



# **Guidelines for Writing and Defending Master's Thesis**

August 2020

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Dear Students,

The thesis is the final stage of the master's degree and provides student with the opportunity to show that student has gained the necessary skills and knowledge in order to organize and conduct a research project. The following guidelines is prepared by the Dean's Office in coordination with Library and Office of Student Records. This document is intended to guide student through the thesis process. Student should read this guide before starting a master's thesis and consult it as necessary throughout the process. This will help student to make a start to master's thesis and make more effective use of student meeting sessions with student supervisor.

Student master's thesis should demonstrate that student is skilled in identifying an area, or areas, suitable for research (1) setting research objectives; (2) locating, organizing and critically analysing the relevant secondary data and authoritative literature; (3) devising an appropriate research methodology; (4) analysing the primary data selected and drawing on the literature in the field; (5) drawing conclusions; (6) and if appropriate making relevant recommendations and indications of areas for further research.

Student should write student master's thesis with the idea in mind that the intended reader and reviewer has some shared understanding of the area being investigated, however, underpinning concepts and arguments still need to be included as otherwise the depth of research will be compromised. In this way, student will not be tempted to make too many implicit assumptions, i.e. by making the erroneous assumptions that the reader has student degree of knowledge about the matters in question or can follow, exactly, student thought processes without student spelling them out. It should be a document which is 'self-contained' and does not need any additional explanation, or interpretation, or reference to other documents in order that it may be fully understood.

A thesis is a formal document, and there are rules that govern how it is presented. It must have chapters that provide an introduction, a literature review, a justification of the data selected for analysis and research methodology, analysis of the data, discussion of the findings and, finally, conclusion. Where the subject is based around an applied situation, recommendations for action may also be required. Student academic supervisor will approve and advice on the range of suitable topics which relate to the subject area of student master's degree.

A thesis seeks answers, explanations, makes comparisons and arrives at generalizations which can contribute to the academic literature. The successful theses are those which are specific and focused.

## **2. THESIS OUTLINE**

### **2.1. Aim of the Master's Thesis**

A master's thesis is an independent, empirically based academic research which demonstrates the student's ability to:

- Analyse a problem in a relevant field, state the task and find a solution;
- Study a particular topic in depth;
- Show evidence of independent investigation;
- Combine relevant theories and suggest alternatives;
- Show evidence of how to plan and manage an academic project within deadlines.

After completion of the thesis students should be able to:

- Define, design and deliver an academically rigorous piece of research
- Understand the relationships between the theoretical concepts and their application in specific situations
- Show evidence of critical and holistic knowledge and have a deeper understanding of their chosen subject area
- Appreciate practical implications and constraints of the specialist subject
- Understand the process and decisions to be made in managing a project within strict deadlines

### **2.2. Supporting Documents**

The following documents are necessary during the thesis preparation, writing, and submission stages:

- Thesis proposal form
- Thesis supervision form
- Acknowledgments page template
- Thesis front page template
- Thesis authenticity form

### **2.3. Content of Master's Thesis**

The content of the master's thesis is:

- Process-oriented research and development
- Scientific experiment or theoretical research work
- Thesis, which includes all the components mentioned above by the approval of the academic supervisor. When writing a master's thesis, it is essential to pay attention to formulating the topic, defining the problem, stating hypothesis or assumption, terminology and explanations.

### **3. THESIS SUPERVISION**

#### **3.1. Eligibility of Student and Supervision**

Student should be aware that he or she can take Master's thesis class and write this research project only if student's Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) is 3.3 or above by the beginning of their second year at University. Moreover, students should have at least A- in his/her major courses (list of major courses can be found in curriculum of each program). Some graduate programs may require students to take and successfully pass Research Seminar (Thesis 1) before starting the master thesis writing.

Student will be supported through the thesis by an academic supervisor. The academic supervisor will ideally have background expertise in student area of study. However, this may not always be possible, and student may choose a supervisor with more general subject knowledge. Regardless of his/her subject background, the academic supervisor should understand the research process. Research supervision is a voluntary task the faculty takes upon himself/herself. Neither Dean's office nor any department can assign faculty member a student that faculty member is unwilling to supervise. The whole process is a mutual agreement between supervisor and student.

A list of Faculty Profiles can be found in the website of the school. Students are free to approach the professors for preliminary discussions of their research interest and topics.

Student must submit a Thesis Supervisor Approval Form (Appendix 1) to the School by the beginning of last semester of studies.

#### **Role of the Supervisor**

##### *During the Writing Phase*

Academic supervisor has the primary responsibility for providing advice and guidance throughout the thesis writing process, towards its completion. Supervisor invite two other faculty to be members of committee. Students are free to consult with faculty members of committee and should provide the final version of their work to committee members at least 3 weeks before the expected defence date. Student should remember that it is supervisor to whom student should turn as a first point of contact regarding the thesis. Supervisor's advice and recommendations will help student make it to the final destination.

Student needs to respect the deadlines set by the supervisor. Supervisor reserves the right to discontinue the supervision if student fails to meet deadlines, fails to address supervisor feedback and integrate it into the work or violate ADA University Honour Code or other conventional academic ethical research standards. The supervisor's role includes the following:

1. To advise the student whether or not the project appears to be feasible and the possible risks that may be involved, for example, problems in trying to access information, potential poor response rates to surveys.
2. To assist the student in tailoring the proposal to the time and other resource constraints.
3. To assist the student at the outset in finding useful and relevant literature and appropriate academic framework within which to place the topic.

4. To advise on the choice of suitable methodological approach(es).
5. To monitor progress and to advise on what is required to achieve a satisfactory thesis.

### *During the Defence Phase*

Student academic supervisor will chair the defence session of student master's thesis. He/she may take part in the examination process and the discussion that follows, but the committee members are the main examiners of student work. With the representative of the Dean's office, the supervisor will ensure that a fair treatment of student work is granted and that a proper examination takes place.

### **3.3. Role of the Committee Members**

The main role of the committee members is to examine and evaluate student thesis. It is their duty to decide whether student passes the examination, or student does not. This takes place in two instances: first through examining student's written work, and second when student delivers and defends student work orally. Each faculty has specific field of work, research interests, and passion for certain topics and subjects of study. A student must agree on the date of the submission of final work with each Committee member.

At the end of the defence process, the committee will give student a grade and, if necessary, provide further details on what student is required to do in order to complete student thesis. This will come in the form of written comment which student will need to carefully address if student is to earn a pass. The Master's Thesis is a Pass/Fail course. Meanwhile, there could be some requirements. Even in case of Pass, committee may ask student to have minor changes to student work. In case of Fail, student discontinues his/her work and should consult Dean on further actions.

Supervisor will provide the necessary support if needed to address the committee's feedback, and if a clarification of the feedback is needed. Student will not be considered to have completely passed until student has revised student work in line with the committee's feedback. Supervisor has the responsibility to ensure that student has done so before being able to resubmit student thesis.

### **3.4. Responsibilities of the Student**

1. To maintain regular contact with the academic supervisor. It is the student's responsibility to inform the supervisor of progress and to lead the development of the thesis. Difficulties must be communicated at the time they are encountered. Retrospective information is not acceptable.
2. To write the thesis in a good standard of clear English using appropriate academic terms and citation and referencing conventions. It is not the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that this condition is met.
3. To write the thesis with guidance from the supervisor. The thesis and research work must be student's own product. The thesis is to reflect student subject understanding and research abilities, not that of student supervisor.

4. To inform the program director and academic supervisor of any absences (sickness, personal, family visits, holidays, work experience) during the time nominated for working on the thesis.

If during the preparation of the thesis, the focus and direction of the thesis changes substantially from that outlined in student Thesis Proposal Form, then student should immediately discuss this with student academic supervisor.

### **3. THESIS**

#### **4.1. Thesis Language and Contents**

A master's thesis must be composed in English.

A master's thesis must be a typed and bound paper which contains the following parts:

The thesis should contain the following sections in the following order:

- Title page
- Approval page
- Statement of authenticity
- Copyright statement page
- Abstract page
- Acknowledgment page
- Table of contents
- An introduction, the chapters forming the body of the thesis and a conclusion
- Appendices
- Bibliography and/or references

#### **4.2. Research Proposal**

The research proposal is an important working document which over the following few months becomes transformed into the thesis. Student will see that the main sections replicate the structure of the thesis. The research proposal should be completed prior to writing of thesis (during the *Master's Thesis I* module taught in the third semester in some programs). Student who is willing to write master's thesis should pass the *Master's Thesis I* course and fulfil its requirements. In other programs where *Master's Thesis I* course is not required, student should submit research proposal to his/her supervisor.

Used correctly, the proposal will become student road map through the thesis process. Because of a wide variety of circumstances, the focus of student research may change. If this happens, student should change student proposal document and also agree with student academic supervisor that such a change is appropriate.

The research proposal shows that student has thought through what the main research objectives are to be, that student has identified the main sources of primary and secondary data and that student has given thought as to the research methodology. The proposal should provide

student academic supervisor with a ‘detailed skeleton’ of the whole thesis; the fine details are added when the literature review is completed, and the primary research has been undertaken.

The research proposal should include:

**a) A working title**

Title can and probably will change but using precise wording even at this early stage will help to keep student thesis properly focused.

**b) An introduction to the topic**

This will include a brief description of the topic, the aim, research objectives, and research questions to be addressed. Student will find that moving from research aim to research objectives, to research questions is quite a difficult task. This, however, will provide a clear focus on student research and help student structure both this research proposal and the final thesis.

The aim of the research describes what student wants to achieve from carrying out this research.

The objectives of the research outline the particular issues that student needs to address in order to achieve the aim above. They are more specific than the aim, in that they outline the particular dimensions of student research topic, which are relevant to the overall aim of student research.

The research questions are more specific than student research objectives and specify the various insights/information that needs to be collected in order to achieve the objectives.

**c) A preliminary literature review**

Which indicates: (i) that student has studied the work of the major authors in student research field (ii) that student is familiar with the major themes relevant to that subject area (iii) what further investigations student intends to pursue as part of this thesis. Student should bear in mind that student is reviewing the literature in order to develop sharper, more insightful and focused research questions about student topic. Therefore, student literature review should lead to and justify student research objectives and questions. The number of cited works should be above 20 sources.

**d) The detailed research methodology**

Which student intends to employ. The methodology section should discuss what methods student is going to use in order to address the research objectives of student thesis. Student needs to justify why the chosen methods were selected as the most appropriate for student research, amongst the many alternative ones, given its specific objectives, and constraints student may face in terms of access, time and so on. Reference to general advantages and disadvantages of various methods and techniques without specifying their relevance to student choice decision is unacceptable. Remember to relate the methods back to the needs of student research question.

**e) Timetable**

Detailing how student anticipates completing the thesis by the submission date.



If student decides to complete student master's studies by writing a thesis, student will have to have a clear idea of what student is going to do student research about. This needs to be done as early as possible as it would help student find an interested supervisor who will support student during the writing phase. It would also allow student to deliver student research on time and avoid any possible delays. Therefore, a good start would be drafting a two-page research proposal that clearly states the aim of the research, the question(s) student seeks to answer and the hypothesis/hypotheses student endeavours to test as well as a brief survey of the main scholarship in the subject area (a literature review). This must be done no later than the **end of November during** the *Master's Thesis I course*. Being late may result in student being excluded from the master's research path.

### 4.3. Writing the Thesis

This is a challenging phase and requires a great effort and hard work as well as dedication and serious commitment. This must be translated through attending *weekly* meetings with student supervisor and meeting all student deadlines. The failure to demonstrate such commitment will delay student research progress and may result in student expulsion from the program. **If student fails to meet two consecutive deadlines, the Dean's office will be notified, and the supervisor has the right to end his/her commitment to supervise student thesis.** Therefore, student must do his/her best to meet the deadlines.

Student will meet student supervisor once a week (or as many times as deemed necessary by the supervisor). The number of meetings can be modified as needed. However, unless student has an emergency, student has to attend the meeting. Before each meeting, student should send student supervisor newly written material, and during the meeting, he/she will provide student with feedback (written/verbal). After each meeting, student will write a summary of the points that were discussed in the meeting and e-mail it to the supervisor for confirmation. In doing so, progress is guaranteed, and the document will serve as a reference point for both student and supervisor when/if needed.

The final deadline for the submission of student thesis for examination is **April 15**, (no work will be accepted after this point). Therefore, student is required to share the final draft of student thesis with student supervisor by April 1 for feedback. This will give him/her enough time to read it thoroughly and provide feedback and will give student the time student needs to revise the work accordingly.

- **Deadlines:** There is no single start date for student to begin thesis as student will be preparing the early ideas and initial reviews in the second semester.
- The **thesis length** should be between 12,000 and 15,000, words excluding footnotes and excluding bibliography unless otherwise agreed upon with the supervisor. It is required that students use Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*.

#### 4.3.1. Title Page

The title page should adopt the format shown in the template that can be downloaded from the university website:

The title page should include the following information centered on the page:

- the name of the University
- the graduate program
- the award for which the thesis is submitted (i.e. the Master of Arts in Diplomacy and International Affairs)
- the thesis title
- the student's full name which should be the same as shown on the cover page, the approval page and the name required on student diploma
- the city and date of submission

This page should be neither numbered nor counted.

#### **4.3.2. Abstract**

A two-hundred-fifty-words abstract will summarize the research, its importance and the argument advanced as well as the important points to be raised in the thesis. The abstract should be headed with the title of the thesis, the student's full name, the degree for which the thesis is submitted and the year of submission. A set of 6 (six) keywords should be included at the end of the abstract for indexing and cataloguing purposes.

A good abstract is difficult to write and can only be completed after the full thesis has been written. It represents a summary of the results of the thesis research. By summarising the results of the research, it allows other people to get an idea of what was accomplished without having to read through the whole thesis. Other scholars can read an abstract to decide if looking at the full work will be worthwhile.

The abstract should provide sufficient information about the results of the research that reading the full thesis is not necessary, although student graders will read the full thesis. If writing a thesis by translation/commentary, student abstract should contextualize the source text, summarise the translation brief, the theoretical framework and the overall results of student translation strategy.

Hints as to what to include in student abstract:

- Aim and objectives: What are the main themes, ideas or areas of a theory being investigated?
- Boundaries: What is the context and background of this thesis? In what areas of theory should the reader concentrate their attention?
- Methodology: What was/were the main method(s) employed to generate the results?
- Results: What were student main findings?
- Conclusions: What are the main conclusions that student arrive at when viewing the entire thesis?
- Recommendations: (if appropriate) What solutions do student offer in answers to the problems posed in the research objectives?

### **4.3.3. Acknowledgments**

A brief statement, signed by the student, should be provided which:

1. Acknowledges all help received in writing the thesis. Try to keep more personal comments about family and friends to a minimum and concentrate on those who have given direct assistance.
2. Gives an assurance that the thesis is student work. Student may need to supply evidence of how student arrived at these findings. Student should retain copies of all his/her fieldwork and analysis in a separate folder (including interviews and transcriptions), should they need to be consulted by internal examiners. The folder should not be submitted with the thesis and will only be required on demand.
3. A declaration that the work is student's own and complies with University regulations on plagiarism.
4. A statement of the word count.

The final draft of student thesis will be checked through anti-plagiarism software.

### **4.3.4. Table of contents**

The table of contents must contain the following sections with page numbers: introduction, chapters and sections and sub-sections, a list of tables, a list of figures, appendices, and bibliography.

The contents page should list the chapter headings, appendices, references and the pages on which they can be found. Separate listing should be given for lists of figures, tables, and abbreviations. Student will find it easier to create these if student know how to generate these lists using the indexing and style functions within Microsoft Word.

### **4.3.5. Introduction**

The thesis should be divided into chapters and sections appropriate to the topic and type of thesis chosen. The following elements are typical of the traditional thesis. Student should discuss the overall structure of student thesis with student academic supervisor.

The Introduction to the thesis should set out the background to the research study and address the following areas:

#### ***The context in which the research took place***

- What is the background, the context, in which the research took place?
- Why is this subject or issue important?
- Who are the key actors in the area under investigation?
- Are there important trends or pivotal variables of which the reader needs to be made aware?
- A clear and concise statement of the aims and objectives that the thesis is going to address.

- Have student presented a clear and unambiguous exposition of student research aim, the objectives student will address to meet this aim and student research questions?

***The reasons why this study was carried out***

- Was this study undertaken, for example, in order to test some aspects of theory or framework of analysis?

***The way the Thesis is to be organized***

This short final section of the Introduction should tell the reader what topics are going to be discussed in each chapter and how the chapters are related to each other. In this way, student are, in effect, providing the reader with a ‘road map’ of the work ahead. Thus, at a glance, they can see (1) where they are starting from, (2) the context in which the journey is taking place, (3) where they are going to end up, and (4) the route which they will take to reach their final destination. Such a ‘map’ will enable the reader to navigate their way through student work much more quickly and appreciate to the maximum what student have done.

**4.3.6. Literature Review**

The main reasons for the inclusion, in a master’s thesis, of a literature review section are:

- To present and to analyse, in a critical manner, that part of the published literature which is relevant to student research topic and which acts as the basis for a fuller understanding of the context in which student are conducting student research; thus helping the reader to a more rounded appreciation of what student have completed. Remember critical does not mean looking at the negatives but forming an evaluation.
- To act as a backdrop against which what student have done in the remainder of the thesis may be analysed and critically evaluated to allow the reader to assess the worth of student writing, analytical and research skills.
- To show that not only have student discovered and reported what student have found to be relevant in the literature search but that student have understood it and that student can analyse it critically.
- To show that student knowledge of the area of interest is detailed enough that student can identify gaps in the coverage of the topic; thus, justifying the reason(s) for student research.
- To show that student know what the key variables, trends and ‘actors’ are in the environment of student study, i.e., student show that student know what the important issues are that need to be investigated.
- To enable readers to be able to measure the validity of student choice(s) of research

methodology, the appropriateness of the process by which student analyse student results, and whether or not student findings are congruent with the accepted research which has gone before.

The literature review is presented in the form of a précis, a classification, a comparison and a critical analysis of that material which is germane to a full understanding of student research study. Such published material may be drawn from all, or a combination of, textbooks, journal articles, conference papers, reports, case studies, t, magazine features or newspaper articles. It should be remembered, however, that the most important source of academic literature is journal articles and student should ensure that student are familiar with the most recent publications in journals relevant to student subject area.

Remember that student literature review should lead and justify the research objectives and questions of student thesis. Student literature review should **NOT** just be a catalogue of authors, frameworks, and ideas but should attempt to introduce a critical evaluation of those authors work.

The literature review will be around 3,000 to 4,000 words

#### **4.3.7. Research Methodology**

Student should begin the Research Methodology chapter by stating, again, the research objectives of the project. This will enable the reader to assess as to the validity of student chosen research methodology.

This chapter is that part of the thesis where student have the opportunity to justify to the reader the process by which the research questions, which were derived by an analysis of the relevant literature, were answered. It is not sufficient to say, for example, “suitable respondents were sampled using a quota sampling technique and then surveyed using a postal questionnaire” and then leave it at that. It might well be the case that, given the problem(s) to be investigated, such a choice of research methods is entirely appropriate. However, if student have not taken the opportunity to justify student research choices to a reader they could be correct in assuming that student have, by chance, merely guessed at what would work and, more by luck than judgment arrived at the ‘correct’ solution to the problem.

The term ‘methodology,’ mainly when employed in the social sciences, does not just mean method, but also the governing philosophy behind the methods employed.

The chapter on research methodology must, painstakingly argue for, and justify each, a decision that is taken when arriving at how the research is to be organized. Every time that student, the researcher, have to choose from a number of options, student must state what each of these are, why student made the choice student did, and why student rejected those not used.

The conclusion of this chapter should provide a summary of the main points that have been covered. The conclusion should also direct the reader as to how the contents of this chapter link in with the contents of the next chapter, student findings. This chapter will usually be between 1,000 and 2,000 words.

#### 4.3.8. Findings

This chapter presents the evidence and/or results of primary research which student have undertaken. Depending upon student subject area this can be in the form of detailed quantitative models, hypothesis testing to some basic analysis using basic descriptive statistics or qualitative techniques dealing with structured content analysis, textual analysis, to case study descriptions. The main part of the chapter is the presentation of the data that student obtained. Even projects of relatively moderate dimensions will generate a large amount of data which has to be considered. This data must be organized in a logical and coherently ordered whole so that student thought processes and interpretation are clear to the reader.

Whatever form of data analysis has been undertaken, it must be accomplished with care and attention to detail, as should how the results be presented. Nothing is guaranteed to frustrate a reader more than to have to plough their way through an arid mass of tables, figures, and statistics. Better by far to describe in an accessible manner (which does not mean that student should talk down to the reader) what the research has uncovered and to include only the most pertinent figures as evidence of student findings. Theses which included detailed modelling or quantitative analysis will need to show all relevant assumptions, relationships, and methods. Student academic supervisor will be able to advise on the level of detail required in the main body as opposed to that included in the Appendix.

Graphs, diagrams, pie-charts, etc. are all useful ways of presenting research results; they are an imaginative way of 'breaking up' solid blocks of text – they let a little 'light' into the body of the text as long as they are relevant and illustrate student points. Keep student review to those items which are relevant to student research question and not just everything student found out.

There might be problems in the execution of any research project and their occurrence should be brought to the attention of the reader. Without stating them, one of the essential elements of the context in which the research took place will be missing.

Not all theses contain quantitative data. In many situations, students will have made extensive use of qualitative research techniques such as focus groups and/or in-depth unstructured interviews. While quantitative data lends itself to graphs, tables and so on, qualitative data, and the way it is presented, pose particular challenges for students. As ever, student objective should be based on the belief that the data must be presented in such a manner as to make it easy for the reader to follow the logic of the analysis.

The analysis of qualitative data should be based on the research questions and issues that student explored during student fieldwork. For instance, student may have addressed six or seven critical questions in a series of interviews. Each of these questions should be examined separately, rather than describing each focus group in turn. This provides a degree of logical flow and development to the analysis. In addition, it is advisable to focus on the points of agreement and disagreement that emerged during the interviews. This should be supported with relevant quotations from the transcripts of the interviews. Student should avoid lengthy quotations unless they are of critical importance. However, short excerpts enrich the reader's understanding of the issues and provide student with the opportunity to shed a clearer insight on the topic.

Many students make the mistake of providing a very superficial, descriptive analysis of qualitative data. This does not allow student to demonstrate that the research student undertook

was substantive. Tables can also be included that reflect the respondent's overall attitudes, perceptions, and views about the themes.

Students are not required to include all the transcripts of interviews, surveys or data sheets. Only include the summarised data in the main body of the thesis. Appendixes should be restricted to no more than 25 pages. Students can keep additional information in a folder for use by the graders if requested.

#### **4.3.9. Findings and Discussion**

In the introduction to the thesis, students described the context of the research. In the literature survey, students analysed the work of previously published authors and derived a set of questions that needed to be answered to fulfil the objectives of this study. In the research methodology section, students showed the reader what techniques were available, what their advantages and disadvantages were, and what guided students to make the choice they did. In the results section, students present to the reader the outcome of the research exercise.

The introduction of this chapter reminds the reader what, exactly, were the research objectives. Student review of the literature and student evaluation of the various themes, issues, and frameworks helped students to develop a more specific set of research questions. In essence, student analysis of the data that students have collected from student fieldwork should provide answers to these questions. Students should, as a matter of priority, focus attention on data that is directly relevant to the research questions. Students should avoid the mistake of including analysis that might be interesting in a general way but is not linked to the original direction of the thesis. External data can be included as an appendix; however, students are reminded that there is a limit of twenty-five pages for appendices. The introduction should also explain how the results are to be presented.

This is the heart of the thesis and must be more than descriptive. This chapter develops analytic and critical thinking on primary results and analysis with reference to theoretical arguments grounded in the literature review. Students should try to highlight where there are significant differences and similarities from the literature or between different groups. Where a model or framework of analysis has been used or is being developed, students should highlight the main relationships as well as explaining the reason and significance behind features or decisions being discussed.

#### **4.3.10. Conclusion**

Here students will bring together the work of the thesis by showing how the initial research plan has been addressed in such a way that conclusions may be formed from the evidence of the thesis. No new material or references should be placed here. The conclusions should make a statement on the extent to which each of the aims and objectives has been met. Students should bring back student research questions and state student understanding of those questions. Be careful not to make claims that are not substantiated from the evidence students have presented in earlier chapters.

Student should include a short subsection on any suggestions for further research for colleagues who might wish to research this area in the future. There should also be a short statement of the limitations of the research. Often as a single case study or limited range of companies student cannot claim that student research holds for all companies. However, by adopting a rigorous approach to student literature review and methods which have validity and can be repeated, student can make a reasonable but limited claim that student conclusions should be taken seriously.

#### **4.3.11. References**

All references used in writing the thesis (whether direct quotations or paraphrasing) should be included in a reference list/bibliography, compiled in alphabetical order by author. The Chicago style for listing references should be used.

The bibliography must fully and accurately include all sources used in the composition of the thesis.

#### **4.3.12. Appendices**

Appendices may be used to provide relevant supporting evidence for reference but should only be used if necessary. Students may wish to include in appendices, evidence which confirms the originality of their work or illustrates points of the principle set out in the main text, questionnaires, and interview guidelines. Only subsidiary material should be included in appendices. Students should not assume that Examiners will read Appendices in detail.

## **5. AND STYLE**

### **5.1. Thesis Formatting**

Students must adhere to the following standards and format:

- The thesis must be submitted in English.
- The thesis must be typed and printed on only one side of the standard sized paper. The left margin should be 32 mm – 39 mm (1.25 - 1.5 inches). Top, bottom and right-hand margins should be 25mm (1.1 inches).
- Students must use 12-point font size and Times New Roman or Arial typeface. Students may use 14 or 16-point type to identify chapters, sections, and sub-sections.
- The thesis should be double-spaced. Quotations longer than two lines should be single-spaced and indented from other text. Footnotes and the bibliography should be single-spaced.
- The thesis must have divided chapters and sections. Students will use a new page at the beginning of each new chapter.



- The pages of the thesis must be numbered consecutively and centered at the bottom of the page.

## **6. CITATIONS AND REFERENCES**

### **6.1 In-Text Citation**

This is where any formal mention that student makes in student thesis to something written by someone else. Every citation must be supported by a reference which supplies the details which will enable the reader to follow up that citation. The University employs various styles of referencing and citation depending on specialisation. Student should check it with his/her supervisor. . If student refers to the work of an author in text, then it should be cited as, for example,

Smith (1997) states that the shoe size of an individual is a function of three criteria.

or

The shoe size has been demonstrated to be a function of three criteria (Smith 1997).

Perhaps more than one author has made a broadly similar point, and student want to include them all. In such a case the citation should appear as follows: 'Logistics research is always important in new product development (Freeman 1997; Hardy 1989; Willis 1999).'

If student quotes directly from an author's work, student should include the page number from which the quotation is taken, e.g. (Smith 1997, p 4.)

### **6.2. End of Text Referencing**

The list of references is placed at the end of the thesis (in alphabetical order of first author's surname), as follows:

For a journal: Smith, S. (1997) "The Effects of Shoe Size on Consumer Behaviour," *Journal of International Shoe Manufacturers*, Vol. 34, No. 45, pp 23-45.

For a textbook: Smith, S. (1997) *Strategy, Marketing, and Consumers*. Paisley, Academic Free Press, 7th edition.

If student is only referring to a small portion of a large text, then student must specify which parts are relevant by adding either the chapters, "chapters 4 and 6", to which student is referring, or the appropriate pages (Smith 1997, pp. 126-341).

### **6.3. Text Notes**

Text notes can provide additional information on points made in the text of the thesis. They may be presented as footnotes or as endnotes, either of which should be kept to a minimum. Neither footnotes or endnotes should be used; however, if the sole purpose is to give a page or reference, these should be presented as parenthetical insertions into the main text of the thesis.

Articles and books mentioned in the text, including text notes, should be identified by the author's name and the year of publication. The title of the article or book should then be listed in the thesis's list of references.

## 7. PLAGIARISM

**Student thesis will be checked for plagiarism by supervisor** before being accepted and/or scheduled for defence. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged inclusion of someone else's actual words or paraphrases, ideas or data as one's own. This means that sources of information must be appropriately cited with footnotes or quotation marks and identified, whether published or unpublished, copyrighted or uncopyrighted. Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty and represents a violation of the ADA's Honor Code. Student must do his/her best to ensure that the work meets ADA's standards. If student need help in this area, he/she should consult with ADA's writing centre and/or student supervisor.

It is important that student gets student citations and references correct. Student must always cite the source of student material; inadequate citation could leave student open to the suspicion of plagiarism.

## 8. SUBMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

A final version of the thesis must be submitted to the library for format review and plagiarism report no later than two weeks prior to the defence date. Corrections and detailed instructions will be returned to the student by email in five business days.

Then, students must review the thesis one final time, make final corrections after library review and submit the final version to supervisor to be sure that no further changes are needed. It will not be possible to make corrections after final approval of the Academic Supervisor.

**After the defence submission:** One hard copy of the thesis, written and bound in the approved manner, and an electronic version (in MS Word format), together with the plagiarism report obtained from the library must be submitted to the Library no later than one week after the defence date.

Where students are submitting from overseas, then they will be required to send an electronic version by email to arrive by the due date and time with hard copies being sent to arrive at the Library a maximum of 7 days later. It is the responsibility of the student to use a reputable carrier and a guaranteed service.

Any thesis submitted after the deadline will not be graded unless the student can satisfy the committee that there are sufficient reasons for the late submission.

***The thesis deadline will be strictly observed. A thesis can be submitted earlier.***

It is vitally important that students report any problems that have affected or will affect their performance on the thesis as soon as possible to both the Academic supervisor and the Program Director. The committee can and will take extenuating circumstances into account, but only if

they know about them before the Committee Board meeting. All issues relating to a substantive medical condition causing a valid medical certificate should support prolonged incapacity.

### **8.1. Submission Deadlines**

One of the learning aims of a master's program is to demonstrate the ability to manage a complex and extended piece of work within the given word count and available timescales.

This requires careful planning and the need to reprioritize and adjust student work as circumstances change.

Extenuating circumstances will be considered by the examination committee and supported by suitable documentation. It is only under exceptional personal circumstances or extended ill health that a short extension may be permitted and authorized by the Dean (not an academic supervisor). Any such request to the Dean will again need to be supported by documentation. Student may have maximum one semester extension (usually summer term) to finalise thesis. No other extension is allowed.

Last-minute delays through printer failure; corrupted files or breakdown to computers; unforeseen problems with statistical software; staff or interviewees being unavailable; just running out of time to complete writing or analysis; or even colds are not exceptional circumstances.

### **RESUBMISSION**

All grades will be agreed between members of the committee. A sample may also be sent to an external examiner.

*Minor editorial corrections or deficiencies:* Minor corrections of English, spelling, statistical errors, incomplete list of references, poorly justified or described methodology but with adequate data; some reorganizing of materials in the literature review, or results or findings but not all sections fall under this heading. Resubmission should happen before the beginning of the next semester. Otherwise student will not pass thesis and will be dismissed from the program.

*Major deficiencies:* This may reflect a literature review limited by the extent of materials and ideas the reviewed or limited by the understanding being shown; inappropriate or inadequate research design; substantially inaccurate or inadequate data analysis; lack of conclusions and understanding. Theses in this category would require substantive improvements introducing a substantial amount of new materials within a number of chapters. Resubmission should happen within one semester. r. Otherwise, student will not pass thesis and will be dismissed from the program.

A student whose thesis falls into the minor revisions category should expect to re-write one chapter at the most (or the equivalent of a chapter spread over several chapters), with appropriate adjustments in the introduction and the conclusion. If student is required to

resubmit, the graders will provide student with an agreed list of corrections to be made. Student will normally be allowed only one further meeting with student academic supervisor to explain these changes.

## **Appendix 1. Thesis proposal form**

### **A. STUDENT DETAILS**

Student Name:

Student dissertation proposal form is due on:

The maximum length for student dissertation is:

### **B. DISSERTATION TOPIC**

First consider the general area of student dissertation.

A dissertation offers student the opportunity to explore an area that student are interested in.

Student are welcome to think broadly about what interests student within the subject area.

Student dissertation is often the place in which student can explore an area in greater depth.

#### ***1. What is student chosen topic?***

This should align with student short description of student broad topic area

#### ***2. What is it that interests student about this area?***

Does this build on a personal interest? Have student already done some thinking about this subject in this course or elsewhere?

### **C. REFINING STUDENT TOPIC**

Providing more focus for student dissertation.

The area student have identified is a good starting point for student research. However, a viable research project usually requires more focus. Are there any aspects of student topic that student are particularly interested in.

#### ***3. What aspect of student topic are student most interested in?***

#### ***4. What further aspects are student interested in? And what questions are student facing in addressing these issues?***

### **D. DISSERTATION SOURCES**

What information do student think student are going to look at to help student find out about student area of study?

#### ***5. Where are student primary sources coming from?***

What are the main sources of information student think student are going to use to investigate student subject? Typically, student primary source material should be something that tells student about student subject directly. Examples might include official publications or survey data. Try to explain in this section how student will be able to access this material.

#### ***6. Where are student secondary sources coming from?***

In addition to student primary sources what other sources are student going to use to find out about student subject? Secondary sources are usually materials that have already been published. They typically include books and articles.

### **E. PROJECT PLAN**

Setting out a practical plan to get the work done.

Developing a research plan is an important part of undertaking a dissertation. How well student organize student research will be a critical factor in the success of student research.

#### ***7. How long do student think the preparation of the formal Dissertation Proposal form will take? Give a rough estimate in hours.***

## Appendix 2. Thesis supervision form

### THESIS SUPERVISOR FORM

Please note: Students cannot register in the Thesis without having completed all forms and having a thesis proposal on file with the School.

#### 1. Student Information

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student # \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Thesis Information

Thesis Topic/Title  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thesis Proposal Submitted: (date) \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Approval of Thesis Proposal

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. Supervisor Information

Thesis Supervisor (name) \_\_\_\_\_

If the supervisor is NOT appointed, then there must be a co-supervisor who is appointed by the school.

Supervisor's Expertise in the Area (please mark all that apply)

- I have published in this area
- I have done research in this area
- I teach in this area
- I have expertise in the methodological approach of this thesis
- I have expertise in the theoretical area of this thesis

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Co-Supervisor (name) \_\_\_\_\_

Co-Supervisor's Expertise in the Area (please mark all that apply)

- I have published in this area
- I have done research in this area
- I teach in this area
- I have expertise in the methodological approach of this thesis
- I have expertise in the theoretical area of this thesis

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### **4. Changes to the Thesis Project**

A thesis project is composed of three major elements (a topic, a theoretical frame, and a methodological frame). A thesis committee/student cannot change more than one of these substantive elements without submitting a new proposal. Please Note: all changes to the proposal must be approved by the Supervisor.

*Substantive Changes made to the Thesis Project?*

Yes (date) \_\_\_\_\_

*Nature of the change:*

New Proposal Submitted & Approved by Supervisor

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### **5. Progress**

Expected Term of Thesis Defence \_\_\_\_\_

#### **6: School (Academic Supervisor) Approval**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **Appendix 3. Same acknowledgments page template**

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This work would not have been possible without the financial support of the Studentth Student Foundation Award, the ADA University Scholarship or the School of Public and International Affairs. I am especially indebted to Dr....., , and Dr....., who have been supportive of my career goals and who worked actively to provide me with the protected academic time to pursue those goals.

I am grateful to all of those with whom I have had the pleasure to work during this and other related projects. Each of the members of my Thesis Committee has provided me extensive personal and professional guidance and taught me a great deal about both scientific research and life in general. I would especially like to thank Dr....., the chairman of my committee. As my teacher and mentor, he has taught me more than I could ever give him credit for here. He has shown me, by his example, what a good scientist (and person) should be.

Nobody has been more important to me in the pursuit of this project than the members of my family. I would like to thank my parents; whose love and guidance are with me in whatever I pursue. They are the ultimate role models. Most importantly, I wish to thank my loving and supportive husband, Rashid, and my two wonderful children, Natig and Maryam, who provide unending inspiration.



**Appendix 4. Example of thesis title page**

NEW SECURITY THREATS IN CASPIAN BASIN REGION

Gunay Mammadova

Thesis Prepared for the Degree of  
MASTER OF ARTS

ADA UNIVERSITY  
May 2019

APPROVED

Orkhan Ismayilov, Academic Supervisor

Vener Garayev, Committee Member

Azer Babayev, Committee Member

Anar Valiyev, Dean of the School of Public and International Affairs

## Appendix 5. Sample of Authenticity Page

### STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

I have read ADA's policy on plagiarism and certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the content of this thesis, entitled (insert title here), is all my own work and does not contain any unacknowledged work.

Hereby I declare that this master thesis, my original investigation and achievement, submitted for the master's degree at ADA University has not been submitted for any degree or examination.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_