MASTER'S THESIS WRITING

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The Master's thesis: 12 credits

Obligatory!

what are other words for obligatory?



compulsory, imperative, mandatory, required, necessary, requisite, binding, essential, indispensable, de rigueur



🔰 Thesaurus.plus



Choosing a topic



"Be selfish, focus on what interests you, think about your Curriculum Vitae and your future professional development as well as the impact your study might have on the workplace, and then step forward with confidence" – Edwards and Talbot 1993

You may NOT have MUCH CHOICE

- Funder

- Employer
- Supervisor

Solutions:

 Adding something to it to make the topic more interesting to you



- Follow available offers from funders...

Your motivation

Are you doubt about your motivation to carry on the research you have in mind?



Then, answer 2 questions:

: - Will it get me out of bed early on a cold Monday Morning?

- Are you willing to work on it on Friday evening and weekend?





Have problems ahead!!!

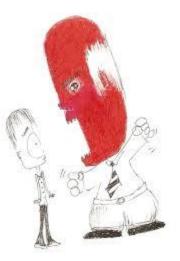
What will you do?



Regulations and expectations

If you don't follow written/unwritten regulations

Revise Resubmit your work Irritate reviewers



Ask for relevant rules and regulations

- Your subject or field of study

Should be aware of or refer to: - Preferred methods for undertaking research - Preferred styles or conventions for writing

You should check on all of these by:

- Talking to your supervisor, their colleagues or other researchers in the area
- Looking at other examples of recent research projects carried out in your subject area;
- Looking at the research literature for your subject area (books, journals and reports)

Previous example of research projects

Previous example of research projects



- In library
- From your supervisor
- From your colleagues



If you feel daunted and unable to produce something of that scale

NORMAL!!!

As you are familiar, you will do even better!

Not too Big – Not too Small – But Do-able within the time, space and resources availability

How to define!

Reference the size and format of your final dissertation or report, maximum number of words allowed

Managing time and Piloting

The cost factor

Common expenses associated with social science research projects

What costs do you think of?



The costs of research

- Travel costs to and from your university to your research sites
- The costs of consumables such as paper, tapes, ink cartridges and batteries
- Charges for access to certain institutions or individuals, or the internet
- Equipment purchase or hire costs (e.g. computer, tape recorder, software)
- Book, report and journal purchases
- Photocopying, printing and publication costs
- Postage and telephone costs
- Library fines

You need for support



Undertaking research, or any kind of education, can threaten your personal, family, work or social life. Be aware of the demands which your research project may put on your loved ones, friend and colleagues.

Make friends with all people around you, take care of your current relationship. Access issues

Data resources, References (scientific journals...)

Methods for researching

- Think about the methods you will use to collect and analyse data as soon as possible.

What to do if you can't think of a topic?

1. Ask your supervisor, manager, friends, colleagues, customers, clients or mother

2. Look at previous research work

You may consider replicating: methods, experiment setup for the same problems but in different context.

- 3. Develop some of your previous research, or your practice at work
- 4. Relate your research with your other interests
- 5. Think of a title

Title is good to keep you focus your subsequent work. However, the time may come when you need to change it.

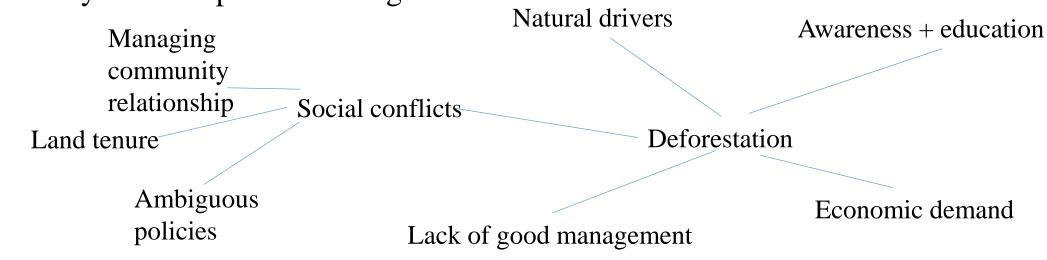
6. Start from a quote that engages you

E.g. "If all the insects were to disappear from the earth, within 50 years, all life on earth would end; If all human beings dissappeared from the earth, within 50 years, all forms of life would fluorish" (Jonas Salk)

7. Follow your hunches

Don't spend too much time and energy on them if it appears they are not getting you anywhere.

8. Draw yourself a picture or diagram



However

Be prepared to change direction

Common

- Change can be positive;
- It's OK to change;
- Lots of people change their research project or forcus;
- You always end up at a different place from where you thought you were going anyway

Focusing

During this period, you need:

- Doing background reading,
- Thinking about the methods you will use in the research
- Refining your research design

Identifying your research questions or hypotheses

Exercise (group work): Write down your research topic and what do you want to search on.

- Draw a diagram that you would like to research on
- Then summarize into clear hypothesis statements? (5 minutes)

Defining the key concepts, issues and contexts

* The way you define **concepts** will shape the data you collect.

- Clear about *indicators* that you are going to use

E.g. If your research is concerned with poverty, you might define poverty in terms of **income, housing size, livelihood, ...**

* **Issues**: That helps you to focus on a particular issue, instead of disciplinary issues

E.g. the links between deforestation and transportation development

* **Context:** The background of existing research, knowledge and understanding that inform new and ongoing research project

Sketching a project outline or project proposal

When do	- Apply for funding
we need?	- Apply for a scholarship

Questions should be answered

1) What:

- what is my research about?
- what is its purpose?
- what is it trying to find out or achieve?
- what questions is it trying to answer

2) How:

- How will my research answer its questions

3) Why

- Why is this research worth doing?

(Punch 2000: 32)

Trying it out on a non-specialist: explaining your topic in simple language

Try explaining your research plans to your grandma, or your neighbor to find the way to simplify your explanation.

Informal piloting

- Social science: Do an unofficial interview before the "formal" one
- Natural science: Do preliminary experiment before the official one

Exercise (report at class) – 20 minutes:

Your research topic (write here)

- 1. Make a list of all the costs you are likely to incur during your research project. Add an additional figure for unexpected costs. Can you afford it?
- Make a list of all the (financial and non-financial) resources you have access to, and of those you believe you will need access to in order to carry out your research project. How will you access those resources you don't already have access to?
- 3. Write down up to FOUR key questions which your research project seeks to address. Begin each one with a questioning word, like How, Who, What, When or Why. Which of these questions is the most important or central to your research?
- 4. Make a list of the key concepts, issues and contexts of importance to your research.5. Note down the prospective contents of your planned dissertation. You can do this chapter by chapter, or section by section, but include sub-headings and details.

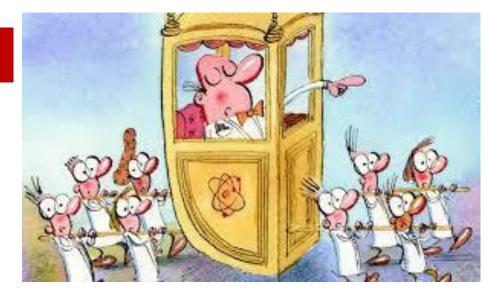
Exercise (group work) – 10 minutes: Discuss together on these questions below:

- **Q1. Who is a supervisor?**
- Q2. Who is a qualified supervisor?
- **Q3.** How many supervisors are necessary?
- **Q4.** What you expect from your supervisor as a student?

Finding and choosing your supervisor/mentor

Q1. Who is a supervisor?

Person has personal responsibility for overseeing the progress of individual students' research projects.
Q2. Who is a qualified supervisor?



- Having knowledge of the specialist areas in which their students are researching
- Having general understanding of the research progress and the various strategies possible
- Having inside knowledge of the rules and regulations, both written and unwritten, affecting students' research project.
- Can help students to focus on their research

Q3. How many supervisors are necessary?

- ONE TWO

Small committee of academics

What students expect of their supervisors:

- To be supervised
- To read their work well in advance
- To be available when needed
- To be friendly, open and supportive
- To be constructively critical
- To have a good knowledge of their research area
- To structure the tutorial so that it is relatively easy to exchange ideas
- To have sufficient interest in their research to put more information in the students' path $\sqrt{}$
- To be sufficiently involved in their success to help them get a good job at the end of it all!! $\sqrt{}$

What supervisors expect of their students:

- To be independent;
- To produce written work that is not just a first draft;
- To have regular meetings;
- To be honest when reporting upon their progress;
- To follow the advice that they give, when it has been given at their request;
- To be excited about their work, able to surprise them and be fun to be with.

What you should prepare to go to supervisor:



A proposal

- Title
- Why do you want to do this research?

(introduction). Places of research? How many treatments you want to set up? What are your hypotheses?

- Methods that you want to apply to solve for each question of your hypothesis?

(Illustrate in images)

- Tentative duration

Always come with solutions: Always come with solutions:

Not enough

After finishing experiment/survey, what should you do before coming to your supervisor?

- Calculate all the results
- Do statistic analysis
- Sort data/ filter data
- Demonstrate data in graph/figures
- Beside each graph/figure, note the trend or pattern of data, most important and exciting finding
- Make an appointment



Identify supervisory problems?

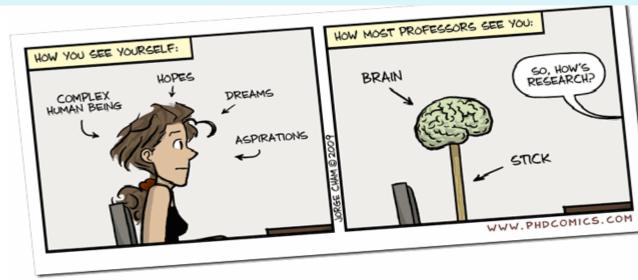
- Supervisor provides an inadequate level of feedback.
- Poor quality and quantity of communication.
- Occasional arguments and clash of personality
- Supervisor treats students as servants for his or her projects
- Require payments for research activities

What should you do as being supervised by supervisor and co-supervisor?

- Maintaining communication with all supervisors
- Always cc email to all supervisors as you want to discuss on your research topic

Take Away Points

- Be aware that you must accept the responsibility for managing the relationship between you and your supervisors.
- Ensure that you have a first supervisor and a second supervisor, rather than two supervisors with equal responsibility, and that your supervisors will maintain contact with each other, and jointly meet with you once a term.
- Try to fulfil the expectations that supervisors have of their students. If you cannot fulfil any of these expectations do not neglect them, but raise the issues in discussion.



Take Away Points

- Look for ways of reducing the communication barrier between you and your supervisory team. In addition to research content, discuss at various times working relationships, setting deadlines, what doing a PhD means to you, the adequacy of provision for research students, and so on.
- <u>Be punctilious in meeting appointments and deadlines</u>, so that your supervisors will be too.
- Help your supervisor to give you better feedback on your work. Always ask supplementary questions to ensure that you understand fully what is being required of you.
- If you are seriously considering changing supervisors, use an appropriate third party as a mediator.

- 1. Managing time
- 2. Mapping your project
- 3. Piloting
- 4. Dealing with key figures and institutions
- 5. Sharing responsibility
- 6. Using computers
- 7. Managing not to get demoralized when things do not go as planned

1. Managing time

- Based on your energy levels, coping strategies, holidays, family, etc.

2. Mapping your project using grid



3. Piloting

Try out the research techniques and methods to see how well they work in practice to adjust to your plan accordingly.

4. Dealing with key figures and institutions

5. Sharing responsibility

Important!!!

- Develop inter-dependence with fellow researchers and colleagues
- Create network, strengthen value of your research

6. Using computers

- Type your thesis yourself
- Be able to use or access to the internet and the various databases of relevance to your field
- Be aware of general terms of the kinds of packages and programmes available for analyzing and presenting research data in your subject area.

7. Managing not to get demoralized when things do not go as planned

When things go wrong!!!

Bare in mind that

- Research is a process of learning. Just as we learn by our mistakes, so changes in plans are an essential part of research.

Advice

- Recognized this as such, understanding why it happened, then revising our strategy and moving on.

Writing up

When should you start writing?

What should you write first?





What should you do if you don't feel like to write?

Advice: write anything even unhelpful to get you to write **Procrastination!!!**



Grammar, referencing and plagiarism

Grammar

- Avoid long sentences, using punchy sentences
- Avoid one-sentence paragraph
- Avoid beginning sentences with linking words for clauses, but for sentences: "but", "and", "because"...
- Avoid incorporating lengthy lists of material in your text. Place them in tables or figures
- Understand and make use of standard punctuation: colon (:), semi-colon (;), coma (,), etc.

Referencing

* Reference to a book

Covington, M. (1992) *Making the Grade: A self-worth perspective on motivation and school reform.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

* Reference to a chapter in an edited book:

Weiner, G., Arnot, M. and David, M. (1997) 'Is the future female?" in A. Halsey, H. Lauder, P. Brown and A. Wells (eds) *Education, Economy, Culture and Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

* Reference to an article in a journal:

Weiner, G., Arnot, M. and David, M. (1997) Can race equality be inspected. *British Education Research Journal*, 28: 327-38.

* Reference to material from the Internet:

Department for Education and Employment (2000) *Choice and Diversity: A New Framework for Schools*. Available from: http://www.dfee.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pm_id=2000_0368.

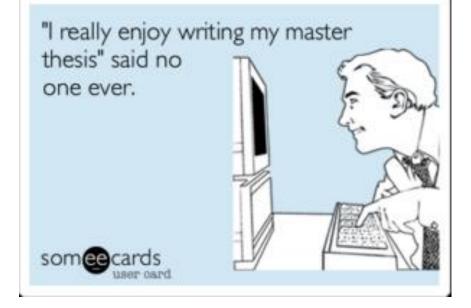
Plagiarism is cheating!

Definition

This occurs when the work of others, either wholly or in part, is presented by you as your own work...

Solutions: Keep citation source and Paraphrase as writing

YOUR MASTER THESIS



What you need to submit **Summary of a Master's thesis** 1 **Master thesis** Research . **Plan Proposal**

- Cover page
- -Title page

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The necessity of the research
- 1.2. The research questions and hypotheses
- 1.3. Research objectives and tasks
- 1.4. Objects and scope of the research
- 1.5. Research Methods
- 1.6. Framework of the Master's thesis
- 2. Matrix of Learning Outcomes for the Master's thesis

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) of MCCD		Results of the Master's thesis		Other outcomes of the Master's thesis	
		Result 2	Outcome 1	Outcome	
PLO1: Accumulating and mastering the basic knowledge on principles of Marxism - Leninism, Political Theory and					
Ideology of Ho Chi Minh; and general knowledge about administration and management					
PLO2: Mastering the fundamental, interdisciplinary knowledge and methodologies to assess and address actual					
problems (fate and features) related to CC mitigation, adaptation for sustainable development at global, national					
and local levels					
PLO3: Understanding and developing systematic thinking; necessary knowledge on science, technology, innovation					
and governance related to CC response for development; identifying, analyzing, assessing and forecasting the issues					
related to CC and CCR; predicting the developing trend of CC science					
PLO4: Applying knowledge to solve the problems in CC and CCR: planning and approaching the works in field of					
CC; proposing the initiatives as well as the researches on CC; implementing the solutions on science, technology,					
mechanism, policy and finance for CCR and development					
PLO5: Having skills of cooperation with personal, agencies, organizations domestically and internationally to solve					
the CC issues, communication in works, projects on CC; and organizing, managing and administrating advanced					
career development					
PLO6: Accumulating soft skills to self-directed and adapt to competitive working environment such as English					
proficiency (at level 4/6 according to English competencies Framework for Vietnam), Japanese communication					
skills; having skills on time management; using the basic computer skills proficiently; working and researching					
independently; having skills of research and development; and using technologies creatively in academic and					
professional fields					
PLO7: Dynamic, confident, persistent, enthusiastic, and risk-taking and management.					
PLO8: Having social/community's responsibility and professional morality, especially for the scientific research					
results; being able to adapt to multicultural environment, ensure the harmony between the stakeholders, CCR and					
development; having good social morality, assist the vulnerable people to climate change; compliance with the law;					
discipline at work and positive lifestyle; having good attitude to their career in climate change response for					
sustainable development					
PLO9: Having responsibility for researching, creating new knowledge, and offering new ideas on climate change					
response in different complex situations; adapting and guiding other people and making expert decisions on climate					
change response; managing research, having high responsibility in learning in order to develop professional					
knowledge, and creating new ideas in new process; and having good life-long learning capacity					

2.3. Structure of the Master's thesis: Students propose the structure of their thesis as follows

Chapter 1. Introduction

Chapter 2. Methodology

Chapter 3.

Chapter 4.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

Expected references



(Note: The structure of chapters needs details of subsections up to 3 numbers (example: 1.1.1 ...)

Pledge

I assure that this thesis is the result of my own research and has not been published. The use of results of other research and other documents must comply with regulations. The citations and references to documents, books, research papers, and websites must be in the list of references of the thesis.

Author of the thesis

(signature)

- The main cover
- Extra cover
- Table of contents
- List of tables
- List of figures
- List of abbreviations
- Acknowledgment
- Foreword
- Chapter 1. Introduction
 - Overview of research in Vietnam and international related to research issues.
 - Presenting theoretical base:
 - Present practical base:



- Chapter 2. Methodology
 - data collection methods,
 - materials,
 - data analysis methods,
 - approaches used specifically in research to implement the thesis.
- Chapter 3. Results and Discussion

In this chapter, students need to present the results and discusion about their research. Name of the chapter 3 could be changed according to the contents and results of each thesis. *Example: Chapter 3. Climate change vulnerability assessment of agriculture in Red River Delta*

- Chapter 4. Proposal of solutions and recommendations
 - 4.1 Recommendations for using the research results
 - 4.2. Further research orientations (if any)

• Chapter 5. Conclusion

In the Conclusion section, students need present briefly the contributions and new findings from this research, also show the limitations that the thesis has not solved and propose further research directions.

• References

All references cited in the thesis must be listed in the Reference List

• List of publishcations by the author (if any)

• Appendix (If any)

The appendix attaches all data that are not presented in the main contents of the thesis, including:

- + The graph (longer than 1-2 pages).
- + Data shown in tables (longer than 1-2 pages).
- + Calculation procedure (longer than 1-2 pages).
- + Software programming (longer than 1-2 pages).
- + Statistical analysis results.
 - + Questionnaire (or interview).

The format of a thesis is presented in Decision No. 796 / DHVN-DT dated November 10, 2018.

Format of a thesis

- Times New Roman
- Size 13-14
- Line spacing: 1.5 lines
- Top margin of 3 cm;
- bottom margin of 3 cm;
- left margin of 3.5 cm; and
- right margin of 2 cm

- The thesis is printed on one-sided A4 pages (210 x 297mm) with the total not exceeding 100 pages (not including appendix).

And so on...

Summary of a Master's thesis

- Each student is required to submit a summary of his/her Master's thesis. The length of the summary is no longer than 24 pages (A4 size). This document illustrates the structure and briefly content of the master thesis. It must be printed out and submitted together with the full text of master thesis.

- The summary of master thesis is conducted to get and put more contents of the master thesis to the website for whom interested in this topic to monitor or reference.

Assignments:

- Base on the provided *On-going research project*, please make a research plan proposal according to the format issued by MCCD.
- Deadline: March 30th (2 weeks) Google classroom.