

Guidelines on Revising a Thesis into a Monograph

A PhD thesis is a sophisticated test of research skills and is written for a very specific audience: your supervisor and examiners. On the surface, a PhD may resemble a book but the accepted language, format and mode of argument are generally very different and most theses need to be significantly reworked before they are suitable for publication as a monograph for a much broader international audience.

The following are general guidelines for reworking doctoral research into a monograph and should be read in conjunction with your external reader reports and our general author submission guidelines.

Readership

- Always keep your audience in mind and write for the widest potential readership, not necessarily only for those working on similar research. Do not assume all of your readers will be as familiar with the literature as you are.
- Be ambitious and aim to write the book you would most want to read about your subject. Think about the academic books you have found most engaging and what made them appealing to you as a reader and a researcher.

Style

- Aim for a coherent narrative flow. A thesis often has a stop-start approach that is not appropriate for a monograph. You may want to think about restructuring the text to foreground your key arguments and highlight the contribution your research is making to the field.
- Focus on the original aspects of your research. Whereas a thesis should demonstrate your abilities as a researcher, a monograph should clearly communicate the key ideas and insights to come out of your research.
- Your prose should be confident and clear and written in a simple and direct way.
- Typically we would expect authored books to be between 80,000 and 120,000 words in length including all references. You may wish to keep this in mind when planning revisions.

Reference to thesis origins

It is absolutely essential that you remove reference to the fact your book is based on doctoral research throughout the text and especially in the acknowledgements, preliminary pages and introduction. Any reference to the terms below will mean your book is categorised as a 'dissertation' by third parties, such as library book supply companies, despite the significant revisions you have made, and this will have a serious and detrimental impact on sales of your book. You must ensure these terms are removed or rephrased:

Thesis; Supervisor; Dissertation; PhD; Doctorate

Opening Chapter

This is the reader's introduction to your work and way into your central argument. It should be written in an accessible style and be as compelling and engaging as possible to catch readers' attention. The introduction should clearly signpost where the book is going.

Literature Review

Cut out or significantly reduce your review of the literature and instead cite relevant literature at appropriate points throughout the text.

Methodology

Substantial sections on methodology should be removed. Any pertinent points should be included in either: the introduction, opening chapter, or alongside your results.

Notes and References

- It is our house style to use footnotes rather than endnotes and these should be kept to a minimum, with your key arguments presented in the main text.
- Ensure a consistent referencing style is used throughout the book. We recommend OSCOLA.
- We do not require a bibliography to be included. If you do choose to include a bibliography we ask that this is included in the overall word count.

Copyright

Remember that you will need permission to quote copyright material or use illustrations under copyright. Please refer to our '[Elgar Copyright Policy](#)' and '[Author Hub](#)' for more detailed guidance on this point.

Review before submission

It can be very helpful to have chapters read informally by colleagues or other contacts to get an external perspective on your book as it progresses.

If you are not a native English speaker we would strongly recommend that you ask a native speaker with expertise in your field to check the final manuscript before submission.

Where publication is required for award of your PhD

We are unable to publish theses in their raw form, or to publish books which explicitly refer to themselves as being developed from PhD projects within the preliminary pages. With this in mind, please note that if your institution requires your thesis to be formally published as part of the examination process then this is not a function we can undertake.

Exclusivity

Unfortunately it can be difficult to make a thesis-based book commercially successful, even when the author has reworked the manuscript carefully. Please consider whether your university will require you to deposit a copy of the thesis in a freely-accessible repository, and whether it may be possible to apply for an embargo if so. (We would require an embargo period which lasts through until at least 18 months from the date of publication of the monograph.) We will not be able to consider your book if the thesis itself is freely available online.

Additional materials

Additional materials that will help us to make a well informed judgement on your proposal include: a PDF copy of your original thesis and a copy of your examiners' reports (if you have access to these).