

Guidelines for the Thesis drafting Ph.D. program in Life Sciences and Biotechnology

Approved by the College September 4th 2024

General considerations

1. A doctoral thesis is in all respects a publication and must possess all the characteristics of a publication: it must have a structure and follow Copyright.
2. The thesis is an original paper that must present in a coherent and structured way the research project developed during the three-year doctoral period by the candidate. The results of the research must be presented according to a defined scheme (introduction to the scientific problem, purpose of the research, results of the research activity, critical discussion of the results with respect to the state of the art of scientific literature). Scientific publications or manuscripts intended for publication may be included in the paper provided they are relevant to the subject of the doctoral thesis. If articles accepted or published by journals are included, the publishers must be asked in advance, and subsequently granted, for authorization to publish.
3. The thesis must be written in English and accompanied by a short abstract of the contents (maximum 1500 characters) written in English, to be published on the Doctorate website.

Thesis format and organization:

PhD thesis writing must follow the guidelines below, choosing between **Option 1** and **Option 2**.

Option 1: Original full text

The thesis must contain the following chapters:

- Front page
- Dedication (facultative)
- Table of contents (indicating the first page of each chapter and eventual subchapters)
- Abstract
- Abbreviations
- Introduction
- Aims
- Materials and Methods
- Results
- Discussion
- References
- Acknowledgements



Option 2: Compilation of research articles

This option is applicable if the candidate is among the authors of submitted/published works resulting from the main focus of the Ph.D. project. The papers must be research articles (submitted, accepted, published or in preprint - not in preparation). The contribution of the candidate must be clearly detailed in the thesis.

The thesis must contain the following chapters:

- Front page
- Dedication (facultative)
- Table of contents (indicating the first page of each chapter and eventual subchapters)
- Abstract of the research
- Abbreviations
- Chapter 1: General introduction
- Chapter 2: Aims of the research
- Chapter 3 4, etc.: all these chapters must be written in the form of a research article. Each chapter includes a submitted or a published one (given the assumption detailed above), in the case publisher's authorization has been requested and obtained. Otherwise, they must be slight or intense re-elaborations of research articles: the student should modify, expand, update the published manuscripts and/or make them more consistent with the rest of the thesis where needed. In the first page of each chapter, please specify if the article has already been published and clearly explain the role of the candidate in the work
- Following Chapters: all the work not included in submitted/published paper. It is strongly recommended to use the same "article-like style as above
- Last Chapter: Conclusive general discussion commenting on all research articles reported in the thesis
- References for the introduction and the conclusive discussion
- Acknowledgements

Note: PDF of publications from collaborations/side-projects may be added at the end of the thesis as appendices

Additional remarks for both options:

- **Cover:** the cover refers to the external binding used to hold the pages of a thesis together and usually contains the main details of the title page. Theses should be bound in portrait format. Please use the provided cover template. Optional: add a graphical abstract descriptive of your work as indicated (**graphical abstract representative and relevant to the work**)
- **Frontpage:** The front page refers to the first page of the thesis and should bear the basic details of the work to be submitted. Please use the provided frontpage template.
- **Abstract:** Abstracts should be a maximum 300 words in length.
- **Paper format:** Use the standard B5 format (176 × 250 mm) and set the margins as: 2.5 cm left, 2 cm top, bottom and right.
- **Size & line spacing:** The text should be character size 11 with single spaced lines. Text must be justified. Paragraphs must be separated by 12 points above and 6 points below.
- **Font:** Your choice between Garamond, Times New Roman, Calibri or Arial.
- **Tables & pictures:** Insert tables, graphs and other images directly where they belong in the text.



- **Pagination:** The text should be paginated throughout (including notes, bibliographies, annexes), with page numbers in the footnote. The page numbering (Arabic) should start with page 1 on the first page of the Abstract.
- **Table of contents:** Use capital letters, highlighting or indenting to differentiate between main and sub-chapters.
- **Citation Style:** References should be in the BioMed Central / Pubmed / NLM styles.
- **Appendices:** The appendices are used to present additional data, technical explanations, maps, drawings, and other supplementary information to the main thesis. Each appendix should begin on a new page. If the thesis consists of multiple appendices, each one should be lettered according to its appearance in the text ('Appendix A', 'Appendix B', etc.). Page numbering for the thesis will include the appendices section.

Obtaining the title of "Doctor of Research"

The Doctoral College appoints the Evaluating Committee for the awarding of the title, observing in this regard the provisions of Article 5 of the Regulations for the PhD courses of the University of Insubria. (<https://www.uninsubria.it/files/regolamento-i-corsi-di-dottorato-di-ricercapdf>).

The thesis will be evaluated by a Committee composed by: a number of external examiners normally equal to one examiner for each candidate indicated among the External Reviewers.

The examiners will receive a full copy of all the candidates' thesis. Members of the Evaluating Committee unable to attend may participate in the final discussion by videoconference.

The final assessment of the dissertation will contain an analytical evaluation of the candidate's original contribution, the methodologies used, the results obtained and the future prospects of the discussed research, in textual form (max one page). To this will be added a synthetic assessment:

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Satisfactory
- Passing grade

For anything not covered herein, the provisions of the Regulations for University Doctoral Research Courses shall apply.

