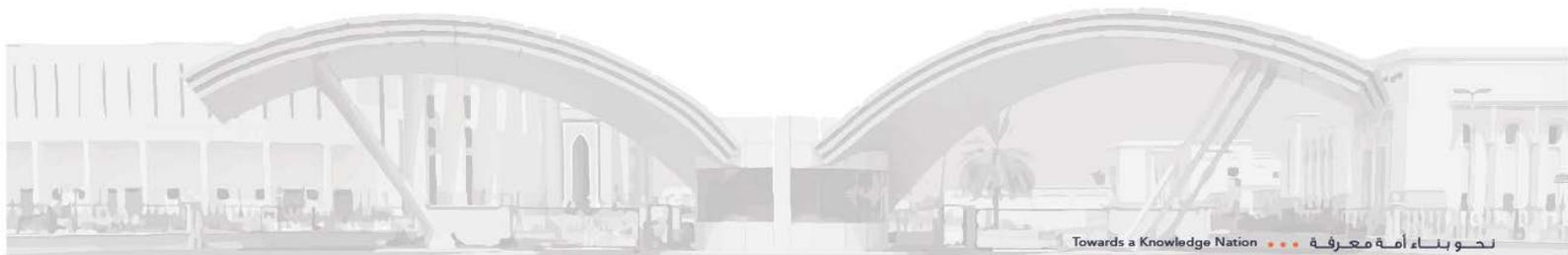


Postgraduate Centre

# Project/Dissertation Handbook 2019-2020



Towards a Knowledge Nation ••• نحو بناء أمة معرفة

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## Introduction

A dissertation is a necessary requirement in the successful completion of a Master's degree in any specialization. It offers students the opportunity to prove that they have the ability to implement the knowledge they have acquired throughout their studies in their specialization and to carry out in-depth research into a topic of their choice related to the aims of the programme, under the guidance of a supervisor.

The purpose of a dissertation must be clear and provide answers to the following:

1. Why is the chosen topic important from an academic point of view?
2. Why is the topic of interest from a practical point of view?
3. What are the corresponding benefits?

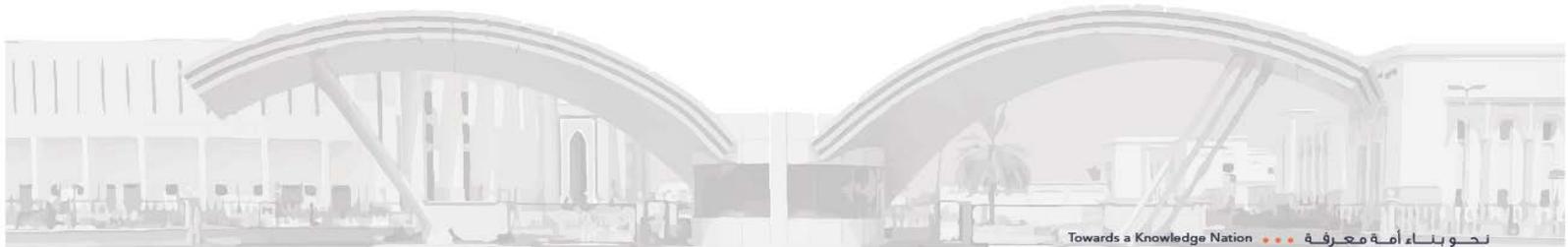
This document is designed to highlight the important procedures and regulations for a successful completion of a dissertation. It also gives you as a postgraduate student advice and guidance on the steps for conducting your project/dissertation and writing up the final report. Normally the dissertation courses (the final year project) take place at the second year of your regular enrollment at the University. The second year is considered as a significant milestone in your journey towards achieving a Postgraduate degree. You will apply theoretical and methodological understanding and skills into devising researchable ideas and particular research questions and hypotheses.

This Handbook provides an overview of the dissertation process and contains a number of useful guidelines and steps to help the student to produce the best possible work. It also details the dissertation course regulations with regard to the dissertation and directs you to the relevant sections in the Post Graduate Handbook.

The dissertation courses will run over two semesters, which will help you develop skills that will help you to write your own dissertation and finishing the system implementation. The two semesters are as follows:



# Dissertation Part (A): Problem Analysis & Research Methodology



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This course will introduce you to independent research, an essential skill of postgraduate studies. During this semester, you will explore how to choose a research problem and develop the skills needed to begin a research project.

In this course, you will look at example proposals and in detail at literature reviews and how to use them to further an understanding of a particular research topic. This part of the course will also give you an opportunity to develop your literature review as a starting point for writing up a dissertation. you will create the outline of their research project and discuss the ethical implications of the research. This course includes the following tasks:

## Assigning the supervisor to each student

A student will designate a supervisor with some knowledge of the relevant subject area. The relationship between the student and supervisor is at the heart of this post-proposal stage and students will be able to discuss their dissertation with the appointed supervisor over the course of the completion of the project. The student needs to address the dissertation area and title with his/her supervisor. And then submit the proposal and fill in SU Ethic form (**See Appendix 1**). Also, the student must obtain approval for the dissertation proposal. However, it is the student's responsibility to keep in regular contact with his/her supervisor and keep him/her informed of progress.

You have to work subordinating of supervisor. Supervisor is responsible for providing help and advice to you, meets regularly with you, leads you through the process of producing the dissertation and its examination, reminds you of time constraints, and checks that the dissertation conforms to the University's requirements. You need to fill in postgraduate student's dissertation progress report form for each visit and keep records of your visits to your supervisor (**See Appendix 2**).

## Discussing the topic and suggesting the dissertation title

It is important to extensively review the literature on your topic before you design your proposal. Thus you need to begin with a researchable topic and then explore the literature using the following steps:

- Spend considerable time in the library examining the research on a topic.
- Given a choice between a topic that might be of limited regional interest or one of national interest, it advisable to select a national interest topic rather than a regional one.
- Consider the time it takes to complete a topic of your project, revise it, and disseminate the results. It is important to put in consideration these issues for a successful work.
- Seek reactions from colleagues, noted authorities in the field, your supervisor, and faculty committee members.

You have to discuss your topic with your supervisor. Tell him/her why the topic is interesting and important: Address how you will focus the topic. Then you have to state the dissertation title in the form of an assertion or statement and It is the focal point around which your research will revolve. Before you start writing your proposal, you need to fill in the Student Project/Dissertation Consent form (**See Appendix 3**).

## Writing a proposal

It's important that when you sit down to draft your proposal, you've carefully thought out your topic, and are able to narrow it down enough to present clear and succinct understanding of what you aim to do and hope to accomplish by doing it. Aiming for 2,000 words or more, your proposal will give an outline of the topic of your dissertation, some of the questions you hope to answer with your

research, what sort of studies and type of data you aim to employ in your research, the sort of analysis you will carry out. The research proposal should contain the following components:

### Title

Your title should be as short, informative, clear, understanding, serving the community engaging and elegant as possible. You may select one of the themes undertaken by Sohar University: Environment, Connecting Communities, Enterprise and Industry and Emerging and Advanced Technology. Each theme has a coordinator in the faculties and you can ask your supervisor to identify the theme-coordinator at your faculty.

### Abstract

Your abstract should be a brief overview of your study. It should contain the aim of your study, method, results and conclusion and should be written in future tense. The minimal size of your proposal abstract should be 150 words. It should cover the following:

- State the theoretical framework
- State the purpose of the study, relevant research questions, and study goals/endpoints in response to the research questions
- Describe the methods that will be employed in the study (including the following):
  - Proposed Participants
  - Proposed Instruments/Research Design
  - Proposed Data Collection
  - Proposed Data Analysis

### Introduction and/or background

Your introduction should include a brief description of the topic, the aim, research objectives and research questions to be addressed. Your introduction and/or background should summary why you chose your topic. It should include:

- the problem statement (why interested in the topic) supported by relevance to previous research (literature).
- what is the contribution of this research to the research field, and
- the field your research objectives/questions or hypodissertation.

### Research question/s

Your question/s should set out what you learn about the topic. The question/s, together with your approach, will guide and structure the choice of data to be collected and analysed.

### Literature Review

After agreeing with your supervisor/s on the researchable topic, you need to discuss with your supervisor/s how the literature for your proposal is going to be addressed. For example, how many studies/articles you need to review and how these studies/articles are going to be cited in your proposal and later in your study. literature review means locating and summarizing the studies about your topic and it helps to:

- Analyse, synthesize, and interpret research
- Focus the purpose of your study more precisely
- Develop a conceptual/theoretical framework
- Identify the key variables and concepts in your study and how they're related
- Identifying relationships between ideas and practice
- Relate ideas and theory to applications
- Establish the context of the topic or problem and place the research in a historical context

- Distinguish what has been done from what needs to be done
- Uncover previous research that is similar to your own that can be meaningfully extended
- Identify the main methodologies and research techniques that have been used
- Determine the relationship of your topic relative to current and past studies
- Link your findings to previous studies.
- Form a basis for determining the significance of your study.

There is no single way to conduct a literature review, but many scholars proceed in a systematic fashion to capture, evaluate and summarize the literature with the following recommended steps:

- Begin by identifying keywords which emerge from your topic or your preliminary reading in the literature.
- With these keywords in mind, next go to the Electronic Resources or the Learning Resource Centre at the University and begin searching the catalogue for holdings e-journals e-books or traditional journals and books.
- Initially, try to locate from 10 to 20 articles or books related to research on your topic.
- Skim this initial group of articles or chapters and duplicate those that are central to your topic.
- Design a visual picture (literature map or figure) of groupings of the literature on the topic, that illustrates how your particular study will contribute to the literature, positioning your own study within the larger body of research.
- As you put together the literature map, also begin to draft summaries of the most relevant articles.
- After summarizing the literature, assemble the literature review, structuring it thematically or organizing it by important concepts

You should convince the reader that your study is important and meaningful within your field of study. In this section you need to establish what is known about your topic, clearly identify the research problem and convince the reader that more research is needed. Your literature review should:

- support the problem statement,
- contain broadly reading on the topic and its wider context,
- highlight trends in the literature relating to the research topic,
- outline some of the limitations and/or gaps in the literature in the research area/topic justify conduct such research, and
- help to inform and set up the theoretical framework, methodology and research design.

You use Article Summary Table form to summary your article (**See Appendix 4**).

### **Problem statement**

You should have an idea of what specifically within the larger problem you want to address. Then transform this into a problem statement that clearly explains the problem you will help solve and demonstrates the relevance of your research.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Drawing on the different theories you have identified in your literature review, there is a need to identify which theoretical approach (or approaches) will be employed in the proposed research and why.

### **Methodology**

Methodology considering the different methodological approaches to be used. A methodology may include research paradigm and epistemologies that underpin the research and you should

give the rationale for this.

## Research design and method

In this section of your proposal you need to give a deep thought about your research design and method because it is going to reflect very much your research implication process and the results of your study.

- Participants: who will be doing research with (individuals, businesses, organisations)?
- What is sample size and its parameters?
- Data collection: how will be data collected (surveys, experiments, interviews)? This should also include any equipment or instruments that will be needed.
- Data analysis and discussion: what to do with data? Include any tools will be used to analysis data (e.g. programmes, models). An indication how analysing the data in this way will answer research question/s.
- Limitations: look at your methodology and consider any weaknesses or limitations that may occur as a result of your research design. Address the limitations by indicating how you will minimise them.

Quantitative data collection typically involves one or more of the following: Surveys, tests, or questionnaires – administered in groups, one-on-one, by mail, or online; reviews of records or documents using a rubric; or observations. Other factors involved in determining your method include the following:

- Accuracy/trustworthiness of data collected (i.e., respondent can openly answer; limited researcher bias)
- Cost and effort required
- Degree of sampling bias (i.e., ability to draw a representative sample)
- Amount of data that can be collected easily
- Speed (i.e., time it takes to complete data collection)
- Administrative issues (i.e., management, auditing, data entry)
- Depth of information that can be obtained

Before collecting data, you will also need to determine if you will be collecting data from everyone in your population of interest (a census) or if you will be collecting data from a sample. There are two types of sampling to consider: probability sampling (a random sampling: everyone in the population has an equal opportunity to be selected for the research) or non-probability sampling (convenience or purposeful sampling).

It is important that you use methods appropriate both to the type of data collected and the aims of your research. You should explain and justify these methods with the same rigour with which your collection methods were justified. Remember that you always have to show the reader that you didn't choose your method haphazardly, rather arrived at it as the best choice based on prolonged research and critical reasoning. The overarching aim is to identify significant patterns and trends in the data and display these findings meaningfully.

## Timeline

A timeline that estimates how long each task will take helps determine the scope of research; this might include:

- time allocation for a detailed literature review,
- time for approval from the ethics committee,
- testing of research design,
- data collection, and
- analysis and writing up of findings

## References

It is important to include all references used when writing proposal; APA style is used at the Sohar University. (*See appendix 5*)

## Appendices

This may include copies of letters seeking participants, consent forms and draft surveys/questionnaires.

## Submitting the proposal

Before submitting a final copy of your proposal make sure that it describes what your dissertation is about, probable questions that you're going to be examining, some reference to the theoretical side, research methods you're going to be using and potential outcomes of the study.

The final stage of the dissertation is writing up the document and submitting the finalized version on or before the submission date. The date of submission of the dissertation is dependent upon the student's start date:

- If you began your studies, or are now on an intake that began studies in **September** you should complete your studies in June of the second year of studies after which you will have 15 weeks to complete and hand in your dissertation (i.e. September of that year).
- If you began your studies, or are now on an intake that began studies in **March** (the "March Intake") you should complete your studies in December of the second year of studies after which you will have 12 weeks to complete and hand in your dissertation (i.e. March of the following year).

## Research Ethics in the dissertation

All students who register a dissertation course are required to submit a 'Research Ethics' form which ensures that their research complies with appropriate rules to protect students conducting research and others who may be the subject of research. All research projects/dissertations must submit this and obtain ethical approval before starting on their data collection by completing a dedicated. You have to fill in correctly the Ethic form with details and information and you can ask if there is any unclear thing. The form is available at the PG Centre and available in PG Handbook, and should be submitted to the Research & Industry Collaboration Office for approval (*See Appendix 1*).

## Approving the proposal

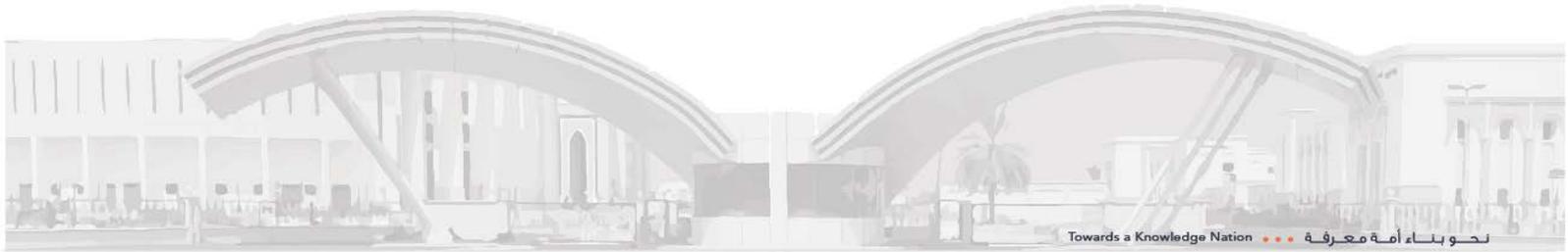
There will be a panel of examiners to discuss and approve your proposal; and you need to be well prepared to defence your proposal and answer the panel's questions. You may require making necessary amendments to your proposal before resubmitting it. You will be informed of the specific deadline for submitting your dissertation once your dissertation proposal form has been accepted. At this stage, you need to prepare for your proposal defence presentation for 10-15 minutes which might include the following slides:

## Proposal Defence

- Statement of the Problem (1 slide)
- Literature Review (1 slide)
- Purpose of the Study (1 slide)
- Research Question(s) (1 slide)
- Significance of the Study (1 slide)
- Sample and Population (1 slide)
- Instrumentation (1 slide)

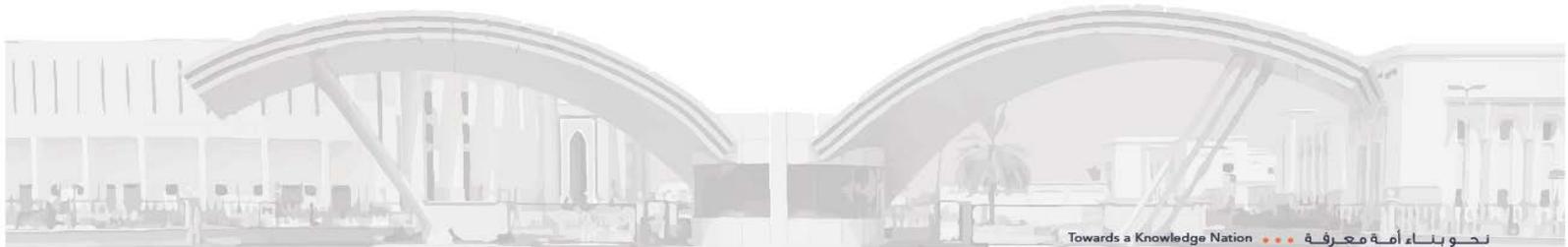


- Data Collection (1 to 2 slides)
- Data Analysis (1 slide)
- Timeline for Completion (1 slide)
- Thank You/Questions (1 slide)





# Project/Dissertation B: Implementation & Writing Of The Dissertation



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After the research proposal defence, the panel of examiners will inform about the decision they make regarding your work and your performance during the defence. You will also be given feedback from the panel on whether your proposal needs amendments. Upon getting the approval of the panel for proceeding with your project, there are some regulations and procedure that you have to follow.

The section below will outline the following events that should take you through the process of finishing the project: expanding literature review, collecting data, analysing data, writing up, submitting final project/dissertation, assigning examiners, and sitting for the viva.

## Expanding literature Review

Having defined and refined the topic during the course of the pre-proposal stage, and been assigned a supervisor, students can begin the serious study of source materials. Discussing ideas with lecturers, other colleagues and supervisors as you progress with your work will help. Remember again that the way in which your sources talk to you, and the use you get from them, will be determined by what questions you ask and how clearly you ask them. Research at Masters level means that students use primary sources - always remembering that the category is a wide one, including documents of all kinds, interviews, newspapers, magazines, films, statistics, television transcripts etc. On some topics, the main primary source is likely to consist of the published texts of the authors in question.

Students can find out which sources are available from a number of places. The supervisor can point some out and it is always easy to find a few books on the background to any subject in the library or through online e-resources. Use these books to build up a list of sources which the authors have used - most books include a bibliography at the back, or you can look at their footnotes to see what evidence they have used to support particular points. The authors will refer to both primary and secondary sources. You will need to be selective in looking at these - you can't read every book on every subject. The list of sources will keep growing but students should try to look at the most important sources which are referred to. These may be identified perhaps by how many authors have used them, or by the frequency to which one author refers to them.

Again, students will need to look through some secondary sources first, in order to establish the general lines of your inquiry, before you can move to the primary sources. But at each point, you need to make notes on what you read. You will need to note down, not only basic pieces of factual information but also the arguments used and points of controversy, as well as retaining some quotes to use when writing up. (A short, succinct quote can produce a good effect in a Dissertation.)

This process of note-taking presents three major problems.

**FIRST**, you must be selective. You cannot note down everything as you will be overwhelmed, but you must learn to write down the essentials. The tendency at first is to write down too much, but you will learn to be more discerning, especially if you ALWAYS KEEP IN MIND THE MAIN QUESTIONS WHICH YOU WISH TO ANSWER. You must be thorough in collecting what is necessary, and ruthless in omitting anything that is superfluous. You must also use books in a selective way: there is no point reading a whole book if only a few pages are relevant for you.

**SECOND**, you must take an accurate note of the source of every reference you collect. Thus, for newspapers, you need to note the title, date, and page; for official reports, the title, volume

number, date and page; and so on. These can be easily abbreviated to save time, but if you fail to keep track of where you have got your material from, you will be faced with the boring and time-consuming task of digging it out again when you come to do the footnotes. Careful referencing at the note-taking stage will help you not fall into the trap of plagiarising through sloppy referencing.

**THIRD**, you must organise your notes in such a way that you can easily refer back to them when writing up your Dissertation. Since a Dissertation is on a much larger scale than an essay, it is perhaps even more vital that you have easy access to notes on particular issues, and also that you can justify all the main points in your Dissertation by referring to appropriate pieces of evidence. Also, you don't want to collect the same piece of evidence more than once, since this will waste valuable time. This is another reason, when making your notes, for keeping a careful record of each of the books, articles or archival sources from where you obtained a particular piece of evidence. You also need to develop a careful system of structuring your notes. A good idea is to organise your notes around your planned chapter-by-chapter breakdown. (This highlights the importance of having a chapter-by-chapter outline ready before you progress far with your research). However, because some pieces of evidence might be useful in more than one context, you may also need to develop a system of cross-referencing. For these reasons, some people prefer to use a system of notes on small index-cards, each with its own particular piece of information and details of the source. These can be numbered, cross-referenced and plucked out at will when you need them for a particular chapter.

## Collecting data

Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes. In research design and method section in your proposal, you have identified one or more of data collection methods such as observation method, in-depth interview and survey through questionnaire and case study, and where necessary, have checked the face and the content validity of your tools. At this phase, you are going to implement the tools and collect your data to answer your research/project questions and/or hypodissertation.

Qualitative research often entails extensive time spent at the research site(s) and/or with participants who will help you answer your research questions. It is important to develop relationships with the participants who become your key informants. When you are collecting qualitative data to need to pay to attend to the following conditions:

- Qualitative data is good when it is captured in depth (in more detail and thick description).
- Data can only be thoroughly analysed if it is recorded/written up as close to the observation as possible.
- Set a goal for yourself: type up your observation data within 24 hours of the observation.
- Decide if/how you will transcribe your interview data. Be sure to allocate time to proofreading the completed transcript against the recording.
- Finally, be sure to standardize your data collection (i.e., to follow the same procedures when administering your data collection tools in order to maximize the reliability and accuracy of your data.

## Analysing data

In your proposal, you have identified how you going to analyse data your research/project data and the software that you are going to use for so. The following presents guide and tips analysing the quantitative data.

### Quantitative Data Analysis

Step 1. Report information about the number of members of the sample who did and did not return the survey.

Step 2. Discuss the method by which response bias will be determined.

Step 3. Discuss a plan to provide a descriptive analysis of data for all independent and dependent variables in the study.

Step 4. If the proposal contains an instrument with scales or a plan to develop scales (combining items into scales), identify the statistical procedure (i.e., factor analysis) for accomplishing this.

Step 5. Identify the statistics and the statistical computer program for testing the major inferential research questions or hypotheses in the proposed study. The inferential questions or hypotheses relate variables or compare groups in terms of variables so that inferences can be drawn from the sample to a population. You can use SPSS software to analysis your data; the software is available in Sohar University, in computer labs in Rustaq Building and Barka Build, and in PG Hall in LRC Building.

Step 6. A final step in the data analysis is to present the results in tables or figures and interpret the results from the statistical test. This interpretation involves several steps.

- Report whether the results of the statistical test were statistically significant or not.
- Report how these results answered the research question or hypodissertation. Did the results support the hypodissertation or did they contradict what was expected?
- Indicate what might explain why the results occurred. This explanation might refer back to the theory advanced in the proposed study, past literature as reviewed in the literature review, or logical reasoning.
- Discuss the implications of the results for practice or for future research on the topic.

### Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative Analysis Dana is a systematic process; it involves the following steps:

Step 1. Organize and prepare,

Step 2. Read through all the data,

Step 3. Begin detailed analysis with a coding process and

Step 4. Use the coding process to generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories or themes for analysis.

It is import to consider step 3 (the coding process) with more care and thought because coding is very imported in interpreting qualitative data. Coding means the process of organizing the material into chunks or segments of text before bringing meaning to information. You may consider the following steps recommended in the literature:

1. Get a sense of the whole. Read all the transcriptions carefully. Perhaps jot down some ideas as they come to mind.
2. Pick one document (i.e., one interview)-the most interesting one, the shortest, the one on the top of the pile. Go through it, asking yourself, "What is this about?" Do not think about the substance of the information but its underlying meaning. Write thoughts in the margin.
3. When you have completed this task for several participants, make a list of all topics. Cluster together similar topics. Form these topics into columns, perhaps arrayed as major topics, unique topics, and leftovers.
4. Now take this list and go back to your data. Abbreviate the topics as codes and write the codes next to the appropriate segments of the text. Try this preliminary organizing scheme to see if new categories and codes emerge.
5. Find the most descriptive wording for your topics and turn them into categories. Look for ways of reducing your total list of categories by grouping topics that relate to each other. Perhaps draw lines between your categories to show interrelationships.

6. Make a final decision on the abbreviation for each category and alphabetize these codes.
7. Assemble the data material belonging to each category in one place and perform a preliminary analysis.
8. If necessary, recode your existing data.
9. best way to organize the findings is first by research question and second by theme.

Most of the programs are available only on the PC platform. The computer software programs that can be used to analysis qualitative data are MAXqda (<http://www.maxqda.com>), Atlas (<http://www.atlasti.com>) and QSR NVivo (<http://www.qsrinternational.com/>)  
Sohar University has a license for Atlas available in the PCs in PG Hall, 3rd floor, LRC Building; therefore, you can use to analysis your qualitative data.

## Writing Up

A well-organised set of research notes is important, not only because it is used as a basis for drafting the paper, but also because you need to refer to your evidence when writing the dissertation. Since a dissertation is a piece of research, it must be properly notated. All quotations, controversial arguments and facts not generally known should be acknowledged by numbered references. The purpose of these numbered references is to show which sources you have used, to provide support for your arguments and to allow the reader to make further study of the points made in the text. the structure of your dissertation should contain the following headings and subheading

Preface
Cover Page
Original Literary Work Declaration Form
Examination Committee Certification
Acknowledgements / Dedication
Abstract
Table of Contents
List of Figures
List of Tables
List of Symbols and Abbreviations
List of Appendices
Main Body
Chapter 1: Introduction
Chapter 2: Literature Review
Chapter 3: Materials and Methods / Methodology
Chapter 4: Results
Chapter 5: Discussion
Chapter 6: Conclusion
References
Supplementary
Appendix

Please follow the guidelines on citations set out in the following section:

### Abstract

In your proposal, you wrote your proposal abstract based on how your dissertation/project is going to be (in future tenses). You need here to write dissertation/project abstract. They are similar but

not identical. The minimal size of your dissertation/project abstract should be 150 words. It should cover the following issues in your dissertation:

- State general background information about your key research variable or variables.
- state clearly the objectives of the study;
- describe the methodology or method employed in gathering the data, processing and analysis;
- summarize the results, and
- state the principal conclusions of your study and its implications.

## Chapter 1: Overview of the Study:

Briefly introduce the area of study.

- **Background of the Problem**

Provide an overview of the broad problems in education which lead up to this particular dissertation, and provide an argument for doing this particular study.

- **Statement of the Problem**

The purpose of the statement of the problem is to focus on what is not known or what is problematic.

- **Purpose of the Study**

-Describes what the study has shed light on, should mirror the statement of the problem.  
-Research questions and hypotheses.  
-Introduce Theory.

- **Importance of the Study**

Describe what contribution your study will make to the broad literature or set of broad educations' problems when it is finished.

- **-Limitations and Delimitations.**

-Limitations refer to limitations on the study, which are beyond the control of the researcher and generally address issues of internal validity.  
-Delimitations refer to the generalizability of the study and issues of external validity.

- **Definition of Terms**

Provide operational definitions of the key terms in alphabetical order. Source definitions.  
Organization of the Study

- **Organization of the Study**

Describe how your study will be organized.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

- **Introduction**

Briefly introduce the major topics you will review in the chapter.

- **Body: Syndissertation of the Literature**

-Organize the body either chronologically, thematically, or methodologically.  
-Critically evaluate the literature instead of summarizing.  
-Highlight important unanswered questions.  
-Identify methodological problems with past studies, and areas of controversy in the literature.  
-Discuss the significance of past research and how it relates to your own study.

- **Conclusions/Recommendations:**

Discuss what you have drawn from reviewing literature so far. Where might the discussion proceed?

Reiterate the general controversies, questions, or problems in the research that support the need for your study.

## Chapter 3: Methodology

- Restate Purpose of the Study.
- Restate the research questions (and hypotheses, if applicable).
- Discuss Method of Study Quantitative vs. Qualitative.

- **Sample and Population**

-Include type of sampling used, criteria for selection, the process of selection, the sample selected, sampling issues, and the population from which the population was drawn.

- **Instrumentation**

- Describe the instrumentation and conceptual or theoretical framework for the instrument content used in the study.
- Include a brief description of the relationship of the research questions to your instrumentation.
- Include the process of development (if applicable) and reliability and validity of the instruments used, as well as field testing (if applicable).

- **Data Collection**

-Include a description of the procedures and methods used to collect data (e.g. how the instruments were administered).

- **Data Analysis**

- Organize by research question and describe the statistical techniques or programs used to analyse the data.
- Describe any problems with the data analysis.

## Chapter 4: Results

- Restate Focus of Study.
  - **Reporting of Results**
- Organize by research question.

- **Summary**

-Include a reflection on results and provide your original insights about what the results mean. Articulate how the results support your findings.

## Chapter 5: Discussion of the findings

- Briefly summarize the background and purpose of the study and research questions
  - **Discussion of Findings.**
- Limitations (Discuss limitations not previously discussed.)

- **Implications for Practice**

-Address how your study informs the practice of professionals in certain fields.

- **Future Research**

-Discuss future research that is needed as a result of the findings in your study.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

You have a good grasp of what the general outline should be of your conclusion, it is important to look at how to actually write it. The most important principle to keep in mind while writing your dissertation conclusion is a reflection. To illustrate:

- If readers were to go over nothing in your work except your conclusion, what message(s) would you want to leave them with?
- What would your 'take-home' message be to your audience? What idea, question, call-to-action, etc., would you want them to have as they finish reading your work and walk away?

These are what you must constantly ask yourself while you are writing your dissertation conclusion.

You should start writing your conclusion by first taking notes, and you should do this while proofreading the initial draft of your work. In general, you should use the following approach:

- Use an approach where you would 1) proofread, 2) take notes, and 3) summarize every single chapter of your work. This will pave the way and give you the structure you need for your dissertation conclusion.
- After you do this, simply copy & paste these mini-chapter summaries and combine them into your conclusion.
- Now you have the 'raw material' and with this, you can start to modify and weave together the main ideas of your general summary.
- After that, simply add the sections on practical implications, contributions, and future work/research.
- As a final step, re-read the draft of your conclusion and ask yourself, "Does my conclusion really grasp the essence of my work?"

## Submitting the final project/dissertation

Upon finishing writing the whole dissertation, you are advised to proofread it and get a final feedback from the supervisor. When the supervisor checks the dissertation and makes sure that the whole work conforms to the university's requirement, you are given permission by the supervisor to submit the finalized version of the dissertation on the submission date to the PG Centre. The date of submission of the dissertation is dependent upon the student's start date. If the student begins his/her studies, or he/she is now on an intake that begins studies in September, he/she should submit the dissertation in June of the second year of studies. However, if he/she begins his/her studies, or he/she is now on an intake that begins studies in March (the "March Intake"), he/she should submit the dissertation in December of the second year of studies. The student will be informed of the specific deadline for submitting his/her dissertation once his/her dissertation proposal form has been accepted. you need to fill Viva readiness form (**See Appendix 6**)

Sohar University expects all students to ensure that full credit for ideas, data, information, quotations and illustrations is given to any original authors. the University has adopted a web-based service to detect plagiarism through a software system called "Turnitin", which compares students' written works with a wide database of web sources, open access materials and other dissertations and commercial texts. It is very important before submitting your final copy of your dissertation/project to check the originality of your work by using TURNITIN and filling in the Plagiarism Clearance Form which available at the PG Centre (**See Appendix 7**).

## Assigning examiners

Upon submitting the dissertation, a viva committee involving a chairperson and two examiners will be made in order to assess the dissertation project and a decision will be made regarding whether the dissertation is defensible or it needs corrections within a specific period of time. If the student

is recommended to make corrections to the dissertation, the consent of the supervisor should be taken to resubmit the project. When the examiners finish the assessment of the dissertation, a date will be determined for the student to sit for the viva and defend his/her MA project. A viva readiness form which should be signed by the student and the supervisor is required before sitting for the viva.

## Sitting for the viva/oral exam

After sitting for the viva/exam, the viva panel will assess your dissertation/project based on the following criteria: Scholarship, Presentation, Methodology, Argument & Understanding, Criticality & analysis, Use of sources and evidence, Academic referencing and Written communication

**Scholarship** means your dissertation/project should demonstrate an understanding of the link between theory and practice and related issues/ standards.,

**Presentation** means your dissertation/project should be presented clear, logical, imaginative, creative and original manner.

**Methodology:** right use of quantitative and/or qualitative methods. Right implantation of Research tools and a clear understanding of research ethics awareness.

**Argument & Understanding:** you should demonstrate a detailed and impressive level of understanding of the topic and associated issues/debates.

**Criticality & analysis:** you show the standard of critical analysis and/or originality and creativity in presenting your dissertation/project.

**Use of sources and evidence:** you should demonstrate good commands of data or literature, drawing on a very broad range of material and/or examining the topic in considerable detail.

**Academic referencing:** you should show a good use of referencing throughout dissertation/project and a good use of bibliography.

**Written communication:** your dissertation should demonstrate a good standard of language use to communicate and express your thoughts and ideas.

You will be given 10-15 minutes to present your summary of your dissertation; the presentation should cover the following areas in slides:

## Dissertation/Project Defence

1. Statement of the Problem/Conceptual Framework - *why study this?* (1 slide)
2. Literature Review (1 slide)
3. Purpose of the Study and Research Question(s) (1 slide)
4. Instrumentation, Data Collection and Analysis (1 slide)
5. Research Questions and Findings - *state the question and findings together* (1 slide per question)

6. Implications for Practice/Policy (1 slide)
7. Recommendations for Research – *what would you do differently? what couldn't you answer?* (1 slide)
8. Review of Abstract (1 slide)
  
9. Thank You – *Questions* (1 slide)

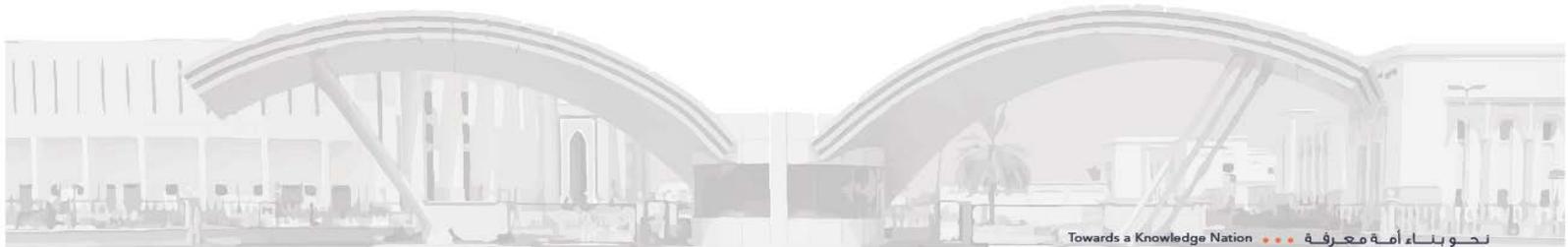
The panel will make one of the following decisions:

- The dissertation is approved without corrections.
- The dissertation is approved subject to minor corrections
- The dissertation is approved subject to major corrections and resubmission.
- The dissertation is rejected.

You will be officially notified about the panel decision; you need to coordinate with supervisor for further work in your dissertation/project, if required and to finalise the process of completing your graduation requirement.



# Appendices



Towards a Knowledge Nation ••• نحو بناء أمة معرفة

## PROJECT ETHICAL APPROVAL APPLICATION FORM

### Section A

<b>Project Title:</b>			
<b>Project #:</b>			
<b>Principal Investigator (PI):</b> (in case of student project the project supervisor and student details should be recorded)	<b>Name:</b>		
	<b>Student Name:</b>		
	<b>Faculty:</b>		
	<b>SID</b>	<b>Ext:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>			
<b>Project Type</b>		<b>Details</b>	
<b>Staff (External Funding)</b>			
<b>Staff (Internal Funding)</b>			
<b>Staff (No funds are required)</b>			
<b>Student (specify: Undergraduate, Masters, PhD)</b>			

### Section B

Project Summary (Short description of the nature of the project and the methodology to be used). *No more than 150 words*

### Section C

Provide information of any possible ethical issues in this project. Otherwise, type "No ethical related issues" and go to section F

### Section D

Provide details of how participants will provide consent for their involvement in this research.

### Section E

Provide details of how the confidentiality of participant's will be maintained.

### Section F

Attach the following forms as part of the application process:

1. Research proposal

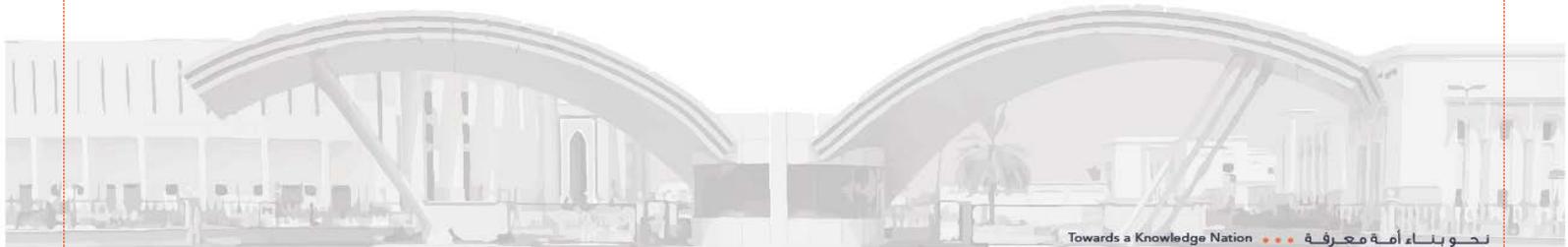


2. Participants Consent Form (*in case the project has ethical issues*) - This form to be prepared by the project PI.

### Section G

PI Signature:

Date:



Appendix (2)

Postgraduate Student's Dissertation Progress Report Form

تقرير تقدم الطالب في الرسالة/المشروع

Student Name: اسم الطالب:	
Student ID: رقم الطالب:	
program: Masters in برنامج: الماجستير في	
Phone: رقم الهاتف:	
Email: الايمل:	
Academic year: العام الاكاديمي	
Principal Supervisor: المشرف:	
Co-supervisor (if any): المنسق:	
Dissertation Title: عنوان الرسالة:	

**(A) Project/ Dissertation Aim(s)** PLEASE PROVIDE A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE HYPO DISSERTATION TO BE TESTED

( أ ) هدف الرسالة/ المشروع يرجى تقديم ملخص مختصر من الفرضية التي يجب اختبارها

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**(B) Project/ Dissertation Plan** PLEASE PROVIDE A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED METHODS, DESIGN AND A TIMELINE

(ب) خطة الرسالة / المشروع يرجى تقديم ملخص مختصر عن الطرق المقترحة والتصميم والزمن

.....

.....

.....



Duration	October		November		December		February		January		December		November		October	
Task	W1 & W2	W3 & W4														
Title of dissertation /Project عنوان الرسالة/المشروع																
Dissertation Problem & Objectives مشكلة واهداف الرسالة																
Dissertation Plan مخطط الرسالة																
Implementation & Design Plan of Dissertation تنفيذ وتصميم مخطط الرسالة																
Results & Interpretation مناقشة النتائج والتوصيات																
Final documentation الوثيقة النهائية																

Name : الاسم :	التوقيع	Signature
Students الطالب		
Supervisor المشرف		
Programme coordinator منسق البرنامج		

## STUDENT PROJECT/DISSERTATION CONSENT

Student Name: اسم الطالب:	
SU ID: رقم الطالب:	
Major: التخصص:	
Year of academic: العام الدراسي:	
Year of study: سنة الدراسة:	
Supervisor Name: اسم المشرف:	
Project Title: عنوان البحث:	

In reference to Sohar University Postgraduate Rules and Regulations, and to my consent to peruse project/ dissertation stream, I here in, knowledge the following:

- Comply with the project/ dissertation guide and period of completion.
- The Postgraduate Centre reviews the student's progress based on the supervisor's reports.
- In case of incompletion the project/ dissertation within 2 semesters, the student needs to re-register.
- When communication difficulties issues appear between the students his/ her supervisor, these issues should be resolved through applying Sohar University rules and regulation.

Name of Student:  
Signature:

في ضوء انظمة الدراسات العليا في جامعة صحار وتعهدني في بدء الدراسة في مجال البحث/ المشروع أصبح معلوما لدي:

- اتفهم خطة المشرف لاتمام الرسالة/ المشروع.
- ان مركز الدراسات العليا يراجع خطة الطالب وتقدمه في الدراسة وفق تقرير المشرف.
- في حالة عدم اتمام الرسالة/ المشروع خلال فصلين دراسيين يحتاج الطالب الى اعادة تسجيل.
- اذا واجهت الطالب صعوبات بينه وبين المشرف الاكاديمي، فان الكلية ستتدخل لحل تلك الصعوبات، ضمن قواعد و انظمة الجامعة.

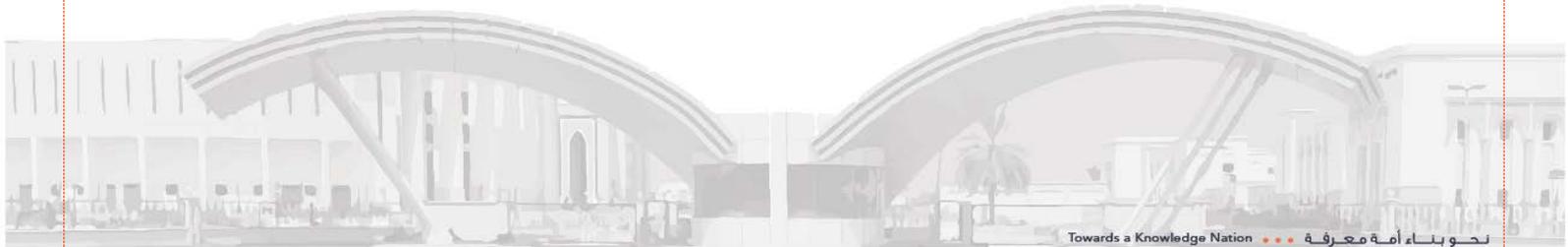
اسم الطالب :  
التوقيع:



## Appendix (4)

### Article Summary Table

Reference	
Aim or Scope	
Participants, when and where	
Context and framework	
Main results or findings	
Implications Practice or Research	
Your comments	



## Appendix (5) APA Style Formatting Hints

### General Points:

- Double-space thesis/dissertation body & references.
- Use a consistent font:
  - Serif fonts (Times New Roman) are easier to read on paper
  - Sans Serif fonts (Arial) are easier to read online
- Use a consistent text size:
  - Most students use 12pt.
  - Tables & Figures can have a smaller text size, but must be consistent

### Title in the Cover page:

- Title should be in all caps and centred at the very top of the page.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

- should appear at the top of the page, centred, ALL CAPS, not bolded.

### TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- Centre the TABLE OF CONTENTS at the top of the page in ALL CAPS

### List of Tables & List of Figures:

- Each is a separate page
- LIST OF TABLES (or LIST OF FIGURES) centred & ALL CAPS
- Create headings of Table (or Figure) and Page, and do not repeat the words Table or Figure for each item on the list
- Table titles must the document
- Figure captions can be shortened to the first statement or sentence of a document caption

### Formatting Body:

- Margins: One-inch top, bottom, left, and right of every page.
- Typeface: Times New Roman with 12-pt. font size.
- Chapter titles should be in ALL CAPS and be preceded and followed by blank lines
- Body should be double spaced
- Chapters start on new pages
- -Chapter number/title must match word for word on the TOC, appear in ALL CAPS, and be on separate lines from each other

### Formatting table:

- Table number is roman
- Table description is in italics

### Formatting Figure:

- Figure number should be in italics followed by a period.
- Figure caption is not italicized, and the first full sentence serves as the figure caption to be listed on the List of Figures.

### Formatting Citation:

Type of citation	First citation in text	Subsequent citations in text
One work by one author	Walker (2007)	Walker (2007)
One work by two authors	Walker and Allen (2004)	Walker and Allen (2004)
One work by three authors	Bradley, Ramirez, and Soo (1999)	Bradley et al. (1999)
One work by four authors	Bradley, Ramirez, Soo, and Walsh (2006)	Bradley et al. (2006)
One work by five authors	Walker, Allen, Bradley, Ramire, and Soo (2008)	Walker et al. (2008)
One work by six or more authors	Wasserstein et al. (2005)	Wasserstein et al..(2005)

1. Author/s:

2. Quote/s:

- Indent when the quote is 40 words or more.
- Indent a half inch from left margin (same as a paragraph), double space.
- Do not use quotation marks

Reference List:

- "References" centred at top of page (not in ALL CAPS or bolded)
- Order entries on the References list alphabetically by author surnames
- Order several works by the same author chronologically by the publication date.
- For entries that begin with the same surname, single-author entries precede multiple-author entries, even if the multiple-author entry was published first.
- Multiple entries by the same exact author(s) and with the same publication date are arranged alphabetically by title and differentiated from each other with lowercase letters following the year (i.e. 1991a and 1991b)

Source: <https://calstatela.libguides.com/apa>

## APA Format–6<sup>th</sup> Edition

**OVERVIEW**–The American Psychological Association (APA) style is widely accepted in the social sciences and other fields, such as education, business, and nursing. The APA citation format requires parenthetical citations within the text rather than endnotes or footnotes. Citations in the text provide brief information, usually the name of the author and the date of publication, to lead the reader to the source of information in the reference list at the end of the paper.

NOTE: Although the examples in this guide are shown in single space, APA style requires double spacing throughout (e.g. text, references, etc.)

**APA RULES FOR THE REFERENCES PAGE** – The following sections show some of the more commonly used APA citation rules.

NOTE: All citations must be in the Hanging Indent Format with the first line flush to the left margin and all other lines indented.

## JOURNALS, MAGAZINES, NEWSPAPERS IN PRINT FORMAT

### General Form

**Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (Year). Title of article.  
Title of Journal, xx, xxx-xxx.**

NOTE: The journal title and the volume number are in italics. Issue numbers are not required if the journal is continuously paged. If paged individually, the issue number is required and is in regular type in parentheses adjacent to the volume number.

### One Author

Williams, J. H. (2008). Employee engagement: Improving participation in safety. *Professional Safety*, 53(12), 40-45.

### Two to Seven Authors [List all authors]

Keller, T. E., Cusick, G. R., & Courtney, M. E. (2007). Approaching the transition to adulthood: Distinctive profiles of adolescents aging out of the child welfare system. *Social Services Review*, 81, 453- 484.

### Eight or More Authors [List the first six authors, ... and the last author]

Wolchik, S. A., West, S. G., Sandler, I. N., Tein, J.-Y., Coatsworth, D., Lengua, L.,...Griffin, W. A. (2000). An experimental evaluation of theory-based mother and mother-child programs for children of divorce. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 68, 843- 856.

### Magazine Article

Mathews, J., Berrett, D., & Brillman, D. (2005, May 16). Other winning equations. *Newsweek*, 145(20), 58-59.

### Newspaper Article with No Author and Discontinuous Pages

Generic Prozac debuts. (2001, August 3). *The Washington Post*, pp. E1, E4.

## BOOKS, CHAPTERS IN BOOKS, REPORTS, ETC.

### General Form

**Author, A. A. (Year). Title of work. Location: Publisher.**

### One Author

Alexie, S. (1992). *The business of fancydancing: Stories and poems*. Brooklyn, NY: Hang Loose Press.

### Corporate Author with an Edition and Published by the Corporate Author

American Psychiatric Association. (1994). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (4th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

### Anonymous Author

*Dorland's illustrated medical dictionary* (31<sup>st</sup> ed.). (2007). Philadelphia, PA: Saunders.

### Chapter in a Book

Booth-LaForce, C., & Kerns, K. A. (2009). Child-parent attachment relationships, peer relationships, and peer-group functioning. In

K. H. Rubin, W. M. Bukowski, & B. Laursen (Eds.), *Handbook of peer interactions, relationships, and groups* (pp. 490-507). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

ERIC Document

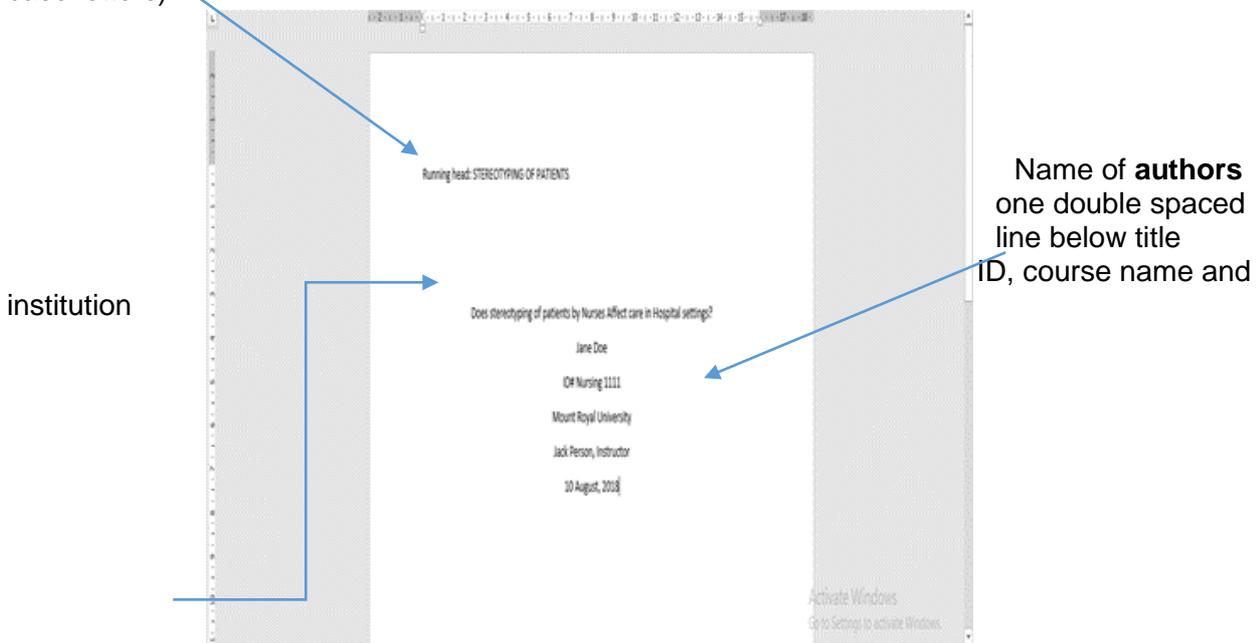
Shyyan, V., Thurlow, M., & Liu, K. (2005). *Student perceptions of instructional strategies: Voices of English language learners with disabilities*. Minneapolis, MN: National Center on Educational Outcomes, University of Minnesota. Retrieved from the ERIC database.(ED495903)

**The document details APA, 6<sup>TH</sup> Edition paper formatting using MICROSOFT OFFICE 365. APA format often includes a specific style of title page, headings, and paragraph spacing.**

Title page setup

Two-part header: the words “**Running head**”

Precede your abbreviated title (50 characters or fewer, counting letters and spaces, in all upper – case letters)



**Title of manuscript.**

- No more than 12 words.
- Double spaced if title is longer than one line.
- Centred in the upper half of the page.

To format Running head in Microsoft Word 365

Double click top of the page (header area) Go to **Header and Design Tab** in **Options** click

**Different First Page**

Click **page numbers** select **Top of Page**, Then **Top Right**

Type in the words **Running head: YOUR ABBREVIATED TITLE**

PRESS Tab key to move the **running head** to the **left margin**

**Organizing Your Paper with Headings**

Depending on your topic’s complexity, you may want to organise your paper with headings and subheadings, or even sub-subheadings. Check with your instructor if headings are appropriate

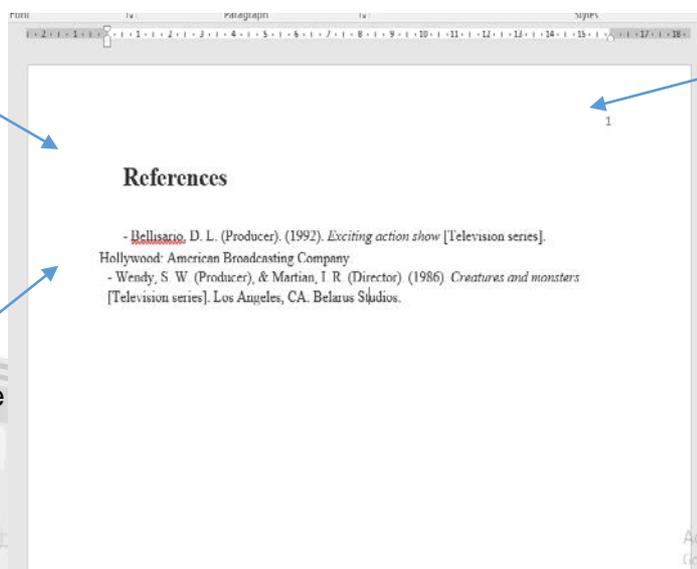
for your dissertation/ assignment. The most common organizational format is two or three levels of headings.

- APA describes headings subheadings and sub-subheadings as levels 1,2,3,4, or 5.
- Format each level of heading and the text that FOLLOWS according to the describes below.

APA level of Heading	Format
1	<b>centred, Bold, Uppercase, and Lowercase</b> Paragraph text begins one line below the heading (with 0 spacing before and after ), with ½ - inch indentation at the start of each paragraph .note :Heading for Title, Abstract, and References are not in bold but otherwise follow level 1 format.
2	<b>Flush Left, Bold, Uppercase, and Lowercase</b> Your paragraph text begins a double-spaced line below the heading, with a ½ inch indentation at the start of each paragraph.
3	<b>Indented, bold, lowercase, and ending with a period.</b> Your paragraph text begins two spaces after the period at the end of the heading.
5	<b>Indented, bold, italicized, lowercase, and ending with a period.</b> Your paragraph text begins two spaces after the period at the end of the heading.
5	<b>Indented, italicized, lowercase and ending with a period.</b> Your paragraph text begins two spaces after the period at the end of the heading.

**References:** The reference list appears at the end of the paper on a new page (use Page Break) and includes all the sources used in the paper.  
the title, **References** or **Reference** if there is only one entry

The **Running head** and **page numbering** continue uninterrupted



Hanging indent, (I.e., every line After the first is indented ½. To Format, press **ctrl+T**

**Other notes**

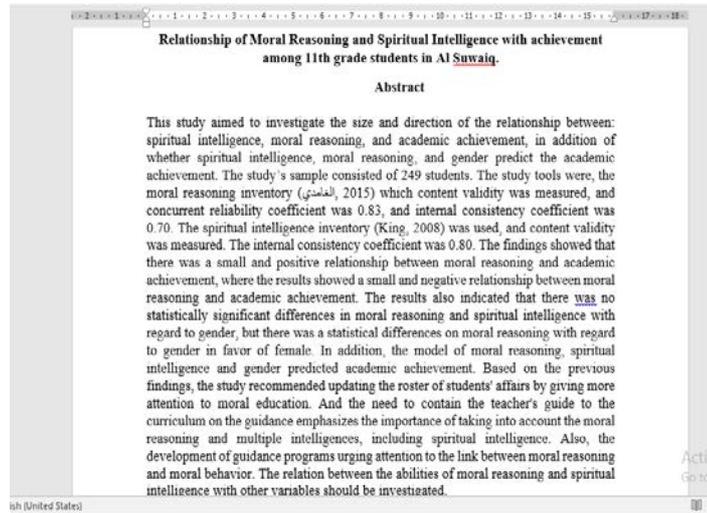
The reference list should keep the same formatting as the rest of the paper:

- 1) Times New Roman font,
- 2) 12-point, and
- 3) Double spaced.

### Abstract

- The abstract required only for select assignments.
- Begins on a new page after the title page.
- Includes heading "Abstract" (not bold), centred at the top of page.
- The first line of the paragraph is not indented.

Is between 150 and 250 words (check requirements)



Appendix (6)

VIVA READINESS FORM  
استمارة الاستعداد للمناقشة

Student name: اسم الطالب :	
SU ID: رقم الطالب:	
Major: التخصص:	
Mobile رقم الهاتف:	
Email: البريد الالكتروني:	
Date: التاريخ :	
Signature: التوقيع:	

For Finance use  
لاستعمال المالية

Staff Name أسم الموظف	
Date: التاريخ	
Signature: التوقيع	
Stamp: الختم	

No financial obligations in the student's record.

لا توجد مطالبة مالية على الطالب

For Admission and Registration use: القبول والتسجيل	لاستعمال	✓ x
The student has completed all compulsory courses الطالب انهى المتطلبات الاجبارية		
The student has completed all elective courses الطالب انهى المساقات الاختيارية		
The student has completed the programme bridge course/remedial/ prerequisite courses, if applicable. الطالب انهى برنامج المتطلبات الاساسية السابقة		

- عدد الوحدات المسجلة للرسالة / المشروع (.....)
- Student GPA (.....)
- المعدل التراكمي (.....)

ملاحظات: .....

.....

.....

.....

Supervisor Recommendations توصية المشرف	√
Ready to Sit for Viva مستعد للمناقشة	×

Master program Supervisor: مشرف الطالب	
Date: التاريخ:	
Signature: التوقيع:	
Master program Coordinator منسق برنامج الماجستير:	
Date: التاريخ:	
Signature: التوقيع:	

Staff Name: اسم الموظف	:
Date: التاريخ:	
Signature: التوقيع:	
Stamp: الختم:	

## Appendix (7)

### Plagiarism Declaration Form

Name of candidate:	
Dissertation / project title:	
Student's Supervisor:	

SU expects all students to ensure that full credit for ideas, data, information, quotations and illustrations is given to any original authors. There are several types of academic fraud which is not limited to activities such as:

- Plagiarism is representing someone else's ideas or work as your own original ideas or work, for example, copying a text from a book, a website, or any other source into in your dissertation or project without giving credit to the original work.
- Multiple submission is considered as academic fraud by mean of submitting your work as research paper/ assignment previously submitted elsewhere.
- False citation means attributing a statement of fact or reference to a fabricated source.
- False Data: Deliberate use of data that is not authentic or modified in your academic works

I understand that the Sohar University has adopted a web-based service to detect plagiarism through a software system called "Turnitin", which compares students' written works with a wide database of web sources, open access materials and other dissertations and commercial texts. Therefore, I hereby, declare the following:

- I confirm that my dissertation / project below mention is my own work except where I have explicitly indicated otherwise.
- I have followed the required conventions in referencing the thoughts and ideas of others.
- I understand that the Sohar University may take disciplinary action against me if there is a belief that this is not my own work or that I have failed to acknowledge the source of the ideas or words in my writing.

#### Copies to:

- ✓ Student's Faculty
- ✓ PG Centre

**BN:** Accepted Percentage 20%  
Attached Turnitin Report

Appendex (8)

تقرير لجنة مناقشة الرسالة / المشروع / The Viva Final Report

Project/ Thesis Assessment Final Report	التقرير النهائي للتقييم
The Viva committee met on ...../...../..... to examine master dissertation / project as follows: اجتمعت لجنة المناقشة بتاريخ...../...../..... لمناقشة رسالة الماجستير :	..... ..... ..... .....

The committee discussion نتيجة اجتماع اللجنة:	√
Pass. ناجح	
Pass with minor corrections. ناجح مع بعض التعديلات	
Pass with major corrections. ناجح مع تعديلات أساسية	
Fail. راسب	

Committee members:	اعضاء اللجنة :
Name / الإسم	Task / المهمة
1.	
2.	
3.	

Note :

To be filled by programmer coordinator

ملاحظه :

تعبئ من قبل منسق برنامج الماجستير