

GSIR Supervision & Seminar Guide

For Students Enrolled in 2-year Programs in 2026/2027 Academic Year

Updated in September 2026

Completing a Master's Thesis or Research Report is the final academic milestone of the two-year program at the Graduate School of International Relations (GSIR). This handbook provides the necessary academic rules, formatting standards, and practical guidelines to support students from early research design to final document submission.

Table of Contents

Schedule & Deadline for 2-year Program Students Graduating in June 2028	2
1. Academic Principles & Supervision.....	3
1.1. Thesis and Research Report Options	3
1.2. Faculty Consultant and Supervisors, and Advanced Seminars	4
1.3. Academic Integrity and Research Ethics.....	5
1.4. Master's Thesis Requirements	6
1.5. Research Report Requirements	9
2. Formatting & Page Layout Specifications	12
2.1. Basic Page & Layout Specifications	12
2.2. Document Structure & Layout.....	14
2.3. Tables, Figures, and Special Materials	15
2.4. Copyright, Co-Authorship, and Publishing	16
3. Guidance for Research & Project Management	18
3.1. How Research and Writing Interact	18
3.2. Breaking the Project into Small Tasks	18
3.3. Writing for Your Audience	18
3.4. Finding a Peer Feedback Partner	18
3.5. Principles for a Creative Writing Process	18
3.6. Communicating an Academic Argument	19
4. Recommended Reference Manuals	20

Schedule & Deadlines for 2-year Program Students Graduating in June 2028

Dates	Steps	Actions Required
September 28 - 29, 2026	Academic Orientation Sessions - GSIR Academic Orientation - Research Guidance - Maintaining Academic Integrity	- Attend orientation Sessions. - Review faculty introductory materials regarding their research, teaching, and supervision styles.
September 28 - October 12, 2026	Interview with Your Faculty Consultant (c.f. 1.2)	Contact your assigned faculty consultant and have an advisory interview.
September 28 - January 31, 2027	Discussing Your Research Topic with Faculty Members	Meet prospective supervisors during their office hours (or by appointment) to discuss your research proposal.
February 1, 2027	Submission of Application Form for Academic Supervisor, and Tentative Research Title (Form 1)	Submit Form 1 to OAA listing your preferred candidate Supervisors.
Mid-March	The Dean's Office will announce matches.	
March 26, 2027	Submission of Application for Decision of Supervisor and Degree (Form 2)	Submit Form 2 online (with your Supervisor's approval)
Spring Term 2027	Advanced Seminar I	Register for Advanced Seminar I
October 11, 2027 *	Submission of Application for Selection of paper option (Form 3)	Submit Form 3 to OAA stating your choice of Thesis or Research Report.(with your Supervisor's approval) Note: Switching from Research Report to Thesis is not possible after this date; you can still switch from Thesis to Research Report until Dec. 17.
Fall Term 2027	Advanced Seminar II	Register for Advanced Seminar II
December 17, 2027	(If applicable) Submission of Application Form for changing from Thesis to Research Report (Form 4)	If applicable, you may switch from Thesis to Research Report by submitting Form 4 (with Supervisor's approval). Note: Switching from Research Report to Thesis is not possible.
Winter Term 2028	Advanced Seminar III	Register for Advanced Seminar III
By 4:30 p.m., March 21, 2028	Submission of Thesis/ Research Report	Submit Thesis/Research Report electronically.
April 3 - 21, 2028	Thesis Oral Examination Period	
By 4:30 p.m., June 5, 2028	Submission of Final Version of Thesis/ Research Report	Submit Thesis/Research Report (1 unbound copy & electronic copy) to OAA.
June 24, 2028 *	Graduation Day	

* These dates are subject to change.

1. Academic Principles & Supervision

1.1. Thesis and Research Report Options

Both options require solid academic research, clear analysis, and proper citations. However, they differ in their level of detail and originality.

What they have in common

Both a thesis and a research report should follow the same basic research structure:

- Clear research problem and purpose
- Research question(s) and, where appropriate, hypotheses
- Literature review
- Data and methodology
- Conclusion and complete bibliography (references)

Key Differences

Thesis (Higher Academic Standard)

- **Original Contribution:** You must add new insights to your field. This can be new data/findings or a fresh, critical perspective on existing theories.
- **Deeper Analysis:** Requires a strong theoretical framework, a detailed research design, advanced methodology, and a deep discussion of why your findings matter.

Research Report (Practical or Applied Focus)

- **Applied Analysis:** Focuses more on applying existing theories/concepts to analyze a real-world policy, current issue, or a practical case study with business/feasibility solutions with clear policy recommendations.
- **Simpler Scope:** Only requires a lighter theoretical framework and a less extensive literature review compared to a thesis.

Table: Overview of Key Differences between Thesis and Research Report

Paper Option	Thesis	Report
Main Focus	• Original research with independent academic analysis.	• Policy evaluation, applied analysis, or case studies.
Required Credits from Other Courses	• 40 credits	• 44 credits
Examining Body	• Examining Committee (Supervisor + Internal Examiner)	• Supervisor
Defense & Grading	• Thesis Oral Examination required • Grades: High Distinction/ Distinction/ Pass/ Non-Pass (See Section 1.4.2 for details)	• No Oral Examination required • Grades: Pass / Non-Pass (See Section 1.5.2 for details)

1.2. Faculty Consultants and Supervisors, and Advanced Seminars

1.2.1. Faculty Consultants

When you enroll, GSIR assigns you a **Faculty Consultant** to guide your studies until you select your official Supervisor.

- **Faculty Consultant's Role:** Your consultant will help you select Fall/Winter term course selections, identify research areas, and suggest potential supervisors.
- **Advisory Interview:** You must schedule and complete an interview with your Faculty Consultant before the Fall term course registration period ends.
- **Course Approval:** Your Faculty Consultant must approve your course registration for your first two terms. From your third term onward, your Supervisor approves your registrations.

1.2.2. Supervisors

GSIR determines Supervisors for first-year students by the end of the Winter term. Every GSIR student must have a Supervisor. In principle, only full-time GSIR faculty members can serve as Supervisors. Your Supervisor is your primary guide for your academic work and thesis/research report.

- **Advanced Seminars:** Once assigned, you must register for your Supervisor's three Advanced Seminars in consecutive terms: Advanced Seminar I, II, and III (6 total credits).
- **Course Registration Approvals:** Starting in your Spring term, you must consult your Supervisor and obtain their approval when you complete course registration each term.
- **Overall Life and Career Support:** Your Supervisor also assists you with scholarship applications, exchange programs, PhD applications, internships, job searches, and reference letters. They act as the primary coordinator of your academic life at IUJ.

1.2.3. Advanced Seminars (Structure and Schedule)

Advanced Seminars help you formulate research questions, acquire analytical skills, and learn alongside peers. While individual professors may adapt the style, the standard structure across the terms is:

Advanced Seminar I (Spring Term / 2 credits)

- Regular meetings.
- Build core analytical skills for framing research questions.
- Define your thesis or research report topic.
- Prepare your research plan for the summer break.

Advanced Seminar II (Fall Term / 2 credits)

- Regular meetings.
- Refine research questions and make significant writing progress.
- Strengthen technical and analytical skills required for your paper.

Advanced Seminar III (Winter Term / 2 credits)

- Regular meetings focused on finalizing and writing your thesis or research report.

Table: Academic Consultation and Advanced Seminars Schedule

Year & Term	You consult with:	Advanced Seminar
1st year Fall term	Faculty Consultant	None
1st year Winter term	Faculty Consultant	None
1st year Spring term	Supervisor	Advanced Seminar I
2nd year Fall term	Supervisor	Advanced Seminar II
2nd year Winter term	Supervisor	Advanced Seminar III
2nd year Spring term	Supervisor	None

1.2.4. Supervisor Selection

- **Faculty Eligibility:** In principle, only full-time GSIR faculty can serve as Supervisors.
- **Allocation of Supervisors:** While student preferences are respected, the Dean's Office reserves the right to make allocation considering faculty workload and administrative duties.
- **Changing Supervisors:** In principle, you cannot change your Supervisor once assigned. If exceptional circumstances arise, contact your Program Director or the Dean.

1.3. Academic Integrity and Research Ethics

- **Avoid Plagiarism:** Always cite your sources when using ideas, data, or direct quotes from others.
- **Copyright Rules:** Ask for permission if you use full photos, extensive charts, or external testing tools.
- **Compliance with AI Policy:** Students must review and strictly follow the IUJ Generative AI Policy regarding the use of generative AI in research and writing. Unauthorized or improper use of AI tools is considered a breach of academic integrity.

1.4. Master's Thesis Requirements

The examination structures, grading scales, word count rules, and evaluation criteria for the Thesis and the Research Report are distinctly separate. Students must strictly comply with the specific regulations for their chosen option and degree program.

1.4.1. Length of Thesis

- **International Relations Program (IRP):**
 - The main text must be between 10,000 and 25,000 words, including all tables and figures.
 - Footnotes and the bibliography are excluded from the word count.
 - An IRP thesis should closely resemble an academic monograph that supports a specific argument.
- **International Development Program (IDP):**
 - Students must write a quantitative thesis of at least 25 pages, including tables, equations, and figures.

- Footnotes and the bibliography are excluded from the page count.
- An IDP thesis generally corresponds to the level and style of an academic journal article.
- **Public Management and Policy Analysis Program (PMPP):**
 - The main text must be at least 8,000 words (approximately 30 pages).
 - Preliminary pages (e.g., title page, abstract, table of contents, and list of tables) and reference materials (e.g., glossary and appendices) are excluded from the word count.
 - A PMPP thesis should correspond to an academic journal article in the field of public management and policy.
- **Japan-Global Development Program (JGDP):**
 - JGDP students must follow the specific thesis rules of the home program that awards their degree.

What Counts in the Word Count?

- Included in Word Count: Main text body from Chapter 1 (Introduction) through the final chapter (Conclusion), including headings, in-text citations, and tables/figures text.
- Excluded from Word Count: Title Page, Approval Page, Abstract, Acknowledgments, Table of Contents, Lists of Tables/Figures, Footnotes/Endnotes, Appendices, and final Bibliography/References.

1.4.2. Thesis Evaluation Criteria and Grading

A. Examining Committee and Oral Defense

- An Examining Committee consists of two members: the Supervisor and an Examiner (for IRP, IDP, PMPP, and JGDP).
- The committee conducts an oral examination and judges the acceptable quality of the thesis and oral performance based on established criteria.

B. Submission for Oral Examination

- **1 Week Prior:** Show the final draft to your Supervisor at least one week before the submission deadline.
- **Agreement Letter:** Obtain your Supervisor's approval via the online system prior to the deadline.
- **OAA Submission:** Submit the signed Agreement Letter and **an electronic copy** of the complete thesis to OAA by the designated deadline.
- **Distinction Recommendation (24-Hour Rule):** If recommended for Distinction during defense, submit **one additional copy** to OAA for External Examiner dispatch by the designated deadline.

C. Thesis Evaluation Criteria

Thesis is evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Focus/Relevance

- Whether the thesis demonstrates relevance to a research question/problem and argument, and sustains a focused development of the argument throughout the thesis.
- Whether the background research, problem identification, research question and objective are properly and clearly defined.

- Whether the student reviews related literature with a critical understanding of the subject under research.
- 2. Research
 - Whether methodology for achieving properly-identified objectives is carefully selected with appropriate justification and adequacy.
 - Whether the student describes the data and data collection method or process clearly and logically without serious lapses.
 - Whether the research is an original work that contributes to the relevant research area.
- 3. Argument
 - Whether the student shows that he/she possesses the necessary knowledge as a master's candidate in the relevant research area, understands the problem accurately, and demonstrates the ability to solve that problem.
 - Whether the student clearly provides analysis and interpretation of data which support their arguments, examines arguments which run counter to their own, and arrives at some sort of conclusion at the end of their thesis.
 - Whether the student demonstrates critical thinking in his/her research.
- 4. Presentation
 - Whether the thesis is written in appropriate academic English.
 - Whether the format of the thesis includes correct use of citations and construction of a bibliography, etc. that is structured in an appropriate academic style.
 - Whether the student presents the findings correctly, logically, concisely, and appropriately based on the research undertaken by himself/herself.

D. Thesis Grading Categories

- HD (High Distinction):
 - Awarded only for work of superlative quality, worthy of the highest academic grade, demonstrating exceptional originality, research depth, argument, and expression.
 - Must be recommended by the Dean's Office, and evaluated, and approved by an External Examiner.
- D (Distinction):
 - Awarded to a thesis showing outstanding performance across all evaluation criteria, deep literature appreciation, clear capacity for independent research, and publishable quality in internationally refereed journals.
 - Must be recommended by the Dean's Office, and evaluated and approved by an External Examiner.
- P (Pass):
 - Acceptable in its present form or pending minor revisions. The required revisions must be certified by the supervisor or a designated person before final acceptance.
- Referred:
 - Not acceptable in its present form, but acceptable pending major substantive revisions (e.g., rewriting a chapter, reinterpreting data, re-calculating results, or conducting additional research).

- Re-examination Rules: The Examiner must specify required changes in writing. The committee may reconvene for a second oral exam, no later than the end of the spring term.
- NP (Non-Pass):
 - Unacceptable to the discipline even with substantive revisions. The student is notified immediately.

E. Evaluation Criteria for Recommending a Master's Theses for Distinction

To receive a recommendation for Distinction (D) or High Distinction (HD), a thesis must satisfy the following 8 criteria:

1. The research should be an original work making a substantial contribution to the subject under study at publishable quality. It must be logically consistent with no major gaps or omissions.
2. The background research, problem identification, research question and objective must be properly and clearly defined.
3. The author must describe the data and data collection method or process clearly and logically without serious lapses. The methodology for achieving properly identified objectives must be carefully selected with an appropriate justification.
4. The author must review the related literature exceptionally well with critical understanding of the subject under research. It should not omit important references on the subject.
5. There must be rigorous analysis and interpretation of data and clear conclusions.
6. The author must present the findings appropriately, correctly and concisely based on the research undertaken by the author.
7. It must provide, in the case of policy-oriented research, a discussion of current policies and policy implications in line with the chosen policy issues. The policy implications must be consistent with the objectives, methodology, results of the analysis, and findings.
8. The overall presentation of the research work must be impressive with scientific research and clear writing.

Depending on the thesis' level of satisfying the criteria mentioned above, the external examiner may recommend the thesis to be awarded either "Distinction" or "High Distinction". High Distinction is awarded only if the research work is of exceptionally high quality (c.f. [Section 1.4.2.D](#)). The external examiner can also reject both options if they are not satisfied with the quality of the research.

F. External Examiner System for Theses Recommended for Distinction

- If the Examining Committee recommends the thesis for Distinction, the thesis will be evaluated by the selected external examiner.
- All External Examiners are nominated by the Dean's Office.
- The External Examiner's report is final. If the External Examiner rejects both options (distinction/high distinction), the thesis paper retains "Pass" evaluation.

G. Final Version Submission

- Submit one unbound hard copy of the final version to OAA by the designated deadline.

- Students are responsible for all printing and binding costs, including the hard copy required for preservation in the IUJ Library.

1.5. Research Report Requirements

1.5.1. Length of Research Report

- **International Relations Program (IRP):**
 - The main text must be between 5,000 and 8,000 words, including all tables and figures.
 - Footnotes and the bibliography are excluded from the word count.
- **International Development Program (IDP):**
 - Students opting for the research report must produce an essay—either quantitative or qualitative—of at least 4,000 words, including tables, equations, and figures.
 - Footnotes and the bibliography are excluded from the word count.
- **Public Management and Policy Analysis Program (PMPP):**
 - The research report must be at least 4,000 words, including tables and figures.
 - Preliminary pages (e.g., title page, abstract, table of contents, and list of tables) and reference materials (e.g., glossary and appendices) are excluded from the word count.
- **Japan-Global Development Program (JGDP):**
 - JGDP students must follow the specific research report rules of the home program that awards their degree.

What Counts in the Word Count?

- Included in Word Count: Main text body from Chapter 1 (Introduction) through the final chapter (Conclusion), including headings, in-text citations, and tables/figures text.
- Excluded from Word Count: Title Page, Approval Page, Abstract, Acknowledgments, Table of Contents, Lists of Tables/Figures, Footnotes/Endnotes, Appendices, and final Bibliography/References.

1.5.2. Research Report Evaluation Criteria and Grading

Unlike a thesis, a Research Report does not require a formal Examining Committee or an oral defense. It is evaluated solely by the Primary Supervisor with a grade of Pass (P) or Non-Pass (NP).

A. The Evaluation Criteria for Research Reports

1. **Research Question / Focus / Relevance:** Clearly defined research questions and objectives, maintaining a focused argument throughout.
2. **Data and Evidence:** Diligent collection and logical description/interpretation of data and evidence without serious lapses.
3. **Literature Review:** Critical understanding and review of related literature to justify the study.
4. **Reasoning and Writing:** Clear analysis supporting arguments, examination of counter-arguments, sound conclusions, correct academic formatting, and proper citation/bibliography construction.

B. Submission for Research Report Evaluation

- Submit the manuscript to your Supervisor and upload an electronic copy to the designated network folder by the deadline for an OAA plagiarism check.

C. Final Version Submission for Research Report Evaluation

- Submit one unbound hard copy of the final version to OAA by the designated deadline.
- Students are responsible for all printing and binding costs, including the hard copy required for preservation in the IUJ Library.

2. Formatting & Page Layout Specifications

This section outlines the mandatory layout and formatting rules for your thesis or research report. All components—including text, tables, figures, footnotes, and appendices—must strictly comply with these specifications to ensure formal binding and long-term archival quality.

2.1. Basic Page & Layout Specifications

2.1.1. Page Size and Paper Requirements

- Paper Size: Standard A4 size (21.0 cm x 29.7 cm).
- Paper Quality: High-quality, durable white paper (at least 75–80 gsm).
- Print Quality: Clear, high-resolution printing in either color or black-and-white. Ensure all text, tables, and visual materials are sharp and fully legible without fading.

2.1.2. Margin Specifications (Strictly Enforced)

All pages must adhere strictly to the following minimum margin settings. These margins provide the necessary space for physical binding along the left edge.

- Top Margin: Minimum 4.0 cm
- Left Margin (Binding Side): Minimum 4.0 cm
- Right Margin: Minimum 2.5 cm
- Bottom Margin: Minimum 2.5 cm

Important Notes on Margins:

1. **Software Settings:** Ensure your software (e.g., Microsoft Word) is set to Centimeters (cm), not inches. (*Note: 4.0 cm ≈ 1.57 inches; 2.5 cm ≈ 0.98 inches*).
2. **Page Numbers:** Page numbers must appear outside the text block but must remain at least 2.5 cm from the page edge.
3. **Landscape Pages:** Wide tables or figures placed in landscape mode must retain the portrait-oriented margins relative to the physical page, and the page number must remain in the standard portrait position.

2.1.3. Font and Line Spacing

Font Style and Size

- Body Text Font: Standard readable fonts such as Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri. Use a consistent font throughout the main text.
- Font Size: Standard 12 pt for main text.
- Minimum Font Size: Text inside tables, footnotes, figure labels, or reduced appendices must never be smaller than 9 pt.

Line Spacing

- Main Text: Double-spaced (2.0 line spacing) throughout.
- Single Spacing is Permitted for:
 - Multi-line table entries and figure captions.
 - Footnotes and endnotes.
 - Block quotations (quotes over 4 lines).
 - Raw computer code, data appendices, or bibliography/reference.

2.1.4. Page Numbering (Pagination Rules)

Your document consists of two distinct pagination sequences. **Every page is counted, but not all pages display a number.**

Note: Any blank page inserted after the Title Page or Approval Page is neither counted in the pagination nor assigned a page number.

Table: Page Numbering and Pagination Rules

Section	Page Number Style	Displayed Number Placement
Title Page		Hidden (Counted as page i)
Approval Signatory Page		Hidden (Counted as page ii)
Blank page (or if copyrighted, the copyright page)	Not Counted	Hidden (Not counted)
Abstract	Lowercase Roman (iii, iv, v...)	Bottom-center
Dedication/ Acknowledgement (Optional)	Lowercase Roman (iii, iv, v...)	Bottom-center
Table of Contents & Lists of Tables/Figures	Lowercase Roman (iii, iv, v...)	Bottom-center
Main Body & Back (from Chapter 1 onwards)	Arabic Numerals (1, 2, 3...)	Bottom-center, Must start at Page 1
References / Bibliography & Appendices	Arabic Numerals (Continued)	Bottom-center

- **Front Pages (Title page to Table of Contents):** Numbered consecutively using **lowercase Roman numerals** (i, ii, iii, iv...).
 - The Title Page is page “i”, but the number must not be printed on the page.
 - The Abstract page typically displays “iii” (following the Title and Approval pages).
- **Main Body and Appendices:**
 - Numbered consecutively using Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3...) starting from the first page of Chapter 1 through to the final page of the Appendices.
 - Do not restart page numbers for individual chapters or use prefixed numbers (e.g., do NOT use A-1, B-1 for appendices).

2.1.5. Headings and Section Organization

To maintain visual clarity across long academic documents, follow a consistent heading hierarchy:

- **Chapter Titles:** Centered, bold, ALL CAPS, 14 pt or 16 pt font (e.g., **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**).
- **First-Level Headings:** Left-aligned, bold, Title Case, 12 pt or 14 pt font.
- **Second-Level Headings:** Left-aligned, bold, Sentence case or Title Case, 12 pt font.
- **Third-Level Headings:** Indented, bold or italicized, integrated into paragraph text.

2.1.6. Title Page Layout

Your Title Page will be automatically generated as a standardized PDF based on the information you submit via the designated Google Form. However, you must ensure that your submitted details adhere strictly to the following rules:

- **Title of Thesis/Research Report:** In full, typed in ALL CAPS. Do not use abbreviations, formulas, or acronyms in the main title.
- **Degree Statement:** *"A Thesis [or Research Report] Submitted to the Graduate School of International Relations in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in [Your Program Name]"*.
- **Author's Full Name:** As officially registered with IUJ.
- **Institutional Name:** International University of Japan.
- **Date of Submission:** Month and Year of graduation (e.g., *June 2028*).

2.2. Document Structure & Layout

2.2.1. Lists of Figures and Tables

- **When to Include:** Required if your thesis includes one or more figures or tables. Use a separate page for each list.
- **What to List:** Include the number, full caption, and page number.
- **Long Captions:** If a caption in the main text is very long, you may shorten it in the List of Figures or List of Tables, provided that the shortened version clearly identifies the figure or table.
- **Appendices:** Tables/figures in appendices must also be listed if they have individual numbers and captions.

2.2.2. Acknowledgments Page

- **When Required:** Mandatory only if you used copyrighted material with permission or must acknowledge research grants. Otherwise, it is optional.
- **Consistency:** Keep your point of view consistent throughout. Either use the third person ("the author") or first person ("I," "my") continuously—do not mix them.

2.2.3. Back Matter Requirements

A. Bibliography / Reference List

- Must list all sources cited in the text.
- Can be placed at the end of each chapter or as one combined section at the end of the thesis (a single section at the end is recommended).
- Follow a recognized discipline style (e.g., APA, Chicago, or MLA).
- **Line Spacing & Formatting:** Entries may be single-spaced internally, but must be clearly separated from one another using additional paragraph spacing (e.g., 6 pt space after each entry). Entries must also maintain a clear, consistent, and consecutive order throughout the list.

B. Appendices

- Use for extra detailed data, long quotes, or procedural details.
- Label them **Appendix A, Appendix B, Appendix C...** (Use just **Appendix** if there is only one).
- **Formatting:** Can use single-spacing and different font styles, but margins and continuous page numbering (1, 2, 3...) must strictly follow main text rules (do NOT use page numbers like A-1, A-2).

- Optional display (title) pages for appendices are counted in pagination.

2.3. Tables, Figures, and Special Materials

2.3.1. Defining Tables vs. Figures

- **Table:** Textual/numerical information organized in columns.
- **Figure:** Graphic illustrations (charts, graphs, diagrams, maps, or photos). Lines must be sharp, and text within figures should be typed.

2.3.2. Numbering and Placement

- Number them sequentially (Table 1, Table 2...) or by chapter (Table 2.1, Table 2.2...).
- Place the table/figure immediately after its first mention in the text (on the same page or the next page).
- Always mention tables and figures in the text by their specific number (never write "in the table below").
- Always add a Source Note at the bottom if taken from another publication (e.g., *Source: Smith (2020)*).

2.3.3. Handling Oversized Tables & Figures

If a table or figure is too large to fit the standard margins, use one of these solutions:

- **Landscape Orientation:** Rotate the object 90 degrees counterclockwise. The caption rotates with it, but the page number must remain in standard portrait location.
- **Pocket Material / Foldouts:** Large items can be placed in a pocket attached to the inside back cover. Label pocket material clearly and write "in pocket" in the Table of Contents instead of a page number.

2.3.4. Images and Photographs

- **Image Quality:** Always use high-quality original photos or sharp, high-resolution reproductions. Avoid low-resolution, blurry, or pixelated images.
- **Integration:** Embed all visual images directly into your digital document file before converting it to PDF.

2.4. Copyright, Co-Authorship, and Publishing

2.4.1. Copyright Rules for Your Thesis

- Copyright protection starts automatically as soon as you create your thesis.
- You may add a copyright notice (e.g., © 2026 *Your Name*) on the title page to state your ownership clearly.
- Other researchers may use small portions of your thesis under **Fair Use** as long as they cite you as the source.

2.4.2. Using Copyrighted Work by Others

- You must get written permission from the copyright owner if your usage goes beyond standard "Fair Use" (e.g., reproducing full photos, diagrams, cartoons, or survey tools).
- Submit your written permission letters along with your thesis. You are solely responsible for copyright compliance.

2.4.3. Previously Published Work & Co-Authorship

- You may include work you have published (or are about to publish) as part of your thesis, provided your committee approves it and it was written for your degree requirements.
- **First Author Requirement:** If the published paper has multiple authors, you must be the **first author**, and your specific contributions must be explained in a preface.
- You must include a comprehensive introduction and conclusion to connect published papers into one cohesive thesis.
- Work submitted for a previous degree cannot be used.

2.4.4. Classified / Restricted Material

- Theses must be open to the public; therefore, you **cannot use confidential or classified data**.
- In rare cases, you may request the OAA to temporarily hold your thesis in the library for a few months before release.

3. Guidance for Research & Project Management

The following suggestions are intended to help students manage the research and writing process.

3.1. How Research and Writing Interact

Many students think research and writing happen in two separate steps: first you do the research, then you write it down. In reality, these two steps overlap.

- Writing helps you test, evaluate, and prove your ideas.
- Analysis results often force you to rewrite earlier sections.
- Research is rarely "100% finished," so start writing early instead of waiting until the final days before the deadline.

3.2. Breaking the Project into Small Tasks

Instead of setting a giant goal like "finish the thesis," break your work into manageable tasks that take a week, a day, or just 30 minutes.

- **Mix short and long tasks:** On high-energy days, tackle hard analytical problems. On low-energy days, complete simple administrative or formatting tasks.
- **Refine step-by-step:** Do not try to write a perfect draft from beginning to end. Start with notes, turn them into an outline, and draft the sections you feel most confident about first.
- **Write rough drafts:** If you get stuck on a paragraph, write quick bullet points or temporary notes and move on. You can refine hard sections later.

3.3. Writing for Your Audience

Remember that your readers know less about your specific topic than you do.

- Explain your goals, motivation, and methods clearly.
- Present core ideas at different levels of detail and use concrete examples to make complex concepts clear.

3.4. Finding a Peer Feedback Partner

Partner with a fellow student who can:

- Read your rough drafts and give honest feedback.
- Meet regularly to track progress and offer emotional support.
- Understand your field well enough to review your logic.

3.5. Principles for a Creative Writing Process

- **Create an Early Plan:** Draft an outline and schedule early, and post it where you can see it daily. Discuss it with your supervisor and update it as your research evolves.
- **Address Key Technical Issues Early:** Plan your methodology and data analysis early. If you use statistics, consult your supervisor or experts right away to ensure your data can be analyzed properly.
- **Start Writing Early:** Write easy sections first to build momentum. Introductions and conclusions are usually written last when your overall picture is clear. Compile your bibliography as you read, not at the very end.

- **Use Word Processors & Backup Files:** Always save multiple backup copies in different physical/cloud locations. Print out paper copies regularly to prevent total data loss.
- **Work Closely with Your Supervisor:**
 - Show your supervisor early drafts (from rough notes to chapter drafts). They are responsible for reviewing your work critically and returning it promptly.
 - Show them the complete draft of your entire thesis as well, so they can review how chapters fit together as a whole.
- **Discuss Publishing & Co-Authorship Early:** If you plan to publish your findings, discuss authorship, target journals, and timing with your supervisor to avoid delays.

3.6. Communicating an Academic Argument

- **Focus on Communication:** A thesis is not just data collection; it is written communication. Keep your core message direct and clear without unnecessary complexity.
- **Write for the Academic Community:** Do not write just to impress your defense committee. Write for an educated scholar or a graduate student at another university.
- **Maintain Logical Continuity:** A thesis is one continuous argument, not a form to fill out. Chapter titles and section headers guide the reader, but the logical connection must exist within the text itself.
- **Structure Your Argument:** Lead the reader through three core questions:
 - What is the background? (Usually Chapters 1 & 2)
 - What did you do to find answers? (Usually Chapter 3)
 - What are the answers and implications? (Usually Chapters 4 & 5)

4. Recommended Reference Manuals

You may consult the following standard style guides for detailed citation formats and grammar rules:

- **MLA Style Manual** (Humanities)
Website link: <https://style.mla.org/works-cited/works-cited-a-quick-guide/>
- **Chicago Manual of Style / Turabian** (History & Social Sciences)
Website link: https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html
- **APA Style** (Social Sciences & Management)
Website link: <https://owl.purdue.edu/>
- **Thesis & Research Report** (in the GSIR My Curriculum Website)
Website link: <https://www.iuj.ac.jp/academics/gsir/my-curriculum/thesis/>