

# THESIS WRITING GUIDELINES

## 1.0 GENERAL GUIDELINES

Following is the format and guidelines on how to prepare a thesis in the School of Agriculture and Enterprise Development for submission and examination. These guidelines should be read alongside those of the Graduate school.

- 1.1 A thesis must be printed on a high quality A4 (210 x 297 mm) size paper; double spaced, Times Roman size 12 and on one side of the paper.
- 1.2 Margins; 50mm left, 25mm right, 40mm from top and 25mm from bottom.
- 1.3 Pagination – Pages shall be numbered consecutively and bottom centre. Numbering of preliminary pages shall be in lower case roman numerals while all the others shall be in Arabic numerals.
- 1.4 All chapters should begin in a new page and centered.
- 1.5 Chapter headings must be Times Roman size 12, bold upper case and centred.
- 1.6 Subsections must be bold lower case.
- 1.7 The first line in a new paragraph must be indented five spaces.
- 1.8 Whenever the heading of a section or sub-section appears near the bottom of a page, it must be followed by at least one complete line of text, or the heading should be forced to the top of the next page.
- 1.9 Legend titles: for tables should be at the top while for figures it should be at the bottom.
- 1.10 List of Candidate's publications emanating from the thesis should be appended.
- 1.11 Tables, Figures and Plates should be numbered in separate sequence and should be cited by a number in the text (eg. Table 1, Figure 1 etc). Each Table, Figure and plate should have a caption. There should be a 60mm margin around all Figures, Diagrams and Plates.

## 2.0 STRUCTURE OF A THESIS

Your thesis should have the following elements in this order

### 2.1 Preliminary pages

- i. Title page
- ii. Declaration
- iii. Dedication (optional)
- iv. Acknowledgements
- v. Table of Contents
- vi. List of Tables
- vii. List of Figures
- viii. List of Appendices
- ix. List of Abbreviations and Acronyms (optional)
- x. Abstract

### 2.2 Main text

- i. Chapter 1 – Introduction
- ii. Chapter 2 - Literature review
- iii. Chapter 3 – Materials and methods
- iv. Chapter 4 – Results
- v. Chapter 5- Discussion
- vi. Chapter 6 – Conclusion and Recommendations

## **2.3 References**

## **2.4 Appendices**

### **3.0 THE PRELIMINARY PAGES**

#### **3.1 Spine**

- 3.1.1 The spine shall be embossed in gold with the candidate's surname and initials, the abbreviation of the degree for which it has been submitted and the year.
- 3.1.2 The writing shall be from left of the spine to right
- 3.1.3 Thesis is bound in black for Master and in Maroon for PhD

#### **3.2 Title Page**

- 3.2.1 This should bear the title of the thesis in capital letters.
- 3.2.2 This should be followed below by the full name of the student, the highest degree title in parenthesis
- 3.2.3 This is followed by a statement as follows **“A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of (name of the degree) in (area of specialization), Kenyatta University”** in the middle of the page.
- 3.2.4 Finally, the month and the year of submission at the bottom and centred.

#### **3.3 Declaration**

- 3.3.1 A signed declaration by the candidate with the following statement” **I (full names of the candidate) declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for the award of a degree in any other university or any other award”**
- 3.3.2 Followed below it by the full of candidate, signature and date
- 3.3.3 This is followed by a declaration by the supervisors as follows: Supervisors Approval **We confirm that the work reported in this thesis was carried out by the candidate under our supervision and has been submitted with our approval as university supervisors**
- 3.3.4 This is followed by the supervisors names (at least two full names), their departments, institutional affiliation, signature and date

#### **3.4 Dedication (optional)**

#### **3.5 Acknowledgements**

- 3.5.1 Supervisors and anyone who made a significant contribution to your research
- 3.5.2 Technically (including materials, supplies)
- 3.5.3 Intellectually (assistance, advice)
- 3.5.4 Financially (research funding, travel grants etc)

#### **3.6 Table of Contents**

- 3.6.1 This is a synopsis of the structural pattern of the thesis.
- 3.6.2 It contains all major sections i.e. chapter level headings. If the thesis is long, sub-headings may be included.
- 3.6.3 The wording and presentation (i.e. capitalisation, use of special fonts and characters e.t.c.) for all entries in the table of contents must match exactly with the text.
- 3.6.4 All entries must have a corresponding page number with leader dots or dashes connecting the entry to the page number.

### **3.7 List of Tables**

- 3.7.1 If the thesis contains a lot of tables, a separate page should be devoted to the list of tables specifying the title and the page where tables can be found in the thesis.
- 3.7.2 The list of tables should be separate from the table of contents and should be immediately after the table of contents.
- 3.7.3 All entries must contain a corresponding page number with lead dots or dashes connecting the entry to the page number.

### **3.8 List of Figures**

- 3.8.1 These list are governed by the same rules as the list of tables (see above)
- 3.8.2 Figures include graphs, photographs, illustrations, diagrams, maps and drawings.

### **3.9 List of Appendices**

### **3.10 List of Abbreviations and Acronyms (optional)**

- 3.10.1 All symbols, abbreviations and technical terms in the thesis should be listed on this page and their full interpretations, and the units where appropriate given.

### **3.11 Abstract**

- 3.11.1 The abstract is a brief summary of your thesis single spaced
- 3.11.2 Its length should not exceed one page and at most two paragraphs
- 3.11.3 Present a brief introduction
- 3.11.4 Give a summary of how you addressed the research problem
- 3.11.5 Give a summary of your key findings and implications

## **4.0 THE MAIN TEXT**

The main text is composed of Chapters 1,2 & 3 as in the proposal writing guidelines (Annex 2) plus Chapter 4: Results, Chapter 5: Discussion and Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

### **4.1 Chapter 4: Results**

In the results section a report describing all appropriate information produced by the research procedures and statistical analyses of the finding is presented in an organized manner. Save the explanation and interpretation of these findings for the discussion section. In presenting the results, use of tables, graphs and figures combined with a brief narrative may be more effective than using the narrative alone. State all significant findings in the text, referring to tables and graphs displaying all significant data. If the study has produced a large amount of raw data, do not present all of it in the results section. Instead, present only the information most appropriate and relates to your research objectives and hypothesis. If appropriate, include your raw data in an appendix, referring to them within your text.

### **4.2 Chapter 5: Discussion**

Note that the discussion section should be rich in references to similar work and background needed to interpret results. Break up the section into logical segments by using subheads where appropriate.

The discussion section should be a brief essay in itself, answering the following questions

- i. What are the major patterns in the observations?
- ii. What are the relationships, trends and generalizations among the results?
- iii. What are the exceptions to these trends, patterns or generalizations?

- iv. What are the likely causes (mechanisms) underlying these patterns resulting predictions?
- v. Is there agreement or disagreement with previous work?
- vi. What is the relationship of the present results to the original questions and hypotheses? Interpret results in terms of background laid out in the introduction and literature review
- vii. What is the implication of the present results for other unanswered questions in this field
- viii. What are the things we now know or understand that we didn't know or understand before the present work?
- ix. Include the evidence or line of reasoning supporting each interpretation.
- x. What is the significance of the present results?

### **4.3 Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations**

- 4.3.1 What is the strongest and most important statement that you can make from your observations?
- 4.3.2 Refer back to problem posed, and describe the conclusions that you reached from carrying out this investigation, summarize new observations, new interpretations, and new insights that have resulted from the present work.
- 4.3.3 Include the broader implications of your results
- 4.3.4 Include when appropriate (most of the time)
- 4.3.5 Remedial action to solve the problem.
- 4.3.6 Further research to fill in gaps in our understanding.
- 4.3.7 Directions for future investigations on this or related topics.

### **5.0 REFERENCES**

As in the proposal writing guidelines (Annex 2)

### **6.0 APPENDICES**

- 6.1 Analysis of Variance tables
- 6.2 A key published article of your thesis.
- 6.3 Details of complicated procedures.
- 6.4 Figures and tables, including captions, should be embedded in the text and not in an appendix, unless they are more than 1-2 pages and are not critical to your argument.