



BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING AND FORMATTING MASTER'S DISSERTATION AND PHD THESIS

A. Introduction

The Board of Postgraduate Studies (BPS) plays a critical role in the realization of the university's mandate through the provision of a supportive ecosystem that promotes postgraduate students' research excellence. To this extent, BPS provides the students with guidelines that seek to harmonize and standardize dissertations and thesis documents. This provides students with a definite template to work with when drafting their research work. The guidelines seek to support postgraduate students in preparing and formatting their dissertations and theses. The guidelines stipulate the key components of a dissertation and thesis; the number of chapters, word count, size of the document, referencing style, and even the font size. The desired goal is to have harmonized and standardized documents that enhance the university brand. The guidelines allow flexibility that promotes creativity and innovation among the postgraduate students.

B. Postgraduate Research Process

The BPS postgraduate research process is a road map on the key milestones, for our graduate students in the dissertation and thesis journey;

1. **Crafting of a Research Title, Development of Concept Paper, Submission and Presentation:** It is desirable that our students research impacts the society and therefore students are advised to craft research titles around existing societal challenges as well as within the university thematic areas obtainable from the university website www.kcau.ac.ke.
2. **Allocation of Supervisor/s:** Students will be allocated 1/2/3 supervisor/s by the respective schools upon completion of all coursework units.
3. **Development and Presentation of Research Proposal:** A student having successfully registered for dissertation or thesis is expected to develop the research proposal under the guidance of the supervisor/s. No student should submit the proposal without the approval of the supervisor/s as required in the proposal submission form. It is desirable that students should come up with novel research work that exhibits originality and zero plagiarism. No proposal

will be scheduled for presentation if they don't meet the minimum plagiarism level.

4. **Ethical Review and Clearance:** All students undertaking their research must have their proposal reviewed and cleared for ethical consideration by the KCA University Scientific and Review Committee (KCAUSERC). An ethical Review certificate will be issued.
5. **Introduction letter from BPS:** All students undertaking their research must obtain an introduction letter from BPS upon successful completion of their research proposal.
6. **NACOSTI Research Permit.** All students undertaking research should obtain National Council of Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) research permit. The application can be done online via the website www.nacosti.go.ke.
7. **Data Collection and Analysis:** A student must undertake data collection and analysis as per their stated methods. No data manipulation will be allowed. All students will be required to submit their real raw data to the BPS Postgraduate Research Liaison Officer for confirmation.
8. **Dissertation and Thesis Presentation:** All students are required to consult their supervisors before submitting their reports for consideration. A dissertation/thesis submission form will be signed by both student and supervisor/s accompanied by a plagiarism report. A student is also required to fill an intention to submit form.
9. **Student Research Progress Reports:** Masters students will be required to submit at least two progress reports and PhD students four before being considered to present the final report.
10. **Article Publication:** PhD students must publish a minimum of two papers in peer reviewed journals preferably indexed in Scopus, Scimago, web of science etc or other journals as may be provided by the Research and Innovation and Outreach Division (RIO). It is desirable for students undertaking master studies to publish one journal paper.
11. **Postgraduate Research Dissemination:** All postgraduate students undertaking research will be required to present their research findings as per the postgraduate research dissemination policy and framework. Some avenues for dissemination include workshops, seminars, conferences, exhibitions etc as advised by their respective schools or departments.
12. **University Research Repository:** All students are required to sign an institutional repository deposit agreement for their dissertation/thesis. All postgraduate research work will be put in the university research repository.
13. **Research Funding:** Students are advised to be proactive in seeking funding opportunities for their studies as shared by RIO through BPS. BPS will guide all interested students on how to apply for the funds.
14. **BPS Capacity Building Workshops:** BPS organizes various specialized research capacity building workshops as shared through the website and student corporate emails. The training seminars range from: The Art of Scientific Writing, Crafting a Fundable Research Title, Literature Review, Research Methodology, Data Analysis etc.
15. **Postgraduate research forms:** To facilitate seamless student progress in the research process

BPS has developed critical forms which are obtainable from the university website under BPS through <https://sgsr.kcau.ac.ke/downloads/>

C. Guidelines for Preparing Research proposal and Report

1. Examination Copies – Soft copy of the thesis or Six (6) Spiral bound hard copies.
2. **Final Copies** – Two (2) copies of either dissertation or thesis in black cover as required by the University or any other mode specified by BPS. In addition, a CD labeled with the candidate's name and registration number in felt pen, or an electronic copy submitted through the virtual link (or any other method specified by BPS), must be provided.
3. The dissertation or thesis must be type-written or printed on good quality A4 size (210 x 297 mm).Font – Times New Roman shall be used.
4. Top cover page – Printed in gold, bold, font 14 and centered.-See provided sample page.
5. The Spine – Surname followed by initials, the degree for which the thesis is being submitted, and the year printed in gold, bold, font 14. The writing should read from the bottom to the top of the spine.
6. Margins - The Left margin of thesis should be 40 mm, wide. Top, Right and bottom margins of thesis should be 25 mm. wide.
7. Apart from the cover page and the title page, the thesis should be in Times New Roman font size twelve (12).
8. The Declaration page and all the preliminary pages should be numbered in Roman numbers i.e i, ii, iii...bottom center.
9. The rest of the document starting from Chapter one should be numbered using Arabic numbers starting 1, 2, 3... bottom center.
10. The whole document should be 1.5 spaced apart from prescribed sections.
11. The respective department shall advise on referencing style. In the absence of departmental guidelines, APA format for referencing shall be used.
12. Length of proposal. The respective department shall advise on expected length of proposal. In the absence of departmental guidelines, a master's proposal is expected to range 25 to 35 pages and a PhD proposal 50 to 70 pages excluding references and appendices.
13. Length of thesis. The respective department shall advise on expected length of thesis. In the absence of departmental guidelines, a master's dissertation is expected to range between 50 to 100 pages and a PhD thesis 100 to 200 pages excluding references and appendices. The word count shall be 20,000 and 50,000 words respectively in line with Commission for University Education (CUE) 2014 guidelines.
14. Front page – Capital letters shall be used, in bold, font 14 and (the whole title page should be symmetrically arranged).

The front (title) page must be arranged as follows:

Full name of the Candidate

Then the legend for dissertation/Thesis “A Dissertation/Thesis submitted in partial

fulfilment for the award of Degree of (insert name of degree) in the (insert name of School) of KCA University. This statement should appear at the middle of the page.

The month and year

15. Declaration – Start on new page- In font 12 duly signed by candidate and supervisor/s.

The declaration page must contain the order indicated below:

- a) a signed declaration by the candidate with the following statement: “This dissertation/thesis is my original work and has not been presented for award of a degree in any other University”.
- b) a signed declaration by each of the University supervisors with the following statement: “This dissertation/thesis has been submitted for examination with my (our) approval as University Supervisor(s)”.

16. Dedication - Start on new page- Optional

17. Copyright - optional. If included, align with University Intellectual Property (IP) policy.

18. Acknowledgement - Start on new page -To universities, supervisors, parents, etc.- Optional

19. Table of Contents - Start on new page- List of all chapters/topics in the thesis.

20. List of Tables - Start on new page. Where applicable.

21. List of Figures - Start on new page. Where applicable.

22. List of Plates - Start on new page. Where applicable.

23. List of Appendices - Start on new page - Where applicable.

24. List of Abbreviations /Acronyms - Start on new page. Where applicable.

25. List of Nomenclatures - Start on new page. Where applicable.

26. Abstract – Single spaced and one page maximum. Though appears first should be written last.

27. Order of names: on cover page. First Name, Middle Name and Last Name.

28. Thesis Chapters. The respective department shall advise on thesis chapters. In the absence of departmental guidelines, the following shall apply.

27 a) Master’s and PhD Dissertation/Thesis shall have five chapters. Each chapter should start on a new page, written in capital letters and laid out as follows.

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER TWO REVIEW OF LITERATURE

CHAPTER THREE MATERIALS AND METHODS /RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER FOUR RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS/FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

REFERENCES -Shall come after last chapter but shall not be given a chapter number.

-References shall be single spaced.

-Literature must be cited by author and date or by number in the text, and a list of references must appear at the end of dissertation/thesis.

27 b) **Or** Master's Dissertation and PhD Thesis, may upon the recommendation of the school follow a thematic format. Where the thematic format is used the chapters shall be:

CHAPTER ONE - GENERAL INTRODUCTION

THEMATIC CHAPTERS (which shall be numbered)

SYNTHESIS (this chapter shall be numbered).

REFERENCES -Shall come after last chapter but shall not be given a chapter number.

-References shall be single spaced.

- Literature must be cited by author and date or by number in the text, and a list of references must appear at the end of dissertation/thesis.

28. Candidates should consult the respective department if they require any advice on any matter concerning the form of a dissertation/thesis not covered by these guidelines.

29. General Thesis Outline

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION.

To include:

Background of the study

Problem statement

Justification

Research questions (where applicable)

Objectives

General Objective-Should be related to the title

Specific objectives –Should be closely linked to the research questions and hypothesis.

Research Questions/ Hypothesis

Significance of the Study

Scope (where applicable)

The Limitations (where applicable)

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Study Theories

Empirical Review

To include all relevant literature to each objective should be exhaustively cover every objective of the study subheadings may sometimes be useful.

Conceptual framework (where applicable)

Research Gaps

CHAPTER THREE

MATERIALS AND METHODS

/RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To include:

Introduction

Research Philosophy (Where applicable)

The research designs.

Description of the study area (if a field observation study was done).

The target population.

Sampling designs, techniques and illustrations.

Data collection procedures.

Data analysis.

Study Model

Diagnostic Tests

Regulatory requirements such as ethical clearance, research permits, biosafety clearance or permission among others.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS/FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The actual data from the study should be presented. The discussion of results (without repeating the results) which is guided by the objectives.

The narrative should be accompanied by illustrations such as plates, figures or tables.

Each table or figure given should be accompanied by a summary or interpretation.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

Should include:

The summary of results (without repeating the results) which is guided by the objectives.

Conclusions drawn to respond to the objectives.

Based on the conclusions make recommendations.

REFERENCES

- To use the style determined by the department. In the absence of departmental guidelines APA style shall be used. Consistency is important in citation.

The candidate should confirm the format with BPS office before binding the final Thesis.

THE PRELIMINARY PAGES

The preliminary pages of the thesis should mirror the usual scholarly books.

i) **Title pages:** This indicates the title of the study, the author's name, the degree requirement being fulfilled, the name of the University awarding the degree, the date of submission of the thesis and the signing of the supervisors.

ii) **Declaration page:** This should be written as:

“This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.”
The student signs his/her name and registration number

All the supervisors then sign the thesis, starting with the main supervisor. At least two full names for each supervisor should be written. Their positions at work e.g. Senior Lecturer, Chairman of Department etc should however not be included:

How a sample thesis in the KCA University is expected to look like is provided.

KCA UNIVERSITY

JAMES MUENDO MWORIA

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY THESIS

MARCH, 2024

**MANAGING SUPPLY CHAIN DISRUPTIONS UNDER
CERTAINTY IN KENYAN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS**

JAMES MUENDO MWORIA (PhD)

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN MANAGEMENT
OF KCA UNIVERSITY**

MARCH, 2024

DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for award of a degree in any other University

Signature..... Date.....
James Muendo Mworia
Department of Technology
KCA/21021/2024

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as the University Supervisors

Signature..... Date.....
Prof. Johnstone Mwai
Department of Technology
KCA University

Signature..... Date.....
Dr. Blake Argy Marvin
School of Health Systems
University of Cape town, South Africa

Signature..... Date.....
Dr. Jude Mueni Mumbi
Department of Law
University of Nairobi

DEDICATION (optional)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

BPS	Board of Postgraduate Studies
GoK	Government of kenya
SCM	Supply Chain Management

DEFINITION OF TERMS

ABSTRACT

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

30. The notable difference between the study proposal and dissertation/thesis;

- i) The proposal is written in the future tense while the dissertation/thesis is in the past tense.

(A proposal describes what will be done during the research study while the thesis/dissertation reports what has been done in the research study)

- ii) A thesis/dissertation contains chapters 4 and 5

- iii) The study proposal contains an introduction letter, respondents' consent form, budget and study timelines. These are not necessary in the dissertation and thesis.