



# Lay Summary in Theses

## Purpose of Guidance

To provide guidance on the Postgraduate Degree and Assessment Regulations that require the inclusion of a lay summary in the thesis.

## Scope: Guidance is not Mandatory

Postgraduate research students, supervisors of postgraduate research students and academic and support staff involved in postgraduate research thesis submission.

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## Document control

Dates	Approved: Aug 2012	Starts: 01.08.12	Equality impact assessment: N/A	Amendments: 11.12.14 5.05.16 25.07.19	Next Review: 2021/22
Approving authority	Researcher Experience Committee				
Consultation undertaken	Covered by annual academic regulations review				
Section responsible for guidance maintenance & review	Academic Policy Officer with responsibility for PGR in Academic Services				
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	Postgraduate Degree Regulations: <a href="http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/">www.drps.ed.ac.uk/</a> Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees: <a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/assessment-regulations">www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/assessment-regulations</a> Standards for the Format and Binding of a Thesis: <a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/thesisbinding.pdf">www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/thesisbinding.pdf</a>				
UK Quality Code	UK Quality Code: Research Degrees				
Guidance superseded by this guidance	Previous versions of this guidance				
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email <a href="mailto:Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk">Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk</a> or telephone 0131 650 2138.				
Keywords	Lay summary, thesis submission, final thesis submission				



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A lay summary is intended to facilitate knowledge exchange, public engagement and outreach. It should be written in simple, non-technical terms that are easily understandable by a lay audience, who may be non-professional, non-scientific and outside the research area.

Abstracts, particularly in science, engineering, medicine and veterinary medicine, may be highly technical or contain scientific language that is not easily understandable to readers outside the research area. Therefore, the lay summary is supplementary to the abstract.

The lay summary should be incorporated at the beginning of each copy of the thesis submitted for assessment, and must be included in the final bound version of the submitted thesis. Students should use the University lay summary form. The lay summary is not included in the word-count. Lay summaries should conform to the requirements of the Standards for the Format and Binding of a Thesis.

Students may seek advice on the lay summary at any point from their Principal Supervisor.

Support and advice on training is available from the Institute for Academic Development.  
[www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/institute-academic-development](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/institute-academic-development).

Download the lay summary form:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/thesislaysummary.docx>

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