

Creative Practice PhD Guidelines

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Dean of Postgraduate Research

1. Kupu Whakataki | Introduction

These guidelines provide information for PhD students who are enrolling in a PhD in Creative Practice.

A PhD in Creative Practice is a distinctive form of doctoral study that includes creative arts or design outputs as recognised contributions to academic knowledge. This approach typically involves the creation of an original creative work; such as an art exhibition, design project, or musical composition or performance, integrated with a written component known as an exegesis (thesis).

Creative Practice uses the creative process as a means of uncovering new insights, ranging from addressing wider societal issues to interventions at community level or to the practitioner's own artistic practice. As a PhD subject, it provides an interdisciplinary space for the production of ground-breaking research and seeks to produce graduates with a deep knowledge of practice, theory and scholarship across their areas of creative research. Researchers incorporate their creative practice into the research design and as a part of the research output.

This programme is for students who have undertaken courses with creative practice content at undergraduate and graduate level and who wish to pursue doctoral study that recognises creative practice outputs as high-level contributions to knowledge in their field.

Creative Practice as a PhD subject is distinct from the work usually undertaken for named doctorates which focus primarily on professional training in the visual or performing arts.

2. Aratohu | Guidelines

These guidelines outline the information and structure of the PhD in Creative Practice. It is assumed that unless otherwise stipulated, students will follow the same processes outlined for a PhD candidate in the regulations and policies. If further clarification is required, please contact Te Kura Tāura | UC Graduate School (graduateschool@canterbury.ac.nz).

3. Regulations

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the [PhD Regulations](#), and the

[Research Student Supervision Policy](#). If anything in these guidelines conflicts with UC Regulations or policies, the Regulations and policies prevail.

4. Definitions:

Artifact / Scholarly Creative Output or Creative Work: A substantial creative work produced as part of research in creative practice. It represents both the product of the creative process and a contribution to knowledge, taking various forms across artistic mediums, such as visual art, performances, designs, digital media, literature, journalism, and curatorial studies. Examples include a major solo exhibition or portfolio in Fine Arts; a portfolio of compositions, original recordings, or recitals in Music; a novel, poetry collection, or play script in Creative Writing; and a portfolio with documentary films and published articles in Journalism. Presented alongside a written exegesis, the creative output serves as examinable work that demonstrates the integration of research and creativity. For the purpose of this guideline, an artifact, Scholarly creative output or creative work will be referred to as a “creative output”.

Exegesis: A scholarly text (40,000 – 60,000 words) that explains, contextualises, and critically reflects on the creative work, demonstrating how it advances knowledge within the field. The creative output and the exegesis together form the basis for examination.

Graduate Research Coordinator for Creative Practice (GRC) is an academic staff member responsible for overseeing and supporting creative practice students and staff supervising students in this PhD subject area. This role is the main point of contact across the various Departments and Te Kura Tāura / UC Graduate School. Please see [Graduate Research Coordinator list](#) for the Creative Practice GRC.

Head of Department/School For the purpose of identifying the HOD/S in terms of these guidelines; The HOD/S refers to the department where the Senior Supervisor is employed.

5. Structure of the Thesis

A thesis in Creative Practice is comprised of:

1. Written Exegesis (40-60,000 words)

The written exegesis follows the general structure of a thesis and which demonstrates expert understanding of the discipline, reflects critically on creative practice, and locates the work in relation to current theory and criticism. The exegesis relates directly to the creative output component and as such does not have a separate research topic or question. The exegesis should include an overview which contextualises both the creative and the written components within their relevant fields. This overview would normally be between 1-2 pages at the beginning of the exegesis.

2. Creative output

The creative output demonstrates substantial understanding of the expressive form and fields of research and creative practice in which it is situated. Text-based creative outputs (such as poetry, prose fiction, song lyrics) form part of the creative output component/output and not the exegesis.

6. Application/Admission

6.1 Pathways

The PhD in Creative Practice is available to students from a range of disciplines including (but not limited to): Music, Fine Arts, Creative Writing, Art History, Māori and Indigenous Studies, Pacific Studies, Media and Communication, Product Design, and Digital Screen.

Some examples of UC degrees that include creative, practice-based research that would be pathways into the PhD in Creative Practice include:

[Master of Fine Arts](#)

[Master of Writing](#),

[Master of Music](#), and

[Postgraduate Diploma in Art Curatorship](#).

6.2 Required information

In addition to meeting the usual entry requirements for the PhD; at admission, applicants will be required to:

1. have completed a relevant entry qualification which includes a creative component. In cases where applicants have a qualification that does not include a creative component (e.g. an MA by thesis only), they will be required to demonstrate equivalent professional experience in creative practice.
2. provide documentation of their creative practice to be assessed for their suitability for the Creative Practice subject.
3. Provide a statement of research intent, noting how their proposed exegesis will relate to the creative output.

6.3 Academic recommendation to the Dean (Admission form)

The Graduate Research Coordinator for Creative Practice will make a recommendation to the Dean of Postgraduate Research (or delegate) regarding the suitability of the applicant to undertake a PhD in Creative Practice via the PhD admission summary. This recommendation will be based on the evidence submitted in the admission process. The Dean of

Postgraduate Research (or delegate) will consider this recommendation when assessing whether the applicant meets the broader [admission requirements](#) of the PhD.

6.4 Confirmation of Required Resourcing (Admission form)

The resourcing required to support the PhD in Creative Practice must be discussed with the Department at the point of admission. The presentation of a creative output as part of the PhD examination process may involve significant resource considerations. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department/School to ensure that adequate resources are available for the research and examination, particularly when examiners need to attend a performance or an exhibition. Applicants must declare their resource requirements (with support of their nominated senior supervisor) at the time of application, and the Head of Department/School will evaluate these requirements before making a recommendation for admission into the degree. The cost of examiners attending the examination and/or a live performance or exhibition will be covered by the department.

7. Transfer applications

Students currently enrolled in a PhD in another subject either at UC or at another University, may apply to transfer into Creative Practice (CRPR790). Normally, a transfer should be completed prior to or at the confirmation stage, with evidence of the creative output (as per 6.1 of these guidelines).

8. Supervision

At least one member of the supervisory team needs to have professional experience as a practitioner in the relevant creative field and at least one member of the supervisory team needs to be research active in written scholarly publication (journal articles, monographs, book chapters, etc.).

9. Milestones

9.1 Confirmation

Students' candidature in the PhD in Creative Practice is considered provisional until the confirmation process has been successfully completed.

Within the [Confirmation Process](#) creative practice PhD students must:

- i. Identify the intended examinable format of the creative output to be presented as part of the exegesis requirement
- ii. Detail how the total work submitted for examination will form an integrated whole in terms of research project, research process and presentation of research outcome(s)

- iii. Satisfy the confirmation panel as to their ability to undertake creative practice research at doctoral level
- iv. Present some of their creative work as part of the confirmation process.

Following confirmation of candidature, major changes to the approved research plan and associated resource requirements must be approved by the Supervisor, Head of Department/School and Dean of Postgraduate Research.

9.2 Progress reports

Progress Reports (submitted every 6 months following confirmation of candidature) must report on progress for both the exegesis and creative output.

10. Submission and Examination

10.1 Examination plan

Six months prior to the submission of the exegesis and creative output, students should work with their supervisor and submit an examination plan to Te Kura Tāura | UC Graduate School. This plan should detail the format of the PhD examination (e.g., is a live performance or exhibition component needed?). Note that if an examiner is required to attend the examination in person, this must be approved by the department in advance as the department will be responsible for travel costs for the examiner.

10.2 PhD Submission

The exegesis and creative output must be submitted for examination. The creative output must be submitted in one of the following formats:

- I. as print material integrated with the written document into a complete exegesis document
- II. as a digital recording that can accompany the exegesis
- III. as a single live performance and/or exhibition of a creative output, If a live performance or exhibition has not occurred prior to the examination which is being examined.

The candidate, together with support from their supervisors, must arrange for all performances and or exhibitions being presented for examination to be recorded and ensure that the quality of the digital recordings is appropriate for the purpose of the examination process and or submission to the UC Repository.

10.3 Examination

The examination of a PhD in Creative Practice can be examined in one of two ways:

- I. Where the creative output (or a digital representation) is sent to the examiners, along with the exegesis. In this case, the creative output and the exegesis is submitted by the final submission date. The normal PhD examination procedures are followed.
- II. Where the examiners are required to attend a performance /exhibition in person, as well as examine the exegesis. In this case, the exegesis must be submitted by the final submission date. If students have documentation of the creative practice in a submission ready format, they may provide this to the examiners in order to prepare for the live event.
 - I. Examiners will be given 4 to 6 weeks to read the exegesis in preparation for the live performance or exhibition
 - II. both examiners will be required to attend the live performance/exhibition
 - III. Examiners will then be given 6 weeks following the live event to write their PhD examination report and recommendation regarding the outcome of the 'written' examination. The normal PhD oral examination process will then be followed.

In both cases, a digital record of all creative works must be uploaded to the UC Research Repository upon completion.

10.4 Appointment of Examiners:

At least one examiner must have extensive professional experience as a practitioner in the relevant creative field.

If attendance to a live performance or exhibition is required, careful consideration should be given when appointing the appropriate examiners to ensure they are available to attend in person.

10.5 Examination with a live performance/exhibition

In cases where an examiner is required to attend a live event, attendance at only one live performance or exhibition will be required.

The department must ensure the live performance or exhibition has been organised by the due date and attendance by the examiners, and bear the costs associated with the attendance of the examiner/s.

He kōrero anō | Related Documents and Information

Ngā Waeture | UC Regulations

- [General Regulations](#)
- [Qualification Regulations](#)

Te Pātaka Kaupapa Here | UC Policy Library

- [Research Student Supervision Policy](#)
- [Thesis Availability Policy](#)
- [Staff Code of Conduct](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)

Te Pae Tukutuku me te Ipurangiroti o UC | UC Website and Intranet

- [Forms, policies and guidelines for Doctoral students \(University website\)](#)
- [Te Kura Tāura | UC Graduate School Homepage \(University website\)](#)
- [Raise a concern for Staff and Students \(University website\)](#)
- [Research Homepage \(University website\)](#)
- [University of Canterbury website \(University website\)](#)

Document History and Version Control Table			
Version	Action	Approval Authority	Action Date
1.00	Document approved by Dean of Postgraduate Research	Dean of Postgraduate Research	