



**សាកលវិទ្យាល័យ កម្ពុជា**  
**University of Cambodia**

N°: 11004 UC.D

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 Studies

**Asia**  
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**DECISION  
 ON**

**THE POLICY ON THESIS AND DISSERTATION GUIDELINES**

- Based on Anukret No. 51 អនក្រឹត្យ dated on 20 June 2003 on the recognition of the University of Cambodia by Royal Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia;
- Based on UC Mission, Vision, and Internal Rules of the University;
- Based on the need for reform to ensure the quality of maintenance and improvement of the University of Cambodia;
- Based on decision to establish of working group for writing legal policy, term of references and rule of procedures on 4 October 2010;

**PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBODIA HAS  
 APPROVED THE POLICY ON**

**THESIS AND DISSERTATION GUIDELINES,**

**AS FOLLOWS:**

The following guidelines relate to the layout of an acceptable Master's or Doctoral thesis, based on international standards as modified by MoEYS. In keeping with the policy of The University of Cambodia, the thesis must be submitted in English (written to an internationally acceptable standard); the requirements of MoEYS mean that it also must be submitted in Khmer??? Attention should be paid to ensure a consistent and logical presentation throughout, so that the whole forms a coherent piece of work set in the broader context of existing knowledge in that specific field. In general, the style used by the American Psychological Association for the general organisation of the text of research papers is recommended, but other styles can be adopted provided that they are reasonable and consistently applied. Details of the organisation of individual sections of the thesis (Title Page, *etc.*) are available from the Dean of Graduate Studies or one of the Associate Deans upon request. As always (see Section V), **plagiarism must be avoided at all costs**: it should be something of your own which you are proud of, and which you have earned in your own right without having to parasitise.

- To satisfy the University's requirements, the final thesis needs to be submitted in English; spelling should be consistent and carefully checked– the American spelling system is preferred.

As a final point, it is interesting to note that the quality of a submitted piece of work gives interesting insights into the candidate's character and attitude to work in general and to academic issues in particular. The ultimate responsibility for the submitted thesis rests with the candidate; when the final version is submitted, it should *not* be in a rough draft, but done to the best of the candidate's ability. It must be a self-contained, coherently-organised piece of work which gives the reader (whether a specialist in the field or an outsider) insight into the candidate's work input and their understanding of the data and the latter's implications.

### **i. General Aspects of Content**

The primary concern of the evaluators is that the material contents should be either

- an integrated record of *original and novel* quantitative 'field' work, *critically* discussed in the context of what is already known in other situations; or
- an organised *original and novel* survey of existing knowledge, with evidence of a *critical* comprehensive survey of the existing literature.

The key factor is that the candidate is able to assimilate a reasonable body of information, and then synthesise a report which is concise and clearly written, and which shows the ability to use this knowledge to provide novel insights which will advance human knowledge and understanding, especially in relation to the situation regarding Cambodia, its past and its future development.

However, even if the submitted work meets the above expectations, it will be failed if it does not meet a number of secondary concerns, as enumerated in the following subsections.

### **ii. General Aspects of Presentation**

Good-quality A4 paper must be used, and only one side of the page should be used; the left margin should be set at 3.5 cm and the other three margins at 2.5 cm. A seriffed font such as Times New Roman should be used throughout; the font-size should be 12-point (11-point for footnotes) and all text should be black. All pages apart from the title page must be numbered, with the numbers appearing in sequential order at the middle of the bottom of the page; a 'running head' at the top should *not* be used. A spacing of 1.5 should be used, except for quotations, footnotes and the Reference section (and long tables, where necessary) when single spacing should be used. Paragraphs should be indented, and the text right-justified. Where appropriate, figures or tables may be included in 'landscape' format on separate pages with the same margins.

The bottom-line of this and the following sections is that the thesis must be of a suitable standard to reflect the candidate and The University of Cambodia; and thus that it can be kept accessible for students in the library and elsewhere, where parts can be scanned or copied as and when required.

### **iii. Pages before the main body of the text**

Apart from the first, title page, the preliminary 'front matter' should be numbered sequentially using lower-case Roman numerals. The sections should be in the following order:-

- (1) Title Page – this should follow a standard layout (available from the Dean of Graduate Studies or from one of the Associate Deans), and should give its title, the candidate's name in full, the month and year of its submission for examination, and the following statement at the bottom "A Thesis (or Research Paper *as appropriate*) Submitted as Partial Requirement for the Degree of ??? of The University of Cambodia";
- (2) Statement of Original Authorship – a copy is available from the Dean of Graduate Studies or from one of the Associate Deans
  - (i) the student should only sign this if none of the work, including the text, has been plagiarised or has been submitted in large part for a degree or diploma elsewhere;
  - (ii) if others have contributed to the collection of data and/or its analysis, then this needs to be adequately recognised in the Acknowledgements;
- (3) Statement of Committee Approval – a copy is available from the Dean of Graduate Studies or from one of the Associate Deans;
- (4) Statement of Deposition and Copyright Declaration – this ? (a copy is available from the Dean of Graduate Studies or from one of the Associate Deans);
- (5) Abstract – this should be a concise summary (maximum 500 words) which focuses on the results, with only brief introductory, methodological and concluding statements, which should appear on one page under the exact title of the thesis and the candidate's name (month and year of submission);
- (6) Acknowledgements – this should be written in the first person, and should be brief and only refer to those individuals or organisations directly involved in contributing information or advice, access to equipment or other resources, or permission to use copyrighted material;
  - (i) Where work has been done in collaboration with others as a team-effort, this needs to be clearly stated here, to be fair and give due credit to the individual contributions of each of those others involved – such collaborative work *must* have been agreed upon by the Committee at the start of the research, otherwise they have the right to deem the data collected through such efforts as not suitable for inclusion in the thesis;
  - (ii) Arising from this, it may be necessary to seek approval from the candidate's sponsors or other bodies in order to ensure that the material content of the thesis does not violate any other contractual obligations.
- (7) Table of Contents – all sections and subsections of the thesis should be included, with the corresponding correct page numbers right-justified;
- (8) List of Tables – if applicable, including titles of tables;
- (9) List of Figures – if applicable, including figure legends;
- (10) List of Abbreviations and Symbols – where these are used in the main body of the text or Appendices.

**iv. The main body of the text**

This should normally be ??? words long (Master's Research Paper), 25,000 to 50,000 words long (Master's thesis) or 40,000 to 80,000 words long (Doctoral thesis); the

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writing should be concise, with no grammatical or other errors. Pages should be numbered sequentially using Arabic numerals. The main body of the text should comprise, in the candidate's own words, and account of his or her own work in the context of the work of others: Thus, typically, it should comprise,

- (i) An introductory Chapter I, which identifies the problem to be studied and its significance; and outlines the approach to be used and the major assumptions which are made;
- (ii) An optional literature review chapter, if realisable (any temptation to include superfluous 'padding' should be avoided);
- (iii) A chapter giving details about the materials and methods used for collecting and analysing data, including statistical procedures, so that others can fully understand how a study was performed and replicate it if they so wish;
- (iv) One or more chapters reporting the results, each with its own Introduction and Discussion (and a specific Materials and Methods, if necessary) – one or more of these can be published papers, but this must be clearly indicated;
- (v) A final chapter with a general discussion of the results, and the conclusions and recommendations which can be made.

For ease of cross-reference, a 'decimal' system of headings should be used: the first section in Chapter 1 is 1.1, and its first subsection is 1.1.1. Each section and the different levels of its subsections should have a brief, appropriate title (which will also appear in the Table of Contents), and there should be a consistent use of italicisation and other font attributes and other aspects of formatting within each level.

MoEYS guidelines are that the Introductory Chapter should include the following headings:

- 1.1 Background to the Study
- 1.2 Problem Statement
- 1.3 Rationale
- 1.4 Aim and Objectives
- 1.5 Functional Definitions of Terms
- 1.6 Limitations to the Study

However, the University of Cambodia allows flexibility in the strict application of these sectional divisions on a case-by-case basis: students should be encouraged to develop their own fluid writing style to meet international norms for academic presentations, provided that all relevant components are incorporated into the final product as and when appropriate.

Citations for references in the text may be through embedded identification of author(s) and year(s) – for example (Mok and Munro, 1996, 1998a, b; Munro, 1984; Sampathkumar and Munro, 1997; Sampathkumar *et al.*, 1996) – following the Harvard system; or through superscripts with the full reference given in footnotes (at the bottom of the relevant page; font size 1 point less than that of the main text: end-notes should not be used), following the Vancouver system (advantageous for citing web sources, or for including additional comments); or through a combination of both according to needs.

Complete and accurate citation is important: it shows that the writer has a broad awareness, understanding and evaluation of the available aggregate of knowledge in relation to the central theme of the thesis (an essential component of any research project); and that the contributions (in terms of observations, ideas, etc.) of others have been given due recognition, rather than being dishonestly passed off as the author's own original contribution (thus constituting another form of plagiarism).

Thus complete and accurate citation is important: it shows that the writer has *academic integrity*: he or she has ideas and opinions which can be respected as a member of the academic community-at-large. Plagiarism, on the other hand, leads to lack of respect and distrust. Referencing can be done by either:

- (vi) Quoting directly (indented, single-spaced within quotation marks;
- (vii) Summarising or paraphrasing relevant portions of the text; or
- (viii) Direct use of key words or statistics.

In each case, the source should be duly accredited; apart from being honest and respecting the work of others, also allows the reader to check the original sources for their own evaluation of the latter's reliability and the thesis author's position with regard to different schools of thought.

Academic honesty and credibility also requires that the candidate includes all data collected, unless they can be justifiably excluded after consultation with the Committee on the basis of, for example, obvious equipment failure. Similarly academic respectability requires that the data be original and not fabricated or misrepresented in any way; and that they have not been presented for a degree elsewhere.

#### **v. Figures and Tables**

All Tables and Figures must be mentioned in the main body of the text and their relevant content described and discussed. They should be incorporated at the first appropriate location where they are referred to; and they should be numbered sequentially according to the order in which they are first mentioned, using a decimal system based on their parent chapter (e.g. Figure 2.1, Table 5.5). Figures should have an appropriate, informative legend; whilst tables must have a title which similarly so; in each case, any abbreviations or symbols need to be properly explained. Printed tables need to be properly organised and follow a consistent style; a single table should not spread across more than one page unless it cannot fit onto a single page. Figures should be clearly printed with photos and maps and other diagrams being of a suitable quality for easy examination. Where Figures or Tables are not the author's original data, their source must be clearly acknowledged by a citation or other accreditation.

#### **vi. References**

These should be organised alphabetically (family name of senior author, followed by initials, and the same for any other authors) and then by year of publication, in a section following upon the main body of the text. All references cited in the body of the text must appear in the References; and all items listed in the References must appear in the body of the text. Each entry should be hanging-indent, and full bibliographic details (using commonly accepted abbreviations for journal names)

must be provided. The style used should be consistent: the 'Vancouver style' (International Committee of Medical Journal Editors) has much to recommend it.

**vii. Appendices**

These should each bear a title and be numbered sequentially, and placed after the References. Only peripheral but still directly relevant material should be included, and the temptation to include superfluous 'padding' should be avoided. Where appropriate, citations should be listed in a separate References section at the end of each Appendix.

- I. All UC Administration, Staff, Faculty, and related Offices are required to read and implement this policy.
- II. Any prior decision in contradiction with this one shall be annulled.
- III. This decision comes into effect from the date of signing.

Phnom Penh, *February 7, 2011*

**On behalf of the Board of Trustees  
and the University of Cambodia President**

CC:

- As stated in I
- University Archive

