

# **Guidance for the Presentation of Taught Masters Dissertations**

**August 2010**

**Teaching and Learning Support Office**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

*These Guidance Notes have been produced for The University of Manchester. Candidates are advised NOT to follow the format of any dissertations previously submitted to the founding institutions (UMIST or The Victoria University of Manchester), as these may have been produced under earlier rules for presentation which are no longer acceptable.*

*If any part of what follows is not clear, or if anything in particular is not covered, please contact the appropriate Postgraduate Office\* for advice before the dissertation is bound.*

***\* Detailed arrangements vary across the University and this will be either a School or Faculty Office. Candidates are advised to check the administrative processes for their degree with their Postgraduate Office.***

*Please note that this document can be provided in a range of alternative formats (e.g. large print) on request from the appropriate Postgraduate Office.*

***FAILURE TO FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW MAY RESULT IN THE DISSERTATION BEING REJECTED BY THE EXAMINERS.***

***Candidates are also advised that examiners can and will reject a dissertation if the quantity of typographical errors indicates careless proof-reading.***

## **2. GENERAL INFORMATION**

- 2.1.** All dissertations must be written in English; quotations, however, may be given in the language in which they were written. In exceptional circumstances variation of this requirement may be approved by the University for candidates to submit a dissertation predominantly in their language of research. Permission to produce dissertations in any language other than English should be sought at the same time as students submit their notice of title.
- 2.2.** Two identical paper copies must be submitted in typewritten or printed form on paper of international standard size A4 (210 x 297mm). No other paper size is acceptable for the main text of a dissertation. Paper of a larger size may be used for maps, plans, diagrams or other illustrations forming part of the dissertation if the supervisor agrees that this is required. Where such large sheets are used, or non-paper materials are submitted as part of a dissertation, they must be placed in a pocket inside the back cover of the dissertation or, if substantial, in a separate volume or folder bound and lettered as described in section 4: supplementary items cannot be accepted in any other form.
- 2.3.** Dissertations can be soft bound but students can produce hard bound versions for their own purposes if they prefer.
- 2.4.** A dissertation may include reprints of material published by the candidate as sole or joint author. If reprints are to be bound into the dissertation, they must be included in the dissertation pagination, according to the instructions below, or placed in a pocket inside the back cover of the dissertation.
- 2.5.** Students must ensure that material that is authored by a third-party and that they use in their dissertation is free of any copyright restrictions and/or they have obtained a licence or permission to use these materials. Students should ensure that any such licence/permission extends to the use of the materials by The University for administrative purposes, including examination and preservation of their work. Furthermore, if the student intends to make an electronic version of their dissertation available to others for download they should ensure the licence for use of these third-party materials extends to this use. Alternatively, students may make available to others a redacted version of their dissertation which excludes the third-party material.
- 2.6.** Candidates must consult their Postgraduate Office for guidance on the length of the dissertation and for information on submission deadlines.

## **3. FORMATTING**

- 3.1.** Double or 1.5 spacing with a minimum font size of 12 must be used for the main text; single-spacing may be used for quotations, footnotes and references. Pages may be single or double-sided.
- 3.2.** General guidance on bibliographic citations and references can be obtained from the programme director, and must be consistent throughout the dissertation.
- 3.3.** To allow for binding, the margin at the binding edge of any page must be not less than 40mm; other margins must be not less than 15mm.
- 3.4.** Page numbering must consist of one single sequence of Arabic numerals (ie 1, 2, 3 ...) throughout the dissertation. Page numbers must be displayed on all pages

**EXCEPT** the title page, though this is counted as page one. The pagination sequence will include not only the text of the dissertation but also the preliminary pages, diagrams, tables, figures, illustrations, appendices, references etc, and will extend to cover all volumes in a multi-volume dissertation. Roman numerals **must not** be used for page numbering.

#### **4. REQUIRED PAGES**

**4.1.** The following items (a-f) **must** be included as preliminary pages of the dissertation **in the order given**.

**a. TITLE PAGE**

A title page giving:

- i. the full title of the dissertation;
- ii. a statement as follows: 'A dissertation submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of xxx (Title of the degree, e.g Master of Arts) in the Faculty of xxx (Name of the Faculty)' (*please see Appendix 1 for a list of correct Faculty titles and Appendix 2 for a correct list of degree titles*);
- iii. the year of submission (*not including the month*);
- iv. the candidate's name (*the same as the name under which he or she is currently registered, or was last registered, at the University*); and
- v. the name of the candidate's School (except for the Faculty of Life Sciences).

*Please refer to Appendix 3 to see a sample title page.*

Where a dissertation consists of more than one volume each volume must contain a title page in the form set out above but including also the appropriate volume number, and the total number of volumes eg Volume I of III.

A dissertation which is referred for re-examination must bear the year of **resubmission** on both the spine and the title-page and not the year of the original submission; a new Notice of Submission Form and the appropriate fee are always required (*see Notice of Submission Form for dates and fees*).

**b. LIST OF CONTENTS**

A list of contents, giving all relevant sub-divisions of the dissertation and a page number for each item.

In a multi-volume dissertation the contents page in the first volume must show the complete contents of the dissertation, volume-by-volume, and each subsequent volume must have a contents page giving the contents of that volume.

***The final word count, including footnotes and endnotes, MUST be inserted at the bottom of the contents page.***

**c. OTHER LISTS**

Lists of tables, figures, diagrams, photographs, abbreviations etc. If a dissertation contains tables it is recommended that a separate list of each item, as appropriate, is provided **immediately after the contents page(s)**. Such lists **must** give the page number of each item on the list.

**d. ABSTRACT**

**i. All programmes EXCEPT MRes:**

A short abstract describing the contents of the dissertation. This must be short (not more than 300 words), with emphasis on major observations and deductions rather than on methods. It must be designed to be read independently of the rest of the dissertation and references to the dissertation and other literature will not normally be included.

**ii. MRes:**

This must be a short summary of the research presented in the dissertation, including a brief rationale for the study, details of the methods employed, a summary of the results, and an indication of the wider implications of the research.

**e. DECLARATION**

A declaration stating:

EITHER: that no portion of the work referred to in the dissertation has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning;

OR: what portion of the work referred to in the dissertation has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

**f. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY STATEMENT**

All **four** of the following notes on copyright and the ownership of intellectual property rights must be included as written below:

- i. The author of this dissertation (including any appendices and/or schedules to this dissertation) owns certain copyright or related rights in it (the "Copyright") and s/he has given The University of Manchester certain rights to use such Copyright, including for administrative purposes.
- ii. Copies of this dissertation, either in full or in extracts and whether in hard or electronic copy, may be made **only** in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (as amended) and regulations issued under it or, where appropriate, in accordance with licensing agreements which the University has entered into. This page must form part of any such copies made.
- iii. The ownership of certain Copyright, patents, designs, trade marks and other intellectual property (the "Intellectual Property") and any

reproductions of copyright works in the dissertation, for example graphs and tables ("Reproductions"), which may be described in this dissertation, may not be owned by the author and may be owned by third parties. Such Intellectual Property and Reproductions cannot and must not be made available for use without the prior written permission of the owner(s) of the relevant Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions.

- iv. Further information on the conditions under which disclosure, publication and commercialisation of this dissertation, the Copyright and any Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions described in it may take place is available in the University IP Policy (see <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=487>), in any relevant Dissertation restriction declarations deposited in the University Library, The University Library's regulations (see <http://www.manchester.ac.uk/library/aboutus/regulations>) and in The University's Guidance for the Presentation of Dissertations.

#### **4.2 OTHER PAGES (not compulsory)**

The preliminary pages may also include the following:

- a. Dedications, acknowledgements and similar: these should appear after the compulsory pages listed in section 3 above. Short items may be combined on the same page.
- b. It is helpful, particularly to external examiners, if a brief statement is included giving the candidate's degree(s) and research experience, even if the latter consists only of the work done for this dissertation. This may be untitled or it may be headed 'Preface' or 'The Author' or similar.

### **5. BINDING AND PRESENTATION**

- 5.1. The University will accept for examination taught Master's dissertations in two different types of binding.
- 5.2. The two approved binding options are listed below. ***Dissertations in ring binding, spiral binding or any other non-approved bindings will NOT BE ACCEPTED.***
  - a. Soft-Binding: acetate or plain card front cover, soft plain card rear cover, glued spine, or channel bound, with **gold lettering on the spine.**
  - b. Standard hard-binding: with **gold lettering on the spine.**

Candidates are advised to consult their programme director as to the preferred option for their programme. Soft-bound copies are acceptable but if students wish to produce hard-bound copies, they may do so.

- 5.3 The spine of the bound dissertation must be **inscribed in gold lettering** with:
  - a. the degree for which the dissertation is submitted (for example, MA/MSc);
  - b. the name of the candidate (as registered on the University system);
  - c. the year of submission (or resubmission); and

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- d. if the dissertation is in two or more volumes, the volume number and the total number of volumes (*please note that it is not recommended that any single volume of a dissertation is thicker than approximately 6cm - if it is greater than this, it is recommended that the dissertation is split into two (or more) volumes*)

These must run from the top of the spine as follows. *Please note writing on the spine with a gold pen is NOT acceptable:*

### Example of spine:

Front Cover			
<b>MSc (OR: MSc Dissertation)</b> (at top)	<b>GILBERT K CHESTERTON</b> (centred)	<b>Vol I of II</b> (as and if appropriate)	<b>2005</b> (at bottom)
Back Cover			

The forename(s) and surname/family name on the spine and title-page must be the same as those under which the candidate is currently registered, or was last registered, at the University. Give first forename in full, other forenames (if any) as initials, then surname.

- 5.4. In all cases, **all other instructions on the presentation of dissertations** (information required on the title page, preliminary pages, etc) **contained in these Guidance Notes must be observed, and identical binding must be used for both copies of the dissertation.**
- 5.5. Once examination of the dissertation has been completed and the examiners' recommendation has been approved by the appropriate School or Faculty Board, candidates will receive a communication from the appropriate Postgraduate Office informing them of the outcome of their examination. If the result is not published as successful then the communication will explain the next step to be taken by the candidate.
- 5.6. **The appropriate Postgraduate Office must have acknowledged receipt of two correctly bound paper copies of the final dissertation before a result can be published.**

## 6. LIBRARY ACCESS/RESTRICTION

- 6.1. Both copies of successful dissertations submitted by candidates on taught Master's programmes will be forwarded to the programme director or Postgraduate Office, as applicable, for lodging in the appropriate Library once examination has been completed.
- 6.2. Normally the author of the dissertation is not expected to place any restriction on access to his or her work, and, in signing the Declaration on the Notice of Submission form, a candidate authorises access to the dissertation.
- 6.3. If, however, it is considered that because of some exceptional circumstances access to the dissertation should be restricted in some way, the candidate must:
- a. sign the Declaration and submit the Notice of Submission form to enable arrangements for the examination to be made;



- b.** ask at the appropriate Postgraduate Office for a Dissertation Restriction Form or the relevant weblink;
  - c.** consult the Supervisor about the need for, and nature of, a restriction (the supervisor's signature will be required on any completed Restriction form);
  - d.** if a restriction is to be applied, complete the Dissertation Restriction Form as appropriate and submit it **with the dissertation**; this form will then supersede that part of the Declaration on the Notice of Submission Form in which the candidate authorised unrestricted access to the dissertation.
- 6.4.** The University reserves the right to restrict access to a dissertation that was initially made open access without prior permission from the copyright owner. This is to accommodate where, for example, copyright infringements are subsequently reported to the University.

**7. APPENDIX 1:**

**LIST OF FACULTY AND SCHOOL TITLES**

Details of the University's Faculty and School titles can be found on the website:

- [University structure](#)

**8. APPENDIX 2:**

**LIST OF DEGREE TITLES**

Details of the titles of degrees can be found within the University's General Regulations:

- [General Regulations](#) (page 17: Regulation XI – Titles of Degrees and other Distinctions)

**9. APPENDIX 3**

**SAMPLE TITLE PAGE**

**TITLE OF DISSERTATION**

A dissertation submitted to The University of Manchester for the degree of .....  
in the Faculty of xxx

**YEAR OF SUBMISSION  
(OR YEAR OF RESUBMISSION)**

**CANDIDATE'S NAME**

**CANDIDATE'S SCHOOL  
(except Faculty of Life Sciences' candidates)**

## **10. DISSERTATION SUBMISSION CHECKLIST**

### **PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:**

The staff in the Postgraduate Office will use the following checklist to ensure all instructions detailed in these Guidance Notes have been adhered to when accepting dissertations.

If any section is missing, out of order or not correct the dissertation may be rejected. (The School may accept the incorrect version for examination but inform the student that no result will be released until a properly bound/completed version has been submitted after the examination process has been finalised).

*It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that the instructions are followed exactly.*

If a candidate is unsure about any aspect of binding or the preliminary pages he or she must contact the appropriate Postgraduate Office for advice.

		<i>please ✓</i>
<b>Correct Binding</b>	Two identical copies (including binding) to be submitted with correct gold lettering on the spine	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Preface pages should be in the following order:</b>		
<b>Title Page</b> – see appendix 3		<input type="checkbox"/>
All of these should be included:		
	Title of dissertation	
	Official Wording – see section 3 (a)	
	Correct Faculty – see appendix 1	
	Year of Submission	
	Candidate's Name	
	School (except Faculty of Life Sciences)	
<b>Contents Page</b> (including any list of tables/figures etc)	Page numbers given for each listing	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Abstract</b>		<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Declaration</b>		<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Copyright</b> (this may go on the same page as the Declaration)		<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Pagination</b>	All pages must be numbered; page numbers must be displayed on all pages, except the title page	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Policy owner:	Louise Walmsley, Head of Teaching and Learning Support Office
Lead contact:	Miriam Graham, Teaching and Learning Adviser (Policies and Procedures)