

**GUIDELINES FOR**

**DISSERTATION WRITING**

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**GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

**1.1 Introduction**

This guide is intended to assist the graduate students of IIC University of Technology (henceforth the University) in the preparation of their theses in terms of formatting and writing conventions. Students should refer closely to this guide and seek clarification with the staff of the Thesis Division of the School of Postgraduate Studies (PGS) on specific matters relating to the preparation of their thesis.

**1.2 Language**

The thesis should be written either in English. Language use should be consistent throughout the thesis, especially in terms of spelling (American or British). The Roman alphabet should be used unless otherwise required by the discipline.

**1.3 Technical Specifications**

The thesis must only be printed on a letter-quality or laser printer. Only the original copy of a thesis or good and clean photocopies will be accepted. Copies with correcting fluid will not be accepted.

**1.3.1 Thesis Title**

The title of the thesis should not exceed 20 words.

**1.3.2 Number of Pages**

The number of pages is dependent on the programme of study and **should not exceed 150 pages for a Master’s thesis, and 240 pages for a PhD thesis** (excluding tables, figures and appendices). Students must obtain written permission from the PGS before submitting a thesis longer than the prescribed length. Students should provide strong justifications to support their request.

**1.3.3 Page Layout**

The text should be presented in the portrait layout. The landscape layout may be used for figures and tables.

**1.3.4 Type of Paper**

White simile A4 size (210mm x 297mm) paper (80g) or paper of equivalent quality should be used. Students must include an extra blank sheet for the front and back of the thesis. Photocopies of the thesis must be on similar quality paper.

**1.3.5 Typeface and Font Size**

The text of the thesis, including headings and page numbers, must be produced with the same font or typeface. The font size should be 12-point and should not be scripted or italicised except for scientific names and terms in a different language. Bold print may be used for headings. Footnotes and text in tables should not be less than 8-point. Fonts appropriate for a thesis include:

Arial

Book Antiqua

Bookman

Palatino

Tahoma

Times New Roman

**1.3.6 Margins**

The left margin should be at least 40 mm, and the right, top and bottom margins at least 25 mm. Margin specifications are meant to facilitate binding and trimming. All information (text headings, footnotes, and figures), including page numbers, must be within the text area as demarcated by the dotted lines shown on this page.

**1.3.7 Spacing**

The thesis should be double-spaced, with four spaces between paragraphs and sections. The following, however, should be single-spaced:

i. Footnotes (if absolutely necessary);

ii. Quotations of three lines or more, indented and set in a block;

iii. References or bibliography (except between entries);

iv. Multi-line captions (tables, figures);

v. Appendices, such as questionnaires, letters; and

vi. Headings or subheadings.

**1.3.8 Pagination**

All pages should be numbered consecutively throughout the thesis, including pages containing tables, figures and appendices. Page numbers should be centred either centrally or right flushed at either the top or bottom margins. Page numbers should appear by themselves and should not be placed in brackets, be hyphenated or be accompanied by decorative images. Text, tables and figures should be printed on one (1)side of each sheet only.

Preliminary pages preceding Chapter 1 must be numbered in lowercase Roman numerals (i, ii, iii etc). The title page should not be numbered although it is counted as page i. Page 1 is the first page of the Introduction (Chapter 1) but is not numbered.

**1.3.9 Binding**

Before making the required number of copies and binding the thesis, ensure that all University requirements have been met and necessary signatures have been obtained. Check that all pages are in the correct order. The thesis should be bound with a black hard cover and the binding should be of a fixed kind in which pages are permanently secured. The following are requirements for the front cover.

A. Thesis Spine (refer to Appendix A for details)

The spine must be entirely lettered in gold, using a 20-point font and must contain the following:

i. Name of student;

ii. Degree for which the study is submitted; and

iii. Year of submission.

B. Front Cover

The front cover must be entirely lettered in gold using 18-point gold block font and contain the following:

i. IIC University of Technology Logo;

ii. Title of thesis;

iii. Name of student;

iv. Degree;

v. Name of the university; and

vi. Year of submission.

**1.4 Submission**

Students intending to submit a thesis must do the following:

i. Submit the prescribed Form APP014 (Notice of intention to submit a thesis for examination) to PGS at least three months before submission;

ii. Submit five (5) soft-bound copies of the thesis with a completed Form APP015 to PGS for examination; and

iii. Submit one loose copy of the corrected thesis, the list of corrections made, forms APP0016 PGS within

* 15 days if the thesis is accepted with distinction; or
* 30 days if the thesis is accepted with minor modifications; or
* 60 days if the thesis is accepted with major modifications

after the successful defence of the thesis.

Students should then submit the following to SGS after notification of acceptance

of thesis:

i. **Two (2)** copies of the thesis in black hard cover

ii. **Three (3)** softcopies of the thesis on CD

Students are also required to submit a bound copy of the thesis to every member of their respective supervisory committees.

Details Explanatory Notes

1. **Introduction**

There are many styles of writing thesis and dissertations. For consistency, students are encouraged to conform to the format approved by IIC University of Technology.

1. **Format of Thesis**

Typically, the format of thesis and dissertation consists of 14 parts as suggested below:

* 1. Cover and Spine
  2. Title Page
  3. Abstract
  4. Signature Approval Page
  5. Declaration Page
  6. Copyright Page
  7. Acknowledgements
  8. Table of Contents
  9. Lists of Tables
     1. List of Figures
     2. List of Symbols/Abbreviations/Nomenclature/Transliteration
     3. Text
     4. Appendices/Supplementaries
     5. Citation of Sources

Preliminary Pages: Overview

(Cover and Spine, Title page, Copyright page, Signature Approval Page, Declaration, Acknowledgement, Abstract, Table of Contents, List of Figures and List of Tables)

1. **Cover and Spine (Refer to Sample A)**

The final copy of the thesis/dissertation must be hardbound in black with gold letterings.

As for the cover, the title of the thesis/dissertation, author’s name, name of institution (IIC University of Technology), and year of submission must be printed in uppercase with font size of 14 pitch in Arial, and centrally aligned. The words in title must be arranged in the inverted pyramid shape.

As for the spine, the title of the thesis/dissertation, author’s name, the degree for which the thesis is submitted, and year in uppercase to be printed on the spine.

2 If the title of the thesis cannot fit the space in the spine, smaller font is allowable.

1. **Title Page**

Title page should include the following:

* 1. Full title of thesis (in uppercase)
  2. Full name of author (in uppercase)
  3. Degree for which the thesis is submitted
  4. Name of the institution to which the thesis is submitted
  5. Month and year of submission

The rules for capitalisation in the document title are strict. The first, last, all principal words and words with 4 letters or more must be capitalised, including those that follow hyphens in compound terms. The only words that should not be capitalised are articles (a, an, the), prepositions (e.g., in, to), and conjunctions (e.g., and, but, for).

1. **Abstract**

For the doctoral dissertation, an abstract not exceeding 350 words or 2,450 characters is to be included--approximately one and one-half pages doubled-spaced.

The abstract should state the research problem in brief, describe the methods and procedures used in gathering data or studying the problem, and provide a condensed summary of the findings of the study.

If the thesis is written in another language, the abstract in that language must be translated into English language. The English version must appear in a separate page.

1. **Signature Approval Page (Refer to Sample C)**

A separate page containing the name of author, title and the signatures of the committee members with their designations. Only persons who has been assigned by the Examination Committee to confirm the corrections to be made to the thesis shall sign this approval page.

1. **Declaration Page (refer to Sample D)**

Numbered as usual.

1. **Copyright Page (Refer to Sample E)**

Centred at the bottom, no heading, counted but unnumbered.

1. **Acknowledgements**

Usually contain written expressions of appreciation for guidance and assistance from individuals or/and institutions. The acknowledgements should not exceed 250 words.

1. **Table of Contents**

Each thesis or dissertation is expected to have a table of contents for the convenience of the reader.

The table of contents should be easy to read and consistent. The title of each chapter should be written in full capital with no terminal punctuation.

The title of a subdivision of a chapter or section should be in small letters, with the exception of the first letter of significant words.

1. **Lists of Tables**

The list of tables follows the table of contents. This list includes the number of each table, the title and the page number.

* 1. **List of Figures**

The list of figures follows the list of tables. This list includes the number of each figure, the title and the page number.

1. **List of Symbols/Abbreviations/Nomenclature/Transliteration**

The list of symbols/abbreviations/nomenclature/transliteration follows the list of tables. This list includes the number of each figure, the title and the page number.

1. **Text**

There is no specific format for the text. Candidates and supervisors should ensure that the text follows the agreed conventions of the individual School. Normally, the text consists of the following chapters;

* 1. Introduction
  2. Review of Literature
  3. Methodology
  4. Findings
  5. Summary, Conclusion and Implications

1. **Spacing**

All text must be double- spaced and justified. Each paragraph should be indented. The double-spacing is even throughout. There should not be any “quadruple” spaces.

1. **Font Size and Typeface**

Font size should be 12 pitch for the texts. However, font size of 10 pitch is allowable in tables. Italic print should not be used except for emphasis (e.g. foreign words other than the language used in the thesis). The same typeface must be used throughout the manuscript, including the page numbers, footnotes and/or endnotes. The entire text of the thesis, including headings and page numbers, must be printed using Times New Roman.

1. **Margin**

For binding purposes, the left margin should be at least 4cm (1.5 inches) and the right, top and bottom margins should be at least 2.5cm (1 inch). All information (text, headings, footnotes and figures), including page number, must be within the text area.

1. **Page Numbering**

All page numbers should be printed 1.0 cm from the bottom margin and placed at the right hand side without any punctuation. Roman numerals (1, ii, iii, etc.) should be used in the preface section. Although the Title Page is the first page of the Preface, no number is printed on it. Numbering begins on the second page with (ii). Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3 are used on the pages of the text and supplementary sections.

* 1. **Appendices/Supplementaries**

Specific items which were not included in the main body of the text should be put in the Appendix /Supplementary Section. Typically, this section may include the following items:

* + 1. Research instruments such as questionnaires, maps, interview protocols, or tests
    2. Figures
    3. Equations
    4. Chapter Layout
    5. Tables
    6. Footnotes
    7. Other relevant information
    8. Selected bibliography or references
  1. **Citation of Sources**

Sources are normally cited in footnotes, figures, tables and bibliography or references. Reference citations are based on the editorial styles of the American Psychological Association (APA).

1. **Length of Thesis and Dissertation**

The length of thesis/dissertation should not exceed the stipulated number of words (excluding footnotes, appendices, tables and prefaces) as regulated by the University Senate.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
| Dissertation for Industrial Ph.D | : | 80,000 words |
| Thesis for Masters | : | 80,000 words |
| Dissertation for Masters | : | 60,000 words |
|  |  |  |

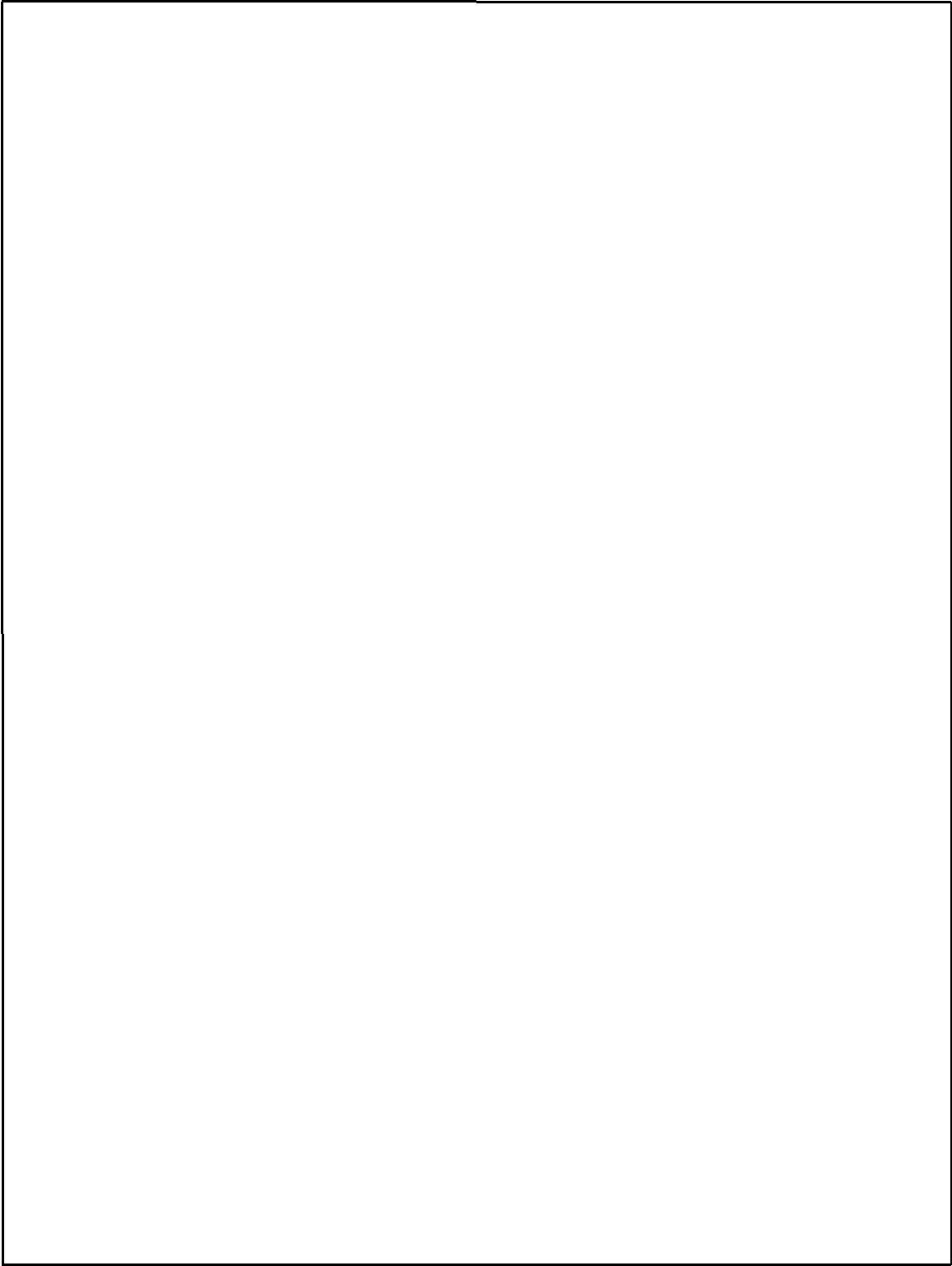
**4. Typing**

All typing must be double spacing between lines. However, in citing references and quotations, single spacing is recommended.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *CHALLENGES AND CATALYST* | THE PRODUCTIVITY TRANSFORMATION |
| *TANG CHOON KOON* |  |

|  |
| --- |
| *InD PhD 2010* |

**Sample A: Example of Cover Page and Spine**



THE PRODUCTIVITY TRANSFORMATION:

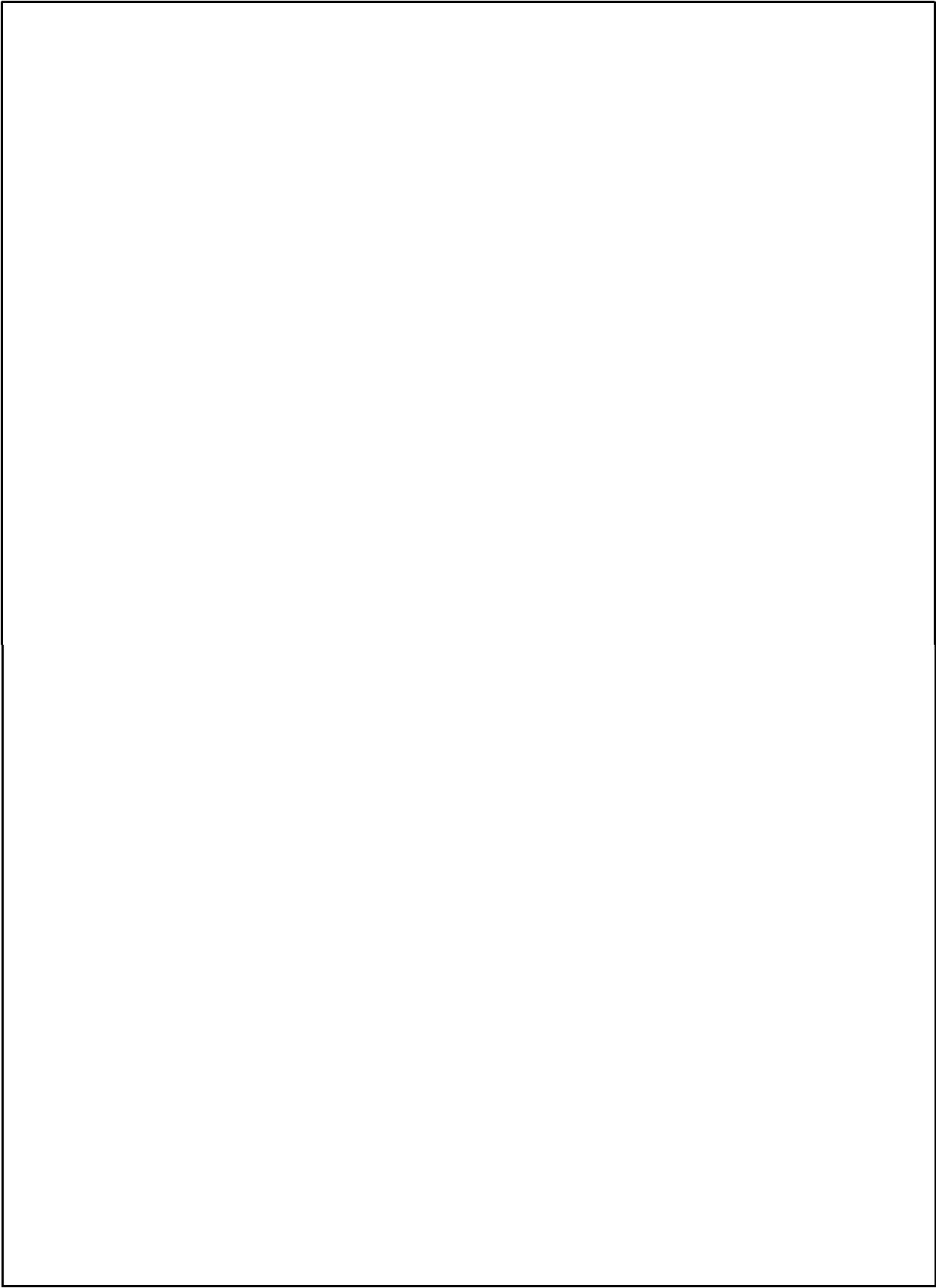
CHALLENGES AND CATALYST

TANG CHOON KOON

IIC UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

2010

**Sample B:** Example of Title Page



THE PRODUCTIVITY TRANSFORMATION:

CHALLENGES AND CATALYST

TANG CHOON KOON

A Thesis Submitted to the School of Business, IIC University of Technology in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in Business

February 2010

**Sample C: Example of Approval Page**

**APPROVAL PAGE**

I certify that I have supervised / read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in quality and scope, as a thesis for the fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

.............................................. ...........................................

Dr Jenet Benson Dr. Geoff

Supervisor Co-supervisor

.............................................. ...........................................

Professor Joseph Johnson Dr Charles Mitcher

External Examiner 1 External Examiner 2

.............................................. ...........................................

Professor K. Palanasamy Professor Dr. Chanthan Chhuon

Internal Examiner 1 Chairman, Examination Committee

This thesis was submitted to the School of Business, IIC University of Technology and is accepted as fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

.............................................. ...........................................

Professor Dr. Leow Chee Seng Professor Dr. Chanthan Chhuon

Head of Graduate School Rector, IIC University of Technology

**Sample D: Example of Declaration**

**Declaration**

I hereby declare that the thesis submitted in fulfilment of the Industrial PhD degree is my own work and that all contributions from any other persons or sources are properly and duly cited. I further declare that the material has not been submitted either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university. In making this declaration, I understand and acknowledge any breaches in this declaration constitute academic misconduct, which may result in my expulsion from the programme and/or exclusion from the award of the degree.

Name: Tang Choon Koon

Signature of Candidate: Date: …………………..

**Sample E: Copyright Page**

Copyright by Tang Choon Koon and IIC University of Technology

**ALTERNATIVE THESIS FORMAT**

The University has recently approved the manuscript style format as an alternative to the conventional format described in the previous part. This format is meant specifically for students who, while they are still within their period of candidature, have already published the findings of their study in peer-reviewed journals, or have articles that are accepted for publication in similar scholarly journals. The technical or research chapters under this format represent a reproduction of these articles.

**3.1 Thesis Layout**

The layout for the alternative format is that of a typical thesis as shown below, except for the way the research chapters are organised (Section 3.2).

i. Title page

ii. Blank page

iii. Abstract

iv. Acknowledgements

v. Approval sheets

vi. Declaration forms

vii. Table of contents

viii. Introduction

ix. Literature review

x. Materials and methods/Methodology

xi. Research chapters (Section 3.2 for details)

xii. Summary, conclusion and recommendations for future research

xiii. References/Bibliography (Section 2.11 for details)

xiv. Appendices (these are to be placed at the end of the thesis as archives. They

will include detailed research methodology and any important data which

has not been included in the journal papers.)

xv. Biodata of the student

Appendix F5 shows in greater detail the Table of Content for this format.

**3.2 Organisation of Research Chapters**

This section comprises the student’s own research papers which have either been

published, or already accepted for publication in citation-indexed journals, for

which they are the first author or principal researcher, and which were produced

under supervision and during the period of candidature. The student may refer

Guide to Thesis Preparation to the following for guidance in the selection of journals:

Thomson Scientific *ISI Web of Knowledge*SM

website at <http://scientific.thomson.com/mjl/>,

The Arts and Humanities Citation Index at http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/eresources/

databases/2087600.html,

Social Sciences citation Index at http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/ssci.html or any other listing relevant to the field of study.

Each reprint or accepted paper represents a chapter. These materials must be retyped

using the format outlined in the technical specifications in Chapter 1 of this Guide.

Written consent must be secured from the copyright owners for all copyrighted materials and the permission letters should be attached at the end of the chapter.

Where there are joint authorships, the works of the others must be clearly specified. For manuscripts that have been accepted for publication, a copy of the acceptance letter from the journal concerned should also be shown at the end of the relevant chapter. Papers presented at conferences or seminars, and those published in conference or seminar proceedings are not acceptable alternatives.

Additional chapters may be added to include findings that have not been published. The format of such chapters should be consistent with that of the preceding chapters. The number of journal papers required differs according to the type of degree as shown below.

Ph.D programmes: At least four chapters should constitute research papers already published or accepted by peer-reviewed journals, with at least two in appropriate citation-indexed journals.

Guide to Thesis Preparation

**WRITING CONVENTIONS**

**Units of Measure**

Use internationally recognised units of measure, preferably SI,3 such as:

1 litre (1 L)

20 millilitres (20 mL)

5 kilogram (5 kg)

20 kilometre (20 km)

2.5 hectare (2.5 ha)

3.7 metric tonnes (3.7 t)

45 parts per million (45 ppm)

12 gram (12 g)

500 US Dollars (USD 500)

3.4 metric tonne/hectare (3.4 t/ha)

The numbers before the measurement units should not be spelt out, (e.g., write 5 kg, not five kg) even if they are below 100 (see Section 3.2) unless they are the first word of sentences or the number one (1). Note the space between the figure and the unit of measure.

**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 the number 10 or more than 10. If a sentence begins with a number, write the number in words, e.g. “Three hundred and eighty-five farmers from the study area were interviewed”, instead of “350 farmers from the study area were interviewed.” or change the order of the sentence. Use numerals for a series of figures. For example:

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

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

**Names of Organisms**

The name of an organism should be written in full the first time it appears in both the abstract and in the text. The name may then be abbreviated according to accepted conventions, e.g. *Escherichia coli* should be shortened to *E. coli*. 3 SI stands for Système International d’Unités, or International System of Units.

**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 comes at the end of a sentence, it appears as four full stops (. ...). One full stop marks the end of the sentence and the other three full stops signal the omission. For example:

Khatijah (1985, p. 4) wrote about the conference: “Members at the conference at Kuala Lumpur...agreed that the world educational crisis sketched in the document was real. ...”

**Use of Square Brackets [ ]**

Within direct quotations, brackets are used to enclose any explanatory note inserted by the thesis writer, e.g. [In 2005] alone, we had 200 applicants wanting to enrol for our new diploma programme (Salleh, 2005).

Use [sic] (within square brackets) to indicate a certain doubt as to meaning or factual error. It simply means “thus” or “As written in the original.” 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 such as spelling errors should be corrected as a matter of professional courtesy.

Square brackets should also be used to show that capitalisation has been altered within a sentence. If the quotation used does not start with a capital letter in the original, but needs one in the new context because it is in the form of a full sentence, a capital letter accompanied by square brackets should be used. If, for example, six words from the following sentence are to be used, It has been shown that some diabetics can control their disease without medication.

The student should write:

“[Some] diabetics can control their disease“ (Sulmiah, 2005, p.17). These square brackets alert the reader to the fact that the original author had some words in the same sentence before those quoted, and did not intend the statement to stand alone. However, the quoted words can stand alone as a full sentence, and as such, must begin with a capital letter.

**Use of a Symbol to Show Percentage**

The symbol % may be used in place of the word percent, e.g. 27.3% and typed without a space before it. If the student prefers to write 27.3 percent in full, then consistency must be maintained throughout the thesis. In tables, the abbreviation Pct may be used at the head of a column to mean percent.

**Policy on Direct Quotations**

Direct quotations must be kept to a minimum except in some fields such as literature. Some examiners disallow quotations of over 10 lines. If, there is a need to use a set of recommendations from a report, these should be paraphrased succinctly. Also provide the original full text in the appendix.

**Format for Quotations**

Both direct and indirect quotations **must** be acknowledged. The penalties for quoting without acknowledgment are severe, as is explained in the section on plagiarism. In the text, authors’ surnames are used. The list of references is ordered by surname For most names, this means the last name is first. Exceptions include Chinese names, (in which the family name is already first and so stays first), and Malay names (in which the whole name is given as there is no equivalent to a family name). For example, Mary MacLaren would become MacLaren in the text and MacLaren, Mary or MacLaren, M in the list of references; Wong Siew Lan would be Wong in the text, and stays Wong Siew Lan or Wong, S.L. in the list of references while Aminah Aris would be either Aminah Aris, Aminah, A or Aris, A, in both text and references. When in doubt about the format for citing a reference by a Chinese or Malay author, seek the advice of your supervisors.

**Direct Quotations**

Direct quotations less than three lines in length can be indicated using double quotations marks. If the length of the quotation is three full lines or more, use indentation and include page numbers. Indented quotations should be singlespaced with no quotation marks.

Example of a direct quotation that is less than a sentence and is worked smoothly into your text:

As Hattersley and McJannet (2005, p.121) explain, feedback, both giving and receiving, is an “essential” management skill. Examples of direct quotations that are in themselves full sentences. As Hattersley and McJannet (2005) state, “Giving and receiving feedback are essential managerial skills” (p. 121).

If the name of the author or authors quoted does not open the sentence, it is given at the end with the date and page number.

Many authors stress the importance of feedback because “giving and receiving feedback are essential managerial skills” (Hattersley and McJannet, 2005, p. 121.)

Longer quotations are indented on the left side only or on both sides. Indenting shows that the text is quoted so quotation marks are redundant. In 1993, the Main Board was refurbished through the launch of four new sectors (consumer products, construction, industrial products, and trading and services), the introduction of a loans sector and the merging of the oil palm and rubber sectors as the plantations sector, (Foong, 2004, p. 17).

**Indirect Quotations**

If ideas or information but not the wording of the original source are used, provide the name and date of the publication, leaving other details for the reference list at the end. For example: Hattersley and McJannet (2005) explain the importance of giving feedback.

Or

Feedback is extremely important (Hattersley and McJannet, 2005). If general statements are being made, requiring the citation of several authorities, these must be listed in chronological order, with a semicolon between each source. Recent practice is to reverse the order, that is, to put the most recent authorities first.

Intercultural understanding is an important component in any international transaction (McLaren, 2005; Varner and Beamer, 2003; Hofstede, 2001).

**PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is taking the works of others and using them as if they were your own. Such works include:

i. Words or ideas from printed literature such as journal papers, magazine

articles, books, newspapers, web pages, computer programmes, etc.;

ii. Published figures, tables, diagrams, illustrations, charts, maps, pictures or

other visual materials; and

iii. Information from interviews, etc.

Plagiarism comes in three forms:

i. Copying full sentences or even paragraphs straight from the source as though they are the student’s own work; and

ii. Using the original wording from the source material without inverted commas or indentation, even if the source is acknowledged.

iii. Paraphrasing without acknowledgement.

Usually, a change in style alerts the reader to the possibility of plagiarism. Examiners are likely to know the literature and recognise the plagiarism, but it is also true that it sometimes goes by undetected. It is now possible to detect plagiarism by simply searching a small string of words on the Internet.

Additionally, plagiarism-checking software programmes, such as Turnitin, are also widely available. These programmes produce Originality Reports, which list the percentage of similarity between the student’s words and the source. Even excerpts with minimal alterations will be detected. Plagiarism is considered form of theft, and is under no circumstances acceptable in the world of scholarship. As such, if plagiarism is proven in a thesis at the examination stage, the thesis is automatically failed and the students’ candidature terminated.

**Avoid Plagiarism**

The key to avoiding plagiarism is to make sure credit is given where it is due when incorporating another writer’s work. Students should do this even when the original source is paraphrased or summarised. When quoting a published or verbal statement, it must be identical to the original and must be attributed to the original author. Alwayscite the authors whose published works or statements are used in the thesis.

The usage of materials such as diagrams and figures which are available on the internet or published articles without the permission of the copyright owners is an infringement of copyright and is not allowed.

**USE OF AN EDITORIAL SERVICE**

Some students employ professional editors to ‘polish’ their written thesis. This should be done before the thesis is sent for examination. Be aware that some people who claim to be editors are not qualified, so check carefully before you commit yourself to an editor. The PGS does not insist that all theses be sent to professional editors (who charge a fee for their services). However, students should know that the PGS accepts only theses that are free from basic errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. Supervisors cannot be held responsible for the grammatical errors in the student’s thesis. Their main responsibility is to check the content of the thesis, and not the language used. Upon submission of the final thesis prior to binding, the PGS will browse through the thesis to ensure that it conforms to the present Guide*.*