

NOTES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF CHAIRPERSON OF EXAMINERS OF MASTER OF MUSIC RESEARCH SUBMISSION

STANDARD FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE

The degree of Master of Music Research (*MMusRes*) is awarded for an integrated program of structured learning and independent supervised study that produces a substantial piece of research in the form of a thesis for independent examination by at least two expert examiners, at least one of whom is external to the University and of international standing.

PURPOSE AND NATURE OF THE MASTER OF MUSIC RESEARCH

This program progressively develops the highest possible skills in musical practice and research by providing training in advanced musical scholarship, promoting reflective professional activity and providing opportunities for innovative research and creative accomplishment.

THE EXAMINATION BOARD

At least two expert examiners of international standing, at least one of whom is external to the University are appointed to assess the thesis. A member of staff of the University is appointed as Chairperson of Examiners, whose task is to consider the reports of the examiners and make a recommendation to the University on the outcome of the examination.

The thesis examination process is conducted online through the Examiner's Evaluation Workcentre located in the Griffith University home page: www.griffith.edu.au>Griffith Portal>Research>Academic Resources>Evaluation Workcentre:

- Examiners are asked to provide their recommendation on results of examination.
- Examiners are asked to provide a justification for their recommendation and a general evaluation of the thesis. Please note that in the case of competing recommendations, a recommendation may need to be set aside if not supported by a report detailing the justification for the recommendation.

Examiners must make an independent report and recommendation and are asked not to communicate directly with the candidate, the candidate's supervisor/s or each other.

Candidates are provided with copies of reports of the examiners and Chairperson of Examiners with their identity expunged. The identity of the examiners and Chairperson of Examiners will be revealed to the candidate when the examination is concluded.

THE EXAMINATION

The Master of Music Research requires candidates to complete a written dissertation and a body of creative work, which together constitute their research output. The dissertation and creative works may be examined together or separately, depending on the nature of the project. This is advised at the time of submission, and examiners are provided with this information by the Thesis Examination Office. Examiners are requested to note the following:

1. Where a dissertation and a portfolio of creative works have been submitted together for examination, the examination should encompass both items, and a single mark should be provided that encompasses both the dissertation and the portfolio.
2. In some circumstances, **a dissertation may be submitted with recordings of live performances that have been assessed separately, but which may accompany the thesis for the purposes of cross-referencing.** In these circumstances, the examination should be of the written dissertation only.

Examiners are advised to check with the Thesis Examination Office if they are unsure which of these two circumstances apply to the work they are examining.

The dissertation should be around 12,000 words in length, though candidates may combine two or three smaller papers into an 8,000 or a 12,000 word thesis if the nature of the topic requires more specific treatment.

The dissertation should include an explanation of the structure, including portfolio items if relevant, in the introduction. The dissertation should clearly relate to the creative work, and should document some aspects of the research which has informed it. The dissertation is therefore not only musicological in nature but may reflect a range of practical research activities and approaches. Among many possibilities, the research may relate to aspects of the works presented, the instrument, performance practice, pedagogical issues or it may be a reflective paper, which documents the process of preparation involved. In assessing the dissertation and portfolio (if applicable), thesis examiners are requested to write a short report of 1-2 pages assessing the quality of the research presented. Minor corrections should be marked clearly in the dissertation copy. They are also asked to consider that the project should -

- demonstrate the candidate's ability to conduct a competent research investigation and
- where possible, consider the value and relevance of the document to the candidate's performance/presentations and
- base their remarks and recommended result with regard to the assessment criteria set out below.

In making a report on the dissertation, their comments and suggestions should be detailed enough to enable the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School to determine the quality of the dissertation. Specific comments relating to the following were requested:

- the extent to which the candidate has demonstrated originality, critical insight and the capacity to carry out independent research;
- the extent of the contribution to knowledge in a relevant field of professional practice;
- the standard of the creative work;
- the suitability of the dissertation or elements within it for publication.

They are also asked to make a recommendation according to the four categories specified in the Evaluation Workcentre in the Griffith Portal, namely that:

- The submission meets the requirements and the candidate should be awarded the degree;
- The degree should be awarded subject to approved revisions or amendments;
- The submission should be revised and resubmitted; or
- The submission does not meet the standard expected for the degree.

For the purposes of future scholarship application at Griffith University **ONLY**, examiners are also asked to recommend a percentage grade for the thesis:

7	(High Distinction)	=	80% - 100%
6	(Distinction)	=	70% - 79%
5	(Credit)	=	60% - 69%
4	(Pass)	=	50% - 59%
3	(Fail)	=	below 50%

Where there is substantial disagreement between the examiners, the University may appoint a third examiner or an adjudicator examiner to consider and report on the thesis and on the reports of the examiners.

ROLE OF CHAIRPERSON OF EXAMINERS

The task of the Chairperson of Examiners is to consider the reports of the examiners and make a recommendation to the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School on the outcome of the examination. The Chairperson of Examiners does not undertake an independent examination of the thesis, although he/she may need to consult the thesis in order to make judgements about the comments of the examiners. The Chairperson's report to the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School should include a number of sections:

1. **A brief summary/overview of the examination reports.**
2. **A collation of the examination reports.** The collation may be provided under the headings in the examiners summary form (ie significance of substantial contribution to the knowledge of the topic, standard of literacy presentation; methodology; survey of literature and documentation of statements; suitability for publication).

3. **Recommendation on the outcome of the examination**, including:

- description of the extent and nature of any new work/revisions/corrections that **must** be completed in order for the degree to be awarded;
- description of what new work/revisions/corrections are optional or desirable;
- a recommendation on who should oversee and assess any new work/revisions/corrections. In most circumstances, it is expected that the Chairperson of Examiners will verify minor revisions and corrections; and
- a timeframe for completion of any new work/revisions/corrections.

When the reports of the examiners cannot be sufficiently reconciled, a recommendation should be made on whether:

- a third examiner should be appointed;
- an adjudicator examiner should be appointed to consider and report on the thesis and on the reports of the examiners.

FURTHER INFORMATION

A copy of an example report or further advice on the role of the Chairperson or the examination procedure may be obtained from:

Thesis Examinations Office
Griffith Graduate Research School
Griffith University
Bray Centre (N54) 2.01
Nathan QLD 4111
Australia

Email: thesisexams@griffith.edu.au
Phone: +61 7 373 53817

* * * * *