



# How to write a transfer report

All MPhil/PhD students are required to submit a transfer report to illustrate that there is potential in the research to form the basis of a PhD and that the candidates work is of the required standard to transfer on to a PhD award.

Your transfer report should normally be no more than 3000-6000 i.e. about 15 pages plus diagrams. Remember - Aim for no more than a total of 6000 good words! No padding. It should contain (1) a brief review and discussion of the work undertaken and (2) a statement of the intended further work including details of the original contribution to knowledge which is likely to emerge.

The examiners of your transfer report will be trying to satisfy themselves that you are making good progress towards your PhD goal. Remember that a doctorate degree (a PhD) is: "awarded to a candidate who having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic resulting in an independent and original contribution to knowledge and demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, has presented and defended a thesis, by oral examination, to the satisfaction of the examiners". The words in bold type are the difference between an MPhil and a PhD. Whilst there is no correct way to write a transfer report the objectives must be borne in mind, and the following suggested layout may be of some help.

## Summary

This should contain a clear and concise statement of the problem being investigated and an explanation of the research methods being used, a brief but specific summary of the essential results obtained so far and what you will be considering in the future. The length should be about 500 words.

## Introduction

This should lead the reader from what they might already be expected to know towards your particular subject. Make quite clear what your project is about. Be brief.

## Section 1

Critically review existing relevant literature, show what is lacking with the present state of knowledge (i.e. that is demonstrate how your work critically investigates the topic)

## Section 2

Introduce your project and show how it should help to address the deficiencies of other work (i.e. demonstrate how you evaluate your approved topic).

## Section 3

Show what has been done so far on your project. Be concrete and factual (i.e. demonstrate your independent contribution to knowledge and understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field.

## Section 4

Explain what you intend to do in the remaining time. It is here that the distinction between MPhil and PhD must be demonstrated. A PhD must involve original work and this section must show how your research will demonstrate this as well as your continuing understanding of the appropriate research methods applicable to your chosen field.

## Section 5

Conclusions...Be concise and preferably list them.

## References

For a 6000 word report you might expect to see about 30 key references. Be selective and only quote relevant references. References should be listed in accordance with BS1629.

If in doubt, always ask for advice and look at some examples of transfer reports. Talk to candidates who have been through the process...they will usually be happy to show you what they have done. Remember to get your report to the relevant Graduate Research Administrator for your Faculty's Research Programmes Committee (FRPC) well before the deadline for submission so that the independent specialist considering the report does not feel pressured - you want them on your side!

Pay attention to the final presentation of the report it must be spell-checked and proof-read and should look 'professional'. After the report has been considered you will have a transfer 'viva'. This is an oral examination which is usually (but not always) conducted by the independent specialist who examined your transfer report and observed by your Director of Studies. The FRPC will consider the transfer report and viva outcome together and decide whether to approve transfer to PhD.

