

# The Confirmation Process

## Purpose of the confirmation process

The confirmation process allows you to:

- receive objective confirmation early in candidature that the research direction is sound and the methodologies appropriate
- identify and remedy any difficulties that might impede successful completion

Source: [https://www.newcastle.edu.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/72337/Confirmation-Guidelines-Oct-2015.pdf](https://www.newcastle.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/72337/Confirmation-Guidelines-Oct-2015.pdf)

## Steps in the confirmation process

Candidates are required to:

1. Present a *written document* of the research proposal
2. Deliver an *oral presentation* of the research proposal
3. Provide a *verbal defence* of the research proposal

### The written document

The written document is a comprehensive research proposal. For more information, see the PDF and/or attend the workshop titled *Writing the Research Proposal*.

### The oral presentation

The oral presentation is based on the written document; however, the content of the oral presentation will be more concise to fit within the presentation timeframe – approximately 20 minutes (discuss presentation length with your supervisor). The oral presentation may be structured to answer some broad questions, for example:

**For WHAT?** [2 mins?]

*Statement of the topic/problem*

**WHY?** [5 mins?]

*Rationale of research question  
via Literature Review*

**HOW?** [5 mins?]

*Methodology  
Research plan*

**SO WHAT?** [3 mins?]

*Emphasise original contribution*

In support of the oral presentation, a PowerPoint presentation can be used. The PowerPoint slides should:

- Minimise text and numbers
- Avoid distracting backgrounds
- Avoid excessive animation or sound effects
- Use large sans serif fonts
- Mix upper and lower case
- Use colour to highlight text
- Use simple, clear, and relevant images and/or graphics (these visuals should be explained briefly to the audience)

To manage presentation nerves:

- Rehearse your presentation, e.g.: to gauge time, polish performance, and lessens nerves
- Decide and highlight, e.g.: emphasis, pauses, and pace
- Focus on the audience not you
- Say it aloud, e.g.: to yourself, to a friend, or to a mirror
- Maintain eye contact - especially with the nodders!

## *The verbal defence*

The verbal defence allows the Confirmation Committee to offer you insights and guidance as well as to ask you questions – encouraging you to think more deeply about your research project.

Some questions will be expected and easy for you to answer, while others will be unexpected more complicated for you to answer. When responding to unexpected or complex questions, you might:

- Offer a reaction, rather than an answer: e.g. “That isn’t something that we’ve discussed yet in detail. However, my initial response would be...”
- Defer discussion, e.g. “It’s a complex point, I’d be interested to talk to you later...”
- Refer back to the group, e.g. “That’s an interesting observation. I’d be interested to know what other people think...”

## For more information or support

Book in for a workshop and/or individual consultation:

- <https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/support/academic/workshops-consultations-advisors>
- 02 4921 5350
- [learningsupport@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:learningsupport@newcastle.edu.au)

Contact UON Graduate Research for policy details and procedural requirements:

- <https://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/research>
- [graduate-candidature@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:graduate-candidature@newcastle.edu.au)
- (02) 4921 6537