

Postgraduate Study



Department of
Sociology, Gender & Social Work

University of Otago

Tena koutou katoa, Hello, and Welcome

On behalf of the staff, I am delighted to welcome you to postgraduate work in the Department of Sociology, Gender and Social Work. As a graduate research student you will take on a new role in our community. In addition to the opportunities related to research you may be involved in teaching and I hope you will forge new links within the disciplines of sociology, gender and social work and throughout the University. You will also find new challenges related to this role that will stimulate you to grow, to reflect, and to contribute to the knowledge base of our disciplines.

In this handbook you will find valuable information about the Department's programmes and facilities. It is designed as an introduction, and does not include all the information you will need concerning the Department and the University. You will also need to consult websites, written material, and (occasionally) live human beings to meet your information needs.

The research enterprise is diverse and complex, and ultimately you are the author – not only of your thesis or dissertation – but of your research career. We take great pride in our graduate research students, and I am certain that you will bring honour to our department and the university in all your professional dealings.

Hugh Campbell (HOD)
Department of Sociology, Gender and Social
Work



1. Embarking on a Postgraduate Career

1.1 Who are postgraduate students?

Postgraduate students are those who have already graduated from a tertiary institution and who are studying for a higher degree. Thus, those studying for a Masters degree or for a PhD are postgraduate students.

Applicants for postgraduate study should have demonstrated expertise in their planned field of study, normally an Honours degree with a research component (for Masters students), or a Masters degree (for PhD students).

1.2 How do I inquire about postgraduate study?

The department's website <http://www.otago.ac.nz/sgsw/> gives a step-by-step guide to the process of investigating postgraduate study. You should also consult the website of the university's International Office if this applies to your situation <http://www.otago.ac.nz/international/index.html>.

You will need to submit:

- Application
- CV
- References
- Transcripts (unofficial are fine)
- Proposal
- Writing sample

The proposal should be brief (1-3 pages) and does not need to include a detailed method section. It is expected that this initial draft will be substantially revised through work with your supervisor.

1.3 Who oversees postgraduate studies in Sociology, Gender and Social Work?

Postgraduate research in this department is overseen by the Postgraduate Committee. Membership of the committee varies year by year. For the duration of your time as a research student in this department your academic welfare and progress will be monitored by the Postgraduate Committee, who will seek regular reports from your supervisor(s). You are welcome to contact the Postgraduate Coordinator or another member of the committee regarding any concerns or suggestions you may have about the postgraduate programme.

Postgraduate Coordinator:

Bryndl Hohmann-Marriott: bryndl.hohmann.marriott@otago.ac.nz

Members of the Postgraduate Committee:

Annabel Cooper: annabel.cooper@otago.ac.nz

Amanda Barusch: amanda.barusch@otago.ac.nz

Melanie Beres: melanie.beres@otago.ac.nz

Rebecca Stringer: rebecca.stringer@otago.ac.nz

Postgraduate Administrator:

Jocelyn Diedrichs: jocelyn.diedrichs@otago.ac.nz

Applications for postgraduate study are considered carefully, in order to ensure that a student is embarking on a project of suitable scope and depth, and that the project will further the student's goals. The student's research interests, and theoretical and methodological approaches, are also part of the Postgraduate Committee's consideration, as it is important to ensure that appropriate supervision is available.

1.4 What sources of information already exist?

There is already a great deal of information about graduate studies available to you within the University. Sources include the following:

- The departmental webpage <http://www.otago.ac.nz/sgsw/>
- The University of Otago Calendar
- Handbook for Masters' Degrees and PhD Study
- (both available online with other useful information: <http://www.otago.ac.nz/study/>)
- Notes on the Preparation of Theses
- Tuition Fees Booklet
- Departmental Research Information booklet
- MSW Course Prospectus

It is assumed that you have consulted these sources of information and it is not our intention to replicate them in this handbook. Rather, we wish to inform you of the related departmental procedures that are not covered in the university documents or on the main webpage.



1.5 What do we expect from our graduate students?

It is expected that, as a graduate research student, you will be progressively able to do the following:

- undertake original, independent and collaborative, interdisciplinary research
- effectively present research results in written and oral form to a wider audience
- assemble, critically evaluate and analyse information from the field, practice, library and other sources
- competently use electronic media to gather, distribute, process and analyse information
- think clearly and methodically in debate and decision making
- practise the highest ethical standards in professional activity
- appreciate and respect the beliefs, needs and aspirations of people of different cultures, ethnicities, gender and ability
- confirm a sense of social responsibility
- Social Work graduate students are also expected to gain skills in:
 - comprehending the nature and reflective character of intervention in social systems
 - demonstrating an understanding of the interrelationships between social issues and policies in the human environment

1.6 What are the formal requirements?

You will find the regulations for degrees and diplomas on the University website: <http://www.otago.ac.nz/postgraduate/index.html/>

1.7 What are the time limits?

As a full time PhD candidate you are expected to submit your thesis within three years of first registering for the degree. The minimum completion time is two and half years.

As a full time MA or MSW student you are expected to submit your thesis within one year of registering for the degree (if thesis only) or by the end of the second year of study if you are undertaking a papers + thesis programme for full time students.

Applications for extensions are considered on a case-by-case basis by the Postgraduate Committee, and the Division of Humanities (for a Masters), or the PhD Office.



1.8 What does it cost and what sources of financial assistance are available?

Undertaking postgraduate study is not cheap but neither is it more expensive than full time undergraduate study. You will find details of the current fee structures on the university's website. You will, however, incur some additional costs associated with your project or thesis, the scale of which will depend on the nature of research undertaken. We wish to emphasise that the likely costs associated with research programmes are important considerations. You must raise this in preliminary discussions with prospective supervisors and the Postgraduate Committee.

1.8.1 Student Loans

Most of you will be well aware of the student loan scheme that is currently operating. If you need confirmation of the details, you should consult the University's link to <http://www.studylink.govt.nz/>

1.8.2 Departmental Allowances

Departments include in their annual budgets an amount to support research students. This is to cover some of the routine costs (e.g. access to physical space, access to computers, access to internet, inter-loans and software), as opposed to specific needs of your project. The department will make an allowance for costs incurred by you as a full time research student as follows:

- for a maximum of one year for Masters research,
- for one year of the PhD

You should discuss the question of research costs with your supervisor within one month of registering to do research. Your supervisor will then collate this information for the Postgraduate Committee who will discuss your specific needs and allocate funds if appropriate, to the extent that the department budget allows. If you are a part-time research student your case will normally be determined on a pro rate basis.

1.8.3 Scholarships/Awards

For those of you embarking upon the thesis year of a Masters degree, or thinking of a PhD, and who achieve grades in the 'A' range at 400 level, there are several scholarships that you should consider applying for. For further details you should contact the University Scholarships Office (Research and International) located in the Registry Building. <http://www.otago.ac.nz/study/scholarships/>

1.8.4 Support from outside agencies

The research of the department's postgraduate students is often of interest to social service and other agencies outside of the University (for example government departments and voluntary sector agencies). For some of you, you may seek to establish an association with such agencies for the duration of your research project (even beyond) and they may offer financial and/or logistical support. Such associations typically operate to the benefit of the graduate student and the outside agency. Collaboration with external agencies however, must be undertaken with great care. Without exception, you must first discuss any possible association with your supervisor(s), then application should be made to the Postgraduate Committee for final departmental approval.

There are two reasons why care is needed with associations with outside agencies. Firstly, there is the issue of possible liability for incorrect advice or research results provided by an individual employed by or associated with the university. Secondly, the expectations which external agencies may have of research projects to which they are contributing are often quite different from the academic requirements of the research. It is the responsibility of your supervisor and the Postgraduate Committee to provide advice to you with the aim that, as a research student, you are not unduly torn between what can be conflicting objectives.

1.8.5 Tutoring and Research Assistance

Graduate students are sometimes employed by the department to undertake various tasks associated with the undergraduate teaching programme. These include small group tutoring, marking assignments, giving guest lectures, and providing administrative help to lecturers. Qualities required for this work, in addition to competence in the subject matter, include the ability to relate and communicate well with undergraduate students.

Tutoring

As a tutor you will meet regularly with course co-ordinators from the time that you are assigned to a programme, to discuss the teaching programmes involved. If you are tutoring you will usually be required to attend regular meetings, where approaches to tutoring and the content of tutorial sessions will be discussed.

Tutoring can often play an important part in developing your command of the discipline, and your own, as well as your students' skill, in verbal and written analysis and discussion. Successful teaching or tutoring is a useful addition to your C.V. You should note, however, that teaching can be time consuming and energy sapping, so you should discuss the possible implications for your own study/ research programme with your supervisor before deciding to take it on.

Advertisements for tutors are placed at least two months before the start of each semester. Specific enquiries can be directed to Pam Jemmett, Department Manager, 03 479 8447. Expressions of interest in tutoring positions should be made in writing to Pam Jemmett and should include a letter covering your experience and which papers you would prefer to tutor, and a current curriculum vitae.

Research Assistance

Department staff at times employ graduate students to assist in some tasks in their own research. This work can also provide valuable experience, especially if you plan to continue in a research career. Research assistance can cover a wide range of support including bibliographic and archival searches, interviewing, managing databases, data analysis, and drafting sections of research reports.



Getting to Know the Department and its Staff

2.1 About the academic staff

The Department of Sociology, Gender and Social Work was formed in 2011, bringing together three disciplines of different types: a traditional social science discipline (Sociology), an interdisciplinary field (Gender Studies), and a professional discipline (Social Work). While each has distinct characteristics, there are many points of common research interest across the three areas, and we expect research collaborations and postgraduate co-supervision to develop between them. Individual staff profiles for academic staff can be found on the department's website www.otago.ac.nz/sgsw.

2.2 Introducing the general staff

Pam Jemmett, Department Manager

Pam manages administration and cost centre finance.

email: pam.jemmett@otago.ac.nz

Helen O'Sullivan, Administrative Assistant

Helen provides administrative support to the department and is the first point of call for students with general administrative enquiries

email: helen.osullivan@otago.ac.nz

Jocelyn Diedrichs, Postgraduate Administrator

Jocey supports the MSW programme and the Postgraduate research students and staff.

email: jocelyn.diedrichs@otago.ac.nz

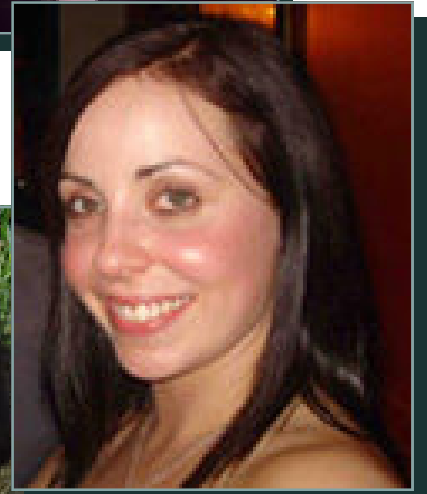
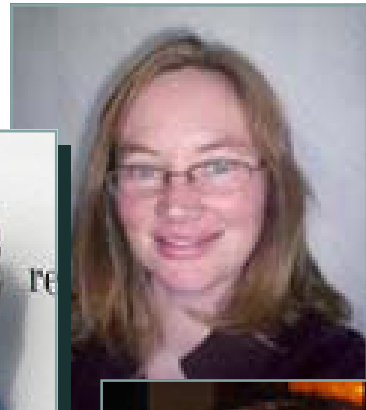
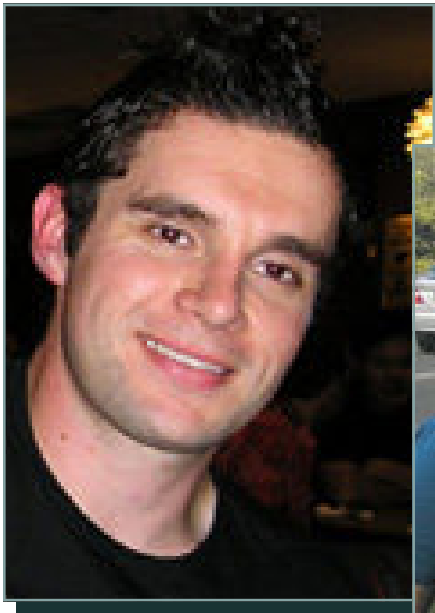
2.3 Web Site

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/sgsw>

3. The Postgraduate Community in the Department

3.1 Introduction: Who are our research students?

Each year approximately 40 students are enrolled in postgraduate courses in the department. Around 25 – 30 students are completing thesis, dissertations or PhDs.



3.2 Support for Postgraduates

There will be times when you need to discuss your concerns or problems with other people. Those concerns or problems might arise from your studies, or your other activities in the department; or they might be caused by outside factors. Any of these may affect your work and your general well being as a student and there are a number of channels of support available.

Your research supervisor(s) is normally your first port of call, as it is important that he or she are aware of any concerns you may have. If there is some reason why you would rather speak with someone else, you can approach the Postgraduate Co-ordinator, a member of the Postgraduate Committee, a senior member of your programme, or the Head of Department.

3.2.2 Postgraduate Committee

Key matters associated with research studies in the department are administered by the Postgraduate Committee. The Committee is responsible for ensuring that your application for admission is processed, that you have appropriate supervision, and that you progress efficiently through your research. The Committee will address issues raised by the postgraduate community in general (conveyed via student representatives – see below) and individual problems you may encounter which cannot be resolved by reference to your supervisor or co-supervisor (discussed later in the Handbook). We stress that if problems arise they are better addressed as soon as possible.

3.2.3 Postgraduate student representatives

Three individuals are nominated by postgraduate students at the beginning of each year to represent the group's interests. These individuals represent, respectively, the programmes of sociology, gender studies, and social work. In addition to conveying matters of general concern/interest to the Postgraduate Committee, student representatives are invited to attend, and suggest agenda items, for regular staff meetings where they are encouraged to participate fully.

3.2.4 Research Paper on Blackboard

As a research student with the department you are already enrolled in the Blackboard research paper. This is a unique Blackboard paper as it has a population of department researchers at various levels and paces, dissertation, theses for MA, MSW, PhD, part-time, full time . . . This provides a chance for you as a researcher to be able to shape the use of this paper, more than you have done before.

You can:

- Start discussion forums for topics relating to your research
- Suggest links and web-sites relevant to you or other researchers' topics
- Post some of your work and receive input from other researchers

3.2.5 e-mail

The university assigns computer usernames and email addresses to all enrolling students. Information about this is available in your registration documents.

At the beginning of each year, providing you consent, student representatives draw up a list of postgraduate e-mail addresses and circulate it. The list is also used to form 'aliases' so that messages can be sent to the postgraduate group as a whole and to sub-groups such as MSW or MA students. For further information about aliases contact Pam Jemmett. The e-mail addresses of staff at Otago are listed on the Research Paper on Blackboard and on the department website.

3.2.6 Notice board

There is a physical notice board specifically for postgraduate students in Leith Walk. Use this to display information and check on posting of fellow students, staff, and for university notices and seminar information.

3.3 Postgraduate development

While completion of a thesis is your main goal as a postgraduate student, there are other skills, practices, and relationships involved in academic life that are important to appreciate and develop at postgraduate level. The following section covers several aspects of participation in a research community.

3.3.1 Other students

Your primary objective is to undertake and complete your research as well and as efficiently as possible, but the life of a postgraduate student can be isolating. Other students can be some of your most important sources of support in sustaining your work and the stamina necessary to complete an extended piece of research. They will be encountering the same challenges for the first time and dealing with the same concerns as you are. Mutual support networks can assist you during your postgraduate years and build the foundation for longer-term career networks. You can use the online discussion board to support communication with other students but the importance of face-to-face engagement with others' ideas and interests is irreplaceable as a support to your own intellectual development and that true grit you will need to draw on.



3.3.2 Postgraduate development programme

The department's monthly postgraduate meetings generally alternate between seminars on areas related to professional development, and short postgraduate presentations. Postgraduate students are required to attend these sessions. Student are also expected to attend departmental seminars (see 3.4.1), especially those in their own programme area.

The postgraduate development programme is designed to provide you with expertise specific to research and writing, but also to contribute to the development of the broader collegiality so critical to academic and professional life. The programme will give you practice in delivering research presentations; but also, together with the departmental seminars, practice in critically responding to others' presentations, and opportunities to develop the wide-ranging curiosity which is a distinguishing characteristic of a good researcher. Whether you are attending presentations by fellow postgraduates or departmental visitors from other institutions, these sessions will help you develop your expertise in the processes of exchange of knowledge and critical debate. These capabilities will be an important aspect of your life beyond the postgraduate degree, whether that takes you to an academic or professional career.



"Speed Dating Master Class" with Erik Olsen Wright

3.4 Academic interest group

3.4.1 The Research Seminar Programme

Departmental seminar presentations are another formal means of monitoring your progress. During the course of your research you are required to present a seminar in your programme's seminar series; and to give at least one presentation of some kind each year. This is a chance to share your research proceedings and findings with other student and staff, and gain feedback in a supportive environment. Graduate students are expected to attend seminars. This is an integral part of the research life of the department, and an important avenue for maintaining your understanding of the wider discipline to which you belong.

3.4.2 Sociology Association of Aotearoa New Zealand (SAANZ)

SAANZ holds an annual conference, which is a good venue for students to present work towards the end of their study. Every second year, SAANZ hosts a 'Gender and Sexuality' stream, which is coordinated by the Otago Gender Studies programme.

3.4.3 Aotearoa/New Zealand Association of Social Workers [ANZASW] (Otago Branch)

For social work students, membership of the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers (ANZASW) is an important step in an ongoing career as a professional social worker in New Zealand. Membership entitles you to copies of Social Work Review, a journal in which you may eventually seek to publish the results of your research. It can also provide you with a way into the New Zealand community of social workers.

4. Departmental resources for postgraduates

4.1 What is available?

The department aims to provide the best possible facilities to support teaching and research at graduate level. This includes access to a workspace within the department, access to computing facilities and a fax machine, limited financial support for routine research activities (e.g. photocopying, inter-loans etc.), and for research in the field. However, resources are limited and some restrictions must apply. These are outlined below.

The Union building is home to the postgraduate lounge, a space dedicated to postgraduate students and equipped with kitchen facilities. Regular social events are held in the lounge, where friends, colleagues and families are welcome to meet and catch up there.

4.1.1 Study space

Resources are available dependent upon the programme for which the student is enrolled. Pam Jemmett is responsible for assigning space. The policy for allocating the spaces is based on the responsibilities and seniority. In general, if you are enrolled for a PhD or Masters and/or employed as a teaching fellow, teaching assistant or tutor you will receive priority. Departmental space is for the use of students undertaking research and study only, and is not, under any circumstances, to be used for entertaining friends or personal visitors. Please respect others using the room.

4.1.2 Access and Security

If you require a key for any access, please call in to the department's administrative office. While the department seeks to create a welcoming and open working environment for all, it is important that everyone shares in the responsibility for keeping it safe.

Unfortunately, personal items, money and equipment are sometimes stolen from rooms in all of the university buildings. There are several things that everyone can do to help make the departmental workspace more secure.

Make sure that doors are kept locked when unattended, and do not leave valuables unattended in non-secured areas

If you see anyone behaving suspiciously in the building, specially in the evening and at weekends, contact the security office immediately by phoning Security on ext. 5000.

If you discover a theft or identify some other emergency after hours contact the security office immediately by phoning ext. 5000.

If working late, always do so with a 'buddy'. When leaving the building late at night, always arrange to do so with someone else.

THE CAMPUS SECURITY OFFICE TELEPHONE NUMBER IS 5000 (if you are off-campus, 479-5000), AND OPERATES 24 HOURS A DAY.

NOTE: From 5:00 p.m. to 8:30 a.m. and all day on weekends the department's buildings will be locked. As a postgraduate student you will be issued a key that will access the main door to your study area. You are responsible for its security and must not lend or copy this key. If you are working after normal working hours you are responsible for the security of the building. DO NOT prop open any doors for others coming later.

4.1.3 Telephones

Students cannot be contacted through the department office phones; but the secretarial staff will take messages for students in emergencies only. Please note that ALL phone calls are charged at business rates to the department by time.

4.1.4 Faxes

Research related faxes may be sent from the department by arrangement with a staff member.

4.1.5 Postal Services

Private mail should not be sent to the department. The only exception is mail for international students in the first few months of their stay when they may not have a permanent local address. The postgraduate student mailbox is located at the department's administrative office. If you wish to use the department address for the receipt of research mail, and expect to receive a large amount of such mail (e.g. survey responses), you must first discuss your plans with the administrative staff.

4.1.6 Photocopying

As a postgraduate you should photocopy material in the Library. If you have a research grant and/or departmental allowance, you should arrange to direct debit your account. Please see Pam Jemmett for funds to be debited to your ID card.

Limited amounts of photocopying may also be undertaken within the department. Obtain a pin from Pam Jemmett. If you need to prepare handouts for a class presentation (or other teaching purposes) you should discuss this with the lecturer responsible for the paper. This use is extended to the copying of final versions of theses and dissertations. If a task involves a considerable amount of photocopying please consult the administrative staff to determine the most appropriate method to complete the job.

4.1.7 Stationery

Overhead transparencies and pens for use in class and research seminars are available from the departmental office. The use of overheads should, however, be kept to a minimum and only exceptionally should you use more than five per seminar presentation.

Letterhead paper is for official University use only. Research-related letters to members of the public should be on letterhead paper and must be approved and co-signed by the supervisor before being sent out.

Photocopied letterhead paper should be used for large mail-outs, such as in association with questionnaires, but only with the approval of the supervisor and if the letter is co-signed.

In principle, all correspondence with people and agencies outside the University that is associated with courses and research should be approved by a member of staff, whether the letter is sent on letterhead paper or not.

Plain envelopes only are to be used by postgraduate students; envelopes bearing the University crest are not to be used.

Freepost envelopes required for surveys are available from the department's office. All envelopes must be initialled for easy identification of surveyor and stamped with the department's stamp. Postage costs will be charged to your allowance. Advise Pam Jemmett of the quantity before posting.

4.1.8 Computing

The department provides extensive computing facilities and access to laser quality printing. This includes access to software for word-processing, statistical analysis, spread-sheets, databases, e-mail and internet access. There are also over 700 computers in 30 different locations for all students to use across the Dunedin university campus.

4.1.9 Guidelines for the use of computing facilities

Computer equipment is to be used for coursework and thesis research purposes only; these facilities are not for personal use.

Students are not permitted access to staff computer accounts.

The department has limited software manuals with most information available online.

Software installed on University systems must not be copied for personal use. Anyone found breaching copyright licences is liable for significant penalties.

No material subject to copyright is to be downloaded from the internet, including music, or movies. As above anyone found breaching copyright licenses is liable to significant penalties.



4.1.10 University library services

As a PhD or Masters student you automatically receive extended borrowing privileges from the University Library. As a postgraduate student you are able to inter-loan material from other libraries in New Zealand, subject to some constraints.

How to survive the information jungle?

Library skills, vital to your postgraduate studies, includes knowing the location of, how to access, search, retrieve, evaluate, store and manage information found in print and/or electronic resources, e.g. catalogues, data bases, e-journals, exam papers, subject guides, citation style guides, thesis preparation, and other web tutorials and resources. Library information Desk staff are available to help you with improving your research skills and your daily research enquiries.

Specialised free workshops are tailored to assist you with effective database searching, through to checking the national catalogue (Te Puna) before placing a document delivery request for material that is not held locally. If you are unfamiliar with any of these essential databases then you need to attend a workshop as soon as possible. There will be an overview of databases given at the beginning of each year at the orientation session.

4.1.11 Special Equipment

The department owns and maintains a range of technical equipment for field research. Your equipment needs should be discussed with, and approved by, your supervisor and the department manager, Pam Jemmett. All equipment removed from the department must be signed for, and signed off on return.

4.2 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) regarding resources

If you need to ask one of these questions, this is who to talk to

FAQ for Helen O'Sullivan:

- Help! The photocopier's jammed – what should I do? / Can you arrange a PIN so I can access photocopying?
- May I photocopy my questionnaires here? May I get envelopes for them, and also return envelopes that are sent to the department? (e.g. procedures with questionnaires – photocopying, envelopes, return of questionnaires etc.)
- I need to store confidential information, where can I do that?
- I would like a key for after hours access please?
- May I have an internal/external purchase order (e.g. for an inter-loan)?

FAQ for Pam Jemmett:

- I will need space and computer connection in the department.
- How do I organise payment for part-time work in the department (e.g. tutors)
- How do I get photocopy funds?
- Can I get a reimbursement if it was not practical for the item to be ordered & paid for by invoice? (yes – a **GST receipt must be provided and prior approval given**)
- I need a digital recorder for fieldwork, can I get it from our supplies, or is there a way to obtain it?
- Can I borrow equipment for my fieldwork?
- The software has disappeared, the computer isn't working? / Can I get my special software installed?
- I can't log on/print/whatever/ . . – what do I do?

FAQ for Jocey Diedrichs:

- Which Social Work paper do I enrol in? Which one would suit my needs best?
- When is the due date for submitting my thesis/dissertation?
- I need an extension, where are the possibilities and how do I go about applying for it?
- How does a thesis/dissertation get bound/ Who does it? How do I get it ready? (i.e. final production of theses & dissertations: photocopying, binding etc.)
- Who do I send my thesis/dissertation to when complete?

FAQ for your Supervisor:

- I am available to give some tutoring, how do I go about doing that?
- What additional facilities can I have access to, to complete my research?
- I need money for a particular research component; what should I do?
- I'm having problems, where can I get help?

5. EXAMINATION OF DISSERTATIONS, RESEARCH PROJECTS AND THESES

Dissertations, research projects and theses are examined by subject experts: some in the department, some from elsewhere in the University, some from another New Zealand university and some, as will be described later in this section, may be from outside the country. This is to ensure consistently high standards and reflects the importance that the University places on research.

Because unique expectations are held for dissertations and theses, they are examined differently. The following terms will make the next sections clearer: a **CANDIDATE** is the person who submits a dissertation or a thesis for examination; a **SUPERVISOR** is a member of staff who advises a candidate on the research and its formal presentation; an **INTERNAL EXAMINER** is a person with expert knowledge of the candidate's research field and is normally a member of the University staff; and an **EXTERNAL EXAMINER** is a subject expert from outside the University of Otago. An **EXTERNAL ASSESSOR** is a subject expert from another university. An assessor provides oversight of the internal examining process.



5.1 Examination of a Dissertation

A 490 dissertation counts as 48 of the required 120 points for the final year of the Bachelor Degree with Honours or the Postgraduate Diploma. A candidate ideally starts work on it late the previous year and is required to submit to the Department three copies of the dissertation by 1 November of the year of registration for the paper. A dissertation should be limited to 20,000 words of text, exclusive of illustrations and supporting material. It should not be bound.

After they are deposited at the departmental office, copies of the dissertation are given to the supervisor, the internal examiner and the external assessor. Grades are awarded with reference to:

- Statement of research objectives
- Awareness of previous work
- Research design
- Analysis and discussion of results
- Conclusions and recommendations
- Supervisor's involvement
- General comments

Like each of the required papers, a dissertation is given a letter grade (A+, A, A- . . . E) and a corresponding mark out of 100. The letter grade is recorded by the University on the candidate's academic transcript.

Candidates who are interested in knowing the examiners' comments on their dissertation are invited to approach the Head of Department. Unless an examiner consent to it, the written report is treated as confidential but an oral summary of its contents may be given.

5.2 Examination of a Master's Degree Thesis

Typically, there will be a discussion about the final title of the thesis and contents of the abstract about three months before supervisor and candidate agree that the thesis is ready to submit. The supervisor will then identify two or three subject experts – typically staff members of a university – who might be asked to examine the thesis. The Head of Department usually makes an information approach to at least of the nominated external examiners before writing to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor to recommend who should be invited to serves as external examiner. At the same time, the internal examiner will be named by the Head of Department. The identities of Masters thesis' examiners are not made known to candidates either during or after the examination process.

A candidate submits three soft bound copies of the thesis to the department. The copies are sent to the external examiner and the internal examiner, respectively. The two examiners are required to recommend a letter grade and a mark out of 100 for the thesis, and are requested to submit a written report justifying their recommended grade and listing any matters in need of attention. The supervisor submits a report on the work of the candidate but is not viewed by the University as an examiner of the thesis.

The standard University cutting grades are used, but Masters are awarded with DISTINCTION (80 and above) with CREDIT (70 – 79), or as a PASS (50 – 69).

In the event of disagreement between the two principal examiners, the Postgraduate Co-ordinator will check to see whether both are able to agree on a final result in the light of all the reports on the thesis. If that is not successful, the thesis is normally sent to a further subject expert for moderation.

Once the internal and external examiners agree on a final result, they sign a form and the details are later recorded on the candidate's academic transcript. It is not unusual for the examiners to require that a number of corrections or changes be made to the thesis before the degree is granted. The details have to be specified by the examiners, and the usual pattern is for the internal examiner to read the revised thesis then to certify in writing to the Postgraduate Co-ordinator that the required changes have been made.

Candidates receive copies of examiners' comments on their theses when they receive their results. If a candidate disagrees with the outcome of the examination process, he or she may appeal in writing to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor.

5.3 Examination of the Doctoral Thesis

About three months before the thesis is expected to be submitted for examination, the supervisor and the candidate will finalise the title and the abstract. If the title is different from that recorded at the time of registration, the Board of Graduate Studies must approve any changes. The supervisor then discusses with the Postgraduate Co-ordinator and the Head of Department who might be invited to examine the thesis.

Because the doctoral thesis is expected to represent a substantial original contribution to knowledge, the University requires a more comprehensive examination procedure than that for a Master's Degree thesis. A subject expert from outside the University, but from elsewhere in New Zealand, is appointed as one of the two external examiners (external examiner 'A'). A second subject expert from an overseas country is appointed as the second external examiner (external examiner 'B'). The internal examiner is normally a member of staff of the University, but not the supervisor, and need not be a member of the candidate's home department. The Head of Department can suggest as many as three names for each position on the examination panel, with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Enterprise deciding after consultation with the department. The slate of names is then conveyed to the Board of Graduate Studies for approval. When that has been received, the University formally contacts the nominated examiners and invites them to serve. A convenor from outside the candidate's home department is appointed to manage the examination process from this point on.

A candidate submits four copies of the thesis to the University, which then sends them to external examiners 'A' and 'B' and the internal examiner. The first two examiners are asked to submit written reports to the University, and can recommend as follows:

- that the thesis be accepted and the degree be awarded;
- that the thesis be accepted and the degree be awarded after minor amendments have been made to the satisfaction of the examination convenor;
- that the thesis be rejected in its present form, but be revised and resubmitted;
- that the thesis be accepted for another degree, with or without amendments;
- that the thesis be rejected with not right of resubmission.

Where sizeable changes are called for by the examiners, an oral examination is almost always required. You should note that relatively few PhD theses are accepted with no amendments (which is why they are submitted in temporary bindings).

Occasionally, external examiners 'A' and 'B' differ greatly in their individual assessments of the thesis. The Convenor is then required to negotiate with them in the hope of reconciling their differences. In that task, the supervisor's written report can be helpful, as can the views of the Convenor. If, the examiners are still unable to agree on how to proceed, the Convenor is required to inform the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Enterprise who will appoint a further subject expert to examine the thesis and report to the University. A candidate can appeal the examiners' recommendation by writing directly to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

Once all reports have been submitted and agreement reached as to whether or not an oral will be held, the identities of examiners are often made available to candidates. Examiners may, however, elect to submit blind reports which means that their identity is not made known to the candidate.



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