

UniFiji Launches PhD by Publication

The University of Fiji's new programme, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) by Publication, will commence from 2020. This was confirmed by Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sushila Chang. The programme is ideally suited for academics who have successfully completed their Master's Degree in a dedicated area of research and researchers in industry who have research publications as part of their work and have not been able to put aside time to do a traditional type PhD. This mode of PhD provides an alternative.

Professor Chang said that the programme, unlike the traditional PhD by dissertation, in this case the candidate's thesis was largely based on a series of peer-reviewed academic papers which have been published or accepted for publication. She noted that the aim of the programme as it is for other PhD's is to find novel approaches of integrating professional and academic knowledge.

The 'traditional' PhD thesis usually forms an integrated whole with a commonly required length of some 80,000 to 100,000 words. It is very common that the traditional PhD candidate, will, upon conferment of his PhD convert the novel innovations or discoveries into publications. In many universities PhD by thesis candidates, besides the thesis, are also required to publish 3 or more papers in ranked journals.

"PhD by Publication divides an often-overwhelming research project into smaller, more manageable sections, each with deadlines, which may provide a clear, outcome-driven framework for the project. Candidates also receive assistance from their supervisor, peer reviewers and editors in producing those publications. The unique aspect of the PhD by publication is that completing publications progressively throughout the candidature may ease some of the pressure involved in preparing one final submission for examination. It also makes the student think strategically and prepares them well for the future, as they are publishing as they research, unlike the PhD by thesis where the research is mostly published later.