

GUIDELINES FOR EXAMINERS – DOCTORAL INNOVATION PORTFOLIO FORMAT



General Information

This information should be read in full by the examiner prior to beginning the examination process.

The Graduate Research School will provide each examiner the following items examination:

- Thesis (Adobe PDF or link to multiple files)
- Examiner Report
- Guidelines for HDR Examiners (as applicable)
- Claim Form

The email will also include a link to the relevant course rules or handbook. Theses may contain multiple digital files, which will be sent as a OneDrive link.

Printed Copy

Should an examiner require a printed copy of the thesis, the request must be sent to the Graduate Research School on hdrexam@une.edu.au

More Information

More information about the examination process and requirements is available in the [HDR Thesis Submission and Examination Policy](#).

Time for Examination

Each examiner is given six (6) weeks to examine the HDR thesis unless an extension has already been agreed to. If during the examination this deadline is not possible, examiners are to contact the Graduate Research School as soon as possible to request an extension. Extension requests will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Conflicts of interest

During the selection of examiners all efforts would have been taken to avoid or manage any perceived or actual conflicts of interest. If an examiner identifies a conflict of interest in relation to the examination, the Graduate Research School must be notified.

Questions During Examination

All questions and/or concerns should be directed to the Graduate Research School by emailing hdrexam@une.edu.au.

We request that examiners do not contact either the supervisor(s) or candidates in relation to any material that is under examination. If an examiner requires clarification or has questions, these must be directed to the Graduate Research School.

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Examiner's Report

Each examiner is asked to submit a completed Examiner Report form to the Graduate Research School (hdrexam@une.edu.au) addressing the criteria and a recommended outcome.

Each examiner is able to provide additional comments that merit comment but that aren't captured by the criteria (for example, relevance to policy or social contexts, potential implications of the work to other disciplinary or professional fields that the researcher may benefit from having highlighted, strength of argument, nuanced insights, elegance of writing, etc.).

Examiner Anonymity

Examiners may indicate to request anonymity on the Examiner Report form. By selecting this, the Graduate Research School will not release the examiner name or institution to the candidate once the examiner reports and outcome are released to the candidate, supervisor(s), and the Associate Dean, Research or delegate (for example HDR Coordinator).

Release of Examiner Reports

Once an examination outcome has been determined, copies of examiners' reports will be made available to candidate, supervisor(s), and the Associate Dean, Research or delegate (for example HDR Coordinator).

Annotated Thesis

To better assist the candidates, if examiner(s) wish to annotate the thesis, printed and/or digital format, this must be returned to the Graduate Research School for dissemination to the candidate.

Confidential Disposal

The thesis and all related items sent to the examiners are confidential documents and must not be disclosed.

All thesis and associated documents must be either destroyed or deleted from any computer storage system used by the examiner. If a printed thesis has been provided, this must either be returned to the Graduate Research School or confidentially destroyed.

Context of the Innovation Portfolio

The portfolio has the impact of Innovation (s), situated in specific context(s), as its central focus for research and development by candidates. The portfolio generates, as its research outcome, an Innovation portfolio comprising three industry/profession oriented outcomes:

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- a. an Innovation(s);
- b. evidence for impact or potential impact of the Innovation(s); and
- c. critical and systemic reflection upon the process of development and what this Innovation means to the person, profession/industry and more broadly.

The portfolio focuses on research at the intersection of academic, industry/profession and policy/practice interests and as such should simultaneously demonstrate professional/industry relevance as well as academic rigor. The research outcomes are intended to provide credible evidence with respect to one or more innovation(s) conceived and/or developed by the candidate.

The Distinctiveness of the Innovation Portfolio

The widest possible view of what constitutes an innovation is adopted in the portfolio, from technological invention to social policy or process.

The innovation portfolio seeks to explicitly and deliberately integrate the various domains of interest, operation and influence through building relationships and cultivating change via the research processes and outcomes realized through a candidate's term of candidature. The innovation portfolio is designed to:

- be research oriented, but not in the traditional sense of PhD by thesis research. This innovation portfolio emphasises the training of the 'enterprising person' rather than the 'autonomous scholar';
- yield a distinctive, coherent and integrated Innovation project Portfolio outcome for the research component as opposed to a traditional dissertation;
- be flexible as to the types of research 'products' relevant to, and produced out of, the professional research context (e.g., Innovation project Portfolio representing new curriculum document implementation, policy, social or process intervention; marketing strategy, technological innovation, creative work or performance);
- reinforce cross-profession and cross-stakeholder dialogue, with respect to key contextual issues such as ethics, constraints and politics as well as deep contextual connectedness with potential user/adopters of an innovation;
- involve a variety of stakeholders and thus the Innovation project Portfolio needs to address appropriate stakeholder audiences;
- focus on strategic and futures orientation, especially on actual or potential impact; and including commercial potential, where relevant;
- focus on critical thinking, writing and evidence-based reflection and (complex) systems thinking; and
- involve integrated mentoring and advising by an industry/professional supervisor and the establishment of workplace support and agreement prior to the course commencement.

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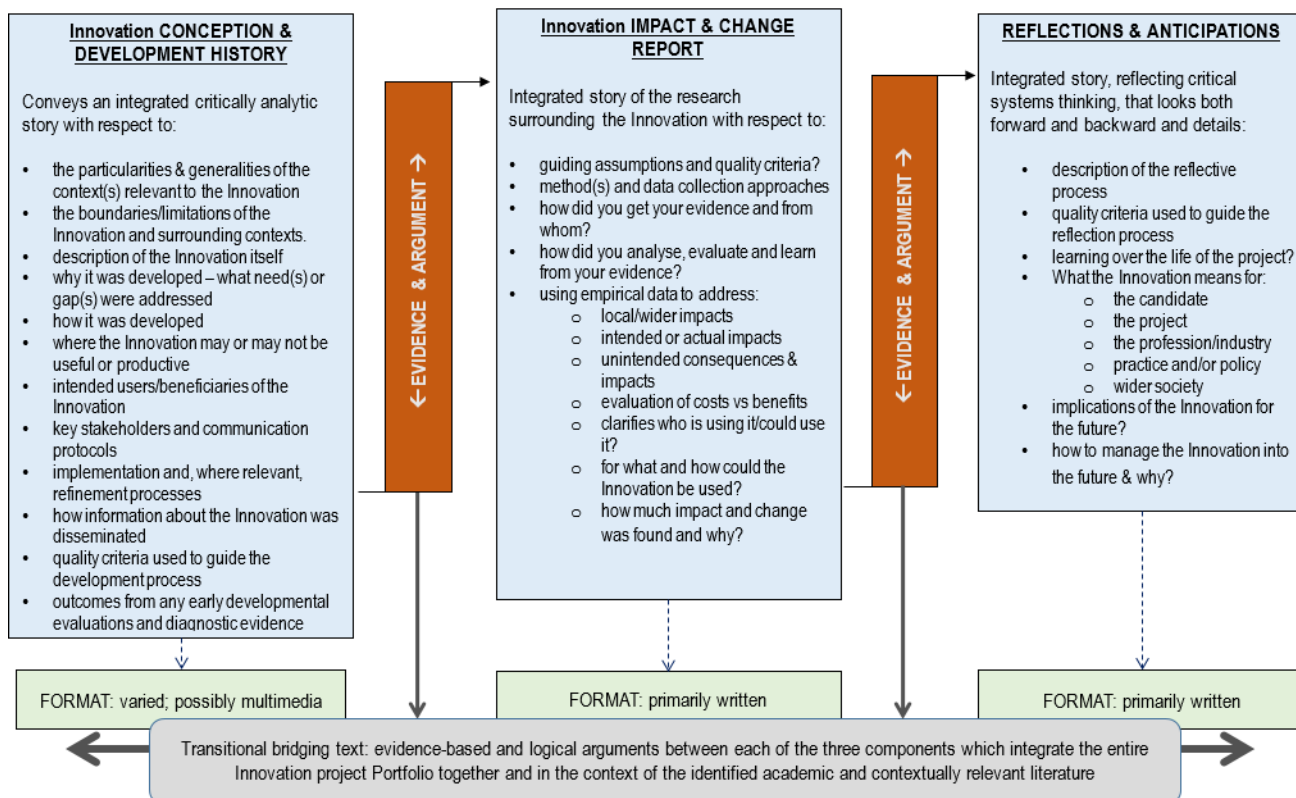
The Innovation Portfolio

The innovation portfolio will normally encompass (1) one or more tangible innovations such as a curriculum document, a marketing strategy, technological inventions, creative work or performance, critical analysis, change intervention program or policy, or an urban plan, (2) contextualised research and developmental evaluation processes providing evidence of and planning for the impact of the innovation and (3) critical reflections and future thinking about the entire innovation process. These outcomes are intended to make a difference in an industry/profession hence the importance of 'impact'. Note that the innovation portfolio may focus on more than one innovation, in which case the discussion below has to be suitably adapted.

Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the research components in the Innovation project Portfolio, each of which is unpacked more fully below. The research outcomes focusing on the 'Innovation Conception & Development History' can be presented in written format, multimedia format, live performance or demonstration or some combination of these. The 'Impact & Change' outcome will primarily be presented in written form as would the 'Reflections and Anticipations' outcome. Both would be expected to be strongly evidence and argument-driven. The three types of outcomes are expected to be integrated and connected through bridging discussions and arguments, possibly contained in a separate document. The entire Portfolio thus represents an integrated project that either demonstrates or has the potential to generate impact and change. Across all components, the Portfolio constitutes more than two-thirds of the total effort involved in the award.

Figure 1. Conceptual representation of the structure of the innovation portfolio.

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As mentioned above, the innovation portfolio (approximately 75,000 to 80,000 words total length) normally comprises three distinct but closely inter-linked components, supported by empirical evidence and arguments. Candidates are provided with the following guidelines with respect to shaping and implementing their innovation portfolio.

1. Innovation Conception and Development History (approximately 25,000 - 30,000 words)

Presents a detailed story about and analysis of the development of the Innovation; parts of the story may be presented as a mixture of a variety of formats, including multimedia, but the history is expected to have a coherent written aspect. The scope of the history should encompass, among other things, those aspects indicated in the box on the left in Figure 1, which are elaborated on below:

Idea(s) Generation

- Discussion of the context(s) relevant to the Innovation (e.g., pertinent literature background and prior innovations; impacted by or impacting on the Innovation, with an emphasis on critical analysis of the relevant contexts, their particularities and generalities)

Idea selection and refinement to identified innovation

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- Describe the boundaries/limitations of the Innovation and surrounding contexts.
- Description of the Innovation itself
- Discussion of why it was developed and what need(s) or gap(s) did it address
- Discussion of how it was developed, including discussion of participatory involvement in these processes by key stakeholders/users/beneficiaries

Innovation implementation and evolution

- Describe where the Innovation may or may not be useful or productive
- Identification of the intended 'audience(s)' for the Innovation
- Identification of key stakeholders and communication protocols
- Description of the implementation and, where relevant, refinement processes
- Discussion of how information about the Innovation was disseminated
- Discussion of the quality criteria used to guide the development process
- Outcomes from any early developmental evaluations and diagnostic evidence

2. Innovation Impact & Change Report (approximately 25,000 - 30,000 words)

Based on research carried out, presents a detailed report on what happened during the development and implementation of the Innovation; presented in written format and should encompass:

- What assumptions and quality criteria were used to guide the research?
- Detailed discussion of the method(s) and data collection approaches used to evaluate the Innovation and its impact
- How did the candidate acquire evidence and from whom?
- How did the candidate analyse, evaluate and learn from evidence?
- Using empirical data to address the following issues:
 - Assessment of local/wider impacts
 - Is it having, did it or will it have the intended impacts?
 - Where/are there any unintended consequences & impacts identified?
 - Evaluation of the costs vs benefits on a number of dimensions (economic, human, social, technological, environmental)

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- Identifies target audience or end-users
- How much impact and change was found or is there potential for that can/could be attributable to the Innovation and why?

3. Reflections & Anticipations (approximately 10,000 - 15,000 words)

Reflective analysis, presented in written format including critical systems thinking, that details and addresses, what has been learned over the entire Innovation project and where things should go forward and should encompass:

- Description of the reflective process
- Identification and discussion of the quality criteria used to guide the reflection process
- What has been learned over the life of the project (e.g., what went right? What went wrong? Unanticipated benefits and/or side-effects? What should be changed versus what should be retained? Overall assessment of success or failure of the project)
- Address the question 'What does the Innovation mean for?'
 - The profession/industry relevant for the Innovation
 - Practice and/or policy
 - Wider society in terms of economic, social, institutional and physical environments.
- What are the implications of the innovation for the future, which could include strategic, spread of adoption and/or marketing discussions?
- Significance of the innovation and its contribution to the field, including discussion of future research needed.

4. Bridging and Supplemental Material (approximately 10,000, words)

There is an expectation that the candidate will integrate the entire Innovation project Portfolio together. This could take the form of a coherent linking paper (see Maxwell & Kupczyk-Romanczuk, 2009)¹.

Material relevant to the substance and/or implementation of the candidate's actual Innovation, where there is insufficient space to provide it in one or more of the Portfolio components, can be provided in one or more Appendices and may take any variety of multimedia formats.

Examination

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Candidates should display strong capacities to (1) independently conduct highly situated contextualised research focusing on their innovation at a high level of originality and quality, (2) produce and incorporate evidence surrounding its implementation, adoption and impact; (3) critically analyse and reflect on that research and its focal Innovation, their own role in and around that Innovation/research nexus and envisage/anticipate future contextual (e.g., social, environmental, political, professional) parameters and pathways associated with their products. To this end, the University of New England has set a standard of training and achievement for the innovation portfolio format which meets national and international standards.

The University expects the innovation portfolio to be well written/presented and to reveal an independence of thought and approach, deep contextual knowledge relevant to an Innovation and to have made a substantive original contribution of knowledge and innovation.

The work embodied in the innovation portfolio is the sole requirement, normally accomplished over a period of three years full-time equivalent work.

The achievement of contextually-appropriate and meaningful innovation is always a desirable outcome of a candidature, coupled with advanced training in the application of relevant research methods to research and development surrounding the innovation process and in transdisciplinary critical systems thinking. It is therefore important that the skill, competence and ability of the candidate be assessed fairly, irrespective of the significance of the research results or success/failure of an innovation.

Examiner's Report

Each examiner is asked to submit a detailed independent report (usually no less than two standard pages) together with a completed summary recommendation form. In their report, examiners are requested to include comments on both the strengths and weaknesses of the Innovation project Portfolio. Please consider the following elements in your report:

- (i) The degree to which the Portfolio shows sufficient familiarity with, and understanding of, the relevant literature and scholarly theorizing, balanced with an industry/ profession and practice/policy emphasis, such that the Portfolio speaks effectively and convincingly to the relevant industry/profession and academic audiences;
- (ii) The degree to which the Portfolio and the process surrounding its emergence around an innovation, demonstrate clear originality, accessibility, potential for scalability and/or commercial application or viability including due consideration and responsiveness to implementation/application for an identified user or user context;
- (iii) The degree to which the Portfolio provides clear and convincing research to support credible claims about demonstration of impact or potential for innovation impact as well as the quality of the innovation and development process; feeding into creative, systemic and strategic forward thinking and learning about the innovation;

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- (iv) The extent to which the research methods and approaches are appropriate to achieving a systemic and contextualised understanding of the entire innovation process, including development, implementation, and adoption/change pathways and outcomes;
- (v) The extent to which the research outcomes, including data management and analysis, conclusions and implications, are set out clearly and logically, accompanied by adequate exposition and interpretation; in light of the academic and professional/industry target audiences; and
- (vi) The degree to which the literary quality and general presentation of the Portfolio are of a suitably high standard, particularly in light of the academic and professional/industry target audiences.