



Notes for submitting a thesis as a series of papers

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Notes for submitting a thesis as a series of papers

Presenting a thesis in the format of a thesis as a series of papers is available in some disciplines for some higher degree research candidates. Students should speak to their department to ascertain if it is possible for them.

1. Requirements of the award

- 1.1. A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy must embody the results of research carried out during the approved period of study. In the thesis and the oral examination the candidate is required to conduct and present original investigations that make a significant contribution to knowledge, to test ideas, whether the candidate's own or those of others, to understand the relationship of the theme of the investigations to a wider field of knowledge and to express themselves clearly and concisely.
- 1.2. In the case of a thesis involving original creative output, the thesis must embody the results of research carried out and/or output created during the approved period of study. The thesis must contain a commentary that addresses the originality and artistic relevance of the work. Within the thesis and oral examination the student must show evidence of the originality of the work, demonstrate an understanding of the relationship of the theme of the thesis to a wider field of knowledge, make a significant contribution to knowledge/the genre, and must express themselves clearly and concisely.

2. Thesis requirements

- 2.1. The maximum word length for the thesis is specified within each programme.
- 2.2. A thesis submitted for examination must not exceed the maximum word length for the degree unless previously submitted for a higher award. When a student wishes to submit a thesis that exceeds the maximum word length permission must be sought from the Dean¹ at least one month prior to the submission of the thesis.

¹ Throughout this document the 'Dean' refers to the Executive Dean (or their deputy) or Dean of Partnerships (or their deputy). In practice, most decisions are referred to the Faculty Dean Postgraduate through the Postgraduate Research Education Team.

- 2.3. The thesis will include a summary or abstract of the work not exceeding 300 words in length. The thesis and summary must normally be in English. This does not include quotations. The Dean may approve, at admission to the programme of study, a request for the thesis to be in another language.
- 2.4. A student who is about to submit a thesis must give at least two months' prior notice in writing to the Dean. The Head of Department/School, or nominee, must approve the title of the thesis.
- 2.5. The thesis as a series of paper consists of a minimum of three papers of publishable quality, preceded by a substantial introduction and a conclusion. The student must use the introductory section of their thesis to outline the context of the research and to set the overarching, unifying question which the thesis addresses. The introductory section should include a literature review and an outline of the methodologies employed. The overall work must constitute a coherent and continuous thesis, rather than a series of disconnected papers.
- 2.6. A candidate must clearly identify all sources, published and unpublished, from which material in the thesis is derived, and must supply full references to all sources, in an appropriate format, both in the body of the text and in the bibliography or reference list.
- 2.7. A candidate must ensure that their thesis does not contain material the publication of which may lead to liability under English law, specifically (but not limited to): intellectual property law; data protection law; defamation law; and discrimination law.
- 2.8. Upon submission of a thesis for examination, a student becomes a candidate for that degree.

3. Co-authorship

- 3.1. A thesis will normally consist of an investigation by one author of a unified theme of research. Where a thesis includes any work that has been written or produced in collaboration with another person(s), the candidate must explicitly acknowledge this, and must state, normally in a preface to the thesis, the extent and nature of the contribution of the other person(s). This applies whether or not the co-written or co-produced work has been published in any format before the examination of the thesis.
- 3.2. In case of co-authorship the candidate has to be the sole author of at least one of the papers and has to be the main contributor to the research and production of the other papers. Additionally, a co-authored thesis has to be submitted together with a '[Statement of Authorship](#)' form available at the end of this guidance note.
- 3.3. A thesis may not incorporate, whether in the same or different form, work that has been submitted to this or to any other Higher Education provider for a degree unless the subject of the research is an extension or continuation of research begun for such a degree. In such a case the extent of the material and the degree, if any, obtained should be indicated. The candidate may be required to produce the work previously submitted. An exception to this regulation will apply where the thesis is resubmitted after unsuccessful submission for a higher

award at the University of Essex (see [Principal Regulations for research degrees, regulation 4.33](#)) (.pdf).

4. Thesis submission

- 4.1. Copies of a thesis for examination shall be submitted according to the University [Policy on Thesis Submission, Deposit and Retention](#) (.pdf) available from the University of Essex website. This policy states that an electronic copy of the thesis be provided to the Online Research Repository following the completion of the examination process and when all the corrections have been finalised and approved by the relevant Dean.

5. Examination Process

- 5.1. All theses must be presented for examination.
- 5.2. The introduction and conclusion will be important in ensuring that the individual papers that make up the thesis can be viewed by the examiners as a cohesive body of work. If the papers do not have a clear cohesion, then the thesis is likely to be rejected. The quality of research and academic rigour of a thesis by papers must match that of a standard monograph thesis.

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Statement of Authorship

Postgraduate Research Education Team

Thesis title

Publication status	Indicate status 'yes/no'
Published work	
Submitted for publication	
Accepted for publication	
Unpublished and un-submitted work written in manuscript style, of publishable quality	

Principal author

Name of principal author (candidate)	Registration number	Department	Contribution to the paper	Overall percentage (%)

Signature:

Date (dd/mm/yy):

Co-author contributions

By signing the Statement of Authorship, each author certifies that:

- i. the candidate's stated contribution to the publication is accurate (as detailed above);
- ii. permission is granted for the candidate to include the publication in the thesis; and
- iii. the sum of all co-author contributions is equal to 100%, less the candidate's stated contribution.

Name of co-author	Contribution to the paper	Overall percentage (%)

Name of co-author	Contribution to the paper	Overall percentage (%)

Signature:

Date (dd/mm/yy):

Name of co-author	Contribution to the paper	Overall percentage (%)

Signature:

Date (dd/mm/yy):

Please copy and paste additional co-author panels here as required.