

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
School of Public Health

Master of Public Health (Hons)
Master of International Public Health (Hons)
MM (Clin Epi) / MSc M (Clin Epi)

NOTES FOR DISSERTATION EXAMINERS

- 1) Candidates for the degree of Master of Public Health with Honours proceed by coursework followed by supervised research leading to a dissertation. The minimum standard of performance required is substantially below that of the degrees of Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Medicine in respect of originality and publishable content, but not with respect to care in presentation.
- 2) Candidates submitting a dissertation have completed one year's full-time or 2 years' part-time coursework and research equivalent to 3 months or about half a semester of full-time study. The dissertation comprises 20% of the requirements for the award of the degree. Both the coursework and the dissertation must be passed satisfactorily for the degree to be awarded.

A dissertation will demonstrate competence in defining a problem (or other matter), summarising its main features and relevant literature, defining research aims and or questions, using appropriate methods to investigate the matter, interpreting and discussing the results, and drawing conclusions and making recommendations. A dissertation may take one of the following forms:-

- (a) A paper dealing with research on a specific topic which could be acceptable for publication in a peer-reviewed scientific, academic or professional journal.

or

- (b) A report concerning certain health problems, their frequency, patterns and impact or their causes and proposed solutions, which would be suitable for presentation to a government department; independent agency or inquiry, the private health industry or an international health or aid organisation.

For (a) or (b) the paper or report would normally be supplemented by appendices. The main body of the dissertation should be direct and concise, and should include a short summary. The appendices should be used for in-depth exposition of the methods, more detailed presentation of source of results, a full bibliography, or an expanded discussion of certain arguments, as required.

or

- (c) A formal academic composition which clearly states the context and importance or relevance of the subject matter, specifies the research question(s), describes the methods used and results obtained, critically discusses the methods and results in the light of existing knowledge and ends with the formulation of conclusions or recommendations.

3. Please present your report in three sections as follows: -

(a) Final recommendation on award

It has been found in practice that the final recommendation of an examiner can fall into one of the following categories:

- (i) That the dissertation be accepted as satisfactory.
- (ii) That, provided one or more emendations of a reasonably substantial nature (rather than purely typographical) are made to the satisfaction of the Head of School, the dissertation be accepted as satisfactory.
- (iii) That although the dissertation does not meet the standard expected for the degree, the candidate be allowed to revise and resubmit it.
- (iv) That the dissertation be rejected and that the degree *not* be awarded.

(b) General comments

Please state concisely the grounds on which you base your recommendations indicating, where appropriate, the strength and weaknesses of the dissertation. You may also wish to make suggestions that would be helpful to the candidate in preparing the material for publication, but which do not require modification in the dissertation.

(c) Corrections

On a separate sheet, please list specific corrections or changes that you would like to be made to the dissertation if the award is recommended subject to emendations (category a (ii) above).