



Submission of research theses

Robert Findlay, June 2018

QG GEN009 [<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/documents/guides/qggen009.pdf>]

The following notes set out the University's regulations governing the submission of theses and dissertations for higher degrees. They apply to all postgraduate research students.

Research degrees

Notice of intention to submit

Not less than one month before your intended date of submission, and 4 months before intended graduation, you must give notice in writing to the Registry, The Hub, Elphinstone Road, Aberdeen AB24 3TU, of intention to submit a thesis. The [intention to submit form](#) is available online.

The form requires name, discipline and School, the degree to which your thesis relates, exact title of the work, and an address for correspondence after the examination. You should notify the Registry of any change to that address.

The onus is on you to apply to graduate.

Submission

The original thesis and one copy must be submitted to **Registry** (not to your supervisor or examiners, although it is highly recommended for your supervisor(s) to see the thesis before transmission). Both copies should be soft-bound, in case corrections are required. You should note that there may be some time between the date of submission and the intended date of graduation, depending on the availability of the examiners and the outcome of the examination.

Oral examination (viva voce)

If you wish to leave Aberdeen after submitting your thesis, you should ensure that you will be available for the oral examination whenever it is to be held; the internal examiner or your supervisors will be able to advise you on the arrangements that have been made. Oral examinations by telephone or video conference call are possible, subject to the agreement of the examiners, the candidate and the Registry.

Corrections

If the examiners require minor corrections to your thesis, you cannot graduate until the examiners (normally the internal) confirm in writing to the Registry that the corrections have been made satisfactorily.

Once the examiner has confirmed, you should return one hard-bound copy of the corrected thesis together with an electronic copy to the Information Centre on Floor 1 of the Sir Duncan Rice Library or, by post, to the Thesis Officer, Room 106, The Sir Duncan Rice Library, Aberdeen, AB24 3AA.

Submission requirements of a thesis

The regulations state that every thesis submitted for a higher degree must:

1. Contain, bound in, a summary of its salient points.
2. Contain, bound in, a signed declaration stating that:
 - the thesis has been composed by the candidate
 - it has not been accepted in any previous application for a degree
 - the work has been done by the candidate (if joint work it should be clearly indicated which part is the candidate's independent contribution)
 - all quotations have been distinguished by quotation marks and the sources of information specifically acknowledged
3. Be accompanied by a copy of a separate abstract, not exceeding 300 words (which may be published by the University). For the soft-bound thesis, this should be printed on a single sheet of international paper size A4 paper and should show the author and title of the thesis. For the hard-bound thesis, only an electronic copy is required (see below).
4. Be accompanied by the [Thesis Deposit and Declaration Checklist](#) form, detailing any limitation on the Inter Library Loan, photocopying or inclusion in any digital repository of the thesis for supply to any bona fide library or research worker.
5. Be accompanied by written justification approved by the Supervisor(s) and **Head of School** concerned if the thesis is to be withheld from consultation on the grounds of confidentiality.

The **TITLE PAGE** should contain:

1. The title of the thesis
2. The statement
'A thesis presented for the degree of...
at the University of Aberdeen'
3. The name of the author, academic
qualifications and where obtained
4. The year of award

Maximum length of the thesis

If you are to be examined by thesis, the regulations specify maximum lengths which you must not exceed except with the special permission of Senate, as follows:

University of Aberdeen Research Degrees	
PhD, EngD, MD and ChM	100,000 words
EdD	60,000 words
MPhil	70,000 words
One year Master's degree	40,000 words

It should be noted that these figures are intended only as an approximate guide to maximum lengths. They include appendices and footnotes, but not bibliographies, statistical and computational compilations and analogous illustrative material (maps, facsimile documents etc). The above word-counts are upper word limits and you are encouraged to do a final word count. If your thesis is above the **upper** word limit, you must make an application to the Registry, giving reasons why your thesis cannot be reduced in length. Remember the hallmark of a good thesis is quality, not quantity!

General layout of the thesis

While the regulations above must be followed precisely, on many aspects there is considerable variation between layouts preferred in different Schools. If in doubt, consult your supervisor to establish what standard practice is for your School.

Preliminary matter

This may include acknowledgements, table of contents, list of illustrations, abbreviations used etc. Consult recent theses and your supervisor to establish what standard practice is for your School.

Diagrams and Illustrations

These should be placed as close to the appropriate text as possible. If they are larger than the paper size of the text, they should be bound in a separate volume, the binding of which must correspond to that of the text. Alternatively, they may be mounted on a guard sheet and folded, or folded in a pocket. You should discuss the academic content and layout of diagrams and illustrations with your supervisor.

Footnotes and references

There are no hard and fast rules for these. Follow the advice of your supervisor.

You may however find it helpful to consult [Library Guides on referencing](#).

Typing/word processing

Every thesis must:

- be typewritten or printed, on one side only, on A4 size paper. Use double or one-and-a-half spacing for the main text and single spacing for indented quotations, footnotes, references and bibliography
- leave margins of no less than 35mm on the left side for binding and no less than 15mm on the other three sides. We strongly recommend that you follow the British Standard on the presentation of theses, BS4821: 1990.
- Notwithstanding the British Standard, the **Senatus Academicus** has agreed that the main body of the text should be no less than point size 12.

Binding and illustrations

For examination you must submit two soft-bound copies of your thesis to the Registry who will send these on to your examiners. Once the work has been examined and accepted, you must submit one hard-bound copy of the thesis together with an electronic copy and a completed thesis deposit declaration and checklist to the Information Centre at the Sir Duncan Rice Library (Floor 1).

Hard-bound copy

The front board of the hard-bound copy should bear the title and author's name with the degree and the author's name and the year of award appearing on the spine.

Published papers should be original reprints and inserted by the binder as an appendix to the text or in a pocket inside the back cover.

Photographs must be original prints or laser copies of original prints (as long as the quality of the original prints is maintained) in all your submitted copies.

A thesis which would be more than 420 pages should be finally bound as two separate matching volumes, with a title page in each.

Arrangements should be made with the binder several weeks before the submission date.

Electronic copy

This can be in the form of a CD-ROM, usb stick, or pdf attachment. You need to obtain permission from the copyright holder in order to include any third-party copyright material in the electronic copy of your thesis. Examples of third-party copyright material include illustrations and extracts or quotations from other publications. You will also need to seek permission to include any original reprints of your published papers. Finally, you will need to get permission from everyone involved in the performance and production of any audio or video recording.

You should provide in a labelled envelope:

1. An electronic copy of the thesis identical to the original complete thesis in a single non-editable PDF file.
2. CD quality (16 bit, 44.1K) electronic copies of any accompanying audio material in WAV files.
3. Electronic copies of any accompanying video material in AVI or MOV files.
4. Electronic copies of any accompanying scores in non-editable PDF files.
5. An edited electronic copy of the thesis with all uncleared third-party copyright material removed in a single non-editable PDF file (if required).
6. An electronic copy of the abstract not exceeding 300 words.

Thesis copying and binding services

The following services are available from the Print Shop, 23 St Machar Drive.

The **Print Shop** offers an all-in-one service for thesis printing and copying, in black-and-white and colour, either from your own originals or directly sent to us by email in PDF format. The Print Shop is where all binding orders are processed. The staff can advise you on how your thesis should be presented and also show you samples of the many other binding services on offer, including comb, wire and heat binding.

UniPrint also offers a full range of photographic and reprographic services (tel. 01224 272825), e.g. laser colour copying, lamination, scanning, AO posters etc.

UniPrint offers the only complete binding service north of Falkirk. The thesis binding services range from a normal 4-day turnaround to a special 24-hour service (Monday to Friday).

A typical **hard bound** volume has a maximum thickness of 420 pages of 80g paper and charges include up to 4 lines of standard lettering (one line = 38 characters including spaces) on the front board.

Theses of exceptional thickness may have to be split into two or more volumes. There are additional costs for pockets, additional or unusual lettering requirements, etc.

Margins and folded papers or plates

To ensure that text or folded plates are not cut off during the trimming process (all these will have a 2mm trim of all three edges) make sure that the margins are adequate.

- Margins should be at least 35mm on the binding edge and 15mm on the other edges.
- Folded material must be at least 5mm short of the foredge.

This ensures that there will be no loss of text – a charge will be made for refolding a thesis.

Check collation

Please ensure that all pages are correctly placed in their proper order as we do not check or change your pages once work has begun. If an incorrectly collated thesis is bound or partially bound, the mistake can only be rectified after consultation with the Senior Bindery Technician – an extra charge would be made for this task.

Service times

You should allow a minimum of 4 working days for UniPrint to bind your hard bound thesis.

Soft bound thesis prices vary dependent on size and style:

- **Comb & Ring style & Metal style** - 30 minute service
- **Card style** - Same day service if submitted by 10.30am

Useful reading on thesis preparation

The Library has a number of manuals on thesis preparation and project writing, generally classified at shelfmark **029.6**.

These include BS4821: 1990, British Standard Recommendations for the Presentation of Theses and Dissertations (London: British Standards Institution, 1990). This standard has now been officially withdrawn but as it has not been replaced with anything else it still offers the best guidance.

Contact details

Print Shop

Tel: 01224 272578

Email: printshop@abdn.ac.uk

Copyright, Engineers' and Technicians' Rights, Music Rights and Performers' Rights

Mary Mowat, Copyright Officer

Email: m.mowat@abdn.ac.uk

Queries regarding electronic submission

Cataloguing Unit, The Sir Duncan Rice Library

Email: cataloguing@abdn.ac.uk

Additional information on copyright

If you are intending to include in your thesis extracts from other publications or illustrations such as images, maps, photographs, figures, etc., you will need to seek permission from the copyright holder, as an electronic version of your thesis will usually be made available online. If you are unable to gain permission to reproduce such material, this does not mean that your thesis cannot be accepted, or that you are expected to pay for permission to be granted.

It means only that your thesis cannot be made available online, or that the version which is made available online must omit the copyright material. In such a case, two electronic versions of the completed thesis should be submitted, one an exact copy of the print version, and the other with any copyright material removed.

Details of any material which has been removed should be listed in the appropriate area of the Thesis Deposit Declaration and Checklist. A short quotation from a published work which has been properly acknowledged and referenced probably does not need permission to use, but if in doubt, it is always best to seek permission. You will also need to seek permission from the relevant publisher to include in your thesis any journal articles you may have published.

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More extensive information on copyright and your thesis is available in the document "Keeping your thesis legal"

www.abdn.ac.uk/library/documents/guides/uggen033.pdf