



OFFICE OF RESEARCH INNOVATION & COMMERCIALIZATION

GUIDELINES FOR THESIS WRITING (Masters/MPhil/Ph.D)

Dec 2015

**KHYBER MEDICAL UNIVERSITY
PESHAWAR**

FOREWORD:

The Office of Research Innovation & Commercialization (ORIC) of KMU is the main building block of the university. The activities undertaken by the ORIC, especially under its research capacity development programme, and the enthusiastic response from the academia, played a fundamental role in enhancing the quality of health professionals' education in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Acting as the gravity for the research technical board of KMU, ORIC is dedicated to developing quality research projects not only at student's level but also at faculty level.

Conducting research (both undergraduate & postgraduate level) requires passion to solve problems that affect educational processes and outcomes, including content. Hence, writing research proposals requires not just the passion but also specific knowledge and skills that would help guide the research process to its logical conclusion which entails making viable recommendations for resolving identified problems, based on research evidence adduced through credible methodologies, thus making a valuable contribution in the area studied.

The primary goal of ORIC KMU is the creation, critical examination, and dissemination of research related knowledge & skills. Students play a central role in achieving this mandate by carrying out and reporting on their research. At the student level, research and creation are expected to broaden the knowledge horizon. The successful completion of a master's or doctoral degree confirms that the scholar has achieved professional standards as a researcher in his or her disciplines.

The thesis is the final report on a comprehensive research project and is the central component to completing the degree requirements. The thesis must demonstrate a mastery of the existing body of knowledge while also expanding the body of knowledge on the subject. To accomplish this, all parts of the thesis must be organized and presented in a cohesive structure that follows a logical progression.

This manual presents thesis guidelines for students and faculty studying in Masters/M.Phil/PhD program of Khyber Medical University Peshawar. The outline presented here include format of thesis writing and detailed guidelines for completing the thesis at different levels of education. The goal of this booklet is to help make the thesis process predictable, enlightening, and even enjoyable for both students and faculty.

WHAT IS THESIS?

A thesis is a presentation of original research carried out by the author. The results and findings of thesis research may be of significance and in demand for many years after the thesis is written. It is important that the thesis be well presented and in a durable form. It is imperative to recognize that the writing of a thesis involves quite as much work as for a paper, and that the work differs from conventional study in shape and demand. The subject of your thesis may, but need not, overlap with a subject or period covered by one or more of your other papers, but you must not repeat material used in your thesis in any of your papers, and you will not be given credit for material extensively repeated.

ROLE OF SUPERVISOR

The supervisor of the thesis will assist in the choice of a topic and give initial advice on relevant sources and methods. He or she will advise on sources and presentation and assist with bibliographical advice; he or she will certainly expect to read draft chapters or sections. He or she may, but will not necessarily, read and comment on a complete first draft. But the thesis must reflect the hard work done by the scholar him/herself.

THESES - GOOD AND INDIFFERENT

The hallmark of a good thesis is that it contains a consecutive argument or set of arguments on its topic. Apart from showing a sound grasp of the secondary literature on the subject and/or period and an awareness of the problems of the topic, you should deploy the evidence of the sources to support the elements in your general argument. It should be made clear how you have approached the subject, what conclusions you have reached and, if appropriate, how your approach and conclusions are related to the views of other scholars.

The work should be well-written and properly presented, with footnote references in orderly, consistent and unfussy shape and a sensibly-selected bibliography. Good presentation, in the experience of many examiners, is usually combined with high quality of analysis. Conversely, careless or unclear writing, uncorrected mis-spellings, typing errors and plain misquotations often go with an uncertain or myopic focus on the subject. Authors sometimes become so interested in their topic that they overlook the need to provide at least a brief introduction to it and to set it in its broader historical context or

contexts. (An introductory section to a thesis may often usefully include a survey of the existing literature on a topic and 'pointers' to its particular interest and problems.)

While reading and research are being carried out, you should also be planning how to shape materials into an argument. Research, while sometimes frustrating, is intensely stimulating; it can also become a beguiling end in itself. Laboriously collected materials are worthless unless they contribute to a coherent argument. For this reason, you should begin to plan the structure of your argument as early as possible; some plans may need to be discarded until the most feasible one has been found.

It is a reasonable assumption that writing the thesis will take longer than expected: a good thesis will certainly require more than one draft of parts if not of the whole. Plenty of time should be allowed for getting the final typed version into presentable form without disrupting work for other papers or revision.

PAGE FORMAT & LAYOUT OF THESIS

A: Font

A single font must be used throughout the thesis or report, the only exceptions being in tables, graphs, and appendices. Headings may be bolded and no more than 2 points larger than the rest of the text. In general, TIMES NEW ROMAN is the recommended font type to be used in thesis writing with a size of 12 for general text and a size of 14 for headings.

B: Margins

All theses and reports must have consistent margins of at least 1.5 inches at the top, bottom, left, and right edges of the page. Page numbers must be placed at the bottom of the page on the right hand corner. Higher or lower margins will only be acceptable in special circumstances (approved by graduate studies committee)

C: Spacing

The thesis or report must be double-spaced. Single spacing may be used only in the Table of Contents, footnotes and endnotes, charts, graphs, tables, quotations, captions, glossary and appendices.

Prose quotations over three lines long should be in block quote, double or single-spaced, and indented on the left. Do not use quotation marks in the block quote except when indicating quotations within the block quote.

No of pages allocated for different thesis levels;

Postgraduate Diploma: 80-100 pages

Masters/M.Phil: 80-100 pages

Ph.D: 150-250 pages

D: Numbering of Pages

Beginning with the first page of the Acknowledgements or Preface, if used, all preliminary pages preceding the actual text must be numbered in uppercase Roman numerals; e.g., III, IV, V etc. These numerals must be placed on the bottom of the page on the right hand corner. If no optional pages are used, the page numbers must begin on the Abstract. Do not number the copyright page, signature page, title page, or dedication, but do include each of them in the pre-text page count.

The first page of the text begins at Arabic numeral 1. All pages within the text must contain an Arabic page number, bottom-right. The first page of every major section (chapters, appendices, bibliography, etc.) must begin on a new page.

E: Tables and Illustrations

Pages carrying illustrative material must be given page numbers appropriate to their place in the document. Illustrative material may not be inserted after the document has been numbered and given numbers such as “10a.”

All tables, figures, illustrations, and other types of examples included and referenced in the text of the dissertation should be numbered for identification. There should be no duplication of these numbers; i.e., no two tables should be assigned the same number. Figures may be numbered in one of two ways: consecutively throughout the document (Table 1, Table 2, Table 3, etc.), or double-numbered so that illustrations’ numbers reflect their locations in the document (Figure 9.3 is the third figure in Chapter 9, or Figure A2 is the second figure in Appendix A).

Captions and legends must be placed on the same page with the figure, graph, table or illustration they describe. In order to fit both figure and caption on the same page, captions may be single-spaced, margins may be decreased to one inch, and figures may be reduced in size to fit. If the figures are reduced from their original size, then the page number must be added after the reduction so as not to alter its size. If there is no other way to manage the amount of material to be shown, the caption and figures should be side-by-side in continuous view. This method should only be used in the rare instance where all of the pertinent material will not fit on the same page. Figures, captions, and page numbers must be easily readable when the electronic document is viewed at 100 percent.

F: Binding Color:

A: Masters/MPhil Thesis: Black

B: Ph.D Thesis: Maroon

THESIS FORMAT (as in sequence below)

1. Title Page:

It is the very first page of thesis. The title is a concise statement identifying actual variables or theoretical issues under investigation and the relation between them. A title should be in minimum possible words that adequately describe the contents of research work/study all the words in the title are to be chosen with great care and the association with one another properly sequenced. This is also important for indexing the study. The title does not contain any abbreviation, chemical formulae, proprietary names and jargons etc.

The title should be written on the top in bold capital letters with a font size of not more than 16. Title should be ideally double spaced, however, in case of lengthy titles 1.5 spacing or single spacing can be utilized. This should be followed by full name of scholar in the order of first, middle, initial and last name along with the title of degree sought and the specialty. Then full name & designation of Supervisor should be mentioned under whom the entire research work/study has been completed together with his/her highest academic degree. At the bottom the name of department and institution is to be given, where research work/study has been conducted. The logo of Khyber Medical University should appear on the top left hand corner of the title page and the logo of the concerned institute should appear on the top right hand corner of the title page. (Logos can be downloaded from www.kmu.edu.pk)

See Annexure A for sample title page.

2. Bismillah Page: Optional.

3. Declaration Page: See Annexure B for sample declaration page

4. Dedication page:

The author/scholar of the thesis can write in his/her own words that the report is dedicated to. This page should not be more than three lines. It is generally recommended to avoid highly ambitious and sensitive words in dedication.

5. Acknowledgements:

This section is designed to offer thanks or appreciation to the efforts of individuals or organizations for help, advice or financial and material assistance extended by them during the research work/study. The Students should not forget to mention the names

of their colleagues, statisticians, the computer operator and spouse, if applicable, as well as the supervisor.

This is the best place to show gratitude and appreciation. Technical help and other contributions like financial and material support are acknowledged in a separate paragraph.

6. Table of Contents:

The Table of Contents must be placed before the text and any lists of tables, figures, etc. It consists of section titles, chapter titles, and as many or few subheadings as the author feels are necessary. The section and chapter titles listed on the Table of Contents must exactly match the titles as they appear within the text. Chapters labeled in the Table of Contents with Arabic numbers (Chapter 3) must not lapse into Roman numerals (Chapter III) when they appear again in the text. Page numbers for chapters and subheadings are right justified on the Table of Contents and preceded by a dot leader.

In the text of the thesis or report, major sections must begin on a fresh page and be designated in the Table of Contents by left justified headings (not indented). Subsections, which do not need to begin on fresh pages, must be indented in the Table of Contents. The page numbers listed on the Table of Contents must correlate with the beginning of each section or chapter.

Table of Contents entries are generally double-spaced. However, chapter titles and subheadings, when more than one line long, should be indented at the second line and single-spaced. For example:

Chapter One: Title.....	1
Chapter Two: Title.....	23
Subheading Title.....	24
Subheading Title Extending Over One Or More Lines, at the Author’s Discretion.....	38

It is acceptable to have a minimal Table of Contents, consisting only of the sections Text and Bibliography with their respective page numbers if the text itself has no divisible chapters or major sections.

7. List of Tables: Refer to Section E of **Page Format & Layout of Thesis above**

8. **List of Figures:** Refer to Section E of **Page Format & Layout of Thesis above**

9. **List of Abbreviations:**

A list of all the abbreviations used in the thesis along with full words is written on separate page(s) and numbered in Roman numerals. Only standard abbreviations are used in the thesis. It is recommended that a standard abbreviation must consist of at least two alphabets and should be written in CAPITAL throughout the whole thesis.

10. **Chapter 1: Abstract:**

The abstract should give a synopsis of the work carried out, the significant results obtained and the major conclusions of the thesis. The maximum length of the abstract should not exceed 500 words in double space and normally unstructured. An ideal abstract is generally recommended to be not more than 300 pages.

It is written in past tense under the following headings:

I introduction

I objectives

I main outcome measures,

I study design

I setting

I subjects

I methods

I results

I conclusions.

At the end of abstract, three to ten (3-10) key words are identified and written.

Selected key words should be from the Medical Subject Headings (MeSH), List of Index

11. **Chapter 2: Background/Introduction:**

In this chapter, clearly state what the purpose of the study is and explain the study's significance. The significance is addressed by discussing how the study adds to the theoretical body of knowledge in the field and the study's practical significance for communication professionals in the field being examined.

Ph.D. students also must explain how their research makes an original contribution to the body of knowledge in their discipline. They also should address the significance of the study for mass communication education.

Before writing introduction in the thesis, the student should study relevant literature retrieved from published papers. Relevant articles are selected, which improve the understanding of the topic. Only pertinent references are cited but not extensively reviewed in this section. Rationale of the study should be mentioned at the end of introduction. The word count of Introduction section should be a minimum of 1000.

It is especially critical that this chapter be well developed. Without a clearly defined purpose and strong theoretical grounding, the thesis or dissertation is fundamentally flawed from the outset.

12. Chapter 3: Review of Literature:

The purpose of the study should suggest some theoretical framework to be explained further in this chapter. The literature review thus describes and analyzes previous research on the topic.

This chapter, however, should not merely string together what other researchers have found. Rather, the scholar should discuss and analyze the body of knowledge with the ultimate goal of determining what is known and is not known about the topic. This determination leads to your research questions and/or hypotheses. In some cases, of course, you may determine that replicating previous research is needed. It should be a collective review and critique in the candidate's own words of various viewpoints supported by relevant data, and should not be copied from published work. The review should be properly referenced. References should preferably be of the last 15 years, including some published in the recent past. However, older references can be cited provided they are relevant and historical.

It is essential to also include a review of the local literature. A special effort should be made to collect and review all work done in Pakistan on the chosen topic. This should include work published in recognized journals and in publications of various societies and medical colleges, as well as abstracts of meetings, conferences or seminars held in Pakistan or abroad. Data collected by others, whether published or unpublished, must be acknowledged whenever included.

13. Chapter 4: Methodology

Chapter 4A: Hypothesis: A hypothesis is a statement showing expected relation b/w 2 variables. Hypothesis must be mentioned clearly and must reflect the objectives of the study. An alternate hypothesis should be clearly written in the following study designs:

All interventional studies

Cohort

Case control

Comparative cross sectional

Chapter 4B: Objectives: Objectives are statements of intentions. They inform the reader clearly what the researcher has done in his/her work. They must identify the variables involved in research. Objective should be sufficiently specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound (SMART). The objective should be exactly the same as written in the research proposal & approved by the advanced studies & research board of KMU and should be written in past tense.

Chapter 4C: Operational Definitions: Should be present in every research thesis/report. Operational definitions reflect the reader or the assessor about how the research measured individual variables, where they were measured, how they were measured. Essentially an operational definition completes once a tool of detection with possible time frame is added to conventional definition. It must be noted here that vague terminologies may be avoided in operational definitions and only confirmatory tests/tools may be sufficient in operational definitions. It is generally recommended that all the operational definitions approved in the research proposal must be incorporated here in the thesis report.

Chapter 4D: Materials & Methods: In this section, the scholar must not refrain from the methodology which was approved by the AS&RB of KMU. Any additional information which the scholar needs to share with the assessor / evaluator can be added in the methodology section. Past tense should be used here since the research will reflect the project is undertaken in the past.

In this section, the following sequence of headings must be used;

Study Design:

Study Population/Settings:

Sampling Technique:

Sample Size:

Study Duration: From date to date.

Inclusion Criteria:

Exclusion Criteria:

Data Collection Procedure:

Data Analysis Procedure:

14. Chapter 5: Analysis & Results:

This chapter addresses the results from your data analysis only. This chapter does not include discussing other research literature or the implications of your findings.

Usually you begin by outlining any descriptive or exploratory/confirmatory analyses (e.g., reliability tests, factor analysis) that were conducted. You next address the results of the tests of hypotheses. You then discuss any ex post facto analysis. Tables and/or figures should be used to illustrate and summarize all numeric information.

For qualitative and historical research, this chapter usually is organized by the themes or categories uncovered in your research. If you have conducted focus groups or interviews, it is often appropriate to provide a brief descriptive (e.g., demographic) profile of the participants first. Direct quotation and paraphrasing of data from focus groups, interviews, or historical artifacts then are used to support the generalizations made. In some cases, this analysis also includes information from field notes or other interpretative data (e.g., life history information).

15. Chapter 6: Discussion:

The purpose of this chapter is not just to reiterate what you found but rather to discuss what your findings mean in relation to the theoretical body of knowledge on the topic and your profession. Typically, students skimp on this chapter even though it may be the most important one because it answers the "So what?" question.

Begin by discussing your findings in relation to the theoretical framework introduced in the literature review. In some cases, you may need to introduce new literature (particularly with qualitative research).

This chapter also should address what your findings mean for communication professionals in the field being examined. In other words, what are the study's practical implications?

Doctoral students also should discuss the pedagogical implications of the study. What does the study suggest for mass communication education?

This chapter next outlines the limitations of the study. Areas for future research then are proposed.

16. Chapter 7: Conclusion & Recommendations:

This is the last section of the text in which conclusions or inferences drawn on the basis of the results of study are described. The conclusions should be linked with the objectives of the study. Recommendations for further research may be included when appropriate. It is important to be careful that the conclusions should not go beyond data and should be based on the study results and population.

17. Chapter 8: Bibliography:

Should be written in Vancouver style as any other style is NOT recommended in KMU. Refer to a variety of guidelines available on the internet to learn about how to write references in Vancouver style. It is generally recommended that reference managers like END NOTE should be used during thesis writing to manage references comfortably.

18. Annexes:

The following annexes must follow after chapter 8 in the specific order before sending the thesis for binding. However, additional annexes can be added where necessary.

The following annexes MUST be included in the thesis in specific order as below;

Annexure I: Copy of approved proposal along with data collection tool from AS&RB KMU.

Annexure II: KMU-AS&RB approval certificate

Annexure III: Ethical clearance certificate from KMU-Ethics board or any other relevant board of any other institute.

Annexure IV: Anti plagiarism certificate issued by Quality Enhancement Cell of KMU.

19. Annexure V: Any other document relevant to the research project.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

1. Master of Public Health Thesis Guide. Department of Global Health, University of Washington. Available at; http://globalhealth.washington.edu/sites/default/files/Thesis%20Manual_August_2015.pdf
2. Format guidelines for Masters thesis & reports. University of Texas. Available at; http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdn/pdf/format_guidelines-m.pdf
3. General guidelines for thesis writers. Available at; https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/access/content/group/a55c44d3-9f21-4dec-b48c-2dc6fa4e4bee/Exams/General_Guidelines_for_Thesis_Writers.pdf
4. Guidelines for writing a thesis or dissertation. Available at; <https://www.jou.ufl.edu/grad/forms/Guidelines-for-writing-thesis-or-dissertation.pdf>
5. Guidelines for writing thesis. Available at; https://www.mu.ac.ke/images/downloads/new_guidelines_for_writing_thesis.pdf
6. Dissertation guidelines of College of Physicians & Surgeons Pakistan.
7. Student's guide to thesis preparation, examination procedures and regulations. School of graduate studies, Concordia University. Available at; <http://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/concordia/offices/sgs/docs/handbooks/thesispreparationguide.pdf>
8. Guidelines for writing academic research proposals and theses in the school of education revised 2013. Kenyatta University. Available at; [http://www.ku.ac.ke/schools/education/images/stories/docs/Guidelines_with Table of Proposal and thesis writingJAN14.pdf](http://www.ku.ac.ke/schools/education/images/stories/docs/Guidelines_with_Table_of_Proposal_and_thesis_writingJAN14.pdf)

ANNEXURE A:

**TITLE-TITLE-TITLE--TITLE-TITLE--TITLE-TITLE--
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TITLE--TITLE-TITLE--TITLE-TITLE--TITLE-TITLE--
TITLE-TITLE-**

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Session 2015-18

