A copy of each thesis accepted for undergraduate degree, Master’s degree by research, the degree of PhD and other higher Doctorate is deposited in the Norma Smurfit Library. Thesis are available for consultation through request at the Library Services Desk. TRAP (thesis, reports & projects) the College Institutional Repository where thesis may be accessed online/electronically; http://trap.ncirl.ie/.

Presenting your thesis:

The Norma Smurfit Library has drawn up this guide as the standard for all theses presented for research degrees in the National College of Ireland.

It should be noted, however, that this guide does not deal with the content and academic standard required of a thesis. On these matters you must always consult your supervisor and the guidance issued by your school.

All candidates are required to submit their thesis in English unless formal permission to use another language was given before the candidate was admitted to the National College of Ireland. If material submitted is the result of collaborative research, the submission must clearly identify your contribution.

The first section of this guide draws to your attention the practical issues about which you should be aware before you embark on the final assembly of your thesis. Many practical decisions (such as the paper to be used, how to cope with illustrative matter, binding specifications and procedures etc.) need to be thought out before you put together your completed thesis with all of its constituent elements. Unless you are aware of these practical issues, you may find that it is impossible to have this done in the fashion you anticipated, or that the costs incurred will be greater than they need to have been. Some mistakes are impossible to correct when the time comes for binding.

The thesis must be bound in accordance with the colleges’ requirements before the degree may be awarded. **Two soft bound and one hard bound copy must be presented for examination. An electronic copy must also be entered on Moodle VLE.**

The second section of the guide is intended to give you guidance on general aspects concerning the layout of the thesis itself.

**General considerations:**
Before embarking on your thesis give careful consideration to how you are going to manage your work over the period of your research.

A thesis is a particular kind of academic task, where you will usually be asked to generate a topic for yourself; to plan and execute a project investigating that topic; and to write-up what you did and what your findings were. Important stages in the dissertation process include:

For example: if you do not have your own computer, is the word processing package that you intend to use freely available in the college? Are there any special requirements? (eg. Graphing, presentation of statistical data, etc.), which may affect the choice of software? How are you going to manage your references – on cards or on bibliographic management software? Again if you use
the latter does it allow you to format and print out references in a style suitable for the presentation of your thesis? (Harvard Referencing Style).

During the process of writing there is a number of practical and technical points to observe, and you should review these well in advance of the final writing.

You should allow adequate time for preparation, typing or word processing, checking, correction and retyping. If someone else is typing your thesis you should check the work frequently in the early stages so that repeated problems or difficulties can be detected early.

**Literature Review**
The purpose of this is to show that you are aware of where your own piece of research fits into the overall context of research in your field

**Supervisor(s)**
Supervisors are there to help you shape your ideas and give you advice on how to conduct the research for your thesis/research. They are not there to teach you the topic you have chosen to investigate: this is your project.

**Paper**
You should use A4 paper. Buy a sufficient quantity of paper for the whole job at the outset as paper sizes vary. The paper itself should be good quality bond paper, weight to be a least 70 grams per square metre (gsm).

**Typing and word-processing**
You must make your own arrangements for the typing of your theses. You must type on one side of the paper only. Use double-line spacing throughout, except for quotations, captions etc., which may be single spaced. Single-spacing within items in the bibliography is also acceptable. Typing should be reasonably uniform in length of line (i.e. justified) and the number of lines per page. The final script should be printed using a letter-quality printer.

**Typeface and Point size**
It is extremely important that the thesis is clearly set out and is easy to read. A clear standard typeface should be used. Recommended typefaces include Times Roman and Courier, a number of other standard faces are equally acceptable but consult your supervisor if in doubt. Italics should not be used as the main font but be limited, if used, to specific aspects of information such as subheadings or within your bibliography. If in doubt you should consult your supervisor. To help ensure clarity it is important that the point size of the type is not too small. Your thesis may be photocopied or scanned at a later stage, so a 12 point typeface is the recommended standard for general use. If there is a strong reason felt for using another point size you should consult your supervisor before proceeding.

**Margins and Pagination**
The left hand margin must be a least 3cm. This is the Binding Margin. When photographs or images are to be mounted the left-hand margin must be increased to 4cm.

It is desirable to leave 3cm at the top and bottom of the page and about 2cm at the outer edge. Preliminary pages are unnumbered, pagination beginning with the first page of the text proper. Page numbers may either be placed at top-centre, 1 cm below the edge or at the foot of the page, 2cm above the edge. (Word packages usually do this automatically). Be consistent in whichever style you choose.
Chapter headings and sub-headings
New Chapters should always commence on a fresh page. Titles should be in capitals and centred. Sub-headings within chapters should be left justified.

Photocopies or Copied Material
If Photocopies are to be included, ensure that all copies are clear and of high quality, especially when plates are being reproduced. It is important that the printed matter is square set on each page with approximately equal margins all round.

Photographs
Photocopies or scanning and printing onto photographic quality A4 paper can provide good quality reproduction of photographs and may find that satisfactory results may be obtained using this method. The binding process is made easier when A4 paper is used, it will also reduce the overall bulk of the thesis and could eliminate the need for a second volume in some circumstances.

Graphs and Diagrams
Page size graphs should be treated in the same way with regard to numbering captions and margins (as photographs and plates, keeping the uniformity throughout). Graph, diagram and map numbers are best positioned in the bottom right hand corner.

Disks and accompanying materials
Theses often need to contain supplementary media. Disks etc. can usually be built into a pocket at the back of the volume, bindery staff will be able to offer advice.

Binding Procedures:
Please allow plenty of time for the binding procedure, most bindery’s offer 5 hr, 24hr and 48hr service along with normal time frames (5-7 days). Please note there may be backlogs at certain times of years and the smaller timeframe given to the bindery the cost will be more expensive.

Submission
One hard bound copy of your thesis will be lodged in the Norma Smurfit Library and will be available for consultation. The electronic copy will be accessible in TRAP (http://trap.ncirl.ie/), the National College of Ireland’s Institutional Repository. In accordance with normal academic library practice all theses lodged in the National College of Ireland Institutional Repository (TRAP) are made available on open access.

The hard bound copies must be bound in University Blue, with gold lettering on the spine giving your name, the degree for which it is presented, and the year in which the degree is conferred – This is echoed on the cover – with the addition of the title of the thesis. Most binderies are happy to undertake the binding of any personal copies you require to your own specification. The college strongly advises that each student submitting a thesis keeps a bound copy for their own personal use.

Hard Copy Bound in University Blue with Gold Lettering (for placement see elements of a thesis or dissertation below)
Part 2:
Elements of the Thesis or Dissertation
A Thesis must be an original work which makes a significant contribution to knowledge in or understanding of a particular field of study. It must contain material worthy of publication. It also demonstrates its relationship to the general corpus of knowledge in the field. In short it is the presentation of the results of original research in a critical and scholarly fashion. For these reasons it is essential that an appropriate and satisfactory literary presentation is adopted.

A thesis normally consists of the following elements:
- Authors declaration form (deposit copy only)
- Submission of Thesis to Norma Smurfit Library
- National College of Ireland Form:
  - Preliminaries
    - title page
    - abstract
    - dedication
    - acknowledgements
    - content listings
      - table of contents
      - list of illustrations
      - list of tables
    - list of definitions and/or abbreviations
  - Text
  - End pages
    - appendices
    - list of references/ bibliography

Authors declaration form (deposit copy only)
You must complete the Author’s declaration form and have it bound into your deposit copy of the thesis. Your thesis will be made available for consultation in the College library or in another academic library, via the inter-library loans system, unless there are grounds for keeping the content of the thesis confidential.

Submission of Thesis to Norma Smurfit Library, National College of Ireland Form
Students must complete a Submission of thesis to Norma Smurfit Library, National College of Ireland Form, this form must be included in the bound and electronic copies of your thesis/dissertation. This form can be located at the end of this document, before the note on restricted access.

Preliminaries
Title page: the title of the thesis should be given between 5 and 7 cm from the top of the page, followed by the name of the Author and after about a 5cm space, a statement of the degree for which the thesis is submitted

TITLE i.e The area of change is being managed in a professional and successful manner in Irish hospitals

AUTHOR i.e John Dempsey

DEGREE
B.A. in Accounting
**COLLEGE:**
National College of Ireland (on left hand side of cover)

**YEAR**
2015 (on right hand side of cover)

**Then on Spine:**
John Dempsey (maximum length of name on spine up to 9 cm. Longer than this, name must be abbreviated to surname with initials). 2015 B.A. in Accounting

The bottom right-hand corner should state school, college and year of submission, which each element being given on a separate line.

Give your full name on the title page as it would appear on the degree conferring list. This also facilitates tracing the thesis if someone wishes to consult it at a later date.

**Abstract**
An abstract – a succinct summary of the thesis containing all of the important concepts and conclusions of the work – should immediately follow the title page. It should be no more than 200 words in length. Do not number this page nor record it in the table of contents. This abstract will be used when the thesis is indexed in the index of theses.

**Dedication**
A dedication is entirely optional. If one is made the dedication page should follow the synopsis. It should be unnumbered and not recorded in the table of contents.

**Acknowledgements**
You may wish to acknowledge any substantial assistance that you may have received in the course of your research. Inclusion of acknowledgments – to whom, and the precise wording – is a matter for your own discretion, but they should follow the synopsis and dedication again on a separate unnumbered page which is not listed in the table of contents.

**Contents Listings**
**Table of Contents:** A table of contents, and if needed a list of illustration and a list of tables, should always be included and should follow the acknowledgements. These are the last of the unnumbered preliminary pages. Contents listings are extremely important. Unlike a book, a thesis has no index. Therefore the contents listings must be accurate and informative – an examiner or reader may use them to find his or her way back round a work. A good contents listing will also display the pattern of ideas through which the reader will be taken. The table of contents should show chapter and section titles (if any), demonstrating the relationship of the parts to each other (if appropriate) indentation and numbering. Chapters and sections should be referenced to their page numbers.

**List of Illustrations** should follow the table of contents on a separate unnumbered page. If different types of illustrations are included this list can be subdivided into headed sections (e.g. figures, plates, maps, charts etc.). A page number should follow the title of the illustration.

**List of Tables**, if appropriate a list of tables should follow the list of illustrations on a separate unnumbered page.

**Other preliminary listings**
It may be advisable to include other listings at this point. For example if the work extensively employs certain abbreviations or includes new definitions or symbols, these may be placed most appropriately at this point. By placing them at the front, readers are alerted to their existence and can return to them when they need to be reminded of their meaning. However lengthy lists of abbreviations (i.e. more than one page) may be better located after the main body of the work.
Discretion must be shown in making this judgement. Whatever you decide you must always explain fully any abbreviation, symbol or new term when you first use it in the text.

**The Text**
The main body of the text follows the preliminaries. As has been indicated in the introduction, this guide is not concerned with the content and the standard required of the thesis. Within the text, however, it may be necessary to indicate additional information or acknowledge other sources.

Throughout a substantial body of text it is certain that you will need to use references to acknowledge sources that you have consulted and it is important that you have a clear understanding of how and why references are employed in a scholarly work.
References and Referencing systems
Referencing is an essential part of academic scholarship. Intellectual honesty demands that authors identify their sources. Referencing has three main functions:

- To acknowledge an intellectual debt to another author where you have drawn heavily from his or her published work or ideas, either explicitly or implicitly;

- To support facts or claims which you make in your text

- To enable the reader to find sources to which you have referred easily and quickly.

Failure to identify sources, on which you draw, is plagiarism, the most serious of academic offences and a possible breach of copyright law. A thesis which embodies deliberate plagiarism will most certainly be rejected. If you are in doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, or how to avoid it, you should consult your supervisor, and read the colleges guidelines on plagiarism.

Students may use referencing software such as RefWorks, Mendeley, Zotero etc. RefWorks is available to registered NCI Students & Staff. Please contact the Library for further details.

See Companion guide 1st Cite: bibliographies & referencing made easy, (a guide produced by the NCI Library)

Length of the Thesis.
The normal maximum length of the thesis or dissertation is stated in the Regulations for the particular degree for which you are registered. The regulations give a normal maximum length. It is expected that the average thesis or dissertation will be considerably shorter. The calculation of the maxima excludes appendices, tables, diagrams, references, bibliography, and endnotes. In relation to the appropriate length for your thesis or dissertation, your supervisor will guide you.

End Pages
The end pages include such sections as appendices, special notes, a list of references and a bibliography.

Appendices
Appendices and special notes may in effect be interchangeable. Appendices are often used for information which is supportive in nature and will not impede the progress of the reader in the main text. They are especially useful for readers who require greater clarification. Therefore they can be used as follows:

- For explanations which are too long for notes, but are not essential parts of the text
- Texts of documents, laws etc. which illustrate the text
- Long charts or tables of test data, specifications for equipment and materials used etc.

DO NOT regard them as repositories for things which do not fit elsewhere in the text – ensure you have a clear justification for including them. Appendices should be listed on the contents page. Where more than one appendix is included, assign each a number and list them like chapters.

List of references/ bibliography
This is an important part of the thesis and, if you have systematically recorded the sources you have consulted it should not present too big a problem. It should be remembered however that bibliographies, even simple ones, generally require a good deal of editing, for most authors discover
that the compilation of a comprehensive and consistent list of references is a task requiring more skill and patience than they are willing to give (Burbidge, 1952)

Burbidge, P.G. (1952) Notes and references, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Submission of Thesis to Norma Smurfit Library, National College of Ireland Form

Submission of Thesis to Norma Smurfit Library, National College of Ireland

Student name: ______________________________ Student number: __________________

School: ______________________________ Course: __________________

Degree to be awarded: ______________________________

Title of Thesis: ____________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________

One hard bound copy of your thesis will be lodged in the Norma Smurfit Library and will be available for consultation. The electronic copy will be accessible in TRAP (http://trap.ncirl.ie/), the National College of Ireland’s Institutional Repository. In accordance with normal academic library practice all theses lodged in the National College of Ireland Institutional Repository (TRAP) are made available on open access.

I agree to a hard bound copy of my thesis being available for consultation in the library. I also agree to an electronic copy of my thesis being made publicly available on the National College of Ireland’s Institutional Repository TRAP.

Signature of Candidate: ____________________________________________

For completion by the School:
The aforementioned thesis was received by __________________________ Date: __________________

This signed form must be appended to all hard bound and electronic copies of your thesis submitted to your school.
A Note on Restricted Access:

The National College of Ireland is committed to the openness of research findings. It is important that, at an early stage of research, candidate and supervisor consider restrictions which may have been placed, for example, on the use of interviews or other confidential material, and whether these may jeopardise subsequent publication or communication or research outcomes. In almost all cases, the rights of the candidate over the intellectual property of theses offer an adequate protection of their research in a context of open research and its dissemination except where obligations to third parties are in place.

In rare cases, the academic registrar may, after consultation with the school direct that any thesis or work deposited be withheld from access to library users, or placed on restricted access, for a specific time (usually 2-5 years).

Applications are to be made in the first instance to the head of school upon notification if results, requesting a thesis be placed on restricted access in the Norma Smurfit library where:

- A) the thesis contains material which could have legal repercussions if published; or
- B) the thesis contains material for which the author intends to apply for patent protection or there are other possible commercial benefits which would be prejudiced were the thesis to be made public immediately after acceptance; or
- C) there are other exceptional circumstances and restricted access would not result in subverting the important academic principle of open access to research material.

All applications must explain fully the reasons for which restricted access is requested and include supporting comments and signatures from the applicant’s supervisor and Head of School.

Candidates should consider carefully before applying for any period of confidentiality or restricted access whether this will unduly impair their ability to publish their research or make their work and achievements known to potential employers. These issues should be discussed.
Additional notes

The need and briefly how to plan your research
The necessity of first coming up with a research proposal/research question
The need to do a literature review
Highlighting of the library resources available for research including the libguides for the different subject areas
Highlighting of TRAP as a resource to view past theses
Recognition of the requirement to do primary research and that the library provides research methodology information in our hard copy and electronic resources
Recognition of the supervisor relationship – while the library is happy to provide ongoing assistance to all dissertation/thesis students, early engagement with their supervisor is essential in the research process as this relationship is paramount