

Faculty of Arts and Education

Higher Degree by Research

Confirmation Procedures

The Faculty's confirmation take two forms:

1. First year confirmation
2. Transfer and/or upgrading confirmation

Confirmation

The confirmation, mandatory for all higher degree by research students will **normally** take place at nine months for full time PhD candidates or within fifteen months for part-time PhD candidates. Masters candidates undertake their confirmation at six months or within twelve months for part time candidates.

Conventional Format

Candidates whose work leads to a **conventional thesis** should present a document for the confirmation of approximately 15,000 words for a PhD and 9000 words for a Masters (usually based on an introduction that backgrounds the research) Literature Review and Research Methodology and Design - as outlined below. The document should be forwarded **two weeks in advance to the Faculty Research Services office**.

The document should comprise six major sections

1. **Statement of problem and context (approximately 750 words – for both PhD and masters)**

Including:

- a brief statement of the overarching **research problem or question**
- the **rationale** for the proposed research and its **significance**
- a discussion of **relevant theoretical perspectives**
- and the disciplinary or intellectual **context** in which the research will be conducted

2. **Literature Review and Background (approximately 9000 words (PhD) and 5000 (Masters))**

Candidates should demonstrate that they are familiar with the **relevant literature**, i.e. relevant current debates and how this theoretical discussion underpins their research.

3. **Research Design and Methodology (approximately 5000 words PhD) and 3000 (Masters))**

Candidates should demonstrate that they are able to discuss their proposed conceptual framing, which influences the research design. Equally, candidates need to articulate how the theoretical framing influenced their chosen research **methodology**. The design and methodology arguments regarding their **appropriateness** involves making transparent how the overarching problem or question will be resolved or answered.

4. **Bibliography or references (approximately 250 words)**

Key representative works consulted or cited, presented in the format typically used in the relevant field of enquiry.

5. **Ethics approval**

A brief statement of whether the research project requires ethics approval, and, if so, anticipated time of application should be noted in (6).

6. **Research plan and timetable**

Students should demonstrate that they can clearly describe their work schedule to date and indicate their future work schedule up to the anticipated submission of the thesis, usually:

- 3yrs FT or 6yrs PT(PhD)
 - 2yrs FT or 4yrs PT(Masters)
- on a chapter-by-chapter or phase-by-phase basis

Creative Practice & Exegetical Format

Creative Practice & Exegetical students not involved in the traditional or conventional thesis, that is, those involved in **studio practice or creative writing**, should develop a document for the confirmation of approximately 6,000 words, accompanied by a relevant **Sample of Practice** sufficient to elucidate the key areas of investigation, future directions and principal ideas and modes of the creative component.

Using the headings outlined below, these students should document a plan of their work, the framework of their research, their positioning in the field or fields, a literature review and background, and **show how the exegetical and creative components of their research project constitute a single thesis**. In line with the temper of practice-based research, students need to demonstrate the necessity of the creative component to the solution of their overarching research problem or question.

The document should comprise seven major sections, including **Sample/s of Practice**.

1. Statement of problem and context of practice/creative work/performance (approximately 1500 words)

Including:

- a brief statement of the overarching **research problem/question**
- the **rationale** for the proposed research and its **significance**
- a discussion of **relevant theoretical perspectives**
- and the disciplinary or intellectual **context** in which the research will be conducted

2. Literature review and background – for both exegesis and practice components (approximately 3000 words)

Students should demonstrate that they are familiar with the **relevant literature**, i.e. relevant current debates in and traversing both components.

3. Research methodology and design – for both exegesis and practice components (approximately 1500 words)

Students should demonstrate that they are able to discuss their proposed **research methodology and design for each component of their thesis**, ie how the overarching problem or question is to be resolved and the appropriateness of practice-based research for the particular research problem or question.

4. Bibliography (approximately 250 words)

Key representative works consulted or cited, presented in the format typically used in the relevant field/s of enquiry.

5. Ethics approval

A brief statement of whether the research project requires ethics approval, and, if so, anticipated time of application should be noted in (6).



6. Research plan and timetable

Students should demonstrate that they can clearly describe their work schedule to date and indicate their future work schedule up to the anticipated submission of the thesis, usually:

- 3yrs FT or 6yrs PT (PhD)
 - 2yrs FT or 4yrs PT (Masters)
- on a chapter-by-chapter or phase-by-phase basis

7. Sample/s of practice

Students should present examples of creative work/s that have sought to test, refine, and elaborate the formative research problem/question so as to outline how the practice-based research has developed pre-confirmation.

Panel and Proceedings

The confirmation panel is organised by the Faculty Research Services office in consultation with the (Executive) Principal Supervisor approximately three months before the scheduled date. The (Executive) Principal Supervisor is required to arrange a Chair and an external panel member.

The panel includes:

- the actual or acting Principal Supervisor/s
- the Associate Supervisor(s) (and External Research Supervisor if applicable)
- the Chair, drawn from the Professoriate, who will chair the meeting and compile an online report of the recommendation of the panel
- and an independent member drawn from another institution, Faculty, School, or Independent Practice.

Although it is desirable that the student attend the confirmation in person, in exceptional circumstances, should he or she be unable to attend in person for reasons of distance (residence overseas) or disability, then a video-conference may be organised.

HIGHER DEGREES BY RESEARCH (HDR) ACADEMIC PROGRESS PROCEDURE