



# **FNU THESIS STRUCTURE GUIDELINE**

**Prepared by:** OPVCR

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## 1.0 Thesis

- 1.1 The thesis must discuss a significant research issue and be primarily the candidate's own work.
- 1.2 If approved by the Higher Degrees by Research Committee (HDRC), the thesis may include a component of creative works including performance, musical composition, exhibition, writing (poetry, fiction, script or other written literary forms), design, film, video, multimedia or other new media technologies and modes of presentation. If the thesis contains a performance or exhibition, it is necessary to provide a record of the performance or exhibition.
- 1.3 The thesis must be compiled in accordance with the authorised and established criteria of the *Higher Degrees by Research Policy and Procedure*.

## 2.0 Language of the Thesis

English is the medium of instruction at FNU and all thesis must be written in English. Candidates intending to write a thesis in another language shall attain formal approval from HDRC prior to the commencement of HDR programme.

## 2.0 Thesis Components

A thesis can be written and organised in the traditional thesis style. The thesis must contain an introductory or overview chapter, literature review, methodology, results, and scholarly discussion. It must include the following requirements:

### 2.1 Title Page

- a. The title of the thesis.
- b. The candidate's name and programme followed by Fiji National University.
- c. Thesis submission month and year.
- d. The submission statement: "A thesis submitted to Fiji National University in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of...".
- e. The universal copyright notice "©" followed by the candidate's name and the year the thesis was submitted.

### 2.2 A Detailed Table of Contents

The table of contents including the Title page; Originality statement; Copyright and Authenticity statements; Acknowledgement; Abstract; Abbreviations and acronyms; List of Tables, Figures and plates, Table of contents followed by Chapters, Reference and Appendix section.

### 2.3 Originality Statement

All thesis copies shall contain an Originality Statement. The statement must appear on a separate page in the preliminary pages of the thesis, preceding the Table of Contents. The following wording will be used:

#### **Originality Statement**

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work, and to the best of my knowledge it contains no materials previously published or written by another person or substantial proportions of material that have been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at Fiji National University or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the thesis. Any contribution made to the research by others, with whom I have worked at Fiji National University or elsewhere, is explicitly acknowledged in the thesis. Any contribution made to the research by others with whom I have worked at FNU or elsewhere is explicitly acknowledged in the thesis. I also declare that the intellectual content of this thesis is the product of my own work, except to the extent that assistance from others in the project's design and conception or in style, presentation, and linguistic expression is

acknowledged.

## **2.4 Copyright and Authenticity Statements**

The statements must appear on a separate page in the preliminary pages of the thesis, preceding the Table of Contents.

### **2.4.1 Copyright Statement**

I hereby grant the Fiji National University or its agents the right to archive and to make available my thesis or dissertation in whole or part in the University libraries in all forms of media, now or hereafter known, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1999. I retain all proprietary rights, such as patent rights. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of this thesis or dissertation. I have either used no substantial portions of the copyrighted material in my thesis, or I have obtained permission to use copyright material; where permission has not been granted.

Or

I have applied/will apply for a partial restriction of the digital copy of my thesis or dissertation.

### **2.4.2 Authenticity Statement**

I declare that the digital copy of the thesis in the library repository is in the equivalent status of the final version approved for the official award. Minor formatting issues may emerge during digital conversion.

## **2.5 An Abstract**

An abstract in the English language of the thesis is required. The abstract shall be 500 to 1000 words and should include:

- a. The aim/ objectives and the scope of the study;
- b. The research design and the methodology;
- c. Summary of the findings;
- d. The conclusion and recommendation (if any).

## **2.6 Acknowledgements**

Among other acknowledgements, the candidate must state the extent to which assistance (paid or unpaid) has been provided by staff members, candidates, research assistants, technicians or others in the collection of materials and data, in the design and construction of equipment, in the conduct of experiments, and the preparation of the thesis (including editorials).

Furthermore, it is suitable to acknowledge the oversight and guidance provided by the supervisors and consultants of the thesis.

Suggestion: Students should also extend appreciation to the participants, government, institutions and gatekeepers who give approval for data collection; governments and institutions who provided financial assistance and or scholarship.

## **2.7 An Introduction**

The introductory chapter should include, but not limited to, the background of the study, the purpose of the study, statement of the problem, the rationale, significance and the scope of the study and the overview of the dissertation structure.

## **2.8 A Comprehensive Review of the Relevant Literature**

The review of the literature must be consistent with disciplinary expectations.

## **2.9 Thesis Chapters**

The thesis should cover sections on the methodology and research findings.

## **2.10 Findings and Discussion of Findings**

- a. For Masters thesis, the two chapters can be combined;
- b. For PhD thesis, the two chapters can be combined or can be separated depending on the type of results/ findings; for instance, if a qualitative or mixed methods design is accommodated, the results chapter itself will be very bulky.
- c. The comprehensive discussion should include all the chapters of the thesis in the case of a manuscript based thesis and should not be a repetition of the individual chapters.

## **2.11 Conclusion**

The thesis should conclude with a general discussion which:

- a. Provides an integrated declaration on the results of the research described in the thesis, how they match the study goals outlined in the introduction and discussion, and how they advance or transform the discipline's knowledge.
- b. A PhD and Masters by Research thesis must state the elements of the thesis that are considered to be the original work of the scholar and distinct contributions to knowledge.  
Include directions for future research.

## **2.12 Referencing and Bibliography**

- a. The references should be consistent with a recognised discipline-appropriate referencing system, compiled in the EndNote reference management software package.
- b. Every source mentioned in the thesis must be referenced. This could be in the form of footnotes, endnotes or parenthetical (In-Text) citation.
- c. Bibliography citing the sources and materials used in carrying out the research.

## **3.0 Thesis Word Limits**

3.1 All thesis submitted for the HDR programme shall be within the prescribed word limit. The minimum and maximum word limits below apply that include footnotes but exclude tables, maps, bibliographies, and appendices:

- a. Masters by Research Degree: 40,000 - 60 000 words; or
- b. Doctor of Philosophy Degree: 60,000 - 100 000 words.

3.2 A thesis that does not confine to the prescribed word limit may only be accepted for examination if:

- a. Approval has been granted by the Chair of the HDR Committee; and
- b. The nominated examiners have agreed to examine the over-length thesis.

## **4.0 Word Counts**

### **4.1 What should a word count include?**

Any text is counted for evaluation purposes as part of the word count. The evaluation marker will include all phrases from the introduction to the conclusion. In some cases, a writer may need to use diagrams, tables, maps, and/or visual images for the evaluation task. These can be included in chapters if appropriate or as appendices. These should be labelled appropriately. Additionally, all visual content should be properly and clearly captioned.

4.1.1 A word count **does not** include the following:

- a. Title page
- b. Contents page
- c. Reference and or bibliography section
- d. Footnotes that are used to list author, date, and page numbers
- e. Appendices
- f. Tables
- g. Figures and legends

4.1.2 The word count **should** include:

- a. Headings
- b. Sub-headings
- c. In-text citations (refer to in-text citation information below)
- d. In-text referencing (used to list author, date, year and page numbers)

## **5.0 Title Pages, Abstracts and Summary Pages**

Having a title page, abstract or summary page is crucial, yet it is excluded in the tally of words. Now and again, a dynamic or synopsis page may have its very own word count; however, for the rest of the assessment, this is infrequently added to the word count.

## **6.0 Headings and Sub-Headings**

The word count includes all words inside the content body, including headings and subheadings, and is adequate as a major aspect of a count of words.

## **7.0 Data, Tables, and Graphs**

The author may require the utilisation of the graphs, tables, maps as well as visual pictures, which can be placed into a reference section or at significant thesis points. Every visual material ought to be appropriately and plainly depicted and ought not to be considered for the overall number of words.

## **8.0 In-Text Citations**

An in-text reference is used in two different ways; an immediate statement or paraphrase of work by another person falls inside the working body and is normally incorporated into the count of words.

## **9.0 Footnotes**

Footnotes should be used for citation information only and are not included towards the word count.

## **10.0 Appendices**

Appendices are useful to provide extra information relevant to the thesis, such as ethics approvals if applicable. All content in the appendices will be subject to examination. If appendices are used, they should be of relevance to the thesis and where the writer tries to build the argument using material or information affixed to the appendices.

## **11.0 References**

References should not be included in the word count. The word count does not include a reference list or bibliography needed for an assessment, but it will be assessed for precision and consistency.

## 12.0 Thesis Format

### 12.1 Script and Page Format

- a. A conventional font, size 12-point, using a font that is best for clarity, for example, Arial or Times New Roman.
- b. Line spacing must be 1.5.
- c. Left and right-hand margins should be 1 inch. Generally, 1.5 on the left and 1.0 on top, right and bottom.

### 12.2 Pagination

- a. The positioning of page numbers is optional. Pages with figures or illustrations may be numbered in sequence or left unnumbered. The chosen procedure must be used consistently throughout the thesis. Pagination must be carefully checked for correct sequence and completeness.
- b. Usually preliminary pages i.e all pages before page 1 of chapter one is in lower case Roman numbers i.e I,ii.iii.iv,v,vi.

### 12.3 Footnotes, References, and Appendices

- a. These should follow a scholarly style appropriate to the discipline.
- b. Footnotes are usually placed at the bottom of the page or as endnotes at the end of every chapter.
- c. Footnotes, endnotes and references should be consistent throughout the thesis.

### 12.4 Figures, Illustrations, Photographs and Digital Images

Any figure, table, graph, map or diagrammatic illustration including photographs shall follow discipline publication convention. If any of the above mentioned is larger than the standard page shall be reduced in size with appropriate resolution; and, if it cannot be accommodated to the standard page size shall be avoided unless absolutely necessary.

Where an entire page has been used for figure, table, map, or diagrammatic illustration including photographs the page can be numbered in sequence or left unnumbered. Legends or captions accompanying such full-page graphics must be presented on a separate page.

## 13.0 Editing of Theses by Third Parties

The candidates' supervisors shall read the thesis and provide directions for any improvements before approving for submission.

Supervisors should critique the thesis and provide editorial support on format and structure, language and illustrations, and completeness and consistency. This section must be read in conjunction with *HDR Policy and Procedure* Clause 5.18.

Students may use editors to edit their thesis. An editor may only be used for:

- a. copy-editing and proofreading; and
- b. providing advice on:
  - i. language, structure, style, syntax, and grammar;
  - ii. presenting arguments, flow, the connection of sentences, paragraphs, and sections;
  - iii. text accuracy and layout consistency;
  - iv. voice and tone, clarity of expression;
  - v. avoiding excessive information, repetition, ambiguity;
  - vi. checking of citations(intext/ parenthetical) references sections, referencing style, and quality; and
  - vii. completeness and consistency.



Any third-party assistance provided to a candidate must be declared in the acknowledgement section as per directions in the HDR Policy and Procedure.

## 14.0 Thesis Submission

### 14.1 Deadlines

- During the year student can request to submit their thesis at any time using the [Notification of Intention to Submit Form](#).
- Thesis submission by the specified deadline for specific graduation does not ensure graduation, nor does it exempt one from financial dues.

### 14.2 Draft Submission

- A draft version of the thesis can be uploaded as a single PDF or Word file in the assigned College dropbox of the **FNU Thesis Submission Portal** in Moodle.
- Where applicable, the thesis submission is checked through Turnitin to ensure the originality of the candidate's work.
- If the **Similarity** Index is high, the student has the opportunity to amend their work and re-upload their thesis.

### 14.3 Final Submission

- At the time of the final thesis submission, the student must be enrolled in their higher degree programme.
- The final thesis must be submitted/uploaded as a single PDF or Word file in the assigned College dropbox of the FNU Thesis Submission Portal in Moodle.
- Submission occurs once the student's Primary Supervisor approves the thesis for submission on the [Notification of Intention to Submit Form](#).
- Where applicable, the thesis submission is checked through Turnitin and an originality report is generated and sent to the student and supervisor.
- Once submitted, no changes to the thesis are permitted.
- Should an external examiner require a hardcopy of the thesis, it is the candidate's responsibility to provide a printed copy to OPVCR for dispatch to the examiner.

## 15.0 Approval Agency

Senate

## 16.0 Revision Log

This table will be used to insert the dates of the different versions made on the policy/procedure/guidelines.

Version	Date of Approval	Comment
1.0	11 December 2019	Approved by the Senate
2.0	2 March 2021	Approved by the Senate

## 17.0 Policy Sponsor

Pro Vice Chancellor Research

## 18.0 Contact Person

The following person may be contacted in relation to this Policy:

Manager Research Data and Analytics and [EO-PVCR](#)

Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor Research

FNU

Ph: 3394 000 Ext: 2042