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To:

All Principals/Head of Departments  
Kenya Medical Training College

### GUIDELINES FOR WRITING RESEARCH PROPOSALS AND DISSERTATIONS

In order to have a uniform approach in the teaching and conducting of research in the College, the guidelines and format for writing research proposals and dissertations used by diploma students has been reviewed. The ultimate goal is to improve the quality of research conducted by both the students and staff in the institution.

Attached, please find the reviewed document as well as the assessment tool for your perusal and necessary action.

Thank you,

Nancy Michire (Mrs)

For: DIRECTOR/CEO



**KENYA MEDICAL TRAINING COLLEGE**

**GUIDELINES FOR WRITING RESEARCH PROPOSALS AND  
DISSERTATION**

**JULY 2018 EDITION**

## **PREAMBLE**

This working document is a general guide for students to write research proposals and dissertations.

### **A. GENERAL INFORMATION AND COLLEGE GUIDELINES ON ACADEMIC RESEARCH PROPOSALS AND DISSERTATIONS**

#### **i. Supervision**

Every department will develop its own policy on the identification and allocation of supervisors. It is expected that each student will have a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 2 supervisors, depending on need. However, one supervisor shall be from the students' department. In exceptional cases more than 3 supervisors may be allowed, provided there is proper justification. A supervisor may be drawn from outside the department but from within KMTCC.

#### **ii. Responsibilities of Supervisors**

- Be available for consultation regularly and respond to issues within two weeks.
- Guide students to relevant literature and their sources
- Discuss and critically evaluate the candidate's findings and ideas
- Advise candidates on the form and structure of dissertations
- Train candidates in the conventions of scholarly presentations
- Advise students on rules governing their specific diplomas
- Ensure that written reports progress of a student's studies are submitted as required by college/department regulations

In the absence of a supervisor for a substantially long time, arrangements must be made by the Head of Department to ensure continuity in Supervision.

By placing his/her signature on the title page of the dissertation, a supervisor is certifying that the proposal/dissertation represents the work of the candidate that was carried out under his/her supervisor and is ready for official examination.

### **B. PROPOSAL FORMAT**

#### **i. Introduction**

This guide is written on the premise that students experience difficulties in writing proposals and dissertations. The main weaknesses are:-

- i. Unfocussed proposal titles leading to internal/inconsistence
- ii. Unclear statement of the problem
- iii. Incoherent literature review
- iv. Unclear study design and choice of methods of data analysis.
- v. Plagiarism

## **C. CONTENT (PRELIMINARY PAGES)**

### **i. Cover Page**

Items will be arranged in the following order:

- Should start with the title of the study
- Title should be focused, informative and not more than 15 words
- Full names of student
- Registration number of student below the name
- Name of Department

Then follows the writing:-

“A research proposal submitted to Kenya Medical Training College in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of diploma (specify, e.g. Clinical Medicine).

- Insert date of submission e.g. July, 2018

#### **Note**

1. The cover page should not be paginated
2. All wording should be singled-spaced
3. KMTC logo should not be inserted on the cover page

### **ii. Student Declaration Page**

To have the following writings:

“This proposal is my original work and has not been presented for a diploma in any other institution.” Then the student signs above his/her name and college registration number, followed by the date.

For example:

Signature ..... Date .....  
Name Richard, Baraka  
DEHS/17001/2018

**iii. Supervisors' Approval page**

This proposal has been submitted for review with our approval as  
College Supervisors

Then the supervisors, each with starting with main, sign above at least  
two of their names written in full, together with their respective  
departments.

For example,

1. Signature ..... Date .....  
Mr. Edward Mrisho  
XYZ Department

2. Signature ..... Date .....  
Dr. Oliver Otieno  
XYZ Department

- Supervisors: Starting and the lead supervisor, listed by title and at least two full names
- Signature and Date
- Department

**iv. Acknowledgement**

This, begins on a separate page, should follow dedication and not exceeding 200 words.

**v. Table of contents**

- Table of contents should start on a fresh page
- All major sections of the proposal should be indicated here

**vi. Abbreviations and Acronyms.**

- All abbreviations and acronyms that are used in the proposal should appear here.

**vii. Definition of terms**

- All operational terms that need further explanations should appear here.

**viii. Abstract**

All proposals must have an abstract, which should not exceed 350 words; should be single-spaced and not paragraphed. The abstract should consist of precise spectrum of the entire proposal including the main objective, methods (including data analysis) and justification. It should give an overview of the proposal and should not EXCEED 350 words. The abstract is followed by the explanation of the abbreviation and acronyms as used in the text.

**Note**

1. Each of the preliminary sections (from student declaration page to the abstract) should begin on a fresh page
2. Each of the preliminary sections except the cover page must be in roman numbers e.g. (i, ii, iii, etc)

**D. FORMAT OF MAIN BODY**

Each major section e.g. INTRODUCTION should start on a separate page. All sub and sub-sub sections should be in lower case (not capital letters)

**CHAPTER I- INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Background to the study**

This gives specific gaps that are considered to be the root of the problem. It should be a maximum of one and half pages

**1.2 Problem statement**

Should be precise and focused and not more than a page

**1.3 Justification**

Should state clearly why the proposed research should be undertaken. Why the need for the study? What information will the study add? What is potential utility of the findings? What are the implications of the study outcomes?

**1.4 Research questions**

These should be clear and focused and should guide the researcher towards developing a logical argument.

**1.5 Objectives**

**1.5.1 Broad objective**

**1.5.2 Specific objective**

- Should not more than three

- Should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound

### **1.6 Scope and limitation**

Explains to what extent the study will be carried out

## **CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW**

- The student should demonstrate evidence of understanding of current research on the subject under investigation and show clear gaps in knowledge that will be discussed. Appropriate themes for this chapter can be developed using the research questions and research objectives. Thus, relevant themes to the study and derived review should be consistent with the requirements of the title (internal consistency) and aspects of the introduction e.g. background to the study.
- Relevant literature should be reviewed according to objectives, recent literature (not more than 10 years)
- Should be at least 5 pages in length for diploma and 10 pages for higher diploma courses

## **CHAPTER III - MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This Chapter highlights methodological details appropriate to the study. Thus:

### **3.1 Study design**

State and justify the chosen design

### **3.2 Study area**

Describe where the study will be done (locate) and why it was chosen

### **3.3 Population**

Describe the study population; describing specifically who will be part of the study. (Occasionally "target population" may be mentioned)

#### **3.3.1 Inclusion criteria**

#### **3.3.2 Exclusion criteria**

### **3.4 Variables**

#### **3.4.1 Dependent**

Explain the dependent variables

#### **3.4.2 Independent**

Explain the independent variables

### **3.5 Sampling techniques**

Explain the sampling techniques for each respondent (subject) to be selected

### **3.6 Sample size determination**

Describe how the sample size will be computed.

### **3.7 Development of data collection tool/instrument**

Explain the instruments that will be used in the study and how they will be constructed

### **3.8 Data collection process**

Explain how field data collection will be done

### **3.9 Pre-testing/piloting**

Describe how data will be collected and how pilot centres will be selected). It is here that the following issues will be discussed:

### **3.10 Validity**

Explain how validity of the instruments will be established

### **3.11 Reliability**

Show and explain how reliability of the instruments will be established

### **3.12 Data analysis**

Explain the methods that will be applied in analyzing the data after field work

### **3.13 Ethical considerations**

Explain how the study will meet ethical requirements as per the nature of the research

## **REFERENCES**

References should be single spaced and listed alphabetically in the reference list. For citation within the text the format of author and year of publication is recommended. Students should use the APA referencing style

## **APPENDICES**

Will include such items as work plan, budget, maps, questionnaires, consent forms, interview schedules etc. numbered sequentially as 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, etc.

## **E. PROPOSAL PRESENTATION DETAILS**

### **i. Typing**

All proposals in the college should be typed in font 12(Times New Roman) on A4 size paper, double spaced, and on one side of the page.

### **ii. Page margins**

Page margins will be as follows: left 40 mm (1.5 inches) all other sizes 25 mm (1 inch)

### **iii. Page numbering**

#### **a. Preceding pages**

All preceding pages except cover page should be numbered using lower case roman numbering system (i.e. i, ii, iii, etc) and in a consecutive manner

#### **b. Pages from CHAPTER I to APPENDICES**



All pages from chapter one to appendices should be numbered consecutively using the Arabic number format (i.e. 1, 2,3,4,5,6, etc)

**iv. Length**

The proposal should not exceed 15 pages

**v. Tense**

Future tense should be used in writing proposals

**Note**

page number should appear in the centre of the lower margin of the page.

## **F. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL TO THE DEPARTMENT**

Two spiral bound copies, duly signed by the student and all supervisors.

## **G. DISSERTATION FORMAT**

**The standard format shall comprise:-**

- i. Title Page**  
Same as in proposal
- ii. Author**  
Full name of student should appear as it is in the registration form, while the registration number should be written below the name, together with the name of the Department, then follows the writing "A research dissertation submitted to Kenya Medical Training College for the award of diploma in .....(specify e.g. Nursing). Then the date e.g. April 2018
- iii. Declaration Page**  
Should be similar to that in the proposal except that the word "Proposal" is replaced with "dissertation followed by the declaration words "This is my original work ....." (As stated in the proposal)
- iv. Dedication Statement**  
Not exceeding 25 words for a dissertation. This follows declaration, beginning on a separate page.
- v. Table of Contents**  
This begins on a new page. It should assist the reader to know quickly and clearly, how the dissertation is organized. There must be consistence in the use of headings and sub-headings.
- vi. List of Tables**

This follows the table of contents, beginning on a separate page. Numbering should be: Table 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 etc for tables on Chapter 1. Similarly Table 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 etc for tables in chapter 2 ..... Table 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 ..... Table 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 ..... Table 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 ..... for those in other respective chapters.

**vii. List of figures**

This immediately follows the list of tables and on a separate page. Numbering should be figure 1.1., 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2 ... etc, according to the chapters.

**viii. Use of Tables and Figures**

Tables and Figures may be included within the text or appear on separate pages. If on separate pages, however, they should be placed near the text, which refers to them.

**N. B.**

- No table and figures should occupy more than one page. They should also fit within the margins prescribed earlier.
- Each table or figure should have a full caption.
- Tables and figures should be numbered in sequence and be cited by a number in the text (numbering sequence is as shown in the previous section on proposals).
- A table that is oversized may be divided so that a portion appears on two pages, which face each other. If this method is used, the entire title and footnotes, if any, appear on the left hand side of a table.
- Photographs should be scanned and printed on A4 paper and on appropriate page.

**ix. Abbreviation and Acronyms**

As it is in proposal composition

**x. Definition of Terms**

**xi. Abstract**

This should be as it is in proposal except the tense changes to past. Include findings, conclusion and recommendations.

**CHAPTERS I -III**

Chapters I to III have content and form as those described in the section for proposal. The future tense must change to past tense.

**CHAPTER IV - RESULTS**

This chapter should present the interpretation and explanation of the findings of the study with regard to the stated objectives and research

questions. The results should be reduced. It also includes description of the tables and figures.

## **CHAPTER V - DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Discussion**

Discuss the results and compare with other similar studies

### **5.2 Conclusion**

Emphatic, strong conclusion based on the study findings should be stated here and should be base on the specific objectives

### **5.3 Recommendations**

To be based on the conclusions

### **5.4 Further Research**

What is considered to be gaps left out by the study, which would need further investigation through research, should be given. The references and then appendices should follow this chapter.

## **REFERENCES:**

As stated earlier

## **APPENDICES:**

Attach all appendices referred to in the dissertation.

## **H. PROGRESS REPORTS AND NOTICES OF DISSERTATION SUBMISSION**

All supervisors are expected to sign and endorse the progress and notice of submission forms.

## ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR RESEARCH PROJECT PAPER

Name: ..... College Number: .....

Department: ..... Date: .....

Description	Marks	Marks Awarded	Remarks
IS THE TOPIC RESEARCHABLE?	2 marks		
<b>Totals marks for the topic</b>	<b>2 marks</b>		
<b>Expected layout</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Declaration</li> <li>• Dedication - not necessary</li> <li>• Table of contents</li> <li>• List of figures</li> <li>• List of tables</li> <li>• acknowledgement</li> <li>• Operational definitions</li> <li>• List of abbreviations / acronyms</li> </ul>	3 marks		
<b>Abstract or summary</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should be one page or not &gt; 300 words</li> <li>• Contain all major points of the study</li> <li>• Methods, major conclusions and recommendations</li> </ul>	6mks		
<b>Total marks for expected layout and abstract</b>	<b>9 marks</b>		
<b>CHAPTER ONE - Contains</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction – to the study, global, regional, national, local</li> </ul>	5 marks		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem statement</li> </ul>	4 marks		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study justification</li> </ul>	3 marks		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad objectives</li> <li>• Specific objectives</li> </ul>	3 marks		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• research question</li> </ul>	2mks		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• study limitations</li> </ul>	1mk		
<b>Total marks for chapter one</b>	<b>18 marks</b>		
<b>CHAPTER TWO – Mainly contains</b>			
Literature review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literature related to the specific objectives</li> <li>• At least 5 pages for the basic course and 10 pages of double spacing for Higher National Diploma</li> </ul>	14 marks		
<b>Total marks for chapter two</b>	<b>14 marks</b>		

<b>CHAPTER THREE – Study Methodology</b>			
• Background of the study area	2 marks		
Major points of the study area related to the topic			
• Study design	2 marks		
• Definition of variables	1 marks		
<b>Description</b>			
• Study population	1 marks		
• Inclusion and exclusion criteria	1 marks		
• Sample size determination	3 marks		
• Sampling procedure	2 marks		
• Data collection instruments	1 marks		
• Validation of data collection tools	1 marks		
• data collection procedures	2 marks		
• Data analysis	2 marks		
• Ethical issues	2 marks		
<b>Total marks for chapter three</b>	<b>20 marks</b>		
<b>CHAPTER FOUR – Study findings and interpretation</b>			
• Should be presented by tables, graphs, etc	13 marks		
<b>Total marks for chapter four</b>	<b>13 marks</b>		
<b>CHAPTER FIVE – Discussion</b>			
• The study findings should be discussed as per the specific objectives	10 marks		
• Conclusion made based on findings	3		
• Recommendations made based on specific objectives and findings	3		
<b>Total marks for chapter five</b>	<b>16 marks</b>		
• Reference	4 marks		
• appendix	2 marks		
General outlook of research project document (Neatness, binding, etc)	2 marks		
<b>OVERALL MARKS</b>	<b>100 marks</b>		

**General Comments:**

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**Name of Examiner:** ..... **Sign:** ..... **Date:** .....