

THESIS GUIDE

Planning and writing a thesis and submitting it for examination

Candidates for higher degrees often have unnecessary difficulty with the *technical* aspects of writing a thesis. They can expect expert supervision in conducting their research and drawing conclusions, but the responsibility for presenting their work in the correct way is theirs alone. This *Guide* has been developed in response to student needs. It explains the simple technical requirements for presenting a thesis. It is the candidate's responsibility to meet these requirements. No Master's or Doctoral candidate can have a valid reason for submitting technically unsatisfactory work.

This *Guide* uses the term "thesis" to cover the minithesis written for the structured Master's degree, as well as the full Master's thesis and the Doctoral thesis. Where it is necessary to distinguish between these, the terms "minithesis", "Master's full thesis" or "Doctoral thesis" will be used. The information and advice given here is generic. *Please note that certain postgraduate programmes may use different conventions, particularly with regard to referencing and thesis structure. Please check with the coordinator of your programme for the specific requirements which apply to it.*

Subsequent editions of this *Guide* will be improved on the basis of advice from users. Please contact me (Prof Nelleke Bak: e-mail: nbak@uwc.ac.za) if:

- X you have some technical difficulty for which the *Guide* offers no help or inadequate help
- X some part of the *Guide* is difficult to understand or follow
- X you have advice for fellow students.

The key principle is that you, the author of the thesis, are responsible not only for writing the main text but also for the technical presentation. This responsibility does not rest with the typist or the supervisor. It will help someone who is typing your thesis for you if you give them a copy of this *Guide* or of the specific technical requirements of your discipline. However, *you are still responsible for the final product.*

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SECTION A:

SOME INFORMATION ABOUT THE PARTS OF THE THESIS

1. THE PARTS OF THE THESIS

Your thesis must have the following parts (unless they are marked optional). The parts must follow the order below unless alternatives are indicated.

PRELIMINARY SECTIONS, pages numbered in Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, etc).

Title page

Keywords

Abstract

Declaration

Acknowledgements (optional)

Contents

Preface (optional)

MAIN TEXT, divided into numbered CHAPTERS, each with a heading.

NOTES

BIBLIOGRAPHY (or REFERENCES)

APPENDICES (optional)

(These part names must be used as headings in the thesis)

2. COMMENTS ON THE PRELIMINARY PAGES

TITLE PAGE

The title page should carry the following particulars:

- X the full (registered) title of the thesis
- X the full names of the author
- X the following statement:

For a Master=s minithesis:

A minithesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of ...[Magister Educationis, Magister Artium, Magister Scientiae, Magister Philosophiae, etc - as applicable] in the Department of[as applicable], University of the Western Cape.

For a full Master=s thesis:

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of ...[Magister Educationis, Magister Artium, Magister Scientiae, Magister Philosophiae, etc - as applicable] in the Department of[as applicable], University of the Western Cape.

For a Doctoral thesis:

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of ...[Doctor Educationis, Doctor Philosophiae, etc - as applicable] in the Department[as applicable], University of the Western Cape.

- X date submitted for examination.
- X name(s) of supervisor(s) (optional)

See Appendix I for an example

KEYWORDS

In order for your thesis to be taken up in the library data base, you need to provide *ten* keywords (or, where unavoidable, compound words or phrases) that capture the main concepts of your thesis. The keywords should give someone who has not read your thesis a clear idea of the issues you tackle. Ensure that you sequence the key words in a logical order, one that reflects the development of your argument.

See Appendix II for an example

ABSTRACT

You must provide an abstract of no more than 500 words. If your thesis is written in Afrikaans, you must provide two abstracts, one in Afrikaans and the other in English. In bound copies of the thesis the abstract in the language of the Main Text should come before the translation. The layout of the Abstract pages is as follows:

- X Abstract (or Opsomming) – as a heading
- X Registered title of your thesis (do not translate your title).
- X Your initials and surname.
- X Name of degree [MSc/ MPhil/ PhD, etc] Thesis [or Minithesis], Department of, University of the Western Cape
- X The text of your Abstract
- X Date

The Abstract should provide a crisp summary of what the thesis undertakes and what major conclusions are drawn. It should preferably be no more than 500 words in length. Someone reading the Abstract must be able to form a fairly accurate impression of what is in the thesis. As the Abstract will be reproduced in various registers and publications (like *Dissertation Abstracts International*) available in libraries across the world, it is important that it should be accurate and well-written. A good Abstract greatly improves the chances of a thesis being referred to by other scholars.

Note the following:

- X The Abstract should reflect the balance of the thesis. You should not give much weight to what is a relatively minor part of the thesis, and

you should give appropriate weight to an important part of your thesis.

- X The Abstract is written last, when you know exactly what the thesis covers and what its main conclusions are. Being thoroughly familiar with the work, you should be able to write it fluently and quickly.
- X You may need assistance in translating your Abstract. It is your responsibility to ensure that the translation is accurate, fluent, and grammatically correct.

See Appendix III for an example

DECLARATION

The following declaration must be made. It must stand on a page by itself under the heading, DECLARATION:

I declare that ... (full title of thesis, in *italics*) is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Full name..... Date.....

Signed.....

See Appendix IV for an example

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS (optional)

An acknowledgements page is optional. If there are any people you would particularly like to thank, or are obliged to thank (some funders require formal acknowledgement in the finished work), you should do so on this page. Your formulation should be understated and dignified. Avoid sentimentality.

CONTENTS

List the preliminary and main parts of the thesis, giving the page numbers on which the parts begin. In the case of chapters, give the chapter number and title in each case. You must ensure that you give the heading of each part **exactly** as it appears in the main text. Attention to this kind of accuracy is a mark of good scholarship, and will be noticed by examiners.

Note:

- X If you use subheadings, you may give the main ones under each chapter heading if you think that will be useful to your reader. However, you must avoid your Contents page(s) becoming cluttered.
- X The Contents pages are the last pages of your thesis to be typed, as you need to know the page numbers before you can type them.

See Appendix V for an example

PREFACE (optional)

You can include a brief Preface *if it would help someone to understand the Main Text*. You might, for instance, provide some information about the context of the writing of the thesis, or some special hazards, or a formulation of the main question or problem (if you do not do so near the start of the Main Text).

3 COMMENTS ON THE MAIN TEXT

Your thesis should be clearly structured, and its logic must be evident. The Alogic@ of your text refers to the principles of reasoning, the sequencing of parts, and conceptual connections that you use in the construction of an overall coherent argument. The Astructure@ of your thesis refers to the way in which you organize your arguments and descriptions. In developing your proposal, you and your supervisor have already thought about the best possible way in which to present your work. Analytical, conceptual, and philosophical studies usually differ in their structure from empirical ones, although there may be overlaps, of course. Broadly, there are theses which draw only on literature and others that combine literature and doing empirical research.

An analytical or philosophical thesis

Theses of this kind usually address academic problems of a historical, semantic, social, ethical, metatheoretical or conceptual kind. Most analytical or philosophical theses require at least some conceptual clarification, i.e. an attempt to articulate the meaning of key concepts and their relationship with other concepts. These kinds of theses draw only on literature and typically do not involve fieldwork. Instead of having a chapter called 'Literature Review', these theses draw on literature (primary and secondary) throughout the development of the thesis discussion and argument.

The focus of the thesis can be one or, more likely, a combination of the following:

- X a contextualisation of the problem, i.e. an analysis of the circumstances in which the problem or ideas arose.
- X an attempt to draw links within an existing body of knowledge.
- X a discussion of the relevance or significance of the research question.
- X an investigation of the implications of a particular approach or interpretation.
- X an investigation of the appropriateness of a particular approach or interpretation for the chosen context.
- X an attempt to trace the development of a particular debate or issue in the literature.
- X an evaluation (or comparison) of different arguments supporting a particular position.
- X a comparison and contrast of different research findings in the literature.
- X an integration of disparate findings as found in the literature.
- X an identification of a trend (or silence) within the various positions offered on a particular issue.
- X a clarification of policy and discussion of (possible) consequences of policy implementation.

How you develop a systematic discussion of your thesis problem is something you and your supervisor will have worked out in your Research Proposal and chapter outline. Usually each chapter addresses a particular aspect of the overall problem you are investigating, with a final chapter that draws together the main strands of your discussion.

A thesis that combines literature and doing empirical research

If you are writing a thesis that will involve fieldwork, the following suggestion of how you can structure your main thesis may be useful. Note, of course, that the suggested sections can change their sequence, may overlap or

parts may be omitted. The following suggestion of how you can structure your main text comes from Mouton, J. (2001). *How to succeed in your Master's and Doctoral studies*. Pretoria: Van Schaik: pp120-126. Usually, empirical studies are structured in the following generic thesis format:

Chapter 1 - Introduction

- X Develop the idea for the thesis and its motivation. Begin by contextualising the study, saying how you came to decide on the topic, why you think it is important.
- X Show how your topic was refined through your reading in the general literature at first and then with increasing clarification of the research problem
- X Articulate the main research problem that drives your investigation. State what the main academic aims of your thesis are by saying clearly what research *question* the thesis hopes to answer or hypothesis it aims to investigate.
- X Give a rough indication of your research framework (what will be your main assumptions, the main perspective from which you will investigate the thesis topic), as well as your research design (what is the structure of your investigation, the steps you plan to follow) and the methodology you will use.
- X Conclude the chapter by giving an outline of the rest of your thesis. Discuss briefly how your thesis will unfold and the main topics that you will discuss in each chapter.

Chapter 2 - Literature review/ theoretical framework

- X Begin by indicating the boundaries of your literature review. You can't review everything, so indicate how you decided to demarcate the field of scholarship to be included in your literature review.
- X All research has key concepts around which the study is built. You will need to clarify the way in which you interpret and use these concepts as early on in the study as possible.
- X Present the literature you have consulted in an organized and structured manner. Avoid mere repetition or lists of points. Remember, you need to give your reader a clear and succinct idea of what the various authors are saying and how the various inputs contribute to the development of the issue you are investigating..
- X End your chapter with an overview of the main points that have emerged from your literature review. This is an important step because it will provide the basis for the development of your research.

Chapter 3 - Research design and methodology

- X Articulate the research hypothesis (where applicable), the key concepts and variables.
- X Discuss the research instruments you=ll use, and motivate why you have chosen to use these. (Append actual copies of questionnaires or observation lists where applicable.)
- X Explain the sample design, sampling techniques used and the criteria for the choice of sample size.
- X Give full details of your data collection processes (times, dates, techniques used, etc) as well as problems you may have had.
- X Describe your data-editing and data-coding procedures. Describe measures used to minimize error, to counter-check findings, etc.
- X Describe the rationale behind the selection of your data analysis procedures as well as the actual procedures used..
- X End the chapter with a discussion of the possible limitations, gaps, etc in the data.

Chapter 4 - Results: Presentation and Discussion

- X Describe the actual sample and its characteristics.
- X Describe and summarize the main results.
- X Discuss main trends, patterns, connections that may have emerged.
- X End the chapter by summarizing the main results - positive and negative.

Chapter 5 - Conclusions and recommendations

- X Summarize and discuss salient points.
- X Draw together your findings with the literature you=ve reviewed.
- X Discuss anomalies, surprise findings, deviations and suggest possible reasons for these.
- X If appropriate, show the larger relevance of your study, as well as aspects that need further research.
- X Discuss some of the possible implications of your study, either for policy or practice.

Chapter format

There are, however, some hints you might want to note when it comes to structuring a *chapter*. Each chapter normally:

- X begins with a section that introduces the main topic of the chapter, the main sections, the way it links to the main research question and, where applicable, how it links with the previous chapter (i.e. orientate your reader).

- X followed by the main body of the chapter, organized logically and economically. Make sure that your paragraphs and sections cohere logically (i.e. that they have a thread which connects them as well as form a coherent story). The use of sub-headings helps to structure your discussion, although avoid using too many.
- X conclude the chapter with a summary of the main points that have emerged. Signpost your reader by noting which issues will be pursued at a later stage, and say how the chapter links with the next one.

4. COMMENTS ON REFERENCING AND QUOTATION

Acknowledging one's sources is essential in academic writing. You are required to indicate where you found the words you have quoted or arguments and viewpoints you have paraphrased. This is a matter of honesty, and it shows that you have a sophisticated idea of how ideas develop and are related. If you acknowledge all borrowed ideas you enable your reader to give you full credit for your own thinking. *Academic readers (including examiners) have very little patience or sympathy with academic authors who fail to do so.*

To simplify acknowledgment of sources, we use certain referencing conventions. However, there are various referencing conventions. Check with your programme co-ordinator which convention would be most appropriate for you to use. The golden rule of referencing is to be *consistent* in the convention you adopt.

IN-TEXT REFERENCING

Here follows an example of one kind of referencing convention. The one adopted by many journals is known as the Harvard convention. The format is: (Author, year:page/s).

When you are referring to an author's argument or quoting directly, you need to acknowledge this in the text. You can insert the reference either in the sentence, or at the end of the sentence, e.g:

According to Thompson (1997:85), ideology is a set of meanings that sustain relations of domination. Or

Aldeology is a set of meanings which sustain relations of domination@ (Thompson, 1997:85).

If a reference already appears within brackets, then place the year in commas instead of double brackets. For example,

According to the CDC director, kidney disease is unparalleled in this population (see Table IV in Blake, 1999, for distribution patterns).

In the final edit of your thesis, check very carefully that each reference in the text is in fact noted in your Bibliography. Again, this is something examiners look for.

QUOTATIONS

You must indicate clearly when you use the actual words of others. There are different ways of doing this.

- (a) Where the quotation is less than (about) three lines long, mark it with double quotation marks. For example: Someone who expresses this point very well is Bobbio (1993:35) in the striking question, AWhat is the better form of government, the one based on the rule of men or on the rule of the law?@
- (b) Where a quotation is more than three lines long, indent the quotation, and *do not use quotation marks* to mark it. We call this indented block a block quotation. You may reduce the line spacing in your block quotations to single spacing and/or reduce the font size, but this is not essential. (See the Ross quotation below.)
- (3) Where you omit a word, or some words, from a quotation, mark that with *three dots*. This same rule applies if you leave off part of the beginning or end of a quoted sentence. The original might read: AThe reform of the law as of any country according to his principles, can only be gradual, and may be long ere it is accomplished; but the work is in progress, and both parliament and the judges are every year doing something, and often something not inconsiderable, towards the forwarding of it.@

You might quote as follows:

The reform of the laws ... can only be gradual ... the work is in progress, and both parliament and the judges are every year doing something ... towards the forwarding of it. (Ross, 1996:72)

Please note the following:

X For quotation within quotations use single quotation marks. For example: McGhee (1999:88) concludes that 'the response, then, to Hume's remark that "morality is more properly felt than judged of" is that of course it is judged of as well as felt'.

X In quoting preserve the spelling and punctuation of the original exactly.

X Punctuation marks go *outside* the quotation marks, unless they belong to the quoted material. For example:

What did the author mean by 'anti-rotaviral'?

Bobbio (1993:35) asks the question, 'What is the better form of government, the one based on the rule of men or on the rule of the law?'

X When you quote you must know why you are quoting; what purpose does it serve in the progress of *your* argument? Is it to illustrate a point you are making? Is it to show that you are not misinterpreting something? etc. Never quote simply because you do not know what to say. Your text should make it clear why you are quoting.

X When you incorporate a quotation in your text, make sure that you preserve the grammar of your sentence. For example, Bobbio (1993:35) asks whether the better form of government is 'one based on the rule of men or on the rule of the law'.

5 COMMENTS ON NOTES

Different programmes follow different conventions. Check with your programme co-ordinator which convention you need to follow.

There are two main ways of organizing your notes: either as footnotes or as endnotes. Some disciplines prefer footnotes (that is, notes at the foot of the page), whereas others prefer endnotes. Endnotes are listed at the end of your thesis, or at the end of each chapter, whichever makes it more convenient to your reader.

In some disciplines, such as History, notes are used extensively for referencing. In many other disciplines, notes are used only to draw the reader's attention to something important which would obstruct the flow of argument if included in the text. In such a case, they should be used sparingly, as it is irritating to the reader to have to look up notes which add little or nothing to the overall purpose of the chapter. Notes must have a clear purpose in relation to the main argument. Use them to enrich the discussion while keeping the main line of argument strong and clear.

If you have a Notes section at the end of your thesis, it should follow the last page of your main text. Number the notes to correspond to the numbers you give in your main text. This is something you need to check with great care in the final copies of your thesis before you submit them for examination.

Most wordprocessing packages have a notes function which automatically changes the numbers as you make adjustments to the text but, even so, you need to check the correspondence between text numbers and notes numbers carefully.

Notes should be marked in the main text by a continuous series of Arabic numerals, either superscripts or in parentheses (but not both), and they should come before any relevant punctuation.

Examples:

... the origin of this way of thinking⁵ is...
or ...the origin of this way of thinking (5) is ...

... as is argued by Bundy¹³.
or ... as is argued by Bundy (13).

Where you have quite a lot of notes you might begin a new series of numbers for each Chapter; where there are only a few, this is not needed. If you begin a new series of notes for each chapter this should be appropriately indicated (give the chapter headings in the NOTES).

See Appendix VI for examples



6. COMMENTS ON THE BIBLIOGRAPHY

There are two kinds of lists your thesis can have: a *Bibliography*, which lists all the books that you have consulted in the writing and development of your thesis (regardless of whether you refer to them directly or quote from them), and *References*, which lists only the books you refer to directly or quote in your thesis. Check with your supervisor which one is more appropriate for your thesis.

The Bibliography or References comes immediately after the Notes; it is the last section of the thesis. The Bibliography should not be artificially bloated (no examiner measures the quality of a thesis by the extent of the bibliography) , it must provide a complete list of all the work you used in the development and writing of your thesis, even if you do not refer explicitly to them.

As you are working on your thesis, record the correct information about each work you used on index cards, which can later be arranged in alphabetical order. This can save a lot of trouble later. You need to make especially sure that your Bibliography/ References contains the full details of every work you refer to in your text and notes. This is the kind of thing for which examiners check.

The Bibliography should be arranged alphabetically, by authors= surnames, and it should provide all publishing information. Pay especial attention to Capital letters, full stops, commas, etc. Recent conventions aim at simplicity - sometimes the brackets around dates are left out, and the use of Capital letters is generally restricted to the first word in the sentence and for proper nouns. You may want to: use a hanging indent (i.e. the first line is flush with the left margin, the rest is indented), and have single spacing.

Each entry should have the following sequence:

Author=s surname and Initials

Year

Name of article/ chapter

Name of journal / book

Place of publication

Publisher

Page numbers in journal (if applicable)

UWC has a software programme called *Research Toolbox*. This can be downloaded from the network. It has a reference function which automatically formats all references in whatever convention you chose. There are about 15 available options from which to chose. The Harvard system uses the following referencing conventions:

Examples:

Chapter in a book:

Asher, J.J. (1982). The total physical response approach. Blair, R.W. (ed.), *Innovative approaches to language teaching*. Rowley: Newbury House: 54-66.

Journal article:

Baltra, A. (1992). On breaking with tradition: the significance of Terrell=s approach. *Canadian modern language review*, 48 (3): 565-593.

Internet (www) reference:

European Union. (1996). *Living and working in the information society: people first*. Brussels: European Commission. [Online]. Available <http://www.ipso.cec.be/html>

Unpublished comments, discussion, seminar

Hafkin, N. (1996). *Game theory*. Seminar delivered at the School of Economics, University of Cape Town, 29 March. Unpublished paper.

Unpublished thesis

Marincowitz, F. (1998). *Towards an ecological feminist self*. Unpublished Master=s thesis. Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.

Newspaper article:

Gumede, W. (1998). Africa=s dream trip over reality at telecom show. *Sunday Independent Business*, 16 May: 5.

Book (single author)

Naisbitt, J. (1984). *Megatrends: ten new directions transforming our lives*. New York: Time-Warner.

Book (more than one author)

Richards, J.C. & Rodgers, T.J. (1986). *Approaches and methods in language teaching; a description and analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Policy document:

Department of Education. (1997). *Education White Paper 3 - A programme for the transformation of higher education*. Pretoria: Government Gazette No 18207

See Appendix VII for examples

SECTION B:

INFORMATION ON THE EXAMINATION OF THESES

1. SUBMITTING THE THESIS FOR EXAMINATION

University rules require you to notify your supervisor in writing of your intention to submit your thesis for examination. Intention to submit is usually taken in consultation with your supervisor who needs to be satisfied that you have fulfilled the necessary requirements.

If you hope to graduate in March:

- X your notification must be submitted to your supervisor by **15 October**.
- X the actual examination copies of your thesis must be submitted to the Exams Office by **15 November**.
- X provide Exams Office with proof of current registration

If you hope to graduate in September:

- X notification of intention to submit must be handed in to your supervisor by **15 April**.
- X the actual examination copies of your thesis must be submitted to Exams Office by **15 May**.
- X provide Exams Office with proof of current registration.

Before you deliver your thesis to the Examinations Office, your supervisor will have sent a confidential letter to Exams Office, granting permission for the thesis to be examined, noting the degree and the names of the appointed examiners.

You are required to deliver to the Examination Office a bound copy of your thesis for each of the appointed examiners (usually **three**, but check with your supervisor). If you are a staff member of UWC and/or a Doctoral student you usually need to submit **four** copies. Although the binding on these Examination Copies needs to be secure (it must not be possible for pages to fall out), it should be of an inexpensive kind (such as plastic ring-binding). The outside cover should contain only the full (registered) title of your thesis and your initials and surname, and should be marked 'Examination copy@'.

Ensure that the copies you deliver for examination are of the highest quality (it is worth getting it commercially copied) as this makes a difference to the way your examiners can read your work. Specifically check the page sequencing in the copies you deliver. Keep the original for your own records and correction.

Note that the examination of a thesis, including the approval of the various committees involved, normally takes two working months. Doctoral theses can take up to three months.

Check with your supervisor about procedures to follow once the examiners' reports have been approved by the various committees. Usually, there are some changes and corrections that need to be done before you hand in your final copies. (See below).

Given the time required for examination, committee approval and final corrections, it is necessary that you submit the Examination Copies of your thesis by the stipulated dates. Unless you deliver these copies by 15 November, you are unlikely to graduate at the March graduation ceremony (or by 15 May if you aim to graduate in September).

2. FINAL COPIES

After receiving their result, successful candidates are required to make the noted proofreading, editorial and other minor corrections before they print the final version of their thesis. At least 7 days before the graduation ceremony, you must deliver the following to the Examinations:

- (a) **two** properly bound (expensive binding) copies of the final (i.e. corrected) version of the thesis. Doctoral students must hand in **three** copies. Your initials and surname and the full (registered) title of your thesis must appear on the outside of the front cover and on the spine. If the registered title is too long for the spine, use an appropriately abbreviated one. If your copies are still with the Binding Section, you may give the Examinations Office a letter from UWC Library stating that it has received the required copies. (Binding will cost about R50 per copy).
- (b) **one** unbound copy of the final version of the thesis. From this copy 8 microfiche copies will be made of Master's theses and 18 copies of Doctoral theses. (You will have to pay for this, about R50-00 for the set). You will need a receipt from Finance to show that the required amount has been paid
- (3) a letter from your supervisor confirming that the necessary changes have been made and that he/she has checked them.

No student will be allowed to graduate unless final copies have been submitted. Quality is your responsibility. For these final copies, use high quality copying services, and check once more that the pages are in the right order and that other technical details are correct. Your thesis, once passed, will be available in libraries around the country. Do yourself justice and ensure that the presentation is of such high quality that it removes all unnecessary obstacles from your readers.

3. EXTRA COPIES

You may want to make at least **two** further properly bound copies of the final version of your thesis: one to donate to the Faculty (not all Faculties request this - check with your supervisor) and one for you to keep on your bookshelf (to show your grandchildren in years to come).

4. A NOTE ABOUT COPYRIGHT

The University encourages you to publish from your thesis where appropriate. It, however, retains the sole right to print or publish a thesis or any part or summary thereof, or to have it done. When you were admitted into the programme you would have signed the following cession: (see Rule A 19.7.3)

I hereby cede to the University of the Western Cape the entire copyright that may in future subsist in any research report or thesis submitted by me to the University in [partial] fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of in the department of

A candidate who wishes to publish his/her own thesis, or to have it published, shall apply to the University for permission. Information on the format (whole/part; soft/hard cover), publisher, date, etc. must be provided. Permission may be granted on condition that:

- (a) it is mentioned in the published work that it was submitted to the University in the form of or part of a thesis,
- (b) two copies of the published work are submitted to the Registrar,
- (c) the changes recommended by the Higher Degrees Committee of Senate have been effected in the published work, and
- (d) the candidate complies with such further conditions as the University may from time to time impose.

SECTION C:

SOME GENERAL ADVICE ABOUT WRITING AND PRESENTING A THESIS

1 CLARITY OF WRITING AND READER FRIENDLINESS

An irritated reader is likely to read your work with less sympathy than you would like. Don't irritate your readers, and especially your examiners, by making it difficult for them to understand what you are doing, or trying to do.

Show that you are a serious scholar by ensuring that your thesis is presented with care. To repeat five main technical aspects that need serious attention:

- X make sure that the pages are in the correct sequence
- X avoid unorthodox spelling and punctuation
- X make sure your referencing follows consistent conventions
- X make sure that every reference in your text and notes also appears in your Bibliography.
- X stick to simple rules and patterns (referencing, subheadings, paragraphing etc.)

Consistency, even at this surface level, signals that you care about your work.

Here are some basic rules:

X **Write as plainly and clearly as possible.**

Clarity is one of the chief virtues of academic writing. You should be definite (are you making a claim here; is this the third, or the fourth, point in your argument?; is this a claim or an argument put forward by someone else? etc), and you should orientate your reader, explain what you are doing and remind your reader of the main line of argument of your text, etc.

Avoid inappropriate jargon, flowery language and unnecessarily long and complex sentences. In general, shorter sentences are preferable to longer ones.

Throughout your thesis refer to it as a *Athesis@*. Do not refer to it as *Athis thesis@* or *Athis dissertation@*, and avoid referring to it as *Athis work@*.

Sometimes a heavy block of text needs to be divided into separate paragraphs.

X Be consistent

Especially in headings, subheadings and in introductory, Abridging@ and concluding paragraphs, keep your key vocabulary and rhetoric rigorously consistent. If you refer, in an introductory paragraph, to Athree main problems@, don=t allow that to become Athree main issues@ in the concluding paragraph ten pages later. Take especial care to be consistent in your use of referencing conventions. Make sure that headings which appear in the Contents correspond exactly to those given in the text.

X Use every possible device to avoid obscurity

(No examiner of a thesis will think that obscurity and profundity are synonyms).

Avoid using pronouns like Athis@ or Ait@ when there is no clear antecedent.

X Prefer literal and direct language

The trend in academic writing is to avoid using passive constructions (e.g. AIt was found that...@ or AThe data that were obtained...@). Rather replace with AI found that...@ or AMbude=s data probably indicate that...@.

Especially in headings and subheadings - avoid being Aclever@ or pretentious. [Wit and humour typically fall flat in theses - in general, prefer the standard and the orthodox to the offbeat].

X Orientate your reader

Provide your reader with advance notice of what is to come, crisp and succinct summaries of the point reached in the overall argument, and brief Abridging@ paragraphs as the argument moves from one phase to the next. (*As you proceed* articulate lucidly what you are doing and how it contributes to your overall project in the thesis).

Some disciplines encourage the use of subheadings (probably at least one every two or so pages) to help readers follow the argument, whereas other disciplines avoid them. Check with your supervisor which approach would be appropriate for your purposes. You might

have two or three levels of subheadings, appropriately distinguished by different typeface, centring or underlining, etc. The clarity of your text might be improved by introducing a simple numbering system for the part of your argument.

2 LAYOUT AND NUMBERING

Again, consistency needs to be your watchword. The layout of chapter headings, section headings and subheadings etc. must be consistent throughout. If someone is typing the thesis for you, you need to discuss the details of the layout of your thesis with your typist before the work begins.

Margins

The pages of your thesis should have (about) 3cm margins top and bottom and on the right hand side, and (about) a 4cm margin on the left hand side (to allow space for binding). The text should be one and a half spacing (some Faculties require double spacing - check with your supervisor).

Page size

A4 size is the usual requirement

Font

12 point Times Roman is the norm for the text. Sometimes block quotes are in reduced font. Avoid fancy fonts that are difficult to read. You may want to use different font sizes to indicate a hierarchy of headings, with a bigger font for your chapter headings .

Visual outlay

Try to ensure that your pages look attractive, neither artificially spread out nor cramped. In paying attention to your layout you are trying to make it as easy (and pleasant) as possible for someone to read your thesis; you are showing that you take your own efforts seriously.

Ordering of headings

You can use different fonts (size, bold, italics, underline) to indicate descending levels of headings, for example:

<p>CHAPTER HEADING Section heading <i>Sub-section heading</i></p>

Or you can use either a numbering outline, alternating letters and numbers and degrees of indentation to indicate descending levels, for example:

- Sonographic Evaluation of the Cranial Mediastinum in Small Animals
- I. Introduction
 - A. Techniques previously used to assess mediastinum condition
 - 1. Radiography
 - a) Advantage - widespread use
 - b) Disadvantage - insensitive technique
 - 2. Computed tomography
 - a) Advantages
 - 1) Defines margins
 - 2) Indicates relative opacity
 - 2) Disadvantage
 - 2. Sonography as a powerful new technique

Or you can use a numeric outline, for example

- Sonographic Evaluation of the Cranial Mediastinum in Small Animals
- 1. Introduction
 - 1.1 Techniques previously used to assess mediastinum condition
 - 1.1.1 Radiography
 - 1.1.2 Computed tomograph
 - 1.2 Sonography as a powerful new technique

Taken from Matthews, J.R., Bowen, J.M. & Matthews, R.W. (1996). *Successful scientific writing*. Cambridge: CUP: p15.

However, this often becomes cumbersome with too many sub-headings.

Most theses written in scientific and technical fields depend heavily on tables and other visual illustrations to visualize and compress information. When properly used, visual aids have several important functions: they summarize, emphasize key points, simplify information and reduce narrative length.

Visual and organizational aids can include a tremendous variety of text accompaniments - tables, line graphs, histograms, maps, photographs, drawings, etc. You need to decide which graphic format would be most appropriate or most informative for your purposes. The following brief table can help you to determine which type of organizational aid will be the most appropriate for your purposes:

To accomplish this:***Choose one of these:***

To present exact values, raw data, or data that don't fit into any simple pattern	Table, list
To summarize trends, show interactions between two or more variables, relate data to constants, or emphasize an overall pattern rather than specific measurements	Line graph
To dramatize differences, draw comparisons	Bar graph
To illustrate complex relationships, spatial configurations, pathways, processes, interactions	Diagram
To show sequential processes	Flow chart
To classify information	Table, list, pictograph
To describe parts	Schematic
To describe a process or organization	Pictograph, flow chart
To compare / contrast	Pictograph, pie chart, bar graph
To describe change of state	Line graph, bar graph
To describe proportions	Pie chart, bar graph
To describe relationships	Table, line graph
To describe causation	Flow chart, pictograph
To describe entire object	Schematic, illustration
	photograph
To show the vertical or horizontal hierarchy of an object, idea or organization	Flow chart, drawing tree, block diagram

Taken from Matthews, J.R., Bowen, J.M. & Matthews, R.W. (1996). *Successful scientific writing*. Cambridge: CUP: p33.

4 PAGE NUMBERING

Every page of your thesis, from the title page to the final page of your Bibliography is formally numbered, although some pages (for instance the title page and the Abstracts, the Contents page and the first page of the chapters) might not actually show the number.

Two sequences of numbers should be used. The preliminary pages be numbered with lower-case Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, v, ...etc.) The main page numbering, in Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, ...), begins with the first page of your main text, and runs through to the last page of your Bibliography.

5 PROOFREADING

Proofreading is extremely important in correcting a print-out of your text. Approach the task in a *technical* frame of mind. You are not reading for content or logical connections at this stage. Once the corrections have been done you will need to proofread a second print-out to pick up any missed or further errors.

(a) Proofreading for **general feature**

In proofreading a print-out of your text you need to check:

- X the consistency of the layout and typeface used for Chapter and other headings,
- X that the numbering of the Notes corresponds to the reference in your text,
- X that every reference in the text is listed in the Bibliography (ensure that spelling of surname and year of publication are consistent),
- X the page numbering,
- X the accuracy of the Contents page,

and other *general features* of the presentation of your thesis. In proofreading for such aspects it is a good idea to make yourself a list of what you are going to check, and then *range across the whole printout* checking those items.

(b) Proofreading for **details**

But then, you also need to check details of spelling, punctuation, section numbering, paragraphing, that there are not paragraphs or lines left out or repeated, and so on. These aspects of proofreading can be done only by reading through the text (with a copy of the original ready at your side). Computer spell-checkers can help in your proofreading, but recognize that they are not foolproof. Words that sound the same (e.g. *Atheir@* and *Athere@*) will both be recognized as correct, but you may have used the incorrect version in your text. Also, although many PCs have grammar checks, these are limited in what they can do - they might not pick up concord (a very common error) or incorrect use of tense. So, ultimately, the responsibility rests on you to read through your text very carefully.

Poor proofreading can seriously affect a reader=s (or your examiners=s) response to what might, in other respects, be a fairly competent piece of work. Some theses get sent back by examiners because the proofreading has been so poorly done. Remember it is the *author=s* responsibility to ensure that the version of the thesis delivered for examination is perfect in all technical respects.

Proofreading is different from editing. Editing is concerned with substantial changes to the text, for instance changing the words used, removing some pieces of text, adding new pieces in, etc. *ATaalversorging@* is sometimes risky, it can shade over into tampering with the sense of the text. You, *the author* are responsible for composing the text and controlling its sense.

6 SOME BASIC GRAMMAR RULES

APOSTROPHES

Form the possessive singular of nouns by adding >s. Thus: the dog=s bone, Benn and Peter=s view in this matter. *AMill=s view@* indicates that the man=s name is Mill; *AMills=s view@* indicates that the man=s name is Mills.

In English, 1980s does not have an apostrophe. (In Afrikaans, 1980's is correct).

TENSES

The use of present or past forms of verbs has a very special meaning in scientific papers - it is a way of indicating the status of the scientific work being reported. However, check with your supervisor which tense/s would be most appropriate for your purposes.

As a rough guideline:

X When discussing other people's findings, ideas in literature, etc the following general rule might help you.

Use the present tense for:

published facts and ideas (e.g. Serological tests *are* commonly used for diagnostic purposes.), for repeated events (e.g. Nesting behaviour *has* been studied under many environmental conditions.), for referring your reader to figures, tables and graphs (e.g. Antibodies occurred in 11% of our mice, as Table I *indicates*. - note here, that reference to the Table is in the present tense, but discussion of the research itself remains in the past tense.)

Use the past tense:

to discuss unpublished results (e.g. The drug *killed* 95% of the M. tuberculosis bacilli.), to discuss results that cannot be generalized (e.g. Barber (1980) reported that 28% of the 396 wasps in his study *showed* signs of parasitism.).

Use either past or present tense:

when referring to an author. However, the part of the sentence that refers to the findings themselves is still given in the present tense (because it is a published work). For example, Smith (1975) showed that streptomycin inhibits growth of the disease organism. or Jones (1978) does not believe that streptomycin is effective.

X The Materials, Method and Results sections describe what you did and is normally written in the past tense.

X When you link your own findings with the literature, you will use both past and present tenses - this might be the most tricky part to construct in terms of tense use.

AVOIDING GENDER-BIASED LANGUAGE

It isn't always easy to avoid gender-biased language, because English lacks a gender-neutral singular pronoun. And it is often clumsy to use the construction 'he or she' or 'As/he'. Here are some options you may want to use:

X use a gender-neutral term when speaking generally of other people (e.g. instead of *Amanpower* use *Awork force* or *Apersonnel*).

- X if possible, use alternatives in titles or job descriptions (e.g. Aspeaker@ or Arepresentative@ instead of Aspokesman@ and Apolice officer@ instead of Apoliceman@).
- X use plural construction when you can (e.g. ADoctors should advise their patients@).
- X if appropriate, replace Ahis/her@ with Athe@ or Aa@ (e.g. AEach teacher is responsible for a class register.@)

CONCORD

Many students struggle with this. Herewith some very brief pointers:
The following singular subjects all take singular verbs:

- Each, one, everybody, neither e.g.
 - Everybody was involved in the project.
 - Neither is acceptable.
 - Each of the findings confirms the hypothesis.
- Singular collective nouns e.g.
 - The country was occupied by the Italians for three years.
 - A large variety is available.
- Either..or/ neither...nor (as singular nouns) - e.g.
 - Neither the interview nor the questionnaire was in English.
- A singular noun (qualified by a phrase involving a plural noun) - e.g.
 - The set of tests shows an increase in the levels of acid.

7 DATA BASES

You might find the following book helpful: Mouton, J. (2001). *How to succeed in your Master=s and Doctoral studies*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

The book lists many information sites you can access for specific research purposes. Here are some of the key ones:

For the most comprehensive database on current and completed scholarship in the social sciences and humanities

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Search engines | http://www.hsrc.ac.za/nexus.html
http://www.aardvark.co.za
http://www.ananzi.co.za
http://www.zebra.co.za
http://www.max.co.za |
|----------------|---|

	http://www.zaworm.co.za
Government website	http://www.polity.org.za/lists/govsites.html
National Research Foundation	www.nrf.ac.za
Statistical data analysis	www.stats.gla.ac.uk/cti/links_stats/software.html

*See also "Bookmarks" on the post-graduate UWC webpage:
www.uwc.ac.za*

SECTION D:

SOURCES OF FUNDING

There are a number of different sources you may want to pursue:

1. Some departments / post-graduate programmes have grant money available for research projects. Consult with the Head of department or programme convenor for information.
2. UWC also has a composite list of bursaries and funds available for post-graduate students. Collect a booklet from Financial Aid Office, ground floor, Administration Building.
3. A number of national bodies also have funds available for post-graduate studies. Visit the following sites:
 - Social sciences, humanities, business:
<http://www.nrf.ac.za/programmeareas/rsf/grants.stm>
 - Natural sciences, agriculture:
<http://www.nrf.ac.za/funding/guide/stud.stm>
 - Health sciences:
<http://www.mrc.ac.za>
4. The Skills Development Act requires employers to assist their employees in further education and training. You could approach your employer to find out if there is any company funding you could access.
5. The National Research Foundation (NRF) supports post-graduate studies. Consult your supervisor about applying for an NRF grant, or contact Prof Renfrew Christie (x 2949) for further details.

Writing a thesis is a demanding task. However, remember that many before you have managed to complete, so it is doable. Avoid the thesis becoming too huge a *Magnum Opus*. Although you will be writing and re-writing your various drafts (all authors, no matter how widely they=ve published do this), there comes a time when the task of revision has to stop. Apply cost-benefit analysis to your work and go for closure.

SECTION E:

APPENDICES

I	Example of Title page of Thesis
II	Example of Key words
III	Example of Abstract
IV	Example of Declaration
V	Example of Contents pages
VI	Example of page of Notes
VII	Example of page of Bibliography
VIII	Draft of UWC Guidelines for Examiners of Master=s and Doctoral Theses

APPENDIX I

AUTHORITY IN SCHOOLING IN POST 1990 SOUTH AFRICA

VANESSA NATASHA KENNEDY

A minithesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Magister Educationis in the Department of Philosophy of Education, University of the Western Cape.

Supervisor: Ms Rosalie Small

April 1998

APPENDIX II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRUST IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP SINCE 1994

Mampho Makhaola

KEYWORDS

South Africa

Education

Trust

School leadership

School principals

Authority

Legitimacy

Democracy

Accountability

Social capital

APPENDIX III

ABSTRACT

CARING IN EDUCATION

S. M. Soal

M.Phil minithesis, Department of Philosophy of Education, University of the Western Cape.

In this minithesis, I explore the connection between education and caring. I argue that although there is a necessary connection between education and caring, caring is neither a sufficient means to, nor an end of, education.

I establish the importance and necessity of caring in education through a conceptual exploration of the moral dimensions of both caring and education. The position which I develop maintains that the relationship between caring and education is mediated by a view of morality which sees caring as one virtue amongst many. I distinguish between two senses of caring: caring about and caring for, and argue that both senses of caring are required in educative relationships.

I critically investigate the views of Nel Noddings, put forward in her book, *Caring - a Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*, and conclude that she makes the error of treating caring as the sole basis for morality. This leads her to attempt to provide a sufficient account of education in terms of caring.

I then argue that caring about persons and caring about disciplines are jointly necessary requirements for education. They are the criteria in educative relationships which must be satisfied in respect to caring. This also requires that students must come to care about their disciplines if they are to be considered educated. The minithesis is concluded with an exploration of the threats posed to education and the caring within it by institutionalisation.

January 1993

APPENDIX IV

DECLARATION

I declare that *A Critical Comparison of the Role of Education in the Struggle for Political Power within Christian National Education A Volksskole@ (1900 - 1910) and People=s Education for People=s Power (1985 - 1989)* is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Ralph Trevor Damonse

November 1993

Signed:

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APPENDIX VI

Chapter 4

1. This constitutes one side of the ‘ambiguity’ of individualism, which is elaborated below.
2. This supports the suggestion I have repeatedly made that in an inclusive democratic perspective, identification with the social collective is an act of autonomous agency.
3. Indeed, as will be seen. Taylor goes further in linking self- interest and authentic individualism in terms of their common underlying aspiration towards authenticity.
4. Noteworthy in this account is the rejection of differences as “purely accidental characteristics imposed by external forces”, as part of the universalist departicularisation of the Enlightenment subject. Ironically, contemporary deconstructionists share the view of the accidental nature of difference, but reject any notion of an essentialist core.
5. This view contrasts sharply with the Marxist perspective in which individual and collective emancipation are interdependent.
6. This brief account of Dewey draws exclusively from Watt’s discussion of his ideas on education and democracy (Watt.1989: 100-114). The quotation in the discussion are drawn sequentially from these pages, unless otherwise indicated.
7. The term ‘subjectivisation refers to the shift from external collective horizons of significance to individual subjective ones determined by subjective choice. The modern interpretation of freedom and autonomy, therefore, center on ourselves, and the “ideal of authenticity requires that we discover and articulate our own identity” (Taylor. 1992:81)
8. This as will become evident later, has an important implication for education. If the manner, as opposed to the content of subjectivity is central to authenticity, then this should have some bearing in a school setting, in supporting a method which enhances authenticity. This would suggest shifting emphasis from a content-oriented approach to a skills-oriented approach which fosters a sense of subjective reflection, judgement and confidence, while retaining due regard for the underlying ideal of authenticity within the strivings of each individual.
9. This idea can be associated with Kant’s epistemological individualism. No truth is valid unless it is authenticated by subjective judgement
10. From this it can be seen that the recognition of difference is relevant only in relation to the specificities of identify formation through which this occurs. Difference is not relevant in affording chances for the development of individual and group identity (and other similar political and social rights). The struggle for equal recognition of such marginalized differences is implied in Taylor’s (1992) term, “the politics of recognition”. Thus, the principle of differentiation applies to the socio-cultural sphere in which relevant differences occur; the principles of commonality and equality apply to the sphere of socio-political rights.

APPENDIX VII

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APPENDIX VIII

INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES FOR EXAMINERS OF MASTER=S AND DOCTORAL THESES

Please consult Annexure A for information on Master=s degrees by coursework and minithesis, Master=s degrees by full thesis and Doctoral theses.

1. **Time considerations**

Please forward the examiner=s form together with your report to the Registrar, Attention: Mr M Appany, University of the Western Cape, Private Bag X 17, Bellville, 7535, preferably within *four* weeks of the date of your confirmation of receipt for Master=s theses and within *six* weeks for Doctoral theses. (The deadline for March graduation is 25 January and for September graduation 25 July.)

2 **Your report**

We would value a full report of your critical judgment on the thesis. Please also complete the enclosed examiner=s form.

2.1 In reporting on the thesis you are asked to respond to the following and to make any additional comments you think relevant:

- X Is the scope of the thesis clearly defined?
- X Is the nature of the topic adequately interpreted?
- X Does the thesis develop a critical and disciplined discussion?
- X Is there evidence of engagement with the relevant literature?
- X Is sufficient command of appropriate techniques of research, analysis and scholarly presentation demonstrated?
- X Is the thesis well-structured and coherently argued?
- X Is the thesis presented in an appropriate style and with due regard to formal conventions of scholarship (such as referencing and bibliography)?
- X Has the candidate paid adequate attention to linguistic and formal features of presentation such as grammar, style and layout?
- X What are the strengths and weaknesses of the thesis?
- X In the case of a Master=s thesis, do you think that the

candidate should be encouraged to proceed to Doctoral study?

X Do you judge that the thesis, in whole or in part, is suitable publication. If so, what changes might be necessary before it was presented for publication?

2.2 In reporting on a Doctoral thesis, you are asked to comment in addition on the following:

X Does the thesis show proof of original work?

X Is it a distinct contribution to knowledge of and insight into the subject?

3 Before making one of the recommendations listed on the Examiner=s Form, the examiners may consult with the supervisor and with one another, but the object of such consultation should be clarification, not reaching consensus. Each examiner should present an independent assessment. Confidentiality is important and on no account may examiners inform the candidate of the result prior to the decision of the UWC Senate Higher Degrees committee.

4. We shall notify you of the final result.

UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

THESIS AND MINITHESIS EXAMINER=S FORM
--

Please read the AInformation and Guidelines for Examiners of Master=s and Doctoral Theses@. We ask that you please complete this form and attach a full report.

Candidate=s name

Type of thesis (please tick one):

Master=s minithesis	Master=s full thesis	Doctoral thesis
---------------------	----------------------	-----------------

Please circle ONE of the following recommendations:

1. The thesis as it stands provides adequate evidence for passing the candidate.

2. Subject to minor corrections being effected as specified in my report, the thesis provides adequate evidence for passing the candidate. The corrections must be made to the satisfaction of the supervisor.
3. The thesis in its present form does not provide adequate evidence for passing the candidate and should be re-worked substantially as specified in my report. It should then be re-submitted for examination.
4. The thesis does not provide adequate evidence for passing the candidate.

For a Master=s minithesis or Master=s full thesis please indicate a percentage mark.

(A *cum laude* is 75% or above; a pass is 50% or above.)

May an anonymous copy of your report be made available to the candidate?

Yes No

If so, may your name be divulged to the candidate?

Yes No

Signature of examiner:.....

Date.....

Name of examiner (Please print).....

UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

ANNEXURE A

The various Master=s and Doctoral degrees have different structures and weightings. Please read Annexure A before filling in the Examiner=s Form and writing your report.

1. Usually candidates are required to submit their theses for examination after obtaining approval from their supervisors. However, students have the right to submit their theses for examination despite having been advised by their supervisors not to do so.
2. Theses are sent to at least three examiners of whom at least two are independent (have not been involved with the supervision in any way) and at least one is external (not an employee of UWC). Examiners will appreciate that they may differ in important respects in their recommendations and that these may need to be reconciled. Based on the examiners= reports, the supervisor or Head of Department is asked to make a recommendation via the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee to the Senate Higher Degrees Committee (SHD). If the examiners make conflicting recommendations, the supervisor or Head is asked to consult with examiners to see whether agreement can be reached. If no agreement can be reached, the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee may recommend to the SHD that a further examiner be appointed by the SHD. The SHD considers all the examiners' reports and the recommendations of the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee, but is then free to make its own decisions.
3. After the reports have been tabled, it is standard procedure to make anonymous copies of these available to the candidate, unless examiners make a request to the contrary.
4. Each examiner may keep their examination copy of the thesis.
5. External examiners will be paid an honorarium and will be reimbursed for expenses on completion of the examining.

Master=s minithesis

- X A candidate submitting a Master=s minithesis, has usually completed the coursework part of the degree prior to submitting the minithesis.
- X The minithesis is therefore only *one* requirement of the coursework Master=s degree.

- X A minithesis is normally between 7000 - 20 000 words in length and is limited in scope.

Master=s full thesis

- X A Master=s degree by full thesis usually has no other components. However, an additional examination may be recommended. (See AInformation and Guidelines for Examiners of Master=s and Doctoral Theses@.)
- X A full Master=s thesis should range between 20 000 - 45 000 words in length
- X The scope and depth of a Master=s full thesis is more extensive than that of a Master=s minithesis.

Interpretation of percentage marks for Master=s minitheses/theses:

85% and over:

A truly outstanding distinction: masterly coverage demonstrating advanced levels of understanding, originality and analysis or research (theoretically and/or empirically) over and above that required for other distinction categories below. Worthy of publication as is.

80 – 85 A strong distinction without reservations: authoritative coverage of relevant material as well as background literature and/or related issues; outstanding presentation in terms of argument, organisation, originality and style. Demonstrates full understanding of subject matter and at most minor typographical corrections required.

75 – 79 Merits distinction though with some reservations: a more than competent presentation with good organisation and sound critical arguments. Evidence of originality / clear insight / solid depth of understanding. Some minor omissions and / or corrections required.

70 – 74 Does not merit a distinction, but there is evidence of some originality and flair. The substantive part of the work is competently covered, well organised and lucidly argued. There are omissions or areas where revisions would improve the work.

60 – 69 Solidly executed, adequate organisation, competent methodology and conclusions adequately drawn. Very little originality, if any, but an adequate overall performance. May require some minor revisions.

50 – 59 No originality, but a pedestrian, albeit competent, review of the literature, a basic understanding of the significance of the issue

discussed, and a fairly competent methodology. There may be problems of organisation and expression, of layout and typographical errors, but the work exhibits the main features of academic work sufficiently to pass. Some major revisions may be required.

49 and less

The work is clearly not adequate. It exhibits such a level of disorganisation and incoherence as to be termed incompetent. The work fails to demonstrate familiarity with basic academic conventions of presentation and organisation. A failing mark indicates that it clearly does not pass in its present form, but if re-worked substantially and re-submitted it may be brought into a passworthy form.

Doctoral theses

- X Unless stated otherwise, the Doctoral thesis comprises the degree. However, an additional examination may be recommended.
- X The content of a Doctoral thesis is defined as original work and should make a distinct contribution to knowledge of and insight into the subject.