

## Thesis Writing – A long distance run

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November 2024



For I and M

*In my youth I was a sprinter – that is, I enjoyed the challenge of athletics – but about as far as 400 metres – and that to me was a stretch. Long distance running was not actually something I enjoyed doing. With that in mind – and applied outside of athletics – much of what has occurred in my personal and professional career is more like long distance running rather than sprinting. Surviving fifty years in academia required sustainability and long-term effort and commitment. Apply this mindset to thesis writing – which is most definitely not a sprint.*

### **Make sure you understand your motive**

From the outset, it is essential that you understand *why* you are doing a thesis and *how* it will enhance not only your understanding of the topic chosen but will have additional benefits including enhancing your professional *credibility*, providing *promotion* opportunities, increased *salary* and enhanced *scholarship/research* profile.

See – Why do a Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) -

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### **Select a topic that interests you in the longer term**

Selecting the actual topic for your research thesis is critical – and may take considerable review and adjustment along the way. It needs to be relevant and best associated with your current *interests and enthusiasms* – and if you happen to be a lecturer ideally with *relevance and currency* in your current teaching work. The topic needs to be *sustainable* in the sense that it remains current for the duration of your candidacy – ideally at least three years. Losing interest and/or relevance can be soul destroying.

### **Find a focus that fits with your current work**

It is always useful to ensure the focus of your work – stemming from the topic carefully chosen – has *multiple benefits* when it comes to your own workplace and occupation. Using the focus appropriately – and ensuring a range of flow on activities from the research focus – will enhance your professionalism significantly and contribute to your scholarship/research profile that in some occupations is critical. Using your research with as much diversity of application is essential to success – not to mention profile.

See – Scholarship can take on many forms -

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### **Pacing yourself**

When writing for either course work or dissertation it is vital to *pace yourself* from the outset – hence the reference to long distance running. Step by step is the answer. Many higher research awards have coursework elements that assist with shaping and framing your thinking and approach. Ideally a range of practice tasks – blogs, viva voce exercises, articles, mini-chapters and the like will assist in getting your head around the actual completion of the thesis not to mention the refinement of the research top and focus.

### **Use a structured approach**

Ideally, you will be taught how to structure your final thesis – with the opportunity of a practice go along the way. Whether it be seven chapters or five chapters – understanding the structure of the final work is critical.

See – The seven carriages - [6113ad\\_cc414d976c45420a8d090da3071c77c7.pdf](#)

*Understanding that writing a thesis (and completing the relevant coursework elements) is a process and it is best viewed as a long-term commitment rather than a quick response is critical to success. The temptation is to bolt ahead and get as much done as quickly as possible – not a good idea. Balancing life, work and study is essential. Using the initial analogy – thesis writing is a long-distance run – not a sprint.*



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