

Getting started with a thesis: Helpful hints for 2017

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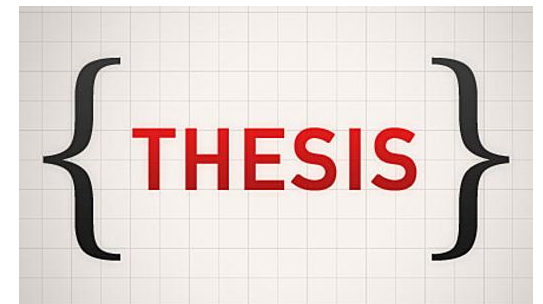
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Department of Psychology

September, 2016

Definitions

- PSYC 690/695 MA/MSc thesis (120 pts)
 - One year of full-time study
- APSY 660 Dissertation (90 pts)
 - Deadline 1 February of the next year
- PSYC 790 PhD
 - Three to four years of full-time study



General source of advice

- MA/MSc/PhD
 - Postgraduate Research Coordinator (PGRC)
- APSY 660
 - Director I/O programme

Get these identities from the Department Handbook – they change

Useful online sources

Go to the PSYC department website and find:

*Forms and Guidelines: PhD/Masters/APSY660 and
PSYC470/475 Project Students :*

[http://www.psyc.canterbury.ac.nz/for/pg_studies/thesis
Project.shtml](http://www.psyc.canterbury.ac.nz/for/pg_studies/thesis_Project.shtml)

PSYC Department website:

<http://www.psyc.canterbury.ac.nz/>

College of Science
Department of Psychology

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CHRISTCHURCH NEW ZEALAND

Guide for Master's Thesis Students

Updated January 2016



Useful online sources

All Postgraduate information is available at

www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/

General MSc/MA information is available at

http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/ma_students/

MSc Enrolment information and links

www.science.canterbury.ac.nz/students/Masters_thesis_enrolment.shtml

MA Thesis Enrolment information and links

www.arts.canterbury.ac.nz/for/postgrad/thesis-students.shtml

Other sources of advice

- Issues specific to Psychology
 - ✓ Administrative Services Manager (Robyn Daly)
 - ✓ Head of Department
 - ✓ Professional Programmes Administrator (Clinical and APSY) (Anna Leuzzi)
- General issues about enrolment, regulations etc
 - ✓ College academic advisors
- Examination of your thesis
 - ✓ Dean of Postgraduate Research / Postgraduate office

Prerequisites

- First (getting into BA(Hons), MA/MSc pt 1)
 - ✓ BA/BSc/PGDipSci with B average GPA in 300-level PSYC
 - ✓ PSYC 344 Research methods (or equivalent)
- Second (getting into MA/MSc pt 2 – the thesis)
 - ✓ Passing 120 pts of 400-level courses (a B average across 4th year courses is normally required)
 - ✓ Credited with PSYC 460/464

What is a thesis?

2. Nature of Master's thesis work

2.1 **Master's thesis work involves a period of individual scholarship and research**, usually uninterrupted by other studies, though concurrent enrolment in coursework and thesis is often the case for the ME and is possible for the MSc. Typically a thesis is completed within one or two years of full-time study, or the part-time equivalent, but the time limits and restrictions vary from subject to subject. The Calendar must be consulted for definitive information.

Notwithstanding the time limits available for its completion, a thesis should comprise a body of work which could, in the given discipline, be completed in the equivalent of one full calendar year of full-time study (i.e., 1 EFTS).

2.2 **A Master's thesis is expected to demonstrate the student's ability to undertake independent research under guidance, using the established methods of research and analysis appropriate to the particular discipline or subject area.**

From the *Masters Thesis Work Policy and Guidelines v. 1.02 p. 3* (see http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/ma_students/policies.shtml)

What is a thesis?

- Written document reporting research

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ Method
- ✓ Results
- ✓ Discussion
- ✓ References
- ✓ Appendices



- Using APA style, but Tables and Figures are integrated into the text
- Typical length 50-70 pages (+ Appendices) (12 point, double-spaced, Times New Roman or similar)
(A dissertation or project report is like a thesis but usually smaller)
- Degree not awarded until PDF of thesis is deposited in UC library

Getting started

- Informal process
 - ✓ Idea
 - ✓ Topic
 - ✓ Supervisor(s)
- Formal process
 - ✓ Enrolment
 - ✓ Thesis registration
 - ✓ Progress reports
 - ✓ Thesis submission



Getting started: Informal process

Idea / question / topic:

- ✓ From course work, reviews, projects, discussions, brainstorming
- ✓ Fundamentally, must be **psychological**
- ✓ Must be **practical** (i.e. realistic within the masters thesis time frame)
- ✓ Must be **within the Department's resources**

Supervisors – you need one to start with; shop around

Every step iterative

Supervisors

- You must have at least 2 by the proposal stage
- Senior (primary) supervisor must be continuing academic staff of the PSYC Dept.
- Other supervisors may be Co-supervisor or Associate supervisor (has a smaller or more specific input than co-supervisor)
- Co/Associate may be from
 - ✓ Other university dept
 - ✓ Other university
 - ✓ Outside organization (Dean may check qualifications)

Who is available to supervise?

- All academic staff expected to do PG supervision
- Have to balance Masters and PhD
- Have to balance new vs existing students
- Have to balance availability – study leave, teaching load, part-time work, etc
- I/O team: often fully engaged with APSY 660 Dissertation students

Sometimes issues resolved by negotiation, e.g., around roles between senior and co/associate supervisors

Supervisors

Ideally:

- Expert in research topic area
- Have the time and resources to help
- Are a person you are comfortable working with

Sometimes, ideals must be compromised!

You and supervisors need to be clear about roles and responsibilities

You can change supervisor arrangements after thesis begins, but this can get very messy

Supervisors

How do I know which staff supervise which topics?

- Use what you know about their teaching areas
- Look at their research interests
http://www.psyc.canterbury.ac.nz/people/index_academic.shtml
- Make an appointment and talk to them about your ideas and theirs – a conversation is not a commitment!

Staff research interests

- **Neville Blampied**: conceptual, applied and experimental analysis of behaviour (PT)
- **Eileen Britt**: clinical psychology, motivational interviewing (PT)
- **Chris Burt**: I/O, workplace health/safety/stress
- **Janet Carter**: clinical psychology (psychotherapy, rumination, eating disorders) (PT)
- **Zhe Chen**: cognitive psychology, in particular topics related to visual perception
- **Sarah Christofferson**: clinical psychology, in particular forensic psychology
- **John Dalrymple-Alford**: neuropsychology, behavioural neuroscience
- **Martin Dorahy**: clinical psychology, complex traumatic stress and dissociative disorders

PT = part-time

Staff research interests

- **Randy Grace:** experimental analysis of behaviour, forensic psychology, research methods and stats
- **Brian Haig:** theoretical psychology (PT)
- **Jacki Henderson:** developmental psychology (infant sleep, psychopathology, child and family interventions)
- **Rob Hughes:** behavioural pharmacology and teratology
- **Simon Kemp:** economic psychology, memory, history of psychology
- **Roeline Kuijer:** health psychology (partner relations and adaption to stress, self-regulation and health behaviour)
- **Joana Kuntz:** I/O, organisational change, employee and organisational resilience
- **Anthony McLean:** experimental analysis of behaviour, forensic psychology

PT = part-time

Staff research interests

- ***Kyle Nash***: psychology of motivation and conflict (nature of threat and defensive reactions to threat, individual differences in the affective experience of conflict and distress, social decision making processes)
- ***Katharina Näswall***: I/O, work-related stress and well-being
- ***Ewald Neumann***: selective attention, working memory, cognitive control
- ***Julia Rucklidge***: clinical psychology, role of nutrition and mental health
- ***Kumar Yogeeswaran***: social psychology (social identity, stereotyping and prejudice, cultural diversity, applied social psychology)

PT = part-time

The formal process

1. Enrol – through normal university process

- APSY 660 in S1 of any year
- PSYC 690/695 anytime/1st Monday of month

BUT – that starts the clock ticking! Often best to wait until you are close to topic decision

You need one provisional supervisor at Enrolment

http://www.science.canterbury.ac.nz/students/Masters_thesis_enrolment.shtml

Compulsory Stages
of Candidature



Optional Stages

Suspension of study

Change of supervisor/topic/department

Change between full-time and part-time study

Extension to submission date

The formal process

2. Thesis Registration

- You have **2 months** (fulltime) to get to this stage
- Requires that you have Dept approval of your Proposal

- Masters Research Proposal application (Faculty forms, different for Arts & Science)

http://www.science.canterbury.ac.nz/forms/m_research_proposal_application.pdf

+ Completed Dept Proposal form

+ Budget

+ IP agreement

Ethics - HEC or AEC needed before you can begin + Bicultural consultation

Compulsory Stages
of Candidature



Optional Stages

Suspension of study

Change of supervisor/topic/department

Change between full-time and part-time study

Extension to submission date

Faculty form application form

You, your supervisor, and the PGRC have to sign this before it goes to Faculty

Check that you have the right form for either Arts (MA) or Science (MSc)



Masters Research Proposal Application

Date Last Modified: (19 May 2009)

This form is to accompany the candidate's research proposal. Parts 1 to 5 should be completed by the candidate, part 6 by the proposed Senior Supervisor, part 7 by the candidate, the proposed Senior Supervisor, and the Head of Department/School*, and Parts 8 to 14 by the Head of Department/School* within two months of enrolment for the thesis work if full-time, or within four months if part-time or if full-time and concurrently enrolled in thesis and course work. Applicants are advised to read section L (Theses) of the General Course and Examination Regulations in the University Calendar.

**The HOD/HOS may delegate to a programme director or other suitable person, and in the case of a student enrolled in a Research Centre, the Director of the Centre should act as HOD/HOS.*

The research proposal itself should be presented in sufficient detail for the supervisor and Head of Department/School to be able to comment on its suitability. It should include a realistic planned timetable including deadlines to be met, a list of objectives, description of methods to be used, and it should provide details of any special supervisory arrangements (for example, provision of alternative supervision in the case of a supervisor taking study leave). There should be statements about who has been consulted about the project, including general staff whose assistance may be required in the course of the work. Research proposals involving a contract will need to acknowledge the signing of the contract by either the Research Office, or Canterbury for commercial work. If the research is dependent on the approval of the University's Human Ethics Committee or Animal Ethics Committee, or any other committee or organisation, the approval should normally have been obtained prior to registration of the proposal; in any case, such aspects of the research which require approval from an Ethics Committee shall not proceed until the approval has been acquired.

-
1. Full Name (Family Name first):
UC Student Number:
UC e-mail address:
Department/School:
Local residential address:

Faculty form application form

Supervision agreement is key part

Note

- Formal meetings
- Supervisor roles

7. SUPERVISION AGREEMENT

We agree that the following conditions govern the relationship as senior supervisor and candidate in relation to the thesis research which is the subject of this application:

- i. Regular formal supervision meetings, to take stock of progress, will occur at intervals of: _____
(A normal expectation is that these meetings occur at intervals of between one and three months, and they should not be confused with less formal and more frequent other meetings)
- ii. The student will endeavour to meet deadlines for work in progress, and the senior supervisor will comment on this work as soon as possible, which will then be discussed at formal supervision meetings. The senior supervisor undertakes to provide expert opinion on progress, and to indicate what needs to be done if progress is inadequate. Senior supervisor and student should maintain their own written records of these meetings.
- iii. The senior supervisor and student will make themselves familiar with the regulations concerning the degree for which the candidate is enrolled, including deadlines.
- iv. The senior supervisor will provide the candidate with information about relevant departmental/school handbooks, guides, websites about postgraduate studies, resources etc., and the candidate undertakes to read the information provided in such documents or on the website.
- v. The senior supervisor will discuss with the candidate the roles of any assistant, associate, and co-supervisors or members of any supervisory committee. A summary of their roles should be given here:
- vi. Responsibility for the correct format and technical writing aspects of the thesis rests with the candidate.
- vii. The candidate will fulfill departmental/school obligations to contribute to annual departmental/school conferences or research seminars.
- viii. In the event of the senior supervisor being absent on leave, or in the event of the supervisor retiring or resigning from the university, the department/school will take all reasonable steps to ensure continuity of supervision, having consulted the candidate with regard to the arrangements made.
- ix. The candidate has the right to request alternative supervision if he or she believes the project is being inadequately supervised. Any request should be made to the HOD/HOS, or if the HOD/HOS is the supervisor concerned, to the Faculty Dean.

The Departmental Proposal

Section 2 should form the core of your thesis introduction

College of Science
Department of Psychology



Department Masters Thesis Proposal Application MA / MSc

Updated January 2016

Section A: General Information

Section 1: Checklist

Section 2: Proposal

Section 2A – Summary of Research (maximum 1 page)

Section 2B – Objectives and Timeline of Proposed Research (maximum 1 page)

Section 2C – Description of Proposed Research (maximum 8 pages)

Section 2D – Description of Planned data analysis (maximum 1 page)

Section 3: References

Section 4: Budget (See Appendix A)

Section 4A – Budget

Section 4B – Detailed Justification of Budget

Section 4C – Other Financial Support

Section 5: Facilities Required

Section 6: Ethics Requirements

Budget

- See the Guidelines for advice
- Discuss with supervisor
- Normal range between \$200 and \$1200 - exceptions go to HoD
- Keep participant incentives under close control
- Get supervisor to sign

Section 4: Budget

Section 4A – Budget (use additional space for each category as necessary). You need to phase your budget spending across years if spending is likely to be outside of the Calendar Year.

Proposed Budget

Research Student:	
Thesis Title:	
Primary Supervisor:	

Category	Details	Cost Year 1	Cost Year 2	Overall Requested
Stationery (list items)				
Printing / Copying (specialist printing jobs, i.e. booklets/colour and large amounts of research related copying)				
Postage				
Participant costs (list type) (include justification of participant numbers)				
Equipment (list items)				
Advertising (list details)				
Laboratory Expenses (list details)				
Other (list details)				
Total Amount Sought		\$		
Approved in Principle by Supervisor:				
Amount Approved by Research Committee		\$		

Intellectual Rights Agreement

- This is an important agreement
- It safeguards both you and your supervisors
- It can be re-negotiated if circumstances change (e.g., you get a new supervisor)

Department of Psychology

Intellectual Rights Agreement

2015 version

DEPARTMENT of PSYCHOLOGY

University of Canterbury

Student-Staff Intellectual Rights Agreement Form

Concerning Copyright, Intellectual Rights (including Property Rights and Moral Rights), Data Access and Storage, and Publication & Dissemination.

Version adopted March, 2015

NB: This template is provided in electronic form so that it can easily be completed and modified if necessary. When completed it should be printed out and the hard copy signed by the parties to the agreement and lodged with the Department Administrator. PDF files/scanned copies may also be made and given to the signatories and any other interested parties. **Expand any section as required.**

Parties to the agreement

Student: Name: _____ ID# _____

Email address: _____

[If there are additional students involved, add their names by copying and pasting more of the above into the document].

University Staff

Name: _____ Role: _____

Name: _____ Role: _____

Name: _____ Role: _____

Different forms for different degrees

Carefully note that there are a different set of forms for

- APSY 660 Dissertation
- PhD

What do you do with the paper work?

1. Carefully check that you have the most up to date version of any forms – download from web
2. Carefully check that it has all been completed!
3. Make sure you and the supervisor have signed it everywhere those signatures are required!
4. Hand the completed forms to Robyn.

What happens next?

1. Everything is reviewed by the PGRC
2. Any gaps, no signatures, etc are noted and forms returned to student and supervisor for correction
3. PGRC signs on behalf of Dept
4. Robyn scans the forms and sends them to the Faculty
5. You will be advised by the Faculty that your thesis is Registered.
6. Once you have ethics approval, you are good to go!

General information (Psychology)

Postgraduate office space: The Department will endeavour to provide research students with office desk space and, but this may not be possible in all cases. Students will normally share an office with others. Applications must be made annually to the Administrative Services Manager, Room 222 and allocations are normally assigned in the first week of March.

Common room: A Postgraduate Common Room is available on Level 4, (Room 409, Lab Block)

General information (Psychology)

Seminars: The Department runs a seminar series throughout the year. Speakers include both members of the Department and external visitors. Students are expected to use their best endeavours to attend as many of these seminars as they are able to – they provide an excellent means of staying “up to date” with research across a variety of domains in psychology.

General information

Opportunities to present your research:

- Postgraduate Student Yearly Conference (Psychology)
- Annual Thesis Student Conference (university wide)
- Thesis-in-Three (usually in August)

Scholarships and awards: information on Scholarships website (including application deadlines)

<http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/future-students/fees-and-funding/scholarships-at-uc/>

Support for PG students:

<http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgraduate/support-for-postgraduate-students/>

General information

Academic Skills centre:

- <http://www.lps.canterbury.ac.nz/lsc/>

Statistics Workshops:

- The Statistics Consulting Unit of Maths & Stats (see monthly news letter from the Dean of PG research)

POSTGRAD NEWS

Dean of Postgraduate Research
Vice-Chancellor's Office

To: Thesis Students
From: Jon Harding, Dean of Postgraduate Research
Date: May 2016

In this edition

- § Need a quiet place to work?
- § Statistical Workshops
- § PGSA Writing Skills Workshop in Kaikoura
- § SOAR Advisors

General information

UCCareerHub for Students

- http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/uccareerhub_for_students.shtml

Careers, Internships and Employment Seminars

- http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/career_options/seminars.shtml

The END

Questions??