

FORMAT OF THE PhD DISSERTATION

1. Three versions of PhD dissertation submission for the FMHS will be allowed:
 - 1.1 Conventional format dissertation
 - 1.2 Publication format dissertation, and
 - 1.3 Hybrid format dissertation.
2. The focus and quality of the research and of the reporting remain the most important aspects in all formats and these formats are treated equally.
3. The differences between the three formats are as follows:

3.1 Conventional dissertation

An introduction chapter, followed by a number of chapters outlining the research, followed by a discussion chapter of the research results of the whole dissertation, highlighting the scientific contributions of the study, followed by a conclusion and future directions.

3.2 Publication format dissertation

A publication is an original article, research article or Research. It includes full Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion sections. Research can be primary or secondary research (evidence synthesis). Comprehensive Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses are included in this category.

A dissertation by publication should consist of an introduction chapter, followed by a minimum of 4 first-authored peer-reviewed published/accepted for publication articles (a maximum of 1 of which may be published within 3 years prior to formal registration for the relevant PhD programme, as per the *Faculty Board Meeting on the 20th of Feb 2020: Page 425: 4.6.4 The CPR recommended that the rule be amended to allow for only one publication that dated back no more than three years before registration, to take effect for all new PhD registrations as from 2020*), followed by a discussion chapter of the research results of the whole dissertation, highlighting the scientific contributions of the study, followed by a conclusion and future directions. It is also acceptable to have a separate chapter on methodology, however it should be clarified whether or not this chapter represents a publication on its own (ie a protocol paper). Refer to the Glossary below for definitions.

3.3 Hybrid format dissertation

An introduction chapter, followed by a minimum of 2 first-authored peer-reviewed published/accepted for publication articles (one of which may be published within 3 years prior to formal registration for the relevant PhD programme), AND

- ❖ a minimum of 2 first-authored submission-ready/submitted manuscripts (a submission-ready manuscript is a manuscript that is already in the final format required for submission by the chosen journal); OR
- ❖ a minimum of 2 chapters outlining the research; OR
- ❖ a combination (minimum of 2) of first-authored submission-ready/submitted manuscripts and chapters outlining the research;
- ❖ In all of the above cases, the chapters should be followed by a discussion chapter of the research results of the whole dissertation, highlighting the scientific contributions of the study, followed by a conclusion and future directions. It is also acceptable to have a separate chapter on methodology, however it should be clarified whether or not this chapter represents a publication on its own (ie a protocol paper).

The information above is summarised in the table on the following page.

Note: For the purposes of a PhD dissertation, co-first authorship is allowed, clearly indicated on the published article.

Approved Formats of a PhD Dissertation					
Conventional	Introduction	Chapters		Discussion	Conclusion
Publication	Introduction	At least 4 x 1 st authored peer-reviewed published/accepted for publication articles		Discussion	Conclusion
Hybrid 1	Introduction	At least 2 x 1 st authored peer-reviewed published/accepted for publication articles	At least 2 x first-authored submission-ready/submitted manuscripts	Discussion	Conclusion
Hybrid 2	Introduction	At least 2 x 1 st authored peer-reviewed published/accepted for publication articles	At least 2 x chapters	Discussion	Conclusion
Hybrid 3	Introduction	At least 2 x 1 st authored peer-reviewed published/accepted for publication articles	Combination (minimum 2) of first- authored submission-ready/submitted manuscripts and chapters	Discussion	Conclusion

- If only one manuscript has been published or accepted for publication at the time of submission for examination, the conventional format dissertation should be followed, and the manuscript reformatted into a chapter. The published manuscript may be included in the appendices but not in the mainbody of the dissertation.
- For both *published/accepted articles* and *submission-ready/submitted manuscripts under review*, information on the journal's URL, impact factor and any other information that will help examiners evaluate the quality of your work *must* be included.
- Articles with co-first authorship are allowed for submission towards the minimum number of first author articles (namely four), with the proviso that the final published article must clearly indicate on the title page that the two first authors have contributed equally to the publication. As the term "co-first authorship" means that both authors contributed equally to the relevant publication, the declaration at the beginning of the dissertation should state clearly what each author contributed to the article. The contribution of each first author should therefore be equal, and clearly outlined in the declaration, and authors who share the first authorship must clearly demonstrate why co-first authorship was necessary.

Layout and technical aspects

All doctoral dissertations should be edited to a high standard of polished presentation, before they are submitted for examination. The website of the Tygerberg Doctoral Office [at this link](#) provides information on the requirements for layout and technical aspects of a doctoral dissertation.

Glossary

Introduction	This is the chapter that introduces the topic and the problem, covers relevant literature to justify the topic, and highlights research gaps.
First-authored	A first-authored manuscript is a manuscript where the PhD candidate is the first named author in a list of authors and, as such, the lead author on the manuscript.
Peer-review	This refers to a process whereby a manuscript submitted to a journal is vetted for quality and importance by reviewers, who are scholars or researchers in the subject area in question, according to the editorial standards of that journal, before it is accepted for publication. This is intended to be a rigorous process that ensures that a manuscript that is published in a journal is a sound piece of research/scholarship.
Published	This is a manuscript that is available in print or on-line. This includes an <i>advance online publication</i> (a manuscript that is available before it becomes available in a specific issue of the print or online journal). An <i>advance online publication</i> may or may not have been edited at the time that it goes online and may or may not have a DOI (digital object identifier) assigned yet.
What is not counted as a research article towards the 4 required publications:	The protocol of a study, whether a published protocol of a trial or a protocol of a systematic review, is a building block. Thus, where a candidate who has published the protocol of the systematic review and then subsequently gone ahead and done this systematic review and published the results thereof, the full review publication is the publication that counts towards one of the publications. The protocol is supporting documentation. An example is that a published Cochrane review replaces a protocol in the Cochrane Library. An editorial letter, published literature review, or opinion piece, is also supporting information.
Published protocol paper	A published protocol paper (or manuscript) refers to a published protocol of the study in question in a peer-reviewed journal. This may also include a published paper of a protocol for a systematic review. (However, a published protocol of a systematic review and a published paper of that same systematic review will not be counted as 2 separate articles but as one).
Accepted for publication	This is a manuscript that is accepted by a journal to be published and which typically includes author-incorporated changes suggested during submission, peer review, and editor-author communications. It is <u>not</u> the version that includes the publisher's contributions, such as copy-editing and formatting.
Submission-ready	This refers to a manuscript that is in a <i>ready state</i> to submit to a journal. A <i>ready state</i> means that further edits/changes/improvements are not envisioned. This does <u>not</u> refer to a manuscript that is unfinished or in preparation.
Submitted manuscript	This refers to a manuscript that has been submitted to a journal and is either awaiting editorial or reviewer assignment or is under peer-review.
Discussion	The purpose of the discussion chapter is to interpret the meaning of the results within the context of what is known about the topic. New insights based on the findings should be explained. The discussion will consist of argumentation as different perspectives and explanations are considered. This chapter could include limitations and recommendations for future research.
Conclusion and future directions	The conclusion and future directions chapter ties together, integrates, and synthesizes various issues raised in the discussion, while at the same time reflects on the aims and objectives. The conclusion should provide answers to the research question(s), identify theoretical and/or clinical and/or policy implications of the work, highlight the limitations and strengths, and recommend areas for future research.