

Curtin University

HDR Thesis Submission and Examination

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we gather today and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples present.

We recognise and celebrate the spiritual and cultural connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have to the land, water, and community. We commit to working together for reconciliation and a shared future.

What we'll cover today

1. **Prepare your thesis**
   Three thesis types and format requirements
2. **Formatting**
   Word limits, submission requirements, and typography guidelines
3. **Proofreading and editing**
   Supervisory team support and professional editor guidelines
4. **Thesis structure**
   Required components (title page, declaration, abstract, acknowledgments, copyright)
5. **Academic integrity and plagiarism**
   Co-author approval, Turnitin requirements, and code of conduct
6. **Nomination of examiners**
   Principal supervisor responsibilities and examiner qualifications
7. **The examination process**
   Timeline, examiner tasks, and evaluation criteria
8. **Next steps after examination**
   Final amendments, revise and resubmit and Adjudication
9. **Viva**
   Oral thesis defence from 2026 and beyond
10. **Deposit of final thesis**
    Library submission and CURATE upload process
11. **Approval to graduate**
    Final approval steps and graduation
12. **Contact information**
    Graduate Research School support and resources

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Thesis types

Key points to consider when you start preparing your thesis for examination.

Traditional

A comprehensive, single document divided into chapters, typically including an introduction, literature review, methodology, body chapters and conclusion. This is the most common format.

This category includes a hybrid thesis, which predominantly follows the traditional format but contains some chapters presented as unpublished, accepted or published papers.

Compilation (or thesis by publication)

A collection of published papers (or papers accepted for publication) that collectively represent a coherent body of original research.

Creative Works

A significant creative work, such as an art exhibition, performance, novel or design project, accompanied by a written exegesis that contextualises and analyses the research questions underpinning the creative work. Together, the creative work and exegesis must form a coherent and cohesive whole.

Refer to the Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Thesis Examination Procedures.

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Format

Word Limits

A thesis must adhere to specific word limits to ensure conciseness and focus:

	PhD	MPhil
Standard Thesis	100,000 words	60,000 words
Creative Works	40,000 words	20,000 words

Note: These word limits exclude all footnotes, appendices, tables, illustrative matter, and the reference list.

Submission Requirements

- **File format:** The thesis, or exegesis, for creative works, must be submitted as a single PDF file.
- **Language:** The thesis must be written in Standard English.
- **Formatting requirements:**
  - 12-point font, such as Times New Roman, Arial or Calibri
  - Margins of at least 2.5 cm on the left and right, with consistent top and bottom margins
  - 1.5-line spacing
  - Pages numbered sequentially

For comprehensive details on thesis examination procedures, please refer to: **Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Thesis Examination Procedures**

Proofreading and editing

Navigating the final stages of thesis submission involves meticulous proofreading and editing to ensure clarity, accuracy, and adherence to academic standards.

Supervisory team support

Your **supervisory team** is the primary resource for proofreading and editing, offering comprehensive editorial advice across various crucial aspects:

- **Substance and structure**
- **Language and illustrations**
- **Completeness and consistency**

Professional editors

- You may engage a professional editor in addition to seeking support from your supervisory team. See the **Guidelines for Professional Thesis Editing**.
- For electronic submissions, suggested edits and proofreading changes should be provided using tracked changes, comments or mark-up tools.
- The editor's name and a brief description of the services provided must be included in the thesis acknowledgements.

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Thesis structure

The thesis must include the following key components:

1 **Title Page**

The title page must clearly state the enrolling area or faculty, thesis title, student's name, prescribed submission statement (e.g., "This thesis is presented for the Degree of Doctor/Master of Philosophy of Curtin University"), and month and year of submission.
A template is available via the HDR forms page.

2 **Declaration**

A formal declaration of originality and adherence to academic integrity.
A template is available via the HDR forms page.

3 **Abstract**

An abstract of at least 200 words summarising the purpose, methods, key findings and conclusions of the research.

4 **Acknowledgements**

An acknowledgements page should recognise the academic, personal and institutional support that made the research possible. If the thesis incorporates previously published material, an authorship attribution statement must be clearly included here.

If the research was supported by an RTP Scholarship, this funding must be acknowledged.

5 **Copyright Statement**

If a thesis includes any third-party copyrighted material, a formal permission statement for its use must be included on this page.

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Academic integrity and plagiarism

Ensuring academic integrity is paramount. Here are key guidelines regarding plagiarism and thesis submission:

1

Co-author approval

If including co-published material, ensure you have secured co-authors' approval. Relevant attribution statements must be included.

2

Originality check

You must submit your thesis to Turnitin and discuss the originality report with your principal supervisor before submitting your thesis for examination.

3

Curtin University Code of Conduct

The responsibilities of all researchers, academic staff, and students regarding research integrity and plagiarism are outlined in the University's Code of Conduct.

Important: Familiarise yourself with the university's policies to maintain academic honesty throughout your research and writing process.

Nomination of examiners

Principal supervisor's responsibility	The principal supervisor is responsible for nominating two thesis examiners no earlier than six months before the anticipated thesis submission date. To contact examiners at point of submission to confirm availability.
Examiner qualifications	Examiners must hold a qualification equal to or higher than the qualification being sought, or have equivalent standing and recognised expertise in the field of study.
Conflicts of interest	Any potential conflict of interest involving a proposed examiner must be fully disclosed in the Nomination of Examiners form for independent assessment.

The examination process

Examiners are normally asked to complete their examination within **six weeks**. However, the examination may take longer depending on the examiners' availability. You should generally expect to receive the examination outcome within **three months** of submitting your thesis.

Examiners are asked to:

- **Evaluate** the thesis against a given set of criteria
- **Make a recommendation** as to how the thesis should be classified
- **Write a report** providing the grounds for their recommendation, detailing strengths and weaknesses

Examiners look for:

- Originality, coherence, and a sound understanding of methodology
- A well-structured argument and justified conclusions
- Sufficient quantity and quality of work

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The examination report

Examiners utilise the following questions to guide their assessment of a thesis, ensuring a comprehensive and fair evaluation of the candidate's work and contribution to their field.

1. **Literature review**
   Assess whether the candidate has adequately reviewed the relevant literature.

2. **Information analysis and presentation**
   Evaluate the candidate's ability to gather, critically analyse and present information.

3. **Independent research capacity**
   Determine whether the candidate has demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, and complete independent research.

4. **Original contribution**
   Assess whether the thesis makes a substantial, original and significant contribution to knowledge.

5. **Publication quality**
   Comment on the quality of any publications included within the thesis, where applicable.

6. **Strengths, weaknesses and amendments**
   Identify the thesis's strengths and weaknesses and recommend any amendments needed to improve its content and presentation.

The examination process: next steps

1

Amendments

All required amendments must be completed and approved by your principal supervisor, Thesis Chair and Director of Graduate Research, before the degree can be awarded.

2

Revise and resubmit

If substantial revisions are required, you will normally have six months to revise and resubmit the thesis for re-examination by the original examiner who requested it.

3

Adjudication

If the examiners' recommendations are not in substantial agreement, the Thesis Chair may appoint an Adjudicator to determine a clear weight of opinion.

Viva

A viva is an oral examination conducted at the end of a higher degree by research. During the viva, you will defend your thesis before a panel that includes the two examiners who examined it. The viva provides an opportunity to present and discuss your research, demonstrate your expertise, respond to questions or critiques, and clarify any required corrections or revisions.

Viva Guidelines

FAQs



Viva implementation

- All HDR students who enrol from 1 January 2026 will be required to undertake a viva.
- Students who enrolled before 1 January 2026 may opt in to the pilot viva.
- Written guidelines are expected to be published by the end of the first quarter of 2027.
- Student and supervisor resources are expected to be available by mid-2027.

Deposit of final thesis

The final amended thesis must be approved by the principal supervisor and submitted to the University Library using the Deposit of Final Thesis form, available from the HDR forms page. Once the degree has been approved, the thesis will be uploaded to CURATE, Curtin's repository for research publications and HDR theses.

Once your thesis has been deposited with the Library, no further changes can be made.

Depositing your final thesis is a prerequisite for the award of your degree.

Approval to graduate

1

Thesis Chair's Report

The Thesis Chair and Director of Graduate Research reviews the examination documentation and final thesis and submits a report recommending whether the degree should be awarded.

2

Dean's endorsement

The Dean of Graduate Studies provides the final endorsement for approval to graduate.

3

Course completion notification

After approval, the Graduate Research School will notify the student of the official examination outcome.

4

Conferral

The students name will be added to the graduation list for formal conferral by the University Council.

5

Awarding of degree

The Graduations Office will invite the student to register for a graduation ceremony or arrange for the award certificate to be sent by registered post.

Graduation Ceremony dates

Curtin University holds two rounds of graduation ceremonies annually:

- **February**
- **September**

Optional thesis binding

Permanent thesis binding is optional and can be conveniently arranged through the Guild G-Mart.

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Forms and guidelines

Thesis Submission Forms

- Nomination of Examiners (Staff access only)
- Thesis Submission for Examination (HDR student access only)
- Thesis Title Page template
- Thesis Declaration template
- Sample Examination Report
- Deposit of Final Thesis (HDR student access only)
- Thesis Permanent Binding (optional)

Thesis Submission Guidelines

- Guidelines for Thesis Preparation and Submission
- Guidelines for Professional Thesis Editing
- Guidelines for Conflict of Interest for Thesis Examination
- Guidelines for Deposit of Final Thesis

HDR Policies

- HDR Thesis Examination Policy
- HDR Thesis Examination Procedures

General Information

Preparing your thesis, how to submit it, and what the examination process involves.

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Graduate Research School

Connecting you with the resources and support for your higher degree by research journey.

Contact information

Phone: +61 8 9266 3337

Email: ROC.GRS@curtin.edu.au

Website: www.curtin.edu.au/students/essentials/higher-degree-by-research/

Location and hours

Opening Hours:
10:00 am to 2:00 pm, Monday to Friday

Location:
Building 101, Level 1



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Feedback

We hope today's session has been helpful.

Questions?

Please ask any questions you have about thesis submission or examination. We're here to help!

Share Your Feedback

Scan the QR code to provide feedback on today's session. Your feedback helps us improve future sessions.

Thank you