

GUIDELINES FOR PH.D. SUBMISSIONS

These guidelines are intended to help Ph.D. students in the Faculty for the Built Environment. It is highly advisable that students familiarise themselves with the many useful guidelines and services offered by the Doctoral School of the University of Malta. With respect to formal regulations, students are expected to abide by the [University of Malta Ph.D. Regulations, 2023](#) and the Ph.D. Bye-laws of the Faculty for the Built Environment (2024).

1. TYPES OF PH.D. DEGREES OFFERED

- Doctor of Philosophy Degree; and
- Doctor of Philosophy Degree by Practice as Research.

In the first instance a Ph.D. by Practice will be offered in Visual Arts, with other themes to be decided upon by Faculty Board, upon the recommendation of the Faculty Doctoral Committee.

The appropriateness of the specific practice component of the Degree by Practice as Research shall be considered on a case-by-case basis at the time of Letter of Intent submission.

2. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Students are required to pursue professional development activities, and produce evidence both at the time of applying for transfer from the M.Phil. to the Ph.D. Degree and prior to their applying to submit their Ph.D. work for examination. The total number of hours over the whole period of studies must be around 100 hours, including a compulsory training workshop covering research ethics and integrity.

Students are strongly encouraged to make use of the [Guiding Principles for Professional Development Activities](#) in choosing the training to be undertaken. This is to be established in consultation with the supervisory team. However, the Faculty suggests that students are to consider following the below workshops organised by the Doctoral School:

- DOC6001 Starting your Ph.D.
- DOC6017 Managing your Doctoral Journey Successfully
- DOC6016 Upgrading from M.Phil. to Ph.D. – the Transfer Process
- DOC6026 Getting Published: the Conference Paper
- DOC6030 Getting Published: the Journal Article (Architecture and STEM)
- DOC6002 Preparing for the Viva

3. PH.D. SUBMISSIONS

Ph.D.: a thesis of between 80,000 and 100,000 words, excluding endnotes/footnotes, captions, list of references, appendices, abstract, and preliminary material.

Ph.D. by Practice as Research:

- (i) a presentation of practice that consists of a portfolio which may include an exhibition, comprising studio-based and/or practice-based and/or project-based work related to the theme of research as approved by the Board.

And

- ii) a thesis of 40,000–50,000 words, excluding endnotes/footnotes, list of references, appendices, abstract, and preliminary material. The thesis will contextualise and expound analytically upon the submitted practice in relation to the key research issue, question, or problem as well as the chosen methodologies and processes undertaken.

4. SUBMISSION AND PRESENTATION OF MATERIAL

Students are to submit their thesis in a digital format. For Practice as Research submissions, the portfolio must be submitted as a hard copy.

When submitting a portfolio of work, students shall include a signed declaration that the entire portfolio is their own personal work and that it has been done after their registration for the Degree.

The work must on no account have already been submitted for any qualification or elsewhere.

For the purposes of the thesis, you are encouraged to consider adopting APA as your main referencing style or another which is recognised in the field of research that your work falls in, in consultation with your supervisor.

The following order should be followed in the thesis:

- (a) Title-page (see template at the end of this document)
- (b) Abstract
- (c) Dedication (if any)
- (d) Table of Contents
- (e) List of illustrations (figures, maps, plates, in that order)
- (f) Acknowledgements (if any)
- (g) List of abbreviations and/or glossary if necessary to an understanding of the text; otherwise the glossary may be placed towards the end, before the references list
- (h) Text of Thesis
- (i) Appendix or appendices (if applicable)
- (j) Endnotes (for the whole text) if applicable and if preferred over footnotes
- (k) List of References or Bibliography

It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the implications of plagiarism and of the University's policy on the matter. See the '[Plagiarism and Collusion Guidelines](#)'.

The unacknowledged use of Generative AI tools is not allowed in the writing of a thesis or any stage of the writing process. The use of unacknowledged work generated by AI tools is considered by the University as plagiarised work and will be dealt with accordingly.

Students are to familiarise themselves and follow the University of Malta guidelines in this respect and which are available at

<https://www.um.edu.mt/registrar/secure/policies/GuidelinesforAcademicStaffontheuseofGenerativeAIToolsinClassandinAssessments.pdf>

For Ph.D.s by Practice as Research, the presentation of practice should be guided by sections 1 and 2 of this document.

5. TRANSFER FROM M.Phil. TO Ph.D.

At their M.Phil. to Ph.D. transfer stage, students are expected to submit:

- (a) an abstract, inclusive of aims and methodology;
- (b) the equivalent of at least two chapters of the entire thesis (14,000–20,000 words);
- (c) a chapter-outline of the thesis alongside a schedule for its completion.

In the case of Practice as Research this shall involve:

- (a) an abstract, inclusive of aims and methodology;
- (b) the equivalent of at least one chapter of the entire thesis (5,000–8,000 words);
- (c) documented evidence of the ongoing practical research accompanied by a written articulation of the process (2,000–4,000 words) – the documented evidence will entail curated material as appropriate to the project, e.g. curated portfolio material;
- (d) a chapter-outline of the thesis alongside a schedule for its completion that also includes the final presentation of practice vis-à-vis Ph.D. Regulation 43.3 (i.e. ‘The presentation of formally examinable practice shall not normally be more than one calendar year in advance of the final written submission’).

6. Ph.D. EXAMINATION

Further to the relevant items in the [University of Malta Ph.D. Regulations \(2023\)](#) that govern the examination of Ph.D. theses, the examination of a Ph.D. consists of:

- (a) a thesis;
- (b) an oral defence of the thesis.

The oral defence will consist of a presentation of a synopsis of the thesis of about 45 minutes followed by the answering of questions posed by members of the Board of Examiners.

The examination of a Ph.D. by Practice as Research consists of:

- (a) a portfolio of works, which may comprise an exhibition, carried out in part fulfilment of the Ph.D. requirements;
- (b) a thesis;
- (c) an oral defence of the thesis that necessarily also involves the practice.

The oral defence will consist of a presentation of a synopsis of the thesis and practice carried out, of about 45 minutes, followed by the answering of questions posed by members of the Board of Examiners.

All expenses related to the written and documentation materials required for Ph.D. submissions (mainly, but not exclusively, the thesis, all aspects of the portfolios as well as pen drives) will be borne by the student.

On successful completion of their studies, students are required to submit to the Faculty Office two hard bound copy of the thesis and one digital copy within six weeks from the publication of their result. In the case of Practice as Research submissions, the hard bound submissions shall include a hard copy of the portfolio and any other relevant materials and documentation. One hard bound copy of the thesis shall be kept in the Library of the Faculty and another copy will be given to the Principal Supervisor. Students should also submit a digital copy to the UM Library via the VLE task. Students who do not comply with this requirement shall not be awarded the Degree.