

THESIS EXAMINATION GUIDELINES



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

You must be enrolled at the time of submission of your thesis.

Please also note that:

- You should ensure that your supervisors are aware of your intended date of submission. Your supervisors are required to nominate examiners and failing to discuss your submission date with your supervisor may result in an extended examination time.
- While you are permitted to discuss potential examiners with your supervisors, it is the Faculty, not the candidate, who recommends examiners. You are not permitted to contact potential examiners and the names of the nominated examiners will not be disclosed to you. You must respect the examiner confidentiality rule. Any breach of this rule will result in new examiners being appointed and may be considered as a case of research misconduct.

1. THESIS SUBMISSION

Your thesis is to be uploaded electronically as a PDF file via [UONline](#). This site also provides instructions on how to upload your thesis, additional information about the examination process and timeframes. You are encouraged to refer to the [Thesis Submission Checklist](#) before submitting your thesis.

Before submitting your thesis, please ensure that it is formatted correctly (see [Section 2. Thesis Format](#)) and contains all relevant declarations and documentation.

The research conducted shall primarily be embodied in the thesis; other work approved by the Faculty Assistant Dean Research Training (ADRT) may also be submitted and considered in conjunction with the thesis. Any additional documentation that forms part of your thesis submission (e.g. illustrations, DVDs) may be included with the thesis.

In addition to your thesis, you must submit a completed [Thesis Examination Application Form](#), signed by both yourself and your principal supervisor. If your supervisor is unwilling to endorse the submission of the thesis you may request that the thesis be accepted for examination by the Head of School and Faculty ADRT.

1.1. Enrolment

Candidates must be enrolled in a Higher Degree by Research at the University of Newcastle at the time of submission of the thesis.

If your thesis is submitted between the first day of the semester and the next census date (31 March and 31 August), UON Graduate Research will drop your enrolment for that and any subsequent semesters, effective from the date of submission. If your thesis is submitted after the census date in any semester, you will remain enrolled for that semester.

1.2. Thesis with a Creative Component

For theses in the creative arts, an exegesis in support of an exhibition or performance must be submitted to UON Graduate Research six weeks prior to the visit by the examiners. A separate digital record must be provided to the examiners on the day of the visit. If all of the relevant creative presentation elements are represented in the exegesis there is no need for a further digital recording. Refer to the [Research Thesis with a Creative Component Procedures](#) for further details.

If your thesis, or associated documents, cannot be presented in a PDF then please contact UON Graduate Research at thesis@newcastle.edu.au to discuss submission of your thesis.

1.3. Embargo

You should discuss with your supervisors whether your thesis requires a period of embargo and, if so, submit the required [Application for Embargo form](#) to UON Graduate Research.

1.4. Professional Doctorate DBA HKMA candidates

Professional Doctorate DBA HKMA candidates are required to submit via the administration staff at HKMA.

2. THESIS FORMAT

Refer to the [Thesis Examination Format Guidelines](#) for examples of different thesis formats. A list of [Frequently Asked Questions](#) has been compiled to assist candidates with queries on the appropriate formatting of their thesis.

2.1. Language

The thesis must be written in English unless otherwise approved by the Dean of Graduate Research prior to submission.

2.2. Word Length

A Doctoral thesis should not normally exceed 100,000 words, excluding appendices, tables and illustrative matter. A Master's thesis should not normally exceed 80,000 words, excluding appendices, tables and illustrative matter. An exegesis forming part of a thesis and accompanying a creative or literary work or series of works should not normally exceed 25,000 words for a Master's degree or 40,000 words for a Doctoral degree, excluding appendices, tables and illustrative matter.

2.3. Font/Spacing/Margins

Font size and style must be reasonable for the reader to read the thesis on a screen or in hard-copy. Styles such as Arial and Times New Roman, with a font size of 10-12 are commonly used.

The main argument of the thesis must be typed in 1½ or double spacing. Variation in spacing may be considered desirable for the presentation of tables, quotations, etc.

In cases where a hard copy submission is required, pages in the body of the thesis may be double-sided (i.e. printed on both sides) at your discretion. The margin on each page of a hard copy thesis should be not less than 4 cm on the left, 2 cm on the right, 3 cm at the top and 2 cm at the bottom for right hand pages. For left hand pages the side margins are reversed to 2cm on the left and 4 cm on the right to allow for binding.

2.4. Copyright

If the thesis contains copyright material you need to obtain written permission from copyright owners to include the material in your thesis. This includes: text, music scores, computer software, film, animation, music, sound and images (including drawings, cartoons, paintings, graphs, maps, photographs, tables). It does not matter whether the item comes from a print or physical source or from the internet – copyright will still apply. In most cases copyright lasts 70 years from the death of the creator. The information sheet on [Copyright in your Digital Thesis](#) contains further advice. University of Newcastle Library staff can also provide advice on seeking permissions. <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/library/research/copyright/>

2.5. Proof Reading and Editing

You may use a Professional Editor to proof read your thesis, however you must discuss this with your supervisor. There are national guidelines for the editing of research theses and you will need to provide your editor with a copy of the guidelines before they commence work. Please refer to the [Guidelines for editing research theses](#) as provided by the Institute of Professional Editors and the Australian Council of Graduate Research (ACGR).

2.6. Required Statements

After the title page, you **must** include the following signed statement(s):

- For traditional thesis – Statement 1
- For Thesis by Publication – Statements 1 & 2
- For a traditional thesis containing published work – Statements 1 & 3

Statement 1: Statement of Originality

STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby certify that the work embodied in the thesis is my own work, conducted under normal supervision. The thesis contains no material which has been accepted, or is being examined, for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made. I give consent to the final version of my thesis being made available worldwide when deposited in the University's Digital Repository, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968 and any approved embargo.

*[Signature]
[Your name]*

Statement 2: Thesis by Publication

Candidates are strongly advised to arrange for the signatures from co-authors to be collected as soon as the paper is prepared or submitted for publication rather than at the time of thesis submission.

THESIS BY PUBLICATION

I hereby certify that this thesis is in the form of a series of papers. I have included as part of the thesis a written declaration from each co-author, endorsed in writing by the Faculty Assistant Dean (Research Training), attesting to my contribution to any jointly authored papers.

Add the signed declaration by any co-authors and the Assistant Dean Research Training after these required statements:

By signing below I confirm that [Candidate Name] contributed [insert outline of contribution] to the paper/publication entitled [insert reference details].

*[Full Name of co-author/s, date, signature of co-authors]
[Full Name of Faculty Assistant Dean Research Training, date and signature of ADRT]*

The purpose of this statement is to summarise and clearly identify the nature and extent of the intellectual input by the candidate and any co-authors.

Statement 3: Acknowledgement of Authorship

If the body of the thesis includes co-authored published papers or co-authored scholarly work¹, and is not being submitted as a thesis by publication, your thesis must contain a declaration, endorsed by your supervisor, attesting to your contribution to the joint publication/s/scholarly work. A declaration is not required when publications/scholarly work are included as an appendix.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis contains published paper/s/scholarly work of which I am a joint author. I have included as part of the thesis a written declaration endorsed in writing by my supervisor, attesting to my contribution to the joint publication/s/scholarly work.

By signing below I confirm that [Candidate Name] contributed [insert description / outline of contribution] to the paper/ publication entitled [insert reference details]

*[Signature of Supervisor]
[Name of Supervisor]*

¹ A co-authored publication is one in which the HDR candidate has published, or submitted for publication, a research output (e.g., journal article; book chapter; refereed conference proceedings) with one or more other people.

Inclusion of research publications (or submissions) in a thesis needs to include details of all the authors and their contribution to the publication – this enables the examiners to evaluate the candidate's work/contribution.

2.7. Title Page

List your thesis title, your name in full, previous qualifications held in abbreviated form e.g. BSc(Hons)(*Newcastle*), the full name of the degree for which your thesis is submitted, and the month and year of submission of the thesis for examination. For example:

<p>“The process of thesis submission”</p> <p>Freda Mary Jones BS(Hons)(Oxon); MA (Sydney)</p> <p>A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Chemical Engineering*</p> <p>April 2017</p> <p><i>**For RTP Scholarship and RTP Fees Offset recipients only – you must include the following statement:</i></p> <p>This research was supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship</p>
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* If you are undertaking an oral examination or presenting a creative component for examination, the following statement must be included: “A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Acknowledgement of Government Support

All candidates in receipt of a RTP Tuition Scholarship and/or RTP Fees Offset must include acknowledgement of the support received from the Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship. All domestic students receive some support from this scholarship scheme in the form of a fees-offset scholarship.

Please note: The Australian Government’s contribution must be acknowledged when the recipient of an RTP Scholarship, their supervisor or any other party publishes or produces material, such as books, articles, newsletters or other literary or artistic works which relate to research project carried out by the recipient of the RTP scholarship. This applies during and after the completion of the program of study.

2.8. Contents

The table of contents should provide a list of thesis chapters and major sections, with page numbers. Pages should be numbered consecutively throughout the document.

2.9. Abstract

The abstract should consist of approximately 300 words.

2.10. Figures and Tables

Presentation of figures, tables and references should follow disciplinary conventions.

2.11. Thesis by Publication

A thesis may be submitted in the form of a series of published papers. Candidates must consult with their supervisor/s early in their candidature as each discipline area will have different issues to consider in the decision to submit a thesis in the form of a series of published papers.

However, any thesis by publication must reflect a sustained and cohesive theme, an integrated whole that sits logically in the context of the available literature. Overall the material presented for examination needs to equate to that which would otherwise be presented in the traditional thesis format.

It should also be noted that the review process for some journals is significant, resulting in lengthy waiting periods for papers to be accepted which can delay thesis submission/completion. Time management and selection of journals/publishers is critical. Focusing on publication rather than research may lead to candidates being tempted to publish sections of their work prematurely and missing opportunities to fully capitalise on the significance of the work. Please refer to the [Rules Governing Higher Degrees by Research](#) for full details.

3. EXAMINATION PROCESS

The University requires examiners to provide their examination report within eight weeks of receipt of the thesis. However, for varying reasons, the thesis examination process can take between three and six months. UON Graduate Research contacts examiners at regular intervals to ensure timely completion of the examination process and to determine if there are any delays. Unless there are known delays to the examination process do not expect to receive any correspondence about the outcome of your examination for three months post submission. Outcomes cannot be determined until all examiner reports have been received.

If significant delays are being experienced, the faculty may choose to use the reserve examiner. UON Graduate Research understands the anxious wait that candidates experience during the thesis examination process and aim to keep candidates informed if delays occur.

4. OUTCOMES

Once received, copies of examiner reports are forwarded to your supervisors, Head of School, and Faculty ADRT for comment. These comments and the examiners' reports are considered by the Research Training Sub-Committee (RTSC)². This Sub-Committee will make a recommendation to the Dean of Graduate Research as to the examination outcome.

Following the RTSC determination, you will be advised of the outcome and copies of the examiners' reports will be provided at this point. The outcome letter and examiners' reports will be sent to your NUmail account. You are responsible for checking this email account and/or ensuring that messages are forwarded to your personal account. If an examiner returns an annotated thesis for editing purposes it will be sent to you. Please ensure your contact details are up to date in [myHub](#). The outcome will be one of the following:

- a. **AWARD** (including typographical amendments): The thesis meets the required standards in terms of the nature and quality of work undertaken, and the degree can be awarded without any further work by the candidate, other than the correction of a small number of typographical, or similar, minor errors in the final copy.
- b. **CORRECTIONS REQUIRED**: The thesis meets the required standards in terms of the nature and quality of work undertaken, and the degree can be awarded without further examination once the candidate has made a number of corrections and clarifications in the thesis, as specified in the examiners' reports.

The required corrections are more substantive than typographical and other minor errors and may include additional revisions to literature, method, analysis and discussion, revisions to creative works, additional experiments and/or data analysis, which improve but do not change the outcomes of the research.

The corrections are to be done to the satisfaction of the university's Higher Degree Research Committee, and would be normally completed within a period of less than six months.

- c. **REVISE AND RESUBMIT FOR FURTHER EXAMINATION BY THE ORIGINAL EXAMINERS**: The thesis does not currently meet the standard required for the award of the degree, but with further work it is believed that the required standard may be achieved. The required amendments, as specified in the attached report, are substantive and may include new experiments or data collection, additional analyses, revision of the scientific method or any essential work that may alter the conclusions drawn in the thesis.

The candidate is required to re-enrol for up to 12 months and carry out this further work. The thesis will then be resubmitted for re-examination. "Revise and Resubmit" can only be recommended once for a given thesis.

- d. **FAIL**: The thesis be classified as failed, without right to resubmit the thesis, on the basis that a significant amount of additional research work and/or major, substantive revision will not raise the thesis to an acceptable standard.

² The RTSC meets monthly except in January.

5. AWARD OF DEGREE

You are required to submit an electronic version of the final corrected version of your thesis online via the University's digital repository - NOVA. By submitting your thesis online, you provide worldwide access to your research via the internet. The 'Thesis Deposit form' can be found at: <http://ogma.newcastle.edu.au:8080/vital/access/manager/Contrib>. Scroll to the headings/links "Theses" and "Submit your theses".

Library assistance is available at library-thesis@newcastle.edu.au or phone (02) 4921 6688.

The submission of the final (corrected) thesis to NOVA will be the final requirement in support of the award of a Higher Degree by Research. A recommendation to award the degree cannot be made until the final thesis is submitted to NOVA or other arrangements are approved. UON Graduate Research will automatically receive a copy of the electronic thesis deposit confirmation. Following receipt of the [HDR Corrections Report Form](#) (where necessary) and your uploading of the final version of your thesis to NOVA, UON Graduate Research will coordinate the ratification of the award of degree through the Dean of Graduate Research and the Vice-Chancellor. This process occurs on approximately a monthly basis.

Upon formal ratification of the award of the degree, UON Graduate Research will write to candidates confirming successful completion of the degree. The testamur and transcript will be presented to you at the next available graduation ceremony.

For Professional Doctorate Candidates

Upon receipt of the [HDR Corrections Report Form](#) (where necessary) and the electronic thesis deposit confirmation, UON Graduate Research will advise the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the relevant faculty that you have met the requirements of the research component of the program. Faculty staff will then check that the requirements of the degree have been met and complete the process to award the degree. This process is arranged by the relevant Faculty and may take up to four weeks to complete. Once eligibility is confirmed, the relevant Faculty will forward a recommendation to the President of Academic Senate and the Vice-Chancellor for the degree to be awarded.

International candidates who submit their thesis up to one month following a census date may be entitled to apply for a partial refund of tuition fees. Requests for a partial refund of tuition fees should be made in accordance with the [Refund Procedure for International Students](#).

6. CITING YOUR QUALIFICATION

The completion letter that will be sent to you from UON Graduate Research will contain the date that your degree was awarded/conferred. This is the date on which you have been deemed eligible to graduate with the relevant qualification. You may only cite your award and if applicable, use the title of Doctor, from the date that your degree is conferred. The letter of award can be used to demonstrate to employers or others that you have been awarded the degree.

7. GRADUATION

Graduation ceremonies are normally held in each semester at Callaghan campus and once each year in Port Macquarie, Ourimbah and Singapore. The timing of the award of your degree and your location of enrolment will determine which ceremony you are eligible for. [UON Graduate Research](#) can provide relevant cut-off dates to help you organise your final submission for a particular graduation ceremony.

A personalised invitation to a Graduation Ceremony will be sent to your preferred email address approximately six weeks before your graduation ceremony.

If a candidate chooses not to attend a graduation ceremony, they should advise Graduation via the online graduation registration system and select to either collect their graduation documents or have them posted. Graduation documents are produced after the graduation ceremonies have concluded and the candidate will be notified when these are available.

An early release of graduation documents can be requested prior to your graduation ceremony by emailing [Graduation](#) with the following information:

- Full Name

- Student number
- Mailing address
- Phone number

If you wish to collect the documents on-campus ([Student Central, Hunter](#)) please note this and include the date the documents are required.

Please mention that your documents are required for employment and/or visa purposes and the associated fee will be waived.

A digital copy of graduation documents will also be made available to all graduates via the [My eQuals](#) system. This will include testamur, Australian Higher Education Graduate Statement (AHEGS) and official academic transcript.

Candidates who are indebted to the University of Newcastle are not permitted to receive their testamur and transcript. You will not be awarded your degree until you resolve any debts.