



Higher Degree Theses

Approved by: Academic Board (on dates noted below)
Contact: Chair, Graduate Studies Committee

See Also Resolutions of the Senate and the Academic Board governing the PhD in the *Postgraduate Studies Handbook* and the University Calendar.

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Higher Degree Candidatures, Higher Degree Theses

Resolutions of The Senate

1. In all cases where a higher degree has been awarded, after examination of a thesis the Registrar shall lodge with the University Librarian one bound copy of the thesis, printed on permanent or acid-free paper.

2. (1) It is the policy of the Senate that a candidate for a higher degree should not normally be permitted to undertake a program of advanced study and research which is likely to result in the lodgement of a thesis which cannot be available for use immediately, to be read, photocopied or microfilmed.

(2) An applicant for admission to candidature for a higher degree shall be required to acknowledge awareness of this policy when applying for such admission.

(3) Subject to sections 3 and 4, a higher degree thesis lodged in the University Library or in a departmental library shall be available immediately for use. The University Librarian (or, in the case of a departmental library, the head of department) may supply a photocopy or microform of the thesis to an individual for research or study, or to a library.

(4) Except as provided in section 3, a candidate for a higher degree lodging a thesis for examination shall sign the following undertaking:

I understand that if I am awarded a higher degree for my thesis entitled '.....' being lodged herewith for examination, the thesis will be lodged in the University Library and be available immediately for use. I agree that the University Librarian (or, in the case of a departmental library, the head of department) may supply a photocopy or microform of the thesis to an individual for research or study or to a library.

Signed Date

3. (1) If, at any time between application for admission to candidature and the lodgement of the thesis, it shall appear to the supervisor and to the head of the

department that successful prosecution of the candidature will require the use of confidential material which the candidate would not be at liberty fully to disclose in the thesis, the matter shall be reported as soon as practicable to the faculty or board of studies concerned.

(2) The faculty or board of studies may, if it thinks fit, recommend to the Academic Board that the candidate be granted

(a) permission to include in an appendix to the thesis such material as is essential to the thesis but which, for a limited period, may not be available for general inspection; and

(b) exemption, in respect of such an appendix, from the requirement to give the undertaking specified in section 2(4).

(3) Subject to the provisions of section 4, if the Academic Board resolves to grant such permission and exemption, the University Librarian shall restrict access, for a period to be specified by the Academic Board, to any appendix referred to in section 3(2) (b). This period of restriction shall not exceed five years unless there are exceptional reasons for an extension of the period.

4. (1) The University Librarian may grant access to an appendix to a thesis to which access has been restricted in accordance with section 3(3), to a scholar who

(a) demonstrates bona fide concern with the material in that appendix; and

(b) has the written consent of either

(i) the author of the thesis, or

(ii) the head of the department concerned in a case where the author cannot be contacted, notwithstanding that all reasonable steps have been taken to contact him or her.

(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of these resolutions, the examiners of a thesis, including any committee or board of postgraduate studies of a faculty or board of studies or any committee of the Academic Board which is directly concerned with the examination of such thesis, shall have access to the thesis and any appendix of it for the purposes of any examination or re-examination.

5. Immediately a candidate for a higher degree lodges the prescribed number of copies of the thesis with the Registrar for examination, the Registrar shall arrange for a label stating the rights of the author under the laws relating to copyright to be affixed to the inside of the front cover of each copy.

6. For the purposes of these resolutions references to 'theses' shall be taken to include also reference to treatises, dissertations and other similar productions where there is a requirement that a copy of the production be lodged by the Registrar with the University Librarian.

Public availability (amended 15 November 2006)

The following resolutions relating to public availability of higher degree theses should be read in conjunction with the above:

1. A candidate for a higher degree who is preparing for publication material in the thesis submitted for the degree, may apply in writing for deferment of the availability of that thesis in the University Library for a specific period of time.

2. The dean of the faculty or chairperson of the board of studies concerned may, if satisfied that such a deferment is necessary to protect the interests of the applicant:

(a) authorise the Registrar not to lodge the thesis in the Library for a period not exceeding six months from the date of award of the degree;

and may also

(b) recommend to the Graduate Studies Committee of the Academic Board that a longer period of deferment, or an extension of the original deferment, be approved provided that, except in exceptional circumstances, the total period shall not exceed 12 months.

Length of PhD Theses

AB 20.12.76, 15.6.87

The Board adopted the following report:

The Academic Board at its meeting on 20 October 1975 adopted a recommendation from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor's Committee concerning the question of imposing a word limit on the length of PhD theses. The Committee, bearing in mind the varying requirements of the different disciplines in the University, felt that it would be very difficult to impose a single word limit for such a thesis and the Board resolved to ask each Faculty to establish a normal limit for that faculty and to ask that supervisors of PhD students within that faculty should consider it a part of their duty in supervising candidates to ensure that these limits are observed.

The Committee has now considered the replies from Faculties, and, in accordance with this advice, recommends that there be no general upper word limit on PhD theses but that there be included in the information provided for candidates and supervisors a statement that it is important that theses be not unnecessarily long.

On 15.6.87 the Committee for Graduate Studies recommended, and the Board endorsed, that faculties and boards of studies be invited to resolve, if they considered it to be appropriate, that;

- (i) there should be an absolute upper limit of 100,000 words of text for PhD theses;
- (ii) there should be a nominal upper limit of 80,000 words which may be exceeded with the permission of the Faculty Board of Postgraduate Studies.

Deferment of public availability of higher degree theses

AB 16.9.96, 15.10.97

The Board noted the following reports from the Committee for Graduate Studies:

The Committee discussed the principles involved in granting up-front approval for lengthy deferments (of up to two years) of the public availability of higher degree theses from the date of submission should it appear that they might contain sensitive information which might embarrass sponsoring companies. The committee agreed that, while each case would have to be considered on its individual merits, such approvals could be given if good cases were put forward.

The Committee noted that the entry in the Postgraduate Studies Handbook would be expanded to make manifest that an application for deferment may be made to allow time for registration or protection of intellectual property such as the filing of a patent application but that where this can be anticipated, it is important that the application be lodged as soon as possible and that adequate explanation to allow the application to be assessed be provided. Sponsoring bodies/agencies should be made aware of the University policy which endorses the principle of early publication.

Electronic Publication of Theses

AB 15.10.97

(Discussed during 1997 with amendments later made to relevant Resolutions of the Academic Board)

The Graduate Studies Committee adopted the following recommendations:

1. commitment to the notion of electronic publication of theses;
2. support for the Research Infrastructure equipment and Facilities Project and the participating consortium;
3. a request that the Graduate Studies Committee be kept informed of project progress;
4. the establishment of a database of useful URL addresses (by the University archivist);
5. the establishment of a web-accessible database of theses titles and abstracts (by the University librarian); and
6. the merging of the Committee's Working party on Electronic Submission of Theses with that on Electronic Publication of Theses with a watching and reporting brief.

Electronic Submission of Theses

AB 11.3.98

The Board adopted the Graduate Studies Committee report on electronic submission of theses, amending the Resolutions of the Academic Board relating to the "Form of the thesis" in order to make provision for the electronic submission and examination of PhD theses. It agreed that while the amendment of the Resolutions makes specific provision for electronic submission and examination for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, it is intended that the spirit of these provisions be applied also to research master's degrees. It was also noted that these provisions will probably be amended and developed further with ever-growing technological improvements.