

UK Council *for Graduate Education*

**PRACTICE-BASED DOCTORATES
IN
THE CREATIVE AND PERFORMING
ARTS AND DESIGN**

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FOREWORD

The UK Council for Graduate Education is an organisation established to promote the interests of graduate education in all disciplines in higher education institutions. The Council was established in 1994 and has over 128 institutional members. This paper on practice-based doctorates in the creative and performing arts and design is the fourth in a series investigating key issues in graduate education.

The paper has been prepared by a Working Group convened by Professor Christopher Frayling, Rector, Royal College of Art. The other members of the Working Group were Mrs Valerie Stead, former Deputy Vice-Chancellor, University of Greenwich, Professor Bruce Archer, Royal College of Art, Professor Nicholas Cook, University of Southampton, Professor James Powell, University of Salford, Dr Victor Sage, University of East Anglia, Professor Stephen Scrivener, University of Derby, and Professor Michael Tovey, Coventry University. The UK Council is very grateful to all members of the Working Group for their time and effort in preparing this paper which will assist institutions to debate the issues raised by the development of doctoral awards in creative disciplines. The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the UK Council for Graduate Education.

This report focuses on practice-based doctorates but raises fundamental questions about the content, form and conduct of doctoral work. In setting out proposals for doctoral study a series of recommendations are made for the creative and performing arts and design. I hope that these proposals will give rise to major debates within the community **and** some action. Certainly, it will be of great benefit to many subject areas to reconsider what constitutes a doctorate. However, it is also important to open up further fields of study at doctoral level.

In order to inform the Working Group about the current state of regulations in force in UK institutions for the award of PhD in practice-based disciplines a survey was carried out of the Council's membership. The Council would like to thank all those institutions who responded to the call for information. The Council would also like to thank the following for making available information or offering advice to the Working Group.

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PREFACE

This report represents the findings of the Working Group on practice-based doctorates, which started its enquiries in June 1996. The Working Group discovered that this is an unusually complex and sensitive topic, raising a number of issues about regulations, submissions, examinations and above all 'equivalence'. As the report shows, the Working Group refined its brief in line with the extensive amount – and range – of evidence considered. The resulting conclusions aim to contribute in a constructive way to the current debate about clarity and consistency in the award of doctorates, in the higher education sector, with particular reference to the broad field of creative and performing arts and design.

The report covers four main areas:

Definitions – and questions arising about 'doctorateness', regulations, and the content of practice-based PhDs;

Contentious areas – should there be a separate category of PhD for practice-based working, or should there be other named doctorates such as Doctorates of Professional Practice?; and how can equivalence be demonstrated between different types of doctorates?;

Regulations – the case for a generic regulation; detailed survey of existing regulations governing submissions, examiners and supervisors;

Conclusions – incorporating recommendations for action by the QAA Working Party on postgraduate typology and awards, or institutions on issues such as supervisors, examiners and examinations.

We are grateful to the many institutions and individuals who submitted regulations, articles, ideas and alternative proposals. A list of institutions whose members submitted evidence, and a summary of existing regulations governing doctoral work in Music Composition, are contained in Appendices.

Professor Christopher Frayling
July 1997

Footnote:

Since this report was drafted, the HEQC Report, "Survey of Awards in Eleven Universities: 1997", has been published (Aug.22 1997) strongly urging the care for a national framework and touching on the nomenclature and other difficulties at doctoral level: **emphasising "the need to clarify the use of new doctoral titles and to protect the significance of the PhD/DPhil"**. (Executive Summary, Point 4)

1. Section One: Introduction

- 1.1 The means by which clarity and consistency in the award of doctorates can be demonstrated and maintained has been an area of concern for members of the UK Council for Graduate Education since its inception.
- 1.2 Scrutiny of one particular area of concern gave rise to publication of the **Report on The Award of PhD on the Basis of Published Work in the UK**, which examined current practice and made recommendations designed, if adopted by existing and intending providers, to achieve, by consensus, clarity and consistency in this area.
- 1.3 A Working Group was set up in June 1996 to bring similar scrutiny to bear on the area of **Practice-based Doctorates** in ‘practitioner’ disciplines. The Working Group agreed to focus on awards in which the common and distinguishing feature is that a major element of the submission – produced specifically for submission for the award – is an original creative work or words in that discipline, created and executed by the candidate (and/or others as appropriate) notably:
 - Architecture
 - Creative Writing
 - Design – including graphics, 3D design, computer-related design
 - Music
 - Performing Arts
 - Visual Arts (including moving images and ‘the Applied Arts’)
- 1.4 Also in 1996, the **Review of Postgraduate Education (Harris Report)** was published. Amongst its conclusions was the need to develop a nationally accepted framework and typology of postgraduate awards. This recommendation was widely endorsed and a working party has been established by The Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC – now the Quality Assurance Agency – QAA), briefed to work with eight pilot institutions to test out and refine such a framework, with a view to its adoption by all UK higher education institutions at the turn of the century.
- 1.5 In consequence, the Executive Committee of the UK Council for Graduate Education amended the brief of the Practice-based Working Group, to re-orient it towards the formulation of this national framework. Thus, the following Report is focused on the outcomes of a survey¹ of current practice governing the awards of practice-based PhDs in UK institutions, and on the key issues affecting the achievement of clarity and consistency in the award of PhDs for practitioner-based study.

2. Section Two: Definitions

¹ Some 116 institutions, the membership of the UK Council for Graduate Education in October 1996, were surveyed. 90 responded, of which 45 indicated they had regulations for the award of such degrees. (see Appendix A)

2.1 The most striking issue identified by the survey and from other contributions to the Working Group was the considerable variation in the definition of both what constitutes a PhD, and what could be included in practice-based work. Key divergences of view were expressed over:

i. **Assumptions concerning the PhD award**

- Every subject can give rise to a PhD award,

OR

- Only those subjects where the ‘scientific method’ can be applied in reasonably direct form should give rise to a PhD.

While the ‘gold standard’ exclusive view implicit in the second bullet point still appears to be held in some quarters it is an extreme viewpoint, but serves to define one end of a continuum. The development of qualitative research methods, the substantial body of doctoral theses from the social sciences, humanities and arts and, most particularly, the more eclectic approaches now not infrequently adopted within traditional science and mathematical disciplines, mean that it is no longer possible to polarise subjects as conforming – or not – to the ‘scientific method’. However, it would be of value for the higher education community to achieve a consensus on the characteristics **common to all** PhDs. This is addressed in 2.2 below.

ii. **Assumptions concerning practice-based doctorates**

- Every subject with a practical element should be included in this investigation – e.g. Nursing, Veterinary Studies, Law, Engineering,

OR

- Only those arts subjects where the production of artefacts (the outcome of ‘research’) is integral to, and determined by, the discipline, should be included in any distinct sub-category of PhD.

There were strong representations from some quarters, stressing the need for clarification in all subjects involving practice. However, the principle operating here is that a distinction can be made between those subjects where there is not (generally) a creative, recordable outcome and those where there is – and the wider category of ‘all subjects with a practice element’ could be the theme of a separate report.

iii. **Assumptions concerning the role of the creative product of practice**

- If the ‘creative product’ is of sufficiently high standard, as judged by knowledgeable and appropriately qualified peers from the subject area, then they should be empowered to apply their expertise and to award a

PhD on the basis of their own use of subject specific criteria for excellence within the field,

OR

- The ‘creative product’ must be of high quality and originality but cannot alone lead to the award of a PhD.

The underlying principle here is that artists, designers, performers who are original and commended in their subject community will achieve recognition in the form of critical acclaim and the rewards of fame and respect. But the PhD award has at its heart the notion of training for research along with the expectation that the fruits of research will be communicated so as to make the contribution to knowledge and understanding indicated below. Thus, to make a PhD award requires a different judgement – and also a somewhat different peer group. The examining team should be constituted to reflect the nature of the submission and also the award; it would need to include those qualified in relevant academic research as well as in the professional practice of the subject.

2.2 Principles underpinning a PhD award

Scrutiny of existing regulations suggest **three principles** which must apply if a PhD (rather than a named discipline-specific doctorate such as DMus) is to be awarded. These are:

- i. The submitted work must make a recognisable **contribution to knowledge and understanding** in the field(s) of study concerned. This principle, of an original, independent piece of work, is enshrined in all PhD regulations.
- ii. The student must demonstrate a **critical knowledge of the research methods** appropriate to the field of study. The idea of the PhD as a training for, as well as a demonstration of successful achievement in, research requires that the candidate is acquainted with the range of relevant methods and knows when, and with what level of confidence, to apply them, even though the submission itself may demonstrate mastery of only one method. It is consistent with this principle that the contribution to knowledge and understanding could itself be focused on method as much as on content or product.
- iii. There is a submission – whatever its form – which is **subject to an oral examination by appropriate assessors**,² the particular nature of these viva voce examinations being specified within national or institutional regulations as befits the specific subject. (See 5.6).

² The debate with regard to the relevance and importance of viva voce examinations is addressed in *Quality and Standards of Postgraduate Research Degrees*, UK Council for Graduate Education, 1996, p19

- 2.3 A further factor in defining the nature of the PhD arises from the question of views as to **what a doctorate is for**. Whilst all answers would refer to the advancement of knowledge and demonstration of subject mastery, the importance of the PhD for **career purposes** needs also to be acknowledged. Within the academic sphere the PhD is well established as a required or preferred criterion for appointment or promotion – “a preparation for the life of scholarship” (Blume et al 1987) (see also 4.6). The value or relevance of a PhD for career purposes in industry or commerce and for professions outside academe, is much less clear. The development of professionally oriented PhDs (see 4.8) can be seen as a response to the desire to demonstrate to employers – and clients – that the ‘gold standard’ of the research-based PhD can also apply to professional subjects. Where they exist, these PhDs have in many cases involved practice-based research. However, where the professionally oriented doctorate contains a substantial taught element, whilst there is acceptance that it can be shown to be of doctoral standard, there remains the further debate as to whether it is equivalent to a PhD. This is taken up in 3.4i below.
- 2.4 One promising way of reaching a satisfactory definition of a PhD for practice-based work would be to start with the intentions of the candidate. This involves distinguishing the activities of the artist/designer/performer in their professional practice role from the academic research perspective they need to bring to bear on their creative work if they wish to submit the results for a PhD award. “Whereas an artist or designer can simply present his or her end-product, and refuse further explanation, the academic art and design researcher is obliged also to map for his or her peers the route by which they arrived at that product”.³

3. Section Three: Central Questions Arising

- 3.1 The fundamental divergences of view expressed in the survey and other submissions, listed above (2.1) led the Working Group to reformulate its goal. First, it agreed to focus mainly on areas of creative and performing arts and design, rather than on the whole range of subjects in which there is a dimension of ‘practice’. Second, it set out to explore what **consensus** on answers could be found to the following consequential questions.

3.2 What is ‘doctorateness’?

A prime cause of difficulty over answering this question is the existence of both PhDs and other types of doctoral awards (see 4.6). In 2.2, the case is made for the defining (arguably equivocal) principles that must characterise any PhD award – and hence all other doctorates must differ, in that they do not meet all these requirements or that there is a substantial imbalance between them. Given that the focus of this paper is on the PhD award, it is necessary to identify the common qualities and characteristics shared by **all** submissions or candidates, or the nature and standard of the award itself is brought into question. However, the diversity of views received and the range of doctoral awards identified in our

³ *Research Perspectives in Art and Design*, The Research Training Initiative, University of Central England, p15

survey means that similar common ground also needs to be established for other types of doctorate, or significant problems of level, consistency and esteem, both nationally and internationally, will continue to exist.

Where the common qualities and characteristics of all awards of ‘doctorateness’ are concerned, our survey reveals a broad peer consensus around the first principle of a doctoral submission as identified at 2.2 above: “an original contribution to knowledge and/or understanding”. This definition implies a new knowledge and/or a new perspective on existing knowledge, embodied in “a contribution”. Reducing the definition to its component parts, ‘doctorateness’ involves mastery of the existing techniques and knowledge-base of the subject, a critical and analytical attitude towards them, an ability to apply them with a view to originating new knowledge and/or understanding and an ability – based on the above – to originate in the form of a contribution which is judged to be valid and significant. This, in turn, involves the demonstration of all or most of a linked series of **competences**:

- To undertake a systematic enquiry, creation or design;
- To apply methods and techniques appropriate to the subject, in self-critical and rigorous ways;
- To grasp contingent areas of knowledge, context and performance/production;
- In documenting the process of origination in a way which is communicable to peers in a permanent and reproducible form;
- In developing a sustained and logical argument contextualised to relevant discourse;
- In justifying actions and decisions relating to process and product;
- In performing/producing a work which is valid and original – arising out of the above – and of high quality.

It follows that the **experience** of ‘doctorateness’ involves the transition from being instructed on what is known or already performed/produced to being able personally to originate, explain and justify what was not previously known or performed/produced – to the satisfaction of an informed peer group. The **essence** of ‘doctorateness’ is about an informed peer consensus on mastery of the subject; mastery of analytical **breadth** (where methods, techniques, contexts and data are concerned) and mastery of **depth** (the contribution itself, judged to be competent and original and of high quality). This consensus, in turn, implies the ability to communicate both types of mastery – within the ‘contribution’ itself, and in defence of it in appropriate forms. However, the appropriate balance between these elements is a matter of some controversy, most notably in the difference between PhD and other doctorates.

3.3 What consensus exists on current PhD regulations for practice-based subjects?

All of the regulations received via our survey (see 5.3, Appendices A, B and E) indicate a consensus on certain requirements of the submission:

- The work must have been undertaken as part of a registered research programme
- The final submission must be accompanied by a permanent record of the creative work(s)
- The creative work must be set in its relevant theoretical, historical, critical or visual context
- There must be a written thesis
- The length of the accompanying written thesis will usually be 30,000-40,000 words – except in the case of musical composition (see below)
- The work will constitute an independent and original contribution to knowledge
- The submission will demonstrate an understanding of appropriate research methods
- There will be an oral examination
- The written thesis and the creative work are of equal, or near equal, importance (except in the case of musical composition).

In the case of **musical composition** the regulations (see 5.4 vi and Appendix D) varied in certain areas from those outlined above, although they were consistent with each other.

- The work must have been undertaken as part of a registered research programme
- The final submission must be accompanied by a permanent record
- The size of the portfolio of compositions – usually described as “substantial”, and at least one composition should be for “large forces” (eg. A full orchestra)
- There should be an accompanying commentary (the implication is that this may be brief – 3,000-5,000 words)
- The submission should show “technical proficiency”
- Compositions should be worthy of public performance
- The commentary should be “an exposition of the creative process”
- There will be an oral examination
- The portfolio will form the predominant part of the submission.

3.4 What characterises a practice-based PhD?

It has already been argued that a fundamental distinction can be drawn between the award of a DMus, or DArt and Design or DDance Performance, as opposed to a PhD in Music, or Art and Design or Dance Performance. The distinction is between the quality of the created product or its production in the former case, and the research focus on the created product in academic context, in the latter case. Not all of the contributions received made explicit this distinction, but the

following statements are consistent with most of the regulations or with the views expressed in other contributions:

- i. it is **not** strictly the ‘same as’ a traditional **PhD based on conventional research**.
- ii. it is **not** the ‘same as’ a **substantially ‘taught doctorate’**.

However, a candidate enrolled on a substantially taught course leading to a submission for a doctoral award **might** develop a thesis of c.40,000 words. Further, the thesis might not only involve a critique of a particular genre but also incorporate an original piece of creative work extending or illuminating the genre. Thus, the taught element may in practice function principally to support a submission which would meet the principles for the award of a PhD.

Where the word ‘taught’ applies only to a short course in research methods – an increasingly common element – or to some taught input in the subject area, the consensus is that a submission which is the product of such a course with a thesis of 40,000 or so words should not be inadmissible for a PhD just because there is a taught element.

Thus, the question to be posed is whether the taught element is so substantial or so closely related to the content of the submission for a PhD award that the **principles** set out at 2.2 cannot unequivocally be seen to be met. In all cases, the regulations governing the taught doctorate or the PhD should make clear what is permissible and what would disbar a candidate from a PhD whilst leaving open a submission for an alternative doctoral award.

It is important to note that most contributors who commented on this category agreed with the Higher Education Business Enterprises (HEBE) publication, *Higher Education in the UK: Graduate Courses*⁴ “A substantially taught doctorate is of doctoral standard but is **not** the equivalent of a PhD.” This issue will need to be addressed in formulating a national framework of awards.

- iii. the **method of submission** for assessment and evaluation of a practice-based doctorate has certain features in common with the regulations for examination of **PhDs by published work**, where the quality of a range of ‘products’ accompanied by a critical analysis is judged by professional as well as academic peers.
- iv. **subjects** with a ‘**practice element**’ in them, and this includes subjects such as teaching, medicine and engineering, can give rise to doctoral study in **traditional forms** – by research, in a taught mode or via publications – as indeed can art and design. These are **not** practice-based doctorates,

⁴ *Higher Education in the UK: Graduate Courses*, Higher Education Business Enterprises, 1995, px

although the focus of the research can be to advance knowledge **about practice**, or to advance knowledge **within practice**.

- v. by contrast with iv, the **practice-based doctorate** advances knowledge partly **by means of practice**. An original/creative piece of work is included in the submission for examination. It is distinct in that significant aspects of the claim for doctoral characteristics of originality, mastery and contribution to the field are held to be demonstrated through the original creative work.
- vi. Practice-based doctoral submissions must include a substantial **contextualisation of the creative work**. This critical appraisal or analysis not only clarifies the basis of the claim for the originality and location of the original work, it also provides the basis for a judgement as to whether **general scholarly requirements** are met. This could be defined as judgement of the submission as a contribution to knowledge in the field, showing doctoral level powers of analysis and mastery of existing contextual knowledge, in a form which is accessible to and auditable by knowledgeable peers.
- vii. The quality of the original work submitted for the PhD award **must** be examined by an academic with appropriate experience in the same or a cognate field, and the examining team may also include an active practitioner/professional who is not an academic.

4. Section Four: Contentious Areas

4.1 The earlier sections have drawn attention to major areas of consensus or confusion, abstracted from a very considerable amount of discussion and written contributions. Those areas which appear to give rise to particularly strong opposing views are worthy of some elaboration. If a consistent national framework is to be achieved, the higher education sector will have to reach – or accept – a consensus on each.

4.2 The validity of a separate category of PhD for practice-based work

A distinction has been proposed between the PhD and other doctorates, based on the academic researcher orientation of the former. This distinction suggests that there should continue to be (at least) two categories of doctoral award. The National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education, chaired by Sir Ron Dearing, recommended that there should be “a framework of qualifications which provides for progression, is broad enough to cover the whole range of achievement [and] is consistent in its terminology” and that such a framework “must have recognisable standards at each level”⁵, and “this means placing a limit on the number of award titles”.⁶ The Qualifications Framework in the Dearing Report (Chart 10.1) proposes only that Doctorates – “taught/research” –

⁵ *Higher Education in the Learning Society*, Summary Report, July 1997, pp16-17, paragraphs 42-43

⁶ *Higher Education in the Learning Society*, Full Report, July 1997, p149, para 10.42

are at level 8, with MPhil at level 7 and other Masters at level 6. This suggests that distinctions between doctoral awards should be blurred in the interests of securing a simpler framework, or that a set of very general regulations could be developed with institutions free to specify within that framework both the nature of, and the requirement for, the award of their particular doctorates. The Dearing contribution to this debate is probably best summarised in paragraph 10.48: “We welcome and endorse the recommendation made in the Harris Report about the need for standardised nomenclature for programmes above degree level, and propose that developmental work in this area be continued in relation to the framework for higher education qualifications to ensure that there is consistency and clear progression”.⁷

- 4.3 The case has already been made that it is neither valid nor worthwhile to differentiate a PhD in a practice-based subject from a PhD in any other subject. It is the research orientation that is paramount. There is a substantial amount of doctoral research, particularly in the humanities, which, though not practice-based, does not conform to a narrow (and probably mythical) definition of a traditional ‘scientific’ model of doctoral research and indeed much work in the sciences does not fit this model. These facts further support the view that such differentiation is not a satisfactory option. There is already a **continuum** from scientific research to creative practice. What **is** needed is a set of nationally agreed definitions of standards for the award of doctorates (see below) framed in such a way that they are sufficiently **rigorous** to secure demonstration of the qualities outlined at 3.2 above, but sufficiently **inclusive** to allow all subjects to find expression within them. Subject specialists, both academics and practitioners, could evolve and agree a subset of **specific** guidelines/criteria appropriate to particular disciplines – but operating within a set of **general** regulations embodying the three principles expressed at 2.2 above. One example of such specific guidelines could be deduced from the criteria for PhDs in musical composition. (see Appendix D).
- 4.4 This **inclusive model** would involve either demonstrating/accepting that the activities and outcomes outlined in earlier sections could reasonably be seen as consistent with a traditional scientific model, or broadening the model so as to encompass the entire continuum from scientific to practice-based research. This would entail re-defining the former in **general** terms of, for instance, the acquisition of relevant data, the exercise of critical and analytical skills, sustained and coherent argumentation, and clarity and (relative) permanence in presentation, rather than in the narrower terms of formation and testing of hypotheses. Such shifts, which have occurred already in the system across all manner of disciplines, perhaps need to be formally acknowledged and embraced. It would follow from this approach that the creative process involved in practice-based doctorates can be seen as a form of research in its own right and, as such, as **equivalent to** scientific research. Thus, the product and associated creative process presented as part of the doctoral submission can be viewed as demonstrating the defining competences of doctorateness in the ‘same way’ as in a traditional research based submission.

⁷ *ibid.* p152, para 10.48

4.5 **Demonstrating equivalence of practice-based submissions for the award of PhD**

The **process** – the programme of research and the research methods followed – can be distinguished from the **product** – the outcome of the research – although the product is a significant indicator of the process. The determination of doctorateness is dependent on the exposition of **both**. The **product** or forms (re)presenting the outcome of research in the arts are essentially determined by the nature of the art form or the specific project undertaken. Depending on the agreed method of presentation and assessment of the individual submission, the **product** may be a musical or dramatic performance or a composition or a play or works of visual art/design. But no matter how valuable or well received in artistic terms the product is, this is not, in itself, indicative of the **process**. There is a basic difference between the presentation of works for a doctorate and for an exhibition. The presentation of the works in the first instance is for a very specific purpose – as evidence in support of a research based argument. It is an exhibition primarily for research purposes rather than, or in addition to, being a professional exhibition.

The commentary has, in the Working Group's view, a pivotal role to play in the assessment of a doctoral submission. Its nature and length could be the characteristics which differentiate between the award of either a PhD or a named doctorate. It would be useful if the development of a national awards framework could also provide guidance as to how to achieve greater clarity and consistency over the exact role that the commentary plays in assessing the attainment of a doctoral award.

Research in the **practice of the Arts related subjects** is more likely to employ qualitative research methods. This kind of research does not, typically, begin with a predetermined set of questions or assumptions but arises from particular situations or contexts, which can be described with sufficient precision for a project to emerge which can be scrutinised and approved by the institution in dialogue with the supervisor. 'Emergent' is the key element as, significantly, decisions and directions within the project are determined by the development of the project. As a research project, such decisions and directions typically would be consequential upon a systematic application of a process and level of self-reflection, critical analysis and synthesis, evaluation, conceptual frame-building, acquisition and application of contextual knowledge and an understanding of the ways the practice is related to theory, in relation to the specific work being undertaken.

It follows that a recording in written form (or in appropriate circumstances in other forms such as video or audio tape) of the context and development of the project is necessary to provide publicly accessible evidence of the research **processes** indicated above: this recording will have underpinned the project and, indeed, can be said to constitute an important element in the research process itself. Furthermore, such recording would seem to be a necessary accompaniment to the body of work in order for that work to be valued, understood and assessed as an outcome of a rigorous and intellectually demanding programme of study, which, without such documentation, would be

otherwise difficult to determine. Such documentation also provides a critical context within which the work may be viewed, heard or otherwise experienced, and assessed.

The arguments lead to the conclusion that the presentation of practical work on its own, however original it may be deemed to be and whatever its critical acclaim, does **not** provide sufficient evidence on which judgement can be made to award a PhD. Indeed, the submission of an appropriate form of recording or documentation (the decision as to what is appropriate may vary from discipline to discipline), which can be shared by the current and future members of the academic community, is essential in expressing the context within which, and the criteria by which, the work was argued as making an original contribution to knowledge, which may well not be self-evident from the work itself. And it is this claim for originality that is a key determinant of whether a doctoral award can be justified.

In terms of existing practice and of the thinking that supports it, the major exception to the principles set out in this section are the regulations relating to submissions based on **musical composition**. As indicated in 3.3 above, it is usual for the **commentary** element of these submissions to be brief (for example, 3,000-5,000 words is prescribed in two instances) and for it to be seen as only ancillary to the compositional element. It appears that, in a long established tradition of compositional doctorates, a consensus has been reached among the academics that the product (namely the composition) embodies and, in consequence, is indicative of the research process and that this is clearly understood by the academic community. In this way musical composition is accorded equal status with text-based musicology. In North America a Doctor of Composition qualification is seen as second-class and any attempt at such ghettoization of composition from music-based musicology is likely to meet with resentment in the UK.

- 4.6 Where **equivalence** is concerned, it appears both possible and desirable to formulate criteria for a submission for a PhD award in which the production of original pieces of work is an integral part of the process as well as its product, and to employ the same judgmental stance as if they were a more conventional research-based submission.

Certainly, the formulation and adoption of a nationally agreed framework of regulations for PhD, and of generic guidelines on examination which could be sub-divided to reflect different subjects, would seem the simplest solution. Such a framework would have to reflect the need to demonstrate comparability across subjects and the way in which the concept of research applies to practice in the Arts and related subjects.

4.7 **Other doctoral awards**

One major cause of confusion and disagreement over the award of a PhD for practice-based work is the existence of other awards leading to a doctoral title. This route to a doctoral award already exists for a key practice-based area,

namely Music. Thirteen institutions offer a DMus.⁸ It is a route which could be opened for all areas of the Arts and related areas. It allows individual excellence to be recognised and celebrated. But it does **not** imply or require the research orientation, or concern with process as well as product, that characterises the PhD either as a “preparation for a life of scholarship”⁹, or in the more prescriptive prose of the CNA 1991/92 Handbook: the CNA Regulations specified that the candidate must have “satisfactorily completed a research training and evaluated or critically studied an appropriate topic over not less than 33 months (or equivalent) of full-time study, resulting in a significant contribution to knowledge, and presented a satisfactory thesis”, or in the regulations of, for example, the University of Southampton, which state that one of the objectives of study for a PhD is “to furnish training in research methods” which will be evident in the candidate’s use of “appropriate research methods and techniques” in the final thesis. There are two additional types of award which are identifiably different in kind rather than in method. These are the higher doctorates and what could be described as ‘Professional Practice’ doctorates.

4.8 Higher doctorates

Higher doctorates have a long history in the UK. In 1882 Durham offered the first DSc¹⁰, and other higher doctorates now available include DLitt, DD and DSc (Social Science). These are in the main awarded in recognition of distinguished individual contributions to a field, usually no sooner than five to seven years after graduation, and on the basis of published work. Often they are awarded only to graduates of the institution in question, or current staff. At Brunel, Sheffield and Plymouth are the awards available via thesis as well as by published/publicly available work.¹¹

As the Higher Doctorate route already exists, it could be extended to embrace all the practice-based areas and there would be value in, but not the same necessity for, consistency of regulations across institutions. A revised framework would be unlikely to **require** a research PhD training; rather, some reference to demonstrating knowledge of and competence in relevant methods of enquiry could be included in the generic regulations. It is probably fair to say that these Doctorates are seen not only as different from the PhD, but there is also debate as to whether they are superior or inferior to the PhD depending on the subject, institution and recipient.

4.9 Professional practice doctorates

Two models have emerged to meet the need for a doctoral award expressed by those whose focus is the advancement of **professional knowledge and practice**.

⁸ J. McGinnety and R. McDougall, *The Professional Doctorate (Part 1): An Old Qualification in a New University*, University of East London, p16

⁹ S Blume and O. Amsterdamska, *Postgraduate Education in the 1980s*, OCED

¹⁰ McGinnety et al, p15

¹¹ *ibid.* p16

- A doctorate based directly on the research degree model, in line with the approach outlined at 4.3 above. (For example, Doctor of Psychology is offered at Edinburgh leading to the award of PhD on the basis of a thesis on research in an approved topic, with viva.)
- A **practitioner** doctorate, emphasising vocational and professional activities, and including a taught element. (For example, Doctor of Clinical Psychology, offered at a range of UK institutions including Leeds and Plymouth involving practical experience, case studies, service evaluation project and then thesis).

These ‘professional’ awards, which include the Ed.D, the Eng.D and the D.Clin.Psy, are intended as **PhD equivalents** although the amount of taught material in the latter example above does raise issues related to doctoral standards. (see 2.3 and 3.8).

The confusion over nomenclature is not eased by the existence of this alternative, but the option of, say, a Doctorate in Fine Art or Design for a presentation-plus-thesis type of submission could be a logical extension of this model for a practising artist or designer. There is already in existence a Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA). This is the standard degree for instrumental/vocal teachers in North American conservatoires and universities, introduced so that teachers can comply with the expectation that **all** tenured university staff should have doctorates.

- 4.10 The introduction of a **new and different qualification – the professional doctorate (PD)**¹² is the proposal from the University of East London; it is also proposed as an **equivalent** to the **PhD** and this ‘solution’ forms part of the critical debate on this topic. Its aim is the **personal development** of the candidate (either in preparation for professional activity or to advance further personal skills and professional knowledge) **and advancement of the subject or profession**. Again, it is arguable that more flexible, inclusive and nationally agreed regulations for PhD could extend to **all** such professionally-oriented study and activity, and avoid further proliferation of titles.

5. Section Five: Towards Consistency of Standards and Regulations for PhDs

- 5.1 In 1991/92 the CNAAs regulations set a single framework for PhD study in the then Polytechnics. Even these relatively recent regulations were not inclusive in the way it is argued above is now appropriate. Nor did they fully resolve the problem observed by Winfield et al (1987) concerning “the apparent uncertainty about the nature, form and purpose of the PhD degree...(which) has not been set down in such a way as would attract unequivocal and widespread agreement”.
- 5.2 It is to be hoped that the outcomes of the QAA Working Party will effect a resolution of the current confused and incomplete picture. Our survey revealed

¹² *ibid.* and J. McGinety and R. McDougall, *The Professional Doctorate (Part 2): Validated Programmes in the University of East London*.

some areas of well developed practice that could form the basis of generic regulations/guidelines which would engender consensus in action as well as better defining what a British PhD actually is. Such regulations would need to touch upon:

- How to frame proposals to achieve registration
- Details of the arrangements for confirmation of PhD registration or transfer from MPhil to PhD
- The characteristics of the original work and the means by which it is submitted for examination
- The form, nature and length of the commentary, allowing for word count equivalence in non-text forms
- Guidance on vivas and composition of examination team.

5.3 Survey of Regulations

- i. In the Autumn of 1996 the UK Council for Graduate Education carried out a survey of regulations currently in force in its member institutions for the award of doctoral degrees in practitioner disciplines such as architecture, art, creative writing, dance, design, drama, moving image, music and the like where a substantial part of the candidate's submission for examination is an original work(s) in that discipline devised and/or executed by the candidate. The request for information was sent to the (then) 116 member institutions and elicited 90 responses (approximately 77%). Of these, 45 stated that they have no special regulations for the award of such degrees, although two have MPhil regulations for certain creative disciplines and one institution has a small number of candidates that can submit a portfolio of musical compositions instead of a thesis (but these are covered by traditional PhD regulations) and one institution uses traditional PhD regulations for such disciplines as architecture. 45 institutions submitted regulations, analysis of which indicate that a number of trends can be identified.
- ii. A large number of institutions who had come under the CNA A regulations are using an adaptation of the CNA A regulations: (see Appendix B)

“A candidate may undertake a programme of research in which the candidate's own creative work forms, as a point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual enquiry. Such creative work may be in any field (for instance, fine art, design, engineering and technology, architecture, creative writing, musical composition, film, dance and performance), but shall have been undertaken as part of the registered research programme. In such cases, the presentation and submission may be partly in other than written form.

The creative work shall be clearly presented in relation to the argument of a written thesis and set in its relevant theoretical, historical, critical or design context. The thesis itself shall conform to the usual scholarly requirements and be of an appropriate length.

The final submission shall be accompanied by some permanent record (for instance, video, photographic record, musical score, and diagrammatic representation) of the creative work, where practicable, bound with the thesis.

The application for registration shall set out the form of the candidate's intended submission and of the proposed methods of assessment".

One institution had added the stipulations "must show coherence and originality in invention" and "the thesis itself must show critical understanding of the submitted creative work in relation to contemporary thought".

The written thesis is to be in the 30,000-40,000 word range.

- iii. Of those institutions listed in Appendix B who submitted full regulations it was apparent that they also adopted the CNAA regulations with regard to the **definition** of PhD. (see Appendix C)

"The PhD shall be awarded to a candidate who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic resulting in an independent and original contribution to knowledge and demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, has presented and defended a thesis by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners".

- iv. However, there were two variations:

"the PhD shall be awarded to a student who has carried out an approved creative programme at an appropriate level which is critically evaluated and set in its context, both of which must result in an independent and original contribution to knowledge, or an independent, original and significant contribution to the advancement of the discipline. The candidate will also have demonstrated an understanding and mastery of research methods and/or techniques appropriate to the chosen field, and presented a thesis, together with an artefact(s) or other appropriate outcome(s) of the research where applicable, and defended it, by oral examination, to the satisfaction of the examiners". [London Guildhall]

and

"The degree of PhD is awarded to recognise the successful completion...of a supervised programme of individual research, development or design, the results of which have been satisfactorily embodied in a thesis (or other presentation) which

- (a) demonstrate an understanding of research methods appropriate to the field of study;

- and
- (b) demonstrate critical investigation and evaluation of the topic of research; and
- (c) constitute an independent and original contribution to knowledge; and
- (d) demonstrate the candidates ability to undertake further research without supervision”. [De Montfort]

Both of these definitions acknowledge that the PhD may include an element of creative work, although there is still expected to be an “independent and original contribution to knowledge” and an “understanding of research methods”.

- v. Recently revised regulations from the University of Derby have built upon but gone beyond the CNAAs regulations and address several of the issues raised in this report. For example:

“Evidence required to be submitted in respect of the awards:

- i. A written thesis focused on a chosen field of enquiry
- ii. A written thesis focused on a chosen field of enquiry accompanied by a creative work(s) or invention(s) where it forms part of the evidence for new understanding.
- iii. A creative work(s) or invention(s) accompanied by a text or dissertation which contextualises the work and the new understanding which stems from the work”.

“Notification of the intention to submit for examination:

- i. the intended date of submission.
- ii. a list of the items or works which are to be submitted.
- iii. a list of items which the examiners will need to see but which for good reason it is inappropriate to submit to the office, for example, large items or works which are to be formally exhibited.
- iv. an indication of when the examiner will have the opportunity to examine the items which cannot be submitted to the School Office”.

- vi. Eleven institutions, the majority of them from the ‘old’ university sector, submitted regulations related to the awarding of degrees in the area of music. (see Appendix D). These submissions fell into two different types of programme with different submission requirements.

A small number involved compositions and a thesis, or a recital and thesis. In these cases the thesis is intended to be substantial.

All eleven institutions offered degrees in musical composition. These require a substantial portfolio of compositions with a shorter commentary. Two institutions indicated that this commentary should be

in the 3,000-5,000 word region. The regulations for these awards had a number of elements in common.

Originality

The compositions were usually defined as “original” or that they needed to show “originality”.

Amount of Work

There was some attempt to define the number and/or type of compositions, with the portfolio usually described as “substantial”. Several stated that at least one composition in the portfolio should be for “large forces”.

Technical Proficiency

There were references to “technical competence” or “technical mastery”. One set of regulations demanded impeccable calligraphy skills and accuracy with regard to notation and presentation.

Public Performance

The majority of submissions stated the compositions should be worthy of public performance.

Written Statement /Commentary

The majority of institutions require an accompanying commentary generally covering the structure of the work and/or “an exposition of the creative process”. Only two institutions have an indication of word length, one stating the commentary should be between 3,000 and 5,000 words and the other that it should be not less than 5,000 words. The implication is that the commentary is brief.

All the institutions surveyed except one see the award as, and indeed refer to it as, a PhD, except Nottingham who refer to the award as AMusD. The Royal College of Music (RCM) offer a DMus which conforms to all the PhD regulations for creative disciplines; and which the RCM sees as ‘equivalent to’ a PhD. In these cases musical composition is seen as on a par with text-based musicology and capable of achieving the same award. This is in contrast to the North American experience where Doctor of Composition is seen as a second-class qualification, thus reinforcing the practical/academic divide.

- vii. Eight institutions submitted regulations for disciplines other than music where creative work could form part of the submission. (Appendix E). Royal Holloway and Bedford New College and Queen Mary and Westfield College both allow for submissions in the field of Fine Art and Design which include a “portfolio, exhibition or other visual display”. The work must be original and must be accompanied by a thesis of 60,000 words. This is 20,000 words less than that required for a traditional PhD in the same discipline.

The University of East Anglia offers PhDs in the field of Creative Writing. Here the original literary text forms “a substantial part of the thesis” with the accompanying work being between 20,000 – 50,000 words long.

Brunel (discipline not specified) require the original creative work to be “supported by adequate documentation”; no word length is prescribed.

Roehampton Institute (discipline not specified) and Wimbledon College of Art, under the University of Surrey regulations, require a portfolio of work(s) with “notes on each item in the portfolio and either an extended analysis of one item or a dissertation on a related theme”. No word length is prescribed.

5.4 **Submission**

All of the institutions indicate that the submission should consist of the creative work(s) and an accompanying thesis or commentary. However, the importance of, and relationship between, the creative work(s) and the written aspect of the submission varies across institutions. The CNAAs adapted regulations (outlined in 5.3 ii) currently in use in a number of institutions (see Appendix B), state “the creative work shall be clearly presented in relation to the argument of the written thesis” implying that the creative work(s) are at most equal or else potentially subservient to the written element. The regulations governing musical composition (5.3 vi) require a commentary, the significance and importance of which would seem to vary from institution to institution. In one set of regulations the commentary is expected to “show evidence of independent critical power as well as demonstrate that the candidate is able to relate his/her work to the context of contemporary musical developments”. In a second, it should embody “an outstanding account of the musical compositions” and in a third, it is “a list of the work submitted and a brief statement of the candidate’s aims and the nature of the work”.

Of eight institutions submitting regulations for disciplines other than music the balance between the two elements was, again, variable. For some the creative work would seem to occupy a subservient position (eg Royal Holloway and Bedford), for others it was more significant, being “a substantial part of the thesis” (University of East Anglia). The lack of prescribed word length and phrases such as “supported by adequate documentation” (Brunel) imply that the balance between the two aspects is potentially more fluid, allowing the creative work(s) to occupy a more dominant position. This variation in the importance of, and relationship between, the various aspects of the submission is a particularly sensitive issue in the pursuit of consistent academic standards and, as such, will need to be the subject of further debate and some consensus among institutions. Only in this way can confidence in the equivalence of submission in which the major contribution is made by the creative element be supported and boosted.

5.5 **Supervisors**

All institutions have similar general regulations covering the arrangements for the supervision of PhDs. These general regulations specify the number of supervisors to be appointed, and that those appointed should be suitably qualified and experienced. They may specify the number of successful previous supervisions the supervisor must have undertaken, and the number of supervisions a candidate may expect as a minimum. However, within these general regulations there is no specific reference made to the supervision of students carrying out practice-based work. This is not to say that such advice may not exist in the form of guidelines within individual departments. If institutions are to adopt the inclusive model outlined in this paper it may be timely for them to consider their current regulations and formal guidelines in this area to ensure that students in the field of creative arts are supported in their work and to ensure that the student's project is such as to enable it to conform to more traditional research requirements, if the revised regulations so require. It will often be necessary for institutions to appoint two supervisors to cover both the academic and practical aspects, in line with the advice on external examiners below.

5.6 Examiners

Where institutions submitted a complete copy of their regulations it was apparent that guidance with regard to examiners is similar across institutions. It is usually expected that there will be a minimum of two examiners, of which at least one, and in some instances, two, must be external. Examiners are expected to be experienced in the field of research, and at least one of them (this is usually stipulated of the external examiner) must have [substantial] experience of examining at this level. One institution did make reference to the use of individuals other than academics as examiners stating they could be appointed from "other suitable environments provided that those individuals are experts in the field of the student's topic of research and hold a professional status which is equivalent to University Professor, Reader, Lecturer or Teacher" (University of Nottingham). It may prove useful to consider including in national regulations for practice-based doctorates the desirability of using two external examiners where no one examiner (or combination of external and internal examiners) can be found to meet the requirement for both academic and artistic expertise in the relevant subject area. This would ensure that there is an external judgement of not only the **academic** standard against other PhDs, but also the **creative** standard against excellence in the relevant field.

5.7 Examinations/Vivas

None of the regulations submitted gave any specific guidance with regard to the examination of submissions that include creative works. However, this is an area that institutions are currently considering. If the works are presented as an exhibition, the structure, purpose and running of the exhibition must be clearly thought through so as to meet the regulatory requirements for the PhD or other doctoral awards. If the exhibition and viva are combined this also raises issues where clarification of the process is needed. It has been noted that examiners still receive the written thesis in advance and, whilst this should include photographs, drawings or other representations of the exhibition, this is not the

same as viewing the genuine artefact. One institution, recognising this, stated that the examiners should not come to, or record their decision until they had experienced the creative work. As indicated previously (see 2.2 iii) there is some debate as to the nature and importance of viva voce examinations for PhDs in general. However, it has been suggested that the viva voce may play a particularly significant role in practice-based disciplines. “It may be the first real opportunity for the researcher to demonstrate fully the connections between practice and research, the effect of research on practice, and the embodiment of research within practice. These may only be alluded to, or outlined, through the juxtaposition of image and text within a classical document but not demonstrated as fully as is possible in the presence of the work”.¹³

5.8 Examination outcomes

It may also be advisable to consider how best to demonstrate the means by which the normal range of examination outcomes – pass, refer, resubmit, lower award, fail – are operationalised for practice-based doctorates. Whilst these outcomes present no difficulties with regard to any written element, it may be inappropriate to resubmit a creative object(s) in all cases.

6. Section Six: Summary/Conclusions

- 6.1 The award of a PhD admits the bearer to a community of scholars. It signifies that the holder is capable of distinctive/original thought and work, undertaken specifically for the award. He/she is also able to contextualise that knowledge or performance so as to demonstrate to peers how it contributes to the development of the subject in its content, its methods and/or its means of communication. Whatever form the product of research in a creative subject takes, its originator should not be excluded from seeking to demonstrate doctoral achievement and hence admission to that community.
- 6.2 It has been established that PhDs are being awarded in disciplines with a creative focus and containing aspects of practice. The need is to achieve a common currency to confirm and make visible their equivalence to other PhDs. The definition of the PhD already provides for awards to be made for study in disciplines using a research approach which does not conform to a narrow interpretation of a traditional scientific approach. The notion of the PhD award as a continuum expressed in this, de facto, inclusive model allows for an award based on academically oriented practice-based study. It is the conclusion of the Working Group that it is in the best interests of scholarly endeavour and international understanding to direct attention to elucidating how the three principles – of excellence in a contribution to and knowledge of methods in a subject, tested through oral, external examination – apply where the intention of the candidate is to make a contribution as a researcher in a practice-based field. (see 2.2)

¹³ Anne Douglas, email communication, Research Training Initiative discussion forum.

- 6.3 The intention of the candidate may also serve to clarify what sort of doctorate he/she should be pursuing. The researcher/academic role is best suited to those whose work or aspiration has analysis or evaluation of the creative process or product, as well as excellence in its expression, as an integral part of the thesis. For those whose main purpose is to achieve an award signalling formal recognition of the highest achievement within the subject area, a Doctor of Composition or Art or Design or Dance Performance or other appropriate disciplinary title may be more valid and appropriate. This differentiation by intention rather than by subject suggests that such a title is a valid and appropriate additional doctoral qualification, following the well established tradition of the DMus. However, there are questions as to the parity of esteem actually accorded to alternative doctoral designations.
- 6.4 Our enquiry indicates that it is both possible and desirable to formulate criteria for a PhD submission in which original pieces of creative work are an integral part of the process and the product, and to employ an equivalent judgemental stance as if they were a more conventional research-based submission. This potential consensus on the defining features of all PhD awards could logically lead to the formulation and adoption of a nationally agreed basic framework of regulations for PhD submission and examination, which would admit both practice-based and conventional submissions. This is not to overemphasise the regulations per se, but rather to emphasise their importance in embodying and securing academic standards. However, it may not be easy to find consensus in the nomenclature debate which turns on differences not only within titles but also of relative esteem.
- 6.5 Where a national framework for postgraduate awards is concerned, consistent academic standards will best be demonstrated and fostered by identifying a set of core **characteristics and regulatory requirements** to apply to all PhDs, on the inclusive model outlined in this paper, and by indicating what variation to these requirements can apply to all other doctorates. In addition, **a subset of regulations and/or guidelines** illustrating how core requirements are operationalised in different subject areas should be developed, drawing on advice from professional and subject groups and on the outcomes of a comprehensive consultation with current providers of doctoral awards.

Institutions who submitted regulations relating to the award of PhD in practice-based disciplines

- Anglia Polytechnic University
- Bath College of Higher Education (validated by University of the West of England)
- Bolton Institute of Higher Education
- Bournemouth University
- University of Brighton
- University of Bristol
- Brunel University
- Buckingham College of Higher Education
- University of Central Lancashire
- Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education (validated by University of Bristol)
- University of Coventry
- De Montfort University
- University of Derby
- University of Durham
- University of East Anglia
- University of East London
- University of Greenwich
- University of Hertfordshire
- University of Huddersfield
- King Alfred's College
- Kingston University
- Leeds Metropolitan University
- Liverpool John Moores University
- London Guildhall University
- University of Luton
- University of Northumbria at Newcastle
- University of Nottingham
- Nottingham Trent University
- Oxford Brookes University
- Queen Mary and Westfield College
- Roehampton Institute
- Royal College of Music
- Royal Holloway and Bedford New College
- Sheffield Hallam University
- University of Southampton
- Staffordshire University
- University of Sunderland
- University of Surrey
- University of Sussex
- University of Teesside
- University of Ulster

- University of the West of England
- Wimbledon College of Art
- Worcester College of Higher Education
- University of York

Institutions whose procedures include CNAA adapted regulations

- Anglia Polytechnic University
- Bath College of Higher Education (validated by University of the West of England)
- Bolton Institute of Higher Education
- Bournemouth University
- University of Brighton
- University of Central Lancashire
- Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education (validated by University of Bristol)
- University of Coventry
- De Montfort University
- University of Derby
- University of East London
- University of Greenwich
- University of Hertfordshire
- University of Huddersfield
- Kingston University (see also Appendix C)
- Leeds Metropolitan University
- Liverpool John Moores University
- London Guildhall University
- University of Luton
- University of Northumbria at Newcastle
- Nottingham Trent University
- Oxford Brookes University
- Sheffield Hallam University
- Staffordshire University
- University of Sunderland
- University of Teesside
- University of the West of England
- Worcester College of Higher Education (as for University of Coventry)

Institutions whose regulations include the CNAAB definition of PhD

- Bolton Institute of Higher Education
- University of Brighton
- University of Coventry
- University of Derby
- University of East London
- University of Greenwich
- University of Hertfordshire
- University of Huddersfield
- Liverpool John Moores University
- Leeds Metropolitan University
- University of Luton
- University of Northumbria at Newcastle
- Nottingham Trent University
- Oxford Brookes University
- Staffordshire University
- University of Sunderland
- University of Teesside

Appendix D

Institutions offering supervision leading to the award of PhD in music

University of Bristol – PhD in Musical Composition

Music: Folio of compositions and analytical and critical commentary – should be worthy of public performance. Compositions will normally cover whole period of study and the commentary chart the development of style and technique over that period. “Compositions should show technical competence, including a secure grasp of musical structure, and a measure of originality. They should also be worthy of public performance. Commentary should show evidence of independent critical power as well as demonstrate that the candidate is able to relate his/her work to context of contemporary musical developments”.

University of Durham (Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy)

Music: Folio of substantial works, or a major work such as an opera which “shows coherence and originality in invention as well as in the treatment of existing musical techniques and is worthy of public performance” – “accompanied by a commentary satisfactorily explaining its structure and the methods employed”.

University of East Anglia –PhD

Musical composition: “A substantial portfolio of original compositions written specifically for the degree, together with an appropriate written commentary. The compositions shall show coherence and originality in invention as well as in the treatment of musical techniques. The written commentary shall discuss the structure of each of the compositions and provide an exposition of the creative process. In the written commentary, and in the examination, the candidate is required to show a critical understanding of the relationship of the submitted compositions to contemporary music thought”.

Kingston University – PhD

Music Composition and Analysis: The candidate can submit “a folio of original compositions accompanied by a thesis in an approved area of musical analysis” within the word range 30,000-40,000 for a PhD and 15,000-20,000 for an MPhil. “The folio of compositions must show a variety of resources and for a PhD should normally include a work utilising large musical forces. The folio must have a total duration of at least 40 minutes for a PhD and at least 20 minutes for an MPhil”.

Music Composition: “A programme of research in which the submission of a folio of original musical composition will form the principal part of the assessment”. “The PhD in the area of Musical Composition will be assessed by a folio of original compositions with a total duration of at least 60 minutes and which must show successful experimentation with forms, structure, texture, language, genres and show a keen awareness of contemporary issues in musical composition. The folio must show a high degree of imagination and notational competence and

should be suitable for publication and professional performance. It should normally include one extended piece utilising large musical forces. Approximately 50% of the folio must be recorded onto cassette tape which will form part of the submission.

The compositions should show originality in the compositional approach, technique and concepts and demonstrate that some of the folio would be suitable for professional public performance.

Each work must be accompanied by a commentary on its structure and the methods employed in its composition. The commentary must show an understanding of the techniques and aesthetic issues which underpin the submitted folio.

The total overall length of the written commentary should be no less than 5,000 words”.

“A PhD in the subject area of Musical Composition shall be awarded to a candidate who having creatively investigated and critically evaluated a personal approach to contemporary composition by submitting a folio of musical compositions resulting in an independent and original contribution to the field of musical compositions and demonstrated an understanding of the aesthetic issues of musical composition, has presented and defended a folio of compositions and critical commentary, by oral examination, to the satisfaction of the examiners”.

University of Nottingham – AMusD

Doctor of Musical Arts: “To submit a composition or compositions displaying originality of imagination, a high level of creative ability, technical mastery in usage of instrumental and/or vocal and/or electro-acoustic resources, firm structural control and coherence and, where appropriate impeccable calligraphic skill and accuracy with regard to notation and presentation. Compositions should be worthy of public performance by professional musicians within a professional environment”.

Queen Mary and Westfield College – PhD

Music: PhD – a portfolio of substantial musical compositions as part of the thesis submission, which show coherence and originality in invention and in the treatment of existing musical techniques; each work shall form a basis for a commentary on its structure and an exposition of the methods employed.

MPhil: A portfolio of compositions which show coherence and invention in a variety of extended structures and a good command of existing musical techniques; each works shall form the basis for a commentary on its structure and an exposition of the methods employed.

Royal College of Music – DMus

“The College will consider applications for doctoral work in the following areas:

- Performance
- Historical musicology
- Composition

The College encourages work at doctoral level which combines performance or composition with supporting intellectual enquiry. Studies related to performance practice are particularly welcome. All doctoral submissions must include a written element.

For submissions involving performance or composition as well as the written thesis, the balance and relationship between the written and the performance or composition elements will depend on the nature of the research proposal.

The degree of Doctor of Music shall confirm the attainment of the highest standard of executant musicianship, and/or form a distinct contribution to current knowledge in a field of applied musicological research. Work presented for the degree should signify systematic study, indicate independent critical appraisal and demonstrate powers of originality, as applicable. It should be of publishable quality.

Candidates may undertake a programme of study in which creative work forms a significant part of the intellectual inquiry. In such cases, the presentation and submission may be partly in other than written form.

Candidates may undertake an integrated programme of work which includes a programme of postgraduate study and training on which there is a formal assessment of practical as well as of the research element. The apportionment of time between the practical study and academic research is at the discretion of the DMus Programme Committee.

The creative work shall be clearly related to the topic of the written thesis and set in its appropriate artistic context. The thesis itself shall conform to normal scholarly requirements and be of an appropriate length.

The text of the thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Music should normally be within the range (excluding ancillary data) of 60,000-80,000 words. The thesis is accompanied by material in other than written form in hard copy, or the research involves composition or the preparation of a scholarly edition, the written thesis shall normally be shorter than in the above limits”.

Royal Holloway and Bedford New College

See Queen Mary and Westfield College.

University of Southampton – Research Degrees in Music – PhD

Musical Composition: “Normally submit a number of substantial original compositions; must be accompanied by a list of the work submitted and a brief statement of the candidate’s aims and nature of the work. Compositions may also be submitted together with a dissertation, the thesis should be on a topic which is

relevant to the composition so that the entire dissertation constitutes a unified research project”.

Performance-related Topics (Performance practice or the relationship between analysis composition): “may offer recital work in part fulfilment of the requirements of the MPhil or PhD degree. The submissions must also include a thesis, and recitals will be assessed on the basis of their relevance to the candidate’s research, as well as in terms of technical proficiency and interpretation”.

Also King Alfred’s College

University of Sussex – DPhil

Music: Portfolio – one large scale work (30 minutes’ duration) scored for large forces and one or two more shorter compositions. Associated commentary 3,000-5,000 words.

Examination and Award: Award for the degree of DPhil in Music taken by composition, that the portfolio of musical compositions makes a substantial contribution to the field of composition and that the associated commentary embodies an outstanding account of the musical compositions.

University of Ulster – PhD

Music: “Folio of original compositions and dissertation (equal weight) or of a more substantial portfolio of original compositions accompanied by a critical commentary”.

Musical Performance: “Presentation of practical recital and dissertation (equal weight)”.

University of York – DPhil in Composition

Requirements:

Music: Compositions may be submitted. May have accompanying notes but not required. Might expect a minimum of eight substantial pieces, of which at least one would be a piece for large forces for DPhil. May be accompanied by a short statement and/or explanatory notes. These need not be detailed analytical notes, although some details of compositional procedures may be desirable where relevant. The purpose of these notes is to assist the examiners in appreciating the composer’s compositional aims.

Appendix E

Institutions offering supervision leading to the award of PhD in practice-based disciplines other than music

Brunel University – PhD

(Subject not specified)

Thesis: “A substantial piece of written work in which the candidate is required to demonstrate a sound knowledge and critical appreciation of his or her discipline. The thesis for the award of PhD, DBA, EngD shall make a distinct and original contribution to knowledge in that discipline. The submission may take the form of a wholly written dissertation, or one which comprises original, creative work supported by adequate documentation indicating its originality and contribution to knowledge within the discipline. All submissions involving creative work should include a means of storage, access and retrieval of work”.

The major part of the thesis, including the written material, must have been completed during the student’s period of registration with the university.

Buckingham College of Higher Education – PhD

See Brunel University.

University of East Anglia – PhD

Creative and Critical Writing: “A substantial part of thesis shall be an original literary text of high standard written specifically for the degree. In the remaining part of the thesis, which shall normally be between 20,000 and 50,000 words in length, and in the examination, the candidate is required to show a critical understanding of the creative process, and of the relationship between the original literary text submitted and contemporary or traditional achievements in the genre”.

Queen Mary and Westfield College – PhD

Fine Art and Design: “May register for studio-based research/or other visual research. Thesis may include a portfolio, exhibition or other visual display. This must be original work which exemplifies and locates the ideas which are developed in conjunction with the written part of the thesis. However presented this work must be accompanied by an adequate and approved form of retainable documentation”.

“Where the thesis is studio-based and includes a visual presentation” the thesis will be in 60,000 word region.

Roehampton Institute – PhD

(Subject not specified)

“A candidate shall present a thesis or a portfolio, which, for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, should form a distinct contribution to the current knowledge of the subject. The thesis or portfolio should also show evidence of a systematic study of the subject, of originality shown by the exercise of independent critical power, and should be worthy of publication in complete and abridged form”.

“A candidate for either degree whose course of study is in the visual or performing arts may submit a portfolio of original works that he or she has undertaken while registered for the Degree in lieu of a thesis. *The portfolio may be presented for examination on the form of an exhibition or live performance. The works shall be accompanied by notes on each item in the portfolio and either an extended analysis of one item or a dissertation on a related theme”.

*Normally, the portfolio shall comprise a body of original works such as musical compositions and/or recordings, paintings, sculpture, printworks, designs or works of performance (dance, music etc). The portfolio ideally should include documentation in appropriate form such as photographs or recordings”.

Royal Holloway and Bedford New College – PhD

See Queen Mary and Westfield College.

University of Surrey – PhD

See Roehampton Institute.

Wimbledon College of Art – PhD

Validated by the University of Surrey – see above.

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