



## **POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH GUIDE**

### **ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FOR MFA CANDIDATES AND SUPERVISORS**

([http://sydney.edu.au/sca/current\\_students/student\\_administration/postgraduate.shtml](http://sydney.edu.au/sca/current_students/student_administration/postgraduate.shtml))

## **MASTER OF FINE ARTS (MFA) PROGRAM**

The degree of Master of Fine Arts (MFA) is primarily undertaken by supervised research within an independent study program of studio and written work. Duration of the degree is two years (four semesters) full-time or three years (six semesters: two full-time and four part-time semesters) part-time.

The course is normally undertaken full-time over four semesters with examination in the final semester. Full-time candidates are expected to devote the equivalent of a 35-hour week to their research.

Part-time study is available for artists who have established a visual arts practice subsequent to completing an undergraduate degree or are engaged in employment, for example as art educators, which limits their study time. Candidates enrolled on a part-time basis may not receive their own studio space as this is subject to availability and priority is given to those enrolled on a full-time basis.

A candidate who wishes to transfer his/her MFA candidature to the Doctor of Philosophy may do so by submitting an application appropriate to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to the Faculty Student Administration by the end of relevant application period. The application to transfer candidature must be made at the end of the first year of candidature and will be considered in relation to the whole pool of PhD applications. A letter of support must be obtained from the candidate's supervisor.

## **MASTER OF FINE ARTS COURSE STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS**

Candidates are required to nominate one of the following methods of candidature:

- by creative work and research paper, culminating in a substantial exhibition, performance or installation of works in a joint show of candidates at the end of candidature, together with a research paper of 10,000–12,000 words and oral presentation, or
- by thesis of 35,000–50,000 words in the field of art theory, art history, cultural studies or professional studies in visual art.

The method of candidature must be confirmed at the first Annual Progress Review, which usually takes place at the end of the first year of candidature.

### **FIRST YEAR**

The emphasis of the first year is on the development of studio work. The first year non-studio work is spent primarily on research, aided by the Masters program. Although reading and note taking commences from the beginning of the course, the submitting of work-in-progress writing and actual writing of the paper will not begin until the second year of the course. For part-time candidates the emphasis on the writing will be from the second half of the second year into the third year of the course. Early commitment to a coherent and structured working method for studio work, the compilation of material, information storage and regular, meaningful supervision are vital.

### **Postgraduate Seminar Program**

All first year MFA candidates attend the Seminar Program, which aims to develop the proposed research project and extend research and critical skills. Candidates make presentations on their projects and engage in peer group discussion on written and visual aspects of their work. Evaluation: a 2000 - 2500 word essay is required each semester. The essay is evaluated in terms of postgraduate standard but no mark is recorded as part of the degree.

Part-time candidates must attend the seminars within the first two years, and in consecutive semesters.

### **SECOND YEAR (THIRD YEAR PART-TIME) PROGRAM**

The second year non-studio work is devoted to the writing of a research paper. At the beginning of the final year a candidate should have a written outline of the paper, with chapter headings or section titles, bibliography, and outlines of the major concerns and issues to be raised in each chapter. The written work begins, and not ends, with the first draft of the paper. Thus it is important that the first draft is presented to the supervisor no later than the mid-semester break of the third semester of the candidature. Past candidates have found to their extreme discomfort that, as the examination begins, supervisors are calling for further and

further drafts and re-writes on the research paper. The final draft recedes towards the horizon, so start early. Don't underestimate the sheer time involved in the preparation of the research paper. Candidates who leave their paper until the end of their course find that the writing occupies up to three full months, to the exclusion of all else — especially creative work.

### **Graduate School Forum**

Candidates are required to attend the Graduate School Forum, which usually runs every Wednesday during semester time (except public holidays and non-teaching weeks).

### **Submission and Examination**

At the end of their final year, candidates must submit for examination:

- a substantial exhibition, performance or installation of artwork with supporting visual material of work completed during candidature; an explanation of the structure and mode of exhibition and developmental process; and a research paper of 10,000 -12,000 words relevant to the candidate's work and its development, its cultural and historical or theoretical references; or
- a thesis of 35,000 – 50,000 words which is the result of original investigation in the fields of art theory, art history, cultural studies or professional studies in visual arts.

The research paper or thesis are presented in English. The candidate must identify those components of assessable work which are respectively the candidate's own and that of others.

The research paper should:

- concern itself with the intellectual, visual or cultural context of the candidate's work and the development of that work;
- be a critical statement and not a mere exposition; and
- identify and discuss the work's references (cultural, historical and theoretical).

The research paper is frequently pursued as 10,000-word critical discussion of creative work done during the MFA course. The option remains to write a longer (up to 12,000 words paper) focusing on ideas tangential or parallel to the specific creative work made, addressing matters that have influenced the candidate in arriving at certain practical outcomes. To avoid confusion of expectations of form or scholarship on the part of examiners or other readers it is useful to include in the Introduction (or Foreword, if there is one) to the research paper an indication of the approach that the candidate has undertaken in writing the paper.

## **EXAMINATION PROCESS**

### **EXAMINATION NOTIFICATION**

Approximately sixteen (16) weeks before the intended date of lodgement of the research paper/thesis examination copies (X date), the candidate submits the 'Notification of Proposed Higher Degree Examination' form to his/her supervisor together with a copy of the research paper/thesis at almost final draft stage.

Fourteen weeks (14) before the X date, the candidate meets with his/her supervisor to discuss the date and place of examination. Candidates may advise the names of persons they do not wish to see appointed as examiners giving their reasons in writing. Candidates may also initiate with their supervisor and/or head of department a discussion as to the range of possible examiners. Care will be taken not to jeopardise the integrity and independence of the examination process; therefore, candidates will not be given the names of the chosen examiners.

Twelve (12) weeks before the X date the candidate submits the completed and signed by supervisor 'Notification of Proposed Higher Degree Examination' form to the Student Administration.

## APPOINTMENT OF EXAMINERS

Supervisors are responsible for recommending the appointment of the examiners and Chair of the oral examination. They must submit the relevant forms approximately ten (10) weeks before the X date. Supervisors should include a copy of a resume with photo ID for external examiners who have not been employed by the Faculty in the last two years. A street address (not PO Box or Locked/Mail Bag) and phone numbers must also be included for the safe delivery of the examination documents.

In order to reduce delays supervisors are required to contact examiners in advance of their appointment to see if they are willing and able to act within the time frame expected. The examination date and time should be arranged.

The following specific points should be noted:

- The examiners should be known to be familiar with the supervision and/or examination of research papers. Justification should be provided for examiners who have not had previous experience.
- Recommendations for examiners who are not persons of obvious academic standing must be supported with justifying statements and documentation.
- Examiners should normally be still active in research/scholarship thus ensuring that their knowledge of the field is current. Recommendations for the appointment as examiner of someone who has retired should be supported with a justifying statement including how long it has been since the person retired.
- At least one examiner for MFA must be external to the University.
- Examiners should be free from bias, for or against the candidate or supervisor.
- A person should not be nominated as examiner if he/she;
  - has had involvement in the student's research;
  - is a co-author on any part of the work;
  - has a close personal relationship with the candidate or supervisor; or
  - has had substantial contact with the candidate or supervisor in any other circumstance, which might jeopardise the independence of the examination.

## EXAMINATION POSTPONEMENT OR EXTENSION

Late examinations are only approved under exceptional circumstances, namely major personal hardship; major health reasons; maternity leave; circumstances that demonstrably support the candidate's research and require the candidate to participate in an activity somewhere else. Late examination requests with supporting documentation must be submitted to the Student Administration Office no later than the relevant census date.

## RESEARCH PAPER/THESIS SUBMISSION FOR EXAMINATION

Five (5) weeks before the scheduled oral examination the candidate submits three copies of the research paper/thesis to the Student Administration Office. A Statement by Supervisor on Submission of Research Paper/Thesis and Lodgement of Higher Degree Thesis/Treatise forms must accompany the lodgement. The research paper is then forwarded to the examiners.

Candidates who have elected *thesis only* mode and who do not require an oral examination must submit their thesis for examination by their latest completion date.

## EXAMINATION EXHIBITION SET UP

Each candidate (with the exception of those doing an MFA by thesis only) is expected to develop a body of creative work for examination, which is to be exhibited in the annual Postgraduate Degree Show. If a candidate has elected to hold his/her examination exhibition off campus, he/she is still required to exhibit work in the Postgraduate Degree Show. Candidates, who are being examined mid-year, are encouraged to exhibit a selection of their work in the annual Postgraduate Degree Show of the preceding year.

The following specific points should be noted:

- Candidates are responsible for arranging their access to equipment, the installation and bump out of their exhibitions, and returning the galleries to the condition before exhibition set up.

- Candidates need to liaise closely with the Graduate School Committee academic representative and technical staff in charge of equipment and facilities. Candidates must contact their supervisor at least two months in advance of examination to discuss the schedule and preparations for their exhibition.
- Exhibitions that fall outside of the designated exhibition periods are subject to gallery availability. You should always check the schedule with Graduate School Committee academic representative.

## **ORAL EXAMINATION PROCEDURE**

The Chair of the examination meets with the candidate about 20 minutes before hand to help him/her to set-up. The Chair also meets the examiners and introduces them to the candidate.

The oral examination process is two hours and is divided roughly into four half-hour sections (if one goes over, time is picked-up in another section)

### **1. Contextualisation of Candidate's Work**

In this section the candidate talks about the lead-up to the examination work, and the work produced during candidature – themes, issues, any problems etc. This provides an opportunity for examiners to ask background questions.

### **2. Examination of Creative Work**

The candidate and examiners discuss the candidate's exhibited work.

### **3. Discussion of Research Paper and Related Matters.**

Examiners ask any questions about the paper and any points of clarification. Towards the end, the candidate can raise points that he/she thinks the examiners might have missed either about the creative or written work.

### **4. Examiners Confer.**

The candidate is asked to leave so that the examiners can confer. After 15 minutes the candidate is recalled and, if the examiners have come to a mutual conclusion, is informally advised of the outcome of the examination. The candidate signs the Chair's Report.

## **EXAMINERS REPORTS**

Approximately four (4) weeks after the oral examination (eight weeks after submission of the thesis for candidates submitting by thesis only) examiners return their reports to Student Administration Office. Candidates will be sent copies of the examiners' reports and a copy of the Chair's Report, which details any changes requested by the examiners, and a letter with the due date for completion of corrections or submission of final permanently bound copies.

## **POSSIBLE EXAMINATION RESULTS**

### **Award Without Further Conditions (Outright Pass)**

The research paper and creative work or thesis have fulfilled all of the requirements and are of such quality that no corrections of any sort are required.

Candidate has four (4) weeks upon receipt of the results notification letter to submit two permanently bound copies before deemed eligible to graduate. A letter of completion will subsequently be sent to confirm eligibility to graduate and date of closest graduation ceremony.

### **Award Subject To Typographical Corrections (Pass with Minor Revisions)**

The award of the degree is clearly appropriate but there are several minor errors or omissions in the research paper and/or creative work or thesis, which should be corrected.

Candidate has four (4) weeks upon receipt of results notification letter to submit corrections. Upon receipt of another letter with approval of corrections, the student has the usual four (4) weeks to submit two (2) permanently bound copies before deemed eligible to graduate. A letter of completion will subsequently be sent to confirm eligibility to graduate and date of closest graduation ceremony.

### **Award Subject To Conditions/Emendations**

The examiners acknowledge that in the main the research paper and creative work or thesis are worthy of the award, but there are several changes or additions that need to be made. The changes should not require an additional period of research and should not substantially alter the conclusions of the research paper/thesis.

The candidate has twelve (12) weeks upon receipt of results notification letter to submit emendations. Upon receipt of another letter with approval of corrections, the student has the usual four (4) weeks to submit two (2) permanently bound copies before deemed eligible to graduate. A letter of completion will subsequently be sent to confirm eligibility to graduate and date of closest graduation ceremony.

### **Fail/Revision and Resubmission**

The research paper and creative work or thesis in its current form is not worthy of being awarded the degree, but has many redeeming features. Major re-writing or reconsideration of creative work, e.g. re-writing a whole chapter, provide extra data, reinstall the exhibition or produce further work. This means result is withheld and revisions will be re-examined by both examiners. Candidate must re-enrol in at least one semester or more, as prescribed by the examiners. A candidate who fails his/her second examination is not allowed to revise and resubmit their work and the following result is applied

### **Fail/Non-Award**

In making the recommendation of non-award, the examiners are of the opinion that the research paper and creative work or thesis is not salvageable, even with a period of further experimental or research work and a complete rewrite of the research paper or thesis. The examiners make this recommendation on the basis that the research was irredeemably flawed in its conception, design and execution, and that the conclusions reached are not valid.

## **ADMINISTRATION OF CANDIDATURE**

### **ATTENDANCE**

Research candidates must attend no less than 90% of a requisite course. A roll is kept and students with non-satisfactory attendance will have to repeat the required seminars unless there is an evidence of unavoidable hardship or extenuating circumstances.

Research candidates at SCA are required to complete their first year as full-time students, unless there are exceptional circumstances such as major personal hardship, health problems, maternity leave; circumstances that demonstrably support a candidate's research.

### **Change of attendance status to part-time**

A candidate wishing to convert to part-time candidature should submit, with the relevant form (available at SCA Student Administration and on-line at <http://sydney.edu.au/sca>), a detailed proposal including how the research will be carried out, and, if relevant, its relationship to the candidate's employment and arrangements for attendance at SCA. The candidate should discuss the matter initially with his/her supervisor.

There are certain restrictions that may apply to students on scholarships. Scholarship holders who wish to convert to part-time candidature should check with the Research Office first to make sure the conditions of the scholarship will allow for part-time study.

International students are normally required to undertake full-time candidature under the terms of their entry visa.

Requests to change attendance status must be submitted to SCA Student Administration by the relevant census date (semester 1 – 31 March, semester 2 – 31 August).

### **Change of attendance status to full-time**

A candidate wishing to convert to full-time candidature should submit, with the relevant form, a detailed explanation including how the change would enhance progress on his/her research studies.

### **VARIATION OF CANDIDATURE**

A candidate who wishes to vary his/her enrolment (suspension, leave of absence, withdrawals and other variations) must lodge a formal request with SCA Student Administration before the relevant census date by completing the appropriate form. The candidate must attach supporting written documentation and obtain a supervisor's support. The forms are available at SCA Student Administration and on-line at <http://sydney.edu.au/sca>.

Current scholarship holders must also notify the Research Office of any changes in their candidature and submit the required forms (available on [http://sydney.edu.au/ro/training/psa\\_forms.shtml](http://sydney.edu.au/ro/training/psa_forms.shtml)) to that office.

### **Suspension**

Candidature is recorded in whole semesters. Suspensions may be requested for one semester or, in exceptional circumstances, for two semesters. The maximum period of suspension is two semesters. Shorter absences (for up to four weeks) will be noted on a student file. Requests for suspension must be made in advance and not retrospectively. A candidate who has been granted leave of absence or suspension has no access to the faculty studio facilities during the period of leave.

### **Time away**

There is a provision to spend time in another university (e.g. exchange) during the candidature. A candidate, who wishes to apply for time away, must seek the approval of his/her supervisor. The Faculty will want to know what arrangements have been made for the candidate's continued supervision.

### **Extension**

During the last year of candidature, a candidate, who feels that he/she will not be able to complete the requirements by the latest date, should apply for an extension of the candidature. Extensions are granted one semester at a time. The candidate should explain in his/her application why he/she does not expect to be able to meet the deadline and should refer to any difficulties that might have been experienced during the candidature. The candidate cannot assume that an extension will be granted. Requests for extension must be made in advance and not retrospectively.

### **Withdrawal and failure to re-enrol**

If in any year a candidate fails to re-enrol, his/her candidature will be regarded as having lapsed, and the candidate will be required to re-apply for admission to candidature if he/she wishes to continue their studies. If a candidate is unable to anticipate when he/she will be able to resume studies, the candidate should ask to withdraw from the course. If the candidate were able to resume at a later date, he/she would have to re-apply for admission. Some credit might then be given for work that the candidate had done up to the withdrawal, but the candidate would be commencing a new candidature.

### **SUPERVISION**

Each research candidate has a supervisor, a member of the SCA academic staff, appointed to take primary responsibility for the conduct and progress of the candidature, and an associate supervisor, a member of academic staff at the Faculty or within the University of Sydney, appointed to provide additional support to the candidate and to cover times when the primary supervisor is not available.

The associate supervisor:

- meets with the candidate and supervisor at least once per semester to discuss the project;
- meets individually with the candidate at the request of the candidate, if time permits; and
- acts as interim supervisor when the supervisor is on leave.

Requests for changes in supervision should be submitted to SCA Student Administration on the appropriate form available at SCA Student Administration and on-line at <http://sydney.edu.au/sca>.

It is the responsibility of candidates to maintain regular contact with their supervisor. As a guide, full-time candidates should see their supervisors at least four times each semester for a period of one hour, i.e. every three or four weeks.

If there is any concern regarding supervision, a candidate should consult the Director of SCA Graduate School or the Dean.

### **CHANGES IN RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

Towards the middle of the second semester during the Postgraduate Annual Progress Review, first year candidates have the opportunity to revise their initial research proposal in consultation with their supervisor. Any such revision must be signed by the Supervisor, and lodged with Student Administration. The candidate should also submit a copy of the revised proposal to the supervisor.

### **ANNUAL POSTGRADUATE REVIEW**

A review of candidates' progress is conducted in September/October of each academic year. Each candidate is required to complete an Annual Progress Report and attend an interview. The report will assist in the interview conducted by a review panel. Opportunity is provided within the review session for candidates to comment in confidence on their supervision and for first year candidates to revise their initial research proposal. Both the review panel and candidate will sign the progress report to confirm any agreed outcomes at the end of the review session.

The maximum composition of the review panel will normally be two members of academic staff who are not the candidate's supervisors. Provided progress in the degree is satisfactory, the candidate will be permitted to proceed. If the candidate's work is considered unsatisfactory by the panel, the review panel may recommend that the candidate be set a specific program of work to be submitted for assessment not later than 1 March of the following year. If this work is not satisfactory, the candidate will be asked to show cause and his/her enrolment may be terminated. A candidate whose progress at any time during the year is unsatisfactory may be subject to the review process as described above.

It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that the Annual Progress Report is completed by all parties before submission to the Student Administration Office. A candidate who fails to complete and return the report may be asked to show cause as to why the candidature should not be terminated by reason of unsatisfactory progress. Failure to submit the completed report by the due date may result in the discontinuation of the candidate's scholarship for which the University of Sydney will not be held responsible.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS**

There is a code of conduct for students and for supervisors that refer to ethics as well as appropriate behaviour. Please familiarise yourself with these policies which are available at:

[http://sydney.edu.au/ab/policies/Student\\_code\\_conduct.pdf](http://sydney.edu.au/ab/policies/Student_code_conduct.pdf)  
[http://sydney.edu.au/ab/policies/PG\\_Rsch\\_Hghr\\_Dgree\\_Train\\_Sprvsn.pdf](http://sydney.edu.au/ab/policies/PG_Rsch_Hghr_Dgree_Train_Sprvsn.pdf)  
[http://sydney.edu.au/ab/policies/Rsch\\_Code\\_Conduct.pdf](http://sydney.edu.au/ab/policies/Rsch_Code_Conduct.pdf)  
[http://sydney.edu.au/ab/policies/Supervision\\_PG\\_Rsch\\_Students.pdf](http://sydney.edu.au/ab/policies/Supervision_PG_Rsch_Students.pdf)

### **POSTGRADUATE FACILITIES AND SUPPORT**

#### **ACCESS CARDS AND STUDIO KEYS**

Postgraduate candidates are issued with a security swipe card and keys to access relevant areas of the campus during their study at SCA. A one-off administrative charge, plus a refundable deposit of \$25 for each key or swipe card, is required. After hours access to studios is subject to Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) requirements.

All lost swipe cards and keys should be reported immediately to the Campus Operations Service Counter in person, or by telephone to 9351 1021, or by email to [sca.security@sydney.edu.au](mailto:sca.security@sydney.edu.au). There will be a charge of \$25 per item to replace any lost keys and swipe cards.

In addition to normal campus hours, postgraduate candidates have access Monday to Friday from 5pm to midnight, and on weekends, from 8am to midnight.

Keys to studio spaces and/or external doors may be kept until the completion of the course (except for periods of suspension and leave of absence), at which time they must be returned to the Cashier's Office, Ground level, Administration Building, during office hours.

#### Disabled access

Ramps provide wheelchair access to most areas of the campus. An elevator provides access to the second floor of some studio areas. There are two disabled bathrooms available.

### **PARKING**

No parking is permitted on hospital parkland roadways. SCA provides designated areas for student and visitor parking. There are approximately 150 student parking spaces available. SCA student parking permits are available from the cashier for a nominal fee and these entitle the bearer to park in the northern, southern and western student car parks. These are not valid for parking on any other University campuses, or in the internal courtyards. Cars parked outside designated parking areas will be subject to parking infringement notices. The designated parking areas are shown on the campus map.

### **INTRODUCTION TO LIBRARY FACILITIES**

Postgraduate research papers and theses require a good understanding of research resources available to research students at the University of Sydney.

Special sessions to introduce all first year postgraduate candidates to the library and research facilities at the University of Sydney Library and the branch SCA Library are organised by SCA Library staff. Attendance at the sessions is mandatory for all new postgraduate candidates. Dates will be advised at orientation.

The Rare Book section of the University Library has copies of previous research papers and theses. These may be accessed in the reserve collection of the SCA Library.

### **SCA WORKSHOP**

No student is allowed to use the Workshop unless he or she has been through an introductory program on workshop practice and safety. This will be arranged early in the March or July semester.

### **IT ASSIST**

Macintosh computers for postgraduate access are located in the SCA Computer Laboratory in Building 11. Arrangements for training on the SCA campus can be made by contacting the Computer Systems Officer on 9351 1018.

If a student encounters any problem with his/her personal UniKey account (MyUni), the student should report to the University's IT Assist department. SCA staff will not be able to assist with these types of matters. The Helpdesk number is 9351 6000 (<http://sydney.edu.au/itassist>)

### **CASHIER**

The SCA Cashier is located on the ground floor of the administration building 24. Opening hours are from 9.30am to 4.30pm, Monday – Wednesday and Friday (closed Thursday). Please check the notice board and cashier's door for any alterations to opening hours. The cashier provides the following services:

- Sale of course readers
- Parking stickers, payment collection
- Studio contribution fees
- Various studio batch fees
- Sale of safety equipment
- Key deposits
- Access card payments
- 2D lab printing payments

### **SCA ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACTS**

Candidates who have any procedural or academic queries relating to their program, should contact their supervisor or Director of SCA Graduate School Dr Debra Dawes, by telephoning 9351 1058 or by sending an e-mail message to [debra.dawes@sydney.edu.au](mailto:debra.dawes@sydney.edu.au)

Candidates who have any administrative queries relating to the program, should contact Student Administration Office (open Monday to Friday 9.30am – 4.30pm) or Operations Manager (Postgraduate and Policy) Ms Gulnara Shayakhmetova by phoning 9351 1012 or by sending an e-mail to [gulnara.shayakhmetova@sydney.edu.au](mailto:gulnara.shayakhmetova@sydney.edu.au)

### **CONDUCT ON CAMPUS**

The Faculty strives to provide the maximum service and equal treatment of staff and students within the premises. Both staff and students are expected to be cordial and courteous with each other at all times. The University is an educational institution and will not condone rude or unacceptable behaviour from its employees nor students. Please refer to the University's Code of Conduct on-line at [http://sydney.edu.au/ab/policies/Student\\_code\\_conduct.pdf](http://sydney.edu.au/ab/policies/Student_code_conduct.pdf).

### **STUDENT SERVICES**

The Faculty provides a variety of services and support for students. As there are different staff and offices in charge of the various areas, students should make the effort to familiarise themselves with the regulations and policies and the location of these services / departments on the campus.

SCA Students have access to all University Student Services located at the Camperdown Campus. These services are confidential and free. The list of the services available to students can be found on [http://sydney.edu.au/current\\_students/student\\_services/index.shtml](http://sydney.edu.au/current_students/student_services/index.shtml) and in SCA Handbook.

### **SCHOLARSHIPS**

For information about scholarships available to postgraduate research students, please contact the Research Office at The University of Sydney by telephoning 9351 3250 or by sending an e-mail to [research.training@sydney.edu.au](mailto:research.training@sydney.edu.au). Website: <http://sydney.edu.au/ro>.

### **SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE ASSOCIATION (SUPRA)**

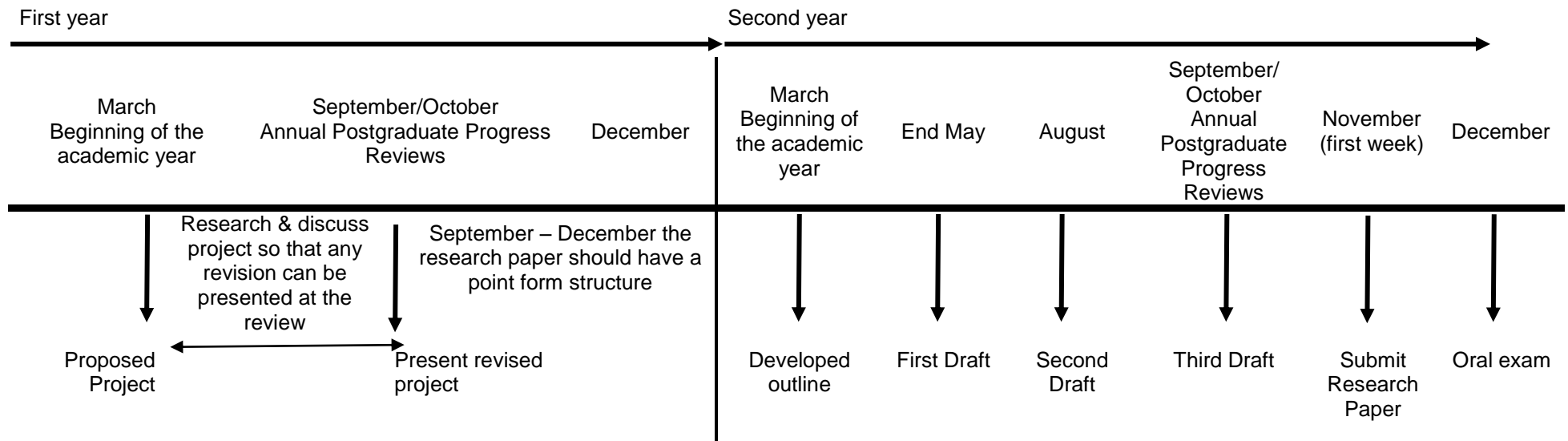
SUPRA is the postgraduate student organisation at the University of Sydney and is run by postgraduates for postgraduates. SUPRA represents all postgraduates at Sydney University, and all postgraduates can look to SUPRA for assistance with any issues that may confront them - both academically and personally - during the course of their candidature.

### **UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY POSTGRADUATE STUDIES AND SCA HANDBOOKS**

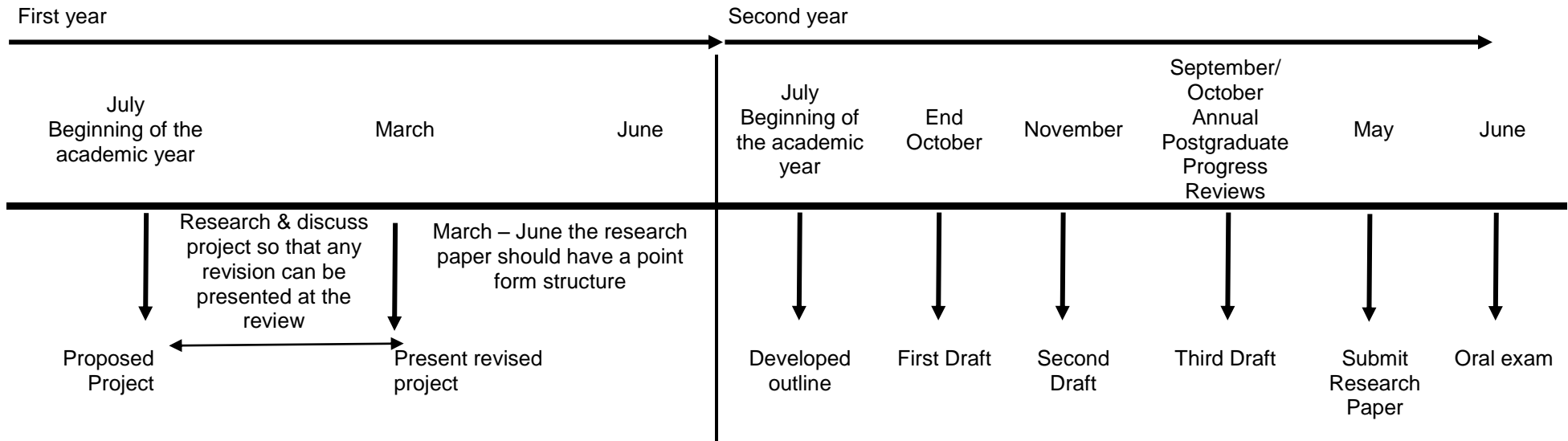
The Faculty strongly recommends that all candidates read the University of Sydney's Postgraduate Studies Handbook and the SCA Faculty Handbook. Both handbooks are available on-line at <http://sydney.edu.au/handbooks>

**APPENDIX A. GENERIC PRODUCTION SCHEDULE FOR RESEARCH PAPER**

**March semester commencement**



July semester commencement



## **APPENDIX B. RESEARCH PAPER/THESIS GUIDELINES**

### **LENGTH OF RESEARCH PAPER**

The Master of Fine Arts course requirements call for a research paper of 10,000-12,000 words. The research paper complements the candidate's creative work investigation, although its purpose is not to describe the creative work, rather to elaborate on interests that impact on it. There is also a separate category of study in which work is undertaken solely by a thesis of 35,000 - 50,000 words.

At least five (5) weeks prior to the oral examination, a candidate presents three examination copies of the research paper in the form of comprehensive elaboration of the creative work, setting out its conception, influences, implications and development or thesis. Candidates proceeding by thesis only option submit three examination copies of the thesis by their latest completion date.

The required word count includes the introduction, main text and conclusion. It does not include the summary (abstract), foreword, captions, footnotes, bibliography and in most cases appendices.

### **INCLUSIONS IN THE RESEARCH PAPER/THESIS**

Each copy of a research paper shall contain:

- research paper text;
- a 300-word summary of the work (creative and written) presented for examination. The summary consists of two parts: an abstract of the content of the research paper and, where possible, a brief description of the creative work presented for examination
- a full visual documentary record of the work presented for examination, in the form of 35-mm slides, CD/DVD or other approved media or formats. The visual documentation should be bound with the paper. All work presented in the exhibition should be fully documented, including installation slides of each work, details of major works (as required) and several views of three-dimensional works. In addition to the documentary record of work presented for examination, a candidate may also present other material generated in the course.
- a catalogue of work presented for examination is a typed list of the works, presenting such information as the title, media and dimensions of work (height before width before depth). This catalogue should also be bound with the research paper.

### **PRESENTATION**

The exam copies of a research paper/thesis submitted in a temporary binding should be strong enough to withstand ordinary handling and postage. The form of temporary binding is perfect or thermal binding. Ring-back or spiral binding is not acceptable.

Each copy must have fixed to the cover a label clearly identifying the name of the candidate, the title of the research paper/thesis and the year of submission.

All copies shall be in good quality typescript on one side of the paper only. In the main body of the research paper/thesis one-and-a-half spacing is preferred, but double-spacing is acceptable. Single-spacing may be used only for appendices and footnotes.

The paper used shall be good quality medium weight white stock, sufficiently opaque for normal reading.

The size of the paper shall be ISO paper size A4 (297 mm x 210 mm) except for illustrative material on which no restriction is placed.

The margin on each sheet shall be not less than 40 mm on the left-hand side, 20 mm on the right-hand side, 20 mm at the top and 20 mm on the bottom.

Beginning with the first page of the Introduction pages shall be numbered consecutively, using Arabic numerals.

The title page shall contain the research paper/thesis title, the candidate's name, the title of the degree, the year of submission and the name of University of Sydney.

Except with the approval of the supervisor, illustrations, charts, tables, etc., shall be bound with the text, immediately after the first reference to them, as right-hand pages with the caption at the bottom, or if necessary, on the page facing the figure.

Diagrams, maps, tables or any material that exceed A4 size shall be either:

- folded so as to read as a right-hand page when opened; or
- numbered and folded for insertion in a pocket in the back inside cover of the research paper binding.

A full visual documentary record of the work may be presented in either:

- 35-mm slides (each slide shall be numbered and inserted into a slide sheet. A complete list of slide titles and numbers together with the slide sheet shall be bound into the volume);
- video Tape, CD or DVD;
- other format approved by the candidate's supervisor.

All loose material shall be clearly marked with the candidate's name, degree, and year of submission.

## **FINAL BINDING**

Two copies, corrected, as necessary, printed on archival ('acid free') paper and bound in a final form, must be lodged with SCA Student Administration after the award of the degree for deposit in the University Library and the branch SCA Library.

Each copy of the research paper shall be

- on international standard A4 size paper;
- bound in boards covered with bookcloth or buckram or other binding fabric;
- the title of the research paper, the candidate's name, the title of the degree, the year of submission and the name of University of Sydney should appear in lettering on the front cover or on the title page;
- the lettering on the spine, reading from top to bottom, should conform to the above (the name of the University of Sydney can be omitted and the research paper title abbreviated) and be as follows:
  - nine mm from the bottom and across, the title of the degree and the year of submission;
  - evenly spaced between the statement in (a) and the top of the spine, the initials and surname of the candidate and the research paper title. No other lettering or decoration to appear on the spine;
  - where the spine of the research paper is too thin to support lettering across, the wording shall be written along the spine reading from top to bottom in all cases.
- the cover of the volume shall be maroon and the lettering - gold;
- supporting materials should be bound in the back of the research paper as an appendix, or in a separate set of covers.

## **EXAMPLES AND SUGGESTED SEQUENCE OF PRELIMINARIES**

This section deals with requirements for the preliminary pages of the research paper and gives standard format examples of these. Candidates are asked to observe their content and general layout, as well as the sequence of the following material.

**Title Page**

Sydney College of the Arts  
The University of Sydney

MASTER OF FINE ARTS (or MASTER OF VISUAL ARTS)  
2010  
RESEARCH PAPER

THE BROKEN MIRROR

by  
Virginia Brown

December 2010

## **Statement**

This volume is presented as a record of the work undertaken for the degree of Master of Visual Arts/Doctor of Philosophy at Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney.

## **Table of Contents**

- Acknowledgments (optional)
- List of Illustrations
- Abstract
- Foreword (optional)
- Introduction
- Chapter One (chapters may have titles)
- Chapter Two, etc
- Conclusion
- Endnotes if footnotes have not been used
- Bibliography
- Appendix (optional)
- Resume (optional)
- Catalogue of Work Presented for Examination
- List of Images (slides, DVD, etc should be bound into back of research paper)

## **Acknowledgments (optional)**

Occupies a separate page between the Statement and the Table of Contents page. Please keep it short. "...I wish to acknowledge the help given to me in this project by my supervisors / consultants / colleagues / family ...etc."

When a research paper has had the benefit of editorial advice then the name of the editor and a brief description of the service rendered should be printed as part of the list of acknowledgements or other prefatory matter near the front of the work when it is to be presented for examination. (Proof-reading and Editing of Theses and Dissertations policy, [www.usyd.edu.au/policy](http://www.usyd.edu.au/policy))

## **List of Illustrations**

Occupies a separate page:

Figure 1. Title of Work, Name of Artist, Page No.

Figure 2.

Figure 3.           etc.

## **Summary**

Description of creative work. Please indicate date and place of exhibition; number of works; media; if relevant, title of exhibition; brief descriptive statement; and other relevant data. This is not the exhibition catalogue.

Abstract of research paper. The abstract forms part of the Summary, and simply states the problem or project addressed and a brief description of the method used in undertaking this project (a condensed summary or synopsis of the sequence and conclusions of the study).

## **Foreword (optional)**

A foreword is optional and is generally to be avoided. It may be a statement about personal aspects of candidate's project (i.e. why the candidate undertook it), about special assistance received, the context (social, political, etc) of the candidate's work or other matters. It ought to be brief, less than one page.

## **Introduction**

The following notes on the Introduction are adapted from Anderson, Durston and Poole, "Thesis and Assignment Writing":

“An introduction should be written with considerable care, with two major aims in view: introducing the problem in a suitable context, and stimulating the reader’s interest. If introductions are dull, rambling, and lacking in precision, direction and specificity, there is little incentive for the reader to continue reading. An introduction may be chapter length and usually contains the following:

- a complete and concise statement of the subject being investigated for the general purpose of the study;
- a justification for the study, establishing the importance of the topic or material. It is appropriate at this juncture to indicate the limitations of the project and to define terms used in the study that have a special meaning or significance for the investigation;
- a preview of the organisation of the rest of the paper to assist the reader in grasping the relationship between the various parts of the paper;
- a clear indication of the methodology of the paper that is, whether it is a documentation of studio works, an essay, some combination of these, or some other. An introduction is usually written early, then completely rewritten after the main text has been finalised.”

### **Main Body of Text**

Because of the diversity of research topics occurring within separate disciplines, it is not possible to specify directions for organising the main body of a research paper or thesis. However, there are certain general principles, which should be followed:

- organise the presentation of the documentation or findings in a logical and sequential way, developing the project aims stated in the introduction.
- substantiate arguments or findings.
- be accurate in documentation.
- every effort should be made to write clearly and within a logical framework. This organisation may be assisted by a division of the material into chapters with headings and subheadings and a sequential organisation and development of material.

### **EXAMPLES AND SEQUENCE OF END PAPERS**

#### **The Conclusion**

The following notes on the Conclusion are adapted from Anderson, Durston and Poole, “Thesis and Assignment Writing”:

“The conclusion serves the important function of bringing together the whole report. In summary form, the developments of the previous chapters should be succinctly restated, important findings discussed and conclusions drawn from the whole study. In addition, the writer may list unanswered questions that have occurred in the course of the study and which require further research. The conclusion should leave the reader with the impression of completeness and of positive gain. As with the introduction, the conclusion usually forms a separate chapter.”

#### **Footnotes**

These are placed at the foot of each page or each chapter; or as a group after the Conclusion as endnotes. See Anderson Durston and Poole, “Dissertation and Assignment Writing” for more information.

#### **Bibliography**

This may be divided into ‘Books’ and ‘Periodicals’ sections, or may be integrated. Again, see Anderson, Durston and Poole, “Thesis and Assignment Writing” or some other style manual.

#### **Appendix A**

Optional. Includes material (possibly by another author), which is of importance to the preceding text. Should be brief. Highly relevant material included here only because it cannot be integrated into the main text.

#### **Appendix B**

Optional. The candidate’s professional resume may be included giving information on exhibitions, publications, collections, and awards in standard form. Should be brief.

### **List of Images**

A record of all images and other visual documentation materials bound into rear cover of the volume. List by number and title of work.

### **Catalogue of Work Presented for Examination.**

It is a typed list of the works, presenting such information as the title, media and dimensions of work (height X width X depth).

### **Footnote and Bibliography Style**

The candidate is expected to follow an appropriate and consistent convention of source citation and referencing. A good guide to current conventions for essays on the visual arts in Australia can be found in the "Guide to writing an essay for the Fine Arts Department" by Virginia Spate, Faculty of Arts, University of Sydney 1983-89. The candidate may consult other recent style manuals. Whichever convention the candidate adopts, he/she should employ it consistently.

**APPENDIX C. SUBMISSION AND EXAMINATION PROCESS TIMELINE\***

\*This is a guide only, exact submission and examination times will depend on candidate's oral examination date.

Mid Year Exam

Submission Timeline			Examination Timeline				
March	April	May	June	August	October	November	December
Semester Start	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Candidates submit 'Notification of Proposed Higher Degree Examination' form 12 wks before submission of research paper/thesis</li> <li>Supervisors submit the relevant 'Appointment of examiners and exam chair' form</li> <li>Submission of request to extend candidature, if necessary</li> </ol>	Submission of exam copies 5 wks before oral exam (3 copies)	Oral exams Postgraduate exhibitions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examiners reports returned</li> <li>Approval of award</li> <li>Copies of reports and award letters sent</li> </ol>	Submission of corrections/emendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submission of final bound copies</li> <li>Completion letters sent</li> </ol>	Graduation

End of Year Exam

Submission Timeline			Examination Timeline				
July	August	November	December	January	February	March	May
Semester Start	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Candidates submit 'Notification of Proposed Higher Degree Examination' form 12 wks before submission of research paper/thesis</li> <li>Supervisors submit the relevant 'Appointment of examiners and exam chair' form</li> <li>Submission of request to extend candidature, if necessary</li> </ol>	Submission of exam copies 5 wks before oral exam (3 copies)	Oral exams Postgraduate exhibitions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examiners reports returned</li> <li>Approval of award</li> <li>Copies of reports and award letters sent</li> </ol>	Submission of corrections/emendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submission of final bound copies</li> <li>Completion letters sent</li> </ol>	Graduation

## **APPENDIX D. FURTHER SUGGESTED READING**

- Anderson, J, Durston, B, and Poole, M, Dissertation and Assignment
- Clanchy, J, Essay Writing for Students: A Guide for Arts and Social Science Students
- Spate V., Guide to writing an essay for the Fine Arts Department
- University of Sydney, Sydney College of the Arts Handbook
- University of Sydney, Postgraduate Studies Handbook

The information given in this booklet may be subject to amendment after the date of preparation, May 2010.