

Office of Graduate Studies Information Sheet Thesis by Publication



A thesis may be submitted in the form of a series of published papers and the additional rules specific to this style of thesis are presented below. **It is important to note that the general rules for a University of Newcastle thesis are also applicable. Please ensure you also refer to [The Rules Governing Research Higher Degrees](#) for the full scope of applicable rules.**

Rule 39.1 A thesis by publication will include:

- i. a full explanatory overview that links the separate papers and places them in the context of an established body of knowledge;
- ii. a literature review;
- iii. if detailed data and descriptions of methods are not otherwise given within the separate papers, they must be included in the body of the thesis or as appendices to the thesis;

Rule 39.2 For a thesis by publication:

- i. the separate papers provided under sub-clause 39.1(i) must be published, in press or submitted to scholarly media only, i.e. refereed publications classified by current national standards and refereed conference papers, however at least 50% of these papers must have been published. Papers published up to three years prior to enrolment may be included provided they were published in scholarly media and do not represent more than 50% of the total papers;
- ii. publications submitted by the candidate for another degree may only be referred to in the thesis literature review;
- iii. the number of papers submitted should demonstrate that the body of work meets the requirements of the degree as outlined in the relevant schedule;
- iv. the candidate must be the lead author in at least 50% of the papers written in the time of their formal Research Higher Degree candidature. Any published paper of which the candidate is a joint author may only be included in the thesis provided the work done by the candidate is clearly identified. The candidate must include in the thesis a written statement from each co-author attesting to the candidate's contribution to a joint publication included as part of the thesis. These statements must be endorsed by the Assistant Dean (Research Training).
- v. the Assistant Dean (Research Training) may seek the approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies to include a paper that is outside the scope of these rules.

Considerations

- 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.
- It is essential that you discuss your options carefully with your supervisor(s). The 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.
- The review process for some journals is significant resulting in lengthy waiting periods for papers to be accepted and this 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 capitalize on the significance of the work.
- Consider the thesis from the examiners' view point - if the publications do not have a clear cohesion and the contribution to knowledge is not clearly demonstrated, then the thesis may attract criticism and be rejected by examiners. The content of the thesis remains a matter of professional judgment for the supervisor(s) and candidate.
- Any published paper of which the candidate is a joint author may only be included in the thesis provided the work done by the candidate is clearly identified. The candidate must include in the thesis a written statement from each co-author attesting to the candidate's contribution to a joint publication included as part of the thesis. The statement/s need to be signed by the Faculty Assistant Dean (Research Training). A sample statement is provided below.
- We strongly advise that you arrange for the signatures from co-authors to be collected as soon as the paper is prepared or submitted for publication rather than trying to collect them at the time of thesis submission.
- There is no minimum or maximum requirement on the number of papers. Of equal, or perhaps more importance than quantity, is the quality of the journals. Please refer to your school or faculty for more specific guidance on the number and length of papers that would normally be expected in your discipline.

Alternative option

As discussed above, you need to consider if your publications will form a sufficient body of cohesive work to meet the requirements of thesis by publication. You may like to consider the other option of including publications within a standard thesis format, either in the body or as an appendix as supported in the rule below.

Rule 38.5. A thesis may:

- i. Include publications arising as a consequence of the research undertaken for a thesis. When the candidate includes a co-authored published paper or co-authored scholarly work, or a substantive component of a co-authored published paper or co-authored scholarly work in the body of the thesis, the candidate must include in the thesis a written statement attesting to their contribution to the joint publication. This statement must be signed by the supervisor. A statement is not required when publications are included as an appendix to the thesis.

Components and Layout

PLEASE NOTE: the layout and ordering of the contents is flexible and should be based on the judgement and experience of candidates and supervisors as well as discipline norms. Please use your own discretion and seek expert advice. The following is a suggested layout only.

1. Title Page

2. Declarations

Originality

I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis is my own work and contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due references and acknowledgements are made. It contains no material which has been previously submitted by me for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution.

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 statement from each co-author, endorsed in writing by the Faculty Assistant Dean (Research Training), attesting to my contribution to any jointly authored papers. (*Refer to clause 39.2 of the Rules Governing Research Higher Degrees for acceptable papers).*

3. Acknowledgements

4. List of publications included as part of the thesis

4.1 List all of the included published work with the full bibliographic citations in the order they appear in the thesis.

4.2 Provide a statement to indicate that where necessary permission regarding copyright has been obtained from copyright owners. For example, the statement may say “I warrant that I have obtained, where necessary, permission from the copyright owners to use any third party copyright material reproduced in the thesis (e.g. questionnaires, artwork, unpublished letters), or to use any of my own published work (e.g. journal articles) in which the copyright is held by another party (e.g. publisher, co-author).”

5. Table of Contents

6. Abstract

An abstract of approximately 300 words is required to describe the content of the thesis.

7. Overview

A full explanatory overview is required to link the published papers to the research thesis. This may include sections for Literature Review (if not included separately), Research Design and Review/Discussion. Not all of these sections may be necessary. **Choose the format that underpins the academic argument so that the contents of the thesis are established as a substantial and significant body of work, but without unnecessary repetition.**

8. Literature Review

9. Statement of Contribution of Others

In the thesis, at the front of each paper, include a written statement from each co-author attesting to the candidate's contribution to a joint publication included as part of the thesis. 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.

9.1 Sample co-author statement

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

List:

Full Name of Co-Author/s, Date, Signature of Co-Authors

Full Name of Faculty Assistant Dean Research Training, Date, Signature

10. Papers/Chapters

Each paper/chapter should have an introduction to explain how it contributes to the overall body of knowledge. It is not necessary to reformat published papers in the thesis. Where appropriate publications can be included in full or in parts thereof.

11. Appendices

12. Bibliography