

# DEFINING GRADUATE RESEARCH CREATION PATHWAYS

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These “categories represent differing criteria, practices, and end results, and require separate forms of assessment and reflection for their distinctions to be understood and imaginatively operationalized by students and faculty embarking on research-creation projects.” (Owen Chapman & Kim Sawchuk, “Research Creation”) The outline here includes five out of Chapman and Sawchuk’s six categories. It is not a policy document. Rather, it is intended to guide the work of admission and supervisory committees.

## 1. CREATION IS THE RESEARCH (MFA)

**Definition:** *the creative work embodies the research*; is accompanied by a support paper but this paper is adjacent to and points to the art work or even could be a creative-critical work.

**Committee membership:** requires Creative Studies supervision, co-supervision as appropriate

**Expected qualifications upon entry:** BFA or equivalent with portfolio

**Comprehensive exams:** N/A (MFA)

**Dissertation format(s):** MFA creative thesis (i.e. creative output with supporting paper) as defined in [UBC Calendar](#)

## 2. RESEARCH-FOR-CREATION (Predominantly MFA, though IGS MA and PhD students might engage in this kind of research as part of their processes of creation)

**Definition:** [research done in order to create something artistic]; artist researches sites, in-studio exploration, information or archives in order to create a work — this is research as a process or method rather than an end product.

**Committee membership:** requires Creative Studies supervision, co-supervision as appropriate

**Expected qualifications upon entry:** BFA/MFA (for PhD), BA/MA with portfolio

**Comprehensive exams:** N/A (for MFA)

**Dissertation format(s):** MFA creative thesis as defined in [UBC Calendar](#)

**3. RESEARCH INTO CREATION** (usually IGS MA/PhD, can be part of an MFA degree though it would not be the main focus of an MFA)

**Definition:** [research into new processes, methods, and understandings of art practice].

**Committee membership:** possible Creative Studies co-supervision/committee membership

**Expected qualifications upon entry:**

- BA/MA [also BFA/ MFA could be appropriate]
- Track record of engagement with creative practice.
- Demonstrated background in theoretical / historical foundations of creative production and/or creative movements.

**Comprehensive exams:** Broad area in theoretical/historical foundations; Concentrated area could demonstrate Creative Practice and/or articulates relationship of methodology and materials

**Dissertation format(s):** Traditional thesis or integrated hybrid creative/critical thesis

**4. RESEARCH-FROM-CREATION** (IGS MA, PhD)

**Definition:** [artistic products/ artefacts / prototypes used to generate data—assessing audience affect, evaluating learning etc.]

**Committee membership:** Creative Studies member probably not needed on committee

**Expected qualifications upon entry:** BA/MA, probably social or media studies

**Comprehensive exams:** May be similar to social studies or media studies degree

**Dissertation format(s):** Traditional thesis or integrated hybrid creative/critical thesis

**5. CREATIVE PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH** [*creative works that convey key ideas of other kinds of research in innovative ways--research is separate from creative practice but practice is brought in to communicate*] (IGS MA, PhD)

**Committee membership:** Creative co-supervision recommended

**Expected qualifications upon entry:** BFA/MFA, BA/MA with strong portfolio or professional practice

**Comprehensive exams:** Broad area in research topic; Concentrated area examines relationship of research topic to chosen form

**Dissertation format(s):** Creative output evaluated by Creative Practice criteria, normally supported by scholarly apparatus

Additional reading:

Natalie Loveless, *How to Make Art at the End of the World: A Manifesto for Research-Creation*, Duke UP 2019

Erin Manning, *For a Pragmatics of the Useless*, Duke UP 2020

Chris Salter, *Entangled: Technology and the Transformation of Performance*, MIT Press 2010

Stephanie Springgay, University of Toronto, [Research Creation Projects](#)

#### Bibliography

Chapman, Owen and Kim Sawchuk. "Research-Creation: Intervention, Analysis and 'Family Resemblances.'" *Canadian Journal of Communications* 37.