

Definitions of Originality for Higher Degree Research

Francis, J. (1976). Supervision and examination of higher degree students. *Bulletin of the University of London*, 31, 3-6.

1. Setting down a major piece of new information in writing for the first time.
2. Continuing a previously original piece of work.
3. Carrying out original work designed by the supervisor.
4. Providing a single original technique, observation or result in an otherwise unoriginal but competent piece of research.
5. Having many original ideas, methods and interpretations all performed by others under the direction of the postgraduate.
6. Showing originality in testing someone else's idea.

Phillips E.M. and Pugh, D. (2005). *How to Get a PhD: A Handbook for Students and Their Supervisors*, 4th edition. Open University Press, Maidenhead.
(based on interviews with Australian students, supervisors and thesis examiners)

7. Carrying out empirical work that hasn't been done before.
8. Making a synthesis that hasn't been made before.
9. Using already known material but with a new interpretation.
10. Trying out something in this country that has previously only been done in other countries.
11. Taking a particular technique and applying it in a new area.
12. Bringing new evidence to bear on an old issue.
13. Being cross-disciplinary and using different methodologies.
14. Looking at areas that people in the discipline haven't looked at before.
15. Adding to knowledge in a way that hasn't previously been done before.

Exercise: Originality in research

Complete the following sentence in no more than 20 words:

My research is original in . . .