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**School: School of Creative Industries**

**Researcher: Kate Pullinger**

**Project Title: Breathe**

**UOA: 27 - English Language and Literature**

300-Word Statement

*Breathe* is a ghost story for the smartphone. It was commissioned as part of the AHRC-funded project, Ambient Literature, which asked how can situated literary experiences delivered through pervasive media systems produce new forms of literary experience? The research looked at the history of the book to establish how the physical situation of the reader has effected the nature of the writing itself.

In keeping with the long literary tradition of haunted technology, *Breathe* tells the story of a young woman, Flo, who can communicate with the dead through her phone. Using three APIs (application processing interfaces) - weather, time, and location - the story accesses data on the reader’s phone in order to subtly alter the story for every reader. Through the use of conditional text, the story changes in line with the temperature, the season, and the place it is being read. This use of personal data draws attention to the phone’s potential use as a tool of surveillance. I chose the genre of the ghost story in order to make the most of the uncanny effect the use of personal data has on the reader; for example, the ghost in the story knows where the reader is located and the text includes a series of nearby locations. In addition to the APIs, the story also uses visual effects to represent the ghosts, making the most of the haptic qualities of the smartphone screen as the reader interacts with the book through swiping, rubbing, and tilting.

*Breathe* is accessible, free of charge, via smartphone; it resides in the browser and does not require a download. *Breathe* builds on the work Pullinger has done on creating fictional forms native to the internet, smartphone, and computer as well as her previous literary work on reimagining supernatural tropes in fiction.