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**SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY**

**Article Format for PhD Thesis**

Background to these Guidelines

These guidelines are adapted from an earlier version (prepared by Zoltan Dienes, November 2010). The current version was discussed and approved by the School of Psychology, Research Degrees Committee on 21st May 2014.

The guidelines are intended to promote consistency and good practice amongst students who opt to structure their PhD thesis in this way. However, they do not replace the University-level guidelines on PhD theses (as laid out in the ‘Handbook for Doctoral Researchers’) that cover practical issues such as length and pagination and also lay out the general requirements for the award of a PhD degree. The declaration page is adapted from this source.

What is an ‘Article Format’ PhD thesis?

PhD theses in the School of Psychology may be structured according to a series of (usually 3-5) distinct articles (which need not have been submitted to journals). These articles should be accompanied by one or more chapters which additionally offer synthetic overview and discussion of the articles. Theses written in most European countries follow this format rather than the traditional British format of one long monograph.

The overview chapters would typically take one of the following two formats:

1. An introductory chapter (the first chapter in the thesis) and a discussion chapter (the final chapter in the thesis) that, collectively, provides a literature review; provides a coherent rationale for the different approaches taken in the articles; and discusses the findings of the different articles in relation to each other and in relation to the wider literature and future research.
2. A single overarching chapter (the first chapter in the thesis) that combines all the elements discussed above.

In either model, the overview will usually be about 10,000 words. This figure is guidance only. The function of the overview is to demonstrate both scholarliness on the part of the student, and also the coherence of the thesis as a whole.

Candidates are encouraged to look at ‘Sussex Research Online’ (use advanced search to specify ‘thesis’). This contains a repository of PhD theses submitted over recent years, many of which have used this format. Some examples of theses that take this format are…

Laurence, Sarah (2013) The effect of familiarity on face adaptation. Doctoral thesis, University of Sussex.

Coy, Abbie L (2013) Schizotypy and facial emotion processing. Doctoral thesis, University of Sussex.

Mealor, Andrew D (2013) Conscious and unconscious: passing judgment. Doctoral thesis, University of Sussex.

In order to alert examiners to the structure of the thesis, and to make clear the contribution of the authors/collaborators, a template Declaration Form is included at the back of this document that should be inserted towards the front of the thesis.

The number of articles to include is an academic judgment the student should reach in discussion with the supervisor. There is no set rule about this, as it depends on research area and amount of work represented by each article. The supervisor must judge what constitutes an amount of work that is equivalent to a British-style thesis, and student and supervisor must judge how best to structure that work into articles.

Articles format theses must of course still follow University regulations. For example, all pages should be consecutively numbered in your thesis (one would not just put e.g. three publications in with the journal page numbering, but they would all need to go into one large document).

Advantages and Disadvantages of this Format

*Advantages:*

1) The structure aligns the assessment of a PhD with its learning aims. If the aim of a PhD is to train the student to be a research academic, then PhD assessment should require the same sort of output as research academics produce. The articles structure more closely matches assessment with learning aims than the traditional structure does.

2) The articles structure encourages more actual publications. The traditional British psychology thesis is a large and thorough document rarely read by more than three people. If the research contained within it is to be published, it would have to be re-written into a journal format, and this often involves some considerable work. For the articles structure, writing up papers is simultaneous with writing up the thesis. Often when PhD students leave academia, their work, even though good, never sees the light of day, because the supervisor is too busy to do the necessary restructuring. Both supervisor and student then lose out. If the student stays in academia, getting publications is easier to achieve sooner by using the articles structure.

*Disadvantage:*

The articles structure may motivate people other than the student to contribute more to the work than they would have done using the traditional format. The work presented in a thesis must represent an original contribution by the student, regardless of the form of the thesis. Where a person other than the candidate is, or would be, “first” author on a paper serious consideration should be given as to whether it is appropriate to include the paper in the thesis. Where a paper contains authors other than the supervisor, their contribution may be problematic if the paper is simply included without comment. In these cases, and also where a supervisor has made more than expected contributions to a paper, a different version of a paper (to one submitted for publication) may be included so that the paper better reflects the student’s own contribution. Alternatively, if the contribution of other people can be simply stated in a way that the contribution of the student is easy to judge, such papers could be included together with a statement of the student’s actual contribution.

**[Notes: This is to be bound in the thesis after the title page. The declaration consists of three parts: a statement that the thesis is written as ‘article format’; a list of the potential/actual articles themselves noting author contributions; and a signed declaration of originality. ]**

**DECLARATION**

[EXAMPLE 1: SINGLE OVERVIEW CHAPTER]

The thesis conforms to an ‘article format’ in which the first chapter presents a synthetic overview and discussion. The remaining chapters consist of discrete articles written in a style that is appropriate for publication in peer-reviewed journals in the field.

[EXAMPLE 2: SEPARATE INTRO AND DISCUSSION CHAPTERS]

The thesis conforms to an ‘article format’ in which the middle chapters consist of discrete articles written in a style that is appropriate for publication in peer-reviewed journals in the field. The first and final chapters present synthetic overviews and discussions of the field and the research undertaken.

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[EXAMPLE 1: FOR ARTICLES IN WHICH PUBLICATION IS IN ACTIVELY IN PROGRESS]

Chapter [X] is [published in/in press in/submitted to] the [insert journal name] as:

 [insert full reference in APA format including list of authors]

The author contributions are as follows: [X] was responsible for [all/some aspects of data collection, data analysis, writing of the manuscript/etc.]; [Y] was responsible for [providing feedback on study design/corrections to the manuscript/etc.]. [X and Y] were collectively responsible for [initial conception of the research/etc.]

[EXAMPLE 2: FOR ARTICLES IN WHICH PUBLICATION IS NOT PRESENTLY PURSUED]

Chapter [X] is written in the style of an article appropriate for [insert journal name].

The author contributions are as follows: [X] was responsible for [all/some aspects of data collection, data analysis, writing of the manuscript/etc.]; [Y] was responsible for [providing feedback on study design/corrections to the manuscript/etc.]. [X and Y] were collectively responsible for [initial conception of the research/etc.]

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[EXAMPLE 1 – WORK SUBMITTED ELSEWHERE FOR EXAMINATION]

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree. However, the thesis incorporates to the extent indicated below, material already submitted as part of required coursework and/or for the degree of:

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In ................................................................................................................................... (subject)

which was awarded by ...........................................................................................................(institution)

Signature:.....................................................................................................................................

[EXAMPLE 2 WORK NOT SUBMITTED ELSEWHERE FOR EXAMINATION ]

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Signature:………………………………………