

# School of Physiotherapy The University of Melbourne

## The Seminar Program: Progress, Conversion and Completion Processes for Masters by Research candidates

### **Seminar program**

The Seminar Program, held fortnightly on a Tuesday at 4:15pm, is a forum for Masters by Research and PhD candidates to present their Progress, Confirmation, Conversion and Completion Seminars. The audience will consist of the School of Physiotherapy Research Higher Degree candidates, staff, the candidate's supervisors and members of the School's Research Committee. Following each Seminar, a social gathering with wine and cheese will occur. Each candidate will be advised of the date of their seminar by email from the Postgraduate Team Leader. The candidate should then advise their supervisors of this date. In addition, it is a School requirement that all Research Higher Degree candidates attend the Seminar Program. Full time students are expected to attend every Seminar and part-time candidates to attend on a pro-rata basis. Attendance will be recorded by the Postgraduate Team Leader.

### **Four Month Progress Report and Seminar**

The progress of Masters by Research candidates will be undertaken in two stages. First, following 4 months (or part-time equivalent) of candidature, candidates are required to complete the School of Physiotherapy Progress Report Form and submit it to the Postgraduate Team Leader. The Postgraduate Team Leader will notify the candidate of the submission date of their Progress Report via email. The Progress Report Form is available from the School of Physiotherapy website: (<http://www.physioth.unimelb.edu.au/resources/pgrad/MResforms.html>). Two members of the School of Physiotherapy Research Committee will provide constructive and timely feedback regarding the report to the candidate. The candidate should discuss this feedback with their supervisor/s and make adjustments to their proposed study as required.

At 6 months (or part-time equivalent), candidates are required to present their Progress Seminar and discuss their research with their Progress Committee. The Progress Committee will consist of at least 3 members of the Research Committee. The Postgraduate Team Leader will notify the candidate of the date of their seminar and the composition of their Progress Committee via email. If the candidate has any objections to the composition of their Committee, they must put their concerns in writing to the Postgraduate Team Leader within two days of notification. Candidates will give a 20 minute oral presentation, in the Seminar Program. In the presentation, the candidate should justify and detail studies which have been undertaken and those that are planned. Following the oral presentation the candidate will answer questions from the audience. In addition, they will meet with their Progress Committee to discuss their proposed research project. During the presentation and discussion, the Progress Committee will assess the feasibility, format and resource requirements of the project and may offer suggestions towards its successful completion. Any suggestions made by the Progress Committee must be documented by the candidate in point form (maximum of one page) and copies submitted to the student's Supervisors, the Progress Committee and the Postgraduate Team Leader. Following the seminar, the Progress Committee will make a recommendation to the Head of School regarding the progress of the candidate.

### **Conversion from Masters by Research to PhD**

Candidates who have completed 6 – 12 months of a Masters by Research degree (or part time equivalent) may be encouraged to apply to convert to a PhD. Students must notify the Postgraduate Team Leader of their intention to convert in their first Progress Report.

Candidates must obtain an "*Application for conversion from the Degree of Masters (by Research) to Doctor of Philosophy*" from the School of Graduate Studies. The candidate should discuss their Conversion with their supervisor and is required to complete the same process as a PhD Confirmation.

This involves submission of a written report, verbal presentation and an oral defense of their research. The Postgraduate Team Leader will notify the candidate of the date of their seminar and composition of their Conversion Committee via email. Candidates are required to bring their completed Conversion Application to their seminar so that it can be signed off by the Conversion Committee.

More information and the application form are available on the SGS website at:  
<http://www.sgs.unimelb.edu.au/phd/enrolcandid/phd/bk/admission/transferrmrs.html>  
<http://www.sgs.unimelb.edu.au/currentpg/forms/>

At least one week prior to the Conversion seminar, candidates must submit a written report to the Postgraduate Team Leader, which supports their progress. The report should be no more than 3000 words. The report should be in a minimum font size of 11, and include:

- a concise statement of the research question(s),
- a critical summary and analysis of relevant literature,
- an explanation of the conceptual framework being used and/or a summary of experimental methods and equipment requirements,
- a summary of progress to date including preliminary data, resources developed etc,
- an argument for the relevance and importance of the study,
- proposed schedule and timeline for the phases of the study, based on date for submission,
- a brief bibliography,
- a list of publications produced or presentations made during the candidature

Candidates will then give a 20 minute oral presentation, in the Seminar Program. In the presentation, the candidate should justify and detail studies which have been undertaken and those that are planned. Following the oral presentation the candidate will answer questions from the audience. In addition, they will meet with their Conversion Committee to provide an oral defense of the proposed research project. The Conversion Committee will consist of up to 4 members of the Research Committee. During the presentation and oral defense, the Conversion Committee will assess the feasibility, format and resource requirements of the project and may offer suggestions towards its successful completion. Any suggestions made by the Conversion Committee must be documented by the candidate in point form (maximum of one page) and copies submitted to the student's Supervisors, the Conversion Committee and the Postgraduate Team Leader. Following the defense, the Conversion Committee will make a recommendation to the Head of School regarding the progress of the candidate.

### **Completion Seminars**

It is a School of Physiotherapy requirement that all Masters by Research candidates give a completion seminar before submitting their thesis. The Postgraduate Team Leader will notify the candidate of the date of their seminar via email. The 20 minute presentation should detail the methodologies used and the results of the research undertaken during the candidature. In addition, candidates are required to provide the Postgraduate Team Leader with brief abstract (no more than 1 page) of their thesis and hard copies of any publications that have arisen from their research at least one week in advance of their seminar.