

Higher Degree by Research Thesis Presentation Schedule



1 Purpose

To establish the presentation requirements for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Theses at the University.

2 Scope

This schedule must be read in conjunction with the Higher Degree by Research Thesis Examination Procedure and is subordinate to it.

3 Schedule

3.1 Presentation standards

All Theses must uphold the presentation and publishing standards relevant to the discipline. Students should discuss the discipline standards with their HDR Supervisory Team and/or the library. Thesis submission should normally be made in PDF format, unless approval is sought from the Graduate Research School (GRS) prior to submission.

3.2 Language

Theses must be written in English.

3.3 Style

The Thesis must be written in clear language and in an acceptable style according to this schedule. The Thesis should be clear, concise, correct and complete. Candidates should refer to research writing style guides for assistance. There should be a thorough editing before Thesis submission with a focus on:

- accuracy and clarity;
- precision and conciseness;
- a high standard of spelling, grammar and punctuation;
- sound language choice;

- sound paragraph and sentence construction; and
- the elimination of redundant or ambiguous words, phrases and passages.

3.4 Length of Thesis

For a doctoral Thesis the minimum length will vary with the research topic and the form of presentation. There is a maximum prescribed length of 100,000 words for a doctoral Thesis. Specific length requirements may apply in some instances, for certain Thesis types. Where such requirements exist, these will be detailed in the Academic Program information within the UniSQ Handbook as well as the Thesis presentation guidelines.

For a masters Thesis the minimum length will vary with the research topic and the form of presentation. There is a maximum prescribed length of 40,000 words for a masters Thesis.

Please refer to the Thesis presentation guidelines for word count inclusions. Any exceptions to this will require approval by the Dean (GRS).

3.5 Declaration of artificial intelligence (AI) use

A UniSQ HDR Thesis submission must include a declaration of AI use in accordance with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research. The declaration must formally acknowledge any use of AI in the generation of the final Thesis. Please see the Graduate Research School webpages on the UniSQ website for further information on using generative AI in Research.

3.6 Format of a Standard Thesis

Please see the Thesis presentation guidelines and Thesis presentation template for information on the presentation and format.

The Standard Thesis should be formatted with:

- line spacing that aligns with your discipline specific referencing style requirements;
- A4 (297 mm x 210 mm) page layout;
- a left hand margin of at least 25 mm, a top, bottom and right hand margin of at least 25 mm;
- 12 point font size for the main text
- all text in black
- consistent font throughout the Thesis

- page numbers only at the bottom of the page (no other lines or formatting)
- no headers or footers, unless it is a specified requirement for your discipline specific referencing style

Submission of the Thesis in two volumes labelled I and II (Roman capital numerals) may be appropriate in exceptional circumstances when there are large, essential appendices.

In this case volume I will contain the whole of the Thesis proper, and volume II the appendices. The contents page in volume I will refer to both volumes; and volume II will commence with a duplicate title page.

3.7 Format of a Thesis by Publication

A Thesis by Publication is available for all HDR programs. A Thesis by Publication will be formatted according to the Standard Thesis as outlined in Section 3.5 although published sections may be inserted without re-formatting. Please see the Thesis presentation guidelines and Thesis presentation template for further details.

The Thesis by Publication must contain an introduction and review of relevant literature that contextualises the research project in relation to the present state of knowledge in the field.

The Thesis chapters and articles must act as one cohesive document. The Thesis must flow logically in a coherent sequence, articulating a clear argument that supports the main findings. The Student must also address how each publication contributes to the advancement of the research area.

The number of publications and the type of publications will vary between disciplines. Normally, the Thesis will be based on a minimum of three publications for a Doctor of Philosophy, two publications for a professional doctorate and one publication for master by research.

These Research papers should be published in, accepted by, or submitted to a peer-reviewed journal for publication during the period of candidature. At least one of these Research papers must be published or have been accepted for publication by a peer-reviewed journal prior to examination. Any exceptions to this will require approval by the Dean (GRS). The quality of such papers must be appropriate for the Academic Program and have been written by the Student as the sole or joint author.

Where the published papers have joint authors, a statement must be included within the preliminary pages of the Thesis declaring that the Student undertook the majority of the research and authorship of the papers. Normally, a Student would be expected to make more than 50% contribution to each paper, and therefore would be expected to be listed as the first author. An acknowledgement of the contribution of other authors must also be outlined in the Thesis acknowledgment section.

The Student must include an original general discussion that integrates the most significant findings and draws together the findings of the published papers in a coherent manner.

The Thesis may include relevant appendices, including additional papers that do not relate to the main thrust of the Thesis, raw data, computer code, questionnaires and other material as deemed appropriate for the relevant discipline.

Further guidelines on a Thesis by Publication can be found on the GRS website.

3.8 Format of a Thesis with Creative Works component

3.8.1 Types of creative components

The creative component of the Thesis may include an exhibition; a series of bespoke studio workshops; a design project; a portfolio containing a curative archive of outcomes development from a practical demonstration of the research such as photographic images, creative development of new works, technical, literary or musical compositions; a sequence of recitals/performances (live or recorded) and/or, audio visual, or multimedia. Other creative practices may include curation, editing/publishing or production/staging/scheduling of other creative works considered acceptable by the GRS.

Where the creative work is a collaboration, a statement must be included within the preliminary pages of the Thesis that clearly specifies the extent to which the creative works was undertaken by the Student. This statement must be accompanied by written confirmation from the collaborator/s regarding the extent of the contribution by each collaborator. Full acknowledgement of the contribution of other collaborator/s must also be outlined in the acknowledgement section.

3.8.2 Exegesis requirements

Students submitting a Thesis with Creative Works must submit an Exegesis along with their creative works.

The Exegesis will normally provide a rationale for the methodology of techniques and strategies adopted in the creative works and situate them in relation to the theoretical, historical and or/cultural context. One or more clearly identified research questions investigated through the creative works should be included in the Exegesis. A clear discussion of methodology and methods needs to be addressed to ensure interpretation and application of practice-led/practice-based/design-led or other methodologies are implemented in alignment with the creative component.

Please refer to the Thesis presentation guidelines found on the GRS Website.

3.9 Raw data

Raw data may be included in the Thesis. Where it is not, it must be available on request by the

examiner.

3.10 Computer code

Computer code should be listed in the appendices only when they have been written by the Student.

Each code piece should be adequately 'self-documenting', with comment panels outlining language, machine requirements, library function/subroutine requirements (where nonstandard), input and output variables, etc. Flow charts are not specifically required, but if there is a suite of codes or interactive subroutines, one (or more) structure charts may be appropriate.

Please refer to the Intellectual Property Policy and subordinate Procedures for further information on the structure for the ownership, reporting, identification, management and commercialisation of Intellectual Property.

3.11 Submission

The Thesis submitted for examination, or as a final copy will be submitted electronically.

3.11.1 Submission for examination

The submission requirements for the examination of a Thesis is outlined in the HDR Thesis Examination Procedure.

4 References

Nil.

5 Schedule Information

Accountable Officer	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Research)
Responsible Officer	Dean (Graduate Research School)
Policy Type	University Procedure
Policy Suite	Higher Degree by Research Student Policy
Approved Date	23/10/2025
Effective Date	23/10/2025
Review Date	25/5/2027
Relevant Legislation	Electronic Transactions Act 1999

Failure to comply with this Policy or Policy Instrument may be considered as misconduct and the provisions of the relevant Policy or Procedure applied. A hard copy of this electronic document is uncontrolled and may not be current as UniSQ the University regularly reviews and updates its Policies and Policy Instruments. The latest controlled version can be found in the UniSQ's [Policy and Procedure Library](#).

	<u>Higher Education Support Act 2003</u>
Policy Exceptions	<u>Policy Exceptions Register</u>
Related Policies	<u>Academic Programs and Courses Quality Policy</u> <u>Admissions, Enrolment and Graduations Policy</u> <u>Assessment Policy</u> <u>Intellectual Property Policy</u> <u>Marketing and Brand Policy</u> <u>Student Grievance Resolution Policy</u>
Related Procedures	<u>Assessment Procedure</u> <u>Commercialisation of Intellectual Property Procedure</u> <u>Graduations Procedure</u> <u>Higher Degree by Research Student Progress Procedure</u> <u>Intellectual Property Procedure</u> <u>Student Appeals Procedure</u> <u>Student Grievance Resolution Procedure</u> <u>Website Procedure</u>
Related forms, publications and websites	<u>HDR Forms</u> <u>Using Generative AI in Research at UniSQ</u>
Definitions	<p>Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary</p> <p><u>Academic Program</u></p> <p>An approved Higher Education Award of the University, consisting of a combination of Courses the successful completion of an offering of which, together with any credit transfers and Exemptions in accordance with the relevant requirements, will fulfil the prescribed requirements for that particular Award.</p> <p><u>Exegesis</u></p> <p>A form of written assessment that accompanies a Student's creative works. The Exegesis will normally provide a rationale for the</p>

techniques and strategies adopted in the creative works and situate them in relation to the theoretical and/or historical cultural context.

[Higher Degree by Research \(HDR\)](#)

A Research Doctorate or Research Masters program for which at least two-thirds of the Student load for the program is required as research work.

[Higher Degree by Research \(HDR\) Student](#)

A Student enrolled in an HDR program.

[Higher Degree by Research \(HDR\) Supervisor](#)

A member of a Student's HDR Supervisory Team. An HDR Supervisor may hold the position of Principal HDR Supervisor or Associate Supervisor.

[Student](#)

A person who is enrolled in a UniSQ Upskill Course or who is admitted to an Award Program or Non-Award Program offered by the University and is: currently enrolled in one or more Courses or study units; or not currently enrolled but is on an approved Leave of Absence or whose admission has not been cancelled.

[Thesis](#)

Also known as a Standard Thesis, is the material outcomes of a program of research. It is also referred to as a 'dissertation'.

[Thesis by Publication](#)

A Thesis where some chapters are in the form of research papers published in, or submitted to, peer-reviewed journals.

[Thesis with Creative Works](#)

A Thesis with Creative Works includes original work such as multimedia, film, exhibition, performance, musical composition, novel, play or other Faculty approved production, in addition to an Exegesis.

[University](#)

The term 'University' or 'UniSQ' means the University of Southern Queensland.

	Definitions that relate to this schedule only
Keywords	PhD, dissertation, Thesis, doctoral
Record No	15/1774PL