



DISSERTATION HANDBOOK

for Honours and Research Masters Students and their Supervisors



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Published by the School of Nursing and Midwifery, Griffith University.

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To the postgraduate and honours student

Welcome to the School of Nursing and Midwifery, Griffith University. It is a pleasure and a privilege to include you in a School with a growing reputation in health, nursing and midwifery education, scholarship and research. Students in honours and postgraduate programs offered by the School and Health Group undertake a 40-50 Credit Point (CP) dissertation. These programs include:

- ◆ Health Group Honours
- ◆ Master of Advanced Practice with Honours (MAP Honours)
- ◆ Master of Advanced Practice (Health Care Research)
- ◆ Master of Midwifery with Honours (MMid Honours)

A dissertation does three things. First, it is an important research training process. Second, it is a means of building on and extending your professional knowledge. Finally, your research contributes to the ongoing development of health, nursing and midwifery. Through your work you participate in a professional and research community of scholars. As your work will contribute to the body of knowledge in the disciplines of health, nursing and midwifery, we encourage you to discuss publishing your work with your supervisors.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with a guide while you undertake your research and prepare your dissertation. It includes information that will help you to select supervisors and maintain a working relationship with them. It provides information about conducting research, preparing your dissertation and submitting it for examination. In addition the handbook also outlines the material resources that are available through the School and the University, as well as detailing administrative procedures.

We hope that you will access the available services and participate in School activities, and that this handbook will assist the academic and administrative aspects of your research endeavour. Please feel free to ask questions if you are uncertain about anything. We value any suggestions or feedback that you may have. We look forward to your participation in the School and contribution, and wish you well in your studies and research.

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Mission Statements

The Griffith University and School of Nursing and Midwifery mission statements ultimately guide the endeavours of all students and staff in the School.

Griffith University Mission Statement

In the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research and community service, Griffith University is committed to:

- Innovation
- Bringing disciplines together
- Internationalisation
- Equity and social justice
- Lifelong learning for the enrichment of Queensland, Australia and the international community.

School of Nursing and Midwifery Mission Statement

The School of Nursing and Midwifery is committed to the development of nursing practice, theory and research in positive and visionary ways. The School of Nursing and Midwifery is also committed to the development of graduates imbued with a solution-focused philosophy who will make a positive difference in nursing and healthcare. Through developing research, consultancy and continuing education opportunities, it seeks to serve the nursing profession, the health care system and the broader community.

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1: Navigating the Handbook

A dissertation is the final report of your research project. There are many ways of conducting a research study, however, there are foundational principles that underpin the research process, presentation of the document, and examination. These are outlined in the following sections, together with information about enrolment, administration and university resources.

Supervision (pp 5-8)

If you are planning to do a dissertation you need to find at least one academic staff member to be your supervisor. This section provides information that will help you to select an appropriate supervisors, negotiate supervision arrangements and responsibilities and inform administration about your supervision selection and progress.

Managing Dissertation Enrolment (pp 19-10)

When you undertake a dissertation there are administrative and academic guidelines and rules governing enrolment and progress. These are addressed in this section.

Academic Requirements (p 11)

This section provides information about seminar presentations and academic conduct/misconduct guidelines.

Ethical Approval (p 12)

Ensuring that your project meets standards of ethical conduct is an important aspect of your research. This section provides information about the processes of ethical approval.

Conducting the Research and Writing the Dissertation (pp 13-14)

This section is designed to guide you as you work through the research process and writing of your dissertation.

Presentation and Formatting (pp 18-19)

The dissertation that you submit for examination needs to reflect your research project work and be presented to a high academic standard in a format that is suitable for examination. This section provides information about presenting the dissertation document.

Dissertation Examination (pp 20-22)

Your dissertation should be submitted for examination by the due dates. This section provides information about the submission and examination process.

Information, Resources and Support (pp 23-26)

In this section you will find details about the administrative information, information resources, funding resources and technical support resources that are available to support your research project. Forms that you need to access resources and manage your candidature are also included in the appendices.

2: Supervision – Selection and Responsibilities

Nominating Supervisors - in brief

In the semester prior to commencing a dissertation you need to:

Consult

Discuss your topic, enrolment, and potential supervisors with the School Honours Advisor (BN Honours), the Postgraduate Programs Coordinator (MAP Honours and MMid Honours)

Interview

Interview potential supervisors to discuss potential projects.

Select

Negotiate your supervisor preferences with your potential supervisors and the School Honours Advisor (BN Honours) or Postgraduate Programs Coordinator (MAP Honours and MMid Honours).

Nominate

You and your chosen supervisors should complete and submit documentation to formalize your supervision arrangements.

More information about this process is outlined below.

Submission Documentation - Supervisor Nomination

MAP Honours and MMid Honours

Nominate a principal and associate supervisor and submit the *Supervisor/Topic Nomination Form* (Appendix 3.1) to the School Administrative Officer - Postgraduate, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Gold Coast Campus within one week of receiving your memorandum of results, before enrolling in the dissertation.

Students should be aware that while their preferences for supervisors will be taken into account, other factors such as staff supervision loads might mean that it is not always possible to approve the supervisors nominated by a student.

If students do not wish to nominate any supervisors, they should leave this section of the form blank, and the School Assessment Board, on the recommendation of the Postgraduate Programs Coordinator, will appoint supervisors on the student's behalf in consultation with the supervisors. If students wish to discuss their supervision nomination they should contact their Strand/Program Convener or the Postgraduate Programs Coordinator, who will be able to provide further advice.

Students should also note that they are required to discuss their topic with their supervisors and submit a full dissertation proposal to their supervisors by the end of Week 2 of teaching. This proposal should set out a viable project, including the research problem being investigated, plus a brief description of the method and literature review to be undertaken.

Health Group Honours

Nominate a principal and associate supervisor and submit the *Supervisor/Topic Nomination Form* (available from Student Administration) to the School Administrative Officer - Postgraduate, School of Nursing and Midwifery, on the Gold Coast campus.

Students should be aware that while their preferences for supervisors will be taken into account, other factors such as staff supervision loads might mean that it is not always possible to approve the supervisors nominated by a student.

If students do not wish to nominate any supervisors, they should leave this section of the form blank, and the School Honours Advisor will appoint supervisors on the student's behalf in consultation with the Health Group Honours coordinator.

Health Group Honours students should note that they are required to organize supervision prior to enrolling in 6001HLS Dissertation Preparation. If students wish to discuss their supervision nomination they should contact the School Honours Advisor, who will be able to provide further advice.

Choosing and Negotiating Supervision

Students need to discuss their enrolment and potential supervision with the School Honours Advisor (Health Group Honours), Postgraduate Programs Coordinator (MAP) and Program Convenor (MMid). Your strand convenor will also be able to provide advice. They will be give you guidance about your ideas, potential projects and supervisors. Staff with appropriate expertise in either or both the content area and research methods will be highlighted to students from the staff profile. For example, you may find that you can undertake a project that is part of a currently-funded research project.

The normal practice in the School is to have two supervisors - a principal supervisor and an associate supervisor. Some supervisors may choose provide co-supervision. Most supervisors are also happy to organise teleconferences to accommodate cross-campus supervision, where supervisors are on located different campuses.

It is the responsibility of the student to contact potential supervisors to discuss their project. Students are advised to discuss their plans with a number of academic staff who may be appropriate supervisors before nominating potential supervisors. To locate potential supervisors used the staff profiles that are outlined in:

- Appendix 4 (a floating appendix)
- The School Website (www.griffith.edu.au/school/nrs/)
- The Research Centre for Clinical and Community Practice Innovation (RCCCPi) (<http://www.griffith.edu.au/health/>) websites.
- School Administrative Officer - Postgraduate, who will be able to supply you with a current listing of projects / supervisors.

These profiles give an indication of the qualifications, research interests and areas of expertise of potential supervisors within the School of Nursing and Midwifery. Appointment of supervisors is related to their specialist expertise in the chosen topic, methodological expertise (in relation to your topic), their availability, and their current supervision load. An honours project is considered research training, so it is important to make sure your supervisors have expertise in the methodology you are using for your research, as well as your topic. In selecting a supervisor, you might consider the following questions:

- Does this person have a project available for me within a funded project?
- Does this person have expertise in the proposed methodology / methods for the research?
- Is this person well acquainted with / interested in the proposed research area?
- What has this person and his/her students published?
- What type of work have this person's previous students produced?
- Do I feel I could work with this person
- Is this person's working style compatible with completion of an independent piece of research in a short timeframe?
- Is this person available for the entire supervision period?

Responsibilities of the Supervisors and the Student

The School expects that all of its dissertation students will have the benefit of full and effective research supervision throughout the dissertation component of their program. By its very nature, the relationship between the student and supervisors is a negotiated one. Supervision aims to meet the diverse needs of students and to be able to deal with the range of individual issues that may arise at any time during research work. A supervisory relationship for Honours and Masters dissertations is a different form of teaching and learning from coursework components of programs, as it is assumed that the student will:

- ▲ generate much of the direction for the dissertation, and
- ▲ be able to work independently for most of the time.

Both parties share the responsibility of ensuring that the research project is conducted in an appropriate and timely manner, each having obligations and responsibilities.

Responsibilities of the Student

The responsibilities of students undertaking research are contained in the University's Code of Practice for Maintaining and Monitoring Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Degrees' (2007/000044) and include:

- Becoming familiar with the University's rules governing the degree;
- Discussing with supervisors the type of help considered most useful, and keeping to an agreed schedule of meetings that will ensure regular contact;
- Attending meetings with a set of clear questions to be answered;
- Keeping notes of advice given at meetings;
- Taking the initiative in raising problems or difficulties and sharing responsibility for seeking solutions;

- Maintaining the progress of the work in accordance with the stages agreed with supervisors including, in particular, presentation of any required written material in sufficient time to allow for comments and discussions before proceeding to the next stage;
- Discussing progress, impediments and maintaining the agreed timetable with the supervisors at regular intervals;
- Adopting safe working practices relevant to the field of research at all times;
- Adhering to ethical practices appropriate to the discipline;
- Accepting responsibility for producing the final copies of the dissertation and its content, and ensuring that it is in accord with the relevant requirements, including the standard of presentation;
- Assisting the supervisors and University to identify the specific needs of students from equity backgrounds and recommend appropriate support measures;
- Submitting draft work in a readable form, and indicating briefly where the piece of work fits into the plan of the thesis as a whole.

The Principal Supervisor will:

- Establish a clear relationship between all parties;
- Assist in identifying and clarifying the student's research topic and later help in planning the research, including: the methodology, the relevant body of literature and the development of a schedule that ensures timely completion of the project;
- Act as a consultant in the conduct of the research, including assistance in the presentation by students for seminar presentations and research and ethics proposals;
- Maintain regular contact with the student, establishing regular meeting times, identifying a timetable for completion of the various elements of the research project, keeping notes of advice given at meetings;
- Specify when written work is to be completed so that progress can be monitored;
- Read and provide timely feedback and comment in detail on drafts of the topic and research work in such a way that, in the final analysis, the topic and thesis is the student's own work;
- Assist the student with administrative aspects of conducting the research;
- Recommend the names of at least two examiners for the dissertation to the School Honours Advisor/Postgraduate Programs Coordinator;
- Submit a progress report that can be presented to the School Assessment Board by the School Honours Advisor/Postgraduate Programs Coordinator at the end of each semester, as well as any additional progress report that may be required;
- Be familiar with School and general guidelines and regulations on the conduct of masters and honours programs and supervision of honours and masters research topics;
- Hold a qualification equivalent to that being supervised, or have published work in the area that satisfies the School Assessment Board that the staff member is competent to supervise the proposed research;
- Be a member of staff of the School holding a confirmed or continuing appointment, or fixed-term appointment of sufficient length for the purposes of supervision;
- Ensure that the student has adequate supervision for any shorter periods of absence, particularly at important times throughout the conduct of the research, eg. just prior to submission.

The Associate Supervisor will:

- Advise the student as appropriate on any matter relating to the research;
- Act as principal supervisor during absences of the principal supervisor;
- Hold a qualification equivalent to that being supervised, or have published work in the area that satisfies the School Assessment Board that the staff member is competent to supervise the proposed research ;
- Be a member of staff of the School holding a confirmed or continuing appointment, or fixed-term appointment of sufficient length for the purposes of supervision.

The External Advisers will:

- Advise the student as appropriate on any matter relating to the research;
- Hold a qualification equivalent to that being supervised, or have published work in the area that satisfies the School Assessment Board that the staff member is competent to supervise the proposed research ;
- Be of recognised standing in his / her field of academic and/or clinical expertise.

Interim Supervision

If approval has been received for only one supervisor to be appointed to supervise a student, arrangements will need to be made to provide supervision during periods when the supervisor is absent for longer than one month during normal semester periods. Likely interim supervisors should be identified at the start of the program so that delays in appointing them are avoided.

Change to Supervision Arrangements

If you need to change your supervision arrangements for any reason follow these steps:

- *Consult* with the Postgraduate Programs Coordinator or School Honours Advisor

- *Submit* a Supervisor/Topic Nomination Form (Appendix 3.1) to the School Administrative Officer - Postgraduate Gold Coast Campus (MAP Honours) or MMid Honours) or to the School Administrative Officer (BN Honours).

In most cases, it is expected that a student and his or her nominated supervisors will be able to establish and maintain a close consultative relationship. It is recognised, however, that there may be occasions when differences of a personal or professional nature may work against the development of a productive working relationship. Where it is clear that a supervision relationship has not been successful or has become counterproductive to the student's work, the student or supervisor may request the Postgraduate Programs Coordinator or School Honours Advisor to consider the appointment of an alternative supervisor or supervisors.

3: Managing Dissertation Enrolment

Enrolment

Eligibility

All students should check their eligibility to undertake a dissertation before completing their enrolment. Students must gain approval in order to enrol in the dissertation programs. To be approved for entry into a Master of Advanced Practice (Health Care Research) or an Honours program offered by the School of Nursing and Midwifery, students must meet honours entry requirements or gain at least an average grade of Credit or above in the coursework component of their Masters program. BN Honours students must be accepted into the program.

Dissertation Courses

Dissertation enrolment in MAP Honours and MMid Honours is managed as four dissertation courses, of 10 credit points each (total 40CP):

7999NRS_P1	Dissertation 1	10CP
7999NRS_P2	Dissertation 2	10CP
7999NRS_P3	Dissertation 3	10CP
7999NRS_P4	Dissertation 4	10CP

Dissertation enrolment in BN Honours is managed as five dissertation courses, of 10 credit points each (total 50CP):

6000HLS_P1	Dissertation 1	10CP
6000HLS_P2	Dissertation 2	10CP
6000HLS_P3	Dissertation 3	10CP
6000HLS_P4	Dissertation 4	10CP
6000HLS_P5	Dissertation 5	10CP

Your enrolment relies on you completing the following tasks:

- ✓ Check your eligibility to undertake a dissertation with the School Honours Advisor, Postgraduate Programs Coordinator or Program Convenor (MAP Honours and MMid Honours)
- ✓ Prior to commencing the dissertation, negotiate and select supervisors as described in Section 3 of this handbook
- ✓ Enrol in the dissertation courses 7999NRS_P1-4 (MAP Honours and MMid Honours) or 6000HLS_P1-5 (BN Honours) depending on your status, ie full or part time and at the campus where your principal supervisor works
- ✓ Find out the required date for submission of the dissertation
- ✓ Submit a full proposal for the topic to the supervisor by the end of week 2 of the first semester of enrolment (MAP Honours and MMid Honours). See Section 6 for details of the contents of the proposal.
- ✓ In a semester when you are enrolled and are not submitting your dissertation, make sure a progress report is submitted to the Postgraduate Programs Coordinator (MAP Honours and MMid Honours) or the School Honours Advisor (BN Honours)
- ✓ Check your transcript of results at the end of each semester to see that it reflects your correct details and progress
- ✓ Apply in writing if you require and extension to the submission date

Enrolment Progress

MAP Honours and MMid Honours

Research for the dissertation is generally conducted and written over one semester full-time, or two semesters part-time. If enrolling full time, students enrol in all four dissertation programs in one semester. Students enrol in two dissertation programs per semester if they are part time. At times, circumstances may require variation to this enrolment pattern. **Students should be aware that when they enrol in the final Dissertation component (7999NRS_P4 Dissertation 4) they are expected to submit their dissertation by week 14 of that semester.** If students have any questions regarding enrolment they should discuss these with their supervisors, or the relevant Program Coordinator.

Students are responsible for ensuring that they are enrolled correctly. This enables them to have access to the facilities of Griffith University such as computing, library, etc. Enrolment, change of enrolment, withdrawal, deferment, etc. is subject to the student administration policies of Griffith University. Information about these policies is available on the Web (<http://www.gu.edu.au/research/home.html> and <http://www.gu.edu.au/students/home.html>) or from the Graduate Studies Office on the Nathan and Gold Coast Campuses.

BN Honours

Together with coursework, research for the dissertation is generally conducted and written over two semesters full-time. A plan for part time enrolment should be negotiated with your supervisor and approved by the School Honours advisor. Students should be aware that when they enrol in *600OHL5_P5 Dissertation 4* they are expected to submit their dissertation by week 14 of that semester. If students have any questions regarding enrolment they should discuss these with their supervisors, or the School Honours Advisor.

Students are responsible for ensuring that they are enrolled correctly. This enables them to have access to the facilities of Griffith University such as computing, library, etc. Enrolment, change of enrolment, withdrawal, deferment, etc. is subject to the student administration policies of Griffith University. Information about these policies is available on the Web (<http://www.gu.edu.au/research/home.html> and <http://www.gu.edu.au/students/home.html>) or from the Student Administration Office on Nathan, Logan and Gold Coast Campuses.

Leave of Absence and Extensions to Period of Program

MAP Honours and MMid Honours

The maximum time allocated for completion of Masters programs in the University is 5 years and is inclusive of any periods of leave. A student may request *Leave of Absence* for a period of up to four semesters. The effect on a students' academic record will follow the provisions set out under *Withdrawal from Programs/Cancellation of Enrolment* in Griffith University policy. During the *Leave of Absence*, a student ceases to be enrolled but is guaranteed the right to re-enrol at the end of the leave. At the end of the leave of absence the student will be sent a *Continuing Enrolment* form and on return of that form by the due date the student will be enrolled in the program. If the student fails to enrol by the due date, the student's enrolment in the program will be terminated.

BN Honours

Maximum time allocated for completion of the BN Honours is subject to Griffith University Honours policy. Current University policy states that the whole Honours Program must be completed within a maximum elapsed time of three calendar years.

To request a Leave of Absence a student needs to:

MAP Honours and MMid Honours

- Submit a written request, to the Postgraduate Programs Coordinator. The request should:
- Specify the period of leave required;
- Have the principal supervisor's endorsement.
- Submit a *Request for Leave of Absence* form with Student Administration.

BN Honours

- Complete the Honours program Change to course enrolment/Cancellation of enrolment/Leave of absence form and submit it to Student Administration.

Progress Reports

Each semester the supervisor, in conjunction with the student, will submit a *Progress Review* (Appendix 3.2). This report summarises the student's work, allows for comments about supervision and makes recommendations about continuing enrolment. Reports should be submitted by week 13 to the School Honours Advisor (BN Honours) / Postgraduate Programs Coordinator (MAP Honours and MMid Honours).

Interim Grades

When the student is making satisfactory progress they will be awarded a grade of *CTG* (continuing) and will progress in their dissertation. If the student is not making satisfactory progress, this could result in a fail grade being awarded for the dissertation by the School Assessment Board. In this instance, students are advised to discuss their progress with their supervisors and the School Honours Advisor (BN Honours) / Postgraduate Programs Coordinator (MAP Honours and MMid Honours).

Resources during candidature

The University and School provide a range of materials, information and financial resources to support you. Refer to section 9 for details of these.

4: Academic Requirements

Seminar Presentations

Students are encouraged to present their research in progress and/or findings at Honours seminars and at least once in the *Research Centre for Clinical and Community Practice Innovation Seminar Series* (refer to noticeboards for current seminar details). This activity provides students with an opportunity to share their work with others and gain feedback and critical review of their work. It will also provide students with a opportunity to develop conference presentation skills. Supervisors will assist students in preparing for seminar presentations.

Academic Misconduct

University Policy

Students are expected to maintain high standards in the conduct of their research. Their research must adhere to ethical principles and be approved by the Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee (refer to section 5 of this booklet). The following is an extract from the University's Policy on Academic Misconduct (95/0287).

Students must conduct their studies at the University honestly, ethically and in accordance with accepted standards of academic conduct. Any form of academic conduct which is contrary to these standards is academic misconduct for which the University may penalise a student. Specifically it is academic misconduct for a student to:

1. Present copied, falsified or improperly obtained data as if it were the result of laboratory work, field trips or other investigatory work;
2. Include in the student's individual work material which is the result of significant assistance from another person if the assistance was unacceptable according to the instructions or guidelines for that work;
3. Assist another student in the presentation of the student's individual work in a way that is unacceptable according to the instructions or guidelines for that work;
4. Cheat (Cheating is dishonest conduct in assessment);
5. Plagiarise (Plagiarism is knowingly presenting the work or property of another person as if it were your own).

Examples of plagiarism include:

- Word for word copying of sentences or paragraphs from one or more sources which are the work or data of other persons (including books, articles, thesis, unpublished works, working papers, seminar and conference papers, internal reports, lecture notes, or tapes) without clearly identifying their origin by appropriate referencing;
- Closely paraphrasing sentences or paragraphs from one or more sources without appropriate acknowledgment in the form of a reference to the original work or works;
- Using another person's ideas, work or research data without appropriate acknowledgment;
- Submitting work which has been produced by someone else on the student's behalf as if it were the work of the student;
- Copying computer files in whole or in part without indicating their origin;
- Submitting work that has been wholly or partially derived from another student's work by a process of mechanical transformation. For example changing variable names in computer programs.

Please be aware that the University has access to text matching software, and supervisors may submit your work for text matching. As a developmental exercise, you may find that text matching reports can assist in improving your methods of using and citing sources.

Penalties

On determination that academic misconduct has taken place, the penalty that may be imposed on the student is one or more of the following:

- a reduced or nil result for the assessment item affected by the academic misconduct;
- a fail grade for the program in which academic misconduct occurred;
- exclusion from the program; readmission to the program is at the discretion of the School based on consideration of the student's case for readmission.

Where a student has been found guilty of academic misconduct on more than one occasion and has previously been penalised, the penalty shall normally be exclusion from the program, unless in the opinion of the relevant Assessment Board there are mitigating circumstances.

5: Ethical Approval - Process and Application

Students need to discuss the ethical implications of their proposed methods and the approvals they will need to obtain from relevant ethics committees with their supervisors. All possible ethical issues that are raised by the research should be addressed including: doing participants / programs no physical, psychological or social harm; confidentiality; consent; storage of data; etc. Students must apply for approval early, as proposals can take one or two months to be processed. **Students cannot commence the data collection activities for which ethics approval is required until approval has been formally given.**

Consult

- Students' supervisors will provide guidance about the ethics approval application process. Advice must be in accordance with the guidelines set out by Griffith University. These can be accessed on-line at the following site: www.griffith.edu.au/or/ethics/
- The University has established Committees to review the ethical aspects of research involving human participants. Applicants are encouraged to read the Griffith University Human Research Manual (www.griffith.edu.au/or/ethics/humans/) before preparing an application. For further information please contact the Manager, Research Ethics in the Office for Research on 07 3735 5585 .

Prepare an Application

Any research that requires ethics clearance must be submitted for scrutiny. A standardised application form must be used. This is accessed on-line via <http://www.gu.edu.au/or/ethics/>. Note that the consent and information package detailed in the guide must be used as part of an application.

Principal supervisors are responsible for the ethical conduct of students' research, therefore, the supervisor must be 'Chief Investigator' and the student the 'Student Investigator' on any ethics applications.

Make sure the completed application is reviewed and signed by the principal supervisor and the Head of School or Centre Director before submission to the Office of Research.

Submit the Application

Applications can be submitted via the Web. Booklets 01, 02 and 03 of the Human Research Ethics Manual will assist students and supervisors in understanding human research ethics at Griffith University.

Approval

Notification of the Committee's decision is made to the principal supervisor who will contact the student. Any requests for further information or modification to the proposal must be made before the student conducts any data collection.

Progress reports

Students are required to provide the Ethics Committee with ongoing and final reports as stipulated in the Human Research Ethics Manual.

Data storage and archiving

- There are nationally recognised standards for the storage of all research data. Guidelines for these standards can be accessed via the Office of Research Website www.griffith.edu.au/or/ethics/.
- Data must be securely stored for a period of five years following publication of research.
- While individuals may keep personal copies of data other storage is required. Secure storage is usually required in the School in which the research was conducted. Students need to identify and submit data for storage. Details can be discussed with the supervisor.

6: Conducting the Research and Writing the Dissertation

Overview of the Academic Requirements of a Masters/Honours Dissertation

A dissertation is a coherent exposition of a research study that follows an ordered sequence in which the research objectives, relationship to other scholarly work, methodology and strategies employed, and the results obtained are identified, analysed and evaluated. Through the dissertation a student establishes her/his capacity for independent research and knowledge of the topic and the discipline. Specifically, the student needs to develop an argument which demonstrates an ability to initialise and frame a question, respond to and represent a variety of viewpoints, provide balanced evidence for positions adopted, develop appropriate methodologies and methods, collect data in an ethical manner, and interpret and generalise data in a defensible way.

Planning the Dissertation

The task of writing the dissertation or producing the practical work is part of the research process and is often best undertaken progressively throughout candidature. In consultation with their supervisors, students may benefit from giving early consideration to matters such as the development and presentation of their material. The following strategies may be employed in the work leading to the submission of a dissertation:

- Define or locate a problem, topic or theme;
- Identify a theoretical framework and/or methodology;
- Review the literature to establish the relationship of the problem, topic or theme to the scholarly context;
- Plan/modify the research design
- Accumulate relevant data;
- Analyse data;
- Draw conclusions in light of material analysed.

Choosing a Dissertation Topic

In selecting their dissertation topic, it is important for students to work closely with their supervisors and ensure:

- that it is manageable - that is, that the student can undertake it in the time available and it is not so general that they will never really be able to come to terms with it in the space of 20,000 to 25,000 words;
- that the topic is not only based on strong interest on the student's part - substantial initial reading should enable testing of the topic's relevance to the discipline(s);
- that there is more than enough information and data available for students to use, not only with respect to library sources, but that the research design adopted will yield sufficient data for what will become the major part of the dissertation.

Questions that may help topic selection include:

- Is there a recognised need for research in the area?
- Is the research achievable within the allocated time?
- Does the topic match the student's capabilities and interests?
- Is the research area open to further professional development?
- Are research facilities and/or information available to the student to undertake all necessary research in the topic area?

Supervisors can be helpful to the student by assuring that the topic

- is appropriate and will lead to a dissertation at Honours and Masters level
- is within the capacity of the student to handle successfully while promising to extend the student's research skill and discipline knowledge.

It is worth considering undertaking a project within a larger project for which your supervisor's has received funding, or that is within their program of research. Undertaking a study that is part your supervisor's program of research has many advantages, including:

- The project will be clearly defined
- If it is funded, the student will have access to more resources
- There are real benefits of being part of a team
- Undertaking a project in a well-developed program of research means that the findings contribute to developments in an area, and is more likely to be significant
- Your supervisors will be very knowledgeable about the methods / topic
- Ethics approval may already been gained for the project

Changing a Dissertation or Project Topic

School Assessment Board expects that the application of the above criteria in the definition of a dissertation topic will ensure the suitability of the topic. Nevertheless, it is recognised that in exceptional circumstances, the research area agreed to by the supervisors and the student and approved by the School Assessment Board may prove to be inappropriate, because it does not fulfill one or more of the above criteria. In such circumstances, it is the supervisors' responsibility to help the student define a more promising research area. A proposal to change a dissertation topic must be made jointly by the supervisors and the student to the School Assessment Board. A change of topic may necessitate a change of supervisors.

A student who wishes to make significant changes to the proposed topic should first discuss them with their supervisors and then apply in writing to the School Honours Advisor (BN Honours) or Postgraduate Programs Coordinator (MAP Honours and MMid Honours) for approval using the Supervisor / Topic Nomination form available in Appendix 3.1.

Developing the Proposal

Students should present their initial research plan to their supervisors no later than week 2 of the first semester of enrolment in 7999NRS_P1 or 6001NRS_P Dissertation 1. Supervisors will assist further refinement of the plan. In this plan consider:

An introduction

- a concise description of the dissertation topic and why it is important
- the major question that the dissertation will answer, along with subsidiary questions
- a concise statement about what is known at this point concerning the field of investigation. Students should refer to the major authorities, interpretations and theories in the field as they understand them at this early stage, and why the topic is of interest.

An overview of the project at this early stage

- the framework to be used - conceptual or theoretical basis
- the proposed research design and methods of data collection and analysis
- an early indication of possible chapter headings
- an initial reading list, which may have some annotation as a guide to the student and his/her supervisors
- an outline of the ethical implications of the proposed methods.

A timeline and management plan

- This should address activities and resources required. The tasks to be undertaken and the time periods and links between those tasks and the resources needed to conduct the research should be detailed. This plan is a useful tool for discussing progress with your supervisors and reflecting on progress throughout the project.

Reviewing the Literature

The literature review can be commenced once the dissertation topic has been decided. The literature review informs the project and enriches research design. It enables the student to gain a broad and deep knowledge of the topic literature and the major interpretations, theories and points of research interest within it.

Activity to review the literature review will be at its most intense at the beginning of the research project. However, the literature review continues throughout the program of research, ensuring that the study is informed by the most recent literature.

Designing the Research

Research design may be defined as a plan for carrying out an inquiry. It maps the population for investigation, the tools and the methods of data collection and the processes for analysis and investigation. It is the means by which an interest in the research issue is turned into a coherent and justifiable project that contributes new knowledge. Therefore, much thought needs to go into the design for the research. It is a significant focus for discussion between you and your supervisors. Supervisors will discuss the various types of research designs common in the discipline and methodological area.

Collecting the Data

Data are collected in many ways. Data collection must be consistent with the method of inquiry and must be conducted in an ethical, rigorous and trustworthy manner. The student and supervisor need to discuss the means and progress of data collection and supervisors need to be familiar with the data set the student is generating.

It is worth reiterating here that no data may be collected without application for ethical approval or certain knowledge that it is not required. Ethics in research are addressed in section 5 of this handbook.

Analysing and Interpreting the Data

The process of analysis and interpretation must be guided by recognised and rigorous procedures. There are a number of questions the student might pose in order to check their process:

- Has the research design been comprehensive enough for my purposes?
- Have I examined my data in sufficient depth?
- Are there significant omissions from my data?
- Am I using it in a manner that is valid?
- Have my results demonstrated the project's significance?
- How inclusive are the explanations that I have drawn from my data? Are there other alternative explanations that might be signaled or other lines of inquiry that might be signaled or other lines of inquiry that might be reasonably pursued?

Developing the Chapter Structure and Headings for the Dissertation

Developing the chapter headings of your dissertation helps establish the boundaries for the dissertation, provides it with a logical development, as well as conveying the framework of the investigation. Students need to discuss the dissertation structure with their supervisors as soon as the dissertation topic is refined and the research design is decided upon.

The dissertation needs to provide information that is organised in discrete chapters. The following list is a guide. Note that although usually only one chapter is needed to fulfill each of these tasks, you may require more than one depending on the nature of your work:

- introduction to the dissertation and research question / problem
- literature review
- methodology and defence of it; the research design used; method /description of the process used
- how data were analysed
- description of findings or results
- discussion: a summary and discussion of the findings and their significance as new knowledge
- conclusion, significance of the dissertation and recommendations
- references
- appendices.

Chapter headings vary according to the nature of the project.

Writing the Dissertation

A dissertation takes tangible form through writing. Writing a dissertation, in the form of drafts, should commence as early as is possible in the research process. For example the introduction, literature review and methodology can be prepared quite early. These early drafts become an invaluable point of discussion between you and your supervisors. Appropriate reworking of them will facilitate the project and the dissertation.

The criteria for effective writing in this context include:

- clarity of expression
- ensuring that the main ideas are clear to the reader and are rendered in a convincing way through the evidence produced
- logical sequencing of ideas
- definition and mastery of abstract or specialist terms
- establishing and sustaining the reader's interest
- appropriate and accurate grammar, spelling and word usage
- accurate and consistent referencing
- accurate and consistent proof reading
- an ability to engage in constructive criticism of the work to develop and refine ideas.

The introduction and literature review shall:

- frame the problem that the dissertation is investigating
- make clear to the reader what question/s are addressed
- establish a rationale for the study
- embed the research statement in an appropriate theoretical/conceptual framework
- provide dialogue between the theoretical framework and the direction of the study
- in the textual commentary indicate the student's level of comprehension
- in the literature review, reflect the student's mastery of the scholarly context of the study. It should be comprehensive, demonstrate critical synthesis and include the most important and the most recent studies.

The methods and results chapters are guided by the following criteria

- a clearly described theoretical framework for the methodology
- a well argued rationale for adopting a particular methodological approach with the constraints acknowledged
- a clear outline of the use of the methodology and methods in health research and articulation of its use in relation to similar or relevant studies that have been conducted
- a clearly directed methodological approach in terms of targets, controls, parallel studies, representativeness, understanding of logistical problems, limitations and methods of validation (as appropriate)
- a clear understanding of the steps followed in data analysis, and why the strategies being followed were adopted; a clearly explained approach to qualitative/ quantitative analyses
- a commentary on findings with reference to the research question/s established earlier
- a clear explanation of the major themes of the dissertation
- clear articulation of the central argument of the thesis and its significance.

The final chapter needs to include the following:

- A summary of the topic and the major aspects of the project
- The statement of sustainable and comprehensive claims in terms of the research study and academic infrastructure which preceded it;
- The statement of sustainable claims with respect to the place of the study in the discipline.

References

All references cited must be included in the reference list and must be documented in a consistent, accurate and conforming style. The School of Nursing and Midwifery prefers students to use the American Psychological Association referencing style¹.

Appendices

The appendices may include copies of a variety of materials, eg. survey forms, interview questionnaires, relevant transcriptions from ethnographic data and policy extracts, which are relevant to the dissertation. They must be clearly and consistently numbered and referred to within the text of the dissertation.

¹ The School of Nursing and Midwifery recommends the American Psychological Association (APA) style. This system is used widely in nursing literature and journals. Copies of the APA Guide are available in the library and are generally available in the bookshop on the Nathan and Gold Coast campuses. However, whichever system is used, it should be used consistently. Students are advised to discuss their referencing system with their supervisors.

7: Presentation and Formatting

Who is responsible for the presentation and formatting of the dissertation?

- Responsibility for the format of the dissertation or project rests with the student after consultation with their supervisors. A major consideration in the presentation of work is the ease with which an examiner can undertake the task of examination.
- Postgraduate students must make their own arrangements for the typing and proof-reading of dissertations.

What goes in the dissertation?

- The dissertation is the presentation of the research and its findings. This document needs to be complete and accessible to the reader, most particularly the examiner
- The preparation of dissertations for examination should be in accordance with the University's *Guidelines for Undertaking a Dissertation in Honours and Masters by Coursework Programs*, available on the Griffith University Website:
<http://www62.gu.edu.au/policylibrary.nsf/xmainsearch/7a86a21156f61caf4a256b97003c8921?opendocument>

How long is the dissertation?

- Approximately 20,000 and 25,000 words in length. It is recognised that the extent of a dissertation may vary, depending on the topic, problem requirements and methodological demands. It is the opportunity to present the research in clear, comprehensive, succinct terms
- There may be academic penalties if the work does not fall within these guidelines. The student is advised to look closely at the examination criteria

How should the text be prepared?

- It is expected that the dissertation will be in English.
- Select a print size of text in the main body of the dissertation of not less than 11 point;
- 1.5 or double line space between text lines;
- Create margins of at least 4cm, and top, bottom and right hand margins of at least 2cm;
- Number the pages sequentially;
- depending on the referencing system used, place references/footnotes either in the body of the text, at the bottom of each page, or at the end of each chapter.

How should the text be printed?

- Print the text on good quality International A4 (297cm x 210cm) bond paper on one side of the page only:

What is the text sequence on the front page?

- the full title;
- the full name and the academic qualifications of the student;
- the Faculty and School in which the program was undertaken, and the name of the University;
- the degree for which the dissertation is submitted including the words "Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Advanced Practice (*Strand*) Program"; the date, month and year - of submission of dissertation.

What is the text sequence for the dissertation contents?

- a short abstract of approximately 400 - 600 words;
- a table of contents, a list of all diagrams and illustrations and a list of supplementary material, if any;
- a statement acknowledging the extent and nature of any assistance received in the pursuit of the research and preparation of the dissertation;
- a signed statement of originality including the words, 'This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the dissertation contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the dissertation itself';
- the main text; divided into appropriate chapters;
- the reference list;
- appendices (including a confidential appendix where appropriate);
- supplementary material separate from the bound dissertation and submitted as part, or in support of, the dissertation such as computer print-outs, films, video-tapes, models, music scores, tape recording etc.

How are diagrams, tables and figures located in the dissertation?

- Small diagrams, tables and figures are incorporated into the text.
- Full-page diagrams are inserted on the page immediately adjacent to the text that describes it.
- Diagrams exceeding A4 size are placed after the main body of the dissertation and bound in such a manner that they may be opened out and read. This entails a left-hand margin of at least 2cm.
- Supplementary material such as rolls of film which cannot be bound together with the dissertation are placed in a storage container, which will ensure their protection.

Referencing

- The School of Nursing and Midwifery uses the APA referencing style.

Dissertation Copying

- Three copies (2 soft-bound, 1 unbound) must be submitted to Student Administration for examination, one for each examiner and one held by Student Administration in case of loss. Soft binding allows for secure packaging and revision should it be required;
- Students are responsible for generating the copies. Copying can be arranged through Griffith University Uniprint, or through a private copy center.

Dissertation binding for final library and School lodgement

The final bound copy of the dissertation after examination and corrections needs to be submitted to the **School Administrative Officer - Postgraduate, Gold Coast Campus** prior to the awarding of the degree. Copies should be accompanied by a *Disposition of Dissertation* form (Appendix 3.4). In order to do this students need to:

- Make two bound copies
- Sign both copies
- Complete the *Disposition Dissertation/Access to Dissertation* form (Appendix 3.4).
- Submit one unbound copy. This copy is forwarded to the University library where it will be catalogued and lodged on the campus where the student was enrolled.
- Submit one bound copy (that is sewn and bound in full cloth with stiff covers). This will be retained by the School.
- Supervisors value having a copy of the student's dissertation and it is recommended that students provide a copy of the dissertation for their supervisors.

Bound copy cover requirements:

Please ensure that the cover of the bound copies contains, embossed on the cover, the student's full name, the thesis title and original year of submission. The spine must bear the student's surname/family name, initial, the dissertation title (or short title if necessary) and year of original submission.' There are no requirements for cover or embossing colours, which are up to the student's discretion.

Where can dissertations be copied and bound?

It is the student's responsibility to prepare copies of their dissertations for examination and permanent lodgement with the University. Certain details need to be checked with any organisation that is binding the dissertation

- ✓ PRINT all information required on the cover;
- ✓ Don't abbreviate unless this is required;
- ✓ If italics, etc are required: please specify;
- ✓ Check spelling;
- ✓ The binder is not responsible for mistakes made by the student in the instructions. It pays to double check.

Theses can be soft-bound by the University Uniprint service. Uniprint requires at least two days to bind copies. Be aware of this in regard to submission deadlines.

Student Administration can provide information and details regarding hard binding requirements and where this can be done.

8: Dissertation Examination

Submission

When?

The submission deadline for all Masters and Honours dissertations is 3.00 PM on the Thursday of Week 14 of enrolment in *7999NRS_P4 Dissertation 4* or *6000HLS_P5*. This means that when students enrol in their final dissertation course, they are signaling an intent submit their dissertation by week 14 of that semester. Students must be currently enrolled in order to submit a thesis.

N.B. Where the dissertation is submitted after the due date and no extension has been authorised, a grade of 'Fail' will be awarded.

How?

- Student and supervisor(s) need to plan the submission. Students should ensure that their supervisors have sufficient time in which to provide feedback on final drafts of their dissertation prior.
- One month prior to submission of the dissertation, an *Appointment of Examiners* form (Appendix 3.3) should be submitted to the School Honours Advisor (BN Honours) or Postgraduate Programs Coordinator (MAP Honours and MMid Honours) by the student's supervisors, nominating two potential examiners. Examiners will be approved by the School of Nursing and Midwifery Assessment Board on advice from the supervisors and the School Honours Advisor or the Postgraduate Programs Coordinator.
- Students need to obtain approval to submit their dissertation from their supervisors prior to submission. Where students submit a dissertation against the advice of their supervisors, the examiners will be advised of this after the dissertation has been examined.

What is submitted and to whom?

- The preparation of the dissertation and its necessary inclusions are described in section 7. This provides information about what the dissertation must contain in order to submit it for examination
- The final draft, *approved by your supervisor*, is the version of the dissertation that must be submitted.
- **MAP Honours and MMid Honours students** must submit three copies, two soft bound and one unbound, of their dissertation together with the approved *Appointment of Examiners* form (if not already forwarded) to Student Administration on their campus
- **BN Honours students** must submit three copies of their dissertation to the School Administration Officer - Postgraduate, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Gold Coast Campus. For more information on BN honours visit http://www17.griffith.edu.au/cis/p_cat/require.asp?ProgCode=2080&Type=structure

Extensions to the submission date

MAP Honours and MMid Honours

If, for any reason, students require an extension to their submission date, they must gain approval to do so using the following process.

- Apply in writing at least one week prior to the date of submission to the Postgraduate Programs Coordinator and copied to Student Administration requesting an extension to the submission date, giving reasons for the request.
- Provide documentation supporting the request and include a new proposed submission date.
- Gain the endorsement of the principal supervisor for the request.

If an extension is granted, students will be awarded a *CTG* (continuing) grade and they will be required to re-enrol in *7999NRS_P4 Dissertation 4* the following semester.

BN Honours

- Apply in writing at least one week prior to the date of submission to the School Honours Advisor, requesting an extension to the submission date, giving reasons for the request.
- Provide documentation supporting the request and include a new proposed submission date.
- Gain the endorsement of the principal supervisor for the request.

If an extension is granted, students will be awarded a *CTG* (continuing) grade and they will be required to re-enrol in *6000HLS_P5 Dissertation 5* the following semester.

Examination

Who marks the dissertation?

- The dissertation will be examined independently by two examiners
- Examiners are appointed by the School Assessment Board on the advice of the Postgraduate Programs Coordinator or School Honours Advisor, after consultation with the supervisors. Where possible, one of the examiners will be a staff member from within the School of Nursing and Midwifery. Should this not be possible, the first examiner will be appointed from another school within Griffith University. The second examiner will be appointed from another School or Faculty of the University, another tertiary institution or from an external organisation where it is considered that the proposed examiner has the appropriate skills and expertise. Where circumstances are such that it is more appropriate for both examiners to be internal, or for both to be external then the student's supervisor, the School Honours Advisor/Postgraduate Programs Coordinator and the Chair of the School Assessment Board will be consulted. The supervisors of a student will not be permitted to be an examiner of that student's dissertation.

What criteria are used to mark the dissertation?

Examiners use a standardized proforma (Appendix 2). They are asked to comment on the quality of the dissertation overall and on a range of specific criteria. These include:

- Rationale for study;
- Background for study;
- Research design - selection and justification;
- Implementation of research process;
- Data analysis strategies;
- Presentation of results;
- Interpretation and conclusion;
- Dissertation's contribution to the field of knowledge;
- Quality of presentation

How is the final grade awarded?

- The decision as to whether a dissertation is of an acceptable standard for the awarding of the degree is made in light of the examiners' reports.
- An examiner may require or suggest that the student make certain revisions to the dissertation before a grade is awarded. In such cases, on the advice of the School Honours Advisor / Postgraduate Programs Coordinator, the School Assessment Board will consider the matter in the light of both examiners' reports and award a grade either program to these revisions being made. A student may, at the discretion of the School Assessment Board, be allowed only one opportunity to resubmit a dissertation for re-examination after recommended revision.
- Where the examiners' recommended marks differ by more than one grade or where the difference is between the recommended grade of 'Fail' and 'Pass' or above, a third examiner will be appointed by the Board after consultation with the School Honours Advisor / Postgraduate Programs Coordinator and the student's supervisors. After considering all three examiner's reports, the School Assessment Board will recommend a grade.
- A final grade for the dissertation will not be awarded by School Assessment Board until all corrections are completed and approved and required copies of the corrected dissertation are submitted. See section 7 for details of the presentation of final copies.
- Examiners will recommend marks with the following ranges:

MAP (Honours) and MMid (Honours)*

Excellent	Of High Distinction quality	85-100%
Very Good	Of Distinction quality	75-84%
Good	Of Credit quality	65-74%
Satisfactory	Of Pass quality	50-64%
Unsatisfactory	Fail	Less than 50%

* Calculation of an honours class for MAP (Honours) and MMid (Honours) students is based on raw scores and is the same as the calculation for Health Group Honours.

Health Group Honours

Excellent	Of High Distinction (Honors I) quality	80-100%
Very Good	Of Distinction (Honors IIA) quality	70-79%
Good	Of Credit (Honors IIB) quality	60-69%
Satisfactory	Of Pass (Honors III) quality	50-59%
Unsatisfactory	Fail	Less than 50%

Honours Class

A degree with honours is awarded in classes - First Class (I), Second Class, Division A (IIA), Second Class, Division B (IIB), and Third Class (III). Unsuccessful candidates will be awarded a grade of Fail. The class of honours degree to be awarded to each candidate will be determined by the School Assessment Board on the basis of the Honours Weighted Average and the standard cut-offs as described below:

The Honours Weighted Average (HWA) is determined by combining the percentage mark awarded for each coursework program and the Honours research dissertation program with their respective credit point value, as follows:

$$\text{HWA} = \frac{\sum (P \times \text{CP})}{\sum (\text{CP})} \text{ where } \begin{array}{l} \Sigma = \text{the sum of} \\ P = \text{percentage mark in each program} \\ \text{CP} = \text{credit point value of each program} \end{array}$$

The Dissertation HWA is calculated by the same method, incorporating only the Honours research dissertation course(s).

Standard cut-offs for Honours Classifications

To be awarded a particular class of Honours, the candidate must achieve an overall **Honours Weighted Average** that is in the range specified in the table AND the Dissertation HWA must be greater than or equal to the value shown in the table as the Minimum Dissertation HWA.

	<i>I</i>	<i>IIA</i>	<i>IIB</i>	<i>III</i>
<i>Overall HWA Range</i>	<i>80% - 100%</i>	<i>70% - 79.9%</i>	<i>60% - 69.9%</i>	<i>50% - 59.9%</i>
<i>Minimum Dissertation HWA</i>	<i>80</i>	<i>70%</i>	<i>60%</i>	<i>50%</i>

A School Assessment Board may determine a classification (as opposed to a grade of Fail) when a candidate has failed a component of the Honours program, providing that the conditions for the class of Honours specified above are satisfied.

Access to Dissertations after Examination

It is the University's expectation that most dissertations accepted for the award of a degree will be immediately available for consultation by staff, students and other inquirers. By lodging a dissertation in the University Library, a student consents to its free access for private study and research purposes. However, it is recognised that not all dissertations should be made immediately available for unrestricted access. A student may apply to the School Assessment Board for approval to restrict access to the copies of the dissertation retained by the University after the degree is awarded, on the following grounds:

- Where the dissertation contains confidential material which the student is not at liberty to disclose freely
- Where the student is seeking to register a patent.

The period of restriction normally granted will be twelve months. Applications for further extensions will be program to review and determination by the School Assessment Board. During the period of approved restricted access, permission to consult a restricted-access dissertation will rest with the Chair of the School Assessment Board in consultation with the student.

9: Information, Resources and Support

Contact with the School and the University

Students can receive information on programs, application forms, enrolment and change of enrolment forms, applications for academic records, scholarships, policies and graduation from the Student Administration office. Student Membership cards are available from Student Administration Centres.

Student Administration:

Gold Coast Campus
G33 Building Level 2
Griffith University
Parklands Drive, Southport QLD 4215
Tel: +61 7 5552 9042
Fax: +61 7 5552 8997
Email: postgraduate-gc@gu.edu.au

Nathan and Logan Campuses
N16 (Macrossan) Level 2
Griffith University
Kessels Road, Nathan QLD 4111
Tel: +61 7 3735 5323
Fax: +61 7 3735 3885
Email: postgrad@gu.edu.au

From time to time the School, or Student Administration may need to contact students. In this instance:

- correspondence will be sent to the most recent address recorded on the student information system; and/or
- the student will be telephoned if a contact number is recorded on the student information system; and/or
- an email message will be sent to the student

Please note: The responsibility for communication rests predominantly with the student. Students are requested to inform the Student Administration of changes to personal details (such as telephone number, mailing address, changes to name) and to supply the School, program convenor and supervisors with an email address. Students should check for messages on a regular basis.

Failure to provide a change of mailing address to Student Administration is not considered by the University as an acceptable excuse for any inaction on the student's part.

The Web

Griffith University is increasingly providing information to students via the Web. For example, on the Griffith University Web Site there is information about:

<http://www.griffith.edu.au/students>

- Enrolment: <https://intranet.secure.griffith.edu.au/enrolment-timetables/enrolment-support> Timetables:
<https://intranet.secure.griffith.edu.au/enrolment-timetables/timetable-support> Academic Calendars:
<http://www.griffith.edu.au/calendars-events/academic-calendar>
- Program information: <http://www.griffith.edu.au/programs-courses>

University policies:

- Enrolment: <http://www62.gu.edu.au/policylibrary.nsf/alldocscat/0d2f49ca317a90884a256b89006385ab?opendocument>
- Assessment: <http://www.griffith.edu.au/academic-integrity/policy-governance>

Web Sites of Interest:

- GUPSA web site: <http://www.griffith.edu.au/griffith-university-postgraduate-students-association>
- Griffith University Research Publications: <http://www.griffith.edu.au/or/publications/>

Noticeboards

There are postgraduate and honours noticeboards on all campuses. The Nathan noticeboard is located on the ground floor of the Health Science building, the Logan noticeboard is on level 2 of the Academic 1 building, and the Gold Coast noticeboard is located on level 2 of the Health Science building. Information that will be displayed on these boards include communication from program coordinators and strand convenors, any changes to programs, University elections, etc. Information of interest such as seminars, scholarships, travel grants, conferences, etc, will also be displayed on these boards.

School of Nursing and Midwifery Resources

The School of Nursing and Midwifery makes resources available to postgraduate and honours students. The School has a policy that governs the provision of resources to postgraduate and honours students that is outlined in *Appendix 1*. Resources are made available subject to the capacity of the School to provide them and, as such, are subject to change. As changes and/or new resources become available, we will inform students via our email networks and noticeboards. To gain information about the resources available to postgraduate students, please see the administrative officer on your respective campus.

Currently the following resources are available:

Funding Support	The School provides support for students enrolled in a major research component of any honours or coursework Master degree in the Faculty. The amount of funding is allocated for the duration of dissertation enrolment. This funding can be used for study purposes including: photocopying, attending conferences, etc. To access this funding and/or to obtain a photocopy card, please see the School Secretary on your campus of enrolment. Applications for an Honours or Postgraduate Research Account must be lodged on the Faculty's application form, included in Appendix 3.5. Monies can then be accessed by arrangements with the School Secretary on the students' home campus.
Research Centre for Clinical Practice Innovation Seminar Series	These forums are an opportunity for scholarly exchange. They can assist in the development of your research. Information about research seminars will be advertised on the honours and postgraduate noticeboards and via email lists.
Postgraduate Mailboxes	Honours and postgraduate student mailboxes are available on all campuses. Please contact School Secretary's regarding the location of the mailboxes.
Scholarships	The School has funded a range of scholarships for honours and postgraduate students. Availability of scholarships will vary from year to year, dependent on resources. In the past, these have included fee-subsidy scholarships, honours scholarships and a PhD scholarship. Information about scholarships can be obtained from the School Administrative Officer - Postgraduate, and student administration.
Other Resources	There are also other resources available to honours and postgraduate students for the purposes of conducting their research. These include: audio recorder/transcribers which can be borrowed from the School Secretary; students may have limited access to computer software. For information regarding access, please contact School Administrative Officer - Postgraduate on 27292. The School Secretary on each campus holds a file of information about conferences, seminars, material of interest, etc. Honours and postgraduate students are welcome to access this information via the School of Nursing and Midwifery office on each campus.

University Resources

As an honours or postgraduate student of Griffith University students, you are entitled to the full range of services provided by the University to all students, plus some services that are made available specifically to honours and postgraduate students.

Library Services	The library offers a full range of services. These include library information sessions for honours and postgraduate students, interlibrary loans, access to computer-based and on-line indexes and databases, etc. For assistance, please see the nursing librarian on each campus.
Information Services (INS)	Information about INS services is on the Web at http://www.griffith.edu.au/ins/ . Full details are also available from the help desk in the library on each campus.
Email and Internet Access	The University, together with the School, provides access to email and the Internet to honours and postgraduate research students undertaking the Dissertation component of their program. Students must complete a form that is available from the help desk from the campus library, then submit these forms to the School Administrative Officer on their campus. The application is then approved and forwarded to INS, where it is processed. Students must allow a 72-hour turnaround before collecting their account information from the help desk at the campus library.
Dial in modem access	A dial-in service known as Griffith@Home is offered to all students. This service allows you to connect your computer to the University's network via modem. This provides you with access to the Internet (NetCheck quota applies), student email, library databases and electronic journals, Learning@Griffith course content, your NetStorage account and some Griffith University restricted websites. A total of 20 hours of access per week is included. For further details, please visit the Remote Access website. www.griffith.edu.au/ins/remotearchive

<p>Common Use Computer Laboratories</p>	<p>INS also provides a number of computer laboratories. Some Labs are open from 7am to 1am Monday to Friday during Semesters, and from 9am - 9pm on weekends. All Labs have printers. To access printers a card must be purchased from the card dispenser or the Copying Service Office in the Library. The same card may be used for photocopying services. University Common-Use Computing Laboratories are available for use outside of these hours.</p>
<p>Computer Skills Workshops</p>	<p>Computer skills education workshops, conducted by the University Information Services (eg. Word, Excel, SPSS, HTML, etc), are available to students. They are conducted regularly throughout the year and are advertised on the Web</p> <p>www.griffith.edu.au/ins/learningfast/</p> <p>www.griffith.edu.au/ins/learningservices</p> <p>Application forms are available on this website. Postgraduate students can access these workshops free of charge. However, students are charged a fee if they book a place and fail to attend without adequate notice. Students are responsible for payment if such a fee is incurred.</p>
<p>Web-Based Access to Library and Computer Databases</p>	<p>There is a range of databases available in the library. Information about web access to library computer databases is available on the web http://www.griffith.edu.au/library/library-resources Information about access to the Griffith University library and other Australian libraries is available on the web at http://www.griffith.edu.au/ins/collections/</p>
<p>Student Services</p>	<p>Student Services provides the following services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Careers and employment service - Counseling service - Health service - Welfare service - Disability service - Chaplaincy service <p>http://www.griffith.edu.au/ua/aa/ss/</p>
<p>Campus Life Services</p>	<p>Campus Life provides the following services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic dress - Accommodation - Catering - Child care (Nathan campus only) - Clubs and societies - Commercial services - Sport and recreation <p>http://www.griffith.edu.au/ocs/</p>
<p>University Services</p>	<p>University Services provides the following:</p> <p>Parking and transport (including railway and airline passes) Security (including security escorts for weekends and after dark) Sexual harassment officers Health and safety at the university Equity at Griffith University Graduation Ceremonies</p> <p>More information about these services is available on the Web at: http://www.gu.edu.au/ofm/home.html</p>
<p>University Bookshops</p>	<p>The University has bookshops on all campuses. Books set as texts for programs will be available through these bookshops. Students may order other books through these bookshops. They can be contacted on extension 07 5594 8720 (Gold Coast) 07 3382 1153 (Logan) and 07 3735 7258 (Nathan).</p>
<p>Support for Students with Disabilities</p>	<p>The University and the School seek to provide support to assist students with disabilities undertaking study programs. Students with disabilities should contact the University Manager, Student Equity Services on 3735 7280 to discuss their support needs. http://www.griffith.edu.au/ua/aa/ss/equity/</p>

<p>Griffith University Postgraduate Students Association (GUPSA)</p>	<p>Students enrolled in MAP Honours or MMid can join GUPSA. GUPSA is a postgraduate student managed organisation that aims to foster interaction and communication among postgraduate students and to represent their interests. GUPSA provides a wide range of services for postgraduate students including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Representation, advocacy and support (eg help with appeals, information, referrals, networking) - Information and advice - Seminars/Workshops - Regular newsletters - Editorial assistance - Liaison with academic and administrative staff - Lobbying at local and national level about postgraduate concerns - Commenting on draft university policy documents, as requested - Social activities and cultural events. <p>It also provides a link with the decision-making bodies of the University by providing opportunities for members to represent postgraduate colleagues on University boards and committees. In addition to this GUPSA also ensures that student's interests are represented nationally through affiliation with the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA).</p> <p>GUPSA can be contacted on telephone 07 3735 7602 or Email gupsa-admin@griffith.edu.au</p> <p>GUPSA's home page on the Griffith University Campus Wide Information System is on the World Wide Web at the following address: http://www.gu.edu.au/centre/gupsa/</p>
<p>University and PhD Scholarships</p>	<p>An important consideration for students undertaking an honours or masters dissertation is that their success in both the coursework and research component of their program contributes to their eligibility for Griffith University Postgraduate Scholarships and Australian Postgraduate Scholarships. These scholarships provide a stipend (currently approximately \$20,000 per year) for three years of doctoral study, together with other payments such as a dissertation allowances. These scholarships are competitive. To be considered students usually require a Class 1 Honours or equivalent in their Honours or masters study. Information about these scholarships is available from the Postgraduate Student Services Centres on Nathan or the Gold Coast. Students interested in continuing on to doctoral studies can discuss their plans, including possible eligibility for scholarships, with the Postgraduate Programs Coordinator.</p>

Appendices

Appendix 1: Resources for Honours and Postgraduate Students

School of Nursing and Midwifery, Nathan

	Name	Phone, Email and Location
School Administrative Officer School Secretary	Lee Earle Jenny Chan	07 3735 7982, L.Earle@griffith.edu.au, N48 2.07 07 3735 5406, J.Chan@griffith.edu.au, N48 2.06

Resources Available

	Support Available (yes/no)	Amt \$	Please specify Per annum/ program/other	Comments
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Health Group Honours, Research and Honours Masters Students

• Photocopy Allowance	Yes			A total of \$400.00 for entirety of candidature - to be used on research in collaboration with supervisor.
• Support for Research project	Yes			
• Conference attendance support	Yes			
• Access to Stationery Supplies	Yes			Limited supply
• Other				

Research Higher Degree (RHD) Students PhD and MPhil

• Photocopy Allowance	Yes			A total of \$3,000 (PhD) and \$2,000 (MPhil) for entirety of candidature (\$1,000 per year of fulltime candidature), to be used in collaboration with supervisor.
• Support for Research project	Yes			
• Conference attendance support	Yes			
• Access to Stationery Supplies	Yes			Limited supply
• Other				

Postgraduate Space and Facilities Available

Postgraduate Space	Room Number	Building
• Honours/Research Masters	Not available	
• MPhil/PhD	Allocated on application	N48
Postgraduate Computing Rooms Available		
• Honours/Research Masters	University common use computer labs	
• MPhil/PhD	Allocated on application	N48
Postgraduate Mailboxes Available		
• Honours/Research Masters	Shared boxes on ground Level	N48
• MPhil/PhD	Ground Level	N48

School of Nursing and Midwifery, Gold Coast

	Name	Phone, Email and Location		
School Administrative Officer - Postgraduate School Secretary	Tamara English Jo Fiorile	07 5552 8911, T.English@griffith.edu.au, G05 2.52 07 5552 8657, J.Fiorile@griffith.edu.au, G05 2.07		
School Postgraduate Contact To Access Resources and Entitlements				
	Name	Phone, Email and Location		
• Honours/Research Masters	As above	As above		
• Research Higher Degrees	As above	As above		
Resources Available				
	Support Available (yes/no)	Amt \$	Please specify Per annum/ program/other	Comments
Health Group Honours, Research and Honours Masters Students				
• Photocopy Allowance	Yes			A total of \$400.00 for entirety of candidature - to be used on research in collaboration with supervisor.
• Support for Research project	Yes			
• Conference attendance support	Yes			
• Access to Stationery Supplies	Yes			Limited supply
• Other				
Research Higher Degree Students PhD and MPhil				
• Photocopy Allowance	Yes			A total of \$3,000 (PhD) and \$2,000 (MPhil) for entirety of candidature (\$1,000 per year of fulltime candidature), to be used in collaboration with supervisor.
• Support for Research project	Yes			
• Conference attendance support	Yes			
• Access to Stationery Supplies	Yes			Limited supply
• Other				
Postgraduate Space Available				
	Room Numbers and Locations			
Postgraduate Rooms Available **Currently very limited				
• Honours/Research Masters				
• MPhil/PhD	4.23			G16
Postgraduate Computing Rooms Available				
• Honours/Research Masters	3.32			G02
• MPhil/PhD	1.04			G16
Postgraduate Mailboxes Available				
• Honours/Research Masters	Foyer, Level 2			G05
• MPhil/PhD	Foyer, Level 2			G05

School of Nursing and Midwifery, Logan

	Name	Phone, Email and Location		
School Administrative Officer School Secretary	Barbara Devenish-Mearns Debbie Mallitt	07 3382 1009, B.DevenishMearns@griffith.edu.au, A1 2.49 07 3382 1272, D.Mallitt@griffith.edu.au, A1 3.28		
School Postgraduate Contact To Access Resources and Entitlements				
	Name	Phone, Email and Location		
• Honours/Research Masters	As above	As above		
• Research Higher Degrees	As above	As above		
Resources Available				
	Support Available (yes/no)	Amt \$	Please specify Per annum/program/other	Comments
<u>Health Group Honours, Research and Honours Masters Students</u>				
• Photocopy Allowance	Yes			A total of \$400.00 for entirety of candidature - to be used on research in collaboration with supervisor.
• Support for Research project	Yes			
• Conference attendance support	Yes			
• Access to Stationery Supplies	Yes			Limited supply
• Other				
<u>Research Higher Degree Students PhD and MPhil</u>				
• Photocopy Allowance	Yes			A total of \$3,000 (PhD) and \$2,000 (MPhil) for entirety of candidature (\$1,000 per year of fulltime candidature), to be used in collaboration with supervisor.
• Support for Research project	Yes			
• Conference attendance support	Yes			
• Access to Stationery Supplies	Yes			Limited supply
• Other				
Postgraduate Space Available				
	Room Numbers and Locations			
<u>Postgraduate Rooms Available</u>				
• Honours/Research Masters	Not available		TBA	
• MPhil/PhD	Allocated on application		To be advised	
<u>Postgraduate Computing Rooms Available</u>				
• Honours/Research Masters	Common use computer labs			
• MPhil/PhD	Allocated on application			
<u>Postgraduate Mailboxes Available</u>				
• Honours/Research Masters	L05 Level 3 (adjacent to SON offices)			
• MPhil/PhD	L05 Level 3 (adjacent to SON offices)			

Appendix 2: Dissertation Assessment Criteria



DISSERTATION ASSESSMENT

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Student Name

Student No

Program of Study

Program Code

Dissertation Title

EXAMINER TO COMPLETE:

Title

Surname

First name

Position

University/Institution

Final mark awarded

%

Date forwarded

Signature of Examiner

Date

I do do not give permission for the disclosure of my details to the student or supervisor.

Signature

DISSERTATION ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Student Name _____

Student No _____

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
1. Rationale for Study					

Comments:

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
2. Literature Review					

Comments:

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
3. Research Methodology and Design - Selection and Justification					

Comments:

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
4. Implementation of the Research Process					

Comments:

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
5. Ethical Considerations					

Comments:

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
6. Quality of Analysis					

Comments:

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
7. Interpretation and Conclusion					

Comments:

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
8. Contribution to the Field of Knowledge					

Comments:

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
9. Contribution to the Field of Knowledge					

Comments:

OVERALL MARK

Please assign a mark for the dissertation. The mark should be determined based on your examination and within the ranges shown in the guide below.

	Overall Mark	%
Excellent	HD - Of Honors I quality	80-100%
Very Good	D - Of Honors IIA quality	70-79%
Good	C - Of Honors IIB quality	60-69%
Satisfactory	P - Of honors III quality	50-59%
Unsatisfactory	Fail	Less than 50%

Comments supporting overall mark for student and assessment board.

Signature

Date

Appendix 3: Forms

- 3.1 Supervisor/Topic Nomination or Change
- 3.2 Progress Review
- 3.3 Appointment of Examiners
- 3.4 Disposition of Coursework Dissertation / Access to Dissertation
- 3.5 Application for Research Account

Appendix 3.1: Supervisor / Topic Nomination or Change Form



NOMINATION OR CHANGE OF DISSERTATION TOPIC / NOMINATION OR CHANGE OF SUPERVISORS

To be completed by student and returned within TWO weeks of Enrolment in dissertation 1 - 7999nrs_p1 or 6000HLS_P1

Student Name	Student No
Program of Study	Program Code
Email:	Phone:

Full-time Part-time

Current or Intended Enrolment in Dissertation Programs:

Course Code and Title	Semester	Year

Proposed Dissertation Title:

Brief Description of Proposed Dissertation Topic:

Nominated Supervisors:

1	2
Signature	Date

Please return completed form to Tamara English, Administrative Officer, Postgraduate, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Gold Coast Campus.

TO BE COMPLETED BY NOMINATED SUPERVISORS (ONE PAGE PER SUPERVISOR)

Title Surname Name

Organisational and contact details if outside the Faculty:

Institution

Address

Phone

Email

I agree to the following supervision arrangements:

Principal

Associate

For changed / replacement supervisors, who are you replacing?

How many students are you currently supervising?

PhD MPhil

Master Project

Please note any planned absences during the expected candidature of this student.

Signature

Date

School Use Only

School Honours Advisor / Postgraduate Programs Coordinator:

Comments

Signature

Date

Appendix 3.2: Progress Review



DISSERTATION SUPERVISION SEMESTER PROGRESS REVIEW

STUDENT to complete this section:

Student Name	Student No	
Program of Study	Program Code	
Full-time <input type="checkbox"/>	Part-time <input type="checkbox"/>	
Supervisor	Associate Supervisor	
Year	Semester	Current dissertation enrolment

Section A: SEMESTER CONTRACT (Completed by week 2 of each semester)

1. Goals for the semester

2. Specific activities

1

2

3

4

3. Evidence that will demonstrate accomplishment

4. Anticipated date of submission:

5. Comments

Student Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

Date

Section B: PROGRESS REPORT (Submitted by week 12 of semester)

Student Name _____ Student No _____

Program of Study _____ Program Code _____

Full-time Part-time

Supervisor _____ Associate Supervisor _____

Year _____ Semester _____ Current dissertation course enrolment _____

Dissertation Progress

Please identify work done so far and further work required in order to complete and submit the dissertation.

Are there any problems affecting dissertation progress? If so, please detail.

Current and / or future supervision issues / problems (if any).

Supervisor's access and assistance.

SUPERVISOR to complete this section:

Student Progress

Satisfactory progress

Minimal progress (continue)

Unsatisfactory (Fail semester program)

Supervisor Comments

Regularity of Meetings this semester:

Weekly

Fortnightly

Monthly

More Frequently

Supervisor Signature

Date

I have sighted this report. Comments:

Signature

Date

Please discuss this report with your supervisor before signing.

Comments:

Signature

Date

School Use Only

School Honours Advisor / Postgraduate Programs Coordinator:

Comments

Signature

Date

Appendix 3.3: Appointment of Examiners



APPOINTMENT OF EXAMINERS

Student Name	Student No
Program of Study	Program Code
Dissertation Title	

Supervisors: Please be advised that no single academic is permitted to be responsible for marking 40% or more of the student's work in their program. Please consider this before recommending an internal examiner.

RECOMMENDED INTERNAL EXAMINER

Title	Name
Address	
Phone contacts	
Email	

RECOMMENDED EXTERNAL EXAMINERS IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE

1. Title	Name
Address	
Phone contacts	
Email	

2. Title	Name
Address	
Phone contacts	
Email	

Have you contacted the proposed examiners to discuss their involvement Yes No
Are each of the recommended external examiners expert in the dominant disciplinary orientation represented by the dissertation? Yes No

If no please provide explanation

Supervisors Signature _____ Date _____

Approved Not Approved

School Honours Advisor / Postgraduate Programs Coordinator _____ Date _____

Appendix 3.4: Disposition of Dissertation / Access to Dissertation



DISPOSITION OF DISSERTATION

Student Name	Student No
Program of Study	Program Code
Dissertation Title	

I give permission for my dissertation to be kept by the School and to be copied by the School for the purpose of preservation and either:

- or
- * (a) I agree that the dissertation may be freely available both for inspection and for copying.
 - * (b) This dissertation contains confidential information which I am not at liberty to disclose. I agree that the School Honours Advisor / Postgraduate Programs Coordinator may upon request and after consultation with me, if in his/her opinion I am reasonably available, make the dissertation available for research or private study (not including copying) to such an extent and upon such conditions as they think fit.

* Strike out the options not elected.

Where an author has elected either of these options, a reason for the restriction may be given to assist those who may have to make a decision in the author's absence.

Reason

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix 4: Staff Profiles

Current academic staff profiles are included as a floating appendix to this volume and are also available on the School of Nursing and Midwifery webpage (<http://www.griffith.edu.au/school/nrs/>) or from the School Administration Officer or School Secretary at your campus. If you are unable to locate this addendum or require a current version please contact the School Administration Officer - Postgraduate - Gold Coast.

Appendix 5: Bibliography for Students Undertaking Dissertations

This bibliography may provide guidance. We would appreciate feedback on titles that have been useful, unhelpful and also useful titles that not been included in this listing.

- American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.
- Anderson, J. (1998). *Thesis and assignment writing*. (3rd Ed.). Brisbane: Chichester Wiley.
- Balian, E.S. (1988). *How to design, analyse and write doctoral or masters research*. London: University Press of America.
- Barnum, B. S. (1995). *Writing and getting published: A primer for nurses*. New York: Springer.
- Biklen, S.K., & Casella, R. (2007). *A practical guide to the qualitative dissertation*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Bloomberg, L.D., & Volpe, M. (2008). *Completing your qualitative dissertation: A roadmap from beginning to end*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Burnard, P. (1996). *Writing for health professionals: A manual for writers*. London: Chapman and Hall.
- Campbell, W.G., Ballou, S.V. & Slade, C. (1986). *Form and style: Theses, reports, term papers*. (7th Ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Daly, J., Chang, E. M. L., & Bell, P. F. (1996). Clinical nursing research priorities in Australian critical care: A pilot study. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 23(1), 145-151.
- Derricourt, R. M. (1996). *An author's guide to scholarly publishing*. Princetown, NJ: Princetown University Press.
- Fitzpatrick, J. & Wright, D. J. (1998). *Secrets for a successful dissertation*. Thousand Oaks, Ca.: Sage Publications.
- Glatthorn, A. A. (1998). *Writing the winning dissertation: A step-by-step guide*. Thousand Oaks, Ca.: Corwin Press.
- Gething, L. (1995). *How to manage research effectively: Guidelines for planning, conducting and publishing research*. Sydney: Sydney Nursing Research Centre, University of Sydney.
- Hailman, J. P. (1997). *Planning, proposing and presenting science effectively: A guide for graduate students and researchers in the behavioural sciences and biology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lewins, F. (1993). *Writing a thesis: A guide to its nature and organisation* (4th Ed.). Canberra: School of Arts, Australian National University.
- McEvedy, M. R. (1990). *Developing writing skills*. Melbourne: Nelson.
- Mardsen, D. (1992). *Successful dissertations and theses: a guide to graduate student research from proposal to completion* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Mahony, D. (1990). *Guidelines for essays: Preparing, writing and presenting*. Brisbane: Griffith University, School of Education.
- Mauch, J. E. & Birch, W. (1998). *Guide to the successful thesis and dissertation: A handbook for students and faculty*. (4th Ed) New York: M. Dekker.
- Meloy, J. M. (2002). *Writing the qualitative dissertation: Understanding by doing*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Memering, D. (1989) *The Prentice-Hall guide to research writing* (2nd Ed.). Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.
- Miller, J. I. (1987). *The thesis writer's handbook*. West Linn. OR: Alcove Publishing.
- National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Health Ethics Committee. (1995). *Ethical aspects of qualitative methods in health research*. Canberra: National Health and Medical Research Council.
- Newman, I. (1997). *Theses and dissertations: A guide to writing in the social and physical sciences*. Lanham, Md: Oxford University Press of America.
- Preece, R. A. (1994). *Starting research: an introduction to academic research and dissertation writing*. London: Pinter Publishers.
- Rudestam, K. E. (2001). *Surviving your dissertation: A comprehensive guide to content and process*. Newbury Park: Sage.

- Swetnam, D. (1997). *Writing your dissertation: How to plan prepare and present your work successfully*. Oxford: How-To Books.
- Turabian, K. L. (1996) *A Manual for writers of term papers, theses and dissertations*. (6th Ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Appendix 6: Information Security Policy

1.0 Purpose

Griffith University's information technology resources are a valuable University asset and must be managed accordingly to ensure their integrity, security and availability for lawful educational purposes. This document is intended as a high-level security policy statement for use by all University staff, students and users of the University's information technology resources.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- The provision of reliable and uninterrupted IT services;
- The integrity and validity of data;
- An ability to recover effectively and efficiently from disruption; and
- The protection of all the University's IT assets including data, software and hardware.

2.0 Scope

Within this Policy, information technology resources include information assets (e.g. databases, files, training materials, risk assessment documents, business continuity plans); software assets (e.g. applications and systems software and development tools); and physical assets (e.g. computers, communications equipment and magnetic media).

The Policy applies to all users of the University's information technology resources, including those who install, develop, maintain, administer and use those systems and applications.

3.0 Information Security Policy

3.1 Access Management

All users of the University's information technology resources must be authorised to access the appropriate systems and their resources. Access is controlled and monitored in accordance with University policy. The elements involved in controlling and monitoring access include identification, authorisation and authentication.

3.1.1 Identification

All system users are assigned a unique ID to use in accessing the University's systems and applications. User IDs are not to be shared. Users are responsible for maintaining the security of their IDs and all activity occurring under those IDs. IDs are issued in accordance with approved standards.

3.1.2 Authorisation

Only those users who have valid reasons (as determined by System Custodians) for accessing the University's systems and information are granted access privileges appropriate to their educational and/or business requirements. Access is granted by means of a computer account, which also serves as identification. Accounts are issued in accordance with approved standards.

3.1.3 Authentication

Authentication ensures an identity. Each ID requires a technique, usually a password, for validating identity. Standards apply to all systems requiring authentication.

3.1.4 Account Management

All System Custodians must regularly review their schedule of delegated authority, to determine who is authorised to use the system and their level of authorisation. System Custodians must also determine who should be able to get network access from off campus or remote locations.

At a minimum, a six monthly review of all system access levels of users should be carried out. The System Custodians should ensure any non-compliance as a result of this activity is addressed as a matter of priority. All records of non-compliance must be kept until all matters arising from non-compliance have been resolved.

System Administrators are notified by HRM when employees change positions within the University or terminate employment to ensure that requirements for transition or to terminate access are completed.

3.1.5 Privileged Users Access

Certain system users have high-level access rights, enabling them to access any data stored on the University's information technology systems. These staff members can be generically termed System Administrators. Staff with high-level access rights should abide by the Code of Ethics promulgated by the System Administrators Guild of Australia. System Administrators found guilty of breaching this Code of Ethics may be subject to disciplinary action as recommended by the Director, ICT Services.

Contractor and third-party access are permitted only if agreed to by the Systems Custodian and a full-time employee sponsors the individual. These parties must comply with access control standards that require, at a minimum, that a unique user ID identify each user. This would then ensure that only authorized individuals receive access to systems. All temporary accounts should have an expiration date based on contract completion date.

3.2 Asset Security Management

3.2.1 Backup

All critical University information must be backed up on a regular basis. Frequency of backup is determined by the frequency with which the data changes and the effort required to recreate the information if lost. Standards apply to the backup of data from all University systems.

3.2.2 Recovery

All backups of critical data must be tested periodically to ensure that they support full system recovery. System Administrators must document all restore procedures and test them annually. Backup media must be retrievable within 24 hours, 365 days a year. Standards apply to the recovery of data from all University systems.

3.2.3 Off-Site Storage

Off-site is synonymous with "out of the building". The off-site storage location must provide evidence of adequate fire and theft protection and environmental controls.

3.2.4 Data Retention

Custodians of University data are responsible for defining and documenting the length of time data must be retained. The retention period, legal requirements, responsible parties, and source of legal requirement should be specified. System Administrators are responsible for ensuring that these requirements are implemented.

3.2.5 Business Continuity

A Business Continuity Plan should be prepared and tested for all of the University's major corporate systems. The testing strategy to be implemented will be influenced by the importance of the system to the University's business operations and the ability to recover the system within agreed timeframes.

A copy of each plan should be stored offsite in a secure manner to ensure that the plan can be implemented in the case of a disaster. A review of any major disruption to information services should be undertaken to identify the cause of the disruption and where appropriate adjust the plan and/or procedures to minimise the risk of the event occurring again.

3.2.6 Security

All major information assets must be accounted for and have a nominated custodian who is responsible for the implementation and management of this policy in relation to those assets.

Physical Security

Access to secure areas, including computer rooms, the PABX room, network equipment rooms and any associated service facilities, is restricted to authorised University staff, through the use of passwords, locks or access-control devices. All wiring closets must be secured to prevent any damage and to stop unauthorised attempts to connect to data outlets and to prevent snooping.

Data Security

Different types of data require different levels of security. The University classifies data into three categories: Public, Proprietary and Restricted. It is the System Custodian's responsibility to establish authentication and authorisation guidelines for custodial data. Please note that:

- Public data can generally be made available or distributed to the general public;
- Proprietary data is for internal University use and not for external distribution; and
- Restricted (moderately to highly sensitive) data is to be used only by individuals who require it in the course of performing their University responsibilities, or data, which is protected by Federal and/or State legislation. Restricted data can only be deleted with the permission of the System Custodian.

Staff should be aware of their legal and corporate responsibilities concerning inappropriate use, sharing or releasing of information to another party. Any third party receiving proprietary or restricted information must be authorised to do so and that individual or their organisation should have adopted information security measures, which guarantees confidentiality and integrity of that data.

Software Security

Software for the purpose of this policy document is defined as the programs and other operating information used by, installed on, or stored on University owned computer systems or storage media (such as floppy disks, backup tapes, CD-ROM).

To comply with legislation and to ensure ongoing vendor support, the terms and conditions of all licensing agreements must be adhered to. All software and other applicable materials must be licensed (if required) in an appropriate manner.

In order to comply with licensing regulations and to prevent software piracy, the purchasing and licensing of software and other applicable materials should, where appropriate, be carried out through Software Services, ICT Services.

All software, including patches, upgrades or new versions, should be tested, archived and documented before being put into production systems. This transition should be under migration and version control and incorporate change management principles. Control measures should also be in place for maintaining and accessing program and system source libraries.

All operational software should be maintained at current versions or at a level supported by the supplier. Processes should be in place to ensure that information systems development and operational environments for critical systems are separated logically from each other.

Software development policies and procedures should be co-developed by ICT Services and the appropriate University element, especially for use by project development teams consisting of staff from IT and business areas. In particular, attention should be paid to ensure that the security controls of audit trails and activity logs are built into applications for the validation of data and internal processing.

Internet Security

Computer devices connected to the Internet face significant risk of unauthorised access, or inappropriate use. A number of measures should be taken to mitigate this risk. Standards apply to all Internet capable devices requiring protection.

Mobile Equipment/Wireless Devices Security

With the proliferation of mobile and wireless devices throughout the University, it is essential that special usage policies and procedures be developed governing the use and access of such devices (e.g. Palm Pilots, mobile phones, Laptops). In particular, the University should ensure that the physical security and use of INS assets and the sensitivity of information access are clearly addressed in this usage policy.

4.0 Security Breach Notification & Reporting

4.1 Security Breaches

A security breach is defined as any action or event in contravention to the provisions of this Information Security Policy; actions or events that contravene the provisions of policy established by organisations of which Griffith University is a member (eg. AUSCERT, QUESTnet, AARNet); and/or actions or events deemed a security breach by State or Federal Police organisations.

The guidelines listed under "notification" below, should be applied during the course of an actual or potential security breach.

4.2 Notification of a Security Breach

The following steps are listed in the order that they should be taken. Once a breach is confirmed, the responsible officer should take these steps as urgently as possible. If a particular step is not appropriate to the breach, then the officer should ignore it and move to the next step.

- a) The Director, ICT Services should be notified immediately.
- b) If the security breach involves a possible breach of State, Federal or International law, then the Director, ICT Services or delegate will notify Queensland Police Service or Australian Federal Police (as appropriate), as soon as is practicable.
- c) If a University element is involved, then that element should be notified as soon as possible, preferably via the Head of Element or approved element representative.
- d) If an organisation or person external to the University is involved in any capacity, then the Australian Computer Emergency Response Team (AUSCERT) should be contacted.
- e) If an organisation or person external to the University is involved as a potential victim, then that organisation or person should be advised as soon as possible.

4.3 Reporting a Security Breach

The person authorised by the Director, ICT Services, to carry out the technical investigation of a security breach must submit a report to the Head of element outlining the following details (where possible):

1. General nature of the security breach;
2. General classification of people involved in the security breach, (such as external client, privileged staff member);
3. Computer systems involved in the security breach;
4. Details of the security breach;
5. Impact of the security breach;
6. Unrealised, potential consequences of the security breach;
7. Possible courses of action to prevent a repetition of the security breach;
8. Side effects, if any, of those courses of action.

Where appropriate, remedial action should be taken on the basis of this report. In particular, significant IT risks should be identified as part of the University's Risk Management Plan and Disaster Recovery Plan.

4.4 Unauthorised Access Attempts

This includes anything from harmless exploration to hacking in order to gain access to information. Unauthorised access also includes gaining access to computer systems for future use (e.g. extortion).

All unauthorised access attempts must be noted and logged. The Audit Trail/System Access Log must be reviewed regularly, exception reports generated and inspected by the System Administrator and appropriate action taken. A copy of the report of unauthorised access attempts must be produced and kept for future reference.

5.0 Enforcement

The University considers any breach of security to be a serious offence and reserves the right to copy and examine files or information resident on or transmitted via the University's information technology resources. Students deemed to be in breach of security are subject to disciplinary action. Staff deemed to be in breach of security are subject to disciplinary action available under industrial provisions. Offenders may also be prosecuted under State, Federal and International laws. The Division of Information Services may temporarily remove material from websites or close any account that is endangering the running of the system or that is being reviewed for inappropriate or illegal use.

6.0 Awareness and Communication

It is essential that all aspects of information security, including confidentiality, privacy and procedures relating to system access, should be incorporated into formal staff induction procedures and conveyed to existing staff on a regular basis.

Each employee, on commencement of employment, should be made aware that they must not divulge any information that they may have access to in the normal course of their employment. Staff must also be made aware that they should not seek access to data that is not required as part of their normal duties.

System Administrators should be properly trained in all aspects of system security prior to supporting these systems.

Notes
