

PGR tips: Looking for hints and tips to help you with writing up?

You can't start the process of writing up too early. If you've structured your work towards this ultimate goal from day one, it is a much less daunting task. Have a look at the checklist below to see how you're doing. If you can tick more than half you're well on your way. If you haven't started yet why not start today!

Getting started

- Break your research down into manageable chunks and make a plan of all the sections and chapters in the thesis. Break these into sections and keep breaking it down until you are almost at the paragraph level
- Have you checked your plan with your supervisor? They will be your best source of support
- You could structure your paper and computer filing systems in the same way as your thesis by creating folders for each chapter
- Have you checked your institution's requirements for length and style etc?
- Remember to back up your work regularly!

If you want some ideas on thesis style and structure why not:

- Visit your university library to find other theses in your subject area
- Visit the Electronic Theses Online Service (EThOS) project website at www.ethos.ac.uk to search for and access online theses (service due to go live mid 2007)
- Ask your supervisor and other academics what they look for when they are examining PhD theses
- Ask your colleagues, especially those who have recently completed a doctorate, to review your thesis or a chapter for content, and ask other friends to proof-read
- Have a look at the writing up section in 'The Unwritten Rules of PhD Research' by Gordon Rugg and Marian Petre (ISBN 0-335-21344-8)

When reviewing your drafts ask yourself the following:

- Does the content match the title?
- Are important points emphasised enough?
- Is the content within each section appropriate?
- Is there a logical sequence?
- Are information sources acknowledged?
- Do the conclusions relate to the objectives?
- Is the meaning of each sentence clear - or open to interpretation?
- Can long sentences be broken down?

For more tips on writing up visit www.grad.ac.uk/writingup

If you have a question on writing up or another topic relating to your research why not Ask The Experts!

July 2006 is the UK GRAD Ask the Experts Month. Throughout the month we will be holding a series of online chats and panel Q&A sessions on a variety of topics relating to your postgraduate research and beyond. Writing up will be the topic from 3-7 July. Find out more at www.grad.ac.uk/asktheexperts