

The Research Room

August 2023

Tips of the month

Here are some tips and tricks you can use to make your research experience at VUW much more productive and enjoyable

Copyright permissions. If you are going to need to use other people's copyright material in your thesis/dissertation – such as images, diagrams and maps, or poems – you must obtain copyright permission before it can be included in our Open Access Institutional Repository.

NZ Copyright Law allows you to use this material without asking permission for examination, but you must have permission to include them in the copy of your thesis that is published in the online repository.

Remember that it can take time to establish who has copyright, contact them, email back and forth to clarify what you are able to do with the work. You should start this process as early as possible and do this as you go. Seeking copyright permissions shouldn't be left until submitting your thesis.

There are some things to consider, such as:

- They might say no, in which case you may need to find a replacement.
- They might want a licencing fee, in which case you might want to find a replacement.
- Not seeking permission might also cost you: reverse image search gets better every day, and the copyright owner might contact you with an invoice.
- Finally, make sure to securely store the permission once you have it; by the time you need to prove you had permission once it's published, your student email will be gone.

If the work is older, you may want to try to contact libraries and archives. Copyright can be inherited; if the work you wish to use is still under copyright protection, but the author is deceased, you will need to seek permission from the author's estate.

Te Pātaka Kōrero – The Library is available to help students as they navigate the world of [copyright permissions](#). If you have any questions or concerns about using third-party content in your research, please get in touch with us and we can work out a solution:

- Carmel Maclachlan (Advisor, Copyright): copyright@vuw.ac.nz
- Library Research Services: library-research@vuw.ac.nz
- Subject librarians: <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/library/teach/find-your-subject-librarian>

Carmel Maclachlan and Library Research Services – Te Pātaka Kōrero, The Library, VUW

Share your story

When utilized effectively, stories can be powerful tools to motivate and change minds. If you need an extra dose of motivation, this story should help you out

‘Optimise your enjoyment, productivity will follow’ – Prakriti

My first orientation to the doctorate was an amusing blog post describing Frodo’s journey in The Lord of the Rings as a metaphor for the PhD. Two years into my journey, I downright disagree. Mr. Baggins had unwittingly been sent on a mission he resented until the very end. Come to think of it, the more suitable allegory is Aragorn’s story. The journey does not culminate in you sailing away to the Undying Lands because the PhD was an emotional rollercoaster. Rather, it fittingly concludes with The Return of the King because you discover you always had what it takes.

That said, it is only natural to want to quit a lengthy journey when it gets demanding. But take a step back. Your PhD is not a punishment. You are not in over your head. Your PhD is one of the few things in your life you have complete control over—just take charge. In tough times when my morale takes a nosedive, I fall back on five fail-safe manoeuvres to get back on my feet:

Master your routine. The predictability of a daily routine keeps my anxiety and stress under control. By now, you know that perseverance—neither intelligence nor motivation—will carry you to the finish line. Chalk out a schedule that helps you show up for your thesis. Give it about three weeks, and your thesis will write itself thanks to your consistency.

Stuck in a rut? Switch it up. I often introduce small changes to my routine to quell the monotony and rev up my enthusiasm. Try changing what you eat for breakfast. Squeeze in an afternoon walk in the botanic gardens. Work from a café or the national library one day. The possibilities are endless. Discipline is the rudder, but you sometimes need to remind yourself that you are still in charge of the steering.

Take mindful breaks. Your PhD does not own every hour. Take purposeful breaks that slow time down and compel you to live in the moment. I have painfully realised that mindlessly scrolling through my phone is the opposite of self-care. Instead, immerse yourself in hobbies and physical exercise, and spend time with family and friends. Build a life beyond the PhD, but, more importantly, beyond the screens.

Embrace the creative process. Know that your success is inevitable, and frustration is the essential ingredient. I consider self-doubt is a secret weapon: you need it to push your limits and surprise yourself. Wield it to keep trying and redefining your “best”. But be wary—if you let it empower you, it will stifle your progress.

Remember a thesis is but words on paper. I struggle the most with what I like to call the “PhD paradox”: realising that there will never be enough time, but there will also never be a better time. If you have not managed to write in a while, it is okay—you are not behind. The only way to beat writer's block is to embrace being a beginner once again and not be afraid of it. Perfection is your enemy, and “Draft 0” is your best friend. At the finish line, all that matters is that you did not give up.

The uncertainty in your PhD comes from working on the edge of human knowledge. You never know what you may find. It is a privilege to go where no man has gone before, just ask Captain Kirk, who is also thrilled to venture out of his comfort zone, unlike Mr. Baggins. As my supervisor always likes reminding me, the PhD will be over before you know it. Focus on enjoying the journey while it lasts.

Prakriti Bhatt, Faculty of Law, VUW

Useful resources

Explore our list of research-related links that will help you throughout your research studies

[How to stress less.](#) An image that speaks louder than words. Stressing less is of paramount importance for our overall well-being and quality of life.

Events happening soon

Looking for other events happening inside and outside VUW? We go over some interesting events happening worldwide

Organizer	Event	Date and Time	Register
Research Services, The Library, VUW	Publishing your article: Creating an academic publishing strategy (<i>Dual</i>)	31 August, 11:00 – 12:00 NZST	Here
Student Learning, VUW	Developing your argument (<i>Online</i>)	01 August, 14:10 – 15:00 NZST	Here
	Writing abstracts (<i>Online</i>)	08 August, 14:10 – 15:00 NZST	Here
	Oral Presentations (<i>Online</i>)	15 August, 14:10 – 15:00 NZST	Here
CAD, Research Office, & FGR, VUW	Introduction to NVivo (<i>Dual</i>)	07 August, 10:00 – 12:00 NZST	Here
	Introduction to Qualtrics for research (<i>Dual</i>)	14 August, 13:00 – 14:30 NZST	Here
Education Now. Harvard Graduate School of Education	Building Diverse College Communities (<i>Online</i>)	24 August, 07:00 NZST	Here
Care for Business	Emotional Wellness - Juggling Act: The Five Bucket Principle (<i>Online</i>)	04 August, 05:00 NZST	Here
The Third Degree	Visualizing Research Data and Concepts (<i>Online</i>)	03 August, 00:00 NZST	Here
	Effective Poster Presentations (<i>Online</i>)	17 August, 00:00 NZST	Here
	Writing Chapter Five (<i>Online</i>)	24 August, 00:00 NZST	Here
Complete Dissertation by Statistics Solution	Mastering Your Literature Review (<i>Online</i>)	09 August, 05:00 NZST	Here
	Running and Interpreting Correlation Tests (<i>Online</i>)	11 August, 08:00 NZST	Here
	Confidently Present Your Quantitative Results Chapter (<i>Online</i>)	16 August, 06:00 NZST	Here
	Surviving Your Dissertation (<i>Online</i>)	17 August, 08:00 NZST	Here
	How to Conduct and Interpret Tests of Differences (<i>Online</i>)	18 August, 08:00 NZST	Here
	General Tips to Fast-Track Methodology (<i>Online</i>)	23 August, 08:00 NZST	Here
	7 Secrets to Completing Your Dissertation in One Year (<i>Online</i>)	25 August, 03:00 NZST	Here
	Navigating the Ethics Committee (<i>Online</i>)	30 August, 06:00 NZST	Here
Lumivero	Introduction to Decision Analysis Using PrecisionTree (<i>Online</i>)	11 August, 12:00 – 13:00 EDT	Here
	Accelerating your Literature Review with Citavi & NVivo 14 (<i>Online</i>)	17 August, 12:00 – 13:00 EDT	Here
Flexible Learning Association of New Zealand (FLANZ)	21 years of teaching online: The good, the bad, and the noteworthy (<i>Online</i>)	31 August, 14:00 – 15:00 NZST	Here
Google Garage	Boost your productivity with AI (<i>Online</i>)	15 August, 10:00 UK time	Here
	Understanding Machine Learning (<i>Online</i>)	15 August, 22:00 – 23:00 UK time	Here
	Writing for social media (<i>Online</i>)	22 August, 22:00 – 23:00 UK time	Here
Taylor & Francis	Research beyond academia: strategies for real world impact (<i>Online</i>)	10 August, 19:00 – 20:30 NZST	Here
	Peer Review Bootcamp: Arts & Humanities and Social Science (<i>Online</i>)	22, 23, 24 August, 23:00 – 22:00 NZST	Here

Organizer	Event	Date and Time	Register
Taylor & Francis	Excellence in peer review: how to be an effective peer reviewer <i>(Online)</i>	23 August, 20:30 – 22:00 NZST	Here
NR Computer Learning Center	Using Microsoft Power BI to develop Reports <i>(Online)</i>	28 August, 09:30 – 10:30 NZST	Here
	Introduction to Data analysis <i>(Online)</i>	21 August, 08:00 – 09:00 NZST	Here
	Introduction to SQL <i>(Online)</i>	28 August, 08:00 NZST	Here
	Excel: Building a Dashboard in an Hour <i>(Online)</i>	21 August, 09:30 – 10:30 NZST	Here
The Education Hub	Visual arts – a practical workshop <i>(Online)</i>	15 August, 20:00 NZST	Here
	Supporting neurodivergent students in the classroom <i>(Online)</i>	22 August, 19:30 NZST	Here
	In consideration of educational tests: evil, necessary, or beneficial? <i>(Online)</i>	28 August, 19:30 NZST	Here
DoctorateHub	Tackling Wicked Problems - ... or how to nail Jelly to the Wall? <i>(Online)</i>	12 August, 12:00 UK time	Here

**Please note that by listing these events we are not endorsing any organisations but rather compiling and sharing a list of resources that may be helpful.*

FGR

The Wellington Faculty of Graduate Research (FGR) works to ensure that your experience as a thesis student is a positive one. For more information, visit our [website](#)

Contact

Postgraduate Research Student Advisers: FGR-postgrads@vuw.ac.nz

- Enrolling in your doctoral or master's programme.
- Candidature management changes.

Online forms for thesis candidature changes can be found [here](#).

Thesis Examinations: FGR-Masters-Exams@vuw.ac.nz or PhD-Exams@vuw.ac.nz

- Submission or examination of theses.

Scholarships and Doctoral Admissions: pg-research@vuw.ac.nz:

- Doctoral applications or the doctoral application process
- Scholarships