



UNIVERSITY OF
AUCKLAND
Waipapa Taumata Rau
NEW ZEALAND

Guide to the Presentation and Submission of Research Components in Sub-Doctoral Qualifications



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This document is a general guide to the presentation and submission of research components and contains additional information about related policies and procedures. It should be read alongside the relevant regulations for the programme you are enrolled in and the General Regulations in the [University of Auckland Calendar](#). In the event of any conflict between the relevant regulations and this guide, the regulations outlined in the Calendar will prevail.

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1 Introduction

A thesis, research essay, research project, research portfolio or dissertation is the written report of a research study undertaken in fulfilment or partial fulfilment of a postgraduate qualification such as a masters degree, bachelors (honours) degree, or a postgraduate diploma. Throughout the rest of this Guide these may be referred to generally as 'research component'. If the word 'thesis' is used it refers only to requirements for theses.

A research component is an undertaking that allows you to explore areas or problems in detail and develop and utilise your thinking and analytical skills. Your research component should demonstrate a capacity for independent thinking, contribute to existing scholarship and must meet international standards for such scholarly research.

Before embarking on your research, you should consult the current University of Auckland Calendar regulations applicable for your degree, and the relevant Academic and General Statutes. These are available on the University of Auckland website: www.calendar.ac.nz.

Policies and Guidelines for sub-doctoral students are available on the University website:

[Postgraduate policies, guidelines and forms - The University of Auckland](#)

[Sub-doctoral research - The University of Auckland](#)

All research students should consult the Student Charter. The Student Charter represents a philosophical understanding between the University and its students, and is aimed at preventing problems before they occur. It provides information about student rights and responsibilities, and clarifies the responsibilities of the University: [Student Charter - The University of Auckland](#)

2 Where can I get help?

If you require assistance with the presentation and submission of your research component your supervisor(s) and department/faculty are your principal sources of support. Support is also available for other aspects of your research, as outlined below.

2.1 Student Hubs

Student Hubs staff are able to provide you with advice on any aspect of your studies and life at university: [Student Hubs - The University of Auckland](#)

2.2 Te Tumu Herenga | Libraries and Learning Services

Te Tumu Herenga | Libraries and Learning Services provides many online resources and workshops to help with your postgraduate study and research skills including literature searching, research writing and many other areas of postgraduate study.

Details of the postgraduate courses and resources provided by Libraries and Learning Services can be found at [Postgraduate resources | The University of Auckland - Libraries and Learning Services](#).

The English Language Enrichment (ELE) team can provide online and face-to-face advice for students who want assistance with academic English.

IT literacy is also an essential aspect of writing a research component. The University of Auckland provides a range of IT services to assist you with your course of study. Consult [Libraries and Learning Services - IT essentials](#) for further information.

2.3 Sub-Doctoral Research Coordinator

Faculty Sub-Doctoral Research Coordinators (or alternative role supporting the examination process) can also provide you with specialist advice and support, especially about the submission of your research component, or if needed they can refer you to other University service providers.

2.4 Graduate Adviser

The Graduate Adviser for your Department/School is another expert who may be able to give you advice about department or disciplinary requirements for the presentation of your research component. Should any difficulties arise at the completion phase that you cannot resolve with your supervisor, the Graduate Adviser is able to give advice and direction.

2.5 Your Supervisor

The responsibility for the submission of your research component is yours however, the decision as to when it is ready is crucial, and you should seek and heed guidance from your supervisor. The final stage of writing is demanding, and you are likely to need supervisory support and expertise as you prepare to submit.

3 Integrity in Research

3.1 Avoiding Plagiarism

Students are governed by the University's Student Academic Conduct Statute (2021), which defines 'academic misconduct', explains the procedures for investigating claims of academic misconduct, and outlines the penalties for students found guilty of academic misconduct. In any writing, unacknowledged copying or plagiarism is not acceptable.

The University's Academic Integrity Course provides information about academic integrity at university, avoiding academic dishonesty, acknowledging the work of others, using copyrighted material correctly and the consequences of academic dishonesty at the University of Auckland. Further information can be found at: [Academic integrity and copyright - The University of Auckland](#).

3.2 Using copyright material other than your own

While you are permitted under the Copyright Act 1994 to copy another person's copyright work (third party copyright) and include this copy in a live, printed or digital format with your research component for the purposes of examination, this exception does not apply if you 'publish' or 'communicate' your writing to the public by way of the internet or live exhibition/performance.

When your thesis is deposited as a digital copy into ResearchSpace it becomes a "commercial publication"¹ under section 11 of the Copyright Act because it has been posted on the internet and made "available to the public".

Guidelines regarding Third Party copyright are available to ensure you use another person's work appropriately: [Third Party Copyright Guidelines](#)

3.3 Collaboration

If you are intending to include a video or a sound recording of a performance in your research component there may be a number of different authors each of whom owns copyright in different aspects of the performance and the recording.

Copyright law protects not only the work of the traditional authors of literary, musical or artistic works, but authors such as:

- in the case of computer generated literary, dramatic, musical, or artistic works, the person who undertakes the necessary arrangements for the creation of the work;
- in the case of a sound or video recording, the person who undertakes the necessary arrangements for the making of the recording and the person who undertakes the editing or the compiling of recordings into a final output;
- in the case of a "communication work" (communication works are a "transmission of sounds, visual images, or other information" made available on the internet or a broadcast or cable programme), the person who makes the communication work;

¹"Commercial publication" in relation to a literary, dramatic, musical or artistic work, means the publication of the work consisting of...(b) Making the work available to the public by means of an electronic retrieval system;...(section 11)

- performers, whether they be actors, musicians, dancers or others who have deliberately contributed through their presence within the performance/exhibition or recording;
- costume and set designers, choreographers, dramaturgs, or others who have deliberately contributed concepts and conceptual materials to the performance/exhibition or recording.

If your thesis includes a film or a sound recording of a performance, you will need to have permission from each of the “authors” before the thesis is posted in ResearchSpace.

Each of the “authors” will also retain copyright in their own performance and that copyright will be infringed by a person who, without the author’s consent, makes a recording of the whole or any substantial part of a performance and communicates that recording to the public. Posting your recording of a performance in ResearchSpace without the author’s consent will be a breach of copyright. Specific contributions by individuals should be recorded in the Co-Production Form.

3.4 Joint ownership

A work of joint authorship will arise if you have collaborated with one or more persons to jointly create a work. For it to be a work of joint authorship, the contribution of each author is not distinct from the other authors.

If the work is a work of joint authorship you will own the copyright in that work jointly with that person or persons. This means you cannot copy or publish that work without the written permission of your co-author(s). Specific contributions by individuals should be recorded in the Co-Authorship Form.

3.5 Third party editing

Many postgraduate students have their research component reviewed by third parties, including professional editors. Such third parties must make no contribution to the intellectual content of the writing, or be involved in rewriting text. Their role is confined to advice on editorial changes, as specified in the [Third Party Editing and Proofreading of Theses and Dissertations Guidelines](#).

It is the student’s duty to convey the policy and guidelines to third parties (including any professional editor) engaged in checking the final version of the research component. Students must acknowledge in their research component any contribution by a third party, in accordance with this document.

4 Style and Format

The following are basic recommendations for setting up the text of your research component however you must consult your own department guidelines because these may vary.

4.1 Backing up your work

The importance of backing up your work cannot be over-emphasised. Back up your computer files regularly, name the different versions of your documents appropriately, and keep these copies in a separate safe location. It is also a good idea to retain copies of collected data, notes, drafts and any other material that might be necessary to reconstruct your research component in the event that something goes wrong.

4.2 Proofreading

Careful proofreading for grammar, punctuation, spelling and general consistency is essential. Do not rely on the spellchecker in your programme to pick up errors. It is also a good idea to have someone else read through your work to pick up any mistakes that you may have overlooked (see section 3.5 on third party editing). A high standard of presentation is very important, so allow plenty of time for this before you submit your work.

4.3 Language

Applications to submit a research component in a language other than English or Māori must be made at the initial stage of enrolment, through the supervisor to the Associate Dean (Postgraduate Research) of the relevant faculty.

All applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Generally, an application will be granted only where the faculty is satisfied that the field of study and topic make this essential, and that suitable examiners will be available for the examination. It is unlikely that permission would be granted merely on the grounds that a student's first language is not English.

4.4 Word length

One of the skills of completing a research component is writing within the word length. This is one of the factors that examiners consider as they mark your work. Examiners are reluctant to examine theses that are too lengthy and are within their rights to refuse to examine those pages that exceed an agreed word limit. Word lengths generally include appendices, footnotes and the reference list.

The total length of a 120 point masters thesis is usually around 35,000–40,000 words including an abstract of 350 words. However, it is important to check with your supervisor, department Graduate Adviser or Sub-Doctoral Research Coordinator (or alternative role supporting the examination process) for individual department requirements, which may vary.

Department guidelines on the length of dissertations, research essays, projects or portfolios also vary and it is essential that you consult your supervisor, department Graduate Adviser or Sub-Doctoral Research Coordinator (or alternative role supporting the examination process). As a general guide, a 30 point research component is around 10,000–12,000 words, and 60 points around 15,000–20,000 words in length.

4.5 Formatting

Much of the formatting required for your research component is department specific but it is generally accepted that the page size should be A4 and with a True Type font (such as Arial or Times New Roman) that is clear and easy to read. Both first line indent or flush left aligned first line are both acceptable. Line spacing should be no less than 1½ line space and no more than double line space, with the exception of longer quotations, footnotes, material in tables/figures and the bibliography/list of references (which may be single line spaced).

In-text quotations of three lines or longer should appear as separate paragraphs, indented 10mm from the left-hand margin throughout the passage with quote-marks omitted.

Page numbers should be located in a consistent position throughout the research component (either bottom right-hand corner or centre is recommended)

For those who are using footnotes, Arabic numerals are used consecutively throughout a chapter, and should normally appear at the bottom of the relevant page, keyed to the same number following the word or phrase in the text to which it refers. If a footnote is too long for the relevant page, it may be continued on the following page preceding the footnotes for that page. If the number of footnotes is very large, numbers may be restarted with each chapter.

The first reference to a work in a footnote should be given in full, but subsequent references may be abbreviated using "ibid.", "op.cit." and so on, as appropriate. However, this is dependent on the referencing style used and department requirements.

4.6 Elements of a research component

The recommended order is as follows:

Elements	Pagination
a. Title page	<i>Counted but not numbered</i>
b. Abstract	<i>Numbered in Roman numerals</i>
c. Dedication (<i>optional</i>)	
d. Preface and/or acknowledgements	
e. Table of contents	
f. Lists of tables, figures, etc (<i>optional</i>)	
g. Glossary (<i>optional</i>)	<i>Numbered in Arabic numerals starting at 1</i>
h. Main text of the research component	
i. Appendices (<i>optional</i>)	
j. Bibliography/List of references	

a Title page

Your title should be centred in the top third of the title page, and should describe the content of your research component accurately and precisely. Your full name should be centred in the middle of the title page. Information regarding the degree, subject, university, and date is centred in the lower third of the page.

The preferred form of wording for the examination copy is "A [name of research component] submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the [name of your degree or diploma] in [subject area], the University of Auckland, [year of completion]. This [name of research component] is for examination purposes only and is confidential to the examination process".

It is not usual to use the logo of the University on the title page of your research component, as the research component represents your own views which may not be the views of the University. For the same reason you do not name your supervisors or advisers on the title page of your research component.

b Abstract

An abstract is obligatory for a thesis and should follow the title page. The abstract should be a succinct summary (no more than 350 words) of the aim, methods, findings and conclusions of your research. Your department may have specific guidelines on writing an abstract.

c Dedication

This is optional.

d Preface and/or acknowledgments

The preface may set out briefly the scope and purpose of the study, though the wording of the abstract may make this redundant. This section may include acknowledgments. However, if it is only acknowledgments, head the section as "Acknowledgments". You should acknowledge people or institutions that have contributed to the content of your research component. You must acknowledge third party editors if you engage them in accordance with the Third Party Editing and Proofreading of Theses and Dissertations Guidelines:

www.auckland.ac.nz/en/about-us/about-the-university/policy-hub/research-innovation/conduct/third-party-editing-proofreading-theses-dissertations-guidelines.html

e Table of contents

This should list chapter titles, normally in upper case, preceded by their numbers in Roman or Arabic numerals; any subheadings should be in lower case except as required for initial letters. It is recommended that no more than four levels of subheadings are included in the Table of Contents (chapter names are level 1 headings, subheadings of a chapter are level 2 headings, subheadings of subheadings are level 3, etc). Subsections of chapters may be numbered with Arabic numerals, or with letters in either upper or lower case.

If a research component consists of more than one volume, the contents of the whole research component should be shown in the first volume, and the contents of subsequent volumes in separate tables of contents in the relevant volumes.

f Lists of tables, figures, etc

This is optional. Lists of tables, figures, photographs, maps and illustrations should be numbered in Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc). In each entry, the first letter of the first and all other significant words is capitalised.

g Glossary

This is optional. A glossary defines or explains specialised terms, symbols and abbreviations.

Any abbreviations or glossary/symbols used should be separately listed in this section, the abbreviated form starting from the left-hand margin, with the full form to its right, e.g.

AJHR *Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives*

ATL *Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington*

NZPD *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates*

Any abbreviations used should conform to standards appropriate to the field or discipline of the research component; check with your supervisor or a librarian for the appropriate abbreviations in your discipline. Unless a particular title or name is cited repeatedly, it is preferable to use the full form rather than an abbreviation.

h Main text of research component

The main text must be divided into a logical scheme that is followed consistently throughout the work. Chapters with subsections are the most common form of division. Any logical system of subdivision within chapters or sections appropriate to the field or discipline may be used, but the scheme must be consistent throughout the writing.

i Appendices

This is an optional section for any additional material that does not fit conveniently or appropriately in the body of the text. It is a good idea to include any confidential information required for the research component into appendices where possible. Each appendix should be labelled in sequence, either with capital letters or with numerals.

j Bibliography/list of references

The bibliography/list of references concludes the research component. It is not acceptable for each chapter to carry its own bibliography/list of references.

It is important that citations be consistent in style, though the system chosen will depend on your subject field and department requirements. Information on reference styles used at the University of Auckland can be found on [Referen@ite](#), an academic referencing resource.

Assistance with referencing and reference management software can be found in the [Learning Essentials resources](#).

While a bibliography may list unpublished material separately from published material, in some disciplines it may be a single alphabetical list. It is often used to include not only sources cited in the research component itself, but all important/relevant works consulted during the research, and which the author thinks that readers might wish to go on to consult. If it is likely to prove more helpful, such a bibliography may be divided into sections according to the type of material; primary sources preceding secondary, monographs preceding periodical articles, works by a particular author (if the subject of the research component) followed by works about that author, and finally, studies relating to the topic in general. A list of references comprises a straight list of material cited in the text, presented in accordance with the applicable referencing system.

5 Submission

It is highly desirable that your supervisor(s) have seen the final copy of your research component prior to submission and agree that you are ready to submit your work. Remember to allow sufficient time for your supervisor(s) to review your research component before your planned submission date.

5.1 Deadlines for submission of the research component

Please refer to the University of Auckland Calendar for information regarding applicable submission dates.

5.2 Submitting a masters thesis

Masters students' should contact their supervisor, department/school Graduate Adviser or Sub-Doctoral Research Coordinator (or alternative role supporting the examination process) for faculty specific submission information. The digital thesis must be formatted as specified in the [Guidelines for Formatting a Digital Thesis at the University of Auckland](#).

At the end of the examination, you will complete any required minor corrections to the thesis (not applicable to research portfolios) to the satisfaction of your supervisor. Substantive revision of the thesis is not permitted. You must then deposit a digital copy of the final thesis (not applicable to research portfolios) to [ResearchSpace](#).

Once a copy of the email from ResearchSpace confirming that your digital copy has been deposited has been provided to your Sub-Doctoral Research Coordinator (or alternative role supporting the examination process) your grade will be released to you. Completion of corrections (and submission of your digital thesis to the University's digital repository) is required in order to be eligible to graduate, but does not affect the grade already allocated to the thesis.

5.3 ResearchSpace

All masters thesis students are required to submit a digital copy of their thesis into the University Research Repository known as 'ResearchSpace' using the [online thesis deposit form](#).

ResearchSpace is an institutional repository for theses, journal articles and research reports authored by University of Auckland staff and postgraduate students that is managed by the Library. Masters theses are required to be deposited here and can be accessed via a link from the record in the catalogue, are indexed worldwide by search engines such as Google and are available directly via a permanent URL.

Providing a digital copy of your thesis means that you have created a fully searchable and potentially media-rich digital document. Your research receives international exposure which may be beneficial for your future career.

Dissertations, research portfolios, essays or projects are not deposited with the University's digital repository.

5.4 Submitting a dissertation or a research portfolio, essay or project

Requirements for dissertations, research portfolios, essays or projects are specified by individual departments/schools. Your research component should be submitted to your faculty Sub-Doctoral Research Coordinator (or alternative role supporting the examination process).

Dissertations, research portfolios, essays or projects are not deposited in the University digital repository.

5.5 Failed thesis

Where the outcome of the examination is to award a thesis a fail grade the thesis will not be held in the University's digital repository.

In addition, where a thesis has passed but all requirements for the degree have not been met, the thesis is not deposited in the University's digital repository.

5.6 Author's rights

a **Reproduction**

As the author of your thesis, you have a right to impose conditions restricting the reproduction of your work using the digital thesis consent form that is completed when submitting the digital copy to ResearchSpace. Unless you specify otherwise, the University Librarian has the right to make and supply copies in terms of section 56 of the Copyright Act 1994.

b **Copyright**

In general, matters of copyright are governed by the provisions of the Copyright Act 1994. Copyright of your thesis normally belongs to you, as the author, though in some circumstances this may be varied. Refer to the [Intellectual Property Created by Staff and Students Policy](#).

Third party copyright: If you have received permission to use third party copyright material (i.e., copyright material other than your own) you will need to have included copies of permissions when you deposit your digital copy.

c **Restrictions on access (embargoes)**

A thesis will normally be available for public consultation unless there are compelling reasons for restricting access to it. A period of embargo may apply to theses that contain material that is confidential or sensitive but will normally be limited to a maximum of 2 years. Applications for embargoes are to be made through the supervisor(s) and Associate Dean (Postgraduate Research) to the Pro Vice Chancellor (Education) using the [Sub-Doctoral Thesis Embargo Form](#).

6 Binding

While a hard copy of your research component is not required, you may wish to bind one for your own use. The following are recommendations only for binding and you should contact the binder that you wish to use for their advice.

6.1 Paper

This should be of good quality, and of a suitable texture and weight for printing. Standard 80gsm A4 printing/photocopying paper is recommended. It is essential that all the contents of your research component (text, photographs, maps, charts, diagrams, etc) fit within an A4 frame. Larger material may be folded or contained in folders.

6.2 Images

Illustrations and diagrams should be produced on paper of a similar size and quality to the main text. When this is also not possible, they should be mounted on a heavier grade of paper than is used for the text to avoid wrinkling. If you are using a diagram, chart, graphic or image from another publication, please refer to section 3.2 on third party copyright.

6.3 Folded Maps or Charts

These should be folded in one direction only, concertina fashion, so that they conform to the accepted page size. The fold should be no closer than 13mm to the edge of the typed page, since all edges are cut during the binding process (it is essential to point out all folded material to the binder). Special material of this type may also be included either as appendices, or in folders contained within the volume.

6.4 General Binding Requirements

A complete set of pages for all copies, with the pages in correct order, must be supplied to a binder. The maximum size for binding as one volume is 7cm or approximately 600 sheets.

For durability, lumbecking is preferred in which the pages are bound with an adhesive, and not stapled. Binding margins of 19mm on the left-hand side are generally sufficient for lumbecked work, but this may vary with the thickness of the research component and the type of binding used. The top, bottom and right-side margins should be at least 15mm.

Many students choose to include the title and authors name on the front of the research component. If the title needs to be abbreviated on the spine, give the binder instructions as to the exact wording required.

7 Useful Websites

The University of Auckland	www.auckland.ac.nz
University Calendar	www.calendar.auckland.ac.nz
Postgraduate Skills Programme	www.library.auckland.ac.nz/study-skills/postgraduate
IT Services and Resources	www.library.auckland.ac.nz/services/it-essentials This site provides information and access to the range of student information technology services and support at the University.
Te Tumu Herenga Libraries and Learning Services	www.library.auckland.ac.nz The Library homepage provides access to the University Library's electronic resources including Library Search, databases, and information about services, including resources to help develop your academic skills https://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/study-skills .
Referen©ite	www.cite.auckland.ac.nz Referen©ite is an academic referencing resource which guides students through the reference styles used at the University of Auckland.
Web Dropoff Box	https://webdropoff.auckland.ac.nz/ The Web DropOff Box allows large files (up to 2GB) that can't be emailed to be checked for malware and shared. This service is used in some faculties for students to submit their research components.
ResearchSpace	https://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/ Home page for ResearchSpace, the digital repository or archive for University of Auckland digital theses and research materials.

8 Research Component Submission Checklists

Checklist for Students

Before Submission

- Have you received your supervisor's feedback on a final draft?
- Have you included an abstract of not more than 350 words?
- Is the word length of your research component within the allowable limit?
- Have you proofread your research component carefully for spelling and typographical errors?
- Have you checked that the presentation of your research component meets department or University style and format guidelines?
- Is your referencing system appropriate for your discipline?
- Are the page numbers in sequence?
- Have you backed up the final version of your research component?
- Have you submitted your research component to your faculty for examination?

Masters Thesis Examination

- Have you submitted any minor corrections to your supervisor for review?
- Have you deposited your final digital copy in ResearchSpace within a month of being awarded a passing grade?
- Have you sent your ResearchSpace deposit receipt to Sub-Doctoral Research Coordinator (or alternative role supporting the examination process)?

Checklist for Supervisors/Graduate Advisers/Academic Heads

Before Submission

- Advise the student on deadlines for submission or make arrangements for an extension, if appropriate.
- Advise the student on the correct referencing/bibliography style and format conforming to University guidelines.
- Ask if the student has performed all necessary checks, including word length, before submitting.

Nomination of Examiners

- Ensure that the appointment of examiners meets the University guidelines. Please refer to the documents Postgraduate Examiner Appointment Procedures and Postgraduate Examiner Conflict of Interest Guidelines.
- Organise the nomination of the examiners well in advance of the submission deadline.
- Submit part A of the AS512R form at least one before the submission deadline

Masters Thesis Examination

- Ensure the grades are submitted on an AS-512R form, via the Associate Dean (Postgraduate Research), once the research component has been marked.

Digital Deposit

- Upon successful completion of a masters thesis examination, the Sub-Doctoral Research Coordinator (or alternative role supporting the examination process) must check that a digital copy has been deposited in ResearchSpace.