



Welcome Aboard Note from the Author

Dear Reader,

Starting a postgraduate research journey is an exciting adventure into uncharted territories, beyond the boundaries of existing knowledge.

Although the research journey of each student is unique, there are common steps that all research students – and their supervisors – need to go through and complete along the way. At the start of your journey, you will likely get a ‘map’ for your postgraduate programme outlining the requirements and milestones of your degree such as taking certain courses, preparing your research proposal, conducting research, and submitting your thesis.

This guide provides you with a compass to help you navigate your postgraduate research journey – and successfully complete your research (and degree)!

This Compass Guide will help you navigate the postgraduate research **process** smoothly from the early stages of research through to writing a thesis and sharing your results:

- This guide offers recommendations for **setting up and maintaining a good foundation** for your postgraduate degree by learning how to be an excellent research student; how to work effectively with your postgraduate supervisor(s); and how to plan your postgraduate degree.
- The guide presents **guidelines** for successfully completing the requirements of all components of your postgraduate research journey (including conducting and writing up a literature review; preparing your research proposal; and putting your thesis together).
- **Tips** will give you additional suggestions and ideas about things to look for or aim for during your postgraduate degree.
- ‘How to do it’ **activities** and **examples** will help you learn through knowledge application and encourage you to reflect on your learning.
- **Compass Guide feedback templates**, **Ask Your Supervisor** sections and **suggested reading** will give you tools, ideas and confidence for finding your own way through the postgraduate research adventure – knowing what to look for and which questions to ask.

It is important to note that **this guide is not a research methodology textbook**. Research methods differ across scientific disciplines and even within disciplines based on specific research questions.

Instead, this guide provides a compass to help students navigate their postgraduate research journey – irrespective of their research discipline and/or chosen research topic.

Although this guide is a resourceful friend, it should not be used as a replacement for a postgraduate supervisor. Your supervisor will be the most valuable resource during your postgraduate studies. Using this guide will help you be/become an excellent research student, build and maintain an effective relationship with your supervisor(s), and successfully complete your postgraduate degree.

Every postgraduate research journey is unique, and you are (or will be) creating and living your own journey. Like many things in life, the more you invest yourself into your postgraduate research experience, the more you will get out of it. Put your best work forward at each stage, ask for feedback and learn from the feedback you receive. Then revise your work, ask for more feedback and learn new things again. And again... And again... Keep learning, get inspired and get the most out of your postgraduate degree – both professionally and personally.

This Compass Guide book was designed with the intention to give you insights into an exciting world of research, help you see the big picture, and enjoy many different layers of learning that postgraduate research offers. Use this guide as a compass to assist you in navigating your postgraduate research journey – and enjoy the experience. 😊

Go well!



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