INFORMATION FOR THE EXAMINER
OF THE HONOURS DEGREE OF MASTER
(by dissertation and creative work)

GENERAL

- The Honours degree of Master (by dissertation and creative work) may be awarded by Academic Senate on the recommendation of the Higher Degree Research Committee solely on the results of the examination in conjunction of a body of materials (henceforth 'the project') consisting of a creative component (in music, writing, video, film, new media, etc) and a dissertation.

- In some cases work done conjointly may be accepted provided that:
  (a) the Higher Degree Research Committee is satisfied that the work done by the candidate meets the criteria for the award (Refer Part I Examiner Report Form)
  (b) the thesis is structured to show explicitly the contribution of parties involved and thus enable examiners to make the judgements on the criteria.

- A candidate may not submit as the main substance of the project any critical/conceptual work or material which has been previously submitted for any degree but may incorporate that work or material in the thesis, if the candidate specifies the work or material that has been so incorporated. No creative components may be submitted as part of the project which have been published or submitted for publication prior to candidature.

- For the purposes of examination the dissertation is to be weighted as at least 30% of the project. It is deemed that 30% is equivalent to approximately 20,000 – 25,000 words (an Honours master thesis is normally subject to an 80,000 word limit). The candidate may opt for a larger dissertation component, but in all cases the proportion must be specified at the beginning of the dissertation. The dissertation must be theoretical, conceptual or analytical; it must stand in some specific relation to the creative component.

- The size of the creative component is not specified, and will vary according to the candidate's area and medium. For example, the creative component in music could be: a written score; a compositional folio containing a number of pieces which might be in different forms; software; video; audio recording(s); etc. In writing, the creative component could be: a novel; biography; a collection of shorter pieces; a volume in poems; etc. Candidates may also choose to integrate the creative and the critical components, as eg. In ficto-critical writing or essay films.

- The University requires that postgraduate research be supervised, and the name of a candidate's supervisor appears at the top of the examiner's report form. Supervisors do not act as examiners. They are invited to report to the Committee on a candidate's performance but are not required to do so. A candidate may submit a thesis for examination against a supervisor's advice.

- Professional contact between candidates and examiners might be expected but examiners should not have been involved in a supervisory role in the preparation of the thesis, as in the reading of draft thesis material. Examiners may consult other examiners about a thesis should they consider it desirable. Examiners may make a conjoint report if they wish, however this occurs rarely.

- Examiners are invited to retain the thesis for their personal use unless otherwise advised by the Higher Degree Research Office. A claim for postage may be submitted.

- It is expected that examiners will be able to complete their examination and submit reports within six weeks of receipt of the thesis. Reports may be faxed ((61 2) 9850 6198), e-mailed (hdrexam@vc.mq.edu.au) or posted to the Higher Degree Research Office. To minimise delays, it is most helpful if examiners fax or e-mail their report and return the original documents in the mail.

CRITERIA

A thesis submitted for the Honours degree of Master (by dissertation and creative work) is to be evaluated according to the following criteria:

(a) that the dissertation component makes a contribution to knowledge in the area with which it is deals by presenting new perspective, and by demonstrating an independent critical ability to evaluate aspects of the area in a new light.

(b) that the dissertation and creative components are appropriately linked

(c) that the creative component is proficient in its handling of the chosen medium and/or genre, and affords...
evidence of substantial originality in conception and/or execution
(d) that both components are satisfactory as regards their form (eg literary) presentation
(e) that the project contains material suitable for publication and/or public promotion or performance. The crucial term here is suitable: there is no requirement that a creative work must gain entry to the public domain.

EXAMINER’S REPORTS

Examiner’s report forms contain two parts.

Part I provides for a summary judgement on the thesis and requests one of a number of possible recommendations. Part I of the report is normally confidential to the Higher Degree Research Committee. Any comments intended as advice for the Higher Degree Research Committee, rather than the candidate, should be provided on a separate sheet and attached to Part I of your report. Examiners should be aware that it is likely that this part of the report would be released to the candidate if requested under Freedom of Information legislation.

Part II is your report to the candidate. Please state concisely but explicitly the grounds on which the recommendation is based, indicating the strengths and weaknesses of the project. This should be in sufficient detail for candidates to gain clear understanding of your opinion of their work and the means by which your conclusions were reached.

Where further work is required, please indicate clearly those revisions and/or corrections which you wish to see made. Supplementary sheets may be attached. On completion of the examination, a copy of Part II of your report identifying you as the author will be released to the candidate.

REQUEST FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Before making a recommendation, an examiner may request further information from the candidate. This can be arranged by contacting the Higher Degree Research Office.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendations, as summarised on Part I of the Examiner Report Form.

CRITERIA FOR THE AWARD OF THE LESSER DEGREE

A project submitted for the Degree of Master (by dissertation and creative work) would be evaluated according to the following criteria:

(a) that the dissertation component has adequately delineated the topic of concern in the context of current knowledge from the perspective of theoretical and/or conceptual and/or professional positions
(b) that the dissertation and creative components are appropriately linked
(c) that the creative component is proficient in its handling of the chosen medium and/or genre, and affords evidence of originality in conception and/or execution
(d) that both components are satisfactory as regards their form (eg literary) presentation
(e) that the project contains material suitable for publication and/or public promotion or performance. The crucial term here is suitable: there is no requirement that a creative work must gain entry to the public domain.

RESULT OF EXAMINATION

❖ When all examiner's reports are to hand, comments are sought from the candidate's supervisor for the information of Higher Degree Research Committee.
❖ After considering all reports the Higher Degree Research Committee may, in general:
  (a) recommend the award of the degree;
  (b) require that corrections to the thesis to the satisfaction of the University be carried out by the candidate before the award of the degree;
  (c) require that the candidate undertakes further study and/or deliberation, and resubmits the project for re-examination by one or more examiners;
  (e) in the event of marked disagreement amongst examiners, appoint a further examiner, moderator or adjudicator, or request that an oral examination be held;
  (f) recommend that the degree be not awarded.
❖ Under the University rules, it is the Academic Senate which determines that a candidate has satisfied the requirements for award of the degree.

Higher Degree Research Office
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