



**INTERNATIONAL BLACK SEA UNIVERSITY
QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM DOCUMENTS**

**GUIDELINES FOR THESIS WRITING FOR
BACHELOR'S, MASTER'S AND Ph.D. LEVEL
PAPERS**

Approved on 11/09/2014 by Academic Board - Decision № 3 (Appendix №:2)

Approvals

The signatures below certify that this quality manual has been reviewed and accepted, and demonstrates that the signatories are aware of all the requirements contained herein and are committed to ensuring their provision.

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CONTENTS

Amendments:.....	4
Revision List.....	5
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION.....	6
I.1. The Research Paper as a Form of Exploration and as a Form of Writing.....	6
CHAPTER II. HOW TO START?.....	8
II.1. Choosing the Research Topic.....	8
II.2. Stating a Problem.....	9
II.3. Statement of the Goal of the Study.....	12
II.4. Statement of Research Questions.....	14
II.5. Formulating Hypothesis.....	15
II.6. Literature Review.....	16
II.7. Structure.....	18
II.7.1. Tables and Figures.....	19
II.7.2. Abbreviations.....	19
II.7.3. Introduction.....	20
II.7.4. Research Chapter.....	20
II.7.5. Reporting Statistical Results.....	21
II.7.6. Citation in General.....	21
II.7.7. References.....	22
II.7.8. Language.....	24
II.7.9. Tense.....	25
II.7.10. Number.....	25
II.7.11. Person.....	25
II.7.12. Voice.....	26
CHAPTER III. STRUCTURE of B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. THESES.....	27
III.1. Typing.....	27
III.2. Paper.....	27
III.3. Margins.....	27
III.4. Page Numbers.....	27
III.5. Tables and Illustrations.....	28
III.6. Printing out and Binding.....	28
III.7. Electronic Submission.....	28

CHAPTER IV. ETHICS in RESEARCH, PLAGIARISM	29
IV.1. Ethics	29
IV.2. Plagiarism	30
APPENDICES	31
Appendix 1. Title Pages.....	31
Appendix 2. Sample Contents Page	37
Appendix 3. Extended Abstract of Ph.D. Dissertation (Sample Structure).....	38
Appendix 4. Dissertation Checklist.....	39

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02	04.03.2016	2.2 ¹	Research methodology and methods

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

The Guideline is intended for the students who are about to undertake some sort of research as a requirement for an undergraduate, graduate or postgraduate course.

The purpose of the handbook is to give to our first-hand researchers the necessary knowledge and basic skills to successfully accomplish their task – write a research paper which will meet the requirements of International Black Sea University (hereinafter “IBSU”), as well as international requirements. We have tried to enable students to become critical readers and also editors of their own research.

Scientific research is a the systematic attempt not only to collect information about an identified problem or question, but also to analyze that information and to apply the evidence thus derived to confirm or refute some prior prediction or statement about that problem.

I.1. The Research Paper as a Form of Exploration and as a Form of Writing

We undertake research when we wish to explore an idea, probe an issue, solve a problem, or make an argument that compels us to turn to outside help. We then seek out, investigate, and use materials beyond our personal resources. The findings and conclusions of such an inquiry appear in the research paper.

The research paper is generally based on primary research, secondary research, or a combination of the two. Primary research is the study of a subject through firsthand observation and investigation, such as analyzing a literary or historical text, a film, or a performance; conducting a survey or an interview; or carrying out a laboratory experiment. Primary sources include statistical data, historical documents, and works of literature or art. Secondary research is the examination of study that other researchers have made of a subject. Examples of secondary sources are books and articles about political issues, historical events, scientific debates, or literary works. A B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. thesis / dissertation usually involves secondary research in the first chapter (literature review).

A research paper is a form of written communication. Like other kinds of nonfiction writing it should present information and ideas clearly and effectively, thus the language of the thesis / dissertation has to be academic and clear.

This handbook is a guide for the preparation of research papers. Although you must fully document the facts and opinions you draw from your research, the documentation should only support your statements and provide concise information about the sources cited; it should not overshadow your own ideas or distract the reader from them.

CHAPTER II. HOW TO START?

II.1. Choosing the Research Topic

While choosing the topic, it is essential to take into consideration:

- 1) Your interests and experience;
- 2) Your and potential supervisor's qualification;
- 3) Society needs;
- 4) Time and literature resources.

It is too difficult to research a topic chosen for / offered to you by your supervisor. You may be not interested in it, and your motivation will most probably be low. Besides, if it is not somehow linked with your experience (as a B.A. student, e.g., writing a presentation in some course, a paper for student's conference, having read some works dealing with the topic; as an M.A. and Ph.D. student, it should be linked with your job experience), it will be too difficult for you to analyze it.

Interest and experience are, of course, important, but is your qualification enough for the topic you have chosen? For instance, if you have never studied a course in lexicology, your thesis dealing with vocabulary teaching will most probably be low level, or you will have to struggle with it too much. Your supervisor may be a psychologist, but if you want to investigate a topic dealing with criminal psychology, and your supervisor has never done it, s/he will not be of great help for you. Thus, the topic should be 'the strong point' of both the student and the supervisor.

A B.A. research has to possess some practical value, an M.A. and a Ph.D. research have to possess both practical and theoretical value. So, the topic you choose and agree upon should be not only interesting and 'researchable' for you and your supervisor, but also useful for society – maybe the institution you work for (B.A., M.A. research) or a certain type of institutions in you region, country or worldwide. Watch what problems exist in your work and studies, try to find out how widely spread are the problems that bother you, and if you think they constitute a real problem and that the solution of this problem will benefit your university/school, town/city, etc., it means that you have found a topic worth researching.

Do not choose global topics, such as ‘Educational Software’. This topic may take your lifetime to investigate it deeply enough. Take the time factor into consideration and choose a narrower topic doable in the time you have, e.g., “Writing educational software for teaching math in primary school”. However, do not (especially in M.A. and Ph.D. research) choose a too narrow topic: it may be interesting / useful for too few people and you will have problems finding literature on it. If literature search gave you an ocean of resources, there is danger that the topic has been so well investigated that you will not be able to say a new ‘word’ concerning it, and a bit of novelty is expected even from a B.A. thesis. If there is scarce literature, it may be too difficult to go on an absolutely uninvestigated (and probably unneeded?) way.

If you have chosen the topic, in the process of working on it, you may feel a need to modify / reformulate it, to make it more exact. This is generally normal, as it is impossible to preview all details from the very beginning, but please take into consideration the time limit and relevant procedure for changing the topic, stated by the university.

II.2. Stating a Problem

A problem is the reason why we undertake research, as we need to solve it, at least to some degree. Observation over the field of your studies, reading corresponding literature, and experience in the field (if any) will help you discover the problems. Some people think they do not have the experience (e.g., graduates of B.A. programs in mathematics, philology, etc., but with no teaching experience), but in reality they do (in the given example, not as teachers, but as learners, which is even more valuable).

Like research, which can be quantitative (measuring some variables) or qualitative (dealing with model), the problem will be stated differently.

In stating a quantitative research problem, the emphasis is on the need to explain, predict, or describe some outcome or event.

For instance, look at the first paragraph of a quantitative study conducted by the author in 2000:

Difficulties with Information Technologies have been well documented among the middle-aged lecturers. A number of reasons such as: lack of interest, inaccessibility to

computers, psychological, economical, and many others serve as the impediments for overcoming the barriers. At present hardly any university holds a professor who is lacking computer skills. Consequently, the number of the professors over sixty at Tbilisi Universities has decreased drastically. Is the employment problem of middle-aged teachers connected with computer skills? Is academic performance of the middle-aged professors affected by poor computer skills? What is the solution to the problem?

The author of this paragraph first introduces the general topic and makes a statement. She continues by identifying the problems that professors with inadequate computer skills might encounter at the university. These are legitimate research problems because they represent educational issue that requires a solution. Quantitative studies could be conducted to explain why the problems exist, as well as how to deal with them. It focuses on exploring some causal relationship, establishing a certain type of dependence between variables. Quantitative studies often have a hypothesis which is to be tested during the study.

In a qualitative study, the research problem will focus on identifying or explaining some process, event, or phenomenon as illustrated in the following example:

Women participation in politics increases every year throughout the world. Georgia which has rich traditions of women involvement in social, economic and political life of the country is now facing a big problem in dealing the issue adequately. The recognition of the significant role the women play in today's politics is essential to maintain gender balance in politics and ensure further stable development of the country. Wide accessibility of Georgian women to higher education, scientific and various professional carriers, as well as global tendencies to balance political decisions by considering women perspectives, forms the basis for their advancement to the decision-making level in government. This increased awareness has raised question as to what problem Georgian state faces. Another huge problem is offering a society not a real woman leader, but a fiction - one who holds office but does not have any authority. A so called 'glass ceiling' is also a growing concern, though the present government is trying to conceal the existing situation, and verbally acknowledges gender equality as an indispensable part of democracy. It is through full inclusion of women in the democratic processes is possible to achieve a stable and balanced development of the country. What lever should be used? What qualitative changes do we anticipate in the nearest future?

In this example, the author opens with a statement of importance of women participation in politics and further talks about various drawbacks in the field. The above-presented is a statement of the author's qualitative research problem. The study will be aiming at exploring this process using qualitative (and also quantitative) methods of inquiry, and will try to answer the research questions raised at the outset of the research.

II.2¹ Research methodology and research methods

The following research methodology and research methods could be used in the research process:

- a) American Studies/US Foreign Affairs
Case study, content analysis, observation, interview, online interview, survey, analysis of documents and texts
- b) Computer Sciences and Engineering:
Developing new applications of existing software and algorithms; developing new algorithms, application of existing algorithms for special problems; application of computers to other fields, existing data analysis, modeling.
- c) Social Sciences:
Research based on primary (interview, observation, content analysis, discourse analysis) or secondary data (interpretation/analysis of theories and empirical data).
- d) Business Administration (Management, Marketing, Finance):
Quantitative study: statistical, regression analysis, functions, formula generation, model creation and testing;
Qualitative study: interview, scenario creation, observation, case study, focus group, customer surveys;
- e) Education Sciences:
Interview, questionnaire, case study, observation, experiment (one of them is sufficient for MA thesis; experiment or case study is compulsory for PhD dissertation in Education Management concentration and experiment - for PhD dissertation in ELT concentration).
- f) Turkish Philology:
Practical Research: participant and non-participant observation, questionnaires, surveys, interviews, discussion groups,
Theoretical Research: Hermeneutics, interpretation, discourse analysis, comparative analysis, text analysis.

II.3. Statement of the Goal of the Study

The statement of the goal of a research study is a statement of the researcher's intent or objective of the study. This is a statement that logically follows from the identification of one or more research problems. This statement needs to be made because making it ensures that you have a good grasp of the specific problem you wish to investigate. Providing a specification of your study purpose at the outset has also the advantage of guiding the research process by, for example, indicating how and by what methods the data will be collected. However the nature of this statement will differ somewhat depending on whether you are conducting a qualitative or quantitative study.

The goal statement in a quantitative study is a declarative statement that identifies why the research is held and defines the type of relationship being investigated between a set of variables.

This relationship could be causal or descriptive. For example, if you want to investigate the causal connection that might exist between teaching Business Correspondence by internet communication and the effect of that teaching on written communication abilities in students, your goal could be stated as follows:

The goal of this study is to investigate the effect that teaching Business Correspondence by internet communication has on the development of students' communicative skills (causal relationship: does the growth of one value cause the growth of the other?).

However, if the intent of your study was to describe the relationship between internet business communication and learning efficiency, your goal could be stated as follows:

The goal of the study is to describe the degree of relationship that exists between practicing business communication through internet and the extent of a student's learning efficiency (descriptive relationship: how great is the impact of one value on the other?).

Both of these statements of goal have identified the intent of the study and the variables being investigated. These two illustrate the basic and essential characteristics that should exist in a statement of the goal. The goal statement should identify the exact type of relationship that is being investigated and the variables that are being investigated. This degree of *specificity* is desired to ensure that an accurate statement of goal is being communicated.

The statement of goal in a qualitative study should be a statement that the intent of the study is to explore or understand some phenomenon experienced by certain individuals at a specific research study. This means that a qualitative study's statement of goal should do the following:

- 1) Convey a sense of an emerging design by stating that the goal of the study is to describe, understand, develop, or discover something;
- 2) State and define the central idea that you want to describe, understand, or discover;
- 3) State the method by which you plan to collect and analyze the data by specifying whether you are conducting an ethnographic study, grounded theory study, case study, or phenomenological study;
- 4) State the unit of analysis and/or the research site, such as senior students participating in a specific program.

For instance, the author stated the following goal of her study:

The goal of the present study was to explore moral and ethical changes in pupils of “inclusive classes” at secondary schools over a five-year period.

This example demonstrates that not every statement of purpose will contain all the fundamental characteristics of a good, qualitative purpose statement, but it contains the most essential ones.

II.4. Statement of Research Questions

A research question is a statement of the specific question(s) to which the researcher seeks an answer. It is therefore an extension of the goal statement of the study in that it specifies exactly the questions that the researcher will attempt to answer. The research questions of quantitative and qualitative study differ somewhat in their structure.

Quantitative research questions state exactly the relationship being investigated between the target variables. A quantitative research question is an interrogative sentence that asks a question about the relationship that exists between two or more variables. Common forms are descriptive, predictive, and casual research questions, e.g.: Is there a positive correlation between the cost of the good and its sales? If we increase the volume of homework, will the level of students' skills increase, too? Is watching aggressive movies a cause of teenagers' aggressive behavior?

The quantitative question specifies exactly the variables that are to be investigated.

Qualitative research questions are more likely to ask a general question about a process or about exploring a particular phenomenon. A qualitative research question is an interrogative sentence that asks a question about some process, issue, or phenomenon that is to be explored. It is a general, open-ended, and overarching question that you would like to answer.

Descriptive questions are questions that seek to determine whether one or more variables can be used to predict some future outcome. Descriptive research questions seek answers to questions such as "What changes over time or different situations?" or "What is the education level of company top managers?"

Descriptive questions are questions that seek to identify the degree of relationship that exists between two or more variables.

Causal questions are questions that compare different variations of some phenomenon to identify the cause of something. These questions often involve the manipulation with an independent variable and the comparison of the outcome of this manipulation with the outcome before the manipulation. An example of causal research question is "What do consumers name as the reason of their choice? Why?"

From this overarching question you can frequently narrow the purpose of the study into more specific questions. It can be helpful to state the general purpose of the study and then state a number of questions that break the overall research question into the components that will be investigated.

If you pose a research question in the introductory part of your thesis, you have to answer it in the conclusion part – based on literature analysis, questionnaire, interview or experiment. It is important that the questions are reflected in the hypothesis, as to answer the questions, you will need to test your hypothesis.

II.5. Formulating Hypothesis

The hypothesis represents the formal statement of the researcher's prediction of the relationship that exists among the variables under investigation. It logically follows the statement of the research question, because you can not formulate the hypothesis without having first stated, either explicitly or implicitly, the research question(s).

Hypothesis is a tentative proposal for solving the existing problem(s) which is a subject to verification through subsequent investigation. Hypothesis is an imaginative preconception of what might be true – but which almost goes beyond anything which we have logical or factual authority to believe in. A working hypothesis is not supposed to be an obstacle for the researcher, rather it could be modified, changed, redesigned or rejected throughout the process of investigation.

Some studies start without a hypothesis. Sometimes one needs to study the field well (do the literature analysis, observe the process, hold a questionnaire and interview) before being able to formulate a hypothesis. Also, as mentioned above, the working hypothesis that the researcher has, may be substantially modified as result of literature analysis and observation results.

The hypothesis for the above-mentioned study which deals with teaching Business English could be formulated as follows:

“On-line communication and live business correspondence” teaching method will enhance students' learning abilities and develop proven business communication skills.

The stated hypothesis typically emerges from the literature review or from a theory. A theory guides the research and somehow predicts the relationship between variables.

A hypothesis also emerges as a result of your logical considerations, reasoning or personal attitudes; you might predict some result based on your empirical observation or experience. Regardless of the source of the hypothesis, it must meet one criterion: A hypothesis must be capable of being either refuted or confirmed. Correspondingly, in correlational studies (which seek to find out the relationships between at least two variables) there exist positive, negative and null hypotheses, e.g.:

- a) Increasing the number of written exercises will improve the quality of spelling skills;
- b) Increasing the number of written exercises will decrease the quality of spelling skills;
- c) Increasing the number of written exercises does not have an impact on the quality of spelling skills

If literature analysis reveals that one of the hypotheses is the most probable, there may be no need to test all three.

In a qualitative study we do not measure variables, the study is generally conducted to describe or discover the significant variables. This is why moral, ethical and religious questions and the hypotheses that follow from them are outside the realm of empirical research. In many studies the qualitative researcher only poses research questions, some of which might emerge as the study is conducted, rather than formulating hypotheses.

II.6. Literature Review

Getting acquainted with literature on the topic under study will help us not to waste time, trying to reinvent the wheel.

If you do not know yet what your research problem, goal and topic will be, start reading literature in the approximate field of your research (e.g., 19th century law). Ph.D. students at IBSU have the first two semesters of studies to do so. If you start doing it just before topic approval, you are going to have serious problems while working on the thesis. B.A. and M.A. students are recommended to think of their research topics a semester before they officially start working on the thesis.

Literature analysis will support your ideas or disprove them. It will help you to formulate a qualified hypothesis. In fact, by the time you meet your potential supervisor, you must have chosen 2-3 possible fields you have studied deeply enough and have some original ideas about.

Where / how to find the sources? What kind of sources are we looking for?

Library catalogues and Internet will help you to make the choice. But it does not mean that internet resources can constitute a large part of your references. Most of the sources you use should come from scientific books, articles in books, peer-reviewed journals, conference proceedings, and/or M.A. and Ph.D. theses. Some of them have both hard copy and electronic versions, these are OK for your research, as they, like on-paper publications, undergo peer review, and are rather reliable. However, internet sites with no hard copies are often unreliable and should be avoided for the time being, although in the near future the trend may change in the scientific world. Internet resources of official organizations like UNESCO, UN, EU, Ministries, etc. are reliable and can be used.

Select search terms or key words / descriptors. Some students think these are only words from the title. This is not so. If you already have a dissertation plan, these words may come from it as well. If not, think of all important notions in the topic you are investigating, also ask your supervisor's advice. After the search has given you some results, read the abstract, content page, info about the author, to find out, how much to the topic the publication is as well as how reliable it is. Look through the publication. Only if you find it useful, read it thoroughly.

Make a photocopy or an electronic copy of the literature you are going to use. Make sure that all reference info needed (see below) is there. It will be too difficult (if possible at all) to search for it later. Underline what you think is important, make some comments on the margins. This will help you in the process of writing the thesis.

For literature search, use professional databases like ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center, supported by the US government), EBSCO (Elton Bryson Stephens Company), Intellectual Property and Science (IPS by Thomson Reuters), Google Scholar, etc. Some of their information should be paid for, but they also have free-of charge information available. Check in our library to see which of them we are subscribed for.

Some students in the literature review chapter just retell the ideas of other authors. This is not the way literature review should be done. Literature has to be analyzed, this means that your opinion (whether you share the view or not) should be stated, reasons to support / disprove the ideas have to be discussed, same ideas should not be repeated as many times, as many sources you have used, but should be summed up (e.g., Smith, 2007; Brown, 2011 and Johnson, 2012 think that ...).

The analysis is not a goal in itself – it should lead to the research chapter: to the items you will observe, the questions you will ask, the variables you will measure. If not so, the review is useless. If your thesis, for example, is about teaching English grammar to freshman students, and your sub-chapter is called “history of grammar teaching”, do not include the topic of “teaching to pre-school and primary school children”, for instance.

II.7. Structure

The dissertation involves:

- a) a title page, (for M.A. and Ph.D. also a second title page);
- b) acknowledgement (optional);
- c) lists of tables, figures, and abbreviations (in alphabetical order);
- d) a short abstract:
 - (min. a hundred words, max. one page), for B.A. in the language of instruction,
 - for M.A. in English, Georgian and language of instruction (if other than these),
 - or an extended abstract for Ph.D. (as a separate document),
- e) introduction,
- f) normally 2-4 chapters,
- g) conclusions (and recommendations),
- h) list of references,

- i) and appendices.

The short abstract is a brief overview of the topic, goals, methods, results, and conclusions of the study. It is desirable to mention for whom the study is useful.

The structure of the extended abstract¹:

- a) introduction (same components as in the thesis),
- b) short description of all chapters with a special emphasis on what has been done by the researcher, and especially the research chapter,
- c) conclusions (and recommendations – same as in the thesis),
- d) list of doctorate student's publications related to the thesis.

II.7.1. Tables and Figures

Only absolutely necessary tables and figures, containing main information, are placed in the thesis / dissertation, others are placed in the appendices.

II.7.2. Abbreviations

Abbreviations should be used sparingly. Too many can easily confuse a reader. If you create your own abbreviations, the term to be abbreviated should be spelled out completely on its first appearance and then followed immediately by the abbreviation in parentheses. Here is an example: "The criterion variable was preference for sick humor (PSH)". Except for very famous abbreviations, such as UN, VAT, etc., they should also be spelled out for the first time. If the title of a journal in the references is an abbreviation, it should also be included in the list of abbreviations.

¹ Please refer to Appendix 3 for a sample structure.

II.7.3. Introduction

The introduction usually begins with a general introduction to the problem area – some history and importance of the issue. The introduction should contain:

- a) a clearly stated problem,
- b) goal of the research,
- c) problem questions,
- d) hypothesis,
- e) novelty, actuality / importance,
- f) practical and theoretical value,
- g) research methods,
- h) and structure of dissertation.

Some of these (e.g., hypothesis, novelty, theoretical value) are not compulsory for a B.A. and an M.A. thesis.

Either do not start writing with the introduction or review it after the dissertation has been completed.

II.7.4. Research Chapter

The research chapter (case study, questionnaire, interview, and experiment) should involve:

- 1) General characterization of the research methods (qualitative / quantitative; variables; questionnaire, interview, experiment, case study, text analysis, etc.)
- 2) Information about participants, adequate to the research (sample size, some info like age, gender, job, professional experience, socio-economic status, education / knowledge level, etc.; response rate – what percentage of those, to whom the

questionnaire was sent, responded). Ethics of research requires that participants are voluntary and should not be named.

- 3) Description of context (where and when it was held) and procedure (how variables are measured, and reliability and validity are provided)
- 4) Results, their analysis and discussion

II.7.5. Reporting Statistical Results

Statistical results should be both presented in tables (explaining some terms, if needed) and explained / discussed verbally.

Please pay attention to the difference: survey, case study, interview and questionnaire just study the state of the matter as it is. Experiment involves two groups, control (with traditional treatment) and experimental (with some innovative treatment); the goal of experiment is to find out whether the offered new approach is better than the traditional one.

II.7.6. Citation in General

There are different referencing and citation styles, we at IBSU use APA style as a basis. Whatever the style, there is essential information that should be there: author (surname with initials or full name), title, year, journal or book title, etc.

In-text citation: author(s)' surname, year. If it is a quotation, it should be in inverted commas and the page has to be mentioned, e.g.:

Just like Laufer (1986) and Nation (1990), Wilkins (1972) expressed an opinion that “while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed” (p. 23).

Otherwise, mentioning the page is desirable, but not compulsory. Normally, no full names or initials are mentioned, however, for the first time mentioning the researcher, his/her first name may be mentioned, e.g.:

Stephen Krashen (1975) was the first to discriminate between the “acquisition” and “learning”.

A quotation that is longer than 50 words has to be presented as a separate paragraph, a little narrower than the main text, with less spacing, and without quotation marks. The full stop is in the end of the sentence and the page is given after it. Otherwise (as in the example above) the full stop is after the page number.

Furthermore, Richards and Renandya (2002) have found out that

Vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners listen, speak, read and write. Without an extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, learners often achieve less than their potential and may be discouraged from making use of language learning opportunities around them. (p. 252)

Remember, if the author is mentioned in the text, s/he should be mentioned in the references and vice versa.

II.7.7. References

II.7.7.1. Journal Articles

Author(s), initials. (year). Title (not capitalized). Journal (italicized, all words in capital letters). Vol., iss., pages, e.g.:

Tabatabaei, O., & Goojani, A. H. (2012). The impact of text-messaging on vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners. *Cross-Cultural Communication*, 8(2), 47-55

(either write “p. 47-55” for all articles or “: 47-55” for all; that is, do not skip from one style to another.

II.7.7.2. Articles in a Book

Author, initials. (year). Title (not capitalized). Book author(s)/editors (Surname, initials). Book Title (in italics, capitalized). Publishing place: house, pages, e.g.:

Yahya, N. (2007). Second language vocabulary development and instruction. In H. Zainuddin, N. Yahya, C. A. Morales-Jones, & E. N. W. Ariza (Eds.), *Fundamentals of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages in k-12 Mainstream Classrooms*. Dubuque, IA: Kendal/Hunt, p.163-181

II.7.7.3. Books

Author(s), initials. (year). Title (all meaningful words capitalized). Publishing place: publishing house, e.g.:

Underwood, J. H. (1984). *Linguistics, Computers, and the Language Teacher: A Communicative Approach*. Rowley, M.A.: Newbury House

If the author/editor is unavailable, organization can stand for it, e.g.,

UNESCO. (1998). *Learning to live together in peace and harmony: values education for peace, human rights, democracy and sustainable development for the Asia-Pacific Region; a UNESCO/APNIEVE sourcebook for teachers education and tertiary level education*. Bangkok, Thailand: UNESCO PROAP

If the book has had several editions, mention which edition it is (e.g., 4th ed.). If no year is mentioned, write '(n.d.)'

For electronic sources: do not write just links! Sometimes it is impossible to find the reference with just a link. Make the referencing as similar as for books as available. The author can be substituted by an organization or web site name. If unavailable, start directly with the title. When and from what address it was retrieved should be mentioned, e.g.:

Suits, B. (1967). *What Is a Game?* *Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 34. Retrieved April 21, 2014 from <http://www.stsintl.com/articles/whatisagame.html>

NCTE / IRA. (2012). *Standards for the English Language Arts*. Retrieved September 1, 2014 from <http://www.ncte.org/standards/ncte-ira>

Georgian National Standard. (2012). (In Georgian). Retrieved May 20, 2014 from http://eqe.ge/geo/textbook_approval/textbook_approval_2011

If you find electronic resources in other articles and use them in your research, be sure that the site still exists and is working. Write the date you opened it.

References should be given in alphabetic order. Articles by the same author are given first the newest ones, and then older ones. If you have used more than one publication of the same author issued in the same year, they can be numbered as: Stone, 2012a and Stone 2012 b. If the author is the only one and then in a group, first comes the single author, then the same author with co-author(s), as shown below, e.g.,

Schmitt, N. (2010). *Researching Vocabulary: A Vocabulary Research Manual*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan

Schmitt, N. (1997 a). Vocabulary learning strategies. In Schmitt, N. and McCarthy, M. (eds), *Vocabulary: Description, Acquisition, and Pedagogy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 17-26

Schmitt, N. (Ed.) (1997b). *Vocabulary: Description, acquisition, and pedagogy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schmitt, N. and Meara, P. (1997). Researching vocabulary through a word knowledge framework: Word associations and verbal suffixes. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 19, p. 17–36

II.7.8. Language

Your writing style influences the reader's impression of you for better or worse. Your writing has to be comprehensible. Do not use too long sentences, if it makes them vague and ambiguous. Be careful with personal pronouns, if the previous sentence / clause contains more than one subject. Use formal / academic vocabulary, avoid jargon. Do not use contracted forms (don't, isn't). Avoid using exclamation marks.

Length of paragraphs should be reasonable. Start a new paragraph each time when you deal with a new idea / opinion / topic.

Do not refer to the male gender (do not use pronouns 'he', 'his', when both genders are meant.) Gender-biased references can usually be avoided by appropriate rephrasing. For example,

"The participant rated his preference for each joke" can be changed to, "The participant rated each joke for preference" or, "Participants rated their preferences for each joke." Avoid using "s/he" to solve the gender problem; it is awkward, especially if used many times.

Avoid negative attributes naming people: do not say "handicapped student", say a "student with an impairment".

II.7.9. Tense

Most sections of a research report should be written in the past tense because they describe events that occurred in the past (what other researchers found or what was done in the study being described). The present tense may be appropriate in the Introduction and Discussion sections when discussing theories and in the Results sections when referring to tables or figures. Occasionally, the future tense may be used to discuss proposed future research. Seldom should tense be switched within a paragraph and never within a sentence.

II.7.10. Number

Consistency of number (singular or plural) should be maintained throughout a research report. Switching from singular to plural or vice versa is poor style. Here is a common error in student papers: "Each participant made their responses in writing." Here is a better version: "Participants made their responses in writing."

II.7.11. Person

Traditionally most research reports were written in the third person (he, she, it, they). First-person references (I, we) are becoming more common nowadays. The APA manual (p. 29-30) recommends use of the first person when it will improve clarity or readability. But use one style, either first or third person, do not write sometimes "I made up a table" and sometimes "The researcher came to conclusion that..."

II.7.12. Voice

Active voice is always preferable to passive voice.

Follow one spelling and grammar variant, either British or American English (e.g., do not write sometimes 'behavior' and sometimes 'behaviour', unless it is a quotation).

CHAPTER III. STRUCTURE of B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. THESES

III.1. Typing

Please use “Times New Roman” font for English and Turkish texts, and “Sylfaen” for Georgian texts.

The chapter titles should be size 14, capitalized; whereas subtitles, 12.

Line spacing is required to be 1.5 lines.

Either indentation or spacing between paragraphs has to be provided.

Do not use italics (except when referencing and citation demands to use it) or underlining.

Alignment of the titles to the left is preferable. In any case, all titles should be aligned the same way: left or centered.

Introduction, each chapter, conclusions and references should start from a new page. Between sub-chapters there should be 1/2 lines’ break. Do not separate the title of the table from the table (they should be on the same page). The title of a sub-chapter should not be in the very end of the page (at least one line should follow it).

III.2. Paper

A4 format paper of good quality, portrait orientation.

III.3. Margins

2.5 cm – on top and bottom of the page, 3 cm – on the left and 1.5 cm - on the right.

III.4. Page Numbers

Pages should be numbered at the bottom, in the middle. The cover page should not be numbered.

The numbering of the second sub-cover page (in M.A. and Ph.D. dissertations), acknowledgements, list of tables, figures and abbreviations (acronyms), abstract and content should be in Roman numbers. Numbering in Arabic numbers should start with the introduction.

When we state the volume of thesis / dissertation in the regulation, we mean the number of pages from introduction to the end of conclusions (without references and appendices) – 30-40 pages for a B.A. thesis, 60-70 for an M.A. thesis, and 120-150 pages (+/- 10%) – for a Doctoral dissertation.

III.5. Tables and Illustrations

All tables and figures should be entitled and numbered. Follow the same style (title above or below) throughout the whole dissertation. The table number should involve chapter number, dot, and number in the corresponding chapter, e.g. 2.1 (= the first table in chapter 2).

Table 2.2. List of Institutions under the Ministry of Economics

If you made up the table, it has to be stated. If you are using some resource, it has to be named, including the page it comes from, e.g.

(Ministry of Economics, 2012: 17)

If you used somebody's table, but modified it, this also has to be mentioned.

III.6. Printing out and Binding

The thesis has to be submitted printed out on one side of a page, and bound by a spiral. So has the extended abstract for the Ph.D. dissertation. The abstracts in 2 or three languages (English, Georgian, and / or Turkish) have to be bound separately.

III.7. Electronic Submission

The M.A. thesis and the Doctoral thesis have to be submitted both in hard copy and electronically – on a disc, in PDF format. The university has the right to publicize it on the web page.

CHAPTER IV. ETHICS in RESEARCH, PLAGIARISM

IV.1. Ethics

Ethics is the principles and guidelines that help us to uphold the things we value.

Research ethics are a guiding set of principles that are to assist researchers in conducting studies ethically.

The primary professional ethical issue is that of fraudulent activity by scientists. The most serious professional crime any researcher can commit is to cheat or present fraudulent results to the research community (fabrication or alteration of results).

Other less serious ethical issues of professional area include:

Partial publication – collecting data for one study and then publishing several articles based on this one large set of data rather than publishing all the findings and data in one article (in fact, hiding some data). However, if publishing large-scale studies, it is entirely appropriate to use database and publish several articles, each of them focusing on different research questions, though.

Duplicate publication – publishing the same data and results in more than one journal or in other publications. Some countries / organizations view it as appropriate to present at a conference (normally without a publication) a paper that has already been published, but which is interesting for conference participants. First, this has to be mentioned during the conference where the publication comes from. Second, it cannot be viewed as an additional publication. We at IBSU avoid such duplication totally.

Use of results – The danger here is misuse of result, including misinterpretation of other researches. The ethical obligation of the scientist is to resist such misuse. Often that means advocacy, taking a public position regarding the interpretation and use of one's results.

Fraud, the dishonest reporting of data, methods or results can never be justified.

IV.2. Plagiarism

Derived from the Latin word *plagiarius* ('kidnapper'), plagiarism refers to a form of cheating that has been defined as "the false assumption of authorship: the wrongful act of taking the product of another person's mind, and presenting it as one's own" (Alexander Lindey, *Plagiarism and Originality*, New York: Harper, 1952). Plagiarism constitutes intellectual theft. Strictly speaking, it is a moral and ethical offense, rather than a legal one, since most instances of plagiarism fall outside the scope of copyright infringement, a legal offense. Nonetheless, plagiarism often causes severe penalties, ranging from failure in a course to expulsion from school, also annulment of the obtained degree.

Forms of plagiarism include:

- a) The failure to give appropriate acknowledgement (presenting somebody's findings as one's own (no reference is given));
- b) Ascribing to an author what s/he has never written;
- c) Citing without using quotation marks.

If we are not providing a citation in inverted commas (we cannot give too many of them in a research paper), we have to paraphrase the author's words. Paraphrase does not mean simply omit / add / substitute by a synonym a couple of words. We have to use a different sentence structure, and, in fact, retell the author's idea.

The source is indicated in accordance with APA style, by the name of the author and by a page reference in parentheses. If the idea is not expressed on a certain page, but throughout the whole work, no page referencing is needed. All works referenced in the text should appear in the reference list and vice versa, all works in the reference list have to be mentioned in the paper.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Title Pages

The title pages here are for demonstrative purposes only.

Please use R03F15, R04F08, or R05F22 as relevant.

a) For Bachelor's Thesis



**INTERNATIONAL BLACK SEA UNIVERSITY
FACULTY of {name of the faculty}
{name of the program} PROGRAM**

{B.A. Thesis Title} (Each Word Capitalized Except for Function Words, Such as (for, of, as, and, or, etc.))
{Sub-Title – if any}

**{Student's Full Name}
Bachelor's Thesis in {field of study, e.g. Education Sciences}**

**Supervisor:
{Supervisor's Full Name and Title}**

Tbilisi, {year}

b) For Master's Thesis



INTERNATIONAL BLACK SEA UNIVERSITY
FACULTY of {name of the faculty}
{name of the program} PROGRAM

{M.A. Thesis Title} (Each Word Capitalized Except for Function Words, Such as (for, of, as, and, or, etc.))
{Sub title – if any}

{Student's Full Name}
Master's Thesis in {field of study, e.g. Education Sciences}

Tbilisi, {year}

Scientific Supervisor: {full name & academic title}

(full name & academic title)

I confirm that the work corresponds to the field, is characterized by novelty, scientific and practical value and is presented in the format defined by International Black Sea University.

(supervisor's signature)

Reviewers (full name & academic title):

1. {full name & academic title}

2. {full name & academic title}

I acknowledge that this is my own work, which is presented in the format defined by International Black Sea University.

(master's student's signature)

c) For Doctoral Dissertation



INTERNATIONAL BLACK SEA UNIVERSITY
FACULTY of {name of the faculty}
{name of the program} PROGRAM

{Doctoral Thesis Title} (Each Word Capitalized Except for Function Words, Such as (for, of, as, and, or, etc.))
{Sub Title – if any}

{Student's Full Name}
Doctoral Dissertation in {field of study, e.g. Education Sciences}

Tbilisi, {year}

Scientific Supervisor: { full name }
(full name)
{{ e.g.: Professor, Doctor, at International Black Sea University }}
(academic title)

I confirm that the work corresponds to the field, is characterized by novelty, scientific and practical value and is presented in the format defined by International Black Sea University.

(supervisor's signature)

Experts (full name & academic title):

1. { full name & academic title }
2. { full name & academic title }
3. { full name & academic title }
(if any)

Opponents (full name & academic title):

1. { full name & academic title }
2. { full name & academic title }
3. { full name & academic title }
(if any)

I acknowledge that this is my own work, which is presented in the format defined by International Black Sea University and is attached by the publications relevant to the dissertation.

(doctoral student's signature)



INTERNATIONAL BLACK SEA UNIVERSITY
FACULTY of {name of the faculty}
{name of the program} PROGRAM

{Doctoral Thesis Title} (Each Word Capitalized Except for Function Words, Such as (for, of, as, and, or, etc.))
{Sub title – if any}

{Student's Full Name}
Extended Abstract of Doctoral Dissertation in {field of study, e.g. Education Sciences}

Tbilisi, {year}

Appendix 2. Sample Contents Page

CONTENTS	
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	I
ABSTRACT	II
LIST of TABLES	III
LIST of GRAPHS	IV
LIST of ABBREVIATIONS	V
INTRODUCTION	1
.... ..	3
CHAPTER 1	9
1.1.....	9
1.2.....	15
1.3.....	27
CHAPTER 2	39
2.1.	39
2.1.1.	54
2.1.2.	74
2.2.	81
CHAPTER 3	97
3.1	97
3.2.	103
3.3.	126
CONCLUSION	135
REFERENCES	142
APPENDICES	156
Appendix 1.	156
Appendix 2.	162
Appendix	170

Appendix 3. Extended Abstract of Ph.D. Dissertation (Sample Structure)

- Cover page (R05F23)
- Introduction
 - Goal
 - Problem Questions/ Hypothesis
 - Methods of Research
 - Novelty
 - Theoretical Value
 - Practical Importance of the Study
 - Structure of the Dissertation
- Brief Content of the Dissertation
 - Chapter I
 - ...
 - Conclusion to Chapter I
 - Chapter II
 - ...
 - Conclusion to Chapter II
 - Chapter III
 - ...
 - Conclusion to Chapter III
 - *Chapter IV (if any)*
 - ...
 - *Conclusion to Chapter IV*
- Limitations of the Research
- Conclusions and Recommendations
- List of Publications

Appendix 4. Dissertation Checklist

Criteria	Cycle		
	<i>BA</i>	<i>MA</i>	<i>Ph.D.</i>
<i>Parameters</i>			
Title page	✓	✓	✓
Subtitle page, signed		✓	✓
Contents and structure	✓	✓	✓
Format: margins, fonts and their size, spaces between lines, indenting	✓	✓	✓
Volume	30-40 pages +/- 10% (excluding pages before introduction, references and appendices)	60-70 pages +/- 10% (excluding pages before introduction, references and appendices)	110-150 pages +/- 10% (excluding pages before introduction, references and appendices)
(Referencing format: in-text, list (APA style))	✓	✓	✓
Number and quality of references	min. 20 (avoid web-pages)	min. 40 (articles, books, theses/dissertations)	(80%) More than a hundred titles (articles, books, theses/dissertations), 'classics', and published during last 10 years (80%)
Abstract	1 page page in English and Georgian (and language of the program)	1 page in English and Georgian (and language of the program)	1 page in program language and extended (16-20 p. in English, Georgian and language of the program)
Introduction	Goals problem, actuality (importance), research methods, practical value, structure	Goals, problem, actuality (importance), novelty, hypothesis, research methods, theoretical or practical value, structure	Goals, /statement of the problem, actuality (importance), novelty, hypothesis, research methods, theoretical and practical value, structure
Research chapter/ part	Not obligatory	Type of research (qualitative/quantitative, observational, case study, questionnaire with open-ended and/or close-ended questions, experiment)	Type of research (qualitative/quantitative, observational, case study, questionnaire with open-ended and/or close-ended questions, experiment)
Conclusions	✓	Should correspond to problem statement / goals and hypothesis	Should correspond to problem statement / goals and hypothesis
Language: clear, academic style, non-offensive	✓	✓	✓
List of abbreviations	If many are used	If many are used	If many are used
Tables/Figures: all entitled and numbered	✓ (If any)	✓	✓
Plagiarism	Supervisor is responsible	Reflected in review of the authority responsible for checking the plagiarism	Reflected in the report of the Commission responsible for checking the plagiarism

*Ignorance of rules of the university shall not be a defence to anyone.
All are therefore required to familiarise themselves with the rules and regulations as outlined in the related
IBSU documentation.*

*IBSU is an equal opportunity institution. It does not discriminate against any member of its community on
the basis of gender, race, nationality, ancestry, creed, marital or parental status, or physical, mental,
emotional, or learning disabilities in its educational programmes and activities.*

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2, David Agmashenebeli Alley, 13th km, Tbilisi, 0131, Georgia
www.ibsu.edu.ge
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