

**KIBU/SGS/MAN/003**



**KIBABII UNIVERSITY**

**SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**Manual for Research Proposal and Thesis Writing**  
*Specific to the Faculty of Science*

**July, 2025**

KIBABII UNIVERSITY – ISO 9001:2015 QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS		
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### MANUAL FOR RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND THESIS WRITING

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Kibabii University ISO 9001:2015 Certified  
Knowledge for Development

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## **UNIVERSITY MANDATE**

### **Philosophy**

Kibabii University embodies the view that Science, Technology and Innovation are critical for sustainable utilization of material and human resources for the posterity of the universe.

### **Vision**

To be a global and dynamic University of excellence in Science, Technology and Innovation

### **Mission**

To achieve excellence in generation, transmission and enhancement of new knowledge in Science, Technology and Innovation through quality Teaching, Research, Training, Scholarship, Consultancy and Outreach Programmes.

### **Motto**

Knowledge for Development

### **Core Values**

- i. Excellence
- ii. Accountability and Transparency
- iii. Integrity
- iv. Social Responsibility
- v. Innovation
- vi. Academic Freedom



## **1. PROPOSAL LENGTH, MARGINS AND SPACING GUIDELINES**

### **Length of proposal**

The number of words should be within the following ranges;

- i. (i). The Masters proposal should not exceed 25 pages, excluding Preliminaries and Appendices
- ii. (ii). The PhD proposal should not exceed 30 pages, excluding Preliminaries and Appendices
- iii. (iii). Project PGD approximately 10,000 words (where applicable)
- iv. (iv). Master's thesis approximately 20,000 words (where applicable)
- v. (v). Ph.D. thesis approximately 50,000 words (where applicable)

### **Margin, line spacing and paragraphing**

- i. A one-inch margin all round.
- ii. One and Half (1.5) line spacing for research proposal and double (2.0) line spacing for Thesis

### **Language use**

Use formal gender sensitive language in future tense (where applicable) for Research proposal and past tense for Thesis

Specific format for Research Proposal and Thesis writing includes the following;

## **2. PRELIMINARY PAGES**

- i. Title page should not be numbered
- ii. Preliminary pages should be numbered consecutively in Roman numbers lower cases (e.g. ii, iii etc.).
- iii. Page number shall appear in the center of the lower margin of the page

### **Title Page**

The title shall;



- i. be centered, upper case and font size 14 Time New Romans (or LATEX font size 14 Time New Romans) where applicable.
- ii. not exceed 20 words
- iii. be clearly phrased leaving out words, phrases or clauses, which do not enhance the clarity of the title
- iv. not have unconventional and unnecessary abbreviations
- v. bring out scope and key variables of the research (where applicable)

### **The Students Name**

The student shall use the official name starting with the surname and upper case.

### **Caption**

Caption of degree for which proposal is made i.e. A Research Proposal Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of (e.g. Doctor of Philosophy in Pure Mathematics) of Kibabii University

### **Date**

Date e.g. April, 2019 (to come at the bottom centered of the title page)

## **3. DECLARATION AND CERTIFICATION**

Declaration page should be on a new page

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

### **Student's Declaration**

Declaration for Research Proposal shall be;

I declare that this research proposal is my original work and has not been presented in any other University/Institution for consideration of any certification. This research proposal has been complemented by referenced sources duly acknowledged.



Declaration for Thesis shall be;

I confirm that this research project/thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other University/Institution for examination. The project / thesis has been complemented by referenced works duly acknowledged.

Signature: ..... Date: .....

Name

Registration number

Department

### **Supervisors' Certification**

Supervisor' certification for Research Proposal shall be;

This Research Proposal has been submitted with our approval as University Supervisor(s).

Supervisor' certification for Research Thesis shall be;

We confirm that the work in this Thesis/Project was carried out by the candidate under our supervision as University/Institutions supervisors

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

Signature: .....Date: .....

Name

Department

University/Institution

Signature: .....Date: .....

Name



Department

University/Institution

#### **4 COPY RIGHT** (Thesis only)

This thesis is a copyrighted work protected under the Berne Convention, the Copyright Act, 2001, and all other relevant international and national intellectual property laws. No part of this thesis may be reproduced in any form or by any means, in whole or in part, except for short extracts in fair dealing for research, private study, scholarly review, and only with proper acknowledgement. Written permission must be obtained from the Dean, School of Graduate Studies, on behalf of both the author and Kibabii University, for any other use or disclosure.

#### **5. DEDICATION** (Thesis only)

Must be on its own page

Should be dedicated to one entity

#### **6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** (Thesis only)

Must be on its own page

Begin on a separate page after Dedication and should not exceed one page NB: University/ Institution(s) and supervisors must be acknowledged

#### **7. TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Must be on its own page

This should be organized to match the headings and subheadings and page numbers up to maximum three (3) levels. All level three should be indented.

All level one headings as well as those of the preliminary pages must be upper case and **bolded**

Chapter number and name must be upper case and **bolded**

Dots must be used to connect the heading and the pagination

#### **8. LIST OF APPENDICES** (must be on its own page)





Must be on its own page

## **9. LIST OF TABLES (where applicable)**

Must be on its own page

- i. Labeled according to chapters
- ii. Show source at the bottom (where applicable)
- iii. The title of tables to should appear at the top

## **10. LIST OF FIGURES (where applicable)**

Must be on its own page

- i. Labeled according to chapters
- ii. Show source at the bottom (where applicable)
- iii. The title of the figures should appear at the bottom

## **11. LIST OF PLATES (where applicable)**

Must be on its own page

- i. Labeled according to chapters
- ii. Show source at the bottom (where applicable)
- iii. The title of the plates should appear at the bottom

## **12. NOTATION AND TERMINOLOGY (where applicable)**

Must be on its own page

This forms a symbolic language that allows efficient communication of ideas. It should be clear, precise, consistent, standard and unambiguous.

## **13. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS PAGE (where applicable)**

Must be on its own page

The abbreviation and acronyms should be capitalized, bolded and arranged alphabetically.

## **14. OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS (where applicable)**



Must be on its own page

Define terms as used in the study.

## **15. ABSTRACT**

Must be on its own page

The abstract must be guided by the following requirements:

- i. Summary of the entire research proposal should include the contextualized background, problem, purpose, method, justification of the study (these are minimal requirements but not in that order)
- ii. Should not exceed 500 words
- iii. Should not have in-text referencing (where applicable)
- iv. Should be single spaced, one block paragraph and be contained on one page

## **16. THE ORDER OF PRELIMINARY PAGES**

Title page

Declaration and Certification page

Copy right (Thesis only)

Dedication (Thesis only)

Acknowledgement (Thesis only)

Table of Contents

List of Appendices

List of Tables (where applicable)

List of Figures (where applicable)

List of Plates (where applicable)

Notation and Terminology (where applicable)

Abbreviations and Acronyms (where applicable)

Operational Definition of Terms (where applicable)

Abstract

## **PRESENTATION OF CHAPTERS**

All chapter numbers and Titles should stand alone and use font size 12 Times New Roman (or LATEX font size 12 Times New Roman) where applicable.

### **CHAPTER ONE**

Should stand alone, bold and be centered

It shall be titled **INTRODUCTION**

The title should be centered in the page and placed immediately below the chapter number.

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

This section shall contextualize the research issue and culminate into the research problem statement.

#### **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The statement of the problem shall entail a logical argument generated from proceeding facts as articulated in the literature section pointing out the problem to be addressed.

#### **1.3 Objectives**

##### **1.3.1 General objective of the study**

Should provide specific and accurate synopsis of the overall goal of the study

##### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives of the study**

- i. Should be directly linked to the study variables as indicated in the title
- ii. They should be SMART

#### **1.4 Justification of the study**

Should give the rationale and state the reason (s) why the researcher choose to focus on the topic

#### **1.5 Significance of the study (where applicable)**

Should capture the contribution of the study to the body of knowledge and stakeholders



### **1.6 Scope of the study** (where applicable)

Gives the boundaries of the study

### **1.7 Limitations** (where applicable)

This will vary from discipline to discipline. The constraints of the study and how they are overcome

### **1.8 Assumptions** (where applicable)

- i. They are statements that help to address doubts on the validity of the study and are accepted in faith, or taken to be true without proof.
- ii. They address the question as to what is taken for granted in the conduct of the study and why

**NOTE: For Pure Mathematics,** Chapter One is structured as a cohesive narrative that provides a self-contained overview of the entire thesis, summarizing the research background, core problem, objectives, methods, main results, and contributions while naturally integrating what would be in separate sections into a unified introduction that can stand alone and inform the reader of the thesis as a whole.

## **CHAPTER TWO**



Should stand alone, bold and be centered

Shall be titled **LITERATURE REVIEW**

It should have;

## **2.1 Introduction**

This is a preview of the whole chapter of literature review

## **2.2 Basic concepts**

- i. defines all essential mathematical terms, symbols, notations, and structures used throughout the thesis, ensuring clarity and precision.
- ii. aligns the reader (especially examiners or researchers from related fields) with your framework, assumptions, and conventions, avoiding ambiguity.
- iii. restricts attention to specific mathematical settings to make your work more focused and accessible.
- iv. consolidate key definitions and known results early, to prevent repetition in later chapters and makes the thesis easier to reference.
- v. ensures the reader doesn't have to search external sources for core prerequisites.

## **2.2 Review of Related Literature**

- i. Highlight the knowledge already existing in relation to the study
- ii. Highlight on the empirical literature that captures on the main areas of the study
- iii. Bring out what is unknown about the study, i.e. the knowledge gaps
- iv. Demonstrate evidence of the understanding of current research on the subject under investigation through relevant and logical discussion
- v. The review should be exhaustive, thorough, critical, informative and relevant.

## **2.3 Theoretical and / or Conceptual framework (where applicable)**

- i. Theoretical framework
- ii. It should provide theory/theories upon which the study is anchored and demonstrate the link between the theoretical proposition and the proposed study.
- iii. Conceptual framework

It should provide the original visualization by the researcher or adaptation of an existing model used in a previous study and give direction of interactions of variables of study

### **2.3 Identification of Knowledge Gap**

The review should clearly show gaps and/or directions for further research

## **CHAPTER THREE**

Should stand alone, bold and be centered

Shall be titled **RESEARCH METHODS** (if the study is theoretical/computational and involves secondary data) or **MATERIALS AND METHODS** or **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND TO THE EXPERIMENTAL TECHNIQUES** (if the study is experimental and relies on primary data)

- i. Describes the mathematical or statistical techniques used in line with the objectives
- ii. Explains the rationale behind the chosen methodology and justify its suitability
- iii. Highlight methodological details appropriate to the study in an explicitly convincing manner in line with the topic and objectives
- iv. Make scholarly references to recent research authorities as much as possible
- v. Should also include the Ethical Consideration

## CHAPTER FOUR

Should be stand alone, bold and centered

In **PHYSICS**, it shall be titled **MATERIALS AND METHODS** if the study is experimental and relies on primary data or **THEORETICAL FORMULATIONS** if the study is theoretical, centered and placed immediately below the chapter number.

In **CHEMISTRY** and **RENEWABLE ENERGY**, it shall be titled **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**, centered and placed immediately below the chapter number.

It should;

- i. Have different titles that relates to the findings of the study.
- ii. Present the findings of the research in line with the objectives.
- iii. Interpret and explains the results in the context of the research objectives.
- iv. Relate the findings to the existing literature.
- v. Identify patterns, trends, or relationships.
- vi. Have scholarly references to research authorities as much as possible

In **AVS**, **BES**, and **MATHEMATICS**, it shall be titled **RESULTS**, centered and placed immediately below the chapter number.

It should;

- i. Have different titles/names that relates to the findings of the study and/or each result may be a chapter in the case of **MATHEMATICS**.
- ii. Present the findings of the research in line with the objectives.
- iii. Have scholarly references to research authorities as much as possible

## CHAPTER FIVE

Should stand alone, bold and be centered

In **PHYSICS**, it shall be titled **RESULTS AND DISCUSION**, centered and placed immediately below the chapter number.

It should;



- i. Have different titles that relates to the findings of the study.
- ii. Present the findings of the research in line with the objectives.
- iii. Interpret and explains the results in the context of the research objectives.
- iv. Relate the findings to the existing literature.
- v. Identify patterns, trends, or relationships.
- vi. Have scholarly references to research authorities as much as possible

In **AVS, CHEMISTRY** and **RENEWABLE ENERGY**, it shall be titled **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**, centered and placed immediately below the chapter number.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Conclusions should;

- i. Have different paragraphs that relates to the findings to the study.
- ii. Summarize the main findings and their implications.
- iii. Highlight the research objectives and how they have been achieved.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommendations should;

Provide insights and recommendations for future research or practical applications.

In **BES**, and **Mathematics**, it shall be titled **DISCUSSIONS**, centered and placed immediately below the chapter number.

It should;

- i. Interpret and explains the results in the context of the research objectives.
- ii. Relate the findings to the existing literature.
- iii. Identify patterns, trends, or relationships.
- iv. Have scholarly references to research authorities as much as possible



## CHAPTER SIX

Should stand alone, bold and be centered

In **BES, MATHEMATICS** and **PHYSICS**, it shall be titled **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The title should be centered in the page and placed immediately below the chapter number.  
**CONCLUSIONS**

Conclusions should;

- i. Have different paragraphs that relates to the findings to the study.
- ii. Summarize the main findings and their implications.
- iii. Highlight the research objectives and how they have been achieved.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations should;

Provide insights and recommendations for future research or practical applications.

## REFERENCES

- i. This contains the list of all the references cited in the body/main text
- ii. The list should be in alphabetical in order in terms of the author(s).
- iii. The names of the authors (surname and initials) should be given followed by the year in brackets. This is then followed by the title of the article / book. The Journal, volume, pages should then follow. The Journal name should be in italics. In the case of a book, the title of the book should be in italics.
- iv. APA style of referencing guide should be followed in referencing in the case of **BES, STE**, and **AVS**
- v. AMS style of referencing should be followed in the case of **MATHEMATICS**.  
<http://www.ams.org/arc/styleguide/index.html>
- vi. **APPENDICES** (where applicable)

The appendices may include any of the following:



- i. Tools of data collection (where applicable)
- ii. Work Plan –Gantt Chart (Research Proposal only)
- iii. Budget (Research Proposal only)
- iv. Codes for Schemes, plots, graphs (where applicable)
- v. Letter of Approval of Research Proposal (Thesis only)
- vi. Research License (Thesis only)
- vii. Plagiarism Certificate f) Abstract for publication, at least two for PhD and one for Masters
- viii. Any other relevant document

The key items in the appendices are;

## **I. WORK PLAN**

- i. The work plan is simple and is useful in guiding the research to keep at pace with the plan of the research.
- ii. The work plan is presented in timed sub-topics connoting activities of the research.
- iii. It is more useful to time one by calendar months and years as opposed to blocks of periods to consume a period of years.
- iv. Use Gantt chart
- v. The work plan should come after References.

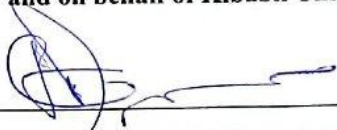
## **II. BUDGET**

- i. The budget is an essential component of the proposal. It should be as detailed as is relevant and should account for the value and cost of the project. It should be as realistic as possible.
- ii. Everything in the budget should be itemized. The items will include but not limited to stationery, transport, subsistence, research assistants, cost of production of the final documents to incidentals.
- iii. An addition of the total cost, usually 5-10% is acceptable to cater for fluctuations.
- iv. A budget should come after the work plan and be placed under appendices.

**APPROVAL OF SGS MANUAL FOR PROPOSAL AND THESIS WRITING**

This 12th Day of August 2025

Signed for and on behalf of Kibabii University Senate



VICE-CHANCELLOR OF KIBABII UNIVERSITY



**Kibabii University ISO 9001:2015 Certified**  
Knowledge for Development