2012
Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
93400 Kota Samarahan
Sarawak
FACULTY OF APPLIED AND CREATIVE ARTS
THESIS WRITING GUIDE FOR POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME

This guide is designed to help the postgraduate students of Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts in the preparation of their theses. It is further improved based on thesis guideline from Centre for Graduate Study UNIMAS (CGS).

A. REQUIREMENT OF THE THESIS

1. Maximum Length Required
   (a) PhD Thesis - 100,000 words;
   (b) Master’s Dissertation - 60,000 words;
   Excluding footnote, appendices, tables, diagrams, references and bibliography

2. Editorial Service
   Candidates are advisable and encouraged of using the editorial service as to check their words and sentences structure before the thesis is sent for examination. Supervisors are not responsible on editing the theses. Students should refer for language expertise for the accuracy of translation and terminology. Theses that are reasonably free of errors will be accepted for examination.

3. Conform to the set Guidelines
   Candidates are required to conform to the guidelines set by the Faculty and Centre for Graduate Study UNIMAS. Candidates are also required to keep the writing structure and format especially citation and referencing format of their theses accurate and consistence. FACA encourage candidate to apply APA (American Psychological Association) System 5th Edition for citation and referencing.

B. FORMAT OF THE THESIS

1. Language and Units
   1.1 The thesis must be written in either English or Bahasa Melayu. The language of the thesis should be as direct and simple, as the subject matter will allow.

   1.2 The English Language must conform to either fully in British or American style, but not a mixture of both.

   1.3 All units of measurement must be in the metric system.

2. Typing
   Chapter titles should be typed with capital letters and centered between the left and right margins. Each chapter must begin on a new page. Titles should be typed in bold without underline. Only the first letter of the first word of a sub-title should be in uppercase.
2.1 **Font.** Preferably, all candidates are to use Times New Roman (font size 12) in their theses. In certain cases, use of other font types may be considered upon approval by the Faculty Postgraduate Committee.

2.2 **Spacing.** The thesis should be typed on one side of the page. The text should be double-spaced throughout the thesis. However, explanatory footnotes, long quotations, appendices, headings and subheadings, legends, captions or keys to tables, figures, or plates should be single-spaced.

2.3 **Type Quality.** Both copies of the thesis submitted for examination and final submission must be printed using a laser printer.

3. **Margins**
The top and bottom margins of all pages should be 3 cm wide, with the right and left-hand page margin should be 2.5 cm wide.

4. **Pagination**
4.1 Pages should be numbered consecutively throughout the thesis, including pages of figures, tables and appendices. Pagination begins with the first page of Chapter 1. Preliminary pages (i.e. those preceding Chapter 1) must carry page numbers in small roman numerals (i, ii, iii, etc.). The title page should not be numbered.

4.2 Page numbers should be centered at the bottom of the page and should be at least 10 mm from the margin of the page. Page numbers should appear by themselves and are not to be enclosed in parentheses, hyphens, etc. Each appendix should be identified separately in alphabetical order. The pages of the appendices should also be typed according to the above pagination system.

5. **Paper**
White, good-quality of 80g A4 paper should be used for all submitted copies of the thesis. Photographic illustrations should be laser colour-printed on good quality high-resolution paper.

C. **THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE CONTENTS OF THE THESIS**

Candidates should bear in mind that thesis examiners deplore overlong or verbose thesis, and the onus is on the candidate to provide a well-organized and well-written thesis. The following ordered list of thesis sections serves as a guide.

The Arrangement of the Contents of the Thesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Blank Page</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>unnumbered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Title Page (Appendix 1)</td>
<td>require</td>
<td>Unnumbered but considered as (i)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Author’s Declaration (Appendix 2)</td>
<td>require</td>
<td>Lowercase Roman Numeral (ii)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Copyright</td>
<td>(optional)</td>
<td>Lowercase Roman Numeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>(optional)</td>
<td>Lowercase Roman Numeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Acknowledgement</td>
<td>require</td>
<td>Lowercase Roman Numeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>require</td>
<td>Lowercase Roman Numeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>require</td>
<td>Lowercase Roman Numeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>require</td>
<td>Lowercase Roman Numeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>require</td>
<td>Lowercase Roman Numeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>List of Symbols and Abbreviations</td>
<td>require</td>
<td>Lowercase Roman Numeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>List of Appendices</td>
<td>require</td>
<td>Lowercase Roman Numeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>require</td>
<td>Arabic Numeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>References</td>
<td>require</td>
<td>Arabic Numeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Reference Appendices</td>
<td>require</td>
<td>Arabic Numeral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Title Page**
   The thesis title should be as concise as possible, giving an accurate description of the thesis. The title page must contain the following information in the following order:
   i. Title of the thesis;
   ii. Full name of the student;
   iii. Statement on the purpose of the thesis submission;
   iv. Name of the faculty or centre where the student is registered;
   v. Name of the University; and
   vi. The year the thesis was written and accepted.

2. **Author’s Declaration**
   The declaration page contains a statement declaring the originality of the thesis. It must be signed by the author. Please refer to **APPENDIX 2**

3. **Copyright (optional)**
   Under International Law the use of copyright material requires the permission of either the author or the publisher. It is the responsibility of the candidate to address this issue and cover any expenses incurred.

4. **Dedication (optional)**
   The author may wish to dedicate his/her work to the relevant person(s) tantamount to his/her success in obtaining his/her degree.

5. **Acknowledgements/Preface**
   Most theses will include a brief statement of gratitude in recognition of special assistance (including financial) and guidance given by individuals, institutions or government bodies.

6. **Abstract**
   Abstracts in both Bahasa Melayu and English are mandatory. The English version must include the title in English for a thesis written in Bahasa Melayu, and vice versa. The abstract is a summary of the entire thesis. It should briefly outline the research
problems addressed by the thesis, the findings, and the significance of the work in the context of the field of study. The abstract should not exceed four (4) typewritten double-spaced pages of text with font size of 12. Abstract in the language not used in the body of the thesis should be written in italics.

7. **Table of Contents**
The titles of sections, chapters and their principal subdivisions along with the page numbers on which they appear should be listed in the Table of Contents. Titles should be worded exactly as they appear in the text of the thesis. Theses with many subsections should use a hierarchical numbering system for headings and subheadings (e.g. 3.0, 3.1, 3.2 etc). Such numbering system combined with the judicious use of upper and lower case, indentations and italics should indicate clear relationships between the sections of the thesis.

8. **Lists of Tables, Figures and Plates**
These lists consist of the exact titles (including numbering) of all tables, figures and plates that appear in the thesis. All tables, figures and plates should be numbered consecutively throughout the text.

9. **List of Abbreviations, Symbols, Specialized Nomenclature**
This list is optional, depending on the subject of the thesis. All scientific symbols and nomenclature should follow the standard SI system.

10. **Main Text of the Thesis**
The main body of the thesis is usually arranged into consecutively numbered chapters or sections. The internal organization of the thesis is the responsibility of the candidate in consultation with his/her thesis supervisor(s). The organization will partly depend on the field of study, but the onus is on the student to provide a systematic and well-organized thesis. Overall, the font of the main text should be font 12 with double-spacing.

There is no restriction on the total number of chapters in a thesis. Generally, a thesis will have the following basic structure:

10.1 **Introduction**
It is the introductory chapter that introduces the problem and indicates its importance and validity. It sets forth the context, the hypothesis (if applicable) to be tested or research problems and the research objectives to be attained.

10.2 **Literature Review**
It is a critical review of literature related to the topic of the thesis. It is meant to act as a base for the experimental/analytical section of the thesis. Literature selected must be up to date, analysed and synthesised logically. It is not a mere summary of works of different authors.
10.3 **Materials and Methods**
All relevant experimental, descriptive, theoretical and analytical techniques used in the research should be outlined, such that the study could be repeated by another researcher. Reference of methods to other researchers should be made where appropriate. This important chapter explains in detail the samples, instruments, materials, procedures and data gathering methods used in the research.

10.4 **Data Analysis and Results**
This may be presented as a single chapter, divided into appropriate section, in two or more separate chapters where it includes the analysis and presentation of data. The results should be interpreted, but extensive reference to other relevant work should not be included.

10.5 **Discussion, Summary and Conclusions**
This provides a general discussion on the results of the study, stressing the significance and implications of the findings of the research project undertaken. Summary and Conclusions are drawn based on the research findings and their implications.

It is acceptable for individual chapters to be self-contained, including their own introduction, methods, results and discussions, as is often the case where individual chapters are being submitted for publication. However, in such theses, a broader introduction to the whole thesis should be included to tie the chapters or sections together and to provide the framework for the whole thesis.

11. **Layout for Tables, Figures or Plates**
11.1 **Tables**
Tables are numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals throughout the thesis (including text and appendices). There are two possible numbering schemes: either (a) number them consecutively throughout the thesis, or (b) number them by chapter, e.g. Table 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2 and so on. Normally, all tables are to be listed under LIST OF TABLES in the preliminary pages (including tables appearing in the appendices). Tables should be placed after their first mentioned in the text or placed at the end of each chapter. Table number, title and caption are typed single-spaced and placed above or below the table. There should be consistency in the style used. Table sources and notes should be placed directly below the caption. Vertical lines are permitted.
For Example:

Table 1.1: Test of liquid absorb in 8 types of hand-made paper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dipping Activities (time)</th>
<th>Hand-made Paper (type)</th>
<th>Diameter in cm (colour spreading)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 second</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 second</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 second</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 second</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 second</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 second</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 second</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 second</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Using conventional watercolour pigment

11.2 Figures or Plates

Figures or Plates include maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, photographs, engineering drawings and printed images. Each of these categories are numbered consecutively or according to the chapter throughout the thesis, including those in appendices. The figure or plate number, title and caption should be typed singles-paced and placed either below or at the top of the figure using Arabic numeral and lowercase, except for Proper nouns and first letters of principal words. Figures or Plates should be inserted after their first mention in the text or at the end of each chapter. If a figure or plate occupies an entire page, the caption may be typed on the left-hand facing page (reverse side blank), which is counted but not paginated. A right-hand page in landscape format should have the top of the figure at the binding edge. The figure or plate number should be typed parallel to the way the figure reads. The page number is typed in standard text position. Figures or plates should conform to standard margin requirements. Large size drawings or images should be placed in the appendix.

For Example:

Figure 1.1: Universiti Malaysia Sarawak Official Logo (Source: UNIMAS)
12. **Format for Measurement, Numbers, Marks and Brackets**

12.1 **Units of Measure**

Use internationally recognised units of measure, preferably SI, such as:

i. litre (L)

ii. 30 millilitres (30 mL)

iii. 15 kilogram (15 kg)

iv. 500 U.S. Dollars (USD500)

The numbers before the measurement units should not be spelt out, e.g. such as 5 kg, not five kg even if they are below 100, unless they are the first word of sentences.

12.2 **Numbers**

All integers less than ten should be spelt out unless they are attached to units of measure (e.g. 5 kg, 10 mL). Use figures for numbers 10 or more than 10. If a sentence begins with a number, write the numbers in words, e.g. "Three hundred and eighty-five farmers were sampled from the study area." Use numerals for a series of figures, for example:

i. In the room there were 4 chairs, 12 boxes, 13 books, 10 files, 9 umbrella and 8 pairs of shoes.

ii. The number of taxi permits issued during the past five years was 8, 53, 27, 38, 52, and 90.

12.3 **Elliptical Marks**

Writers use the ellipsis mark to show an omission from quoted material. The ellipsis consists of three-spaced full stops (...). When an ellipsis follows a sentence, it appears as four full stops (...). One full stop marks the end of the sentence and the other three signal the omission. For example: Khatijah (1985: 4) wrote about the conference: The conference at Kuala Lumpur . . . agreed that the world educational crisis sketched in the document was real. . . .

12.4 **Use of Brackets [ ]**

Within direct quotations, brackets are used to enclose any explanatory note inserted by the thesis writer, e.g. This year [1996] alone, we had two hundred applicants wanting to join our holiday camp (Mustafa, 1996). Candidates should use "sic" within brackets [sic] to indicate a certain doubt as to meaning or factual error. It is used in quotations to show that the original is being faithfully reproduced even though it is incorrect or seems to be so. Errors, which are obviously typographical, should be corrected as a matter of professional courtesy.

13. **Literature Citation and Referencing**

13.1 Any thesis, which makes use of other works, either in direct quotation or by reference, must contain a bibliography listing all of these sources. Only works directly cited or quoted in the text should be included in the bibliography.

13.2 UNIMAS follows either the Harvard or the APA System (American Psychological Association) for literature citation and referencing. However, FACA is strongly
suggest the students to apply APA System (American Psychological Association) 5th Edition.

13.3 In the text, the year of publication appears within parentheses after the author’s surname if the latter forms part of a sentence; for example, Chong (1986) or Azis and Harrison (1987) or, where there are more than two authors, Yamakura et al. (1990). If several papers by the same author(s) and from the same year are cited, the letters a, b, c, etc. should be put after the year of publication; for example: Chazdon and Ibrahim (1988b)

13.4 Both the author’s surname and the year of publication appear within parentheses if the author’s surname does not form part of a sentence; for example: (Yakub & Chan, 1989).

13.5 If a reference contains three authors, state all three names the first time it is referred to in the text. For the second and subsequent times it is mentioned, state only the first author’s name followed by “et al.” and year.

   For example:
   A study by Alias, Black & Gray (2002) shows that engineering students have lower spatial visualisation ability than required. Since this ability is important in solving engineering problems, it needs to be improved among engineering students (Alias et al., 2002).

13.6 In any particular sentence, if several publications are cited, the references should be cited in chronological order.

13.7 However, if several publications of the same year are cited the references should be cited in alphabetical order, with single author taking precedence over joint authors.

13.8 Reference from authorless articles should be cited as thus: (Anonymous, 1998). Reference from official publications of international bodies/agencies should be written as thus: (WHO, 1984).

13.9 **SHORT QUOTATION** - Words of an author may be quoted exactly by the writer to support an argument. When a direct quotation from a source is taken, it should run into the text with double quotation marks if it is reasonably brief (three (3) or less sentences) with the end-of-sentence period in the normal place.

   For example:
   Rajaratnam (2001) concluded that, “The cost to the nation’s health of working out of phase with our biological clocks is probably incalculable at present.” (p. 1000).

   For example:
   A lot of discussion has been made on the cost of working out of phase with our biological clocks. “The cost to the nation’s health of working out of phase with
our biological clocks is probably incalculable at present” (Rajaratnam, 2001, p. 1000).

**LONG QUOTATION** - A quotation containing more than three sentences must be set off from the text as a paragraph on its own with 1 cm indent, placing the period at the end of the quoted text with no period after the reference citation page number. Single spacing should be used for block quotations.

For example:
According to a renowned scholar (Rajaratnam, 2001),

> Biological time is not only scientifically important, but it also greatly affects the productivity and health of a nation. The cost to the nation’s health of working out of phase with our biological clocks is probably incalculable at present. In the 19 short term, poor sleep, gastrointestinal problems, higher accident rate, and social problems are evident. (p. 1000)

13.10 **PARAPHRASING** - The paraphrasing method is used to acknowledge information taken from the original author by rewording the original text without altering its meaning nor providing the writer’s own interpretation.

For example:
Rajaratnam (2001) argues that while the notion of biological time is of scientific importance, it is also economically and socially significant at a national level. He points to the health, productivity and social problems which may be attributed to individuals working “out of phase” with their internal clocks.

13.11 **SUMMARISING** - The writer may summarise cited text in his/her own words to present the key points of an author’s arguments or ideas, without altering the meaning.

For example:
In his conclusion, Rajaratnam (2001) points to the possible economic and social costs incurred by a nation, when individuals work “out of phase” with their biological clocks.

13.12 At the end of the thesis, all the references cited are listed in alphabetical order. There is no necessity to number the references. The bibliography should be double-spaced as with the rest of the text with a size 11 font.

13.13 Bibliographic examples (APA System):

**Reference from edited books:**

**Reference by two or three authors:**

**If the book has an editor, the name of the editor must also be written:**

**Articles from books:**

**Articles from journal:**

**Proceedings:**
For example;

**Newspaper clippings:**
Author (Date). Title of article. *Name of newspaper*. Page numbers.
For example;

**Translated sources:**
Original author's name. (Year of translation). *Title of book* (Name of translator, Trans.). Place of publication: Publisher. (Original work published Date)
For example;

**Interview:**
A not considered to be recoverable data, so no reference to interviews should be provided in the reference list. You may, however, cite the interview within the text as a personal communication.
For example;
...students are not interested in community services (Hassan, A. R., personal communication, August 15, 2006)

**Retrieved from internet:**
14. Appendices
This section is optional and will depend on the individual thesis content. It contains supplementary illustrative material, original data and quotations too long for inclusion and not immediately essential to an understanding of the subject. Appendix materials should be grouped by type, e.g. Appendix A: Questionnaire, Appendix B: Original Data, Appendix C: Result Tables. The appendices should be labelled alphabetically.

D. BINDING, HARD COVER AND FINAL SUBMISSION

Binding of the thesis shall be the responsibility of the candidate.

1. Thesis For Examination
Students are required to submit 2 copies of ring bound thesis in soft cover prior to examination by the internal and external examiners. Theses submitted must be approved by the main supervisor.

2. Hard Bound Thesis and Front Cover
Following acceptance and approval by the Graduate Studies Committee the thesis should be bound in hard cover. On the final hard bound copies, the title of the thesis, name of candidate and the degree for which the thesis is submitted should be printed on the front cover according to the format required (Appendix 3). The front cover of the theses shall be printed according to the colour of the Faculty/Institute together with the UNIMAS logo and the name of the Faculty/Institute. The student’s name, degree and year shall also be printed on the spine of the bound thesis. Stripes according to the colour of the faculty, institute or center shall be printed on the back cover and spine to distinguish between a PhD (3 stripes) and Master (2 stripes) thesis (Appendix 4). Candidates are advised to consult the Centre for Graduate Studies for the final submission of thesis.

3. Final Submission
Students are required to do 5 copies of approved thesis and submit to Centre for Graduate Study, UNIMAS. CGS then will verify the copies and students are required to complete the Final Submission Form. CGS will keep 3 copies of student theses. Students are also encouraged to submit a copy of their thesis to main supervisor. Additional requirement – students are required to submit a copy of electronic document (compile as one file in PDF format) of their thesis to CGS.

REFERENCES


Universiti Putra Malaysia (2005), Guide to the Preparation of Thesis, School of Graduate Studies UPM
Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (2012), Thesis Writing Guide, Centre for Graduate Studies UTHM.
TITLE OF THE THESIS

NAME

A thesis submitted
in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts/ Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
Year
APPENDIX 2: Author’s Declaration

AUTHOR’S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak. It is original and is the result of my work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak or to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any other degree or qualification.

Name of Student : 
Student ID No : 
Programme Degree : 
Faculty : 
Thesis Title : 

Signature of Student : 
Date : 
APPENDIX 3: Front Cover

Thesis Cover (Font type: New Century Schoolbook)

Background Colour:
Official Faculty colour

LOGO
(Black for FCS & IEAS;
White for other faculties/institutes/centres)

Faculty of Resource Science and Technology
(Faculty/institute/centre: font size 16; small case)

Land-use History, Tree Diversity and Soil Fertility in Changing Landscape of Sabal Forest Reserve, Sarawak, Malaysia
(Thesis title font size 14; Bold Capital/Scientific name, italic)

White Background

Student’s Name
(font 12: small case)

Degree Year (area)
(font 12: small case)

Equal margin

Equal margin

2.5cm