

HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH THESIS FORMAT GUIDELINES



Format of Thesis

All candidates must submit their thesis as a digital PDF file. Microsoft Word is recommended for thesis preparation. All UNE students are entitled to download Microsoft Office at no cost. The UNE Thesis Template is a useful tool in assisting with the structure of the thesis layout.

Formatting Requirements

Font: Use a clear, readable font that follows discipline norms

Line spacing: Choose either 1.5 or 2.0 line spacing

Margins: Minimum 20mm on all four sides (consult discipline-specific requirements where applicable)

Figures and diagrams: Ensure all visual elements are clearly legible with appropriately sized text. Consider potential trimming requirements if examiners request printed copies

Thesis Structure and Pagination

The thesis should follow this standard order:

1. **Preliminary pages** (numbered with lowercase Roman numerals: i, ii, iii, iv, etc., positioned at bottom of page)
2. **Main text** including figures (numbered sequentially: 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., positioned according to header/footer requirements for odd and even pages)
3. **Reference list**
4. **List of Figures** (if applicable)
5. **List of Tables** (if applicable)
6. **Appendices** (if applicable)

Thesis by Publication (specific requirements)

You may submit a thesis by publication using either one of the two methods of presenting a thesis by publication; the first is to have the published/publishable work within the body of the thesis, or the second method is to have all published/publishable work in the Appendices only, not in the body of the thesis.

Whichever method is chosen, you must include the Combined Statement of Authors' Contribution & Originality form at the end of each chapter which contains a published/publishable work or the chapter that referring to published/publishable work in the appendices.

Combined Statement of Authors' Contribution & Originality Form

Please note: Published work includes written work or manuscripts that have been submitted for publication and accepted by the publisher. Publishable work includes written work or manuscripts that have been submitted for publication but not yet accepted or published.

Thesis by Creative Practice (specific requirements)

That the additional media is to be embedded with the thesis/exegesis, as an appendix, within the body, or for multiple media, as an external linked within the thesis/exegesis, that is accessible.

Section A – Initial Pages

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The order of these pages will normally be as follows candidates should follow discipline norms and seek advice from the Principal Supervisor in the first instance. HDR Candidates and supervisors may also refer to the UNE Thesis Template.

Initial Pages of a Thesis may include the following:

- a. Title Page (Required)
- b. Abstract (Required)
- c. Declaration or Certification Page – sample attached (Required)
- d. Acknowledgment of Country (Optional)
- e. Acknowledgements (Optional)
- f. Table of Contents (Optional)

Title Page (Required)

This page must contain the following information:

- Full title of the thesis
Example: The Participation Generation – the social and psychological implications
- Full legal name of the candidate
Example: Constance Aurora Page Lloyd Thomas Johnston
- Academic qualifications of the candidate at time of submission.
Example: Bachelor of Social Science, University of New England
- Award for which the thesis is submitted, the institution and the year of primary submission.
Example: A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of New England in 2025
- Any candidate that received a Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship either as a tuition offset or stipend payments (Domestic or International), must acknowledge the government in the thesis.
Example: This research has been conducted with the support of the Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship

Abstract (Required)

The abstract is a concise summary of your completed research, typically 300-400 words. An effective abstract succinctly presents the purpose of research, methodology, major findings, and implications, engaging readers and encouraging further exploration of the full thesis.

The abstract is critically important as it is often the sole basis upon which academics decide whether to read the full thesis or accept an invitation to examine it. Thesis abstracts are also reproduced in specialised academic publications and databases, making them a key tool for disseminating your research to the broader scholarly community.

Certification or Declaration (Required)

The statement is used to indicate that the work contained in the thesis is the work of the candidate, that the

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work has not been previously submitted for an award, and that, to the best of the candidate's knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement and reference is made in the thesis to that work. The HDR candidate's typed name and date is placed beneath the statement, candidates may choose to insert a signature however a signature is not required as a typed name will suffice.

Acknowledgement of Country (Optional)

The University of New England approved Acknowledgement of Country can be found within the UNE Thesis Template.

Acknowledgements (Optional)

Candidates may acknowledge assistance received during the research project and thesis preparation. This includes academic and personal support. Acknowledgements should typically not exceed one page.

Table of Contents (Optional)

The purpose of a 'Table of Contents' is to provide a clear and comprehensive index to the material presented.

Section B – Main Text

The main text will usually be divided into chapters. Typical chapter headings are listed below as a guide and please follow discipline/degree norms and seek clarification from your principal supervisor.

Chapter 1: Introduction (Compulsory)

The Introduction chapter must clearly articulate the aims and focus of the research, identify its significance, and establish the conceptual framework that links the subsequent publications or chapters. This chapter should guide readers through the logical sequence and interconnections of the works that follow.

Chapter 2: Methodology (If applicable)

Chapter 3: Results (If applicable)

Chapter 4 Discussion of results (If applicable)

Chapters must flow logically and coherently from one to another. Candidates should clearly articulate the connections between chapters and demonstrate how each chapter contributes to the overall research narrative and argument.

Chapter 5: Conclusion (Compulsory)

The final chapter must provide integrative conclusions that synthesize all research findings and explicitly relate them back to the issues and objectives established in the Introduction. Where appropriate, this chapter should include recommendations for further research in the field.

Plans, Diagrams, Tables and Photographs within body

General Guidelines

Follow discipline and School conventions. Consult your supervisor and/or HDR Coordinator for clarification where needed. Small diagrams, tables, and photographs should be incorporated into the text and numbered sequentially.

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Numbering System

Use chapter-based numbering (e.g., Figure 2.1, Table 3.1). Related figures or tables may be grouped using sub-labels (e.g., Figure 2.2(a), 2.2(b)).

Stand-Alone Presentation

Each figure, table, or photograph must be comprehensible without reference to the main text. Provide informative captions with adequate definitions of characters, symbols, and abbreviations.

Caption Placement

Table captions are placed above the table. Figure (diagrams, photographs, illustrations) caption placed below the figure.

Formatting Considerations

- Avoid excessive reduction of diagrams that renders text or dimensions illegible
- Generally, limit to one figure per A4 page (only very simple diagrams should share a page)
- Ensure all materials, including large tables or plans, are formatted to A4 or clearly accommodate larger sizes where necessary
- Figures and tables may be placed on separate pages and interleaved with text before final pagination

Appendices

To maintain conciseness in the main body, place essential but voluminous material (e.g., experimental results, computer program listings, supplementary investigations) in appendices.

Appendix Organization

- Label appendices sequentially: Appendix A, B, C, etc.
- Order appendices according to their first reference in the main text
- Page numbering may continue from the main text or use separate pagination (e.g., A1, A2, A3) for convenience, particularly if appendices are prepared before the final text draft.

Section C – References, Footnotes, List of Figures, List of Tables & Appendices

Referencing Style

Referencing styles vary by Faculty, School, and discipline. Consult your supervisor and/or HDR Coordinator to determine the appropriate style for your thesis. For more information, refer to the [UNE Referencing webpage](#). Please ensure consistent application of your chosen referencing style throughout the thesis.

Footnotes

Footnotes use superscripted numerals in the text to reference citations at the bottom of each page. Format footnotes in a smaller font (typically 9-10 point) and position them at the page bottom, outside the footer region. A bibliography must accompany footnoted citations.

Supplementary Sections

- **List of Figures/Tables:** Comprehensive listings with captions and page numbers
- **Appendices:** Additional material supporting the main text

Important Note

Candidates submitting theses containing publications, appendices, or incorporated materials must ensure consistent A4 page sizing throughout the entire document.

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