

Converting a Thesis to a Book

Read our advice on how to create a publication from your academic research.

Most academic research outputs will need significant re-working in order to produce publications that will be attractive to potential purchasers. As a result, publishing a 100,000 word PhD thesis in its original form would be too costly and have too limited a readership to be viable.

Here are some factors to consider before considering whether to re-work your thesis as a book for publication:

- Do you have sufficient time around your other commitments to invest in the project? The process of conversion can often take years and other demands on your time should be borne in mind when committing yourself to such a major investment of time and effort.
- Will the research be appropriate for a lengthy publication, or more suited to a series of journal articles in established journals? The latter have the advantage of being more manageable in terms of the time needed for preparation and journals already have a ready market.
- Is there demand for such a publication in your subject area and how will it stand out against its competitors?
- How will you make your publication appeal to as wide an audience as possible in order to make it viable?
- Is there a clearly defined market with a good spread of individual and institutional purchasers? A realistic idea of sales in the current climate will be needed.
- Will the material have dated by the time the proposed book is published? Publishing projects often take a long time to complete and so you will need to keep up with the latest published material in the field.
- Can you seek advice from academic supervisors or colleagues as to the suitability of the project for publication?
- You should consider ways in which the book can be marketed, such as relevant online forums, review in particular journals, conferences in the field and your own networks of contacts in the field.
- Do you have illustrations that are copyright free or will you need to approach third parties to seek permission?
- Do you have permission to use longer quotations? This will apply if a single quotation is over 400 words or multiple quotations from a single source of over 800 words.
- Other things to consider while preparing a book for publication:
- Try to make it as appealing as possible to readers. This will mean simplifying the methodology and literature review and concentrating on the aspects that will be of interest to readers. Imagine what you would want in a book on this subject and adapt your material accordingly.

- Ensure that there is a logical structure and develop a narrative that will keep your audience interested and want to read the book to the end.
- Make sure that your arguments are clear and do not assume that everyone will have the same level of knowledge, particularly if the topic crosses multidisciplinary boundaries.
- Condense the material so that it is manageable for readers, while retaining the essence of the research.
- Bear in mind that you will have to satisfy the peer reviewers and the Editorial Board that it is a worthy project and your proposal and sample chapter should clearly demonstrate why it should be considered for publication.
- Have you considered all the questions that are likely to be raised in relation to your material? This is especially important when submitting books for review, as any gaps will be highlighted by experts in the field.
- Keep footnotes or endnotes in wherever possible, as it helps readers to see what sources you have used and makes it easier for people to find related material.

Your academic supervisor should be able to offer further advice on the most appropriate means of publication for your thesis. For any enquiries about publishing with the University of Chester Press, please contact [Sarah Griffiths](#), University of Chester Press, Parkgate Road, Chester CH1 4BJ, UK (+44(0)1244 513305).