



DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

ADVICE TO EXAMINERS OF HIGHER DEGREES BY RESEARCH: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY PHD BY PRIOR PUBLICATIONS IN THE CREATIVE ARTS (EXEGESIS PLUS PORTFOLIO CREATIVE PRODUCT)

Introduction

Higher degrees by research are awarded on satisfactory completion of supervised but independent research, which is described in a thesis. Coursework may be included in the requirements for the degree, but this is generally minor and preliminary to the research project. The PhD degree is awarded for “a substantial original contribution to knowledge.”

Background to the Degree

The selective-entry degree of PhD by Prior Publications in the Creative Arts is designed for established creative-arts practitioners, within any art form/s, whose substantial record of major creative arts outputs is judged to be at a nationally or internationally recognised standard of excellence and who bring to the program a demonstrated capacity for scholarly writing and high-level project management skills. Candidates will generally be mid- to late career artists looking to further develop and reflect upon their practice, within a scholarly and research context, through the opportunities afforded by the degree of PhD. The usual and minimum enrolment period is one-year equivalent full time.

Candidates produce, in candidature, an exegesis accompanied by a portfolio creative product that critically and reflectively curates and/or re-composes a selection of at least three major, creative arts outputs produced by the candidate prior to enrolment. There is no time limit on when the original works may have first been published or produced.

The form of curation or re-composition of the several prior creative arts outputs into a portfolio will be determined by factors including the nature of the relevant art form/s, the circumstances attendant on the prior outputs, and the thesis research topic. In all cases, the final portfolio creative product is expected to be an essential element of the original contribution to knowledge characteristic of a PhD thesis. In its form and development, the portfolio creative product has a precedent in the way established creative writers often publish a book of Selected Works or how visual artists might hold a Retrospective.

The requirement to present a portfolio creative product is designed to provide the examiner with a cross-career selection of the candidate’s work as the focus material for the concerns and argument of the exegesis. Furthermore, the in-candidature curation or re-composition of the prior creative arts outputs will give the candidate the opportunity, in an artistic and creative mode, to select, shape and mobilize the various elements of the portfolio product so as to maximize its capacity to productively address the research problem or question.

Some candidates may take the opportunity the degree offers to produce, through the combination of their previous works, a new, singular work. However, the intention behind the portfolio creative product is certainly not to promote the retrospective forging of artificial connections across works. Instead, besides stimulating the candidate to consider their career outputs using a wide lens, the portfolio will enable a methodological activation of their creative work as fresh material orientated towards a sustained and original contribution to knowledge.

In cases where it is impractical to curate the prior works in their original art form, as might sometimes occur in the Performing, Visual or Media Arts, for example, equivalent documentation or materials will be accepted for examination. Such evidence must, as far as possible, capture the artistic and creative rigour and complexity of the prior outputs. Examiners for this degree will be expected to have some degree of familiarity with the creative arts outputs of the candidate over their career to date, although this does not lessen the onus on the candidate to describe, analyse and critique their own work, in the exegesis, as part of their engagement with a research problem or question.

The Nature of the Thesis

The thesis for the degree of PhD by Prior Publications in the Creative Arts takes the form of a portfolio creative work accompanied by an exegesis. The expected thesis word count is 80,000 to 100,000 words or equivalent. The exegesis will be a minimum of 25,000 words and a maximum of 50,000 words.

Portfolio Creative Work and Exegesis

The creative work comprises, in portfolio form, a curation or re-composition of at least three major outputs produced by the candidate at any time prior to enrolment in the degree over the course of their professional career to date.

The accompanying exegesis addresses a research question or gap in knowledge in scholarly fashion, in the process incorporating an engagement with the accompanying portfolio creative work that sets the outputs it samples within the context of the candidate's career as a practitioner, professional artist and thinker.

In an appendix to the exegesis, the candidate will provide a list of the prior works discussed in the exegesis.

The Examiner's Report

You are asked to complete your recommendation on the outcome of the examination and to provide a written report in English giving the reasons for the recommendation. This is to be done in the online examination system. The report should be complete in itself; annotations in the thesis are not a substitute for the written report but can be sent via email or post if you have made any typographical corrections in the thesis. Examiners are asked to report independently.

Examiners may require the candidate to respond to questions on the thesis. If there are matters that require elucidation, please send a list of questions to the Examinations Officer HDR (see below for contact details). The responses will be sent to you to enable you to complete your examination.

There is no prescribed format for the report as conventions vary between disciplines but it should be at least one page and can be up to ten pages, depending on the changes required. Reports can be structured commenting on the learning outcomes or a chapter-by-chapter review of the thesis. You can also include any suggestions to the student regarding future publications and a list of typographical errors if appropriate.

Your response is requested within eight weeks of receipt of the thesis. If circumstances arise that prevent you completing the examination by the due date, please contact the

Examinations Officer HDR.

The Recommendation Form

Examiners are asked to select one of the five following recommendations.

Recommendation 1 (the degree be awarded)

This recommendation is appropriate where the thesis meets the standard required for the degree. This includes cases where there are small style or typographical errors that do not impact on the substance of the thesis, but should be corrected in the Library copy.

Recommendation 2

Make this recommendation where the thesis meets the standards required for the degree but some revisions are required that affect the presentation of the thesis rather than the substance; that is changes that can be approved by the Head of School rather than requiring your input. Please identify in your report the changes and corrections that should be made by the candidate. Your report will be used to provide guidance to the candidate in making the changes, and to the Head of School in determining that the changes are satisfactory.

Recommendation 2.1 (the degree be awarded provided that the textual errors and other minor matters identified in my report are corrected to the satisfaction of the Head of School)

Make this recommendation where there are minor textual errors or omissions, or minor corrections to passages of text are required.

Recommendation 2.2 (the degree be awarded provided that the matters identified in my report are addressed to the satisfaction of the Head of School)

Make this recommendation if substantial changes or corrections are required to improve the presentation of the thesis. This may include rewriting passages of text, addressing minor omissions, and correcting extensive textual and typographical errors.

Recommendation 3 (the degree not be awarded but the candidate be permitted to revise the thesis in response to the examiners' reports and present if for re-examination)

Make this recommendation if the thesis requires substantial revision and must be returned to the examiners for re-examination. Please state clearly in your report the weaknesses and shortcomings of the thesis, which led to your recommendation. Your report will be used to provide guidance to the candidate on how to revise the thesis for re-examination. The Regulation directs that, as far as possible, the revised thesis should be examined by the original examiners. When the revision is almost complete, we will approach you to ask if you are prepared to act again.

Recommendations 4.1 and 4.2 (the degree not be awarded but the appropriate degree of master be awarded) (NOT APPLICABLE TO MASTERS DEGREES)

As defined earlier, the PhD degree is awarded for "a substantial original contribution" achieved in two to four years of full-time candidature. It is the outcome of a project treated with a greater depth of scholarship and research than is required for the masters degree or possible in the shorter time allowed. Recommendation 4 allows an examiner to recommend the award of a masters degree for a thesis submitted for a PhD. However in no sense is a

masters degree a “failed PhD”, and this recommendation will only be appropriate in the few cases where the thesis is at the standard of a masters degree rather than at the doctoral level. A thesis with particular deficiencies rather than simply lacking in depth should receive another response.

If you make one of these recommendations please state clearly in your report the basis for the recommendation.

4.1 is a recommendation of a masters degree with no amendments.

If you make recommendation 4.2 please indicate in your report the minor changes and corrections that should be made by the candidate before the thesis is accepted.

Recommendation 5 (the degree not be awarded)

If you make recommendation 5, please state clearly in your report the weaknesses and major shortcomings of the thesis, which led to your recommendation.

Availability of the report

The examiners reports are given to the candidate at the conclusion of the examination process. In recognising the importance of a visible research community, Deakin University encourages examiners to permit their identity to be disclosed to the candidate; but also respects and abides by the wishes of those who request to remain anonymous.

As a courtesy, a copy of the report for each examiner is sent to the other examiners of the thesis at the end of the examination process.

Communication with the University during the Examination

You are asked to conduct all communication in relation to the examination through:

Examinations Officer HDR Deakin Research
Deakin University
325 Burwood Highway
Burwood
3125, Australia.

telephone: 03 5227 1090 [international: +61 3 5227 1090]

E-mail: research-examinations@deakin.edu.au