

PhD COMPLETIONS CHECKLIST

THINGS TO DO WHEN SUBMITTING YOUR THESIS

BACKGROUND

SUPRA receives many enquiries from PhD students about tasks they need to complete in the last semester of candidature. To help we have pulled together some of the key requirements from 7 separate policies related to the PhD thesis, added some advice from SUPRA, and briefly listed the major tasks that PhD students need to address in the lead up to submitting their thesis for examination. Our checklist lists these tasks in an indicative order and offers suggested timeframes to help give you a sense for when you could be doing different things.

You should still consult with your supervisor and relevant staff within your discipline, school and faculty (eg. post-graduate coordinators & heads of departments) to get their advice on when you need to do things and for information about any additional specific tasks you need to complete. You should also note that not every single issue or every policy relevant to PhD students is covered in our checklist. That said, it's our hope that our checklist will give you a good generic starting point that will make preparing for submission that little bit easier.

Though the items below are relevant to the vast majority of University of Sydney PhD students (with a couple of exceptions like cotutelle students studying under two different institutions) there might be some items that don't relate to your particular situation. If you come to a point that's not relevant to your candidature tick it off and move to the next item. If at any stage you have difficulties or just want to clarify an issue or find out where you can find a policy reference for a particular point please feel free to contact SUPRA's Student Advice and Advocacy Officers (SAAOs) for a free consultation.

SUPRA'S CHECKLIST - *At least six months away from submission*

- Check you are enrolled or will be enrolled in the semester you intend to submit the thesis for examination (you cannot submit your thesis if you are under a suspension).
- If you will be over the time limits for submitting your thesis (4 years full time and 8 years part time) then seek SAAO help to apply for an extension of candidature.
- Check any word limits or guidelines that apply to your discipline to make sure that the thesis is going to be the right length (there are no University wide guidelines).
- Speak with your supervisor, postgraduate coordinator and/or head of department about a wide range of possible internal and external examiners for your thesis.
- If relevant write to your head of department and specify the names of anyone who in your opinion would not be suitable to examine the thesis and give reasons.
- Check and make sure that any of your published work you intend to include in the body of the thesis occurred during the course of the candidature (if it did not then you may not be able to use that material as part of the body of your thesis).
- Discuss with your supervisor and the University whether there is the possibility of exploiting any invention or other intellectual property arising from the thesis.
- If it is felt that confidential material is needed in the thesis that can't be immediately lodged in the library make sure your faculty applies for permission to have that material included in an appendix not available for general inspection for a period.
- If there is concern over the exploitation of intellectual property related to your thesis and the thesis can't yet be lodged in the library at all, then make sure your dean of faculty is aware of this and ask that they recommend deferment of public availability.
- Where you have generated research data that will be used in the thesis make sure arrangements are in place for the retention of that data within the University for a minimum of five years. Longer periods may apply in some situations.
- Check and confirm the availability of your supervisor, associate supervisor and any other advisers you might need (eg. statistical support) during the last six months of your thesis, and confirm an indicative timetable for regular and intensive supervision.

Three to six months from submission

If you decide you want to submit electronically fill out and submit the form at least three months prior to submission, noting that if any of the examiners do not wish to examine electronically they can request a hard copy of the thesis.

Where you are going to use work in the body of the thesis that has already been published with other co-authors, make sure you get a statement from all authors that demonstrates the parts of the work for which you are responsible.

If you are going to use a professional proof reader or editor check their availability, and make sure they have read and can comply with the Proof Reading and Editing of Theses and Dissertations policy. SUPRA keeps a list of people offering services.

Discuss the possibility of an oral examination with your supervisor and/or head of department, and if appropriate lodge a request that oral examination be conducted well before the thesis is submitted.

If specialised electronic applications form part of the thesis then inform your faculty office at least three months prior to submission so that they can ascertain whether examiners have the capability to accept the format.

If you made exceptional progress and will be ready to submit one semester earlier than the end of your sixth full time semester of candidature, ask your head of department and supervisor to recommend to the faculty permission for early submission.

If you made even more exceptional progress and want to submit even earlier, then make the same kind of approach only this time ask your supervisor and head of department to recommend that the Dean write to the Chair of the Academic Board.

Inform your supervisor of your intention to submit and complete a form provided by your faculty office giving notice of your intention to submit within three months.

One to Three Months from submission

Include a preface to your thesis that states in general terms the sources used in your research, any animal and human ethics approval obtained, the extent to which the work of others is used, and the portion claimed to be an original contribution. Any work submitted for another degree should also be identified in the preface.

Review the form of previous theses submitted in your faculty to get an idea of how others have presented their work and to help you to prepare your own format.

An advanced thesis draft should get thoroughly reviewed from cover to cover by at least yourself and your supervisor for substantive issues such as content, structure and consistency of argument (final editing of grammar and spelling comes later).

Later give the thesis a final and thorough proof read/edit for spelling and grammar as well as for thoroughness of referencing throughout.

One Month out to Submission Day

Write a 300 word summary of the thesis to be included with all four copies of the thesis when you submit for examination.

Where you get additional proof reading/editing from someone other than your supervisor you should give a brief description of services rendered and acknowledge the assistance in either the acknowledgements section of your thesis or with other prefatory matter. If their academic specialisation is similar to yours this also needs to be stated.

Make sure your thesis cover includes a label clearly identifying your name, the title of the thesis and the year of submission.

If submitting electronically prepare the document with the same structure as a printed version with separate documents (Pdf's are usually best) for each chapter.

If submitting electronically the title of the thesis, your initials and surname, the title of the degree, the year of submission and the name of the University of Sydney should be on the title page and also affixed to your disk.

If submitting electronically you also need to provide at least one hard copy to your Faculty office for retention and further copies if one or more examiners are unwilling or unable to examine electronically.

For hard copy submission of the thesis you can submit using permanent binding, though SUPRA strongly recommends you use appropriate temporary binding ('perfect binding' is preferred and ring or spiral binding is not allowed) that is strong enough to withstand normal handling and postage.

For hard copy submission prepare at least four copies. Three copies will be forwarded to examiners and one copy is retained by the Registrar.

No matter whether submitting electronically or in hard copy request your supervisor to certify in writing that in their opinion the form or presentation of the thesis is satisfactory. This certificate must be submitted when you submit your thesis.

Where there is joint authorship on material included in the body of your thesis make sure you submit with your thesis evidence identifying sections of work for which you are responsible. The above-mentioned letter from co-authors should suffice.

Make sure you are prepared to submit by the final date for the relevant semester. Normally you get until 31 March the following year for theses due in second semester and 31 August for theses due in semester 1.

Once you have submitted you need to notify the Research Office and/or the scholarship provider if there is any more time left on a scholarship so that you don't get overpaid and need to pay money back.

After Examination

If possible claim thesis production costs through the Postgraduate Research Support Scheme or via funds provided as part of any scholarship you might have (eg. APA's and UPA's include funding for thesis production costs).

If you're awarded the PhD subject to typographical corrections or emendations, then you need to complete those and get the head of department or postgraduate coordinator to sign a statement certifying that you have made any necessary corrections.

If you receive notice of a foreshadowed revise and resubmit or a fail examination outcome contact a SUPRA SAAO for advice immediately.

Once you have passed examination the thesis should be permanently bound and is normally to be on A4 size acid free paper, sewn and bound in boards with bookcloth or buckram or other binding fabric. SUPRA keeps a list of binders you can use.

Make sure the title of the thesis, your surname and initials, the title of the degree, and name of the University of Sydney are in lettering on the front cover or the title page.

The lettering on the spine should include similar information though the name of the University can be omitted and the thesis title shortened.

Submit the hardbound copy to your Faculty office for lodgement with the library, complete with any letters from your head of department/postgraduate coordinator confirming that you have completed any corrections.

You can at this point make a decision as to whether to have the thesis included in the Australian Digital Thesis program (see the following website for information and online forms: <http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/theses/>)

POLICY REFERENCES USED TO PREPARE THIS CHECKLIST

– available at www.usyd.edu.au/policy

Oral Examination of PhD Theses at the University of Sydney

Resolutions of the Graduate Studies Committee

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Resolutions of the Academic Board

Proof Reading and Editing of Theses and Dissertations

Resolutions of Academic Board

Submission of Doctor of Philosophy Theses Containing Published Work

Resolutions of Academic Board

University of Sydney (Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)) Rule 2004

Rule of the University Senate

University of Sydney (Amendment Act) Rule 1999 (As Amended)

Rule of the University Senate

Code of Practice for Supervision of Higher Degree Research Students

Resolutions of Academic Board

Also see the Postgraduate Research and Coursework Handbook. Available at the following web page it is published bi-annually and includes some of the above policies along with plenty of information on postgraduate study:

<http://www.usyd.edu.au/handbooks/>

SUPRA PUBLICATIONS

– available at http://www.supra.usyd.edu.au/Pub/About_Publications.html

Thesis Guide – This checklist along with lots of information and advice published from a postgraduate student perspective will be in a new edition due for release in early 2008!

Survival Guide – Gives general guidance on a range of postgraduate issues.

Fact Sheets – we have lots of fact sheets on a range of postgraduate topics with more coming out all the time...

A FINAL WORD FROM SUPRA...

If you're using this checklist we expect you have completed or aren't too far away from completing an advanced draft of the thesis and are going to submit at some point in the next six months or so. SUPRA offers a big congratulations on your achievement thus far and we wish you good luck with finishing the thesis!

If you have a question about any of the items you can often find an answer by referring back to the policies we have provided, or even better contact a SUPRA Student Advice and Advocacy Officer and ask them to do it for you. They provide professional and free confidential advice to postgraduate students who subscribe to SUPRA.

CONTACT DETAILS

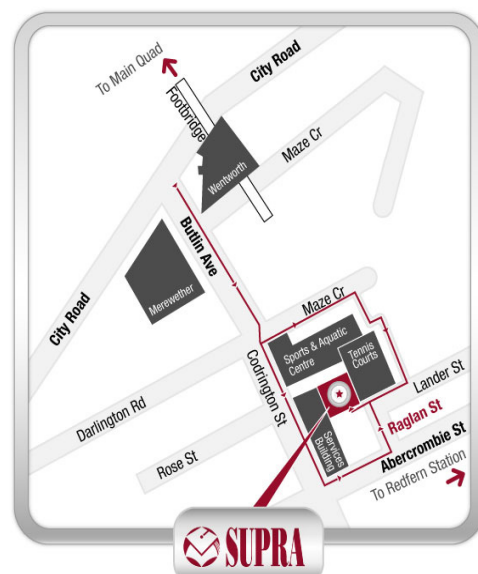
You can contact a SUPRA SAAO via:

- Email: help@supra.usyd.edu.au
- Telephone: (02) 9351 3715 or free call number: 1800 249 950 if you are outside the Sydney Metropolitan area.
- In writing: Send a fax to (02) 9351 6400 or post your letter to:
SUPRA
Bld G10, Raglan St
Darlington Campus
University of Sydney NSW
2006 Australia
- Complete a web form:
http://www.supra.usyd.edu.au/Adv/Contact_a_SAAO.html
- Or just come into the office during normal business hours

Disclaimer:

This information does not constitute legal advice. Despite our best efforts there may be errors in the information we give you. Seek a range of advice and up to date information on your particular circumstances before you act on the information provided.

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