

Presentation of Thesis

UQ-Exeter Institute doctoral students

This document should be read in conjunction with other guidance about the presentation of theses for examination of the University of Exeter (Exeter) and The University of Queensland (UQ). This guidance applies to all theses submitted by students under the UQ-Exeter Institute.

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01

About your thesis

Your thesis must make a contribution to knowledge that reflects the effort of your study during the duration of your degree programme.

Your thesis will be examined according to the criteria for award at both institutions. Note that there is significant overlap, but the criteria for award at both institutions has been included here for reference. Examiners will use both sets of criteria when examining your work

Exeter regulations	UQ regulations
The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication;	Does the thesis demonstrate a significant and original contribution to knowledge?
A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice	Does the thesis engage with the literature and the work of others?
The general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems	Is there a clear and discernible coherence in the presented research, its arguments and conclusions?
A detailed understanding of applicable techniques and advanced academic enquiry	Does the thesis show an advanced knowledge of research principles and methods relating to the applicable discipline?
A satisfactory level of literary presentation	Is the thesis convincingly written?

Resources and training

To help you prepare for your examination, we have put together some useful resources. This includes workshops, online materials, resources, and other helpful materials to guide you from the commencement of your PhD to examination.

- [University of Exeter Researcher Development resources](#)
- [University of Queensland support during your Research Degree](#)
- [Guide to Oral Examinations](#)
- [Additional Support and Resources available through UQ](#)
- [Additional Support and Resources available through Exeter](#)

02

Formatting your thesis

Formatting should be line spacing 1.5, Times New Roman or Arial 12pt font, all four margins 20mm. All pages including abstract, appendices, indices, drawings, maps, pages of photographs, etc., should be numbered consecutively in one sequence starting with the title page as 1.

A thesis must adhere to the UQ-Exeter Institute's thesis preliminary pages template.

The following information is required on the title page:

- It is expected that the thesis title is in sentence structure format, i.e., capital letters for beginnings of sentences, nouns etc.
- The Universities' logos provided in the preliminary pages template have been approved use in joint PhD theses. Other versions of the logos will not be accepted.
- The degrees listed on the title page must be tertiary degrees that have already been awarded. The name of the institution is not required.
- You cannot list the degree currently being examined.
- The year of submission is required. The month/day is not required.
- You must list your enrolling units at both institutions.

For guidance, you can find previously submitted theses through the University libraries, but it should be noted that thesis formatting changes through time so there may be variation in how they are presented:

- [Instructions for finding UQ theses](#)
- For more information about accessing Exeter theses, please contact a [Liaison Librarian](#)

To assist in the preparation of your thesis, both Universities provide access to an official UQ-Exeter Institute preliminary pages template.

Alternate thesis formats

In certain circumstances you can use an alternate thesis format.

This allows for the production of a thesis in an alternative format, which may include either:

- a. the presentation of part or all of the thesis in an alternative format e.g., it may be a multimedia document (e.g., an element or the thesis in its entirety, which is presented in a format appropriate perhaps for professional/stakeholder audience or for public engagement/ impact activity).
- b. (b) A constructed text such as a piece of art, or a record of professional practice in the form of a series of case-studies, which must be accompanied by a commentary.

Unique alternate formats

With the support of the PGR Support Team (Exeter) and the Graduate Research School (UQ), you can request permission to use an alternate format not listed above.

Permission to do so may be given, provided that by virtue of the subject:

- the intellectual quality of the thesis/dissertation would be enhanced;
- that a qualified supervisor and appropriate examiners can be appointed;
- the format is appropriate to the thesis/dissertation;

- that the format will allow the student to demonstrate their ability to meet the award criteria;
- or, that the alternative format is an appropriate specific arrangement to ensure the consistent equitable assessment of a student with disabilities.

Read Section 6 of the [Alternate Thesis Format Options Procedures](#) and [Section 3 \(Thesis/Dissertations in an Alternative Format\)](#) for further information and before you submit a request. The University of Exeter guidance on [Alternative Format Thesis](#) is useful and links to [a form which should be completed](#) by the student and supervisor to request permission.

Once you've completed the form and you have the support of your supervisors and Directors of HDR, email a copy of the completed form to both graduateschool@uq.edu.au and UQ-Exeter-PGRSupport@exeter.ac.uk to request permission.

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Word limits

It's important to adhere to the word limit when writing your thesis. Students are expected to be guided by disciplinary norms on the word-count, up to a maximum of 100,000 words. In line with [UQ's policy on thesis word limits](#), UQ-homed students should still seek the permission of the Dean of the Graduate Research School for word-counts beyond 80,000 words.

The word limit:

- includes all footnotes and appendices
- includes all in-text referencing,
- includes all tables, charts and captions but
- does not include your abstract and other preliminaries (table of contents, acknowledgements etc) or your bibliography/reference list.

04

Language and writing

It's essential to carefully proofread your thesis before submission.

To help you with the task of proofreading, you may wish to hire a professional editor.

You can use the list of [proof readers provided by UQ Union](#) or through [Exeter's Academic copy editor register](#).

You must consider the implications of using AI before using it to proofread your work. Please see Section 8 below, the [Guidance for use of AI in Postgraduate Research](#) and the AI guidance provided at The [University of Queensland Library](#) before using AI for this purpose.

Writing in a language other than English

The body of your thesis must be written in English, except where you have permission from the Deans at both institutions to write your thesis in a language other than English (LOTE).

Discuss writing your thesis in a language other than English with your advisory team as early as possible, and seek permission from the Dean of the Graduate Research School (UQ) at graduateschool@uq.edu.au and the Dean of Postgraduate Research and the Doctoral College (Exeter) via DCqualitydevelopment@exeter.ac.uk

In considering a request, the Deans will consider:

- your research topic
- the extent to which this topic is associated with the nominated language
- the University's capacity to provide linguistic expertise on your advisory team
- the availability of expert examiners who can read the thesis in the nominated language
- whether writing in English would compromise the argument of your thesis.

We may ask you to prepare a confirmation document in the nominated language to determine the quality of your academic writing in that language. A lack of English language proficiency is not an appropriate reason for seeking to write a LOTE thesis.

If you are given approval to write a LOTE thesis, you will still have to:

- meet the University's English language proficiency admission requirements
- work in an English-language environment
- speak with University colleagues in English
- write an English-language abstract (as well as a LOTE abstract)
- complete progress reports and other documents in English.

05

Preliminary pages

Preliminary pages include everything except the main body of your thesis. A preliminary page's template is provided by Exeter's Doctoral College (UQ-Exeter-PGRSupport@exeter.ac.uk) and UQ's Graduate Research School (graduateschool@uq.edu.au) to ensure your thesis is in the right order. Please follow the template requirements exactly. A thesis must be submitted with the correct formatting and preliminary pages completed correctly. Any thesis that does not follow the template exactly will be sent back to the student for corrections and supervisor approval, which will delay your thesis submission.

You must retain all headings in the preliminary pages, whether or not they apply to your research. Please don't change the template to suit your thesis.

You must use the declaration by author supplied in the preliminary pages template. All use of Generative AI in your thesis must be declared using the appropriate declaration statement provided in Section 8 below. Do not sign and date the declaration.

If you have published during your candidature, a clear statement of authorship and contribution to each scholarly work must be provided in the preliminary pages of the thesis under the appropriate heading.

- Publications included in this thesis. Under this heading, list any publications (whole or part) that have been included in your thesis. If you have not included any publications in your thesis, state 'No publications included' under this heading.
- Submitted manuscripts included in this thesis. Under this heading list papers submitted for publication and awaiting review.
- Other publications during candidature. Under this heading you must list all publications arising from your candidature, irrespective of whether they appear in your thesis or not.

Before you submit, make sure your preliminary pages are correctly formatted and you have removed all placeholder text.

Your name should appear on the title page as it appears in mySI-net (at UQ) and in MyPGR (At Exeter). Your name should be the same at both institutions. If your name in mySI-net is not correct, [you can change it](#). If your name in MyPGR is not correct, [you can request to change it](#).

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Including publications in your thesis

We encourage you to publish during your candidature. However, a thesis which includes a paper that has been published is no guarantee that the examiners will recommend the award for which the candidate is being examined.

In the body of your thesis:

- you can only include research conducted leading to manuscripts published during your candidature.
- you can't include the content of manuscripts or research conducted before the commencement of your candidature.

There is no limit on the number of publications you can include in your thesis, but we expect the work to be of a quality suitable for submission and publication in high-quality peer-reviewed journals for it to be included.

A thesis that includes publications must also reflect the same level of effort and rigour required for a thesis without publications. You cannot just submit a collection of publications as a thesis, no matter how good they are. You must develop and sustain a coherent argument across your thesis.

For more information about including publications in your thesis, see Section 1 of the [UQ guidelines on including scholarly works in a thesis](#). At a minimum any thesis including publications must contain:

- a. an independent introduction that contextualises the research project in relation to the present state of the knowledge in the field;
- b. thesis chapters in a logical and coherent sequence leading to an argument that supports the main findings of the thesis;
- c. can independent and original discussion that integrates the significant findings of the thesis.

Preliminary pages

In the preliminary pages of your thesis you must list the:

- manuscripts published during your candidature and that are included in your thesis
- manuscripts published during your candidature that are not included in your thesis
- manuscripts written during your candidature that you have submitted for review.

More information about listing publications in the preliminary pages is available in Section 5 of this document.

Co-authored papers

If you are the co-author of a manuscript published during your candidature, you must have permission from your co-authors to include any part of the publication in your thesis. You must have made a substantial contribution to key ideas, research development, and writing of the publication, be able to take public responsibility for each scholarly work appearing in the thesis, and provide a clear statement of authorship and contribution in the preliminary pages of the thesis.

On the page immediately before the chapter that includes the publication, you should clearly explain your own contribution to the co-authored paper:

- how much original research was undertaken by you rather than your co-authors
- the extent to which you authored the paper.

Structure the page as follows:

- Chapter XXX
- Citation of the co-authored paper
- Details of your contribution (no more than one page).

Seek guidance from your advisors/Supervisors at both UQ and Exeter, and co-authors when preparing this statement.

More information is available in the preliminary pages template.

Contributions by others to the thesis

You are required to list significant input made by others to your thesis. Examples of what you can include are provided in the preliminary pages template.

If no one else significantly contributed to your thesis, then the heading must be retained and you are required to state 'no contribution by others' under this heading.

Publishing third-party material

Most theses will include illustrative material such as maps or photographs. Where these illustrations have not been created by the author of the thesis, the source must be acknowledged in the caption.

Where an illustration has been created by someone else, it may be subject to 'Third Party Copyright', which is material in any format to which another person or entity holds the rights.

Upon final submission of the thesis, an electronic copy must be deposited in both the Exeter and the UQ Library, for all students.

If you wish to include any substantial portion of material that is subject to Third party Copyright in your thesis/dissertation, you must obtain the written permission of the copyright holder before submitting your thesis/dissertation to Exeter and the UQ Library and attach the permission as an appendix to the thesis and list it in the table of contents. If you have not obtained the permission of the copyright holder, you must submit two versions of your thesis/dissertation, one with and one without the third-party copyright material. The removed material should be replaced with a statement such as "this image has been removed by the author of this thesis/dissertation for copyright reasons". Further information can be found on the [E-theses and Copyright](#) page of the University of Exeter Library website.

Further guidance may be found on the [Copyright for postgraduate researchers](#) SharePoint site.

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Plagiarism, iThenticate and Turnitin

Plagiarism is the act of presenting other people's ideas, words or work as your own, without proper credit or acknowledgement.

Plagiarism can be deliberate or unintentional. We take all allegations of plagiarism very seriously.

The UQ-Exeter Institute has resources available to help you better understand your obligations and how you can avoid plagiarism:

- Find out more about academic integrity and student conduct at The University of Queensland and [Research Ethics and Governance](#) at the University of Exeter (including research integrity, codes and policies and ethics and good practice).
- Read the [UQ Library guide to referencing](#)
- Complete the [UQ Research Integrity Module \(RITMOD\)](#)
- Work through the University of Exeter's [Mandatory Training](#) on Research Integrity, which covers plagiarism and responsible referencing.
- Consider using [Endnote](#) or other referencing software to ensure consistent formatting in your bibliography.
- Refer to the University of Exeter PGR Handbook - [Research Misconduct: Procedure for Graduate Research Students suspected of Research Misconduct](#)

iThenticate

iThenticate is a text-matching tool that allows you to check the originality of your thesis. All UQ-Exeter Institute students may use iThenticate throughout their candidatures, however, this is not compulsory for students homed at the University of Exeter. You can use it to check documents including:

- UQ progress review documents
- manuscripts for publication
- thesis drafts and final documents.

Share your iThenticate originality reports with your principal advisor/Supervisor, so you can identify any issues early on.

For information about how to use iThenticate, [follow the UQ Library's iThenticate Guide](#).

Further information about [iThenticate](#) is available, including further information about the similarity report.

Turnitin

All Exeter-homed students are required to submit their upgrade portfolio through Turnitin as an originality check prior to submission. You will be provided with more information ahead of your upgrade, but can also find details at 5.7 at [PGR Handbook Chapter 9.pdf](#).

The use of Generative AI in your thesis

The University of Queensland and the University of Exeter have developed guidelines for doctoral candidates regarding the use of AI in postgraduate research. You are advised to read through this guidance and discuss any AI use with your supervisors, considering the safety, ethical and environmental implications of AI use.

- [Guidance on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Postgraduate Research](#)
- AI use at UQ - [AI Student Hub](#) - Library Guides at University of Queensland Library

You must include one of the following statements in the preliminary page of your thesis/dissertation under the heading 'The use of generative AI in the production of this research'. The absence of any such statement will be considered a declaration that you have not used generative AI in preparing your work.

I confirm that I have used AI tool(s) responsibly in my work and that no content from generative AI has been presented as my own work. All generated content from AI has been acknowledged and referenced according to The University of Queensland and University of Exeter guidelines and a log of AI use throughout my research degree has been included as an appendix at the end of the upgrade portfolio/thesis/dissertation.

OR:

I have not used any AI tools in preparing this thesis/dissertation.

You can copy and paste the relevant text into your thesis/dissertation in the declaration page (see the preliminary pages thesis template).

You will be expected to be able to explain any content included in your thesis, as per the [Procedure for Graduate Research Students suspected of Research Misconduct](#) and may be asked to discuss how you have used AI as part of your viva.

You will not be penalised for using Generative AI tools in your submitted work, provided the use falls within the latest referencing guidance at [Using generative Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) tools in academic work - Referencing](#). However, failing to declare the use of GenAI may be considered under the Home institution's research misconduct procedures, available at [TQA manual section on research misconduct](#).

Acknowledging and referencing AI use

To ensure transparency and uphold academic integrity, you must disclose any use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in your research and thesis preparation using the following table. Depending on usage, thesis/dissertation format, and disciplinary conventions, you may also need to cite or reference use of generative AI in your dissertation or upgrade portfolio text. Guidance about referencing AI use is available at [Referencing Generative Artificial Intelligence \(GenAI\)](#)

This is a suggested template for documenting the use of AI in your research, you may present this information differently if appropriate and if that makes more sense for how you have used AI in your research. The table should be included as an appendix in your submitted thesis/ dissertation.

Where AI is the subject of the thesis and its use explained in detail as part of the methodology and analysis sections of the thesis, you do not need to replicate those explanations in this template.

You should provide sufficient detail for your examiners to understand how you have used AI in your research when they are reading your thesis. This is for transparency and does not need to be exhaustive:

your examiners have the opportunity ask you to expand on this during your viva examination. This documentation should not be onerous – a few pages should be sufficient to guide the examiners as to how AI has been used. You do not need to list every single prompt or conversation.

AI Tool	Purpose of Use	Prompts Used/Summary of conversation	Thesis Section
{Name and version of AI tool}	{How you specifically used the AI tool, e.g., data analysis, literature review assistance, language editing}	Prompts or queries you input into the AI tool If this is part of a conversation with too many prompts to enter, please include a summary of the instruction to the tool that you used. This is to support your examiners to best understand the content of the conversations	{Specific chapters or sections affected}

How to complete your AI declaration table:

- **AI Tool:** Clearly identify the name and version of each AI tool you used (e.g., ChatGPT 4.0, Grammarly).
- **Purpose of Use:** Describe how you used the AI tool in your research or writing process.
- **Prompts Used/Summary of conversation:** Provide the prompts or instructions you gave to the AI tool. If this is part of a conversation with too many prompts to enter, please include a summary of the instruction to the tool that you used. This is to support your examiners to best understand the content of the conversations.
- **Thesis Section:** Specify the location in your thesis where you used AI-generated content or assistance.

Example of a Completed AI Declaration Table:

AI Tool	Purpose of Use	Prompts Used/Summary of Conversation	Thesis Section
Microsoft Copilot	Improved clarity and conciseness of specific abstract sentences and introduction sections.	"Make the text below more concise."	Abstract and Introduction (pp. i-24)
ChatGPT 4.0	Assisted in brainstorming and refining research questions.	"Refine the following research questions related to sustainable urban development."	Chapter 1: Introduction (pp. 3-5)
Elicit	Curated and summarised relevant research papers, identifying key themes.	"Summarise recent studies on sustainable urban development and organise into key themes."	Chapter 2: Literature Review (pp. 15-30)

IBM Watson Studio	Processed large datasets to recognise patterns and build predictive models.	N/A (data input and model training)	Chapter 4: Data Analysis (pp. 50-70)
Grammarly	Enhanced grammar, style, and academic tone throughout the thesis.	N/A (automated grammar and style suggestions)	Entire thesis
Syntho	Generated synthetic datasets to address data scarcity and preserve privacy.	N/A (synthetic data generation)	Chapter 3: Methodology (pp. 35-40)

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Submitting your thesis

Students homed with the University of Queensland will submit their thesis using the UQRDM system. For further detail on how to do this please see the [“my thesis” guidance](#) on the UQ website.

Students homed within the University of Exeter will submit their thesis in accordance with the thesis submission guidance in the [PGR Handbook](#).

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Final copies of your thesis

Students homed with the University of Queensland are required to submit the final version of their thesis via the [UQRDM](#) system.

Students homed with the University of Exeter are required to deposit the final version of their thesis/dissertation into ORE (Open Research Exeter) [E-thesis Guidelines and E-thesis FAQs are available](#).

The final version of your thesis will also need to be lodged with the institution that is not your home institution. Instructions to submit will be sent once you reach the conferral (award) stage. Please note you cannot be conferred (awarded) until your final thesis is lodged with both institutions.