Doctor of Philosophy (Theatre Performance)
Notes for Examiners

1. Governance

All matters pertaining to the PhD degree are the responsibility of the Graduate Research Committee under the general direction of the University's Academic Board.

2. The submitted work

The PhD (Theatre Performance) is undertaken by 100% research and results in two assessable components, a performance project and a thematically related written dissertation.

The performance project:

- Should embody evidence of the candidate’s research into the social, historical and/or performance contexts of the project as well as the theoretical issues germane to the project. It should demonstrate that the candidate has developed the capacity to manipulate the aesthetic elements of the chosen practice genre in order to make an advanced work of theatre performance.
- Will be in one of the following practice genres: directing, theatre making and writing for performance, where the outcome is a directed performance, a created performance work or a written performance text. When the creative project is a performance text, the examination can be based on either a performance of the text or the written text itself. Where the primary examination of the creative project is on the written text, examiners will be invited to a rehearsed reading.
- Will normally be 60-90 minutes in duration and examined as a live presentation in a public venue or an equivalent performance text.
- May include a performance programme outlining the research features of the project.

The written dissertation:

- The written dissertation should demonstrate that the candidate has developed the capacity to research and address contextual, methodological and/or theoretical issues related to the themes or problem explored in the performance project. It should demonstrate that the candidate has acquired the ability to research and contribute to performance studies.
- Will normally be between 30,000 to 35,000 words in length.

Examiners will be sent a bound copy of the written dissertation together with a DVD or video recording of the performance or the written performance text, as appropriate.
3. Appointment of examiners

- Three persons, each external to the University, shall be nominated as possible examiners. Two nominees will be appointed as examiners and will undertake the examination of the full work (performance project and written dissertation). The third nominee will attend the live presentation of the performance if appropriate for the examination of the creative project, but will hold their report on file, to be used only should the appointment of an adjudicator or replacement examiner become necessary in the examination process.

- It is the practice at Monash University to release the names of examiners who have agreed to act to the candidate when the work is dispatched for examination.

- The work is forwarded to an examiner in confidence. An examiner is under an obligation to maintain confidentiality and in no circumstance should the work or any part of the examination process be discussed with a third party without the prior approval of the Monash University Institute of Graduate Research.

- There should not normally be any direct contact between the examiner and candidate and/or supervisor during the examination process. Any communication should be via the Monash University Institute of Graduate Research.

4. The examination process

- Examiners attend the live presentation of the performance project, if relevant, but must not consult with each other before, during or after the performance. Examiners are asked to write a report on the performance immediately after the presentation and hold this report on file until the accompanying written dissertation and, if relevant, performance text is received by post.

- The written dissertation will be submitted to the Monash University Institute of Graduate Research within three months of the performance presentation. The bound written dissertation will be sent to the examiners together with a DVD or video recording of the performance project or written performance text. The examiners then complete the pro forma report form and write a detailed report on the written dissertation and the performance project.

- Once the examination is complete, the examiner should return the DVD/video, written dissertation and, if relevant, the written performance text to the Monash University Institute of Graduate Research together with their report.

5. Examiner's assessment

- The Graduate Research Committee wishes to receive clear advice on specific aspects of the work and, to this end, the examiner is asked to respond to each statement in Section 1 of the enclosed examiner’s report form. If an examiner reports negatively on any aspects referred to in Section 1 then comments should be made in the examiner’s detailed report. A positive response must be received to statements (iv) and (v) in Section 1 of the report form for the work to pass.

- Recommendation 2(ii) Pass – amendments to Head of Department and 2(iii) Pass – amendments to examiner should be made only when the examiner can specify amendments with reasonable precision.
• An examiner may request that the University obtains clarification from the candidate on specific points in the work. Such requests should be made only through the Monash University Institute of Graduate Research.

• Oral examinations are not normally a part of the examination process. If the examiner has generated a list of questions from the examination, these can be put to the candidate via recommendation 2(iv) Pass-questions. Under this recommendation, a candidate would normally respond to these questions in writing and may amend the dissertation as result of this process.

• In the case of recommendation 2(v) Revision and Resubmission, if a revised performance project is required and the original examiner is prepared to act as examiner for the revised work, they will be initially notified of the re-performance dates by the supervisor.

• Where examiners deem it necessary to annotate the work, it should be done lightly in pencil or by the use of temporary adhesive labels.

6. Following receipt of both examiners’ reports

• Unedited copies of the examiners’ reports are forwarded to the candidate in due course.

• In the event that the two examiners disagree substantially in their assessment of the work, the relevant faculty is required to convene an advisory panel to determine a course of action. Most commonly an advisory panel will recommend either that:
  • the work be revised and resubmitted to the original dissenting examiner(s); or
  • an adjudicator be appointed to review the two examiners’ reports, the candidate’s response to the reports and the work itself. The third nominee would normally be appointed to adjudicate in this instance. The names of the examiners are not revealed to the adjudicator.

• Examiners will be advised when a candidate is asked to revise and resubmit his/her work.

• All examiners will be notified of the outcome of the examination.

For a detailed explanation of thesis and examination matters at Monash University please visit: http://www.mrgs.monash.edu.au/research/examination/index.html or contact the Research Degrees Examinations Unit.

Research Degrees Examinations Unit
Monash University Institute of Graduate Research
Building 3D, Clayton Campus,
Wellington Rd, VIC 3800, Australia

Telephone + 61 3 9905 3047  Facsimile + 61 3 9905 5042
Email migrexams@monash.edu