4. PHYSICAL FORMAT AND LAYOUT OF DISSERTATIONS AND THESES

4.1 Introduction

A thesis is the written document that results from a period of supervised research at the University. It reports on new findings and implications of research undertaken, set in the context of the earlier work of others and making appropriate reference to those previous studies and results that have influenced the conduct of work. A thesis must be an original work which makes a significant contribution to knowledge in a particular field of study. In short it is the presentation of results of original research in a critical and scholarly fashion.

This document is intended as a standard guide for all theses presented for research degrees and the transfer report for upgrading to PhD at the University of Mauritius. This guide deals with the practicalities of producing the thesis/transfer report in a format that is acceptable for examination and for deposit in the library. Because each discipline has different conventions over matters such as lay-out and style, it is recommended that students consult their respective supervisors before starting to write their thesis.

4.2 General Considerations

Many practical issues such as paper to be used, illustrative matter, binding specifications and so on, need to be thought out before one embarks on the final assembly of a thesis/transfer report, with all of its constituent elements. Ignoring these details may lead to the cost incurred being greater than they need have been or to mistakes which are impossible to correct when the time comes for binding. The thesis must be produced to a standard acceptable for long-term storage, and bound in accordance with the University requirements.

4.3 Language

All candidates are required to submit their thesis in English, unless the discipline requires otherwise. The thesis should normally be written in the third person, in past tense and should be as concise as possible. Sentences should be kept short. Students are advised to use simple and clear English throughout the thesis so that even readers who are not expert in the area may understand the work. Students should also remember that it is better to produce a short and well- written thesis than a long one full of irrelevant details.

4.4 Paper and Typographical detail

The thesis must be typed, justified and printed on one side of the paper only using:

(i)   1½ line spacing, and
(ii)   characters not less than 10 pt, font type 'Times New Roman' or 'Arial'.

Good quality A4 white paper should be used for the printing and for xerographic copies.

The left margin used for binding shall not be less than 40 mm while all other margins shall not be less than 20 mm.

4.5   Length of the Thesis

The PhD thesis should be no more than 100,000 words in length and the MPhil thesis no more than 60,000 in length both including footnotes and references. The word count includes only the main body of the thesis and therefore excludes the table of contents, list of figures, tables and schemes, declaration form (if any), acknowledgements and appendices.

4.6   Pagination

Pages shall be numbered consecutively throughout the thesis, starting with the title page, including appendices.

Roman numerals (i, ii, iii..) shall be used for the front pages (Preliminaries) and Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, …) as from the 'Introduction' section onwards.

Page numbers shall be located centrally at the bottom of the page, approximately 10 mm above the edge.

4.7   Referencing

Each student should adhere to the system of referencing as per "The University of Mauritius Referencing Guide" when writing up the thesis. The Referencing Guide will normally be based on the Harvard System.

Students and staff are advised to refer to 'The University of Mauritius Referencing Guide' available in the *'Handbook on Rules, Regulations and Procedures Governing MPhil/PhD Programmes'* posted on the UoM website.

http://www.uom.ac.mu/Images/Files/Regulations/MPhilPhD/2016_2017/harvardsys.pdf

4.8   Plagiarism

Plagiarism involves using the work of another and presenting it as one's own, whether published or unpublished. Students must acknowledge all work that is not their own, whether ideas, experimental procedures, data, maps, tables, diagrams and photographs. The acknowledgment should be in the form of citations or references.

The University of Mauritius takes a very serious view of plagiarism and any case detected will be dealt with as per Section 7 of the *'Handbook on Rules, Regulations and Procedures Governing MPhil/PhD Programmes'***,** also accessible on the following university website:

http://www.uom.ac.mu/Images/Files/Regulations/MPhilPhD/2016_2017/chap7.pdf

4.9   Proof-Reading

The thesis should be carefully proof-read before submission. It is recommended that the student undertakes this important role. The following should be carefully checked:

(i)   every table, diagram, photograph and map has a caption and is referred to in the text;
(ii)   every table, diagram, photograph and map referred to in the text is actually included;
(iii)   every citation in the text is included in the 'List of Reference';
(iv)   Every item in the 'List of Reference' is referred to in the text;
(v)   The conventions in the use of italics or underlining especially for foreign and scientific terms, as appropriate to the discipline have been followed.

4.10   Cover and Binding

The thesis will initially be submitted for examination in three (3) spiral bound copies and one soft copy.

After assessment, the thesis including all amendments proposed (if any) shall be submitted in two (2) hard bound copies. They should be in book form in a fixed binding. The boards shall have sufficient rigidity to support the weight of the work when standing upon the shelf. The cover shall be black and full bound.

The spine of the hard bound thesis shall bear in at least 24 pt (8mm) type the qualification and the student's surname and initials and the year of presentation in gold lettering, starting 40 mm from the base. This information shall be printed along the spine in such a way as to be readable when the dissertation is lying flat with back cover uppermost. If the dissertation consists of more than one volume, the spine shall bear the number of each volume.

The front cover shall bear in at least 24 pt (8mm) type the full title of the dissertation as approved by the Department/Faculty/Centre.

This section should be read in conjunction with section 6.2, 'Procedures for Submission of the thesis' of the 'Handbook on Rules, Regulations and Procedures Governing MPhil/PhD Programmes'.

4.11   The Framework

The thesis normally consists of preliminaries, main text, references and appendices.

4.12   Preliminaries

The preliminaries should abide by the following elements, wherever applicable:

4.12.1   Title Page

The title page should consist of the following information in the order listed:

(i)   Full title of the thesis as approved by the Faculty/Centre Board or TRC;
(ii)   The full name of the author;
(iii)   The qualification for which the thesis is submitted;
(iv)   The name of the institution to which the thesis submitted;
(v)   The Department and/or Faculty/Centre in which the thesis is to be submitted; and
(vi)   The month and year of submission.

4.12.2   Table of Contents

The Table of Contents shall list in sequence with page numbers all chapters, sections/headings, sub-sections/headings and other sub-divisions of the thesis, appendices, etc.

4.12.3   List of Tables, Figures, Plates/Schemes

Separate lists of each, in the above order, giving number and page reference.

4.12.4   Acknowledgements

Students may wish to acknowledge any substantial assistance that that they may have received in the course of their research.

4.12.5 Thesis Declaration Form

The form should be duly filled and it should be included just after the acknowledgement in the thesis.

4.12.6 Abstract

The abstract constitutes an up to one-page executive summary, which provides a brief outline of the objectives, scope of the thesis, the methodology used, the main findings and results achieved and any conclusions and recommendations made. The abstract is very important as it is often the only part of the thesis that is consulted by those seeking information relevant to them. It must therefore be concise, informative and exact.

4.12.7 List of Abbreviations/Glossary

This section should list in alphabetical order all abbreviations used in the thesis.

4.13 Main Text

The main text of the thesis follows the preliminaries and should start with an introduction followed by chapters, subdivided into sections and sub-sections.
Depending on the discipline, appropriate chapters may include amongst others: Literature Review, Materials and Methods (or Methodology), Results, Discussion, Data Analysis, Conclusions and Recommendations.
Any table, figure, plate, scheme or illustration included in the thesis should be clearly labelled. The caption should be placed at the top of tables but below figures/plates/schemes/illustrations.

4.14 References/Appendices

The list of references and appendices should follow the main text.

The appendices shall consist of any base material, which would break the flow of the thesis due to its length or partial irrelevance. Some examples are:

➢ Specifications and data sheets of equipment from suppliers
➢ Correspondence from suppliers and company
➢ Raw data
➢ Survey sheets
➢ Charts and data tables from books
➢ Lengthy mathematical derivations
➢ Copies of drawings of equipment

All appendices should be listed in sequence, i.e. Appendix 1, 2, 3, etc.

4.15 The MPhil Transfer Report

The MPhil Transfer report for upgrading to PhD should be no more than 40,000 words including footnotes and references. The word count includes only the main body of the thesis and therefore excludes the table of contents, list of figures, tables and schemes, declaration form (if any), acknowledgements and appendices.

The report should be in the same format as the MPhil thesis, given in section 3.0 above. It should include a concluding chapter as well as the future plan of work. In addition any papers published in connection with the research work should be annexed.

Updated on 17.11.16