

## **THESIS/PROJECTS FORMAT STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS**

Thesis writing should conform to Kirinyaga University format as stated below:

### **Paper**

- Type-written or printed on a white paper, size A4 (297mm x 210mm); 80-100 g/m<sup>2</sup>
- Consistency in the typeface using font 12

### **Page**

- One side of paper
- Left margin 35mm
- Right, top, bottom margins 30mm

### **Page Numbering**

- Bottom of page, center or right side.
- Lower case Roman numerals beginning from Title page through Table of contents (commonly referred to as front matter). The rest of the sections, beginning with Chapter one, shall be in Arabic numerals.
- Chapter Title page numbers shall not be shown.

### **Frontal Matter specifications**

#### **(a) Title Page**

- In capital letters with the full names of the candidate below
- The statement "A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment for the degree of (Insert the name of the Degree) of Kirinyaga University" shall appear in the middle of the page.
- The date of submission shall appear below indicating month and year.

#### **(b) Declaration Page**

The second page shall contain:

- A signed declaration by the candidate with the following statement, “This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree or any other award in any other University.”
- A signed declaration by the University Supervisor (s) with the following statement, “I/We confirm that the work reported in this thesis was carried out by the candidate under my/our supervision.”

**(c) Dedication**

- A statement of dedication, beginning on a separate page, and not exceeding twenty-five (25) words; shall follow the declaration.

**(d) Acknowledgement**

- Acknowledgement, beginning on a separate page, and not exceeding one hundred fifty (150) words; shall follow dedication.

**(e) Abstract**

- An abstract, beginning on a separate page, and not exceeding five hundred (500) words; shall follow acknowledgement.

**(f) Table of contents**

- Table of contents, beginning on a separate page; shall follow abstract.

**(g) List of Tables**

- List of tables, beginning on a separate page; shall follow the table of contents.

**(h) List of figures**

- List of figures, beginning on a separate page; shall follow the list of tables.

**(i) Line Spacing**

- Double spacing, except for captions of illustrations, extended quotations, and listings of references; which should be single line space.

**Type Print**

- 12 point font

- Double space
- Black ink
- Times New Roman

### **Illustrations**

- Each table, figure, graph, etc must lie on a separate page. Related illustration may be laced on the same page.
- The numbering of illustrations must be in series; according to the requirements of the selected style publication.

### **References**

KyU shall adopt APA Style Citations (American Psychological Association) in which “sources receive attribution in the text by the use of parenthetical in-text references”. Departments and Schools may adopt any other referencing style provided that their area of discipline requires use of different referencing style and provided that that style is approved by the Board of Postgraduate Studies.

### **Signatures**

- All in Blue ink
- On Declaration page

**Binding** Hard covers and colors shall be adopted for thesis binding as follows:

- Doctorate - Dark Green
- Masters and Postgraduate Diploma - Dark Navy Blue

## PROPOSAL AND THESIS WRITING CONTENTS PER CHAPTER

### RESEARCH PROPOSAL WRITING FORMAT

**(a) Title Page**

This page is centered vertically and horizontally and should not be numbered, and should not be listed on the Table of Contents. It contains the title of the proposal, full names of the candidate and registration number, statement of fulfillment of the requirement of the degree program, name of the institution and the year the proposal is being submitted.

**(b) Other Preliminary pages**

These pages should start from number two (ii). All should be numbered using lower case Roman numerals.

*(i) Declaration and Recommendation page*

• Declaration;

The candidate makes a declaration using the following words;

*“I declare that this research proposal is my original work and has not been presented in any other university”.*

*Signed..... Date.....*

• On the same page a Recommendation by the supervisors is made using the following words;

*“This research proposal has been submitted for examination with our approval as university supervisors”.*

*Signed..... Date.....*

Name.....

Signed.....

Date.....

Name.....

(ii) ***Table of Contents:***

The Table of Contents is supposed to help the reader to quickly identify the contents of the proposal. It should therefore, only contain the First Level (Chapter Number and Chapter Title) and Second Level (Sub-headings) for each First Level heading. The Table of Contents should contain the following:

(iii) ***Abstract:***

This should be approximately three quarters of a page. It should be comprehensive, with no paragraphs. Therefore, it should not contain any sub-headings.

- Chapter Numbers and Titles.

There are three (3) chapters:

**CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

**CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

**CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

(Other details are as per the APA manual)

**(c) REFERENCES**

- Should start on a new page and contains the list of all the books and journals cited in the proposal.
- Should not have any materials not cited in the proposal nor should the proposal have any materials not cited in the list of references. However, if the researcher

referred to any books or journals that are not directly referred to in the proposal, then these should be listed under BIBLIOGRAPHY.

- The listing of the books or journals should be as per the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA). Any deviation from this must follow a manual recommended by the School and approved by the Board of Postgraduate Studies.

#### **d) PLAN OF WORK (WORK PLAN)**

This should be on a separate page.

#### **e) BUDGET:**

This should be on a separate page. It is essentially a conversion of work plan into a financial plan.

#### **f) APPENDICES**

Should start on a new page, and contains all the materials that could not be included in the main text, such as instruments used to collect data, and a map that indicates the location of study. If there is more than one appendix, they should be numbered as Appendix I (or A or 1 e.t.c.), followed by the title of the appendix.

#### **g) LIST OF TABLES**

Should be in a new page and should contain the number of the tables, title, and page number where the table is located in the proposal. The numbering of the tables should be from 1 to the last. The title of each table should be precise and descriptive of the table of contents and placed on top of the table. Other details are as per APA manual.

#### **h) LIST OF FIGURES**

Should be in a new page, and should contain the number of the figure, the title and *the page number where the figure is located in the proposal. The numbering of the figures*

*should be from 1 to the last.* The title of each figure should be precise and descriptive of the figure contents and placed at the bottom of the figure. Other details are as per the APA manual.

## **i) ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

Starts on a new page and should contain only the abbreviations and acronyms used in the proposal; all listed in alphabetical order.

## **CHAPTER ONE CONTENT - INTRODUCTION**

The numbering of the whole proposal starts from here with NO.1 (Arabic) as the first page continuing up to the last page of the proposal. The chapter should have the following sections:

### **(i) Background of the Study**

The section sets the stage for the study and puts the topic in perspective and ends with general statements about the need for the study. The purpose of this section is to demonstrate the student understanding of his/her field of study by critically analyzing the pertinent work of other investigators leading up to her/his proposed work. State explicitly what scientific questions other scientists have not yet answered about your field. This will identify the "gaps in our understanding". This should not be more than three pages

### **(ii) Statement of the Problem**

Statement of the problem refers to a concise description of the issues that need to be addressed by the researcher. This is the focal point of the study, it precisely indicates the situation (need or gaps) between the actual and the ideal state. Since the stage has already been set in the background of the study, the statement of the problem should be precise, specific and clear enough to be easily identified. A statement of about three sentences should be adequate in order to avoid ambiguity.

**(iii) Purpose of the Study**

The purpose statement of a dissertation proposal explains why a researcher's study will be conducted and what the study will accomplish. The purpose of this section is to state precisely the ultimate goal or aim of the study. It should be stated in one sentence.

**(iv) Objectives (minimum of three, maximum of five)**

Study objectives define the specific aims of the study, and should be clearly stated. They are derived from the statement of the problem. Specifying the research question is one of the first methodological steps the investigator has to take when undertaking research. Choosing a research question is the central element of both quantitative and qualitative research, and in some cases it may precede construction of the conceptual framework of study. In all cases, it makes the theoretical assumptions in the framework more explicit, most of all it indicates what the researcher wants to know most and first. They clarify relationships among variables and support competing hypotheses or theoretical views. Research questions can be used to delineate the variables in the research objectives to make them clearer and measurable. They always correspond to the research objectives. Research Questions/Hypotheses (3-5 questions, but depending on number of objectives).

v) **Hypotheses** are an ideas or explanation that you test through study and experimentation. Hypothesis is therefore an idea or theory that is not proven but that leads to further study or discussion. It is derived from an intelligent guess about a relationship, thus it is the researcher's anticipated explanation or opinion regarding the results of the study. It may be directional or non-directional and is based on findings of previous research gained from a thorough literature review. Variables must be clearly operationalized. If you state hypotheses in your study,



you must plan to test them and show clearly in the methodology sections how testing will be done.

N/B Depending on the type of study, you can choose either research questions or hypotheses. Example of a hypothesis; there is no significant relationship between employee training and voluntary turnover of business development officers in XYZ company. Depending on the statement of objectives or research questions, one can have both research questions and hypotheses.

This will be the case if some objectives cannot be converted into hypothesis; as such no testing is required.

**(vi) Justification of the Study (1 to 2 paragraphs)**

Research *justification* refers to the rationale for the research, or the reason why the research is being conducted, including an explanation for the design and methods employed in the research. It answers the questions: why is the study important? To whom is it important? And what benefit will occur if the study is done?

**i) Limitations of the Study (1 to 2 paragraphs)**

*Limitations* are influences that the researcher cannot control. They are the shortcomings, conditions or influences that cannot be controlled by the researcher that place *restrictions* on your methodology and conclusions. Any *limitations* that might influence the results should be mentioned in this section and the Methods used to counter the limitations.

**ii) Delimitation of the Study (1 to 2 paragraphs)**

This is a statement describing the scope of the study.

**ix Assumptions of the Study**

In the process of the study, there are some areas that the researcher will assume that they will have no effect on the data interpretation (i.e. internal and external validity). Such assumptions may relate to validity and reliability of measuring instruments, representativeness of the sample taken and honesty in the subjects in making the appropriate responses. The assumptions make it possible for the researcher to continue to undertake the study with a reasonable degree of confidence.

**iii) Operational Definition of Terms**

All terms that may assume a unique meaning in the study should be defined under this section. This may include terms that the researcher may think are new to the audience.

**CHAPTER TWO CONTENT - LITERATURE REVIEW (10 - 20 PAGES)**

This chapter reviews what previous book writers or researchers have written out or have found out, respectively, in the area. The length will depend on how much work has been done previously in the area. Nevertheless, it should not be more than 20 pages. If one is planning to explore a relatively new area, the literature for review may be limited, but there is always related literature. The review will help the researcher to know whether the area being explored is new and if not, how much remains to be done (existing gaps). In case the intended area of study has exhaustively been studied, then one has to look for another area unless there is a need for replication.

**a) The structure**

**Introduction:** States what is contained in the literature review in one to two paragraphs.

**Body:** Literature review is structured into sections; the first section should address a specific theme using secondary information on the topic generally such as text

books. The second section should contain information on the topic in the area of study from researched articles in journals dealing with primary information

**Sub-topics:** If it is to be included, it has to be based on the aspects covered by the stated objectives. Conceptual framework should be presented here, showing a brief explanation of the relationships between the variables identified for study in the statement of the problem, objectives and research questions. It is always depicted diagrammatically showing the relationships between the independent and dependent variables as well as any anticipated intervening variables (if any). If there is reviewed literature that has indicated the theoretical model or framework similar to what is under study, then it should be included as theoretical framework. Theoretical framework should come before the conceptual framework.

### **CHAPTER THREE CONTENT - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY (8-10 PAGES)**

- (i) **Introduction** (1 paragraph) – should state what is contained in this chapter, namely, research design, target and population, sampling, preparation of data collection instruments/instrumentation, data collection procedures and methods of data analysis.
- (ii) **Research Design** ( $1/2$  a page) – should discuss the design used in the study and the reason why that design was selected. The designs may be survey correlational, experimental, *ex-post facto* research design.
- (iii) **Target Population** – ( $1/2$  a page) - Provide a description of the population you wish to study. Indicate their characteristics, including size and why it has been chosen.
- (iv) **Sampling methods** – ( $1/2$  a page) – This discusses how the sample is to be selected, and sample size. Use a sampling matrix to show the population and selected sample.
- (v) **Instrumentation**

This section describes what instruments are to be used, their development and how many of them depending on the categories of respondents. The section should also include details on how quality of the instruments (validity and reliability) will be ensured.

- (vi) **Methods of Data Collection** (1-2 pages) should discuss issues related to data collection and procedures for administering them in the field.

It should include how authority to collect data will be sought, methods of ensuring high response rates and any ethical values to be considered

- (vii) **Operational definition of variables** – Operationalizing or operationally defining a concept to render it measurable, is done by looking at the behavioral dimensions, indicators, facets or properties denoted by the concept. These are then translated into observable and measurable elements so as to develop an index of the concept. Measures can be objective or subjective, for example: income can be measured by where one falls in an income bracket say Ksh. 10,000 – 50,000, or successful projects would be measured in number of completed projects in use by the community – these would be considered objective measures. A subjective measure is based on opinion, for example: customer satisfaction would be measured by perception of customers towards service received. Note that, it is not possible to construct a meaningful data collection instrument without first operationalizing all the variables.

- (viii) **Methods of Data Analysis** (at least  $1/2$  a page) – should discuss issues related to qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis and relate them to research questions. For each research question, one should show how he/she will analyze the variable and their relationships or differences. Describe the type of statistical methods that will be used and justification as to why the statistics have been prepared.

**Note:** (a) Other aspects of the proposal have been covered under table of contents.

(b). The proposal is written in future tense since it is a presentation of what is to be done.

## **RESEARCH THESIS WRITING FORMAT**

The guidelines for the thesis writing are similar to those of proposal writing except for the following:

(a) The whole thesis is written in past tense since the research will have been carried out. It outlines what was actually done.

(b) Cover Page

The date and year indicated should be the time the thesis was submitted.

(c) Other Preliminary pages

(i) Declaration:

The words "research proposal" should be replaced by "research thesis".

(ii) Recommendation:

The word "research proposal" should be replaced by "research thesis".

(iii) Copyright:

This is necessary because a thesis is a permanent recording by the candidate and for the candidate and the university.

This page comes after declaration and recommendation page. It should start with the copyright symbol under which the full names of the candidate should be written out. The following should be included after the candidate's name.

*"All rights reserved. No part of this thesis may be reproduced, stored in any retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronically, mechanically, by photocopying or otherwise, without prior written permission of the author or Kirinyaga University on that behalf".*

(vi) Dedication

This page is optional. However, if the candidate wishes to dedicate the thesis to someone special or for any reason, it is normally included.

(vii) Acknowledgement:

This page is normally written to acknowledge the persons who may have contributed significantly to the research and preparation of the thesis.

(viii) Table of Contents

In addition to the first three chapters of the research proposal there is:

**CHAPTER FOUR : RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**  
**CHAPTER FIVE : SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Since the work has already been done, there is no WORK PLAN or BUDGET in the thesis.

(ix) Abstract:

This should be up to one page.

## **CHAPTER ONE - CHAPTER THREE**

This chapter is per the proposal writing guidelines except for the past tense presentation.

## **CHAPTER FOUR - RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

b) This chapter contains the results of the data analysis. The results are presented in form of tables and figures. Where the results can be presented easily in writing then tables or figures are omitted. The purpose of tables and figures is to facilitate clarity in understanding of the results. For example, there is no need to include a figure that only indicates "56% of the respondents were males, while 44% were females" or "60% responded "YES" while 30% responded "NO". Ten per cent did not respond.

The results presented should also be discussed. Discussion involves explanation, description and interpretation.

c) In the process of discussion one should relate the results obtained to the literature reviewed. Relationships or confirmation of previous findings need to be shown. Where there are contradictions with previous findings this should also be indicated, with any possible explanations. This is where previous experiences and the obtained results can also be integrated and explained.

d) The chapter should have suitable sub-headings, starting with 4.1 Introduction; and then well selected sub-headings, preferably drawn from the objectives of the study and data collection instruments organization. The last sub-heading should be a summary of the whole chapter.

As indicated earlier, the Tables and Figures titles should be explanatory of the respective contents.

## **CHAPTER FIVE - SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This is the last chapter in the thesis. All the contents included here must be based on the previous chapters but no references should be cited in this chapter.

### **(i) Introduction**

This introduces the contents of the chapter.

#### **Summary**

This is a summary of all the chapters beginning from chapter one, especially indicating the purpose and objectives of the study.

### **(ii) Conclusions**

The conclusions ought to be systematic and based on the set objectives. The contents of this chapter will indicate whether the objectives, consequently, the purpose of the study were achieved.

One should avoid making conclusions that are not based on the results obtained.

### **(iii) Recommendations**

The recommendations must be based on the conclusions drawn from the findings/results. These should be in two sets.

#### **e) *Recommendations on Research Findings***



These should be based on the results and the subsequent recommendations.  
They should be specific on what actions to be taken and by whom.

f) *Recommendations for Further Research*

These are based on the issues that emerged in the process of the research, but could not be investigated since they were not of primary concern when the study was set up.

**Note:**

*The length of the thesis of a master degree programme shall be at least 20,000 words.*

*The length of the thesis/dissertation of a doctoral programme shall be at least 50,000 words.*