



Graduate Research School

Guidelines for preparing Research Proposals/Details of Proposed Research for Students in Research Higher Degrees

These guidelines are applicable to the following category of student/applicants:

- In the University General Rules for Academic Courses, under Rule 1.3.1.15(2) of the General Provisions for Research Higher Degrees (by thesis) enrolled PhD students are required to submit a Research Proposal within six months of the commencement of candidature for full-time students and within nine months for part-time students. The approval of a student's enrolment is dependent on the acceptance of this proposal.
- Under Rule 1.3.1.15 (1), Masters students are required to submit a Research Proposal within four months of the commencement of candidature for full-time students and within eight months for part-time students. The approval of a student's enrolment is dependent on the acceptance of a research proposal prepared by the student and endorsed by the supervisor(s) and the head(s) of the appropriate School(s).
- Late submission of the Research Proposal may result in suspension of candidature.
- Under Rule 1.3.1.22(2) details of proposed research must be supplied along with appropriate application material by students applying to upgrade (transfer) from a masters degree (at UWA) to a PhD (at UWA).
- Under Rule 1.3.3.1 (d)(ii) a Research Proposal must be supplied along with application material by new applicants for the PhD who have partially completed a research higher programme at another institution.
- All new PhD students are initially enrolled as conditional students for the first year of Full-Time enrolment or equivalent. All new PhD students are required to complete designated tasks and meet agreed milestones, negotiated with their supervisors and Head of School/Graduate Research Coordinator, by specified deadlines in order for their ongoing candidature to be confirmed. These tasks are approved by the Graduate Research School as part of the approval of the formal Research Proposal.

All Research Proposals should be divided into sections and formatted as set out below. No more than fifteen pages should provide sufficient detail.

A. PROPOSED STUDY

1. Provide a title.
2. **For PhD:** Rule 1.3.3.3 specifies that a PhD study must make a "substantial and original contribution to scholarship, for example through the discovery of knowledge, the formulation of theories or the innovative re-interpretation of known data and established ideas". In what way is the proposed study expected to fulfil this requirement?
3. **For Masters:** Rule 1.3.2.3 specifies that a Masters study must be a "substantial work generally based on independent research which shows a sound knowledge of the subject of the research, evidence of the exercise of some independence of thought and the ability of expression in clear and concise language". In what way is the proposed study expected to fulfil this requirement?
4. If the proposed study includes a creative component, describe the creative component and show in what way the thesis and creative components may be linked.

B. RESEARCH DIRECTION

1. The specific aims of the project - the problem(s) it hopes to solve; or particular question(s) it will answer; issues it will explore; and the new knowledge it will create
2. The methods to be used or the approach to be taken. What similar projects have been undertaken here or elsewhere; have similar methods been used before?
3. What efforts have been made to ensure that the project does not duplicate work already done?
4. Students should show familiarity with the research topic by including a bibliography giving publication details for the most relevant literature in the field.

C. CANDIDATURE PLAN

1. The supervisor should assist the student to prepare a framework for the research, with a general timeframe for completion of the various phases and a detailed timeframe for the next 12 months. Each Annual Progress Report will include an update of the general plan and a detailed plan for the next 12 months.
2. All new PhD students are required within a period of twelve months to complete designated tasks and meet agreed milestones in order for their ongoing candidature to be confirmed. If you are enrolled in a PhD please identify your Confirmation of Candidature tasks and indicate the date at which they will be completed.
3. In partnership with your supervisor(s), please undertake a skills audit to determine if you possess the generic skills required to bring your project to a timely completion. Please identify the special skills your project requires of you, and if you do not possess them map out a strategy for their achievement.
4. Regulation 9.1 (d.) of the Code of Good Practice for Graduate Research Supervision states that students are expected to devote at least 30 hours per week (or equivalent if the candidature is part-time) to research higher degree studies. If your normal working hours are going to be anything less than 30 hours Monday to Friday 9am-5pm then please outline what they will be.

D. FACILITIES

1. In addition to confirming that proper supervision is available for the project, please comment on any other requirements, for example:

2. Special Equipment - if not already available, how it will be obtained.
3. Special Literature - if not available from the Library, how will access to it be obtained?

E. ESTIMATED COSTS

What funds will the School commit to maintain the project? Please include all contributions that the School will make, excluding staff salaries and building/infrastructure costs. Please provide a breakdown of the costs, including, for example, items such as photocopying, telephone, computing and other administrative costs as well as costs specific to the research project.

F. FIELDWORK

If you are conducting fieldwork as part of your research, you must read the University's Field Work Policy which can be found at http://www.safety.uwa.edu.au/policies/field_work Are you familiar with the University's Insurance Policy which can be found at <http://www.safety.uwa.edu.au/policies/student?>

G. SUPERVISORS

Each student must have a supervisor who is nominated as the Coordinating supervisor. The Coordinating supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the administrative and reporting requirements of the supervisors are met. This supervisor will receive all correspondence from the Graduate Research and Scholarships Office relating to your candidature, and is responsible for communication with and between other supervisors. The Coordinating supervisor must be a member of staff of this university.

If a student is enrolled in Joint Schools, there must be a Coordinating supervisor from each School.

Where a student has more than one supervisor, the supervisors and the student must discuss the roles of each supervisor, record this in writing and lodge the record with the Graduate Research and Scholarships Office as part of the Research Proposal.

Please provide a list of your supervisors and their role, including percentages, as indicated in the Research Proposal Cover Sheet.

H. CONFIDENTIALITY & INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

If your thesis is likely to contain information of a confidential nature, you must draw this to the attention of the Board of the Graduate Research School from the outset, or as soon as it becomes apparent.

You must also draw the Board's attention to any intellectual property issues that need to be considered, including any existing intellectual property of value that is pertinent to the research and to any agreements that may affect your right to intellectual property arising out of the research.

A simple guide for Research students as to confidentiality and intellectual property issues is available at <http://www.postgraduate.uwa.edu.au/policies>

Students who are likely to be affected by matters concerning confidentiality or intellectual property should familiarise themselves with Rules 1.3.1.24-1.3.1.30 of the University General Rules for Academic Courses, General Provisions for Research Higher Degrees (by thesis) and with the University's Intellectual Property Policy. Both are available on the WWW at <http://www.postgraduate.uwa.edu.au/policies>

I. APPROVALS

The Head of School is required to certify on the Research Proposal that all necessary approvals in relation to it have been obtained from the appropriate University of Western Australia committees (see www.postgraduate.uwa.edu.au/forms?f=145053 for relevant contact details). Approvals will be required prior to the use of animals, the participation of human subjects, genetic manipulation, potentially biohazardous procedures and situations, the use and disposal of potent teratogens and carcinogens, the use of ionising radiation, or other matters of a hazardous nature. It is the responsibility of the student, the supervisor and the Head of School to ensure that appropriate approvals have been obtained. Similarly, it is essential that all required safety and other training is complete prior to the commencement of research

J. SUBMISSION OF THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL/DETAILS OF PROPOSED RESEARCH

Having prepared the proposal:

- Students should complete a Research Proposal Coversheet and submit **TWO** copies of their proposal and coversheet through the supervisor and Head of School/Graduate Research Coordinator to the Graduate Research School.
- Prospective students applying on the basis of an incomplete PhD from another institution should complete the Application Form and submit **TWO** copies of the Details of Proposed Research and application form (plus other supporting documentation as required) through the proposed supervisor and Head of School/Graduate Research Coordinator to the Graduate Research School.
- Applicants applying to transfer (upgrade) from a Masters programme at UWA to the PhD should complete the Application to Upgrade Form and submit **TWO** copies of the Details of Proposed Research and Upgrade form through the proposed supervisor and Head of School/Graduate Research Coordinator to the Graduate Research School.

Students, supervisors and Heads of School must ensure that the coversheet is completed and signed, as it certifies that the assurances made therein have been made to the Board. NO RESEARCH PROPOSAL OR APPLICATION FOR CANDIDATURE CAN BE CONSIDERED WITHOUT THESE ASSURANCES.