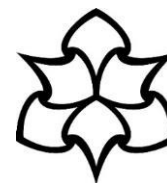


Guidance on Thesis Submission for Postgraduate Research Degrees

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New from academic year 2020-2021

The Guidance on Thesis Submission for Postgraduate Research Degrees is reviewed annually. Changes may be made throughout the year, so please refer to the [Graduate School website](#) for the latest version of this document.

This document is owned and updated by the Manchester Metropolitan University Graduate School on behalf of Academic Board. Queries should be directed to the Graduate School (gsresearchdegrees@mmu.ac.uk).

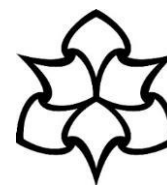
Introduction

Manchester Metropolitan University produces a suite of documents that outline the formal regulations and procedures for postgraduate research degrees.

The Guidance on Thesis Submission for Postgraduate Research Degrees provides the operational detail to support students with the information around the structure, format and presentation of their thesis for examination.

This document should be read alongside the regulations and the other supporting documents available on the [Graduate School webpages](#).

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Document Title:	Guidance on Thesis Submission for Postgraduate Research Degrees		
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Equality Impact Assessment			
Approved By:	Research Degrees Committee		
Implementation Date	October 2020		
Amendments since approval	Details of Revision	Date of Revision	Revisions approved by:
3.2 Declaration about thesis content	Clarification that work should not have been submitted for another award	4/03/2021	Research Degrees Committee



1. Advice for postgraduate researchers and staff

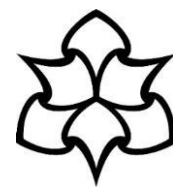
1.1 Standard Thesis Submission Timeline

Action	Timeframe (cumulative)
Student Submits thesis to Turnitin to review report prior to submission	Chapters submitted as they are drafted. Draft thesis submitted as soon as available and prior to Notification of Intention to Submit.
Student Submits Notice of Intention to Submit form to the Graduate School	3 months prior to submission
Student - submits the electronic version/copy of the thesis to the Graduate School - completes and signs the thesis submission form in SkillsForge - Confirms that they have no outstanding fees to pay - Ensures that they have completed re-enrolment on the programme	By the maximum period of registration
E-thesis is submitted through Turnitin and the originality report is generated and sent to the Principal Supervisor for checking The Principal Supervisor checks the originality report and signs the declaration form in SkillsForge. The thesis is sent to the examiners. <u>If there is an oral examination:</u> The Principal Supervisor liaises with the independent chair, the examiners and the student to decide on a mutually convenient location and time for the oral examination.	Within 2 working weeks of submission Normally within 12 working weeks of submission

At the end of the standard registration period, the submission of a research student's thesis for examination is made solely at their discretion.

While it would be unwise to submit their thesis against the advice of their supervisors, it is the student's right to do so. Equally, a supervisor's agreement to submission does not guarantee the degree will be awarded.

Permission is required to submit prior to the end of the standard registration period.



1.2 Request for early submission

Early submission is defined as submission before the end of the standard period of registration. A student can request to submit early by submitting a Request to Submit Early form for consideration by the Graduate School. A request to submit up to three months before the standard registration period will normally be approved.

Students cannot submit before they have completed the minimum period of registration as noted in the [Regulations for Postgraduate Research degrees](#) for the student's programme.

For all research degrees, the registration period commences on the date indicated in the student's offer letter.

1.3 Request to enter a writing up period

If a student is unable to submit the thesis by the end of their period of supervised study, they may be eligible to enter a writing up period to allow additional time to prepare and write up their thesis in advance of submission. This will commence immediately after the end of the standard registration period. If applicable, the writing up period will be approved at the final formal review meeting. The maximum time allowed for the writing up period is detailed in the [Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees](#) for the relevant programme. A writing up fee will be charged at the end of the standard period of supervised study for any student who doesn't submit by this point. Fee details can be found in the [Regulations for the Payment of University Fees and other related Financial Information for Postgraduate Research Students](#).

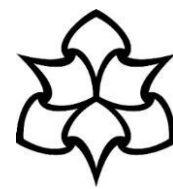
2. Plagiarism, Copyright and Research Misconduct

2.1 Plagiarism

Copying and presenting someone else's work without acknowledgement may be construed as attempting to pass that work off as one's own. This is called plagiarism. Whether or not the intention is accidental or deliberate, it is still plagiarism. Manchester Metropolitan University takes the act of plagiarism very seriously. It is important for researchers to understand this when they are writing their thesis and/or journal articles originating from the thesis.

The supervisory team should ensure the research student is able to:

- Agree and document what work was carried out and by whom
- Be clear about all those who had input into the research
- Be clear in referencing work obtained from the research, citing all work that has been published and/or is in print
- Use the accepted referencing system, including the use of direct quotes



Research students are expected to maintain the highest professional integrity in research practice and publication. Where there are allegations of plagiarism, or any other form of academic or research misconduct, this will be investigated through the [Investigation of Misconduct in Research](#) and the [Procedure for Handling Academic Misconduct](#). Examples of what is considered as academic and research misconduct are identified within these procedures.

If a research student needs further advice and guidance on writing support, they should contact either their supervisory team, the [Academic and Study Skills Team](#), or a Student Support Officer.

2.2 Copyright guidance

Students must have a full understanding and awareness of copyright issues and when it is necessary to seek permission to use other's work to avoid infringing copyright. The [Library's Copyright guide](#) includes helpful information for researchers. Anyone using/citing third party material in their own work is required to make a clear reference to the name of the owner of the original piece of work. See Appendix A for further details.

3. Submitting the thesis and the oral examination

The following is a step-by-step guide to the procedures for the submission of a research student's thesis.

To successfully submit a thesis, a student must ensure that they are currently enrolled as a student of the University, and that they have no outstanding fees.

If a thesis is not submitted before the end of the maximum period of registration, the student will be withdrawn from the University and deemed unable to submit, unless further approval is granted due to exceptional circumstances using the Application for Extension to Thesis Submission Deadline form in SkillsForge.

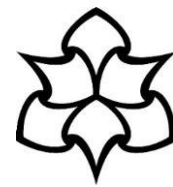
3.1 Preparation of the thesis

The University has specific requirements for thesis presentation that are detailed below. Students should note that their thesis cannot be examined until the format is correct.

To prepare for thesis submission and the oral examination, students can attend relevant workshops and explore online resources. It is recommended that students and their Principal Supervisor arrange a mock viva.

The University Library holds copies of successful Master's by Research, MPhil and doctoral theses, which are available for reference. Students may also wish to look on [e-space](#), the University's open-access digital repository, for more recent submissions.

If the research includes the presentation of work in a form other than written (for example an installation or a performance), reference to this should be made in the Initial Project Review meeting and should continue to be discussed at subsequent milestone reviews. If it becomes clear at a later stage that the thesis will involve work in a non-written format, then students should contact the Graduate School as soon as possible.



Research students are required to submit their work to [Turnitin](#) (accessed via the PGR Hub page in Moodle) prior to formally submitting their thesis to ensure there are no issues with citation or references. It can also help to improve academic writing, as students will receive feedback on their use of quotations, citation and referencing. Students should submit their work to Turnitin as they write each chapter, and ensure any issues with plagiarism are resolved at an early stage.

3.2 Declaration about thesis content

Research students on submitting their thesis are asked to confirm:

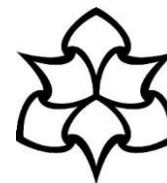
- that no material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for another academic award
- that any material which has been used for any other award or qualification is detailed. This should include any published material submitted by any other student of Manchester Metropolitan or any other institution

Where material has been used for another award or qualification, prior approval must have been obtained in advance, and at as early a stage as possible. This includes material which has been jointly authored and included in a thesis submitted by another student.

3.2 Thesis format for examination

The research student must ensure that the format of their thesis is in accordance with the following requirements for their examination:

- (a) Theses shall normally be in A4 format, although permission may be given for a thesis to be submitted in another format if necessary for the research. Permission needs to be requested and approved in advance of submission.
- (b) The thesis shall be submitted in typescript and should be submitted electronically (either as a pdf or Word document) via email.
- (c) Where documents are large and contain lots of additional information e.g. tables and images, a text only version should also be submitted in order to permit timely report to be produced through Turnitin.
- (d) The margin at the left-hand binding edge of the page shall not be less than 40mm; other margins shall not be less than 15mm.
- (e) Double or 1.5 spacing shall be used in the typescript except for indented quotations or footnotes where single spacing may be used.
- (f) Pages shall be numbered consecutively through the main text, including photographs and/or diagrams included as whole pages.
- (g) The title page shall give the following information (please see Appendix 3):
 - i. Full title of the thesis (in the format that you would like it to appear on your degree certificate e.g. not in capital letter or lower-case text)
 - ii. Full name of the author
 - iii. Award for which the thesis is being submitted
 - iv. Title(s) of the department(s) or other unit(s) of the University
 - v. Collaborating Establishment(s), if any



vi. Year of submission (not including the month)

(h) Arial, Tahoma or Calibri font shall be used and the font size shall be 12 point, as standard. Alternative fonts may be used for practice-based elements if necessary for the research.

(i) Diagrams or graphs should be clear and legible and any colours used should be distinguishable.

(j) Copies of relevant material published by the student in advance of the examination of the thesis should be bound within the initial thesis submitted for examination or placed in an adequately secured pocket at the end of the thesis.

(j) A single page abstract of approximately 300 words should be included in the thesis. This should provide a synopsis of the thesis stating the nature and scope of the work undertaken and the contribution made to the knowledge of the subject treated.

(l) The text of the thesis should normally not exceed the following length (excluding the abstract and ancillary data such as footnotes, bibliographies, diagrams and references):

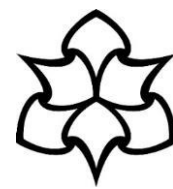
Programme	Word limit
PhD	80,000 words
MPhil	50,000 words
Master's (by Research)	30,000 words
Doctor of Clinical Science	40,000 words
Doctor of Education	60,000 words
Doctor of Health and Social Care	60,000 words

It should be noted that the maximum limit is not intended to be interpreted as a requirement for the length of the thesis, and that in certain disciplines the thesis may be shorter.

3.2.1 [Word limits for practice-based research](#)

Students registered to conduct research within a practice-based context may be permitted other variants of assessment methods. This would normally be based on a thesis with a lower word limit, and a practice-based element (for example a live performance, exhibition or calculations and equations). Where this applies, and a student requires alternative examination arrangements, they must inform the Graduate School and Research Degrees Committee in advance of thesis submission in order for appropriate examination arrangements to be made.

Where the balance of text and practice-based elements differs to that outlined in the degree programme regulations, Principal Supervisors should seek advice from the Graduate School.



3.2.2 Theses which are longer than the maximum word limit

In exceptional circumstances a student can apply to submit a thesis that exceeds the maximum word limit. Students should seek further advice from their Principal Supervisor.

3.3 Editorial Support on the Thesis

When a research student submits their thesis, it must be their own work (except where the Regulations permit the inclusion of appropriately referenced collaborative research or work). Guidance on the use of proof-readers is available in the university's Proofreading Guidance.

3.4 Alternative Format Thesis Submission

Students may wish to submit their thesis in an alternative format. This allows doctoral students

- a) undertaking practice-led research to submit practice-work that constitutes up to 50% of the intellectual contribution of the PhD. They will also submit critical, contextual or reflective text of at least 50% of the maximum word count for the degree.

The intellectual contribution of the practice-based part of the thesis is a matter of academic judgement and may not be reflected through word count.

- b) to submit material that has been published, has been submitted or accepted for publication, or is in a format intended for publication

- If submitting published material the thesis should include a statement that provides a clear indication of the candidate's contribution to each publication
- Any published work which is included should meet the [outcome statements for the degree](#).
- A Contribution to Publication form must be attached to each publication, indicating the extent (%) of the candidate's contribution, which should be signed by any co-author(s) of the publication, and their particular role/contribution towards the publication.
- The structure and format of the submission may vary and include original material and a range of media such as journal articles, performances, exhibitions and digital media.

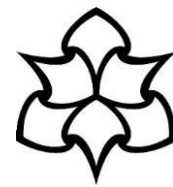
Students should discuss this with their supervisory team at the Initial Project Review and indicate on the Notice of Intention to Submit form of their intention to submit a thesis in an alternative format.

Examiners must ensure that the alternative format thesis meets the requirements of the degree as stipulated in the Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees. Please note that even if a thesis includes material that has already been published or accepted for publication, there is no guarantee that the examination team will recommend the award for which the student is being examined.

- c) Students should refer to the [Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees - PhD by Published Works](#) in relation to the structure requirements of their analytical commentary.

4. Submission of the thesis for examination

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the thesis is submitted for examination to the Graduate School on or before their thesis submission deadline date.



4.1 Submission requirements

To successfully submit a thesis, a student should ensure all of the following:

- i. One electronic copy of the thesis (in pdf or Word format) is submitted via email.
- ii. The declaration form is completed via SkillsForge.

There is no requirement to submit any physical copies of your thesis.

When the student submits the thesis for examination, they must ensure that they are currently enrolled as a student of the University, and that they have no outstanding fees. If there are any fees outstanding, this will cause delays to the examination of the thesis.

4.2 Turnitin

The submitted thesis is processed through Turnitin for plagiarism checking before it is sent out to the examination team. The Principal Supervisor will be sent a report (generated through the Turnitin process) and will be asked to check the details to confirm that no plagiarism is identified within the thesis. Where anyone involved in the examination considers that there may be plagiarism, this is investigated in accordance with the University's [Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research](#) and the [Procedure for Handling Academic Misconduct](#).

4.3 Timeline

The standard timeline from submission to viva examination is up to 12 working weeks. In some cases, arrangements may take longer. This may be due to a late submission of the Notification of Intention to Submit form or a delay in nominating examiners.

The normal timeframe following the submission of the thesis is noted in the [Guidance on the Examination of Postgraduate Research Degrees](#).

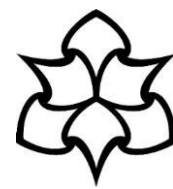
5. Nomination and appointment of examiners

The Principal Supervisor nominates and applies for the approval of examiners. Full details of the nomination and appointment process are detailed in the Guidance on the Examination of Postgraduate Research Degrees.

It is important that the student has no contact with their examiner(s) between their appointment and the oral examination.

6. Request for confidentiality (thesis embargo period)

If a student requires their thesis to remain confidential, an application must be made to the Graduate School. A Request for Thesis Embargo form must be submitted to the Graduate School no later than the approval of examiners form, and must be supported by the



student's Principal Supervisor. The form must provide details of the reasons for the confidentiality request and the duration required.

An application for confidentiality will normally only be approved in order to enable a patent application to be filed, if there is commercially sensitive data, or to protect the legitimate interest of stakeholders.

The period of confidentiality shall not exceed two years from the date of the oral examination in the first instance. At the end of that period, if confidentiality is still required, a further application can be made.

When the research student submits their thesis, they should state on the thesis submission form on SkillsForge that a request for confidentiality has been submitted. This will also be confirmed after the oral examination on the EThOS deposit agreement form.

During this confidentiality period, only the abstract will be published on e-space until the embargo period has lapsed, when the full thesis will be displayed.

7. Submission of the final thesis

Upon completion, the research student is required to submit an electronic copy of their final approved thesis directly to the Graduate School via email. The University does not require a hard-bound copy of the thesis.

The electronic copy will be deposited in the University's open access digital repository, [e-space](#), and made available in the [British Library Electronic Theses Online System \(EThOS\)](#).

The electronic thesis must be submitted as one complete document and can be submitted either in Word or pdf format.

In order for the degree to be completed and awarded, the research student must submit the following to the Graduate School:

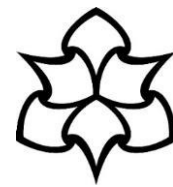
- An electronic copy of their thesis (via email)
- A separate title page and abstract page
- A completed exit form in SkillsForge, countersigned by their Principal Supervisor
- A completed EThOS Deposit Agreement Form. The student should indicate here if a thesis embargo period has been approved (see above).

8. Completion and award

Subsequent to submission of all the required documentation, the formal notification of their award normally takes two to three working weeks.

For all students the date of award will be the date when the Graduate School confirms to the Awards and Conferments team that the student has completed all the academic and administrative requirements.

The student must provide the Graduate School with the address to which they wish their formal notification, certificate and invitation to the awards ceremony to be sent. This can be provided on their exit (RDEXIT) form.



The awarding of the degree can take place any time of the year.

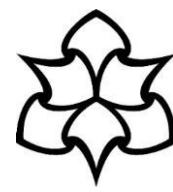
8.1 [Collection of certificates and award ceremonies](#)

It will take approximately four working weeks following the completion of the award for the certificate to be ready.

Certificates are normally posted out to the student's permanent address or the address they identify on their exit form. They can also be collected from the Student Hub in the Business School (check their web pages to confirm the opening hours). Students will need to indicate that they wish to collect in person in the "Address" section of the RD-EXIT form in SkillsForge

The student will be invited to the University's awards ceremony to receive the congratulations of the Vice-Chancellor. This is normally held annually in July at a venue in Manchester.

If the student is awarded their degree between May and June, their certificate will be presented to them at the ceremony. If they do not attend, it will be posted out shortly after that date.



Appendix 1: Copyright and intellectual property rights

This appendix draws attention to some of the main issues for research students and their supervisory teams regarding copyright and intellectual property.

What is intellectual property?

Intellectual property, of which copyright is a form, is a system of interconnected legislation that protects the creative output of the mind. Nobody can own ideas, but once you write or record your idea in a permanent form it becomes your 'intellectual property'. Under UK law (Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988), once you have created something you then automatically own the copyright to your intellectual property.

What is copyright?

Copyright is a form of intellectual property that protects original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works, as well as layouts or typographical arrangements of published work, sound recordings, film and broadcast.

Copyright gives the creator of the work the exclusive rights to copy, license, rent, lend, perform, show the work to the public, make an adaptation of the work or translate a work.

For example, when you write a letter to someone, the recipient owns the letter, but the writer keeps the copyright. Buying a book does not buy the right to copy the text. Supervising a research degree does not give the supervisor copyright to the content of their student's thesis.

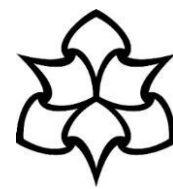
What can I copy?

The University holds a license from the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) to permit photocopying from books, loose-leaf works, journals, periodicals, conference proceedings, law reports, and volumes of short stories and poems.

- A book: up to 10% or one complete chapter (whichever is the greater)
- An issue of a serial publication: up to 10% or one whole article (whichever is the greater)
- A set of conference proceedings: up to 10% or one whole article (whichever is the greater)
- A published report of judicial proceedings: up to 10% or the entire report of one single case (whichever is the greater)
- An anthology of short stories or poems: up to 10% or one short story or one poem of not more than 10 pages in length (whichever is the greater)

Further information including what is not included in the license can be found in the [Manchester Metropolitan University Intellectual Property Rights Policy](#).

Important: all copied material must acknowledge the author, if not, it is deemed as plagiarism. The University treats acts of plagiarism very seriously.



Advice for postgraduate research students and staff

Because research degrees involve creating knowledge and understanding, the law of copyright and intellectual property affects research students and the work that they do for their degree. It is a complicated area of law, and the University's [Legal team](#) will be happy to give advice.

The details relating to students have been extracted below:

4.2. Students

4.2.1. If an individual enrolled on a course of study or research at the University (a "Student") generates IPR pursuant to his/her studies or research, the standard position is that the Student will own such IPR, unless the Student:

4.2.1.1. is a postgraduate student and receives a University scholarship in which case such IPR will be owned by the University subject to any alternative arrangements with the Student;

4.2.1.2. is a postgraduate student and receives a bursary from, or has his/her fees paid or subsidised by, a sponsor in which case ownership of such IPR will be subject to the arrangement between the Student, University and Sponsor;

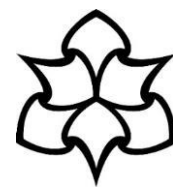
4.2.1.3. generates IPR which builds upon existing IPR generated by, or is jointly invented with University Employees or Associates (in which case the Student will be required to assign such IPR to the University and in respect of revenue generated by that IPR, the Student will be entitled to apportioned income in accordance with the policy); or

4.2.1.4. is also an Employee of the University and developed the IPR in that capacity (in which case the Student is treated as a University Employee for the purposes of this policy).

4.2.2. The University may be willing to support protection and commercialisation of student-owned IPR. Students should in the first instance notify their course tutor who will then contact the RKE Office on behalf of the Student. Following consultation with the Faculty Head of RKE and/or Head of University Research Centre as appropriate, and the students involved, the Director of RKE will be responsible for the final decision as to whether the University wishes to protect and commercialise the student-owned IPR through the existing disclosure and assessment route. If the University agrees to support protection and commercialisation of student owned IPR the Student will be required to assign such IPR to the University and in respect of revenue generated by that IPR, the Student will be entitled to apportioned income in accordance with the policy.

E-space

[e-space](#) is Manchester Met's Institutional Repository in which published research outputs are archived and made available online. Government policy is directing universities to make all of their research outputs open access, and depositing the correct version of publications into e-space fulfils this obligation. The Library has produced a [guide to open access publication](#) to explain this process in more detail.



Embargoing your thesis

On completion of a research student's degree, their thesis will be archived in e-space. This means the full text will be available online. If they do not want the full text to be seen online they may request that it be embargoed for a limited period in advance of thesis submission.

Theses are public documents and copies can be requested under Freedom of Information Act and therefore the reason for embargoing a thesis should be valid and fall into one of the following categories which correlate to the various exemptions under the Act.

Accordingly, an embargo on a thesis *must* be requested (and complied with) for the following reasons:

a. Commercial Contract

The contract with a sponsor states that the research must remain confidential for a given number of years.

b. Patent Pending

The University or a sponsor has lodged or intends to imminently lodge a patent application relating to an invention described in a thesis. The thesis should be embargoed until after publication of the patent by the relevant patent office.

c. Third-party Copyright

Theses containing un-cleared third party copyright material should be embargoed until the material is no longer under copyright, unless this can otherwise be removed from the thesis to a separate embargoed appendix.

An embargo *may* be requested for the following reasons:

d. Publication Pending

Some publishers consider publicly available theses as prior publications. If you have not finished publishing from the thesis, you may request that the thesis is embargoed.

e. Ethical Considerations/data protection

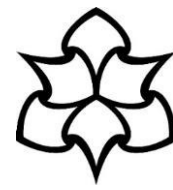
This will have been considered when the research proposal was being considered by the ethics committee.

f. Other

This needs to be a substantial reason and will depend on the type of research undertaken. This reason must be justifiable to demonstrate that an embargo outweighs the public interest in access to the research.

Useful links

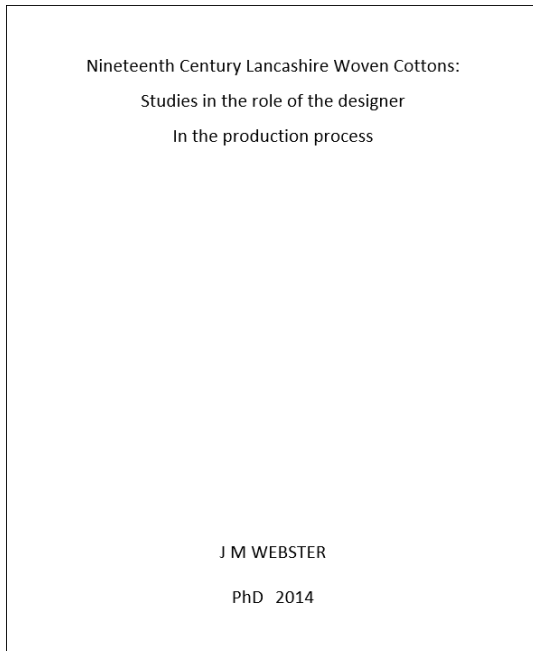
- [Guidelines on Good Research Practice](#)
- [The UK Copyright service](#)
- [Office for Public Sector Information](#)
- [Copyright Licensing Agency](#)
- [Jisc - Intellectual Property Rights.](#)



Appendix 2: Specimen front covers and title page

Text on front covers should be point size 24. For further details on formatting your thesis, see above, 'Thesis format for examination'.

Specimen PhD front cover
(for illustrative purposes)



Specimen PhD title page for PhD
(for illustrative purposes)

