

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
(PhD)**

**MUSIC COMPOSITION**

**Requirements**

“A set of compositions must consist of at least three substantial original compositions (not less than 70 minutes in duration), the character and form of which must receive the prior approval of the Senate on the recommendation of the Head of Department and the Departmental Postgraduate Research Committee.

Where compositions are submitted, the candidate must also submit an explanatory statement (not less than 25 000 words) referring to important aspects of the scores, including in particular a description of the form or forms employed and of any contrapuntal, harmonic and orchestration devices used. This document should detail the portfolio’s theme or contextualizing thread. Recordings of compositions are required” (Rhodes University Calendar 2015, 216).

**Guidelines for Assessment**

The reflexive document (explanatory statement) **and** compositions are to be considered as a single entity. Attention should be given to how the reflexive document informs understanding of the works, and engenders appreciation of each work as an artistic creation. Particular focus on how the works relate to, and bolster, the portfolio’s underlying context is necessary; with the thread between context (reflexive document) and the works forming an inter-related whole.

Importantly, while the reflexive document should conform to acceptable academic style and norms, **this should not be considered as a thesis**, its aim being to outline the most important features of each composition and supply the reader with the portfolio’s contextualizing thread. Further, the portfolio should be considered as a creative endeavour and not as a thesis.

Assessment commentary should include evidence of the following:

- emergence of an individualized style/voice, especially within the context of the portfolio’s contextualization
- technical finesse matched with artistic expressivity
- advanced musicianship coupled with resourceful ingenuity and creative probity

As with all doctoral submissions that ultimately either succeed or do not, it is not necessary to award a grading (percentage). Motivation for the final decision should be contained in the assessment commentary.