

Guidelines for Contents and Presentation of Thesis

This document is intended for PGR students enrolled on the PhD Bioethics and Medical Jurisprudence programme.

Thesis content

In general terms, students will submit a thesis that contains:

- an introduction (more detail on this later);
- the main body of the thesis, which is made up of 3 - 4 published, or publishable articles; and
- a concluding section (more detail on this later).

Thus, to provide more detail, the thesis shall comprise the following items, presented in the order given:

- i. Title page
- ii. Contents list
- iii. Abstract
- iv. Declaration
- v. Copyright statement (see below for further guidance regarding i – v)
- vi. Introduction (see below for more detailed guidance on contents of introduction)
- vii. Copies of each of the publications in their published form, with clear details of where this work was published, in Word format, rather than PDF form)
- viii. Conclusion
- ix. Annexes (where appropriate, including PDF copies of published papers)
- x. Bibliography (List of cases, legislation, books, articles, reports and any other sources that you have referred to or simply read to inform your thesis).

Introduction – suggested contents¹ (12,000 – 15,000 words)

- 1) **Problem:** An introduction to the general area that will be explored.
- 2) **Ethical and Legal background to this problem/Literature review** – Show that you are aware of all the relevant literature; legal issues, etc., and the main debates and issues, legally and ethically, in this area. In this section you should:
 - Identify and summarize the arguments put forward by key authors in the academic literature relevant to your research questions/area.
 - Identify how the arguments offered in the relevant academic literature relate to the arguments you put forward in your research. In doing so, you should be able to identify what is missing, or has been under-researched in this area and, therefore,

¹ This is based on the guidance you received for the 'First Year Report', but aims to provide more information, and detail, which should help you when revising this report.

how your research will make a contribution to the existing research in this area. (This is a 'scene setting' section, the more developed material about your approach and outlines of your arguments will be outlined in sections 4 and 5).

[As the format of this doctorate is distinct to that of a 'traditional' PhD, it is crucial that this section serve to demonstrate a full awareness of the academic context of the work.]

- 3) **Research Questions** – Here, briefly outline the research questions you have focused on to take this issue forward; the 3 - 4 questions which are the basis for your 3 - 4 articles.
- 4) **Philosophical Approach** – An outline of the approach you take in these articles. What are the pertinent ethical issues that you explore in order to answer your questions? If you take a particular philosophical approach, what is it, and why have you chosen it? If you focus on particular ethical principles, what are they, and why are they important?
- 5) **Legal Approach** – An outline of approach you take in these articles. What are the pertinent legal issues you explore in order to answer your questions? If you take a particular approach, what is it, and why have you chosen it? If you focus on particular legal issues or principles, what are they, and why are they important?
- 6) **Summary of the articles** – Finish with a more detailed account of what will be included in each of the three to four articles you have developed, and possibly try to provide a narrative that 'joins' these articles together.

*N.B. Even if your articles are all ethics articles, you **must** include a 'Legal Approach' section in order that you can demonstrate your knowledge and skill in this area (and to justify the award in Bioethics and Medical Jurisprudence). Similarly, if your articles are all legally based, you should still include a 'Philosophical Approach' section in your Introduction, for the same reason. If you are in any doubt about how you should do this, or the relative 'weight' to give the ethical and legal sections, do contact your supervisors for further guidance.*

Guidance for writing your Conclusion – (5,000- 10,000 words)

The conclusion to your thesis will be a substantial chapter. It is your opportunity to pull together the work you have done in the 3-4 published or publishable papers, and explain how in combination they offer a contribution to knowledge. In a traditional PhD some of this work may be done as the thesis progresses but, because of its focus on published/publishable work, this will not have been possible in your thesis. It is **not** intended that your conclusion contain new research, but it must give a substantial account of how the papers that form your work come together as a doctoral thesis. It is suggested that this can be done by using the conclusion to:

- Cross reference the work you have done in the 3-4 papers
- Draw together the work you have done in the 3-4 papers and explain how the body of work forms a coherent whole
- Relate what you have done to your amended first year report (which now makes up the introduction to your thesis)
- Identify if needed any issues that you have not covered and explain why

- Provide a discussion on how the 3-4 papers relate to the existing literature and show that they combine to add to the world knowledge base – show how they fill some gap or make some addition.
- Reflect on where this leaves you in terms of possible future directions for your research

Remember that what you have to do is convince the examiners that not only have you achieved publishable standard in 3-4 papers, but in so doing, and with the help of this chapter and your first chapter/introduction, you have produced a piece of work that makes the same sort of addition to knowledge as a conventional PhD.

If you have any queries about what should be included in the Introduction or conclusion contact your supervisors, Cohort Director, or the Programme Director.

Assessment

This thesis is assessed by *viva voce* (oral examination). An Internal Examiner and an External Examiner will be present at the *viva*, and will assess, by questioning the student, whether the thesis presented is of sufficient quality to be awarded a PhD. The length of *vivas* can vary greatly, but, typically, you may expect your *viva* to take between 2 – 3 hours. In some cases, an Independent Chair may also be appointed for your *viva*. Please note that an independent chair is not involved in and does not contribute to the assessment of the thesis.

Information about the thesis examination and links for preparation for your *viva* are available at: <http://www.law.manchester.ac.uk/pgr-handbook/your-programme/thesis-submission/thesis-examination/>

Further guidance about *vivas* can be gained from your supervisors, your Cohort Director, and the Programme Director.

Presentation

The body of the thesis should be presented as a Word document (rather than PDFs of the various articles). If these articles have been published, accepted for publication, or submitted for consideration for publication, this should be indicated in the introduction to each article (you might provide a title page before each article that provides the title of the article, and any information about its publication status).

Providing the body of the thesis as a Word document will allow the page numbers in the body of the thesis to follow one single sequence (see 3.4 below). This sequential page numbering will help the process of examination go more smoothly. PDFs of articles already published at the time of binding the thesis should be included as Annexes at the end of the document.

Please note that when you come to submit your thesis electronically you must upload this as a single Portable Document Format (PDF) file. You won't be able to complete submission if you upload your thesis in another format, e.g. a Word file. You can [convert a Word file into a PDF](#).

You must follow the University's Presentation of Thesis Policy and ensure your thesis is presented in accordance with this policy. The policy is available at: <http://www.law.manchester.ac.uk/pgr-handbook/your-programme/thesis-submission/thesis-presentation/>

Notice of Submission

You are required to provide at least six weeks' notice of submission through [eProg](#). Instructions on completing your notice of submission and further examination details are available in the following guide: [eProg Submission to Examination Student Guide](#)

IMPORTANT: Students submitting a thesis for the Bioethics and Medical Jurisprudence programme should select 'Journal Format' in section 4 of the notice of submission. Although it is usual and standard for those on the Bioethics and Medical Jurisprudence programme to submit in this way, the University still considers this thesis format to be 'Journal Format'.

Thesis Submission

You are required to submit an electronic version of your thesis for the PGR examination process.

Once you have submitted your thesis electronically you must submit printed and bound paper copies from the submitted eThesis for both examination submission and resubmissions to the PGR Office by your thesis submission deadline.

IMPORTANT – When you see the confirmation page that you have completed your eThesis submission you must download a copy of your eThesis with the cover page, which is available on this page. This is the version of the thesis that you should have bound (examination and resubmission only).

Information about electronic thesis submission can be found at: <http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/using-the-library/staff/research/services/ethesis/pgr-students/>

We strongly recommend that the bound paper versions of your examination and re-submission thesis are printed from the electronic PDF version that you submit, as it is important that both versions have all the same information.

You can download and print a copy of your submitted eThesis PDF, including a cover page confirming eThesis submission has occurred, immediately after your successful eThesis submission. You may also download a copy of your submitted eThesis at any time after your submission via the My ETD Summary portlet. You do not need to print and bind your final, post-examination thesis.

Queries

If you have any queries, please contact the BMJ Programme Director or the PGR Office (lawpgr@manchester.ac.uk).

Contact details can be found at: <http://www.law.manchester.ac.uk/pgr-handbook/services-and-support/student-support/programme-management/>