

Article-based PhD Thesis

FASS PhD students from the departments indicated below may choose to submit an article-based PhD thesis as an alternative route to completing a PhD thesis. This requires the approval of their Thesis Advisor, Thesis Committee members and the Head of Department/Programme or nominee.

- (1) Economics
- (2) English, Linguistics & Theatre Studies – only students in Linguistics
- (3) Geography
- (4) Japanese Studies
- (5) Malay Studies
- (6) Philosophy
- (7) Political Science
- (8) Psychology
- (9) Social Work
- (10) Sociology & Anthropology - only students in Sociology
- (11) South Asian Studies

Students will be required to submit the following:

- (a) Two to three journal articles that fulfill the following conditions:
 - (i) the student must be the lead author on the articles;
 - (ii) the journal articles must be based on work carried out since the student's period of registration as a doctoral candidate at NUS, and relate directly to the PhD research in the Department/Programme in which the student is registered;
 - (iii) at least one of the articles should be at least formally accepted (if not in press or published) at the time of submission, and the other article(s) should be in a publishable format, appropriate for submission to a stated journal; and
 - (iv) targeted journals must be reputable international journals, agreed beforehand with the student's thesis committee and endorsed by the Head of Department/Programme or nominee.
- (b) An analytical commentary of 8,000-12,000 words that fulfills NUS formatting requirements and comprises:
 - (i) a title page;
 - (ii) an abstract of up to 300 words;
 - (iii) an introductory section, highlighting the current state of knowledge and understanding in the field, identifying the research questions that have guided the PhD research, and indicating how the publications submitted contribute to an existing body of knowledge/scholarship;
 - (iv) an overview of and justification for the methodology/methods adopted in the research;
 - (v) a critical account of how the publications submitted address the guiding research questions and together make a coherent and significant contribution to knowledge and scholarship;
 - (vi) an indication of potential future research direction/questions in the field; and
 - (vii) where the portfolio includes jointly authored publications, a statement explaining the student's contribution to those papers.

Students are required to choose **one** of the following two formats for the thesis:

Format A in which the analytical commentary will form the main body of the thesis, with appendices comprising full copies of the journal articles, OR

Format B in which the publications are placed as chapters within the structure of the thesis. The thesis must be presented in a consistent format, with material drawn from the journal articles but reworked to be integrated into the main body of the text such that the complete thesis reads seamlessly, as with a monograph thesis.

It is important that students check with their home department on the specific format required as well as any additional departmental requirements. For example, some departments may require two journal articles while others may require three; some departments may require that you decide on which path to take much earlier on in your candidature.

Other Requirements

A student opting for the article-based PhD thesis route must have met, in full, the same coursework and Qualifying Examination (QE) requirements of the degree as students on the regular thesis pathway. In other words, **all other requirements for the PhD degree will remain**. There will be no change in the coursework requirements, or in the examination process.

The work submitted under the article-based PhD thesis route should clearly meet the standard requirements of a PhD by thesis, in terms of language, coherence and most importantly, contribution to the discipline. The article-based PhD thesis will require the same amount and standard of research as a PhD by Thesis and is in no way expected to be an easier option. It might in fact be more difficult as it will have to be assessed by both journal reviewers and thesis examiners. The successful publication of even three (or more) articles will not in and of itself be sufficient to guarantee that the thesis will be passed by the examiners. Students will still be expected to make revisions to the articles and commentary if required by the examiners, even if the articles have been accepted by/published in journals.

Other Important Points to Note

- Students will have to decide on whether to complete the normal PhD by thesis or one based on articles, latest within a year of passing the PhD QE using the form available [here](#).
- The same journal article cannot appear in more than one thesis, even if there is equal co-authorship of the article.
- All copyright and permission issues must be resolved prior to uploading of the thesis. As per normal, students have to use the write-up in the [Electronic Thesis/Dissertation \(“Thesis”\) Submission form, NUSGS.008/21](#), to seek formal approval with the respective journal editors to reproduce the articles.
- Students can subsequently choose to opt-out of either route, but must do so before the examiners are nominated.