



HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH (HDR) THESIS BY COMPILATION GUIDELINES

Date first approved: 11 September 2017	Date of effect: 11 September 2017	Date last amended: (refer to Version Control Table) 11 September 2017	Date of Next Review: 11 September 2022
First Approved by:	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and International)		
Custodian title & e-mail address:	Manager, Graduate Research School graduate-research-school@uow.edu.au		
Author:	Professor Stephen Ralph, Deputy Chair, Thesis Examination Committee		
Responsible Division & Unit:	Research and Innovation Division, Graduate Research School		
Supporting documents, procedures & forms:	Authorship Policy Higher Degree Research (HDR) Award Rules Higher Degree Research (HDR) Supervision and Resources Policy Higher Degree Research (HDR) Thesis Preparation, Submission and Examination Policy		
Relevant Legislation & External Documents:			
Audience:	Public		

Submit your feedback on this policy document using the [Policy Feedback Facility](#).



Contents

1	Purpose.....	3
2	Scope.....	3
3	Definitions.....	3
4	Guidelines	3
5	Preliminary Approval.....	3
6	Authorship.....	4
7	Number and status of papers	4
8	Structure of the thesis.....	4
9	Format	5
10	Copyright.....	6
11	Examination	6
12	Corrections to thesis.....	6
13	HDR Award Rules	6
14	Version Control and Change History.....	7
	Appendix A. Format of Thesis by compilation	8



1 Purpose

1. There is an increasing expectation in many disciplines that HDR students should publish journal articles during and shortly after their degrees.
2. A HDR thesis by compilation allows a student to include in their thesis publishable or published journal articles and book chapters.
3. These guidelines provide clear direction on how to prepare and submit a thesis by compilation.
4. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Higher Degree Research Thesis Preparation, Submission and Examination Policy.

2 Scope

1. These guidelines apply to all theses which are prepared and formatted as a thesis by compilation.
2. As disciplines vary extensively, the guidelines are not prescriptive in details such as number of papers required.
3. Overall, the quantity and quality of the material presented for examination needs to equate to that which would otherwise be presented in the traditional thesis format in the relevant discipline.
4. Requests for revisions from examiners must be treated in the same manner as revisions requested for a thesis prepared in a traditional format.

3 Definitions

Word/Term	Definition (with examples if required)
HDR student	Higher degree research student
HPS	Head of Postgraduate Studies
TEC	Thesis Examination Committee

4 Guidelines

1. All papers included in the thesis by compilation must have been researched, compiled and written during the course of the candidature.
2. A thesis by compilation may include video recordings, film or other works of visual or sonic arts, computer software, digital material or other non-written material for which approval has been given for submission in alternative format.

5 Preliminary Approval

1. The option to submit a thesis by compilation will require the preliminary approval and support of the supervisors and HPS well in advance of the submission.
2. Supervisors should discuss the option of a thesis by compilation early in the student's candidature and offer practical guidance about whether or not this option will be appropriate. Final approval to submit a thesis by compilation will take into account a range of factors including:



- a. the expected number of peer-reviewed publications in press/published as of the time of thesis submission;
 - b. whether or not the HDR candidate is first author on most/all of the published material; and
 - c. publication timeframes in the discipline.
3. Further details concerning the authorship of material to be included in a thesis by compilation, as well as the number and status of published articles, is provided below.
 4. The approval process ensures that the student has received discipline-specific guidance on the appropriate quantity and quality of papers for submission as a thesis, and is made aware that requests for revisions of the thesis requested by examiners will be treated the same way as for a thesis prepared in a traditional format.

6 Authorship

1. Students who are undertaking a thesis by compilation should seek advice before signing publisher's agreements to ensure each agreement does not preclude the inclusion or modification of published work in their thesis, or changes if required by a thesis examiner and the Thesis Examination Committee.
2. UOW recognises that authorship order varies across disciplines and publishers, however unless other conventions or conditions apply, a UOW HDR student should always be first author in work arising from his/her thesis.
3. Whether or not the candidate is sole or first author of all, some or any of the papers that form the basis of a thesis by compilation will vary by discipline, and schools and supervisors and/or the HPS should provide advice on what is most appropriate.
4. Where the candidate is not the sole author of a paper, they must demonstrate that they have made significant contributions to the paper, as per clause 8.7 below.

7 Number and status of papers

1. The thesis will consist of a number of chapters each based on papers published in, accepted by, under review at, or in preparation for, high-quality, peer-reviewed journals.
2. In some disciplines the expectation will be that the majority of such chapters will be based on journal articles that are already fully published or have received final acceptance for publication.
3. It is important to note that there can be significant differences in expectations between different discipline areas. For example, in mathematics a single long monograph may be acceptable; in other disciplines the expectation might be 4–5 peer-reviewed papers.
4. All chapters will be examined in the same fashion regardless of whether or not they are based on published journal articles.
5. Schools and supervisors should provide sound disciplinary advice on appropriate numbers of publications and publication status.

8 Structure of the thesis

1. A number of distinct papers are expected, and while some overlap between related papers is acceptable, they should nevertheless be substantially different in focus or content.



2. The thesis must present each chapter in a logical and coherent way, and may require the addition of linking text to establish the relationship between one chapter and the next. This could, for example, be achieved by the inclusion of a foreword to each chapter.
3. An extended context statement demonstrating the relationship between all aspects of the research is also required as part of the thesis. This will include an introduction to the field of study and the hypothesis or research questions, how these are addressed through the ensuing chapters, and a general account of the theory and methodological components of the research where these components may be distributed across separate papers/chapters.
4. The context statement should be in the order of 5,000 to 10,000 words in length. The outcomes of the project and the author's conclusions will either be summarised in the context statement, or covered in a concluding chapter.
5. Students should include a literature review that clearly details the research question, and a concluding general discussion that integrates the work and places it into the context of the research question posed in the literature review. The thesis may also include relevant appendices containing raw data, programs, questionnaires and other material that would normally appear in a standard PhD thesis.
6. A thesis by compilation must include a signed declaration that specifies:
 - Title, authorship and publication outlet of each paper.
 - The current status of each paper (in press, accepted, under review, in preparation).
 - The extent of the contribution of the candidate to the research and the authorship of each paper.
7. For each paper where the candidate is not the sole author, the collaborating authors must also sign the declaration.

9 Format

1. The entire thesis, including the published papers, must be formatted in an acceptable PhD thesis style. If a printed copy is requested by the examiner/s, the papers and supplementary material should be on A4 paper (or similar), bound or formatted together in a single volume.
2. The thesis formatting should be uniform and have an overall professional appearance. The publications should all be formatted using the same style, including the same font, font size and referencing format. In addition the published materials should be embedded as chapters within the thesis, to help provide a coherent format to the thesis.
3. It is often necessary to include additional material, as journal publications are often abbreviated and important data or methods are left out or abbreviated in their preparation. The candidate may think it appropriate to include additional material to augment the publications.
4. The thesis must have an integrated conceptual framework. The overall aim is to provide the examiner with a full and coherent story of the research program without unnecessary repetition. The thesis should not appear disjointed and the argument should flow logically throughout the thesis. To achieve this, other supporting commentary may be needed, such as a foreword or summary statement at the beginning of each chapter/publication to establish the link to previous chapters and explain how it relates to the overall thesis argument.
5. The chapters could contain internal references to each other to avoid repetition.



UNIVERSITY
OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA

6. The order of chapters should be chosen carefully. Publications should be presented in a sequential order that is logical to the progression of the thesis argument, and not necessarily in the order in which the work was undertaken or published.
7. The thesis chapter in some cases could be an expanded version of the publication. Unnecessary dissection of data sets should be avoided so that the analysis as a whole is still apparent. While some studies will naturally form a series of discrete experiments, other studies (particularly qualitative research) often consist of one large dataset that needs to be analysed as a whole. In this case, publications from the thesis may consist of a critique of methodology and explanation of innovative practices, an empirical/experimental paper, and a critical review or discussion paper.

Refer Appendix A for suggested format.

10 Copyright

1. Students are expected to seek permission from journals to include publications in their thesis for the purpose of examination. In many instances the information pages for journals provide details about the conditions under which published material may be included in a thesis.
2. The final thesis is published on the UOW Digital Repository, Research Online. Details of the retention of theses by UOW can be found under Section 11 of the HDR Thesis Preparation, Submission and Examination Policy.

11 Examination

1. Following submission of the thesis the standard UOW examination described in the HDR Thesis Preparation, Submission and Examination Policy will apply.
2. The same “Information for Examiners” guidelines are used for all examinations, whether the thesis includes publications or not.

12 Corrections to thesis

1. Students must complete all of the examiners’ requested corrections as determined by the Thesis Examination Committee (TEC), and noted in the applicable TEC resolution, to the actual thesis.
2. A HDR thesis is held to a higher examination standard than most individual journal manuscripts. Where an examiner requests revisions to chapters based on accepted or published journal articles in the thesis, it is mandatory that those revisions that have been approved by the TEC are made in the body of the thesis, and not contained in an Erratum.

13 HDR Award Rules

1. A Candidate undertaking a thesis by compilation shall conform to the University Rules regarding Higher Degree Research degrees.



14 Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1	11 September 2017	Professor Judy Raper, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and International)	First Version.
2	1 January 2020 (Approved 9 June 2020)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation)	Administrative amendments to reflect the rescission of General Course Rules replaced by Coursework Rules and Higher Degree Research (HDR) Award Rules.



Appendix A. Format of Thesis by compilation

Candidates are required to follow the general presentation guidelines outlined in the Higher Degree Research Thesis Preparation, Submission and Examination Policy.

The Format of a Thesis by Compilation should be as follows:

1 Title Page

2 Abstract of no more than 500 words.

3 Acknowledgements by the Candidate of help given or work carried out by any other person or organisation who is not listed as a co-author on publications that form the basis of thesis chapters.

4 Statement indicating what style of thesis has been used.

Common concerns and criticisms of examiners of compilation style theses include that they were uncertain whether or not chapters were based on published journal articles, a high level of repetition between chapters, particularly of introductory material and experimental details, and a lack of deeper analysis of the overall body of work beyond that apparent from reading the discussion/conclusions sections of a single chapter. In view of these issues, the candidate must provide a statement indicating that the thesis has been prepared in journal article compilation style format. The candidate can also indicate why they believe a journal article compilation style format was appropriate for their thesis. Such a statement does not, however, mitigate against criticism from examiners concerning the issues outlined above, and does not prevent a student from having to make corrections to chapters that are based on published material.

5 List of publications included as part of the thesis.

For work that has already been published or accepted for publication at the time of submission, list the full bibliographic citations in the order they appear in the thesis. For publications with copyright issues, include a statement that permission regarding copyright has been obtained from the publishers where necessary.

6 Statement of Contribution of Others

The purpose of this statement is to summarise and clearly identify the nature and extent of the intellectual input by the candidate and any co-authors for all chapters based on journal articles or book chapters. The statement must be signed by the candidate, supervisor(s) and HPS and included with the nomination of examiners form at the time of submission and must be included as an appendix in the thesis.

7 Table of Contents



8 Critical overview

The candidate is required to present an academic explanation of the submitted work and/or a description of the linkages between the works, thus presenting the thesis as a coherent whole. Candidates can present this overview as a single chapter at the beginning of the thesis (called the “Critical Review”), or as one chapter at the beginning of the thesis (called the “General Introduction”) plus a chapter at the end of the thesis (called the “General Discussion”).

9 Literature Review

10 Publications/thesis chapters. The publications should usually all be formatted the same and embedded as chapters within the thesis. The full bibliographic citation of the publication should be stated on the first page, with a Summary Statement (see section 4.6) if required.

11 General Conclusion

This section should synthesise the key findings of the thesis and draw the main conclusions, as per a traditional thesis. It may also include sections such as Recommendations or Further Research.

12 Appendices

These may include statements from co-authors, permission letters regarding copyright and evidence demonstrating some form of peer review of the publications. If detailed descriptions of methods and additional data are not provided within the publications, they should be included as an appendix to the thesis. PDF proofs of published work should also be provided.

13 Bibliography

All references must be provided at the end of the thesis or, more likely for a thesis in journal article compilation format, at the end of every chapter.