

Guidelines for alternative format Research Degree theses using Practice as Research: School of Arts and Humanities

NB:
Specific to the School of Arts and Humanities only. This document is intended to act as an exemplar for the development of similar subject-specific guidelines on alternative format research degrees in other schools, and, potentially initiate the development of some shared guidance on alternative format research degrees for all schools.

Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. What constitutes an alternative format thesis?	2
3. General principles for submission.....	3
4. Contents which make up an alternative format thesis	3
5. Progression Points for alternative format thesis research degrees	4
6. Word counts	4
7. Submission.....	4
8. The role of the supervisor	5
9. Criteria for judging the originality, impact, ‘contributions to knowledge’ pertinent to doctoral research.....	5
10. Subject specific guidelines on contents which make up an alternative format thesis with practical components	6
Subject specialism: creative writing	6
Subject specialism: History	6
Subject specialism: Drama, Theatre, and Performance	8
Subject specialism: Music Performance	9
Subject specialism: Music composition	12
Subject specialism: art and design, fashion and textiles, architecture and the built environment	13
Subject specialism: art and design, fashion and textiles	15
Subject specialism: architecture and the built environment	17

1. Introduction

QAA Characteristics statements for research degrees

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education provides the following characteristics for subject specialist doctorates (Doctor of Philosophy) with practical components:

- Practical work, such as in the creative and performing arts, may well form part of a candidate's output. The form of artefacts and outputs of a practical nature, sometimes involving multimedia, relates to the candidate's subject area rather than to the form of the degree programme.
(Category 1: Subject Specialist Doctorates, p.6)
- In the final assessment, candidates are assessed on their thesis, portfolio, artefact or composition (the latter two normally, and the portfolio sometimes, are accompanied by a critical commentary on the work), and by an oral examination (Category 1: Subject Specialist Doctorates, p.6)

Please read the QAA [Doctoral Degree Characteristics statement](#) for more information.

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education provides the following characteristics for subject specialist master's research degrees (MA by Research) with practical components:

- Assessment is specific to the individual and usually requires a dissertation or thesis, or other output, such as an artefact, performance or musical composition.
(Category 1: Research master's degrees, p.4)

Please read the QAA [Master's Degree Characteristics statement](#) for more information.

The guidance listed below is for *research degree students who are undertaking research with a practical component*. This is specific to subject specialisms in Music, Humanities, Media, Art, Design and Architecture. *The guidance is for supervisors and students who are considering an alternative format thesis research degree submission.*

2. What constitutes an alternative format thesis?

A research degree submission with a substantial practical component is considered an alternative format thesis. The knowledge presented as part of the research may constitute forms that accompany the written elements of a research degree. An alternative format thesis allows for subject specialist practices of research to be represented within the frameworks of PhD and MA by Research.

Subject to the agreement of the appropriate academic School, a candidate for the award of the degree of PhD or MA by Research may submit a project on a research topic which includes two elements:

- A written thesis/critical commentary and;
- A substantial practical component. This may take the form of outputs appropriate to the subject specialist field of study and include: artefacts, film, performance, creative writing,

music composition, photography, art, design, design-prototypes, curation, multi-media and architectural outputs.

Please note:

- The research outcomes must form a coherent whole. Research proposals required to undertake the research will be carefully reviewed with the candidate at the beginning of the research journey.
- In keeping with the Doctoral Degree Characteristic Statement (4.3), 'the body of work presented [must] demonstrate the research question and [provide] a critical evaluation of the extent to which it has been addressed.'

3. General principles for submission

The general principles for submission to a higher research degree (PhD or MA by Research) apply. Examiners will assess all submissions in accordance with the criteria for the award of PhD and MA by Research as set out in [Section E](#) and [Section B](#) respectively of the [Regulations for Awards \(Research Degrees\)](#)

The maximum word count for a research degree is 25,000 words (MA by Research) or 80,000 words (PhD). However, the balance between written and practical components in an alternative format thesis varies across subject specialisms. School specific guidelines outline subject specialist conventions where the practical and written components may vary in weighting. Both written and practical elements together should address the research question, the methodology adopted, the critical and theoretical framework for the research and demonstrate original research, analytical skill and rigour. School guidelines on subject specific submissions will carefully review these components as part of the alternative format submission.

The mode of submission for an alternative format thesis would normally be appropriate in the School of Arts and Humanities. The practical work must be undertaken on a registered research programme and in accordance with University and School subject specific guidelines.

The written and practical elements of the submission shall be submitted for examination in accordance with the [Regulations for Awards \(Research Degrees\)](#)

A record of the practical element of thesis will be deposited along with the written thesis in the University's Repository. The record of the practical element must be in a digital form (e.g. portfolio format). Please see [Section A4](#) of the Regulations for Awards (Research Degrees) and School subject specific guidelines on the submission of alternative format theses with practical components.

4. Contents which make up an alternative format thesis

Research with practical components may include:

- Portfolios of artworks/artefacts/designs/performance/creative writing and pieces of music. *(These guidelines are only applicable to disciplines in Schools that accept practice as a key element of research approaches.)*

5. Progression points for alternative format thesis research degrees

The progression points for Research Degrees (PhDs) using practice as research are the same as for standard format theses. However, the content of the submission would normally incorporate examples of the practice components (see subject-level guidance) alongside a written critical commentary.

The progression monitoring documentation will normally include:

- A critical review of appropriate literature and relevant practice;
- A critical methodology appropriate to the subject area;
- Discussion and analysis of research outcomes, including contextualisation of the practical components of the project;
- Critical evaluation of the outcomes in light of the literature and methodology.

At each progression point for Research Degrees with a practice component, the documentation should also outline and account for the following:

- How the practical and/or creative components are situated in relation to relevant historical, theoretical, critical and visual contexts;
- How the practical component is to be accompanied by written text;
- Where appropriate to the project, students may submit a sample of creative or practical work alongside a written text; please refer to school-based guidelines on word counts for progression.
- The word count of the thesis, indicating the relationship between the written and practice component. Please refer to subject-based guidelines.
- Any significant changes to structure and word count percentages should be addressed at the second progression point. These can be part of the supervisory team and panel assessor feedback.

6. Word counts

The maximum word count for a research degree is 25,000 words (MA by Research) or 80,000 words (PhD). However, the balance between written and practical components in an alternative format thesis varies across subject specialisms. Please refer to the School-based guidance (below) on the word count conventions for your subject specialism.

7. Submission

- Alternative format theses may include a portfolio of components appropriate to the field of study, for example, artefacts, film, performance, photography, music compositions, creative writing, architectural outputs, design prototypes.

- Submissions with a practical component (in the form of a portfolio) should provide a permanent record, stored in a way that is retrievable.
- Arrangements for an alternative format thesis should be approved by the Exam Arrangements team in consultation with the Director of Graduate Education and the supervisory team. This can include the public exhibition, display and/or performance of practical components of the project and be embedded into the examination process.
- Documenting practice – practice components included in a portfolio should be integral to the thesis development. This documentation should ideally be cross-referenced in the written work accompanying the project.
- Pre-existing work/compositions must not be included in the submission, except in accordance with Recognition of prior research under [Section A2](#) of the Regulations for Awards (Research Degrees).
- The written and practical elements of the project should be realised as a whole. The whole submission should meet the standards of doctoral level research as identified by the [QAA Qualifications Descriptor](#) for FHEQ level 7 or 8 as applicable.
- Please see school-based guidelines for advice on preparing a portfolio for submission.

8. The Role of the Supervisor

In addition to the University's standard guidelines on supervisor responsibilities, for alternative format theses the supervisor will be expected to:

- Ensure that any practical work is reviewed as part of the admissions process to assess suitability for research degree level study.
- Oversee, in consultation with the student, the practice and written components that make up an alternative format thesis.
- Advise the student, using school-based guidelines, on the submission of progression monitoring documentation and on the final submission of PhDs.
- Prepare suitable examination arrangements in line with agreed alternative format components in a timely manner, ensuring all examiners who attend a practice-based event have been formally approved.

9. Criteria for judging the originality, impact, 'contributions to knowledge' pertinent to doctoral research

The standard criteria for research degrees apply, and can be located in the [Regulations for Awards \(Research Degrees\)](#).

10. Subject specific guidelines on contents which make up an alternative format thesis with practical components

Subject specialism: Creative Writing

(MA by Research and PhD)

The MA by Research and PhD in Creative Writing are made up of creative and critical written components. Though the creative component may take a variety of forms, it is usually entirely in written form (for example, a novel, collection of poetry, or a number of short stories). The exact nature of the critical written component will depend upon the research aims of the project, but it will operate in dialogue with the creative work, reflecting on the creative practice and exploring the work in a critical context. The creative and critical elements together make up the thesis and are examined as a whole.

Word counts

For both MA by Research and PhD, the balance between creative and critical components is expected to be major/minor (creative/critical):

- For the MA by Research, the critical exegesis will typically be 5-10,000 words. There may be cases where a critical component longer than this is desired. This should be discussed with and approved by the supervisory team. The exegesis should not be below 5000 words. The creative component must be the equivalent of 15-20,000 words. The total of both components must not exceed 25,000.
- For the PhD, the critical exegesis will typically be 15-25,000 words. There may be cases where a critical component is longer than this. This should be discussed with the supervisory team and a rationale for the decision approved by the examination team at progression points. The rationale should explain how and why the divergence from existing subject convention is key to the specific underlying aims of the research project. The exegesis must not be below 15,000 words. The total of both components would not normally exceed 80,000.

Submission

- If the creative work is not, or is not entirely, in a standard written form (e.g. has online or performative elements) then the plan for the work must be approved by the supervisor and, in the case of a PhD, approved by the examination team at the first and second progression vivas.
- Submission of non-standard creative elements should be in line with University regulations and processes.

Subject specialism: History

(MA by Research and PhD)

These guidelines are for supervisors and students who are considering including practice-based elements as a part of a PhD or MA by Research portfolio submission in History. Students may include a practice-based element as part of their PhD or MA by Research submission if it directly relates to the written research component of their submission. Normally this would take the form of audio, or audio-visual, recordings, film, and/or a live performance (or performances), or a public exhibition (either online or for public display).

Word counts

Ordinarily, the PhD thesis : practice ratio will be 60,000 word written thesis : 20,000 word equivalent practice-based output

For the MA by Research, assessment will take one of the following forms, in relation to the above:

1. A written dissertation of 12,000 words
2. A reflective piece of 3,000 words (this can be submitted as a stand-alone piece or incorporated as a section of the dissertation)
3. A practice-based element of the research such as a film, exhibition or public workshop, or combination thereof, of 10,000 words equivalent, accompanied by a folio of evidence (see below on the content of the portfolio)

Submission

For the MA by Research and the PhD, practice and thesis should always be related, and should not be considered as two entirely distinct components. The alternative format thesis comprises practice AND thesis, to be considered and assessed as a whole, such that the practice supports the written work and vice versa. The final result will then be a reflection of the whole portfolio.

The reflective piece must demonstrate consideration of the ways in which the practice has informed the content of the written dissertation (for example in terms of methodology, research questions, source-base and findings), and the way in which the research has informed the public output (for co-produced practice-based outputs this must demonstrate the ways in which the candidate's individual research contributed to the final output). It must comment and reflect upon the evaluation data. It must also critically engage with contemporary research and writing in the fields of public history/ public engagement/ impact and situate the portfolio of written dissertation and practice-based element within this broader literature.

For the MA by Research, the portfolio should normally contain the following:

1. a log of work undertaken in preparing and delivering the practice-based element of the portfolio (in cases of co-produced outputs, this log must demonstrate the candidate's individual contribution to the practice-based element)
2. an audio/visual recording or photographic record of a production or public event; or a copy (supplied on a memory stick) of supporting written/ visual material such as exhibition panels or the programme / materials for a public workshop
3. copies of evaluation materials (e.g. surveys, recorded interviews, questionnaires) and summaries of evaluation data

Assessment is undertaken by an internal and external examiner through viva voce. The examiners must have access to the practice-based element. Where appropriate, examiners are to be invited by the supervisor to attend a practice-based event such as a theatre performance or an exhibition. It is the main supervisor's responsibility to ensure all examiners who attend a practice-based event have been formally approved.

The expected minimum standard is that all audio/visual recordings, that form part of the portfolio for final examination, are available for consideration by all examiners. It is the postgraduate researcher who is responsible to ensure there are audio/visual recordings available.

Additional information

The student is responsible for obtaining ethical clearance from the university where relevant for practice-based elements of the portfolio. They must obtain consent from all the participants for a recording of a public event such as a public workshop to be made. They must also obtain permission to share with the examiners any individuated evaluation data (such as recorded interviews) from the participants, and must anonymize any written responses to evaluation material (such as questionnaires).

Subject specialism: Drama, Theatre, and Performance

(MA by Research and PhD)

These guidelines are for supervisors and students who wish to include an assessed practical component as part of their submission for an MA by Research for PhD. They apply in all such instances whether the methodology is referred to as Practice Research (PR), Practice-as-Research (PaR) or any other related term. This practical element might consist of, *inter alia*, live performance, video, creative writing, workshops, choreography, installations, or any combination of these.

Word counts

The maximum word count for an MA by Research thesis is 25,000 words. Where there is a significant practice research component the length of the thesis may be reduced. The precise reduction in thesis length will depend on the nature of the research project but the final submission should not normally fall below 12,500 words. The submission of practical and written elements will be treated as an integral whole and components will not be individually marked.

The maximum word count for PhD thesis is 80,000 words. Where there is a significant practice research component the length of the thesis may be reduced. The precise reduction in thesis length will depend on the nature of the research project but the final submission should not normally fall below 40,000 words. The submission of practical and written elements will be treated as an integral whole and components will not be individually marked.

Submission

Where live performance work is integral to the MA by Research or PhD submission it will normally be observed by both internal and external examiners. For this reason it is imperative that the dates

for examined live performances are agreed at least three months in advance. For the PhD, in some circumstances it may be necessary for the examiners to observe live performance work in each of the three years and, on each occasion the three-month guideline is to be applied. It is the main supervisor's responsibility to ensure all examiners who attend a practice-based event have been formally approved

The expected minimum standard is that all live performances, that form part of the portfolio for final examination, are recorded and can be considered by all examiners. It is the postgraduate researcher who is responsible to ensure the live performance is recorded.

All practical work should be documented in a format agreed between the student and the supervisory team whether or not it has been observed live by the examiners.

Subject specialism: Music Performance

(MA by Research and PhD)

These guidelines are for supervisors and students who are considering including performance elements as a part of a PhD or MA by Research submission in Music. Students may include performance as part of their MA by Research or PhD submission if it directly relates to the written research component of their submission. Normally this would take the form of either audio, or audio-visual, recordings, and/or a live performance (or performances). In the PhD, performances might range from substantial performances, such as performances of complete works, to short extracts serving as audio examples of ideas expressed in the thesis. Recordings should *always* be included as hard copy (CD, DVD, USB stick, etc.) with the submitted thesis but hyperlinks within the thesis text may also be used to point to the same performances on-line.

Admissions

In addition to the standard admissions requirements for MA by Research or PhD, those expecting to include their own performance within a research degree – as part of its methodology or final submission – will be expected to provide evidence of their practical qualifications. This will take the form of a live or recorded example relevant to the proposed research, and will be arranged as part of the admissions process, with the advice of the admissions team.

Word counts and submission

For the PhD in Music Performance, for performances of music composed by someone other than the performer, the expected length of thesis should be 40,000–50,000 words, which would ordinarily be accompanied by 90–120 minutes recorded and/or live performance. Other thesis:performance ratios might typically be:

Length of written thesis	Duration of performance (minimum)
60,000 words	60 minutes
65,000 words	45 minutes
70,000 words	30 minutes

Where the performance element might be considered to involve collaborative work, or original/improvisatory components, then further reductions in the written component might be

considered, to be negotiated with the supervisor. The thesis must not be less than 15,000 words, and in such cases it is assumed that the performance element is entirely original work, akin to a composition portfolio.

Performances may involve other musicians, as part of an ensemble/band. In such cases it is understood that where the contribution of the student is impossible or very difficult to isolate from the performance as a whole, the submitted recording/performance is likely to serve more as demonstration of ideas explored more thoroughly in the thesis and the thesis:performance ratios cited above should be adjusted accordingly in agreement with the supervisor.

Performances should be of a professional standard. Where audio/audio-visual recordings are submitted, these should be of the highest quality possible. Published recordings may be included, as long as permissions and credits have been provided and included within the thesis text.

Where live performances are included, assessment is undertaken by an internal and, where possible, external examiner. Where appropriate, examiners will be appointed earlier than usual in order that examiners might view the performance (or the final performance). All live performances should be filmed and stored on the University server for future reference, and, where the external examiner was not present, available for the external examiner to view. It is the main supervisor's responsibility to ensure all examiners who attend a practice-based event have been formally approved

The expected minimum standard is that all live performances, that form part of the portfolio for final examination, are recorded and can be considered by all examiners. It is the postgraduate researcher who is responsible to ensure the live performance is recorded.

Whilst a mark is not awarded for live performances, feedback should be written and saved ready to contribute to the final examiners' report for the portfolio as a whole. Informal feedback on a first recital may be provided at the examiners' discretion. It is expected that performances, both live and recorded, will be evaluated in relation to the aims and context of the portfolio.

For the MA by Research in Music Performance, assessment will likely take one of the following forms, in relation to the above:

- Two recitals, totalling ca.80-90 minutes, or recorded materials, totalling ca. 80-90 minutes, or combination of live and recorded performances, totalling ca. 80-90 minutes; plus dissertation ca. 7,000-10,000 words
- One or two recitals, totalling ca.40-60 minutes, or recorded materials, totalling ca.40-60 minutes, or combination of live and recorded performances, totalling ca. 40-60 minutes; plus dissertation ca. 11,000-13,000 words
- One recital, totalling ca.20-30 minutes, or recorded materials, totalling ca.20-30 minutes, or combination of live and recorded performances, totalling ca.20-30 minutes; plus dissertation ca. 16,000-18,000 words

Additional information: PhD in Music Performance

Instrumental tuition is not provided as a part of the PhD programme. However, the student may apply for funds available through different University schemes in support of consultation lessons

with named instrumentalists as appropriate to the knowledge and/or training requirements of the research.

Additional information: MA by Research in Music Performance

Whilst the relationship between performance and other (usually written) components of the portfolio is to be negotiated between the supervisor and student it is recommended that one of the following three divisions is adopted:

- Major performance, minor dissertation
- Equal performance and dissertation
- Minor performance, major dissertation

Other options may be adopted in agreement between the student and supervisor, including possibilities for lecture recitals, ensemble/band performance, or unusual performance requirements as confirmed and recorded at the point of progression.

Instrumental tuition is not provided as a part of the MA by Research. However, the student may apply for funds available through different University schemes in support of consultation lessons with named instrumentalists as appropriate to the knowledge and/or training requirements of the research.

Assessment is undertaken by an internal and external examiner. Whilst there is no requirement for a viva voce, it is expected that the external examiner will be present for at least one of the live performances where live performance is part of the portfolio of work. The internal examiner should be present at all live performances. It is the main supervisor's responsibility to ensure all examiners who attend a practice-based event have been formally approved. All live performances should be filmed and stored on the University server for future reference, and, where the external examiner was not present, available for the external examiner to view.

The expected minimum standard is that all live performances, that form part of the portfolio for final examination, are available for consideration by all examiners. It is the postgraduate researcher who is responsible to ensure the live performance is recorded.

There is no set time in the year when performances will be scheduled. However it is strongly recommended that the examination periods scheduled for undergraduate students in May and late June/early July be also used for one or both of the performances. It may be, however, that a final performance in September (or at the end of the programme of study) is more appropriate. Live performances are planned and scheduled in consultation with the student, as well as with internal and external examiners. Where appropriate the supervisor should consult the Head of Performance to arrange for the inclusion of performances within the undergraduate performance exam schedule.

Whilst a mark is not awarded for live performances, feedback should be written and saved ready to contribute to the final examiners report for the portfolio as a whole. Informal feedback on a first recital may be provided at the examiners' discretion. It is expected that performances, both live and recorded, will be evaluated in relation to the aims and context of the portfolio. However, it is

recommended that examiners make use of the criteria used for all undergraduate performances to guide their assessment, namely the elements of technique, style, individuality and communication.

Subject specialism: Music Composition

(MA by Research and PhD)

These guidelines relate to the integration of composition within an MA by Research or PhD portfolio of work. Students may include a practice-based element as part of their research degree submission if it directly relates to the written research component of their submission. Normally this would take the form of either a portfolio of compositions and/or audio/audio visual recordings. Other types of work, such as software-based analysis and software development, may also be offered.

Admissions

In addition to the standard admissions requirements for MA by Research or PhD, those expecting to include their own creative work within a research degree – as part of its methodology or final submission – will be expected to provide evidence of their previous compositions. This will take the form of a sample folio of work (in hard copy or digitally), relevant to the proposed research, and will be arranged as part of the admissions process, with the advice of the admissions team.

Word counts

Whilst the precise relationship between the composition and thesis components of the portfolio is to be negotiated, ordinarily the thesis: practice ratio will be:

MA by Research

5,000-10,000 word written thesis: 15,000–20,000 word equivalent practice-based output

PhD

20,000 – 30,000 word written thesis: 60,000–50,000 word equivalent practice-based output

The PhD thesis should not be less than 15,000 words, and the MA by Research thesis should not be less than 5000 words.

Submission

The MA by Research and PhD using an alternative format are examined by portfolio. Compositions and/or recordings may form a part of this portfolio and will be accompanied by a written thesis.

Practice and thesis should always be related and should not be considered as two entirely distinct components. The portfolio of work comprises practice AND written work, to be considered and assessed as a whole, such that the practice supports the written work and vice versa. The final result will then be a reflection of the whole portfolio.

For the MA by Research, whilst there is no requirement for a viva voce, the external examiner must have access to the practice-based element in the form of submitted scores and/or

accompanying recordings. Recordings should always be included as hard copy (CD, DVD, USB stick, etc.) with the submitted thesis but hyperlinks within the thesis text may also be used to point to the compositions online.

Presentation of the practice-based output should be of a professional standard. Where audio/audio-visual recordings are submitted, these should be of the highest quality possible. Published recordings may be included, as long as permissions and credits have been provided and included within the thesis text. Software or computer-based analyses should be presented in the most appropriate way for examination; online work should be presented in a format that captures it in a fixed and stable way for the examination, rather than in live form.

The expected minimum standard is that all audio/visual recordings, that form part of the portfolio for final examination, are available for consideration by all examiners. It is the postgraduate researcher who is responsible to ensure there are audio/visual recordings available.

Subject specialism: Art and Design, Fashion and Textiles, Architecture and the Built Environment

PhD (Art and Design)

PhD (Fashion and Textiles)

PhD (Architecture and the Built Environment)

These guidelines are for supervisors and students who are considering including practice elements as a part of a PhD research portfolio submission in the areas of art, design, fashion and/or textiles, architecture and the built environment.

Word counts

- The maximum word count for a thesis is 80,000 words. The % weightings between practice and written are to be negotiated between the student and the supervisory team.
- The aims, objectives and methodology of a research project will dictate the structure of the submission.
- Practice-orientated PhD projects in the subject specialist areas of art, design, fashion and/or textiles, architecture and the built environment in the School of Art, Design and Architecture are normally balanced between 50% Practice and 50% written (approx. 40,000 words).
- The supervisory team in consultation with the student should discuss the percentage equivalents between the practice and the written elements of the PhD project at the start of the research journey.
- At the first progression point, the student should outline the balance between practice and written components. This will be subject to approval by the supervisory team and the Progression Panel assessors.
- The sector wide equivalents for PhDs that are practice-orientated vary across the disciplines. Therefore, a clear rationale is needed for the % weightings. The rationale

should explain how and why any divergence from existing subject convention is key to the specific underlying aims of the research project.

- Please see section 5 [Progression Points for alternative format thesis research degrees](#) for further guidance.

Submission

- Students may include practice components as part of their PhD submission if it directly relates to the written research elements of the submission. Alternative format theses may include a portfolio of components appropriate to the field of study, for example, artefacts, film, photography, design prototypes, technical samples, research-curation, multi-media designs, etc.
- Research in, with and through practice ranges from substantial portfolios featuring research processes and completed artefacts or prototypes, to short practical extracts serving as examples of research ideas expressed in the thesis.
- The documentation of the portfolio must *always* be included as part of the submission using encrypted files (e.g. USB, CD, DVD) alongside the written part of the thesis, but hyperlinks within the written text may also be used to point to the practice on-line. Images of practice may also be embedded with the written element of the thesis.
- Portfolios of practice and written elements must be related. The portfolio of work comprises practical elements AND written documentation. They should not be considered as two entirely distinct components, but rather sit together as a critical thesis or exegesis of the research undertaken. To be considered and assessed as a whole, the practice and the written work should inform each other and lead to new research insights. The submission of practical and written elements will be treated as an integral whole and components will not be individually marked.
- The structure of a PhD with practical components are informed by the existing conventions and accepted academic practices of subject specialist fields of study (e.g. aspects of art, design, fashion and/or textiles, architecture and the built environment). It is expected that the supervisory team will work with the student to develop a suitable structure for the research practice.
- The research practice outcomes should be of a professional standard. Where documentation is submitted, these should be of the highest quality possible. Published outcomes/exhibitions may be included, as long as permissions and credits have been provided and included within the written text.

Please refer to the standard university regulations on submission of PhDs under [Section A4 of the Regulations for Awards \(Research Degrees\)](#)

Additional information

The supervisory team should oversee all aspects of the student's progress, submission and examination. The supervisors should ensure the following:

- That the balance between practice and written elements of the thesis are discussed at the first progression monitoring point and agreed and reported in the Progression Feedback Form. Any revisions to the agreed structure should be further reviewed by the supervisor and progression monitoring point assessors, and any changes agreed must be recorded in the Feedback Form.
- Exhibitions/live exhibits should be carefully planned and scheduled in consultation with the student, as well as with internal and external examiners and with Registry as part of the Examination arrangements.
- Examiners understand the agreed relationship between the practice and written components. This includes the research aims of the portfolio, and the general criteria used for all PhD submissions at the University of Huddersfield.

Subject specialism: Art and Design, Fashion and Textiles

MA/MSc by Research (Art and Design)

MA/MSc by Research (Fashion and Textiles)

These guidelines are for supervisors and students who are considering including practice elements as a part of a research portfolio submission in the subject specialist fields of art, design, fashion and/or textiles.

Word counts

- The maximum word count for an MA/MSc by Research is 25,000 words. The % weightings between practice and written are to be negotiated between the supervisory team and the student.
- Practice-orientated MA/MSc projects are normally balanced between 50% Practice and 50% written.
- The aims, objectives and methodology of a research project will dictate the structure of the submission.
- The supervisory team in consultation with the student should discuss, agree and record the percentage equivalents between the practice and the written elements of the project at the start of the research journey (in the Research Support Plan and Skills audit phase).

Submission

- Students may include practice components as part of their MA/MSc by Research submission if it directly relates to the written research elements of the submission. Alternative format theses may include a portfolio of components appropriate to the field of study, for example, artefacts, film, photography, design prototypes, technical samples, research-curation, multi-media designs, etc.

- Research in, with and through practice ranges from substantial portfolios featuring research processes and completed artefacts or prototypes, to short practical extracts serving as examples of research ideas expressed in the written submission.
- The documentation of the portfolio must *always* be included as part of the submission using encrypted files (e.g. USB, CD, DVD) alongside the written part of the thesis, but hyperlinks within the written text may also be used to point to the practice on-line. Images of practice may also be embedded with the written element of the thesis.
- Portfolios of practice and written elements should always be related. The portfolio of work comprises practical elements AND written document. They should not be considered as two entirely distinct components, but rather sit together as a critical thesis or exegesis of the research undertaken. To be considered and assessed as a whole, the practice and the written work should inform each other and lead to new research insights. The submission of practical and written elements will be treated as an integral whole and components will not be individually marked.
- The structure of an MA/MSc by Research with practical components are informed by the existing conventions and accepted academic practices of subject specialist fields of study (e.g. art, design, fashion, textiles, etc.). It is expected that the supervisory team will work with the student to develop a suitable structure for the research practice.
- The research practice outcomes should be of a professional standard. Where documentation is submitted, these should be of the highest quality possible. Published outcomes/exhibitions may be included, as long as permissions and credits have been provided and included within the written text.

Please refer to the standard university regulations on submission of Master's research degrees under [Section A4 of the Regulations for Awards \(Research Degrees\)](#)

Additional information

The supervisory team should oversee all aspects of the student's progress, submission and examination. The supervisors should ensure the following:

- That the balance between practice and written elements of the thesis are discussed with the student and agreed and recorded at the research plan and skills audit phase. Any revisions to the agreed structure should be further reviewed by the supervisor, and any changes agreed must be recorded.
- Exhibitions/live exhibits should be carefully planned and scheduled in consultation with the student, as well as with internal and external examiners and with Registry as part of the Examination arrangements.
- Examiners understand the agreed relationship between the practice and written components. This includes the research aims of the portfolio, and the general criteria used for all research master's degree submissions at the University of Huddersfield.

Subject specialism: Architecture and the Built Environment

MA /MSc by Research (Architecture and the Built Environment)

These guidelines are for supervisors and students who are considering including practice elements as a part of a research portfolio submission in the subject specialist fields of architecture and the built environment.

Word counts

- The maximum word count for an MA/MSc by Research is 25,000 words. The % weightings between practice and written are to be negotiated between the supervisory team and the student.
- Practice-orientated MA/MSc projects are normally balanced between 50% Practice and 50% written.
- The aims, objectives and methodology of a research project will dictate the structure of the submission.
- The supervisory team in consultation with the student should discuss the percentage equivalents between the practice and the written elements of the project at the start of the research journey (Research Plan and Skills audit phase).

Submission

- Students may include practice components as part of their MA/MSc by Research submission if it directly relates to the written research elements of the submission. Alternative format theses may include a portfolio of components appropriate to the field of study, for example, architectural designs, design prototypes, technical samples, research-curation, multi-media designs, etc.
- Research in, with and through practice ranges from substantial portfolios featuring research processes and completed artefacts or prototypes, to short practical extracts serving as examples of research ideas expressed in the written submission.
- The documentation of the portfolio must *always* be included as part of the submission using encrypted files (e.g. USB, CD, DVD) alongside the written part of the thesis, but hyperlinks within the written text may also be used to point to the practice on-line. Images of practice may also be embedded with the written element of the thesis.
- Portfolios of practice and written elements should always be related. The portfolio of work comprises practical elements AND written document. They should not be considered as two entirely distinct components, but rather sit together as a critical thesis or exegesis of the research undertaken. To be considered and assessed as a whole, the practice and the written work should inform each other and lead to new research insights. The submission of practical and written elements will be treated as an integral whole and components will not be individually marked.
- The structure of an MA/MSc by Research with practical components are informed by the existing conventions and accepted academic practices of subject specialist fields of study

(e.g. architecture and the built environment). It is expected that the supervisory team will work with the student to develop a suitable structure for the research practice.

- The research practice outcomes should be of a professional standard. Where documentation is submitted, these should be of the highest quality possible. Published outcomes/exhibitions may be included, as long as permissions and credits have been provided and included within the written text.

Please refer to the standard university regulations on submission of Master's research degrees under [Section A4 of the Regulations for Awards \(Research Degrees\)](#)

Additional information

The supervisory team should oversee all aspects of the student's progress, submission and examination. The supervisors should ensure the following:

- That the balance between practice and written elements of the thesis are discussed with the student, agreed and recorded at the research support plan and skills audit phase. Any revisions to the agreed structure should be further reviewed by the supervisor, and agreed changes must be recorded.
- Exhibitions/live exhibits should be carefully planned and scheduled in consultation with the student, as well as with internal and external examiners and with Registry as part of the Examination arrangements.
- Examiners understand the agreed relationship between the practice and written components. This includes the research aims of the portfolio, and the general criteria used for all research master's degree submissions at the University of Huddersfield.