

University of Wollongong

School of Medicine

Honours Thesis preparation guide

The thesis MUST be a true representation of work produced and written by the student. A recommended structure for the thesis is provided in Appendix A. While Supervisors are free to request their Honours students present the thesis according to the Supervisor's stylistic preferences, the overall criteria for success is that the thesis must represent a well-written document that is both concise and informative.

The thesis is to be prepared in accordance with the following specifications:

- the text of the document (in English) must be in double-spaced typescript with the exception of tables, figures and captions which may be prepared in single-spaced typescript;
- Thesis length is usually no more than 15,000 words
- the print size of the text in the document will be 12 point with the exception of footnotes that may be 10 point font where appropriate;
- the document is to be printed on standard A4 size (297 x 210 mm) white opaque paper;
- the text must be printed single-sided pages numbered sequentially using Roman numerals for the initial sections and Arabic numerals starting from the first page of the Introduction;
- the margins on each sheet will be 40 mm on the left-hand side, 20 mm on the right hand side, 30 mm at the top and 20 mm at the bottom;
- the thesis will be "soft" bound (spiral binding);
- tables and figures must be incorporated into the text and they should be easy to understand without reference to the text and must include an appropriate caption (captions for tables are inserted above the table; captions for figures are inserted below the figure); and

Examiners will indicate if they would prefer a thesis that is a pdf document or a soft spiral bound document. The Honours coordinator will advise you and you must provide two copies that comply with examiner's request. One soft spiral bound copy is required for the Honours Coordinator.

The thesis should be divided into chapters or sections (each of which start on a separate page)

See Guidelines that follow

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING AN HONOURS THESIS

NOTE: These are guidelines ONLY. If you and your Supervisor decide on a format substantially different to that provided in the following pages, please inform the Honours Coordinator so that your Examiners can be advised.

1. General Formatting Guidelines

Formatting guidelines are provided on page 13. However, please note the following:

- Page numbers should be clearly labelled throughout the thesis in ***Roman numerals for the initial sections*** and ***Arabic numerals starting from the first page of Introduction***.
- Tables and figures must be incorporated into the text. They should be easy to understand without reference to the text and must include an appropriate caption. Table captions are inserted above the table, whereas captions to figures should be placed below the figure.

2. Title Page to List of Tables/Abbreviations

Include the following at the front of your thesis:

- **Title Page:** Include the full title of the thesis, the award for which the thesis is submitted (e.g. Bachelor of Science (Honours)), the full name and academic qualifications of the student, the name of the academic unit, the Supervisor(s) and the year of submission. An example title page is provided in below.
- **Declaration:** A signed statement declaring that the work contained in the thesis is the work of the student and the work has not been submitted for a degree at any other university or institution. An example declaration is provided below.
- **Acknowledgments:** If required, acknowledge any academic, technical, secretarial, administrative, financial, or personal (e.g. family) assistance received within one page.
- **Table of Contents:** Provide a comprehensive index to the material presented (i.e. chapter (or section) headings; headings and sub-headings within chapters; references or bibliography; list of figures, tables, or illustrations; appendices) with page numbers.
- **List of Tables, Figures, Notations:** Tables, figures and notations should be numbered, have an explanatory caption and be referred to within the text. Separate lists for tables, figures and notations with page numbers should be included after the table of contents.
- **List of Special Names or Abbreviations:** A list of any foreign language terms (and definitions) used in the thesis. A list of abbreviations and full name.

3. Abstract

Insert the abstract prepared for the final seminar without the preliminary information of title, student name, student number, Supervisor(s), etc. Simply have the title of "Abstract". The abstract may be single spaced and should be presented only on one page.

4. Chapters of the Thesis

Use active voice whenever possible. For example: "Attempts were made to modify the method" is preferable to "Modifications were attempted to be made to the method". Use past tense when describing and discussing the experimental work on which the thesis is based. Use present tense for reference to existing knowledge or prevailing concepts and for stating conclusions from the experimental work. Clearly differentiate previous knowledge and new contributions. The main text will usually be divided into chapters. Each chapter should have a title and start on a separate page.

The thesis should be divided into *chapters or sections* with the headings similar to those below:

- Chapter 1: Introduction and Review of Relevant Literature (can differ from proposal)
- Chapter 2: Materials and Methods (can differ from proposal)
- Chapter 3: Results
- Chapter 4: Discussion
- Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations
- References
- Appendices (if appropriate)

Introduction and Short Review of the Literature

This chapter should form the foundation of the topic and make the object of the research clear, in terms understandable to the non-specialist, by describing the published work relevant to the thesis. Clearly state the purpose of the thesis as well as the hypothesis(es) being tested. Summarise the rationale for the study or observation, giving only pertinent references and a concise review of the subject based on, but not as extensive as, the literature review contained within the proposal document.

Materials & Methods

Describe clearly your selection of the observational or experimental subjects (patients or experimental animals, including controls). Identify the methods, apparatus (manufacturer's name and location in parentheses), and procedures in sufficient detail to allow other workers to reproduce the results (e.g. centrifugation give g-force, duration, and temperature). Do not use trademark names (e.g. Chow) as generic terms. Give references to established methods, including statistical methods; provide references and brief descriptions of methods that have been published but are not well known; and describe new or substantially modified methods, giving reasons for using them and evaluating their limitations. Identify precisely all drugs and chemicals used, including generic names, dosages, and routes of administration. If trade names are used, give manufacturer's name and location.

Ethics. When reporting experiments on human subjects or animals, indicate that the procedures followed were in accordance with the ethical standards of the responsible institutional committee on human or animal experimentation. Do not use patients' names, initials, or hospital numbers.

Statistics. Describe statistical methods with enough detail to enable a reader with access to the original data to verify the reported results. When possible, quantify findings and present them with appropriate indicators of measurement error or uncertainty (such as CI, SD, or SEM). Discuss eligibility of experimental subjects. Give details about randomisation. Describe the methods for, and success of, any masking of observations. Report treatment complications, give numbers of observations and report losses to observation (e.g. drop-outs from a clinical trial). References for study design and statistical methods should be to standard works when possible rather than to papers in which designs or methods were originally reported. Specify any computer programs used, with manufacturer's name, location and software version. Avoid non-technical uses of technical statistical terms, such as random (which imply a randomising device), normal, significant, correlation, and sample. Avoid value judgments about the results of statistical analyses with phrases like "nearly reached significance". Define statistical terms, abbreviations, and symbols not in common use. Detailed statistical analyses or mathematical derivations may be suitably presented in the form of one or more appendices.

Results

Present your results in logical sequence in the text, tables, and illustrations. Quantitative observations are often better presented graphically than in tables. Do not present specifics of data more than once and do not repeat in the text, data from tables, figures or illustrations; emphasise or summarise only important observations. Do not present data from individual subjects except for very compelling reasons.

Discussion

Emphasise concisely the new and important aspects of the study and the conclusions that follow from them. Do not repeat in detail data or other material given in the Introduction or Results. Include in the Discussion the implications of the findings and their limitations and relate the observations to other relevant studies.

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summarise your study and conclude whether or not you can accept the experimental hypotheses stated originally in the Introduction. Link conclusions with goals of the study and the current literature but avoid unqualified statements and conclusions not completely supported by your data. Avoid claiming priority and alluding to work that has not been completed. State new hypotheses when warranted but clearly label them as such. Recommendations, when appropriate, may be included.

Remember to write your thesis using non-discriminatory language and presentation.
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5. References

Referencing of material used in the thesis is a formal mechanism for giving appropriate acknowledgment of the work of others. A reference must be cited every time it is used in the main body of text but it is listed only once in the reference list, no matter how many times you cite it in the text. The School of Medicine uses the Harvard system of referencing (available on Endnote®). However, given the short page limit for the research proposal and the thesis itself, in consultation with your Supervisor, you may choose one of the following (remember to be consistent):

- Number references consecutively in the order in which they are first mentioned in the text. Identify references in text, tables, and legends by Arabic numerals in superscript.
- Place references in alphabetical order. Cite the author(s) and year in the text. For three or more authors, cite the first author only followed by *et al.* and the year.

It is rarely necessary to cite more than 60 references in an Honours thesis (most journals have suggested limits of 30-40).

6. Appendices

Appendices should contain any supplementary material that the author considers necessary to the interpretation of the research project. Ethics approval letters, questionnaires, subject information packages, informed consent forms, long tables, essential raw data, detailed reports or computer printouts are generally more appropriately included as appendices. If there is more than one appendix, the appendices should be numbered or lettered in sequence and placed after the references in the thesis. Other supplementary material such as film, floppy disks, CD-ROM, which cannot be bound together with the thesis, should be placed in a storage container or sleeve at the back of the thesis. Ensure packaging has adequate protection.

Students must ensure they leave sufficient time to evaluate and write-up their work. Importantly, all students must ensure that their Supervisor(s) have enough time (i.e. at least 2 weeks) to read and make suggestions before thesis submission

7. Writing Assistance

- Tutorials about effective writing and critical thinking: <http://unilearning.uow.edu.au>
- Library provide a dedicated page for researcher information: <http://www.library.uow.edu.au/researchers/index.html>

APPENDIX B: FORMAT OF TITLE PAGE

TITLE OF THESIS

*A thesis submitted in (*partial*) fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS)

from

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

AUTHOR'S NAME, DEGREE(S) HELD

Supervised by: Dr
B. I. Omed Prof.
N. U. Triton

**SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
2011**

APPENDIX C: FORMAT OF DECLARATION

Sample Declaration for inclusion in thesis:

DECLARATION

I, Karen M. Smith, declare that this thesis, submitted in (partial) fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Science (Honours) in the School of Medicine at the University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

(Signature)

Karen M. Smith

10 October 2011

APPENDIX D: FORMAT OF FINAL ABSTRACT

Title (size 14 font; bold)

Student Name, Student Number (size 12 font)

Supervisor(s): (size 12 font)

Background: Provide a sentence or two that explains the context for the study.

Objective: State the precise objective, specific hypothesis(es) to be tested, or both.

Design: Describe the study design, including the use of cells, animal models or human subjects. Identify specific methods and procedures for data collection, analysis and statistics.

Results: Report the most important findings, including statistical analyses.

Conclusions: Summarise in a sentence or two the primary outcomes of the study, including their potential application, if relevant (avoid over generalisations).