



# PhD Theses by Published Papers

## 1.0 Introduction

The PhD Regulations 14.1.1 & 2 state:

The Queensland University of Technology permits the presentation of theses for Doctor of Philosophy degree in the format of published and/or submitted papers where such papers have been published, accepted or submitted during the period of candidature.

Papers submitted as a PhD thesis must be closely related in terms of subject matter & form a cohesive research narrative.

Offering this option QUT is encouraging PhD candidates to publish papers during their candidature.

A collation of unrelated papers would not be suitable and such papers not contributing to the main thrust of the thesis would at best be suitable for inclusion in an appendix.

Some important points to consider

Discuss the option of thesis by published papers with your supervisor early. The idea of thesis presentation by published papers is not suited to all disciplines/topics/candidates. Some disciplines may favour one (large) conventional continuous thesis.

The decision to undertake a thesis by published papers is most valuable to candidates concerned with the production of published papers. Consider the value of publications to your longer term career/employment goals.

The decision to present a thesis by published papers should be made early in the candidature, probably in the first year.

Publications of the candidate prepared prior to commencement of candidature are not acceptable.

## 2.0 Format

PhD Regulation 14.2.1-3 states:

The thesis may be comprised of published papers, manuscripts accepted for publication and those submitted for publication or under review.

The minimum number of papers and/or manuscripts is normally three. At least one paper must have been published, accepted, or be undergoing revision following refereeing

Where the papers have multiple authorship, the candidate must be the principal author on at least two of the three papers and have written permission of the co-authors

In developing publications for inclusion the candidate and supervisor should consider the importance of the overall body of work that these works will represent and the contribution the combined body of work makes to the discipline.

## 3.0 Content

PhD Regulation 14.2.4 states:

The format is laid down by QUT and must include a title page, abstract, key words,

---

Research Students Centre, Level 3, O Block Podium, Gardens Point Campus, PO Box 2434, Brisbane QLD 4001  
Ph: +61 7 3138 4475 or 3138 5306 e-mail [research.degrees@qut.edu.au](mailto:research.degrees@qut.edu.au)

<http://www.rsc.qut.edu.au/>

list of publications and/or manuscripts, contents, statement of original authorship & acknowledgements.

The main sections of the thesis by published papers are normally:

Introduction  
Literature Review  
Published papers & submitted manuscripts  
General discussion

PhD Regulation 14.2.5 – 6 state:

14.2.5 The abstract summarises the main findings presented in each published paper or submitted manuscript and should indicate how the included works, when considered together, demonstrate a significant contribution to knowledge in the discipline.

14.2.6 The introduction should contain succinct statements under the following headings:

- \* description of research problem investigated;
- \* overall objectives of the study;

- \* specific aims of the study; and
- \* account of research progress linking the research papers.

The account of research progress must link together the various papers submitted as part of the thesis. The intention of this Section is to provide continuity for the entire thesis so that the reader can move from one chapter to the next understanding the logic behind the progression of the research program.

14.2.7 The literature review will, of necessity, replicate literature cited in subsequent chapters but must contain a clear statement on the significance of the project aims, a critical review of relevant literature, identification of knowledge gaps, and the relationship of the literature to the experimental program.

14.2.8 Published papers/papers submitted in the following categories may be included but each must be presented as an individual chapter in the thesis:

- \* published papers;
- \* manuscripts accepted for publication;
- \* manuscripts submitted and under review by referees; and
- \* manuscripts under revision following referees\_ reports.

14.2.9 Only papers which have been published by or submitted to journals approved by the faculty committee are allowable under these Regulations. Whilst Short Communications and Letters are acceptable, their number should be less than that of full length papers.

In Science, the Science Citation Index Impact Factor (IF) for the journal must be greater than 1.0; It is better to have fewer papers in high IF factor journals than several in lower IF journals.

14.2.10 Manuscripts which have been rejected by a journal must not be included unless they have been substantially rewritten to address referees\_ comments as certified in the Final Seminar documentation.

14.2.11 Each chapter comprised of a published paper or submitted manuscript must

begin with a clear statement of the contribution made by each author of any jointly authored paper. The description must be sufficiently detailed to describe accurately the contribution of each author.

This requirement highlight the importance of each publication contributing to the overall thesis contribution and also that the contribution of the candidate as author must be clear.

14.2.12 The thesis must contain an overarching discussion of the main features linking the publications and include a statement of the significance of the findings, problems encountered and the future directions of the work.

#### 14.3 Presentation

14.3.1 The thesis must be presented in accordance with the requirements of the Council, including any accompanying declarations and in accordance with MOPP Appendix 51 .

### 4.0 Examination Process

All theses must be presented for examination. The successful publication of articles will not render the work exempt from examination. Because the publications are examined as part of a larger work it is possible for reviewers of individual papers to be invited to comment as external examiners.

The introduction and conclusion will be important in ensuring that the individual publications that make up the thesis can be viewed by the examiners as a cohesive whole. If the published papers do not have a clear cohesion, then the thesis is likely to be rejected. The introduction, conclusion and bridging sections between publications do not have to be publications in their own right.

Bear in mind that the objective of the regulations is to encourage publication; a thesis composed largely of submitted manuscripts is likely to be attacked from two sides, the journal referees and the PhD examiners with resultant difficulties in contradictory advice and criticisms.

### 5.0 Useful Website Resources

QUT MOPP

[www.qut.edu.au/lti/qut/pubs/mopp/appendices/appendix51.html](http://www.qut.edu.au/lti/qut/pubs/mopp/appendices/appendix51.html)

PhD Regulations

<http://www.courses.qut.edu.au/cgi-bin/WebObjects/Courses.woa/wa/selectMajorFromMain?courseID=2274>

QUT Copyright Guide

<http://www.dias.qut.edu.au/copyright/crguidefrontpage.html>

AVCC document Ownership of Intellectual Property in University Policy and Good Practice Guide

[http://www.avcc.edu.au/news/public\\_statements/publications/index.htm](http://www.avcc.edu.au/news/public_statements/publications/index.htm)