

Thesis Titles

For PhD registration, the draft title of the thesis may be fairly broad at the time of commencement of study to allow a wider area of research at the start of the candidature, whilst discussions about the precise focus take place. The title of the research must be clearly defined and focussed by the transfer assessment stage and reported to Postgraduate Research and Operations (PGR&O) with the recommendation for transfer to a definite degree category.

For MPhil and Mastership by Research registration a draft thesis title must be confirmed at the time of acceptance of the candidate and reported to PGR&O with the recommendation for acceptance. Due to the tight timescale for completion it is essential that the research project is clearly defined and focussed before the candidate commences study.

Postgraduate Research Tutors should review the title of the research on an annual basis to ensure that it is still an appropriate description of the work being carried out. Where it is identified that there has been a change in the focus of the research, an amended thesis title should be reported to PGR&O so that the University records may be updated accordingly. Amendments to thesis titles may be reported to PGR&O at the time of registration or, if not at the time of registration, in writing from the Postgraduate Research Tutor.

For all research degree candidates, the final thesis title must be confirmed at the time of submission of the examination entry form. Changes to the title of the thesis should not normally occur after the entry form has been approved by the Examinations Group. Supervisors are asked to note the following good practice which may assist with the development of the research, target setting and professional development of Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs):

- (a) the need to ensure that each PGR has a clearly defined and unique thesis title;
- (b) the use of short titles which clearly reflect the work being undertaken;
- (c) the avoidance of unnecessary words such as “an introduction to, an evaluation of, an investigation into, a study of”;
- (d) the use of titles which are relatively narrowly focussed to reflect the restricted length of the period of study;
- (e) the use of titles which locate the work in the relevant discipline or disciplines;
- (f) the use of grammatically correct language;
- (g) the use of a title, where possible, which can indicate clearly the area of research, even to those outside the discipline/s.

It is recognised that the use of the first person in a thesis title may be appropriate in exceptional cases and where this is indicative of the thesis methodology. A request for permission to use the first person in a thesis title must be submitted for consideration by the Programmes of Study and Audit Group by no later than the transfer stage and the rationale for its use must be clearly justified.