

DissertationAid

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Introduction

The DissertationAid was designed to make the process of writing Your Dissertation more feasible. It was prepared based on years of experience.

Writing a dissertation on average requires 200-300 work hours, though this number may be much higher. Using this method, the work hours may be reduced by 100-150 work hours.

Why?

The dissertation may be broken up into chapters. Some of these may be completed with more speed, i.e., Methods, Results Chapter. The Introduction chapter is one of the most difficult to write. Many start by trying to complete this chapter, even though this may be continued into eternity. In contrast leaving the Introduction to the end of the process, we may compile this chapter based on the major points of the discussion, making this segment much quicker.

0.Step: Pre-screening

Selection of the articles (first and co-authored) to be included in the dissertation. It is not necessary to include all publication by the author in the dissertation, as it is difficult to overview more than 2 or a maximum of three publications well on a single subject in the scope of a 30-60 page dissertation. We recommend rationalization regarding the number of necessary articles – taking into account guidelines of the Doctoral School and the required IF.

Why?

Compiling a Dissertation from a limited more rationalized number of articles is speedier. Also, the articles included in the PhD are considered to be Step 0 by the scientific community, as scientific activity performed following completion of the PhD Dissertation is most commonly measured later on. Should you have an excess of scientific material, consider leaving some of it for the post-PhD scientific period, so as not to leave you „empty handed”.

Estimated work hours: 2 hours

1.Step: Compiling the Word template and using Endnote

We recommend compiling the word file for the Dissertation at the beginning of the process, because if you use the Titles included your Table of Contents will automatically be created. Your Dissertation – which according to current regulation must be written and submitted in English - should include the following Chapters (Title Page 1: Cover page (This does not need to be included in the Title Pages); Table of Contents; List of Abbreviations; 1. Introduction; 2. Objectives; 3. Methods; 4. Results; 5. Discussion; 6. Conclusions; 7. Summary (1page); 8. References; 9. Bibliography of the candidate's publications; 10. Acknowledgements.

Templates for the cover page and guidelines regarding form i.e. margins, font size and style etc. may be found on the webpage of the Doctoral School: <https://semmelweis.hu/phd/hallgatoknak/kepzesi-kovetelmenyekvizsga-hazi-vedes-nyilvanos-vedes/a-doktori-ertekezes-formai-kovetelmenyei/> (in general: Times New Roman font type; font size 12 for the text, 3-3 cm margins in all directions; 1.5 row distance; justified style).

It is essential to use a program to handle references. Endnote may be downloaded free of charge by students from the Semmelweis University Library webpage via VPN or using the University network. The Endnote file appropriate for the Dissertation is also available at this site (<https://lib.semmelweis.hu/endnote>).

There is a teaching video available through signing in with SEKA on the Semmelweis University Library Kultúra channel: https://kultura.semmelweis.hu/playlist/dedicated/216284223/1_ydayfl61/1_91r3zrf1

Tip: The Workgroup for Science Management created a word template for the dissertation that is available for download through the webpage of the, KMMCS (<https://semmelweis.hu/kmmcs/>)

2.Step: 'Methods' and 'Results' chapters

A coherent Methodological section and a comprehensive compilation of the Results is necessary using the selected articles. As a first step we recommend copy-pasting the relevant sections from the original articles (i.e., CTRL+C, CTRL+V), without rephrasing the English text.

Should the articles differ significantly from each other, creating subchapters may be useful (i.e., Study 1, Study 2, etc.). In case of similarities the Methods section may be compiled into a single uniform segment. Subchapters may be useful in the Results section as well. When including the Figures and Tables, the original articles **MUST ALWAYS** be referenced (*most easily accomplished by using Endnote*). Many Journals require asking for permission when modifying or editing the Figures or Tables of the original articles. I.e.: changing colors or changing the captions may be considered modification and therefore editing. Some Journals allow for free use and editing of Figures (they must still be referenced), while written permission must be given by others to perform modifications. */Details in the Copyright and writing the Dissertation chapter/.*

Why?

The Methods and Results section may be compiled most speedily. You may complete it in a fast and timely manner, and it may be quite motivational to have a third of the Dissertation ready.

The rationale behind having to reference you own Figures is that they were published in the articles first, and therefore all further publishing must be referenced – this precisely marks, that this is not a new result in the dissertation (and is therefore proofed and checked by a reviewer).

We **DO NOT RECCOMEND/we PROHIBIT** including **UNPUBLISHED RESULTS** in your dissertation especially if you wish to publish it later on. This is important, as the dissertation itself is considered to be a separate scientific entity and it therefore has a Doi number. This means that results presented in the dissertation may not be published as novel results later on, if they had not been published beforehand. It also presents difficulties for the dissertation as the results have not been checked by an independent reviewer, so they must be verified.

Estimated work hours: 24-48 hours

3.Step: 'Objectives' chapter

We recommend that this section be between 1-2 pages. A short general introduction of the subject - to orient the reader. No references necessary, and the questions answered by the conclusions the dissertation should be listed here in points (these may be presented by the opponents at your PhD defense).

Tip: The aims/goals listed in the abstract/introduction sections of the English articles may be used here. This section should be concise 1-2 well written paragraphs may be enough.

Estimated work hours: 4-8 hours

4. Step: PPT

This may seem strange, but we recommend preparing your PPT for your defense in the middle of writing your dissertation, because once you have compiled your goals, methods and results creating the PPT comes easily. The PPT may then serve as a guide for writing your discussion and your summary.

Estimated work hours: 8-24 hours

5. Step: 'Discussion' chapter

The discussion should be a coherent compilation of the discussions of the articles. As a first step „copy paste”-ing the discussions of the articles may serve as a guideline, without revising the English text. Subchapters may be added if necessary. After working into a comprehensive and logical well-structured whole, new subchapter may be necessary. Overlaps should be extracted/worked into a comprehensive whole. A minimum of 2-3 chapters are recommended. The first page of the discussion should be a general introduction and should include a well-delineated question, applied methodology, most relevant results, similar to the structured Abstract. The references should be compliments and brought up-to date to achieve a list of over 110, with a third/half of the references being from the past 5 years.

Tip: the chapters may be paragraphs from previous discussion that have not been elaborated on, or a section or two from previous introductions. These sections should be discussed in 1-2 pages each. Novel chapters, relevant to the topic, may also be added. I.e., in case of clinical research theoretical background may be described in more detail, and in case of theoretical research translational aspects clinical implications may be discussed.

Estimated work hours: 16-32 hours

6. Step: 'Conclusion' chapter

This section will include the answers to the questions posed in the Aims/Goals sections. This could be concise, as this will be read out loud at the defense as the results accepted as novel. Appropriate length: half-two pages.

Tip: The conclusion/summary and parts of abstracts may fit well in this section. Only the main points of the original results, and minimal discussion only.

Estimated work hours: 8-16 hours

7. Step: 'Summary' chapter

Strictly 1 page. Similar to the format of an abstract: introduction, methods, results, conclusions. If many articles were used, these should be compiled.

Tip 1: the abstracts of the original articles may be quite useful here. We do not recommend paraphrasing here yet, but this section should be compiled and summarized.

Tip 2: using color-codes for each article may help keep track of the origins of each section of text. Leaving the novel sections free of color is also helpful.

Estimated work hours: 4-8 hours

8. Step: 'Introduction' chapter

This segment should be written while keeping in mind the guidelines regarding length. This should introduce the following sections in a concise, well-structured and logical manner. Limits regarding length of the dissertation overall should be regarded. The text must be between 30-60 pages written in English, not including the cover page, table of contents, abbreviation or the references. Number of pages of the introduction should be calculated to fit the final page count number. The length of a „short” dissertation is deemed to be 40 pages, 31 qualifies, but it is not elegant.

Tip: the introduction section of the previous articles may be included here – „copy paste”, paraphrasing is not recommended in this phase. Based on the topics introduced later on, titles for subchapters may be introduced as a draft. These points may then be elaborated on in detail, while keeping the text within the scope. General educational images may be of use to demonstrate more complex relationships (this may aid comprehension of the questions posed in the „objectives”, i.e., Biochemical interactions).

Estimated work hours: 24-48 hours

9. Step: 'Acknowledgements' chapter

We recommend acknowledging your thesis advisor, the lead of the institution, your co-authors, student researchers, assistants and family.

We ask you to kindly mention the Workgroup for Science Management in this section.

Estimated work hours: 2-4 hours

10. Step: References, checking the Table of contents

If you utilized the titles and the Endnote well, you will be able to complete this chapter with minimal effort.

Estimated work hours: 2-4 hours

11. Step: 'Bibliography of the candidate's publications' chapter

This section needs to contain 2 subsections: the articles of the thesis and those not part of the thesis.

Tip: this may be put together speedily in another word file using Endnote. IF should be indicated after each publication (you may search for IF scores in the webpage of the Semmelweis University Library: <https://lib.semmelweis.hu/impaktfaktorok>). The prepared list may then be submitted as the Library Data Sheet (which is necessary for handing in the dissertation, however the articles should be submitted and checked through MTMT).

Bibliography should include English language articles with IF and Hungarian/or other language IF and IF equivalent publications. We find it unnecessary to include the following type of publication (i.e.: published abstract, presentations, posters -these are important professional milestones; however, they have no bearing on the evaluation of the dissertation).

Estimated work hours: 4-8 hours

12. Step: Paraphrasing

The now prepared manuscript needs to be paraphrased, as both plagiarism and self-plagiarism should be avoided. Semmelweis University uses a plagiarism search software called „Turnitin”. This program is not strictly a plagiarism finding device as it identifies „similarities” between the submitted text and other articles, books, publications etc. on the internet. The program then provides a similarity index score that scaled the degree of familiarity if the submitted manuscript to the above-mentioned texts.

This is an important distinction, as it doesn't screen plagiarism, as a high level of similarity does not necessarily mean plagiarism (marked sources; special, technical terms etc. may be mistakenly included), and low similarity index does not rule out plagiarism (i.e. a previous original text may have been paraphrased but not marked as an original source). Low similarity index should be aimed for when paraphrasing, but this is not always possible (i.e. there may be many tables, results included from the authors own work, and the program identified these similarities as well) some special terms may be repeated frequently – in these cases a higher similarity index may be permitted.

The program color codes the sections that presented similarities to other texts. Should more consecutive sentences be marked, they need to be paraphrased.

Tip1: Turnitin screening may be requested through the KMMCS webpage, making paraphrasing the appropriate sections simpler.

Tip2: a native speaker or a professional lector may be included in this part of the dissertation process. Semmelweis University Department of Languages currently (2023) offers services at 8000 HUF/hour, calculating approximately 10-20 work hours for a dissertation. Expected time to completion is 2-4 weeks. Paraphrasing websites may also be used i.e.: <https://quillbot.com/> (this is free of charge, however there are more services available is a fee is paid).

13. Step: Thesis booklet

The Thesis booklet is an extract of the dissertation. We recommend compiling this following paraphrasing. This is not an independent scientific entity; it may match the dissertation word for word. Length of the thesis booklet is 8-16 pages in A5 format (templates are also available on our webpage: <https://semmelweis.hu/kmmcs/>). The thesis booklet needs to be prepared in English if the defense is in English and in Hungarian if the defense is in Hungarian. Structure of the thesis booklet: 1. Introduction/Bevezetés – 2. Objectives/Célkitűzés – 3. Methods/Módszerek – 4. Results/Eredmények – 5. Conclusions/Következtetések – 6. Bibliography of the candidate's publications /Saját publikációk jegyzéke (the articles included in the dissertation need to be listed separately). The thesis booklet reference section should only include the articles of the dissertation. References should not be indicated in the thesis booklet.

Tips:

- 1) Introduction should not be longer than half a page/one page.
- 2) Methods should be concise.
- 3) Results should be compiled based on the titles of the dissertation figures, as they are usually short.
- 4) All figures will probably not fit, so more important ones should be selected, and some results may be indicated in the text instead of figures and tables.
- 5) summary, conclusion, publication list should match that of the dissertation.

14. Step: Copyright writing the Dissertation

The dissertation should include the original articles following the Acknowledgement section. Editing the figures requires permission – this should be checked with the relevant Journal.

Copyright permissions should be saved, as they need to be handed in along with the dissertation.

If the publication is Open Access, permission may not be necessary, this should also be documented i.e., screen printout of this fact submitted to the Doctoral School.

Tip: if the article was published in the past couple of years, the article itself may contain copyrights (search for „CC BY” or „copyright”). Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) means that it may be utilized and edited without the need for permission for NONcommercial purposes.

Is permission being necessary application forms are usually available on the Journal website.

Further information: <https://semmelweis.hu/phd/hallgatoknak/kepzesi-kovetelmenyekvizsga-hazi-vedes-nyilvanos-vedes/a-doktori-ertekezes-formai-kovetelmenyei/>

15. Step: Documents to hand in

1. Dissertation in Word + PDF format

2. Thesis booklet in Word + PDF format

3. Copyright statement

A copyright statement of the articles used to write the dissertation. It needs to state that the articles will be included in printed form in the dissertation, and figures and tables were also included.

- most articles include this information, search for (CTRL+F: CC BY)
- the author guidelines usually detail how the articles may be utilized; search key: journal name + copyright statement. If no permission is needed this is usually emphasized.
- When you found the copyright statement: print screen and include in the PACK.
- in certain cases, permission needs to be obtained from the publisher (i.e., Orvosi Hetilap): the form needs to be filled in, submitted and the answer from the journal needs to be included in the PACK.

4. Guidelines regarding format

It is included in the minutes of the first institute organized round of the defense, but it may also be downloaded separately. It is important to choose the appropriate format for the dissertation: all three versions are available on the webpage (English 25-50, English 30-60, Hungarian 70-150). Should you have the opportunity to choose, we recommend the 30-60 page English dissertation (this is the standard requirement for PhD students starting after 2022, those starting before may choose) <https://semmelweis.hu/phd/documents/2016-szeptember-1-utan-tanulmanyaiikat-megkezdok-reszere/>

5. Proof of Payment of the administrative fee

Administration fee for employees of Semmelweis University 120 000 HUG, and 200 000 HUF for non-Semmelweis University employees and those who are independent PhD students.

- you must ask your Doctoral School administrator in writing to add your fee to your Neptun account, then following payment take a screen shot of proof

or payment (from Neptun)

- Should you require assistance with payment of fees our financial officer may offer help: Monika Baracsi Mónika Phone number: +36 30 016 4561. E-mail: baracsi.monika@semmelweis.hu
- Payment may be performed via transfer between Institutions, if your Institution is willing to accept the charge (usually they would)

6. Library Data Sheet

Articles need to be downloaded from the MTMT webpage into a word file, and impact factors should be included. Articles need to be listed in two groups: articles included and not included in the dissertation.

https://lib.semmelweis.hu/phd_igazolas

Impact factors search according to year (through VPN connection):

<https://lib.semmelweis.hu/impaktfaktorok>

7. Minutes from the institute organized first round of defense

It needs to be scanned, signed and it should include the notes of the opponent and the answer to the opponents' questions.

8. Language exam certificates

If they had not previously been submitted

9. Recommendation of the relevant Doctoral School (scanned and signed by the Supervisor and the head of the TDI) for the opponent committee

- One president (from Semmelweis University, at least Med Habil/ professor), one member (non-Semmelweis University affiliation), one secretary (Semmelweis University), 2 opponents (one from Semmelweis University one non-associated): [Download \(doc\)](#) One further member may be included, it is not however necessary (more people means more difficulties with scheduling).
- needs to be signed by supervisor and the head of the Doctoral School

10. Certificate of employment no older than 30 days

- you need to provide this for yourself if you are self-employed.

11. Articles in PDF format

12. Certificate of originality and copyright: you must sign that you have not plagiarized ([Letöltés](#))

13. Certificate of the original results included in the dissertation: separate for each article [Letöltés \(doc\)](#)

Here you need to list which figures were used from which articles in the dissertation using the numbers from the original articles. This needs to be signed by the first, last and corresponding authors, and by both if they are joint first/last or corresponding authors.

They must be listed one by one even if all figures and tables were included in the dissertation.

14. Certificate signed by the dissertation supervisor, that the modifications requested at the institution organized first round of the defense have been performed ([Letöltés](#))