

# **Article-based PhDs: Guidelines for the College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Celtic Studies**

## **General comment**

The standard of scholarly achievement and professionalism expected of an article-based PhD is identical to that expected of the traditional monograph-type thesis. An article-based PhD will be no less rigorous academically than a monograph and should still not exceed 80,000 words as per university norms. Reference also section 6.2.6 'Article-based' PhD in the university guidelines for research degree programmes; [Guidelines](#)

## **Relevance to disciplines within College**

It is recognised that article-based PhDs are not equally relevant to all disciplines within the College. Certain disciplines or sub-disciplines (for example Physical Geography, Archaeology, Psychology, Social Work and Education) are more likely to encounter greater take-up of this format among their doctoral students. The traditional monograph route is the preferred option in Humanities, Languages, Literatures & Cultures and in many sub-disciplines of Sociology & Political Science and of Geography and Archaeology. There is no obligation on any discipline within the College to promote the article-based format over the traditional monograph format. The decision of a student to avail of this format should be made early in the PhD in accordance with the norms of the discipline and with the agreement of the supervisor(s) and GRC.

## **The number and status of publications**

A minimum number of substantial articles, based on the disciplinary norm, should make up the core of an article-based PhD thesis:

- In Geography, a minimum of three articles should make up the core, where the PhD candidate is the primary author.
- In Archaeology, a minimum of three articles should make up the core, where the PhD student is the single author.
- In both Geography and Archaeology, two of the articles should have been accepted for publication by internationally peer-reviewed journals relevant to the discipline in question, with the third submitted for review.
- In Psychology, **three articles should make up the core of the PhD, with 2 of these accepted for publication and the third submitted for review.**
- In Education, a minimum of two accepted substantial single-authored articles are required.
- In Political Science and Sociology, a minimum of three accepted articles are required.

Further articles may also be submitted. In the case of jointly-authored articles (for instance, in Geography), the applicant should be the primary author and must be capable of demonstrating that he/she made a substantial contribution to them. These articles should have either been published or have been accepted for publication by highly-ranked peer-reviewed journals relevant to the discipline in question. In the case of material accepted for publication, the student's supervisor/GRC must be able to verify that the manuscript has passed all stages of the peer review process.

The PhD thesis containing these articles should make a coherent and substantial contribution to knowledge in a specific field in order to qualify for award of the PhD degree.

In the case of jointly-authored papers, the candidate's contribution to the authorship and content of the papers must be made explicit in the other required material for PhD thesis.

It is the responsibility of the supervisor and GRC to sign-off that the candidate's work is worthy of PhD thesis for examination (EOG-020 Approval for Examination form). In other words, the supervisor and GRC should have reached a judgement that, in their view, the student's work is of the standard to merit the award of a PhD. During the *viva*, close attention should be paid to the nature and quality of the articles, and in the case of jointly-authored material, to the student's role in it. It must be emphasised that the examiners retain final judgment on the quality of the thesis.

### **Required material**

In addition to the articles, the PhD thesis must include the following, subject to disciplinary norms:

- a thorough critical review of previous scholarship and literature on the topic;
- a chapter locating the candidate's work within the existing scholarship, which will explicitly articulate the key research question(s) addressed by the candidate and the chosen methodology/theoretical framework, as appropriate;
- a concluding chapter, which draws the substantive material in the articles together so as to demonstrate their coherence and the full extent of their contribution to knowledge;
- in the case of jointly-authored papers (for instance, in Geography), the candidate's contribution to the authorship and content must be made explicit in this section;
- a full bibliography.

### **Supporting or supplementary material:**

As appropriate to the discipline, the PhD thesis may be supported by appendices consisting of, but not limited to, the following kinds of information:

- Databases of key evidence
- Lists and examples of archival material consulted
- Research questionnaires, such as those used in the Social Sciences
- Statistical analyses of full data-sets

Such detail is often inappropriate in the context of a journal, where word-counts are at a premium, but are essential in the context of a PhD thesis for a PhD.