

**FORMAT FOR WRITING PROPOSAL AND THESIS FOR FINAL SUBMISSION**

**Preamble:**

The final hard bound copies of the thesis shall be lettered in gold on the spine with the following information:

- Thesis title
- Name of student
- Degree
- Year of submission.

The hard cover shall be lettered in gold with the following information: Title of Thesis, Degree, Name of Candidate and the year of final submission at the bottom.

The final thesis should be bound in boards with **sky blue buckram** for **Masters** and **dark tarn** for **Doctoral degree**.

**GUIDELINES FOR THE FORMULATION OF RESEARCH PROJECT, PROPOSALS AND THESIS WRITING FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDIES.**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Research is a serious academic enterprise which is undertaken to explore new areas, describe situations and events, and explain phenomenon. It is a systematic way of asking questions or a systematic investigation of a situation with the view of preventing self-deception. Research involves carrying out a diligent inquiry or critical examinations of a given phenomenon. It is an exhaustive study, investigation or experimentation following some logical sequence. Research means to investigate repeatedly: search or quest aiming to discover answers to problems through reliance on empirical evidence. The research process entails the conception of the research problem (research proposal) to the reporting of research findings (thesis writing).

**1.1 The Research Continuum**

- Needs assessment
- Methods of studies
- Data analysis
- Interpretation

- Dissemination

**Needs Assessment** includes, problem identification, articulation, justification and legitimacy; objectives, limitations Hypotheses feasibility of the study and reviews of theoretical works and previous studies discussed in 2.0.

**Methods of Study, Data Analysis and Interpretation** are covered under Materials and methods in section 2i.

## **2.0 RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

Generally, research project proposal differ in style, scope and content depending on the goal and objectives, as well as the potential source of financial and other recourses. A proposal is a written description of the purpose, scope of the proposed study. It is a document that describes, in a logical fashion, an idea that can be researched on.

### **2.1 Basic Components of a Research Proposal**

Should contain but not limited to the following arranged in a logical and consistent order:

- Title
- Declaration
- Abstract
- Introduction or background to the study
- Statement of the Problem
- Research objectives
- Research Questions/Hypotheses
- Purpose/Aims and Objectives
- Significance/Justification of the Study/ Expected Outcomes/Outputs
- Assumptions and limitations
- Literature Review
- Theoretical/Conceptual Frameworks
- Materials and Methods/Research Methodology
- Work Plan/Time Schedule
- Budget
- References
- Relevant Appendices

#### **a) Title:**

A title, that should not exceed than twenty (20) words, should be conscise and reflect the research topic.

The title page should indicate:

- Research Topic
- Researcher Name
- Standard Citation
- University
- Year and Month

## **b) Abstract**

Summary of the proposal of maximum 500 words and should be written last to fit within one page. It is the most important part of the proposal. Should be concise and contain, but not limited to the following:

- Background to the studies
- Statement of the problem/justification
- Objectives
- Theoretical/ Conceptual framework (optional)
- Materials and Methods or Methods
- Significance of the study/Expected output

Standard Maasai Mara University Format for Writing Abstract for submission to BPS for a higher degree:

Below the abstract the following should be included:

1. Name of the candidate, Signature and date of submission
2. Names of the two proposed supervisors and their signatures and date when received.

## **c) Introduction**

Sets the tone of the proposal and gives context of the research. It should convey the importance of the research. Should lead logically to the next section- **Statement of the Problem.**

## **d) Statement of the Problem**

The statement of the problem must clearly be articulated and be correlated to the topic of research.

## **e) Purpose/Aims and Objectives**

Give the general objective, in line with the statement of the problem, that indicate what the research is supposed to accomplish. Enumerate Specific objectives that should be , **Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound (SMART).**

#### **f) Research Questions/Hypotheses\***

These are re-statements of the objectives. They are principal intellectual instruments in research. A hypothesis is developed by inductive or deductive reasoning. They must be capable of verification or rejection. Some researchers render themselves to hypotheses while others can be stated as themes or arguments. Where hypotheses are used, especially in the sciences they are normally stated in their “null” form. The researcher then sets out to uphold the “null” hypotheses or reject it.

#### **g) Assumptions/Limitations\***

The assumptions and limitations of the research must be clearly stated. In most research, the researcher has to make certain assumptions, they must be related to the research and not extraneous factors like money availability. Every research has certain limitations. These could be something to do with the weather, ethical or legal issues. The stage of operationalisation tests whether the research is feasible on the ground, whether it can actually be done.

#### **h) Literature Review**

A review of related literature shows the bridge between the proposed research and past research, if any, and it is important to review up-to-date literature. Always read literature that is related to the subject of your research. Literature should be reviewed on the major components (objectives) of the study.

Apply the axiom:

- (i) Cite what has been done;
- (ii) State how it was done ( Method(s));
- (iii) What was found (Result(s) ) ;
- (iv) Link to your current study to any of ((i), (ii), (iii)).

#### **f) Materials and Methods/Method Methodology**

Enumerate the methods to be used to achieve the stated objective(s)

State, where applicable, the materials to be used in the study.

- **Research Design**

Indicate the relevant research design that will guide your study.

- **Instruments and procedures**

Describe the relevant instruments and procedures for data collections where applicable.

- **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

- **Ethical Considerations in Research**

\* Where applicable

### **g) References**

There are different styles for listing the reference. The most important thing is to ensure that the listed references are technically complete and ensure consistency.

We recommend the use of either American Psychological Association (APA) or Modern Languages Association (MLA) style. NEVER mix any two citing systems.

### **h) Appendices**

Include the following:

- a) Research Instruments
- b) Maps
- c) Work plan/Schedule of activities

A work plan should indicate the time in a project life when each of the listed activities will be accomplished. It is advisable to prepare a graphical outlay of the work-plan showing the approximate duration of each activity. Please note that the work must be done within the specified time of registration time.

- Analysis of the tasks
- Time estimates (schedule)
- Synthesis of the plan

#### **d) Budget**

The budget must be done in such a manner that it is in tandem with the work plan. Enumerate all the financial costs and any other resources required for the implementation of the project.

### **NB: The Length of a Research Proposal.**

Specific disciplines will provide the desirable length for their proposals (usually not exceeding 30 pages). Font size 12 Times New Roman double spaced.

## **4.0 WRITING RESEARCH REPORT/THESIS**

The forms that research reports can take range from theses and dissertation to technical reports, conference papers and journal articles. Although there may be overlaps in the various types of reports the emphasis will be on thesis writing.

#### **4.1 Basic Components of a Thesis**

Should contain but not limited to the following arranged in a logical and consistent order:

1. Title
2. Declaration
3. Dedication
4. Acknowledgment
5. Abstract
6. Table of Content
7. List of Tables
8. List of Figures
9. List of Appendices
10. List of acronyms/abbreviations
11. Introduction or background to the study
12. Statement of the Problem
13. Purpose /Aims and objectives
14. Hypotheses( Where applicable)
15. Research Questions(Where applicable)
16. Literature review
17. Materials and Methods/Research Methodology
18. Main Result(s)
19. Discussions, Conclusions and Recommendations
20. References
21. Appendices (where applicable)

#### **4.2 Thesis Title Page**

- Title of the project
- Name of the candidate
- Standard Citation
- University
- Year

#### **4.3 Abstract**

- A precise description of the project or thesis in summary
- It should not exceed five hundred (500) words

-It must state in a comprehensive and logical manner, the main results and unique methods that lead to the results. In any case, there should be discernable threads from the objectives to conclusions.

#### **4.4 Introduction and background to the study**

- This can be similar to the introduction in the proposal with some improvements.

#### **4.5 Statement of the Problem**

- Same as in the proposal

#### **4.6 Research questions, objectives, hypothesis**

- Clearly state the research questions, objectives and hypotheses.

#### **4.7 Scope and Limitations\***

As stated in the proposal and as found in the field

#### **4.8 Significance of the Study**

State the significance of the study done.

### **5.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

- Use the literature review axioms as stated in the proposal.
- Generally, should not be more than 5 years old.

### **6.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS/RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

- Describe in details the materials and methods used in the study.

### **7.0 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **a) Results**

- Present your results after analysis describing them in adequate and clear details.

#### **b) Analysis**

Clearly draw the similarities and differences in your findings with the set objectives.

#### **c) Discussions**

- Discuss your results by giving possible scientific explanation for your findings.

### **8.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**

- Draw summary, conclusions and give recommendations from your results and discussions.

#### **8.1 Suggestions for Further Research**

- Suggest possible future areas of research to be followed in the short and long term.

### **9.0 References**

- List all references used in the text in alphabetical order using MLA/APA (discipline-specific) style.

### **10.0 List of Appendices\***

As in the proposal

## **Note for Standard Template**

### **Roman number pages**

Title  
Declaration  
Acknowledgement  
Dedication  
Abstract  
Table of contents  
Abbreviation  
Acronyms  
Operational Definition of Terms  
List of tables  
List of figures  
List of appendices

### **Body- Numerical Pages**

Introduction  
Literature Review  
Material and Methods/Research Methodology  
Data Presentation, Results and Discussions  
Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations  
References - Use APA/MLA format as applicable.  
Appendices - (Where applicable)



\*Where applicable