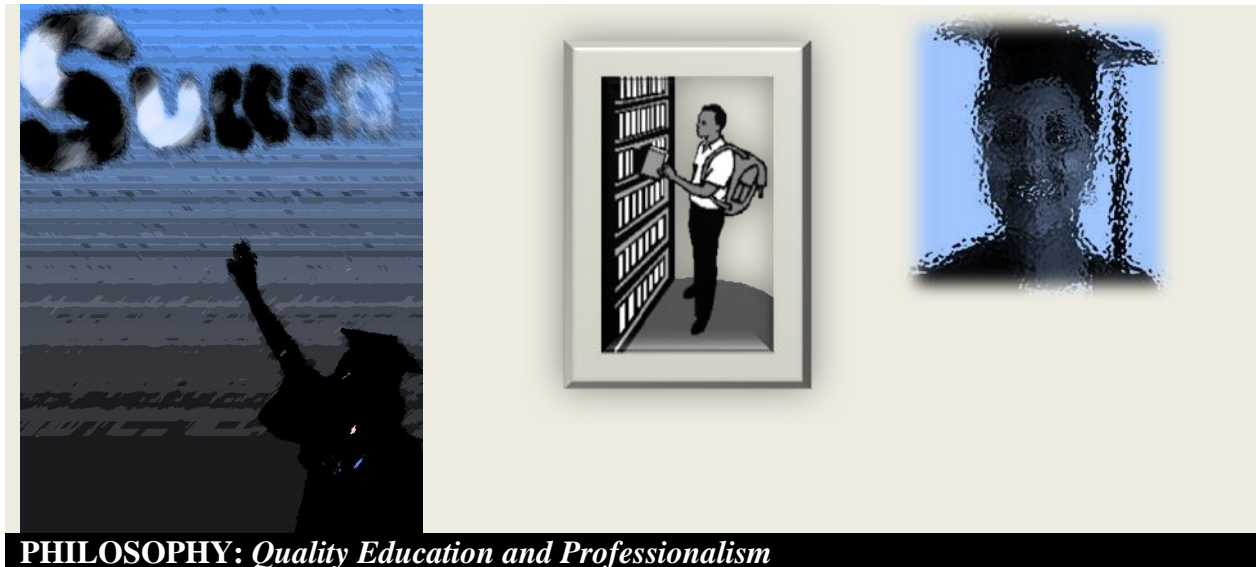




**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEAN**



**GUIDELINES FOR WRITING ACADEMIC RESEARCH
PROPOSALS AND THESES IN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
REVISED 2013**



PHILOSOPHY: *Quality Education and Professionalism*

A handwritten signature in black ink.

2013

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Guidelines on how to write research proposals and theses in the School of Education had last been revised in Year 2005. Hence, our School expresses sincere gratitude our Vice Chancellor, Prof. Olive Mugenda for approving and supporting the review workshop the outputs of which is the revised edition of the guidelines. Our acknowledgements also go to all members of the review and drafting committee derived from all the Education Departments for their dedication and sense of duty in producing this revised edition of guidelines for proposal and thesis writing aimed at enhancing the quality of research work by our graduate students. Many thanks also go academic members who took time to comment on the draft thus enhancing the quality of the final document.

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This document was approved for use after due diligence in content and copy-editing by Dean of School.



PROF. FATUMA CHEGE

Dean, School of Education

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NB// All students registered in the School of Education **must adhere to the guidelines** presented in this document and **must make due reference** in their proposal document (i.e.... *School of Education, Kenyatta University [2013].Revised proposal writing guidelines*).Any other person may use aspects of this guideline to enhance their academic proposal writing skills without any obligations.

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PREPARATION TO CONDUCT POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH IN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

The concept paper

Before writing proposal, it is very important to begin by writing a concept paper

Content of concept paper

- Demonstrate concisely the:
 - (i) “**what**” (broad definition of research issue/problem)
 - (ii) “**Where**”(location of research problem)
 - (iii)“**why**” (overview justification of proposed study) and
 - (iv)“**how**”(general explanation of research methodology)
- The concept paper should not exceed two pages- double spaced and should be shared with potential supervisors and lecturers specialised in the area proposed for research. Only after the concept paper has been approved by the relevant lecturers in the relevant Department should the student begin drafting the research proposal. At this time it is imperative for the student to work closely with potential supervisors from his/her department.

PART I: PROPOSAL WRITING

1.0: Introduction and justification

Conducting educational research requires passion to solve problems that affect educational processes and outcomes, including content. Hence, writing research proposals in the area of education requires not just the passion but also specific knowledge and skills that would help guide the research process to its logical conclusion which entails making viable recommendations for resolving identified problems, based on research evidence adduced through credible methodologies, thus making a valuable contribution in the area of study. This revised edition of School of Education Proposal Writing Guidelines was prompted by the need to respond appropriately to education research students who require to be updated periodically with the necessary but up-to-date capabilities in proposal writing. In this context, the School of Education sought to achieve the following objectives through the revised version of the guidelines.

- i) To enhance knowledge and skills in quality proposal writing and presentation, via benchmarking with the best practices globally.
- ii) Address persistent challenges experienced by students, with regard to:
 - ✚ Poorly focused proposal titles resulting in internal inconsistencies
 - ✚ Unclear statement of the problem
 - ✚ Poor articulation of theoretical framework
 - ✚ Lack of precision in presenting the interacting variables through a conceptual framework
 - ✚ Incoherent literature review not consistent with study objectives
 - ✚ Unclear study design, methodology and choice of methods – especially methods of data analysis.
 - ✚ Unsystematic referencing style

This revised edition of proposal writing guidelines has addressed these shortfalls making the guidelines relatively easy for the students to follow as they write their proposals and eventually their theses.

N.B: All education students have responsibility to work with their supervisor(s) in developing the research proposal beginning with the research title - all the way to the

references and appendices. It is advisable to work collaboratively chapter by chapter and hence, supervisors are also advised not to accept work that has been developed and completed outside these guidelines.

PRELIMINARIES

How to present a proposal cover pager

The cover page must have the following components “*centred on that page*”:

(i) **Title...**

- a) Should not exceed 20 words
- b) Be clearly phrased leaving out words, phrases or clauses, which do not enhance the clarity of the title. E.g. *A study of*, articles such as “*the...*”, “*A...*”
- c) Avoid use of uncommon/unconventional and unnecessary abbreviations, repetitions....
- d) Do not begin titles with ambiguous phrases such as “*Factors influencing...*”
Instead, state the actual/specific factors for the particular study
e.g....**economic, cultural, psychological, social** etc.
- e) Bring out scope and key objective of the research (include site/locale of study, variables, target population, thus providing guidance on internal consistency of the study).

The box below presents an example of a 20-word research title reflecting points given above:

Relationship between self-efficacy (independent variable) and academic achievement (dependent variables) among Form 4 students (population) in Kiambu County, Kenya (site and locale)

- (ii) **Student's name**—this should reflect the student's registration e.g. *Kazungu Mwanaisha Kipusa*
- (iii) **Student's registration number** – e.g. *E55/... xxxx/2013*
- (iv) **School** where student is registered i.e. *School of Education*
- (v) **Caption of degree for which proposal is made**... i.e. A research proposal submitted in partial/fulfilment of the degree of *Master of Education (or Doctor of Philosophy)* of ...
- (vi) **University name** –*Kenyatta University*
- (vii) **Date** (e.g. November, 2013).

b) Declaration page

The student must declare in writing the originality, intellectual honesty and compliance to anti-plagiarism for the work as follows:

I declare that this proposal is my original work and has not been presented in any other university/institution for consideration of any certification. This research proposal has been complemented by referenced sources duly acknowledged. Where text, data (including spoken words), graphics, pictures or tables have been borrowed from other sources, including the internet, these are specifically accredited and references cited using current APA system and in accordance with anti-plagiarism regulations.

Signature _____ **Date:** _____

Name e.g. *Wawire Halima Wanjiku*

Registration number e.g. *E55/93017 /2012*

Department: *XYZ*

Supervisors' declaration: This proposal has been submitted for appraisal with our/my approval as University Supervisor(s).

Then the supervisor(s), sign as shown below using at least 2 of their names written in full, alongside their titles as well as their respective departments.

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Name: e.g. *Prof. Adelaide C Kipkorir*

Department: XYZ

University: ABC

Signature _____ **Date:** _____

Name: Prof. *Ephraim K Wambogo*

Department: XYZ

University: ABC

N/B... Avoid either numbering of names of supervisors or referring to 1st& 2nd supervisors as the School of Education considers supervisors as collaborators who make equal contribution. As per revised supervision policy, Masters Students will be allocated one to two (1-2) supervisor and PhD students would be allocated two (2). Additional supervisors would need justification to Graduate School by the relevant Department.

c) Dedication page: Candidate is free to devote the work to person(s) of their choice in not more than 50 words.

d) Acknowledgement: Candidate is at liberty to give credit to individuals, groups, organisations, institutions etc in a presentation that does not exceed one typed page

(e) Table of Contents page

This should be organized to match the **headings** and **subheadings** and **page numbers** up to maximum three **(3) levels**

(f) Abbreviations and Acronyms page

(i) This section should be included in the proposal when applicable

- (ii) The abbreviation and acronyms should be arranged **alphabetically**
- (iii) The abbreviations/acronyms should be **Capitalized** and separated from the text by 2 indentations of 5-point each
- (iv) The corresponding explanatory text should be in **Title Case** and aligned to the left e.g.

| | |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| AIDS | Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome |
| STI | Sexually Transmitted Infection |
| WHO | World Health Organisation |

f) Abstract page: The abstract must be guided by the following requirements:

- (i) Summary of the entire proposal including the contextualized statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research design and methodology, method of data analysis and justification of the study.
- (ii) Should **not exceed 500 words**.
- (iii) Should **not have in-text referencing**
- (iv) Should be single spaced, one block paragraph and be contained on one page

PRESENTATION OF CHAPTERS

All School of Education Thesis would be confined to the standard five (5) chapters. **However PhD thesis would be allowed to have additional 2 chapters making total of 7 chapters, depending on the thematic nature of the findings being presented. The additional chapters would be confined to the findings only (i.e. Chapters 4, 5 & 6) and marks allocated to the Findings would then be distributed accordingly**

The following style should be followed:



CHAPTER ONE

(All chapter numbers should stand alone and use font size 14)

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND/CONTEXTUALIZATION OF THE STUDY)

Chapter title should read as shown above. It can also be enhanced to read as follows: **“INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY”...].** The title should be centred in the page and placed immediately below the chapter number.

1.0 Introduction (Every chapter must begin with “Introduction”)

Introduction should highlight key contents of the chapter. Provide concise and sequential details of specific content areas. E.g. *this chapter entails XYZ, ABC, theoretical framework based on... etc.*

1.1 Background to the Study

This section must contextualise the research issue and culminate into the research problem statement). It must also:

- Create reader interest in the topic by providing a basis for your research issue and problem.
- Lay the broad foundation for the problem beginning from global perspective narrowing down to regional context then to the country and actual location of the study e.g. in a precise place in Kenya,
- Frame the study within the larger context of the scholarly literature, underscoring key issues linked to your study issue while reaching for your specific audience.
- Highlight the specific knowledge gaps justify your study problem and which must lead logically to the statement of the problem in an ensuing sub-section.

1.2 Statement of the problem

- A problem statement points out the precise gap that exist in the literature, theory, or practice which the particular research will address (other gaps would be pointed out in the literature review chapter).

- The statement of the problem must entail a logical argument generated from preceding facts as articulated in the background section
- Always avoid in-text referencing characterized by **cut-and-paste** from background section
- It should be concise and **not exceed 300** words.

It is important in a proposal that the problem stands out immediately after the background so that the reader can easily recognize it without having to meander around unnecessary reading in the sub-section. Avoid the trap of obscure and poorly formulated problems that are masked in extended unfocussed discussions crowded with references and citations.

1.2.1

Purpose (General objective)

- The purpose statement should provide a specific and accurate synopsis of the overall goal of the study

1.2.2 Objectives

- Should be directly linked to the study variables as indicated in the title
- They should be SMART- Specific/Specific, Measurable, Attainable/Achievable, Realistic, Time bound
- Should be outcome based verbs such “Identify, define, relate, describe, review, justify, indicate etc.” and unless for clearly stated purpose try based on specific types of qualitative studies, it is important to avoid process-based outcomes such as “understand”, “explore”, “investigate”, “examine”
- Exploratory studies may use process based verbs because they are mainly qualitative in nature.

1.2.3 Research questions and or Research Hypotheses

Questions

They should stem from objectives (creatively and not necessarily in a cut-and-paste fashion)

They should not be stated in a leading form that elicits yes/no response (e.g. ...questions that start with “*is there normally...*” would often elicit a yes/no response).

Hypothesis (dictated by nature of the study as explained below)

Hypotheses are usually presented as directional declarations of relationships between variables

- While a **research question** poses a relationship between two or more variables but phrases the relationship as a question; a **hypothesis** represents a declarative statement of the relations between two or more variables (Kerlinger, 1979; Krathwohl, 1988). E.g. compare “*how does labelling of students influence academic performance?*” with e.g. “*there is no relationship between positive reinforcement and academic performance*”
- Deciding whether to use questions or hypotheses depends on factors such as the purpose of the study, the nature of the design and methodology, and the audience of the research (at times even the taste and preference of committee members, particularly the Chair).

1.3 Significance of the study (Rationale)

- Mention the beneficiaries and how they may benefit from the findings of the study.

1.4 Limitation and Delimitation (these should be explained separately to avoid confusion)

- **Limitation**– this requires identification of potential weaknesses of the study that may be beyond the capability of the researcher to intervene e.g., the nature of self-report, your instruments, and the sample size. The researcher needs to think about threats to internal validity that may have been impossible to avoid or minimize. Hence, it is imperative to explain how you as the researcher intend to overcome such limitations as much as possible.

- *Delimitation*– this requires you to address how a study will be narrowed in scope. Explain the things that you are not doing and why you have chosen not to do them. E.g. the literature you will not review (and why not); the population you are not studying (and why not); the methodological procedures you will not use (and why you will not use them) etc. Explain what the possible implications of the delimitations will be for your study

1.5 Assumptions

- Here you state the things you are taking for granted about the nature of the behaviour you are investigating, about the conditions under which the behaviour occurs and about your methods and measurements etc. Stating that you assume participants will cooperate is not adequate.
- Assumptions are not testable but are statements about observations, hunches and experiences related to the study that is taken for granted or are assumed to be true.
- They are statements that help to remove/reduce doubts on the validity of the study and are accepted in faith, or taken to be true without proof.
- They foreground the question as to what are you taking for granted in the conduct of your study and why.

1.6 Theoretical and Conceptual framework (*All students of Education must demonstrate this section*)

Theoretical framework

This is a structure derived from existing relevant theorization of key aspects of your study.

Often existing theory/theories provide foundation for the theoretical framework within which to position your research. Hence, it is important to do the following:

- (i) mention the proponents of the theory or theories to be used
- (ii) cite the main points emphasized in the theory/theories

- (iii) Support your exposition of the theory/theories by ideas from other experts and your own interpretation;
- (iv) Demonstrate the link of theoretical proposition and the proposed study.

Conceptual framework

This is the researcher's own perception of the problem and how variables operate in influencing each other. The researcher is expected to provide a graphic presentation that is self-explanatory showing how various variables interact and the direction of the outcomes from such interactions. It ought to be characterized by:

- (i) original visualization by the researcher or adaptation of an existing model used in a previous study
- (ii) direction of interactions of variables of study
- (iii) a diagrammatic format (graphic presentation)
- (iv) Brief explanation of the conceptual framework for clarification of the flow.

1.7 Operational Definition of terms

Only provide definitions of key terms used in the study that are not used in conventional manner.

CHAPTER TWO (should stand alone centred)

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE (centred)

2.1 Introduction (provide structure of this chapter in line with objectives in Chapter One)

- (i) Use relevant headings developed from the research objectives to guide the structure of this chapter – (**creatively -not direct copy-and-paste**).
- (ii) Highlight the knowledge you find already existing in relation to the study problem.
- (iii) Bring out what is still not known about this study problem, i.e. the knowledge gaps.
- (iv) Demonstrate evidence of your understanding of current research on the subject under investigation through relevant and logical discussion

- (v) Be systematic and synthetic in style using logical links in the flow of arguments
- (vi) Show clearly which gaps in knowledge with regard to and not excluding methodology, theory, scope and how these link to your proposed study
- (vii) Provide the chapter summary in approximately a page to capture the following:
 - key knowledge issues,
 - controversies in literature,
 - main research gaps and
 - the actual gap(s) that your research will address

CHAPTER THREE (centre and stand-alone)

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This is a chapter in which the researcher justifies every choice/action made in implementing the proposed study. It must highlight methodological details appropriate to the study in an explicitly convincing manner, making scholarly references of research authorities as much as possible.

3.1 Introduction: provide structure of the chapter

3.2 Research design

- (i) State the designs adopted and provide reasons for your choice.
- (ii) Link the design to the study topic

3.2.1 Variables

- (i) Explain the Independent and Dependent variables.
- (ii) Indicate the scope (coverage) of the study

3.1.2 Research methodology and specific data collection methods

- (i) Indicate the overall methodology (e.g. quasi experimental, qualitative, historical etc.)
- (ii) Specify the actual data collection methods for the methodology chosen

3.2 Location of the study

- (i) state the location of the study and actual sites where research will be conducted,
- (ii) justify the choice of that location, and
- (iii) Discuss the characteristics unique to the site that are relevant to the study problem.

3.3 Target population

- (i) describe the population from where your research sample will be selected
- (ii) Justify the choice of the target population and give figures where appropriate.

3.4 Sampling techniques and sample size

3.4.1 Sampling Techniques

Explain the method of deriving a sample category from the population you identified...e.g. random sampling, purposive, convenient, snowballing....

3.4.2 Sample Size

Give the proportion of the sample in relation to the accessible population .e.g. how many students (girls and boys) from each selected class; how many teachers (heads of departments, class teachers etc.)

- *Present the sample size in a table format*

3.5 Research Instruments

- (i) Describe each instrument that will be used in the study.
- (ii) Ensure that instruments linked to objectives and questions to ensure that data is generated for each objective to be achieved and to guide your findings chapter.

3.6 Pre-testing/Piloting Study

Describe how the research instruments will be tested for their worth using pilot sites deliberately selected for the purpose and in view of addressing the following aspects of the study:

3.6.1 Validity

Explain how validity of the instruments will be established.

3.6.2 Reliability

Explain how reliability of the instruments will be established.

NB: If using standardized test, quote test and existing reliability levels and demonstrate how these will be attained practically in the research process.

3.7 Data Collection Techniques

Explain how field data collection will be done using the specific method/tools/instruments that have been chosen for this activity

3.8 Data Analysis

- (i) Explain the methods that will be applied in analysing the data based on each objective stated (e.g. Atlas ti, NUDI*ST; *Chi Square, t-tests, other correlational tests etc.*).
- (ii) Clarify the methods of analysis of each research question/ hypothesis e.g. *State your null hypothesis and indicate statistics used to analyse the hypothesis.*
- (iii) For non-numerical data indicate the method of thematizing, coding, and indicate questions software used
- (iv) Explain how data will be presented after analysis is complete (e.g., in text, tabular, graphic etc.)

3.9 Logistical and Ethical Considerations

Logistical considerations

Explain how you will manage logistical requirements of the research (e.g. various levels of authorisations that include the various procedures of ensuring successfully access into the field)

Ethical considerations

- (i) Demonstrate your understanding of research ethics and show how you will observe ethical issues related to researching human subjects (e.g. confidentiality, anonymity, soliciting informed consents among others that capture the

considerations you will use to protect human rights of the research subjects/participants and ensuring they suffer no harm from the research process and outputs/outcomes)

REFERENCES

You **must use the current version of the APA system of referencing** and include the version in the list of references for your study (Search the www for examples of how to conduct this activity)

All reference items must be accurately and consistently written and acknowledged using correct conventional format of the APA system

- In-text citation should be presented using the same APA system (get examples in current edition on website).
- Ensure *italics* are used correctly in the right phrase where applicable. (APA **does not** have underlining, so keenness is required on use of underlines)

Below are a few examples of the APA referencing styles (it is your responsibility to search appropriate usages for your work.)

I. Book

Each reference should include four elements: (1) Author/Editor/Producer (2) Date (3) Title of the work and (4) Publication Information.

Author, A., & Author, B. (Year). *Title of the work*. Place name: Publisher.

Caulcutt, R. (1991). *Statistic in Research and Development* (2nd ed.) London: Chapman & Hall.

2. Edited Book

(a) Letheridge, S. & Cannon, C.R. (eds.) (1980). *Bilingual Education: Teaching English as a Second Language*. New York: Praeger.

3. Periodicals/Journal articles

Items published on a regular basis, such as **journals**, **magazines** and **newspapers**, are known as serials or periodicals. Include the same elements as for a book, but exclude the publication information and **add the volume, issue and page number(s)** instead.

Each reference should include the following elements: (1) Author (2) Date (3) Title of article (4) Title of Periodical (5) Volume, Issue and Page numbers.

E.g. Author, A., & Author, B. (Year). Article title. *Title of Periodical*, x(x), pp-pp

Horowitz, L. M, Post, D.L French, R.S Wallis, K.D & Siegelman, E.Y. (1981). The prototype as construct in abnormal psychology: 2 clarifying disagreement in psychiatric judgments. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 90(4), 575-585.

APPENDICES

The following points must be considered while including appendices for your proposal.

Number appendix using Roman numbers

Appendix I- should be research instruments

Appendix II- Work plan

Appendix III- budget

Appendix IV-maps and other graphics where applicable

Any other useful notes/documents e.g. copy of research permit/authorisation

FORMATTING THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL: IMPORTANT TIPS

PART I: PRESENTATION FORMAT

(a) Margin, line spacing and paragraphing

- (i) A one inch margin all round.
- (ii) Double space
- (iii) Block paragraphing ,no indenting

b) Pagination:

- (i) Preliminary pages (Title page to Abbreviations/acronyms) should be numbered consecutively in Roman numbers lower cases (e.g. ... i, ii, iii etc.).
- (ii) The main content pages(from chapter One to Appendixes) shall be numbered consecutively using Arabic numbers (e.g. 1, 2, 3...)
- (iii) All page number shall appear in the **centre of the lower margin** of the page

c) Typing guidelines

Typing should be in **font size12** (Times New Roman) on a white A4 size paper, and on one side of the paper

d) Heading

- (i) Major headings should be centred in bold face
- (ii) Follow APA heading levels
- (iii) Headings should **Not Exceed**3rd level

e) Visuals-tables, figures, charts

- Labelled according to chapters, use Arabic numerals at the top
- Show source at the bottom

f) Language use

Use formal gender sensitive language in future tense for proposal (avoid jargon, sweeping/political statements, colloquial language etc.)

g) Length of proposal and submission to Graduate School

- The proposal should be 20-30 pages, excluding Appendices.
- The completed proposal **must be duly signed** by the student and the supervisors
- The candidate should then submit four (4) spirals bound copies of the signed proposal, through the Chairperson of department, through the Dean, School Education to Graduate School for consideration to conduct the research

h) Oral Presentation (One hour)

- This presentation tests the student's readiness to conduct field work of the proposed study successfully.
- The student is expected to use communication technology, usually the PowerPoint projection to **highlight key aspects of each of the 3 chapters** captured within 15 minutes, leaving 30-60 minutes for clarification depending on whether it is a Masters/PhD study).

PART II: THESIS WRITING AND SUBMISSION

This section is dedicated to helping the research student write the thesis after data collection and analysis.

A.PRESENTATION FORMART FOR THESIS WRITING BY EDUCATION STUDENTS

1. Typing

- ✓ Font 12 (Times New Roman) on A4 Size paper , double spacing, one sided paper of 80 gm white in colour;

- ✓ A 50 mm margin to be left on the left side of the paper and a 25 mm on the right side of the margin paper;
- ✓ Typing should begin 40 mm from the top of the page and should not go beyond 25 mm from the bottom of the page;

2. Pagination

- i. Preliminaries (title page to abstract should be numbered consecutively in Roman numbers lower case (e.g. i, ii etc.) ;
- ii. The text (from chapter one to appendices) shall be numbered consecutively in ordinal numbers e.g. 1, 2, 3., the page number should appear in the centre of the lower margin of the page;
- iii. The number of pages should be within the following ranges, excluding references and appendices:
 - Project PGDE (50-80 pages)
 - Med thesis and project (80-100 pages) ;
 - Ph.D. thesis (120- 250 pages)
 - ✓ Title page should not be more than 20 words
 - ✓ Clarity and logical arguments that are not verbose (must be economically worded),
 - ✓ focused enough to pin-point the main independent and dependent variables ;
 - ✓ Keep thesis with the stipulated scope. Emergent findings need to be scaled down so as not to lose sight of the study issue.

COVER PAGE: As reflected in the Proposal

STUDENT’S DECLARATION

I confirm that this research project/thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other university/institution for certification. The thesis has been complemented by referenced works duly acknowledged. Where text, data, graphics, pictures or tables have been borrowed from other works- including the internet, the sources are specifically accredited through referencing in accordance with anti-plagiarism regulations.

Signature.....

Date.....

Name: e.g. Mwanili Brayo Orarai
Registration number e.g. E83/22222/2013
Department: XYZ

Supervisors' declaration: We/I confirm that the work reported in this project/thesis was carried out by the candidate under my/our supervision as University supervisor(s)

Signature..... Date.....

Prof. Mwikali Mali
Lecturer/SL/Prof, Department
Department XYZ
Kenyatta University

DEDICATION

(Same as illustrated in the proposal section)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Begin on a separate page after table of contents and should not exceed one page.

TABLE OF CONTENTS (maximum 3 levels allowed)

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

To start on a fresh page and be arranged alphabetically (as demonstrated in proposal section)

ABSTRACT [one page, single spaced, and font 12... not exceeding 500 words...see proposal section]

NB// The abstract should be written in past tense unlike the proposal that was in future tense and must entail the following

- ✓ Problem studied in brief context
- ✓ Purpose of the study in tandem with the title... [Why was the study done]
- ✓ The objectives stated a summarized form, not listing]
- ✓ Theoretical framework
- ✓ Design and locale
- ✓ Population and sampling
- ✓ Research methodology and methods used [**instrument** types , validity and reliability]
- ✓ Data collection and analysis
- ✓ Key findings
- ✓ Major conclusion
- ✓ Major recommendation

Format for main body [*to be written in past tense and present continuous in cases that are still continuing.*]

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT/BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Chapter One to Three should be revised to reflect the transition to Chapters One to Three of the proposal. However, it should demonstrate growth in terms of the following:

- (i) the tense should change from future tense to past tense
- (ii) additional relevant literature in Chapter Two should be introduced where need be
- (iii) Field experiences that are relevant to the study should be included in Chapter Three.
- (iv) Chapter Three should demonstrate the value added by piloting the study.
- (v) There should be concrete evidence of how pre-testing of instruments added value to the study.

The following notes will help guide the writing of the thesis

1.1. Introduction

To focus on the content of the chapter (structure of chapter)

1.2. Background to the study

The problem needs to be introduced from the international, regional, national, and local context. [Use reported speech, cite where necessary and discuss in relation to the completed study].

1.3 Statement of the Problem(Ideally should not exceed 350 words)

- ✓ Constitute logical argument generated from facts articulated in preceding background section .
- ✓ Be concise, focused and should never exceed one page... preferably less.
- ✓ Avoid intra-text references which would be a repetition of the preceding background section.
- ✓ End with an interrogative or exclamation statement that captures the entire study concerns. *E.g. the task of this study was therefore to.... OR The essence of this research was therefore to answer the key question*

The following sub-sections need to be kept closely linked to the original proposal to ensure consistency of the research from its inception to the end.

1.4. Purpose of Study

1.5 Objectives of the study

1.6 Research Questions

1.7 Hypotheses [*optional, but if it must be included should contain both the null hypothesis and the alternative hypothesis*]

1.8. Hypotheses [optional]

This needs to indicate both the Null and Alternative hypotheses and where possible the technique and level of expected statistical significance.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study (what assumptions were realistic and which were not?
This should therefore demonstrate a reflection of what had been stated in the proposal)

1.10 Limitations of the Study (how did you deal with these from proposal stage?)

1.11. Delimitations of the study (did anything change from what had been proposed)

1.12. Significance of the Study(has this remained or is it different after the study?)

The candidate should clearly state the expected theoretical and practical output of the study.

1.13. The theoretical Framework

The candidate should demonstrate how the theories proposed in the proposal helped in the research. It is advised that students retain only the key theory and possibly two. Keeping more than two theories often creates confusion in application and hence should be avoided as much as possible.

1.14 The Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework should be drawn in such a way that it shows the interactions between the independent and dependent variables. In statistical studies, the composite variables constituting the independent and dependent variables should include measurable indicators derived from the objectives of the study. If need be the intervening variables should be included. In qualitative studies, clear links between variables should be demonstrated thematically.

1.15 Operational definitions of key terms (see proposal section)

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature, especially from research should be as current as possible. Use of internet to sources on-line current references is highly encouraged. Ancient literature may be used to stress historical significance especially where important theorists are being cited.

✓ *The citation style should be in line with the latest APA referencing approach.*

- ✓ *Cross check and ensure that all citation as are not only included in the references but that the years correspond with authors appropriately.*
- ✓ *Where direct quotes which are more than three lines, the text should be indented without quotation marks. The author, year and page number should be included.*
- ✓ *The review should be done critically as per the objectives of the study and organized as indicated below.*
- ✓ *The tense used should be in present continuous or past depending on circumstances.*

2.1. Introduction

2.2. Literature Related to the Main Concepts

2.3. Review by Objective One

2.4. Review by Objective Two

2.5. Review by Objective Three

2.6. Review of literature should be guided by study objectives(content of literature review themes should be in tandem with stated objectives)

2.7. Summary and gap identification must be included at the end of this chapter

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The chapter should be written in past tense and organized as shown below:

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Research Design and Locale

State and justify the choice of the design State the measurable indicators of the independent and dependent variables. The choice of the design should equally be justified.

3.3 Population

Indicate the main composition of the targeted population specifying actual population size, N.

3.4 Sampling techniques and sample size determination

3.5 Research instruments

- ✓ Indicate the types
- ✓ Main content
- ✓ Validity and reliability determination

3.6 Data Collection

- ✓ Logistical and ethical considerations
- ✓ Research protocol and itinerary.
- ✓ Actual data collection

3.7 Data Analysis

The types depending on the nature of data collected

- ✓ Qualitative data use thematic analysis and quotes (participants voices)
- ✓ Quantitative data use appropriate descriptive and/ or inferential statistical techniques.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction (provide structure of chapter)

E.g...This chapter presents the findings, interpretations and discussion according to the objectives, research questions and/or hypotheses. (Importantly, the discussions should be related to the literature reviewed). In the introduction the candidate should re-cast the objectives, research questions and/ or hypotheses as presented in Chapter One. For example,

- a) To analyse the extent to which the frequency of exposure to practical in science subjects enhance students' academic performance in the subject.

4.2 General and Demographic Information

4.2.1 General information to include the return rate and any research problems;

(Not more than three (3) pages)

4.2.2. Demographic Data to include types of sampling units (schools and colleges), educational level; experience; age, gender.

4.3 Findings for Objective, Research question and/or hypothesis one [Note, the objective/question, and/ or hypothesis should be stated in a phrase to summarize the main issues in the objective] For example, the objective stated in 4.1(a) becomes: *Frequency of practical exposure and students' performance.*

The candidate is expected to appropriately introduce the objective, research question, and/ or hypotheses. For example the first task of this study was to analyse the extent to which the frequency of exposure to practical in Science enhances students' academic performance in the subject. Students were asked to indicate the extent to which they performed practical experiments in physics. The results are indicated in Table 4.1. or figure 4.1 (Note that the table should be numbered by chapter and on top of the table as indicated in table and the figure numbered at the bottom).Please note that either use a table or a figure but not both .

Table 4.1: Frequency of students' exposure to science practical per month

| Frequency of exposure | None | | 1-2 a month | | 3-4 a month | | Over 4 times a month | |
|-----------------------|------|-------|-------------|-------|-------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % |
| Physics (n=170) | 50 | 29.41 | 70 | 41.18 | 30 | 17.65 | 20 | 11.76 |
| Biology (n=135) | 60 | | 30 | | 25 | | 20 | |
| Chemistry (n=70) | 30 | | 20 | | 15 | | 05 | |
| Home Science(55) | 25 | | 20 | | 10 | | 0 | |

After the table presentation, it is imperative to avoid repetitiveness of the same table. Hence, the candidate should interpret the table of contents creatively without reproducing the figures as they are. For example, the candidate could use terms like **majority oral** instead of 100%; **none** instead of 0.00%; **half** instead of 50 %; **three quarters** instead of 75 % or **nearly two-third** instead of 64% etc.

The last step should be a discussion of the findings using **cross-referencing** in relation to literature reviewed. Try as much as possible to indicate the extent to which the findings find support or deviate from the literature. The candidate should provide a plausible explanation to the deviation, if any.

Ensure that all data related to each objective are presented and discussed under the relevant objective.

e.g. 4.3 Findings for Objective One (**Generate a relevant sub-heading that reflects this objective**)

4.4 Findings for Objective Two (**another creative title to reflect object two**)

4.6 Findings for the last chapter etc.....

Note: when presenting data, do not use both table and figures. Chose to use one of the two graphics and ensure that they are discussed and not left hanging without any discussions to elaborate the findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Introduce the chapter structure as exemplified in previous similar sections

5.2 Summary

The focus of this section should be succinct summary of the main findings. The summary should not include a repeat of the detailed figures presented by objective in Chapter Four. There should be no graphics or further discussions of the findings.

5.3 Conclusions

The section should focus on conclusions based on the findings and organised by objective as highlighted in 5.2. The write up should be in prose. It is advisable to state e.g. This study has resulted in three (3) main conclusions as follows. E.g. *“Firstly, based on the findings that XYZ, it is logical to conclude that ...”*. Secondly, Thirdly..... etc

5.4 Recommendations

Recommendation should be linked to findings and/conclusions. They should also be dichotomized into those related to policy, practice and those related to further research. For quantitative studies, the recommendations should be based on **negative findings** with the aim of soliciting viable **interventions** – otherwise qualitative studies may include **positive findings** that are key inform on good practices and lessons that may **need scaling up**.

All recommendations should be numbered using Roman numerals. They should be realistic and directly linked to the research findings as per the objectives cited as well as related conclusions already presented in the study. Recommendations are **never to be presented as a shopping list or list of wishful thinking** that reflects on all the things that the researcher has always dreamed of seeing implemented by everybody ... and therefore by nobody at the end.

5.4.1 Policy Recommendations

These must be directly linked to:

- (i) existing policy that needs enhancement
- (ii) non-existent policies that need to be formulated
- (iii) practical interventions may be presented in this section under specific policy considerations

5.4.2 Recommendations for further research

These should be related to the concluded study (not some wishful/wild thinking from nowhere).

REFERENCES [use current APA ... search the www as advised in the proposal section]

APPENDICES/ANNEXES (as advised in the proposal section)

These should include the following:

- ✓ Research Instruments
- ✓ Timetable
- ✓ Budget
- ✓ Permit
- ✓ Maps and/ or critical tables not appearing in the main text.
- ✓ Other relevant documents

Part III: Quality Supervision....School of Education Postgraduate Committee (SEPC)

Because quality results in supervision may only be achieved if students, supervisors and SEPC members work collaboratively and in full consultation with one another, the SoE will soon present detailed supervision guidelines in consultation with Graduate School in Year 2013/14. You will need to consult Graduate School on how to access a copy of their overarching guidelines for yourself.

3.1 Advice to Regular Students

Make plans on how follow specific work plan as suggested below:

(i) First year

- September-April: Successfully complete coursework (9 months).
- May-August:
 - Develop proposal
 - Oral defence in the department. Use Power Point in the presentation
 - Registration process starts by the department sending the proposal to Graduate School through the dean school of education

- **First Seminar paper** (Action: Student/Department)

(viii) Second year

• September-December: -Field Work (Pilot study and data collection)

- **First progress report**

• January-March:

- **Data Analysis**

- Report Writing

- **Second Seminar paper at the department (PowerPoint) used.**

-Second progress report

- **Give notice of intention to submit** (Action: Student, supervisors, C/M Dept.)

• April –**Submit thesis for examination** (Action: Student/Supervisor)

• April –June: **Thesis examined**

• June-July: **Board of Examiners’ meeting** (Defence) (Action: SPS, students, Examiners)

• July –August: **Make corrections**

- **Submit final copy**

- Postgraduate Seminar

December: - **Graduate** (Action: Student, Supervisor, and BPS).

Those whose academic year begins in other months can make similar programme other than September (M.Ed. by coursework)

Students doing Coursework and Project

Students doing M.Ed. through coursework and project will also present their work to the Departmental Postgraduate Board.

Concerned departments will organize for such presentation. Thus:

- Organize for a student to present the proposal
- Organize a day for a student to present the findings

The purpose of this arrangement is to ensure that the standards for postgraduate programmes are made to be the same as much as it is practically possible.

Note: The proposal will go to graduate school after defence at the department through the dean school of education for official allocation of supervisors. Students doing projects will defend their findings at the departmental level while those doing thesis will defend their findings at the school level through arrangements by Graduate School.

3.2 Advice to IBP Students

Make and follow specific work plan as suggested below:

First Year

April- December: Successfully complete course work in three sessions

December- April:

- Develop proposal
- Oral defence in the department. Use Power Point in the presentation
- Registration process starts by the department sending the proposal to Graduate School through the dean school of education

First Seminar paper (Action: Student/Department)

(ix) Second year

- April- April: -Field Work (Pilot study and data collection)

First progress report

- April- August:

- Data Analysis

- Report Writing

- Second Seminar paper at the department (PowerPoint) used.

- **Second progress report**

Give notice of intention to submit (Action: Student, supervisors, C/M Dept.)

- December–Submit thesis for examination (Action: Student/Supervisor)
 - January- February: Thesis examined
 - February- March: **Board of Examiners’ meeting** (Defence) (Action: SPS, students, Examiners)
 - March- April: **Make corrections**
- Submit final copy

- **Postgraduate Seminar**

June: -**Graduate** (Action: Student, Supervisor, and BPS).

Those whose academic year begins in other months can make similar programme other than April (M.Ed. by coursework)

Students Doing M.ED through Coursework and Project

Students doing M.Ed. through coursework and project will also present their work to the Departmental Postgraduate Committee.

Concerned departments will organize for such presentation. Thus:

- Organize for a student to present the proposal
- Organize a day for a student to present the findings

The purpose of this arrangement is to ensure that the standards for postgraduate programmes are made to be the same as much as it is practically possible.

Note: The proposal will go to graduate school after defence at the department through the dean school of education for official allocation of supervisors. Students doing projects will defend their findings at the departmental level while those doing thesis will defend their findings at the school level through arrangements by graduate school.

3.3. Advice for ODEL Students

Make and follow specific work plan as suggested below:

First Year

January- December: Successfully complete course work in (twelve months)

(x)Second year

January- April:

- Develop proposal
- Oral defence in the department. Use Power Point in the presentation
- Registration process starts by the department sending the proposal to Graduate School through the dean school of education

First Seminar paper (Action: Student/Department)

- April- August: -Field Work (Pilot study and data collection)

First progress report

- August- December:

- Data Analysis

- Report Writing

- Second Seminar paper at the department (PowerPoint) used.

- Second progress report

Give notice of intention to submit (Action: Student, supervisors, C/M Dept.)

- December –**Submit thesis for examination** (Action: Student/Supervisor)
- January- February: Thesis examined
- February- March: **Board of Examiners’ meeting** (Defence) (Action: SPS, students, Examiners)
- March- April: **Make corrections**

- **Submit final copy**

- **Postgraduate Seminar**

June: -**Graduate** (Action: Student, Supervisor, and BPS).

Those whose academic year begins in July will make similar programme other than January (M.Ed. by coursework)

Students Doing M.ED through Coursework and Project

Students doing M.Ed. through coursework and project will also present their work to the Departmental Postgraduate Committee.

Concerned departments will organize for such presentation. Thus:

- Organize for a student to present the proposal
- Organize a day for a student to present the findings

The purpose of this arrangement is to ensure that the standards for postgraduate programmes are made to be the same as much as it is practically possible.

Note: The proposal will go to graduate school after defence at the department through the dean school of education for official allocation of supervisors. Students doing projects will defend their findings at the departmental level while those doing thesis will defend their findings at the school level through arrangements by graduate school.

POSTGRADUATE COMMITTEE IN SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

3.2 Departmental Postgraduate Committee

- i. Create a forum where students' concept papers are discussed and topic approved.
- ii. Assign supervisors to students soon after the concept paper has been approved.
- iii. After the student has finalized the proposal, appoint readers and organize for an oral presentation.

- iv. After oral presentation of the proposal in the department, there should be minutes forwarded together with the refined proposal to the Dean Graduate School through Dean School of Education.
- v. Any problem facing student's supervision should be addressed as soon as it is reported.
- vi. Organize seminars for students and encourage them to use Power Point resources.
- vii. Appoint both internal and external examiners for the thesis.

This arrangement would ensure that the students and their supervisors interact early enough for effective supervision. This is likely to ensure students' completion of their degree programmes within the stipulated period

- i. **3.3. SEPC Committee Members to:** In consultation with the Registrar (Academic), the Dean and the Chairmen of departments, open and maintain a register for postgraduate students in the School.
- ii. Meet all postgraduate students at the beginning of first and second year.
- iii. Meet once every month and as regularly as the demands may arise.
- iv. Members of the SEPC are validators of proposal defence corrections at the assigned departments.
- v. In their capacity as validators, they are supposed to read proposals and attend defences in the assigned department on behalf of the School of Education and oversee that the corrections recommended by the departmental board members are implemented. Ensure that oral presentations by students are conducted in a friendly atmosphere meant to help the students and not to humiliate them.

Note: Validators are not examiners of the proposals but can make contributions that will improve the proposals.

- (xi) Try to give advice on any reported problem with regard to students' supervision.
- (vi) Attendance of seminars for students organized by the SEPC from time to time.
- (xii) Produce a review report that guides students to doing appropriate corrections on their thesis.

(xiii) Approve the thesis examiners appointed by the department and appoint two board members for defence after the student has given notice to submit the thesis to graduate school.

END END END.

XX

GUIDELINES TO SUPERVISORS (These are important for postgraduate students)

(a) Basic responsibilities

Ensuring that the student:

- Develops and writes focused researchable topic.
- Writes clear and precise statement of the problem
- Works within time frame as described in Part iii of these guidelines.
- Follows correct organizational format, including conventionally written references.
- Develops correct academic argumentation, including in-text citation.
- Does NOT PLAGIARISE.

(b) Advice

- Do not keep student's work for more than one month.
 - Give written (typed if possible) review reports for effective communication.
 - Ensure students do corrections as recommended by various reviewers/examiners, especially after presentations.
 - Arrange for regular consultations with the student.
 - Encourage academic argumentation through discussion.
 - After reviewing the students' work individually, the two supervisors should come together and harmonize the comments before giving feedback to the student.
- Prompt the student to argue rather than passively taking your advice.

3.4 Support recommended for the SEPC

The suggestions given herein can successfully be carried out if there is significant support from various stakeholders.

Thus:

1. There will be need for committed SEPC members drawn from all departments of the School by the dean (Action: Dean's Academic Board).
2. Establish an office for the Chairman, SEPC with necessary facilities especially for documentation, record keeping and monitoring purposes.
3. Regular training for SEPC members:
 - (i) Annual local refresher course/seminar outside Kenyatta University on modern research methods.
 - (ii) Enable at least one member attend one international conference on educational research in a way that gives every member to attend once in a given time (Action: Dean, University).
 - (iii) Initiate an induction (initial) seminar for all postgraduate students on proposal/Thesis writing at the beginning of each academic year (Action: Dean; Chairman SEPC)
4. Facilities
 - (i) SEPC office for the Chairman
 - (ii) PowerPoint projector and other necessary accessories
 - (ii) School-specific Library stocked with current educational and research materials. Students' Theses can be stocked in such Library for reference purposes.

COMMENTS, QUERIES AND SUGGESTIONS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO DEAN, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION VIA ADDRESS ON COVER PAGE