



## PhD Confirmation Report & Oral Presentation

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### Purpose of this process ...

After 12 months of enrolment in your PhD, you will receive notice that you are required to write a report on your work and present to a *PhD Confirmation Meeting*. The purpose of this is two-fold:

1. To assess whether you have engaged with your thesis project and the field of research sufficiently to ensure you have a good chance of completing your research, to the high standard required of a PhD
2. To assess whether you have made sufficiently good progress in your first year, to complete your PhD research in a timely fashion

Both the oral presentation AND the written report are important in this assessment. Guidelines for what is expected are given below.

The PhD confirmation panel will consist of your Head of Department, your supervisors and an independent academic staff member. They will collectively make a decision on whether you should be confirmed in your PhD study (and continue) or whether some other action is appropriate.

### 1. Written Report

This should be formatted carefully as a professional technical/scientific report (refer guidelines attached), and circulated to the people who will attend your meeting at least **one week** before the meeting itself. It should contain maps, diagrams and data of relevance, and be structured under the following headings (preferably numbered) and with subheadings (preferably numbered) as appropriate. Potentially the first chapter of your thesis and a lit review should be part of this document.

**Title** Should be concise and informative.

**Introduction** Providing the context of your proposed research, with references to **all** earlier key works in the field, and identifying the knowledge gap that your research will address. You may include diagrams or images, if this helps illustrate a key point. This should largely be similar to that you provided in for your initial research proposal, but updated with published research that you have discovered since.

**Research Aims & Objectives** A clear statement of the research aim (what you plan to achieve in this thesis) and 4-6 key objectives or questions (the key steps you will take to achieve this, or the key questions you will answer).

**Methods** A description of the methods and techniques you are using/will use to solve your research problem, including how you will access any data you are not collecting yourself. Provide a map of the study area and study site(s) where this is appropriate.

**Results To Date** A description of your results so far, relating them back to your research objectives/question. Use graphs, diagrams and images (as relevant) as well as tables of data to explain your progress. Discuss the meaning of your results and your conclusions so far.

**Proposed future work** Describe the work that still has to be completed, in order to fully address your objectives/questions, and provide a timetable for the completion of this work. Outline any obstacle you may anticipate, that could prevent you completing this work on time (4 yrs after the initial enrolment date for full time).

**Reference list** A list of references that you have cited, in a correct format.

## 2. Oral Presentation

You should aim to give a 30-40 minute presentation on your research, using MS Powerpoint, and achieving a similar level of presentation as you would at a national or international conference. You should communicate;

- An introduction to your field of study and key gaps in the knowledge
- Clearly state the overall purpose, and the objectives/questions in your research
- Explain your results so far and what you think they mean
- Explain what you still need to do to complete your thesis, and give a timeline for this
- Describe your publication strategy (e.g., what papers, how many)
- Identify any obstacles to your progress that you need help with.

Focus on communicating your research and why you are doing this to an audience of mixed experience in your field (i.e., explain technical terms and concepts carefully).

Attached is the PhD Confirmation Report form the panel will fill out at the end of the presentation.

Attachment:

## General Guidelines for a WATR research report

**Report Length:** A research report would normally be in the range of 10,000 – 15,000 words. This word count does not include figures, tables, diagrams or appendices.

**Format:** The report should be laid out in a series of sections to reflect the assessment criteria. Please number the sections, and number the pages.

<i>Technical Report</i>	<i>Science Review or Article</i>
Title	Title
Author's name	Author's name
Executive Summary	Abstract
Table of contents	Key words (up to 5 )
Numbered headings, subheadings and sections, in a logical order	A clearly structured, logical text with subheadings (may be numbered)
Summary and Recommendations	Conclusions
Reference list	References list
Appropriate appendices	Appropriate appendices

**Tables and Figures:** Tables and figures that need to be consulted while reading the text (i.e., support the text and are important) should be inserted into the text. Reference to these should be made in the text, otherwise it is unclear when they are relevant. Examples include: "As shown in Table 1, ..." or "... not a clear trend (Figure 3)". Do not include photos, diagrams or tables without referring to them ... and refer to all tabulated data as "Tables" and all diagrams, graphs, photos etc., as "Figures".

**Appendices:** The appendices should not exceed 10 pages, and would normally be much less. Only tables and figures **not** important to the body of the text should go in the appendix (such as details of specific methodology, raw data sets or descriptions of data bases, supporting documentation, long formulations etc).

**Referencing:** Be careful to clearly reference **ALL** of the information you are using. The reference should be given in the text, in any of the recognised formats used in scientific journals. In the list of references at the end of your report be sure to include sufficient information regarding report numbers, page numbers, publishers etc., so that **someone else could find these same documents!**

The order of preference for finding material should be: (i) text books and journal papers, (ii) other papers, technical reports and published articles, (iii) websites and newspapers. Use website information sparingly (though for data in particular it can be useful), and if you access a report of other document via a website, reference the report, not the website. If referencing a website, report the webpage address and the date you consulted it.

**General Presentation:** Our expectation is that the submitted report will be prepared to a high professional standard, preferably covered and spiral bound (there is a machine for this in Waterways). The standard of technical presentation, grammar, and clarity of expression should be high.