

PREPARATION AND EXAMINATION OF THESES/PORTFOLIOS
GRADUATE STUDIES
SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC

Introduction

Following are guidelines for students preparing a thesis and/or portfolio for submission as part of graduate study at Sydney Conservatorium of Music, and information on the examination process of theses/portfolios. It is important that these guidelines are used in consultation with students' supervisors, and that matters of style, referencing and formatting are discussed by students with their supervisors early in the writing stage. This will ensure that valuable time is not lost in re-writing documents, and that final documents will be as comprehensive and consistent as possible.

The Conservatorium Library holds archival copies of all research theses undertaken at the Conservatorium, and students should acquaint themselves with matters of formatting, contents and style by looking at some of these during the thesis writing process. For a list of Conservatorium research theses go to the Library catalogue and in Advanced Search **Keyword**, select 'Con Music' as **Location** and 'USYD Thesis' for **Material Type**, then enter the word 'thesis' in the Search space.

Style, style guides and referencing software

The term 'style' is used in academic writing to refer to the protocols used for presenting information. This covers the following: typing/word processing, structuring of theses and sections within them, methods for referencing the work of others, conventions for the use of headings and sub-headings, details of bibliographies, etc. Numerous style guides are available and it is an expectation that students have selected and are using an appropriate one. The terms 'publication manual' and 'manual for writers' are also used for style guides. The use of a Template set up in your word processing software can save a lot of time and effort in preparing a thesis.

Different academic areas use different style guides and different ways of presenting information. For example, historically based research is usually organised using a footnoting system in which the sources of information are indicated by numbered

footnotes. Social science disciplines tend to favour the author/date system, in which quoted material is referenced immediately at the point of use by indicating authors' names and the date/s of publication in brackets with full bibliographic details provided in a References or Bibliography at the conclusion of a thesis. Within each of these different types of styles there are numerous rules governing punctuation, the order in which information is given, and the type of information that is expected. Consistency is the rule; once a style has been adopted, it is essential that it is maintained throughout a document.

EndNote software for managing your referencing is freely available to students. This can help with correctly formatting your references in whichever style you are using. Download this software through the *EndNote* link on the Library website. Look out for online tutorials and workshops to assist you use this software. *EndNote* also helps you keep control of bibliographic materials through the database you create with it.

A number of style guides are provided in the Reference section of the Conservatorium Library. Others are available online and can be located through search engines.

Front matter

The opening pages of a thesis/portfolio are referred to as the **front matter**. In the front matter, pages are numbered in small Roman numerals (do not number the title page); Arabic numbers, commencing at '1', are used for the body of a document.

The front matter contains the following in the order shown:

Title page

Statement of originality

Abstract

Preface (and optional separate Acknowledgements)

Table of Contents

1. Title page. Sample title pages are provided later in this document. Note that the information on the title page is centred. The title of the work appears in upper case; the author's name appears next ('by' is not used and no earlier qualifications are cited); at the bottom of the page there must be one of the following statements, depending on the type of work and candidature. Some degree programs require a thesis as a **partial requirement**, others require a thesis as **fulfilment** of study.

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of
requirements for the degree of
Master of Music (Music Education)
Sydney Conservatorium of Music
University of Sydney
2005

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Sydney Conservatorium of Music
University of Sydney
2010

Composition students please note that as you are required to submit both a portfolio and a thesis, your title pages should reflect this and should indicate **partial fulfilment** in both cases.

A portfolio of compositions submitted in
partial fulfilment of requirements for the degree of
Master of Music (Composition)
Conservatorium of Music
University of Sydney
2005

2. Statement of originality. Please make sure that the following is included at the bottom of the second page of the front matter.

I declare that the research presented here is my own original work and has not been submitted to any other institution for the award of a degree.

Signed:

Date:

3. Abstract. The abstract provides the reader with a succinct summary of the thesis. It cannot be more than one page of typing in length.

4. Preface and Acknowledgements. A Preface is normally needed in doctoral theses but may not be found necessary in a Masters thesis. Discuss with your thesis supervisor if in doubt. The sources of the research are stated in general terms in the Preface. (These will of course be detailed within the body of the thesis. If an ethics approval has been obtained for the research this will be stated in the preface. Any collaboration in the research or professional assistance is to be stated here. Inclusion of a separate section of Acknowledgements is at the discretion of the writer. It is considered polite to indicate the contribution of those who assisted in the research.

5. Table of contents. There are set ways of presenting the information in an Index/Table of Contents. This should be discussed with a supervisor and relevant sections of style guides should be consulted. In the case of composition portfolios, these also require an index/table of contents showing the titles and page numbers of all compositions, etc.

Basic formatting considerations

A thesis/portfolio is to be presented with the following formatting:

- Theses are presented on A4 size paper
- The paper must be acid free
- Composition portfolios can use paper sizes up to but not larger than A3
- Use 1.5 or double spacing
- Printing is single sided
- Left margins of three centimetres and right margins of two centimetres (the left margin allows for binding)
- Each chapter/composition commences on a new page
- All musical examples, tables, diagrams, figures, etc, are numbered consecutively throughout and labelled correctly

Composition students should consult supervisors over the presentation of scores and portfolios.

Some sample title pages are provided below.

**IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY: A STUDY OF MUSIC
IN INNER-CITY SYDNEY**

Mary Henderson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of requirements for the degree of
Master of Music (XXXXXX)

Sydney Conservatorium of Music
University of Sydney
2005

**IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY: A STUDY OF MUSIC
IN INNER-CITY SYDNEY**

Mary Henderson

A thesis submitted in fulfilment
of requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Sydney Conservatorium of Music
University of Sydney
2005

PORTFOLIO OF COMPOSITIONS

James Milson

A portfolio submitted in partial fulfilment
of requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Sydney Conservatorium of Music
University of Sydney
2005

PORTFOLIO OF COMPOSITIONS

ANALYTICAL NOTES

James Milson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Sydney Conservatorium of Music
University of Sydney
2005

The examination process

The examination of theses/portfolios follows a process mandated by the University and set out in both the University Calendar and the *Postgraduate Handbook*. Three months before submission of a thesis/portfolio you must lodge a Notice of Intention to Submit Thesis, available from Student Administration or from the Conservatorium website. The requirement that this occur three months before submission allows the Conservatorium time to contact and confirm examiners. This form also allows you the opportunity to discuss suitable examiners for your thesis/portfolio with your supervisor; however, the decision over examiners is made by the Graduate Studies Committee of the Conservatorium and is a confidential matter. Master's theses/portfolios are examined by two examiners, doctoral ones by three.

Theses/portfolios are submitted to Student Administration. At the Master's level, this requires three copies; doctoral submissions require four copies. Theses/portfolios are submitted in soft binding, also called perfect binding (like a paperback). The submission must be accompanied by a statement from your supervisor on the form provided on the Conservatorium website in the postgraduate research student section.

A thesis/portfolio can be submitted electronically; however, this requires notification and acceptance of intention to do so.

Once the reports have been received from all examiners, a student is required to carry out any corrections, alterations, emendations or re-writing stipulated by the examiners and to the satisfaction of the Conservatorium. Only when this has been approved does final binding take place. This is hard (permanent) binding and one copy is required in this form for placing in the Conservatorium Library as an archival copy. Once this has been received, graduation can be organised.

It is also recommended that an electronic archival copy of a thesis/portfolio be submitted to the University on the following website:

<http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/theses/deposit.html>

The following flow chart sets out the process of candidature from intention to submit the thesis to graduation and the responsibilities of students, supervisors, the University and the Conservatorium:

Step	Responsibility	Comments
Intention to submit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student & Supervisor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 months before submission • to GSC for approval of examiners • to Student Admin for setting up of examination process
Submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain supervisor's approval that thesis is ready to submit • 3 copies for masters degrees • 4 copies for doctorates • copies are soft bound (perfect binding) for examining
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor 	Statement of readiness to examine
Examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Admin 	
Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of School/Associate Dean Graduate Studies 	Collates reports, consults with supervisor if necessary, reports result to GSC
Corrections, emendations, etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student with supervisor's advice 	To be completed and agreed to by supervisor, Chair of Unit, or Head of School/Associate Dean as appropriate
Notification of completed changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor to Head of School – Head of School/Associate Dean to Student Admin - noted to GSC 	
Hard binding of thesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student 	
Submission of one archival copy with Student Admin for lodgement with Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student and Student Admin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation to be completed by Student Admin • Graduation not allowed until archival copy is lodged

Copy sent to Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student Admin and Library	
Graduation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student Admin	

For further information see:

Sydney Conservatorium of Music, *Postgraduate Handbook 2010*

University of Sydney, *Postgraduate Studies Handbook*

SUPRA *Thesis Guide*