

Creative Master of Arts by Research & Doctor of Philosophy Information for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) applicants

A Creative MA or PhD by Research at Flinders University allows students to pursue a rigorous research program that enhances their creative practice and makes a contribution to that practice and to the intellectual discourse of the field.

As with other MA and PhD degrees, creative HDR students will demonstrate that they can undertake a project at an advanced level and will meet the general requirements for HDR. See the [Higher Degrees by Research Policy](#).

1. Admission Requirements for Creative Higher Degrees by Research

1. Students must fulfil the general university requirements for entry to higher degree study and adhere to university deadlines. Admission to a PhD program requires an Honours class 1 or 2A degree or equivalent, although other qualifications may be considered. See Course rule admission requirements ([PhD](#)), ([Masters](#)).
2. Students must submit evidence of creative work, such as creative writing, film, moving image, performance, or other arts work. Work (published, produced or unpublished) can be in more than one art form.

***Please note:** acceptance will also depend on the university's confirmation that it can provide appropriate supervision for the project. It is essential that you contact the HDR Advisor for Creative & Performing Arts for further information: [Associate Professor Julia Erhart](#).

[Domestic HDR applicants](#) may **lodge a separate application** for the competitive [Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship](#) which are allocated based on academic merit and research potential to enable suitably qualified applicants to undertake full-time study towards a Master degree by research or Doctorate by research.

[International HDR applicants](#) may **lodge a separate application** for the [Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship \(International\)](#). A limited number (up to 10) of AGRTPS-I are available each year and the scholarship round is highly competitive. The AGRTPS-I is awarded to applicants who demonstrate outstanding aptitude for independent research. AGRTPS-I are allocated based on academic merit, academic research training and research indicators and performance.

Please consult the [University Scholarships database](#) for these and other scholarship opportunities. NB Application deadlines are strictly enforced.

2. Thesis by Exegesis and Creative Product

The creative HDR at Flinders can take a range of forms and can follow different models of practice-led research in a variety of disciplines and genres.

Students will submit for examination a thesis consisting of an exegesis and a creative product. Depending on the nature of the proposed artefact, the student will undertake a program of appropriate research covering primary texts in the field and secondary material on this topic (e.g. appropriate critical and theoretical texts that contextualise the work). The results of this research will be embodied in both the creative product and the exegesis. Interdisciplinary projects are also welcome where students produce and/or examine works in more than one genre.

Students can make a case that part of the original contribution to knowledge of the PhD comes from the relationship between the two parts of the thesis. Alternatively, students can integrate the creative and critical portions of the thesis into a coherent whole and present it as one work.

The thesis consisting of exegesis and creative product will be examined in the same way as other theses, that is, as a whole product. Although it is normally made up of two elements, the thesis as a whole must fulfil the requirements for an MA or PhD by research as laid down in the [Higher Degrees by Research Thesis Rules](#).

The length of the thesis depends upon art form category and will be negotiated with supervisors. In general, the work should represent a substantial effort in the genre.

For the MA: The thesis embodies the equivalent of two years of full-time work. The intellectual and creative effort inherent in the artefact and exegesis should be equivalent to that inherent in a standard thesis of 35,000 – 50,000 words. The exegesis should be no more than 30,000 words and no less than 15,000 words.

For the PhD: The thesis embodies the equivalent of three years of full-time work. The intellectual and creative effort inherent in the artefact and exegesis should be equivalent to that inherent in a standard thesis of 70,000 –100,000 words. The exegesis should be no more than 60,000 words and no less than 40,000 words.

3. Exegesis

The exegesis relates specifically to the student's creative product or artefact and addresses a clear research question, or questions. It typically sets the work in its artistic, cultural and/or historical context by examining exemplary texts and other relevant contextualizing material. The exegesis typically will consider how the artefact has been informed by research, and thus, how the student has incorporated theory and/or historical practices into the artefact produced for the degree. The exegesis may also investigate the development of the artefact in a way that explains the processes by which it has been produced. The exegesis must be supported by an appropriate bibliography and annotations, as in other postgraduate theses.

4. Creative Product/Artefact

The creative product/artefact demonstrates the student's ability to perform professionally and competently in his/her chosen genre. It will embody the results of research into the genre and display mastery of the appropriate craft that reaches the level of current art form industry standards. In other words, the creative product can sustain critical examination in the same way that exemplary texts can. Work submitted for the PhD must attain a high standard.

i) Creative Writing

As a guide, these creative products/artefacts are acceptable for an MA or PhD in Creative Writing:

- a full-length collection of poems;
- a full-length collection of short fiction;
- a full-length novel;
- a work of creative nonfiction (e.g., essays, fictocriticism, etc.); an autobiography or biography;
- mixed media or multimedia works that are substantial efforts in the genre.

For the MA, the creative product is adjusted accordingly. For example, a novella, short novel or one-act play are acceptable.

ii) Drama

As a guide, these creative products (or their equivalents in other genres) are acceptable for an MA or PhD in Drama:

- a series of creative developments for a work;
- a full-length script, developed through dramaturgical research;
- a staged production of an original work;
- a pilot for a feature film or documentary, including a filmed excerpt;
- mixed media or multimedia works forming a substantial contribution in a genre;
- a substantial, original contribution to theatre training.

iii) Screen and Media

As a guide, creative products that are acceptable for an MA or PhD in Screen and Media include:

- a film or documentary (including animated works);
- a film, documentary, or web series script;
- a series of linked film, video, motion graphic, or VR productions which constitute a coherent body of work;

- interactive or mixed media works such as games or websites that are substantial efforts in their field;
- a suite of narrative or genre-driven characters or environments;
- a substantial original contribution to the film, television, or digital industries

This list is merely indicative; there are others that would be also be acceptable. For the MA the creative is adjusted accordingly, although it should still represent a substantial achievement in the chosen art form. For example, a substantial short film, video or digital work may be acceptable.