



TUS

**Technological University of the Shannon:
Midlands Midwest**

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Sionainne:
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TUS Submission Specifications for PhD and Master's Theses 2024 - 2026



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1.0 Overview

This document comprises the submission specifications for Masters by Research and PhD theses in the TUS Graduate School. It provides advice on the presentation of theses, language, the format of the thesis and the structure of the front matter. This document aligns with the [TUS Guide to Effective Practice that Supports Equity in Technological University Communications](#).

2.0 Presentation of Thesis

- Candidates should carefully proofread their thesis for typographical errors. It is imperative that the thesis presented for examination and in its final amended format is produced to a high standard and that it is clearly legible.
- The thesis will be written in English or Irish. Use of a language other than English or Irish may be permitted; however, this is subject to the availability of faculty with competence in the language concerned.
- If a student favors using a language other than English or Irish, they and their supervisors should have the necessary skills/fluency in the relevant language. The student and supervisory panel should consult with the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Faculty Research Committee (FRC) prior to the student registering on the postgraduate degree. The Dean and/or the FRC may refer the matter to the Postgraduate Studies and Research Subcommittee if they deem it necessary.
- The external and internal examiners to be appointed must also be sufficiently competent in the language in which the thesis is to be written. Notification of the intention to complete a postgraduate research degree in a language other than English or Irish, including specification of the language in question, should be made to the Graduate School and the FRC prior to the commencement of postgraduate studies.
- A thesis should be written concisely. A Master's thesis should not exceed 60,000 words. A PhD thesis should not exceed 100,000 words. The word count limits apply to the abstract and numbered chapters only and excludes appendices, footnotes, tables and the bibliography.

3.0 General Requirements for Submission

- The candidate is required to prepare one electronic PDF or Word version of the thesis which must be submitted to the Graduate School. The Graduate School will forward one copy to each of the internal examiner, external examiner and to the principal supervisor and co-supervisors.
- From time to time, candidates may be requested to submit soft bound copies on the request of examiners. The Graduate School will contact students and supervisory teams on same if requested to do so.
- At the conclusion of the examination process and when amendments and/or minor textual modifications (if required) have been made and signed-off as completed by the relevant examiner(s), the candidate should submit their final versions to the Graduate School.
- Where printed copies of the thesis for examination are submitted, they should be soft-bound or ring bound. If soft bound, they should be printed on one side of the page only. If ring bound, printing can be on both sides of the page. Printed copies are not always necessary. The Graduate School will advise you if printed copies are requested by examiners.
- Hard back copies of the thesis are not required until after the viva and all changes to the thesis have been signed off officially by the examiners. The Graduate School will submit this copy to the Library on your behalf.

4.0 Format of Thesis

- The thesis should be typewritten and when using soft-bound copies, they should be submitted on good quality A4 (297 x 210 mm) white paper of at least 80g/m² in weight. The type must be fully formed as in the output of a laser or inkjet printer.
- The spacing should be used in the body of the text should be between 1.2 and 1.5. The preferred typeface is black 12-point. San Serif Typeface like Arial, Tahoma and Verdana are considered more legible to read on-screen and most suitable for documentation being read on a computer.
- The font used in the body of the text must also be used in headers, page

numbers, and footnotes. For example, when using Arial in your thesis text, please use Arial in the headers, page numbers and footnotes, endnotes etc. Exceptions are when tables and figures created with different software and inserted into the document. Please accord emphasis to accessibility when writing and reviewing when your thesis.

- Please use bold fonts or italics in your thesis only when this is necessary. Do not use all capital letters in words or sentences as it may convey the incorrect tone.
- Single spacing may be used for footnotes and indented quotations. Margins at the binding edge should be not less than 40mm and other margins not less than 20mm.
- Block quotations, footnotes, and bibliographies should have single spacing within each entry.
- Footnotes should not be less than font size nine. Portrait format should be used, except when for example, incorporating a table that may be more easily legible using landscape.
- Theses submitted for research degrees should be aligned left and the margins should be justified.
- Pages must be numbered consecutively with page numbers located at the bottom of each page in the middle. All diagrams, photographs, graphs and tables should be numbered appropriately in relation to the correct chapter.
- The preliminary pages of the thesis follow this order: declaration, acknowledgments, abstract, table of contents, list of tables, graphs and illustrations. In some circumstances, students may opt to also include a preface directly after the illustrations. However, including a preface is not compulsory.
- Alternative text (Alt Text) can be used to include descriptions of images, charts and diagrams. This is to optimize accessibility and readability for persons with visual impairments.

5.0 Title Page

The title should be an accurate and concise description of the contents of the thesis.

The title page of each volume of the thesis should contain the following information:

- The full title of the thesis and the sub-title (if any)
- If there is more than one volume, the total number of volumes and the number of the particular volume. Volumes should be clearly labelled.
- Full name of the author with, if desired, any previous qualifications
- Award for which the thesis is submitted
- Name of the university, department and faculty
- Name of any research institutes that the student is studying with
- Name(s) of the supervisor(s) of the research
- Date, month and year of submission should also be supplied in the following format (dd/mm/yr.).

6.0 Declaration

- A declaration page should directly follow the title page with the following statement: “I declare that this thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university and it is entirely my own work”.
- The candidate’s signature (electronic or hand written) and the date should immediately follow this declaration.

7.0 Acknowledgements

- Acknowledgements are given on the page following the declaration and should normally be confined to persons, professional bodies or institutions that have contributed to the work.

8.0 Abstract

- An abstract in English or Irish, usually not more than one page in length is an integral part of the thesis and should precede the main text.
- The abstract should provide a synopsis of the thesis and should state clearly

the nature and scope of the research undertaken and the contribution made to the knowledge of the subject treated. The abstract should include a brief statement, where appropriate, of the method of investigation used, an outline of the chapters, principal arguments of the work, key findings, contribution and a summary of any conclusions reached.

9.0 Table of Contents

- The table of contents follows the acknowledgements page and should clearly set out the chapters, headings and subheadings provided subsequently in the thesis.

10.0 Tables and Illustrated Material

- Photographs, maps, graphs, illustrations and statistical tables should be added where appropriate. If using a bindery service, the bindery should be advised in advance when a thesis contains material of this kind.
- Maps or diagrams larger than A4 must be folded well inside the front edge of the thesis.
- The lists of tables and illustrations should follow the table of contents and should list all tables, photographs, diagrams etc. in the order in which they occur in the text. Figure and table numbering must be continuous throughout the dissertation or by chapter (e.g., 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, etc.). Two figures or tables cannot be designated with the same number.
- Tables and figures should be placed as close as possible to their first mention in the text. They may be placed on a page with no text above or below, or they may be placed directly into the text.
- Headings should be placed at the top of tables. Captions should appear at the bottom of any figures.

11.0 Abbreviations

- Abbreviations may be used at the discretion of the author and, when used, a key should be provided. In the text, the term should be given in full at the first instance, followed by the abbreviation in brackets. The abbreviation can then be used subsequently in the thesis from there on.
- The list of abbreviations is normally after the Table of Contents.

12.0 Declaration of Publication/Joint Research

- When submitting a thesis, the author should indicate in a declaration, any material contained in the thesis that they have used before and/or had published. If the thesis is based on joint research, the nature and extent of the author's individual contribution should be divulged in full, relative to other authors/contributors. If other institutions are involved, they should also be acknowledged.
- This declaration should immediately follow the abstract.

13.0 Back Matter

- The back matter of the thesis usually includes the following:
 - Appendices
 - Bibliography
 - Supplemental figures and tables used for illustrative purposes
 - Copies of interview schedules/guides, risk assessment tools and data collection tools (e.g. survey questionnaires).

14.0 Bibliography

- Theses submitted for any degree by research shall contain a full bibliography. The Harvard Referencing System is usually used. However, there may be discipline-specific conventions that regulates the usage of other referencing systems (e.g. APA). If so, disciplinary conventions surrounding references should be observed.

15.0 Pre-publication, Copyright and Intellectual Property (IP)

- Copyright and other intellectual property (IP) regulations are important. It is important that issues relating to IP and publishers' copyright are resolved before the thesis is submitted. Accordingly, candidates are required to obtain from copyright holders (normally the publisher) permission to republish their already published work and to include in an appendix a declaration stating that permission has been granted. Candidates must discuss with their supervisors, the number of published papers and any externally funded contractual obligations, including IP and confidentiality issues that may pertain to the underpinning research.
- You need to identify all material in your thesis that is subject to third-party copyright. Material subject to third-party copyright includes, published articles, diagrams, images, photos, illustrations, tables, figures created by another author and inserted in the thesis to illustrate an argument.
- You need to obtain permission from the copyright owners to include this material in your thesis before it is published online. You should seek such permissions in good time, well in advance of thesis submission.
- Before submitting an article, which is intended to form part of an article-based PhD/PhD by publication, a candidate should ensure that the publisher will allow the author's final version of the article to be made freely available electronically. Different publishers have different policies in relation to authors making published material freely available electronically. Please consult with publishers individually to make sure you have the correct information.
- There is some excellent information at the following links on copyright as applied to student work:
 - [Copyright | TUS Libraries \(tus.ie\)](https://www.tus.ie/libraries/copyright/)
 - [Copyright - Thesis Preparation - LibGuides at Glucksman Library University of Limerick \(ul.ie\)](https://libguides.ul.ie/copyright-thesis-preparation/)
- TUS has an Intellectual Property Policy. Students and supervisors are advised to familiarize themselves with the contents of this policy on commencement of their project [TUS IP Policy](#)

- The library will retain its copies of the thesis and will make these copies available for consultation, in the library and the online repository, in accordance with normal academic library practice and subject to the following:
 - In cases where the material in the thesis is confidential or proprietary, the internal and external examiner(s) are required to sign a non-disclosure undertaking in respect of the material comprising the thesis.
 - The candidate and the primary supervisor should advise the Graduate School with regards to the basis on which access to the thesis for purposes of research may be given to third parties.
 - The library will make provision for the inclusion of a description and abstract of the thesis in appropriate directories of abstracts for reference by the international academic community. In cases where the material in the thesis has been deemed to be confidential or proprietary, the library shall embargo access to both hard-bound and electronic copies of the thesis for a specified time after they have been lodged in the library.

16.0 References

1. TUS (2024) [Copyright | TUS Libraries \(www.tus.ie\)](http://www.tus.ie)
2. TUS (2022) [TUS Guide to Effective Practice that Supports Equity in Technological University Communications 2022 – 2025](#)
3. TUS (2022) [TUS IP Policy](#)
4. University of Limerick Glucksman Library (2024) [Copyright - Thesis Preparation - LibGuides at Glucksman Library University of Limerick \(www.ul.ie\)](#)