- (iv) The extent to which the research methods and approaches are appropriate to achieving a systemic and contextualised understanding of the entire innovation process, including development, implementation, and adoption/change pathways and outcomes;
- (v) The extent to which the research outcomes, including data management and analysis, conclusions and implications, are set out clearly and logically, accompanied by adequate exposition and interpretation; in light of the academic and professional/industry target audiences; and
- (vi) The degree to which the literary quality and general presentation of the Portfolio are of a suitably high standard, particularly in light of the academic and professional/industry target audiences.