



**FOR ALL MASTERS AND DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN THE
College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences**

**New inclusions to the
CAES Procedures for Masters and Doctoral Degrees
2020**

2020

Compiled by

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Important information to consult

Page 3	Ms Van Wyk no longer deals with Postgraduate Matters
Page 8	Corrections of proposal after vetting
Page 31	Research Proposal Module Sign of form to include additional documents
Page 46	Article format for PhD thesis currently not available
Page 55	Abstract Summaries in different languages
Page 56	PhD article submitted should be attached to the Sign off
Consider the following OERs on:	
1. Tips for Scientific Writing on the CAES Website for M&D students	
2. How to write a Research Proposal	
These OERs can be found on the CAES Website at this link: https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Colleges/Agriculture-&-Environmental-Sciences/Open-Resources	

INTRODUCTION

As a Masters or Doctoral candidate in the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, you will raise several questions regarding submissions of various documents during different processes within the college and Unisa in general. This document has been compiled to help you follow the procedures required to complete your qualification which are specific to the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences (CAES). In some instances, college procedures will link with Unisa procedures. The purpose of this document is to help you understand what is expected of you by giving you more information about the procedures and processes.

The document is divided into three different sections that each deal with the two different modules you will be registered for during your particular qualification. **Section A** deals with the College requirements for the proposal phase and **Section B** deals with the College requirements for the dissertation or thesis phase. In these sections you will find all the information of the different processes you will be exposed to during your studies in the different modules, which will enable you to complete each of the phases.

You are reminded that you still remain registered within a particular department as the qualification you are registered for is offered by a particular department. The department which hosts your program may have particular stipulations with which you have to comply in order to enable alignment with particular college procedures or departmental quality assurance measures. The information contained in this document also provides examples which you may follow as a guide line. However, it remains the supervisor's prerogative to instruct differently and set other guidelines and requirements for you to follow. Always discuss the requirements with your supervisor to determine what your supervisor prefers. As has been mentioned the examples and guidelines provided in this document are only examples. Where possible diagrams have been used to explain the processes.

This document should be read in conjunction with any other documentation a Department provides you with when registered for either the proposal module or the dissertation or thesis module and the M and D Procedures compiled by Unisa.

You are reminded that **Ms Emelda Pimentel is the M&D Administrator in CAES** and all enquiries should be forwarded to her at pimente1@unisa.ac.za. **Ms Marthie van Wyk no longer deals with any M&D matters, only Research related matters in CAES. She is the Research Administrator in CAES.**

SECTION A: PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES DURING THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL MODULE

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Research Proposal module is to assist students with the development of the necessary knowledge and skills required during the preparation of a research proposal for the research project they will complete during the Dissertation phase of the Masters and PhD qualification. The purpose of the Research Proposal module within the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences is also to ensure that Ethical clearance is obtained for the planned research which will commence during the Dissertation or Thesis phase.

In Summary: During this module you will be completing 2 activities which are:

- *A Research Proposal of which the outcomes are as follows:*
 - *Define the context of the research*
 - *identify and formulate a problem that can be solved by means of scientific research,*
 - *formulate appropriate research question(s)/hypothesis if required*
 - *set well defined objectives for the study*
 - *complete a thorough literature review*
 - *present a suitable methodology and data analysis*
 - *identify the contribution the research will make*
 - *draft an ethics application related to the proposed research*
- *A submission for Ethics Clearance*

Students in the Research Proposal module of a Master's qualification or a Doctoral qualification should study this section. This section will cover all aspects related to the Proposal module presented in your program and specifically the requirements in the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences. Always consider any specifications and documents provided by your Department together with the information in this document.

2. GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

2.1 Departmental Postgraduate Coordinators

Your Department has identified a Post Graduate Programme Coordinator who will administrate the activities, information and other departmental requirements for students registered for the Research Proposal Module. The Coordinator will post information on *myUnisa* and share generic information with all students registered for a Master's or PhD qualification in your Department. The Coordinator may not

necessarily be your supervisor and may not be approached to assist with supervisory support if not assigned to you. Only the Coordinator related to your department will be able to service you.

2.2 Your Supervisor

When you initially registered you were requested to develop a concept document that best suits a specific research topic. In many instances specific supervisors were allocated to these topics or projects for which there is supervision capacity. During the assessment of your application the supervisor indicated that he/she would be willing to supervise you. This person is now your supervisor for the duration of your studies. Your supervisor would have been informed of your registration through the M&D admission system. However, it is your responsibility to make contact with your supervisor and to introduce yourself if you have not had contact prior to the admission process. In most cases a supervisor establishes a one-on-one relationship with their students and it is therefore essential that your supervisor has all your contact details.

You may contact your supervisor, by e-mail, via the *myUnisa* system, by fax, by mail or personally when you visit the campus. Supervisors do like to meet their students, but it is **essential** that you **make an appointment** beforehand. Note that supervisors are seldom available during the Christmas Holidays.

Please consult this document further on for the role of your supervisor to ensure you understand the part your supervisor will play in your studies.

2.3 Your Co-supervisor

In some instances you will be allocated a co-supervisor. It is essential that you study the role of the co-supervisor as explained in this document in order to ensure correct procedures to be followed during your studies.

2.4 How to contact a supervisor via *myUnisa*

It is vital that you register your *myLife* e-mail address for any communication from the supervisor that might be of importance to you. This is also the form of communication that the Examination division uses later on during the Dissertation phase to inform you about your submission for examination. Ensure that this account is always in working order. Students are reminded to check this email account on a regular basis as it is usually the main way in which UNISA communicates with students. From time to time information concerning this module may be posted on *myUnisa* which is important for the successful completion of the Research Proposal Module.

Also remember that your supervisor will indicate the preferred mode of communication and proposed times of communication and feedback to you. It is always prudent to remember that your supervisor may not have only one student to supervise but needs to schedule students for feedback to ensure that every student is serviced.

Procedure to follow for access to *myUnisa*

Use the Internet. In your browser, for instance Windows Explorer/Netscape, go to the Unisa website, at <http://www.unisa.ac.za>. On the home page, select the option “*myUnisa*”. If you are a first-time user, you must now click on the option “Registering as a user”, which will enable you to register online (this does not cost anything). Type in your name, student number and a password (you can choose any password provided it is at least six characters long). You will then be given a PIN code (personal identity number), which you will use in all future transactions with *myUnisa*. Once you have registered, select the option “Enter *myUnisa*”, which will take you into *myUnisa*. In *myUnisa*, select the option “My courses”, and then the option “Contact lecturer”. This will enable you to send e-mail correspondence to the relevant lecturer.

2.5 College Librarian

The College Librarian for the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences is Mrs Leslie Adriaanse. It is important that you make contact with Mrs Adriaanse to assist you with familiarizing yourself with the Unisa data basis and finding research related information regarding your proposed topic of research. Mrs Adriaanse welcomes an appointment with her for 2 hours where she takes you through the different Unisa systems to ensure that you are able to find scientific sources to reference. She can be contacted at LAdriaan@unisa.ac.za.

2.6 Discussion classes

During the course of the year, discussion classes may be held for all Master’s students registered in your department. Also constantly check *myUnisa* for updates on the discussion class and other postings regarding the discussion classes. However, this may only be necessary should your department wish to bring a particular matter to your attention or to share information with you that may be relevant to your studies. Please inform your supervisor or post graduate programme coordinator if you are unable to attend the discussion class on the Florida campus. In this instance video conferencing can be scheduled for the students who might be located in other provinces. The Florida campus serves as the main discussion class location.

2.7 Video conferencing

In some instances your department may make use of video conferencing to communicate with you. Video conferencing is a system that enables students and lecturers at different locations to communicate with each other while seeing and hearing each other via video cameras, television screens, microphones and the internet. The sessions will be hosted from the Florida campus or Main campus, but students staying far can make use of the video conferencing centres on the Muckleneuk and Sunnyside campuses in Pretoria, Durban, Parow, Polokwane, Port Elizabeth, East London, Mafikeng, Kimberly, Pietermaritzburg, Bloemfontein, Nelspruit, Middelburg, New Castle and Umtata. Ethiopian students are also contacted via video conferencing. You will be informed via SMS and/or *myUnisa* about the nearest

conferencing venue. This is organized when you are too far from the Florida campus to attend the discussion class. In some instances your supervisor may want to discuss some aspects of your work with you which may also be organized through video conferencing.

2.8 Generic Workshops

From time to time the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences will present workshops to Masters and Doctoral students registered for a qualification in CAES. It is advisable to attend these workshops as they may assist you in proposal writing and article drafting to name a few. The invitation will also be sent to supervisors. All students will be notified by Mrs Emelda Pimentel. The program will also be on *myUnisa* under your module.

2.9 Assessment of the Research Proposal

Continuous assessment of your research proposal will be required in order to successfully complete the Research Proposal Module. In fact, every submission you make to your supervisor is a submission that will result in feedback from your supervisor. You are advised to address the comments and suggestions with great care to ensure that general mistakes are not continuously made.

Your supervisor will assess your work through different methods such as track changes, hand written comments or feedback through email. Whichever way your supervisor provides feedback it should be regarded as valuable comments which should be addressed. As a student you should be learning from the comments and implement the suggestions to ensure that the proposal is successfully completed. Remember that your supervisor has experience in terms of what is required to successfully complete a research proposal.

In general, there aren't any assessments to complete in a formularized fashion such as you will find at undergraduate or honours level. When we talk about assessment of your Master's work it means that a supervisor has been able to comment and give feedback about the submission. Some departments may in fact also require the submission of assignments, but this is not standard practice for all Master's' qualifications.

Your supervisor may in some instances require you to submit your work to an editor if your English writing skills are not at a scholarly level. This will ensure a professional research proposal which will then be submitted for assessment by the reviewers.

2.10 Final assessment of the research proposal

When your supervisor is satisfied with the final copy of your research proposal it can then be submitted to the department for vetting or final assessment. Your department

has compiled a document which will be used to assess the research proposal. You are advised to consider the criteria used for assessment of the research proposal to ensure that you have addressed all possible requirements to successfully complete the research proposal.

Only when the assessment has been completed and the committee or individual reviewer has passed the proposal and ethical clearance has been given will you be able to register for the dissertation module. Each department may have a different way of assessing the research proposal. You should follow the instruction of your department. When the research proposal has been passed you may submit an application for ethics clearance.

An important point to remember is that you are required to make the necessary changes to the research proposal in consultation with your supervisor after it has been vetted. This copy of your corrected proposal without any track changes has to accompany all the documents forwarded to the Ethics committee.

2.11 Research Proposal Presentation

Part of the processes within the Research Proposal Module is to present and defend your research proposal. A departmental research presentation event may be scheduled which will allow you to present the research you are planning to do. In some instances this presentation may be part of the assessment a department wishes to perform. Other departments may not require such a presentation. You may be requested to present your proposal on the Florida campus or through video conferencing at your nearest Unisa Centre.

2.12 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of taking the words, ideas and thoughts of others and passing them off as your own. It is a form of theft which involves a number of dishonest academic activities

Please take care not to plagiarise your documentation but instead provide scientific and well referenced documentation.

Note that although you may make use of some assistance when preparing parts of your research proposal, you must write and submit your own individual work. In other words, you must submit your own ideas in your own words, sometimes interspersing relevant short quotations that are properly referenced. It is unacceptable to submit work that is not your own. That is copying (a form of plagiarism) and in this instance your work will not be assessed. Furthermore, you may be subjected to disciplinary proceedings by the university should you not adhere to plagiarism warnings. You are required to adopt a scientific approach to prepare your research proposal. This means

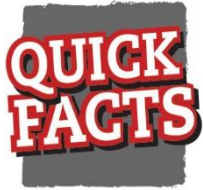
you should be writing in a scientific way during which references should be used and sources you consulted, acknowledged. If you are unfamiliar with the correct referencing style to adopt or how to write scientifically you should consult the current document further on.

The College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences is very cognizant of plagiarism. You are advised to consult paragraph 5.57 – 5.61 of the M and D Procedures to ensure that the work submitted to your supervisor is not plagiarized.

To assist you with plagiarism detection, the Turn-it-in software can be applied. However, this type of software is only a guideline in assisting you to apply a better approach to the presentation of scientific information from other sources. **Your supervisor may NOT submit your document to Turn-it-in on your behalf.** You are required to submit your document to Turn-it-in throughout the development of your research proposal to assist you with the correct way of referencing or your supervisor might decide to only submit the final copy for assessment to Turn-it-in. However, use the recommendations to improve your submission to ensure that plagiarism has not been committed.

OPEN ELECTRONIC RESOURCE (OER) AVAILABLE ON HOW TO WRITE A RESEARCH PROPOSAL

<https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Colleges/Agriculture-&Environmental-Sciences/Open-Resources>



THE SECTION TO FOLLOW WILL ASSIST YOU WITH DEVELOPING YOUR RESEARCH PROPOSAL

3. HOW TO START THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL MODULE?

3.1 Make contact with your Supervisor

When you have registered your first responsibility is to make contact with your supervisor. As a registered student you would have received the following letter indicating to you who your supervisor is and if there is a co-supervisor. An example of the Confirmation of Registration Letter is given below this paragraph. Your first communication should always go to your supervisor. Although this letter does not indicate the contact details for your supervisor you may contact Ms Emelda Pimentel at pimente1@unisa.ac.za to provide you with the email address for your supervisor or you can contact the postgraduate coordinator for your department. The modes of contact Unisa encourages have also been indicated above. Read this letter carefully to ensure that the correct details have been captured on the system. **You may need**

to activate a myLife Unisa account to view this letter. This is an essential part of any communication between you and any M&D administration as well as the examination division at a later stage. Confirm if your supervisor has received such a letter.

3.2 Registration period

As a registered student in CAES you should be aware that the registration period is for 1 year only. The registration for Masters and Doctoral students closes during the middle of March each year, but opens towards the end of an academic year. The closing dates are always found on the Unisa website. It is your responsibility to check the notifications on the opening and closing dates for registration. Your academic year stretches from the date of registration to the closing date of registration of the following year.

You have to register for the next academic year as registration is not automatic.

You should also consider the fact that if for some reason you register late you may have a shortened academic year to complete your Research Proposal module. You should also mention your registration status to your supervisor.

3.3 Due date guidance

The College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences has proposed that students in the Research Proposal phase should be planning to complete the research proposal by September 2020. This is just a guide line which may not be applicable to all students in the Research Proposal Module. Your department may have internal arrangements that require specific due dates other than the 1st of September 2020. Consult with your supervisor if he/she thinks it is possible for you to complete your research proposal on or before 1 September or set another appropriate date for completion.

This date was chosen to allow you to have your proposal finally approved by your supervisor and ready for submission for assessment by your department. This date will also give you enough time to complete the ethics application before registration for the dissertation module commences during mid-March 2020. By not being able to reach your due dates you may not be able to register in time for the dissertation module of your qualification.

Therefore apply yourself to the completion of timely activities aligned to your due dates and research plan to ensure registration for the next module. This date means you have to be working continuously on your research proposal and not procrastinate in completing the proposal.

3.4 Discuss and plan your research

When contacting your supervisor it is important to discuss your research idea with your supervisor and **draw up a research plan**. The reason for this plan is because you were informed of the fact that a student should not spend more than 1 year in the Research Proposal module. In order to achieve this you have to plan your activities related to the development of your research proposal. An example of such a plan is given below.

Example of Research Plan

Activity	Due date
First draft of background to my research	5 May 2020
Draft of the research problem	10 May 2020
Literature review	30 May 2020
Objectives of my study	10 June 2020
Methodology	31 June 2020
First draft of completed research proposal	15 July 2020
Second draft of research proposal	30 July 2020
Final submission to supervisor	15 Aug 2020
Submission to turn it in	30 Aug 2020
Due date for submission to Dept for assessment	1 September 2020
Submission of Ethics application	1 October 2020
Presentation of proposal to department	31 October 2020

3.5 Requirements for compiling a research proposal

As mentioned in the Introduction, CAES has different research focus areas and different Masters and Doctoral programs to accommodate your research interests. Due to the variety of research that the researchers in CAES undertake there is no one standard research proposal outline that can be followed. Even if you have completed a research proposal you may find the discussion useful and a good reminder of what you need to include in the research proposal.

It is your responsibility to discuss the content of this outline with your supervisor to determine what else your supervisor would require and how you should structure the proposal to best represent your particular research. The department where you are registered may also provide you with such guidelines. For most researchers the generic research proposal format as presented in this document gives a researcher a good start that can be developed further in the way your supervisor would like to see the research proposal develop.

In some instances your supervisor may change the headings and prefer to use another concept than the generic research proposal has used. This is acceptable as your supervisor is familiar with the appropriate way of presenting your research proposal in the field of research you are working in. If your supervisor would like you to first draft a proposal and then comment on your submission without giving specific guidance you may choose to use the generic research proposal guide. Your supervisor may have examples of good proposals that you can study.

3.5.1 Length of your research proposal

This is always a very tricky question to answer. There is no one specific length to recommend. Mouton (2001) refers to the way in which your research proposal addresses the concepts of “balance” and “proportions”. This is illustrated by Mouton (2001) in terms of the length your proposal takes on. If a proposal of 10 pages is compiled each section should be proportionally the same length. This is not a fixed rule but will give you an idea if you are not providing enough information to support a particular section. The length of your proposal should be discussed with your supervisor. Remember that the proposal is only a suggestion of what you will research. It therefore should contain all the facts necessary to enable the reader to understand what you want to do, why you want to do this research and how you want to execute the research. A research proposal of 96 pages will most probably contain unnecessary information which could be eliminated. Usually a research proposal of approximately 25 – 35 pages including a reference list will suffice if it contains all the required sections and the necessary information presented in a scientific manner.

3.5.2 Formatting and Editing

The proposal should always be presented as a well laid out document that is evidence of well formulated sentences and paragraphs and good use of the English language.

If your document is not well written it will complicate the assessment of the research proposal as the message will not be clear in terms of what you want to do. Mouton (2009) is very clear on this matter in that the research proposal should be considered as a scholarly or scientific document which should adhere to the requirements of scientific writing, argumentation and referencing. This document therefore has to fulfill these requirements before it can be approved as a research proposal. You should therefore be attentive to sentence construction, ways of linking sentences and paragraphs, grammar, spelling and not to write as you would speak for example “get” but rather as you would formally write such words as “obtain or acquire”.

Your research proposal should make a good impression on your reader. Therefore it is always advisable to spell check the document and if necessary ask someone to read it to help you identify grammatical errors if English is not your first language.

Your research proposal should also be formatted so that it presents a readable document. Therefore consider the following if there aren't specific guidelines about this from your Department:

Typeface or Font: Arial (depending on the specifications of your supervisor)

Font size: 11pt or 12pt

Line spacing: 1.5 or 1.15 depending on the preference of your supervisor.

Always include *headings* in your research proposal and make sure that you do not write long sections that are difficult to follow without some sort of *sub-heading*. Also pay attention to the length of paragraphs and sentences. Rather write shorter sentences that make a point than long sentences which lose the reader in terms of what you want to say. Never leave paragraphs as one sentence. There is a proposed guideline you can follow to determine the length of your paragraphs and that is the 3 sentence rule. In this instance the first sentence introduces the idea you want to bring across. The second sentence expands on the first. This sentence can result in several other related sentences. The 3rd sentence concludes the idea and builds the bridge to the next paragraph. It does not mean all paragraphs should have 3 sentences. This is a guide to determine what you are writing and if the message and facts are clear.

3.5.3 Cover page and content page

Your proposal should be presented with a cover page on which the title of your research is indicated, your Initials and Surname are stated with your student number and who your supervisor and co-supervisor are (if necessary) as well as the qualification for which you are submitting the research proposal. You may also include the date of submission.

A content page should follow the cover page to enable quick reference. This page should include the main headings and sub-headings of your proposal (if not too many). Page numbers on which the discussion related to the headings can be found should

also be included.

3.5.4 Sections to include in the research proposal

There are various approaches to the research proposal. According to Mouton (2009) a generic approach to the research proposal would include the following sections.

1. Background/Rationale
2. Preliminary literature study/Theoretical framework
3. Research problem and objectives/hypothesis
4. Research design
5. Research methodology/methods
6. Time frame
7. Chapter outline (optional)
8. List of references

However, different disciplines and different supervisors have different views on how to compile a research proposal. You will need some guidance from your supervisor to determine where you have to deviate from this generic approach. The generic approach is also there to give you direction in terms of what you would be required to write about. The generic approach contains the most relevant parts which are always found in a research proposal.

3.6 How to write the Research Proposal

If this is your first attempt to write a research proposal you may want to read the next section to get a good idea of how you should approach each of the generic research proposal sections. Remember that you should discuss the outline with your supervisor to ensure that you cover all the aspects required in your particular discipline. The table below provides an insight into the criteria used by a lecture when evaluating a Research Proposal. Study it carefully. Use this to ensure that you fulfil all the requirements. Keep in mind that you may use your own headings for the sections, but all the relevant information must be included. *The College would like to acknowledge Prof J Olivier for the compilation of this information.*

Criteria	
1. The topic:	
1.1	represents a major problem area which warrants research
1.2	can be justified within the parameters of the discipline (does not “interfere” with the domains of other disciplines).
1.3	can be justified within the focus area of the Department.
2. The title:	
2.1	is a concise reflection of the content of the proposal?
2.2	captures the key words which enables other researchers to retrieve the research.
3. The introduction and background:	
3.1	leads the reader into the context and the scope of the topic.
3.2	provides sufficient information to contextualize the topic and the problem.
3.3	contains all the elements expected in an introduction.

4. The statement of the problem:
4.1 flows naturally from the introduction and background.
4.2 is of practical / scientific significance and thus could lead to knowledge creation.
4.3 sets out different points of view and assumptions in an unbiased way.
4.4 is congruent to the title as well as the purpose of the study.
4.5 the theory, practical problem or previous research from which it proceeds, is clearly described.
4.6 leads logically to a research goal and research questions.
5. The rationale / justification / need for the research:
5.1 is explained clearly and sufficiently.
5.2 provides sufficient motivation for doing the research.
5.3 should be sustainable throughout the research.
6. The research goal / purpose / hypothesis:
6.1 is formulated clearly and unambiguously.
6.2 are limited to the issues at stake.
7. The literature review:
7.1 is relevant to the topic, the problem statement and the purpose of the research.
7.2 is sufficiently comprehensive regarding the expectations.
7.3 uses essential information sources (acts, policy, expert opinions).
7.4 is properly integrated, synthesized and provides an own justified point of view.
7.5 attends to the theories relevant to the study.
7.6 presents previous research technically correct, shows perspective and justifies criticisms of it.
7.7 provides evidence that sources on research methodology have been consulted.
7.8 include evidence of a computer literature search and a NEXUS-search. (printout?)
7.9 terminology is defined or concepts are clarified.
8. The research design and methodology:
8.1 provides sufficient evidence of an understanding of research paradigms and philosophical approaches to research (ontology, epistemology, three words)
8.2 are appropriate for the problem in question.
8.3 justifies the use of specified approaches and methods (in congruence with 8.1)
8.4 provide evidence of sufficient knowledge of the chosen approach / method.
8.5 are described clearly and with proper evidence to ensure replicability.
8.6 population and sampling procedures are described.
8.7 the classification of respondents or the way participants are assigned to groups are described.
8.8 issues related to internal and external validity are discussed.
8.9 reliability of measuring instruments are discussed.
8.10 validity of measuring instruments are discussed.
8.11 the data collection techniques (instruments) and administering are briefly described.
8.12 examples of instruments (questionnaires, survey instruments) are provided as appendices.
8.13 techniques for data analysis (quantitative or qualitative) are briefly explained.
8.14 if statistical techniques are to be used, it has been cleared with an accredited statistician.
8.15 an ethical statement is included.

9. Language / style / layout:

- 9.1 the language used is of acceptable standard.
- 9.2 an appropriate scholarly style is used.
- 9.3 the layout is according to the guidelines and limited to pages / words.

10. Chapter breakdown:

- 10.1 the proposal sufficiently covers all the aspects of the research.
- 10.2 the breakdown meets the criteria for postgraduate research of the institution (scope, depth)

11. Time frames / Schedule:

- 11.1 a well-designed long-term plan is submitted.
- 11.2 short-term targets are clearly spelled out.
- 11.3 sound project management principles are applied.

12. References:

- 12.1 are sufficiently comprehensive for the purposes of the proposal.
- 12.2 are used correctly according to the accepted conventions of the Department.
- 12.3 is technically correct in terms of bibliographic requirements (effective retrieval)

Acknowledgements: Prof C Kapp, University of Stellenbosch

Notes received during Postgraduate Supervision and Training Workshop, UNISA, 9 – 11 May 2005

Pointers regarding technical matters when compiling a research proposal:

Title page

The title must be written clearly and include information on the degree, the department, topic, student name, student number, supervisor, date and contact details. An example of a title page is given at the end of this document. You do not necessarily have to use the same layout. You must just ensure that all the information is given.

Table of Contents

A document, such as a report, dissertation or thesis, should include a Table of Contents (NOT to be entitled "Index"). The Table of Contents should contain main headings and sub-headings as well as the number of the page on which the relevant heading begins.

The type and size of the font in the Table of Contents should be identical to the type and size of the font used in the text: e.g. INTRODUCTION (in the Table of Contents) and INTRODUCTION (in the text), *not* INTRODUCTION (in the Table of Contents) and Introduction (in the text).

A List of Figures and/or List of Tables (including the page numbers) should be included in the Table of Contents after the literary 'References'.

Use the international standard font of 'Times New Roman' or 'Arial' or 'Universal'. Use 12pt for the text of your document, and a larger font for headings, but note the

restrictions of point 2.2 above.

When writing in English, use the British spelling, not the American spelling, e.g. metre and NOT meter, and behaviour, NOT behavior. Computer 'language' on your work processor must be set accordingly to MS Word or WordPerfect.

The text

You have read extensively on the topic, and have compiled notes on what each author wrote - and now it is time to start with your own work. It is essential that you summarise the information obtained and write it in your own words. However, you must give the sources of information by means of references (see point 5). Everyone has their own, unique writing style. The following general rules on scientific writing should be considered:

- Every scientific report has an Introduction and a Conclusion. The Introduction introduces the reader to the topic, and the Conclusion briefly summarises the most important conclusions or results that were reached.
- Write only about scientific facts, i.e. do not enter into a discourse about unsubstantiated legends, hearsay or rumours.
- Do not employ a journalistic style, but use scientifically objective statements throughout; e.g. 'The man had brown eyes', not 'The good looking man had soulful, smouldering, soft brown eyes like pools of molten chocolate'.
- The exclamation mark (!) is *very seldom* used in a scientific report.
- Substantiate your factual info by using scientific references. If you do not supply references, it is assumed that the ideas are yours or are facts that are in public domain and widely known. If you do not give credit to the originator of the idea/knowledge you are committing a criminal offence and may be taken to court. You must reference all information, be it from articles in journals, magazines, books, personal communication, newspapers, the internet etc.
- Do not place your subheadings in the middle of a page in your text - type them in line with the rest of the text against the left-hand margin.
- It serves no purpose to include figures/tables/diagrams in your document without referring to them in your text. The main purpose of a figure is to enhance the image created by your text in the mind of the reader, so as to supplement the text. A Figure or Table never constitutes a section on its own. Number your figures and tables *consecutively* (start at 1, end at n), *except* in a dissertation where you link a figure or a table to a particular Chapter (e.g. Fig. or Table 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2).
- When referring to a figure/table/diagram in your text, position the particular figure/table/ diagram as close as possible to the line where you first referred to it.

A photograph is also referred to as a figure.

- Every figure/table/diagram must have its own number and title, e.g. 'Figure 1: Rivers in South Africa'. Or 'Table 1: Population of Gauteng'. (Note the punctuation!) The numbers and title (caption) of any *figure* is always positioned at the bottom, whereas the heading for any *table* is always at the top.
- A scientist always remains impersonal when writing a scientific report, e.g. 'It was found that ...', or 'According to the respondents, the ...', or 'The authors are of the opinion that ...'. *Never* write 'I think that ...', or 'We are of the opinion that ...', etc.
- Use links to proceed from one section/subsection/chapter to the next, e.g. 'Now that erosion has been dealt with, farming methods will be discussed.' This is very important since it leads the reader to the next topic. Keep in mind that you are the expert in the field of study - you have done the research. Consider the reader to be intelligent but not having detailed knowledge of the topic.
- You must remain consistent *throughout* the document in the use of terms/units/punctuation. If you are inconsistent in your writing, your research procedures may also be inconsistent, and your results will be under suspicion.
- The *Metric* system *must* be used when numbering your different sections/subsections, e.g. 1 BACKGROUND; 1.1 Introduction; 1.1.1 Research problem, etc. You should, however, avoid something like 1.2.5.3.7.6.5.9. Use only up to FOUR digits (e.g. 1.3.4.2); after that simply type (i), (ii), etc. or use 'bullets'. *Don't use* A, B, C, etc.
- Do not use the symbols of elements or molecules as part of your text, e.g. 'Water is scarce ...' is correct but 'H₂O is scarce ...' is incorrect. 'Iron-rich soil ...' is correct, but 'Fe-rich soil ...' is incorrect.
- *Always* write out the numbers zero to ten, but NOT 11 to infinity, except when these start a new sentence, e.g. 'Between seven and nine babies are born per minute, while 315 die every day'. And 'Forty-four people saw the ...'. However, always use digits for *figures* and *tables* (e.g. 'Figure 8' of 'Table 1').
- The Metric SI system *MUST* be used correctly, e.g. 15 Ha of soil and NOT 15 ha, 500 mm of rain and NOT 50 cm of rain, etc. *Imperial* measurements and weights (mass) *MUST* be converted to SI units, e.g. 1 inch = 25,4 mm, 2.2 feet = 1 metre, 1 mile = 1,6 km, 1°C = 5/9 (°F - 32), where C = Celsius and F = Fahrenheit, 2.2 pounds = 1 kg, 1 pound = 454 g. Write 0,5 and NOT ½; 0,33 and NOT 1/3, etc. Use the ISO 'thousand million' and not the American 'billion'.
- *Do not* write the heading of a section/subsection in the very last line of a page, and then start with that section at the top of the *following* page. Rather place both the heading and the start of the section at the top of the next page.
- Always use correct, appropriate language. Consult a dictionary or thesaurus frequently. A thesaurus gives synonyms and related meanings of words and phrases. Consider consulting a *language expert* to *edit* your document. You should use the spell and language checks on your PC (remember to set it to

'British English' beforehand!). It is frustrating for the reader (and the evaluator) to have to read a document containing spelling errors and poor language usage. Remember: A good scientist is also an expert in his/her language!

- Keep your sentences relatively short and do not use jargon or complicated language. Ensure that only one idea is expressed in a sentence. Related sentences and ideas are put together in a paragraph. Do not jumble up information on different things in one paragraph.
- Keep in mind that the writing of a report or thesis can take just as long as doing the research. Leave sufficient time that you can put the completed document aside for a day or two, and then to re-read it critically (as if you were not the author). See if it makes sense.
- Do not use an abbreviation before defining it eg. 'The National research Foundation (NRF) funded the project' - not 'The NRF funded the project' 'Once you have defined the abbreviation, you may use it subsequently without writing out the full term.
- When you read an article, do so more than once. Obviously you will read it to obtain information on the methodology used, the findings, the rationale etc. but also notice how the article is set out and the language used by the author. Use other ways to say something. Don't use the same terms such as 'Figure 1 shows...', but alternate it with eg. 'According to figure 1,' or 'Figure 1 illustrates.....' We strongly recommend that you acquire your own copy of a *Thesaurus* such as *Rogert's Thesaurus*. The *Thesaurus* given as a 'Tool' on MS Word or WordPerfect is helpful but not adequate.

Technical aspects

This section deals with the *final editing* of your document for evaluation:

- The error-free typing and the printing of a document on a good-quality word processor and printer (preferably a Laser or Inkjet printer) is a *prerequisite*. It is a fact that the lecturer who evaluates your work will be impressed with a neatly typed text, devoid of typing errors. This could earn you additional marks (Remember: 'First impressions are lasting!'). If you do not have your own computer/printer, use one of the numerous computers and printers made available for use by students at the University and in our Department.
- A document that is full of typographical errors can be extremely frustrating to mark, so a typed document is *no guarantee* for good marks. Similarly, a good document of *poor* print quality immediately creates a negative impression.
- The contents as well as a typed document containing no errors *count tremendously* towards the marks, which is why a typed document must be proofread and the errors corrected before submission. This is essential.
- Always use paper that is at least 80g/m² thick (or the printing on page 2 will show a background on page one's printing, making reading difficult).

- The line spacing in the text should be at least one and a half, so that the lecturer can write comments between the typed lines. Leave at least a 2 to 2,5 cm margin on the right hand side.
- Be *very* careful of the capitalistic sharks out there. If you pay a typist for the typing of your text, make sure in advance that she/he uses the *correct thickness of paper and line spacing*, and corrects the typing errors, before you pay him/her.
- You are responsible for the document submitted. Don't blame mistakes on the typist or the editor. You must check the document carefully.
- Figures/diagrams/photographs/tables must be *edited properly*. Scanned or digitally printed figures/tables/photographs/photocopies are acceptable. English titles may be retained, but you must allocate your *own serial figure or table number* to the figure/table (e.g. Figure 14.6 from a textbook may become your own Figure 3).
- Each document should have a cover page and must be stapled at the *upper left-hand corner* or ring bound.
- The scientific genus and species name of a plant or animals is always written in italics, but no the family name eg. '*Athrixia phyllicoides* belongs to the family Asteraceae'.

The use of references in general

Statements, ideas or facts drawn from the published works of other authors and incorporated in your text must be acknowledged properly. This is called 'referencing'. There are various referencing methods that can be used. **Discuss the correct method to use with your supervisor.** In some instances the American Psychological Associations (AP) referencing method is used or the adjusted Harvard method of referencing. This method is employed by most scientists worldwide; it may differ from the methods used by historians, educationists, etc. **There are quick Harvard referencing style guides on the internet to assist you if the basics discussed below are not enough. Keep in mind that each journal has its own referencing system as well and is it not advised to adopt one of these methods in your proposal only if your super advises you to do so.** However, the following general guidelines should be followed.

- In general, accepted, established facts are quoted from another author's work, only the author's surname and the date of the publication are cited, e.g. 'During last years, King (1953) developed his idea of the parallel retreat of mountain slopes.' or 'King (1953) was of the opinion that ...'.
- If you refer to the works of more than one author simultaneously, of the dates of their work should be arranged chronologically e.g. 'Glaciers are powerful erosional agents (Strahler, 1974; Davies, 1985).'
- The reference to a figure or table or author(s) *always forms part of the sentence*, e.g.

‘According to Hattingh (1987), rivers flow to the ocean.’ or ‘Rivers flow to the ocean (Hattingh, 1987).’ *Please note the position of the full stop that ends the sentence, i.e. not: ‘Rivers flow to the ocean.__(Hattingh, 1987)’* With respect to *figures* etc.: ‘The earth is a sphere (See Figure 1).’ and *NOT* ‘The earth is a sphere.__(See Figure 1). The page number need not be given unless it is a direct quotation or a controversial, very recent or little known fact.

- If you give (a) a *direct quotation* from another author’s work, or (b) quote a controversial statement in your text, or (c) perhaps, a very recent, *little known fact*, the page number is cited with the author’s surname and the date, e.g. (a) ‘the human population is increasing at an alarming rate.’ (Pounds, 2004, p.12). (b) The earth is flat (Pancake, 1987, p 14). (c) The population of South Africa includes 9,5 million illegal immigrants (NRIP, 2005, pp 23, 34) or The Karoo is expanding eastwards at three kilometres per annum (Grobler, 2005, p 234).
- *(Please note the punctuation, i.e. the position of the commas, full stops, brackets, in the above examples!)*
- If a particular author publishes two or more written works in the same year, the letters (a), (b), etc. are used, e.g.: ‘The earth is already overpopulated (Botha, 1999a), yet every year more and more babies are born (Botha, 1999b).
- Sometimes we consult *experts in person*. Then the term ‘Personal Communication’ is used, e.g. ‘South African produces too little maize (Hanekom, 2005: Personal Communication).’ or ‘South Africa produces too little maize (Hanekom, 2005)*’ with a footnote: ‘*Personal Communication.’
- If only *two* authors publish a work together, *both surnames* are cited *throughout*, e.g. ‘Rocks move downslope (Marsh and Dozier, 1995).’ But ‘Marsh and Dozier (1995, p 23) are of the opinion that his seldom happens.’ (The page *number* is mentioned in the latter instance, because this point of view is *new* to the scientific community.). Note the use of brackets.
- If *three or more* authors publish a work together, the Latin *et al.* (for “and other”) is used, e.g. ‘Du Preez *et al.* (1987) are of the opinion that grain produce is related to precipitation.’ However, all the authors are given in the reference list at the end of the document. Note that *et al.* is always written in italics.
- Please note that we just about *never* use the author’s name, initials or title in the text. We *only* use the *surname*, even if you refer to your own professor or the Vice-Chancellor of the University, (*This is a major advantage of the Harvard referencing system: it gives you the opportunity to address senior people by their surname only!*) E.g. ‘Olivier (2004) was of the opinion that the new funding formula for publications should be implemented with immediate effect, but Pandor (2005), Mearns (2005), and Pityana (2005) felt that this should be postponed until 2006.’ and *not* ‘Prof Jana Olivier (2004) was of the opinion that the new funding formula for

publications should be implemented with immediate effect, but the Honourable Minister of National Education, Ms. Naledi Pandor (2005), Mr Kevin Mearns (2005), and the University Vice-Chancellor, Prof Barney Pityana (2005) felt that this should be postponed until 2006.' (errors underlined in the above). The *only* exception to this rule is when *referring* to really great people in your field of science (usually deceased), e.g. 'William Morris Davis (1920) ...' or 'Lester King in 1953 had this vision of ...'

- If one of the works that *you* consulted cites the work of *another* author, and you feel that *you* should also incorporate the *other* reference in *your own* text, you proceed as follows: 'Joubert (1988), as cited by Meyer (1989, p 45), states that ...'. In this example, *you* studied the work by *Meyer*, and *Meyer* cited *Joubert*, but *you* felt that *you also* want *Joubert's* reference incorporated in your text.
- If you obtain information on the Internet, the author's name and the date (year) are mentioned, as for the above examples. If you cannot identify the name of the author, YOU MAY NOT USE "Anon" for Anonymous (author unknown). If an author does not put his/her name to his/her published work on the Internet, the work is of doubtful scientific quality or value and thus may NOT be used by a scientists in training (what you are)!!

Consulted sources

- At the end of your report, place a list of all the sources that *you* consulted in preparing *your* report. This is known as 'Reference List'. *Avoid* the term 'Bibliography' because a bibliography is a list of *all possible sources* that deal with a particular subject, which *you* most probably do *not* have!
- References must be *listed alphabetically* according to the *surnames* of the *authors*. If multi-authored, the sequence of authors for a publication must remain the same as on the publication. If there are a number of references with the same first author, the references are listed alphabetically according the second, third etc. authors' surnames e.g. Botha N & Hattingh A is placed *after* Botha N and Andrews S. For the same author(s), the references are arranged *chronologically*. If the same author has published more than once in a year, use the letters a or b after the date. Singled authored works (articles or books) are placed before multi-authored works eg. Botha N 2006 comes *before* Botha & Kruger 1998.
- If your reference comes from a book, give the author's surname, his/her initials, the year of publication, the title of the book (underlined or *in Italics*), the edition (only for second or *later* editions), the city/town (place) of publication and the name of the publisher (the name only, not the full name of the company, e.g. Macmillan and not Macmillan and Co., or Wiley and not John Wiley and Sons Inc.); please note: the name of the publisher is required, not the name of the printer/printing company). Do not provide the total number of pages in the book. **YOU MUST PAY**

PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THIS LAYOUT.

- If your reference is an article from a scientific journal, you give the author's surname, his/her initials, the year of publication, the title of the article (this is not underlined or *in Italics*), the title (name) of the journal (underlined or *in Italics*), the volume number, and the page numbers in the journal where the article is found (neither underlined nor in Italics).
- If you obtained the information on the Internet, you give the author's surname, his/her initials, the year, the title of the article (neither underlined nor in *Italics*) and the Internet address (e.g. http://www.altavista.digital.com/slope), which is underlined or *in Italics*.
- In the case of two or more authors: first author's surname, then his/her initials eg. Marsh WM & Dozier J or Beckedahl HR, Bowyer-Bower TAS, Dardis GF & Hanvey PM).

Examples of references

The following examples may illustrate the above: *(Please note the punctuation, the placement of the full stops, commas, etc.). Always determine which referencing system your supervisor prefers.*

REFERENCES (NB: NOT 'Bibliography')

Beckedahl HR, Bowyer-Bower TAS, Dardis GF & Hanvey PM 1988: Geomorphic effects of soil erosion. In Moon BP & Dardis GF (eds.): *The Geomorphology of Southern Africa*. Southern Books: Johannesburg, 249-276. (This is an example of a paper by Beckedahl *et al.* found in an *edited* book published by Moon & Dardis - in *this* instance, the page numbers of the book must be supplied.)

Botha JR 1999a: *Humans on Earth*. Cape Town: Wiley.

Botha JR 1999b: *Population growth on our Planet*. Pretoria: van Schaik.

Davies P 1985: Do glaciers really erode? *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, 14, 130-138.

Du Preez MJ, Du Toit DP, Du Plessis PPR & Van der Merwe ABD 1987: The influence of summer precipitation on grain production. *South Africa Journal of Science*. 83, 123-146.

Fuggle RF & Rabie MA 1992: *Environmental management in South Africa*. Cape Town: Juta.

Grobler PJ 1995: Report of the Commission for Rural Restructuring. Part 1: Desertification in the Republic of South Africa. Department of Agriculture, Report No. 123. Pretoria: Government Printer.*

Hanekom D 2005: Personal Communication. Chairman of the South African Maize Producers Council.**

Hattingh PF 1987: *Fluvial erosion: an analysis*. New York: McGraw-Hill. ***

McKinney ML & Schoch RM 1996: *Environmental science: systems and solutions*. (2nd Ed.) New York: West.

National Research Institute for Population, 1995: The Population of South Africa. HSRC Report No. 123. Pretoria: Government Printer. *

Pancake DUMB 2010: The Earth is Definitely Flat. Unpublished MSc thesis. University of Non-Sense: Department of Geography. ****

Pounds NJ 1996: The population explosion in the Twentieth Century. *Journal of the Association of American Geographers*, 45, 346-450.

Strahler AN & Strahler AH 1973: *Environmental geoscience*. (4th Ed.) Santa Barbara: Hamilton.

Tindale, AB 1999: New Ideas on Slope Formation. http://www.altavista.digital.com/slope_

* An example of a Government or related publication.

** In a personal communication, provide the person's rank/position and place of work/office where he/she could be contacted (not the complete address!).

*** Many publishing companies have branches worldwide. You mention only the first city mentioned in the source, i.e. *not* McGraw-Hill: New York, Sydney, Toronto, but ONLY New York.

**** This is an unpublished work. This title is *not* underlined.

Adapted from notes compiled by professors TJ Harmse and PJ Wolfaart, University of Johannesburg, 2005.

4. COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS WHEN WRITING YOUR PROPOSAL

4.1 Regular submissions to your supervisor

When you are busy compiling information that will form the Research Proposal it is fitting that regular submissions are made to your supervisor as agreed upon. Some supervisors would like to receive parts of the research proposal, other supervisors might want the whole proposal as a completed document for commenting purposes. What your supervisor will do is to comment on your document and give feedback to improve. The regular submissions will ensure progress in completing your research proposal on time. It is not advisable to ignore the research plan and submit a fully written proposal without consulting with your supervisor. In this way you might run the risk of wasting time on irrelevant aspects which could have been identified long before your submission. This may result in further delays in completion of your research proposal.

4.2 Activities to capture on myUnisa

The regular submission according to your research plan will be captured as myUnisa activity. The myUnisa system has a section which is called M&D activities. This is the section your supervisor uses to capture discussions with you, comments on chapters and various other activities you may have completed as well as final submission of your research proposal and approval of your research proposal. It is very important that information is captured to show your progress.

These activities are used as a progress report for each student. When there has been no progress irrespective of a research plan, registration may be declined for the next year. Paragraph 4.10 of the M and D Procedures explain this point. If there is no progress the myUnisa system automatically blocks registration. The College hopes to have engaged with you before such measures are necessary.

4.3 Progress report

During August of the academic year, your supervisor will be requested to complete a progress report where no progress has been experienced. In such a case the college would require a progress plan in which activities are indicated and due dates listed. If this plan does not result in progress, your registration may be declined for the next academic year. According to the M and D Procedures Paragraph 4.11 it states you may appeal which will then be considered by College Management. When a supervisor is concerned about the progress of a student, the student will be requested to complete a progress report which will be accompanied by a progress report completed by the supervisor. The supervisor will then propose a workplan/research plan for the remainder of the year which the student and supervisor agree upon. The COD of the department should sign off the documents. If the student is still unable to progress the supervisor may be required to recommend that the student is no longer admitted to the program for the next academic year. The forms can be found on the College website under Postgraduate matters and under forms.

The form can be found on the College website under Masters and Doctoral information. It has 2 parts.

Example of progress report form for supervisor and student.



PROGRESS REPORT

Supervisor report

To be completed by the supervisor during August of each year if and when it has become apparent that the student is unable to achieve the proposed outcomes as set in the research plan for the Research Proposal module or in the Dissertation or Thesis module to enable successful completion of the module within the given time. The progress report should be submitted to the College office for Research and Postgraduate studies after approval by the COD of the Department.

Progress report for:

1. Surname and Initial(s)		Student nr:	
2. Which module is the candidate currently registered for?			
2.1 Research Proposal module		Year of first registration	
2.2 Dissertation Module		Year of first registration	
2.3 Thesis Module		Year of first registration	
3. Is this the first report for this candidate in the module indicated above			Yes or No
4. Give a brief summary of the progress to date to enable a better understanding of the myUnisa M&D activities recorded. Attach myUnisa M&D activity report.			
5. Suggest a possible plan of action or way forward for the student with completion dates and achievable targets.			

Signature of supervisor: Date:

Signature of COD: Date:

Comments from COD:

PROGRESS REPORT

Student report

To be completed by the candidate during August of the academic each year in question if and when it has become apparent that the candidate is unable to achieve the proposed outcomes as set in the research plan for the candidate as per the Research Proposal module or Dissertation or Thesis module. The progress report should be submitted to the supervisor who will submit both reports for consideration by the COD after which the reports will be submitted to CORGS for further processing.

Progress report for

1. Surname and Initial(s)		Student nr:	
2. Which module are you currently registered for?			
2.1 Research Proposal module		Year of first registration	
2.2 Dissertation Module		Year of first registration	
2.3 Thesis Module		Year of first registration	
3. Give a brief summary of your progress to date in terms of the research plan agreed upon between you and your supervisor.			
4. What do you think has delayed your progress?			

Signature of candidate: Date:

5. COLLEGE PROCEDURE FOR FINAL RESEARCH PROPOSAL

5.1 Submit final draft to supervisor

The final draft of your research proposal should be submitted to your supervisor. This is the draft which your supervisor has commented on for the last time and you have made the improvements. The draft is submitted back to your supervisor for further processing in the department.

5.2 Supervisor Signs off research proposal

When the final draft is returned to your supervisor, it will then be signed off by your supervisor by completing the following form which can be found on the College website under Postgraduate Matters and Forms. As this is a college and departmental process, this form should be **submitted by your supervisor** to the Postgraduate Programme Coordinator for vetting purposes. If a co-supervisor is involved the co-supervisor should also agree to the sign off of the research proposal for vetting. If a co-supervisor does not agree with the submission of the proposal for vetting purposes it should be indicated on the form. If your supervisor requests you to submit you may do so. This document is to be submitted in electronic format with the Research Proposal attached

and submitted to the Postgraduate Programme Coordinator for vetting for all students.

Check that the following is submitted:

- Final research proposal
- Signed Research Proposal for vetting form
- Signatures of both supervisor and where applicable co-supervisor.
- Electronic submissions should be made
- Some departments may require a Turn-it-in Report as well.

Research Proposal for Vetting

This document is to be submitted with the Research Proposal attached to the Postgraduate Programme Coordinator for vetting for students in the Department of Life and Consumer Sciences, Department of Geography, Department of Agriculture and Animal Health and Department of Environmental Sciences. This document and the Research Proposal with external supervisors in the Department of Environmental Sciences is submitted to Ms Emelda Pimentel at pimente1@unisa.ac.za. All submissions should be electronically. The Co-supervisor is also required to agree to the submission.

I _____(supervisor to complete)_____ hereby give notice that:

Student Initials and Surname	
Student number	
Title of Research Proposal	
Qualification	

may submit the research proposal for vetting purposes.

For noting by the Vetting committee: The Research Proposal

	Tick the appropriate option	
	Yes	No
Was submitted through Turn-it-in during the development of the proposal		
Final draft was submitted through Turn-it-In		
Final draft was not submitted through Turn-it-In		

Supervisor signature: _____ Date: _____

Co-supervisor signature: _____

Date: _____

Administrative CORGS sign off and submission to Student Record	Date submitted	Signature _____
--	----------------	-----------------

5.3 Outcome of the research proposal

The outcome of the research proposal is communicated to you via a letter from the Postgraduate Coordinator. Please note that each department has a different way of issuing the completion letter. Approach your supervisor if you have not had any direct communication from the department if your proposal was submitted for vetting. This letter should be kept as it forms an important part of your ethics application to follow and final Research Proposal Module Result form which will be the final sign off of this module.

5.4 Recording of Research Proposal outcome

When the outcome of the research proposal which was vetted has been finalized by your department, your supervisor will record the outcome on myUnisa under M and D activities.

Remember that you cannot register for the next module if the Research Proposal Module has not been signed off by your supervisor. Please ensure that your supervisor has signed off the Research Proposal Module form (RPM form) and submitted it through the college processes. Students may not have a copy of this form. It is a Unisa procedure. See section 6.2 for further detail.

6 COLLEGE PROCEDURES AFTER RESEARCH PROPOSAL HAS BEEN APPROVED

6.1 Apply for Ethics clearance

Only after the Research Proposal has been approved may you apply for Ethics Clearance. The approval of the Research Proposal and the Approval for Ethics Clearance should be obtained in the year you are registered for the Research Proposal module. You will not be permitted to register for the Dissertation or Thesis module if you have not obtained Ethics Clearance. Section 7 of the **Quick Guide for M&D students 2020** explains the process to follow to submit an application to the ethics committee.

The following documents should be submitted in electronic format to Ms Marthie van Wyk at vwymkj@unisas.ac.za who deals with all Ethics related matters in CAES:

- College Ethics application form
- Approved and corrected research proposal (it is critical that you make the necessary corrections as per the outcome of the vetting committee and in consultation with your supervisor. Track changed research proposals may not be submitted)
- Letter from your supervisor confirming the research proposal was approved and that changes were made to the proposal according the outcome of the vetting committee.
- All permission letters required from the institutions involved in the research · Consent form where human participants will be used

6.2 Completion of Research Proposal Module Result form

After you have acquired Ethics approval for the research you suggested your supervisor will complete the Research Proposal Module Result form on your behalf. Also referred to as the **RPM form**. This is not a process you may be involved in as it is a Unisa administrative process. Your Supervisor completes this form on your behalf and submits it for processing. You may also not be in possession of this form as you have the outcome of your approved research proposal and ethics application. This form is submitted to Ms Emelda Pimentel pimente1@unisa.ac.za or to her office room 053, 3rd floor of the Calabash building by your supervisor and requires the signature of the School Director. The RPM form should be submitted to Ms Emelda Pimentel no later than **31 January of the next academic year to ensure timely registration**. This means your research plan should include due dates to reach this specific date of submission to the College office for Research and Postgraduate Studies.

Documents that should be attached to the RPM form are the following:

- ✓ Letter confirming the research proposal was approved
- ✓ Assessment criteria as from 1 February 2020
- ✓ The vetting form where the supervisor agrees to having the research proposal vetted and
- ✓ Ethics approval letter

If for some reason your progress was unsatisfactory and re-registration is denied, the RPM form will also be completed and submitted to Ms Emelda Pimentel for processing and signature by the School Director. In this instance the progress report of the supervisor and student should be attached as well as all myUnisa activities. The RPM form is included below and is obtained from the College website at <https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Colleges/Agriculture-&-Environmental-Sciences/Information-for-postgraduate-supervisors>. **Remember that this form should not be in your possession for any reason.** The RPM form can be found on the College Website and is required for registration for the next dissertation or thesis modules.

Ethics Note

As you have noticed it is important to plan the development of your research proposal very well and your application for ethics clearance as well as to obtain approval for both before the next registration period for the next academic year starts. Ethics applications can be submitted every month. There is no reason to miss any of the submission dates to the Ethics committee. This might not be the case in December as committee members may be on leave and will this only be possible if all committee members are available. Please plan the submission of your Ethics application carefully to ensure that enough time is left for finalization of your registration. Visit the College Website for the submission dates. <https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Colleges/Agriculture-&-Environmental-Sciences/Research/Research-Ethics>

6.3 Incomplete Research Proposal module

If you have not complete die Research Proposal module in the academic year with good reason, you may apply for an additional year of completing the Research Proposal module. This will be considered by College Management and is not an automatic allowance if you have not completed in one year. A motivation has to be submitted to Management by your supervisor to be considered by the committee. Such an application should be submitted by **31 January** of the next academic year. The RPM form is used for this purpose and option 2 is selected. Adequate motivation should be provided for a continuation to be considered.

7. REGISTER FOR THE DISSERTATION OR THESIS MODULE

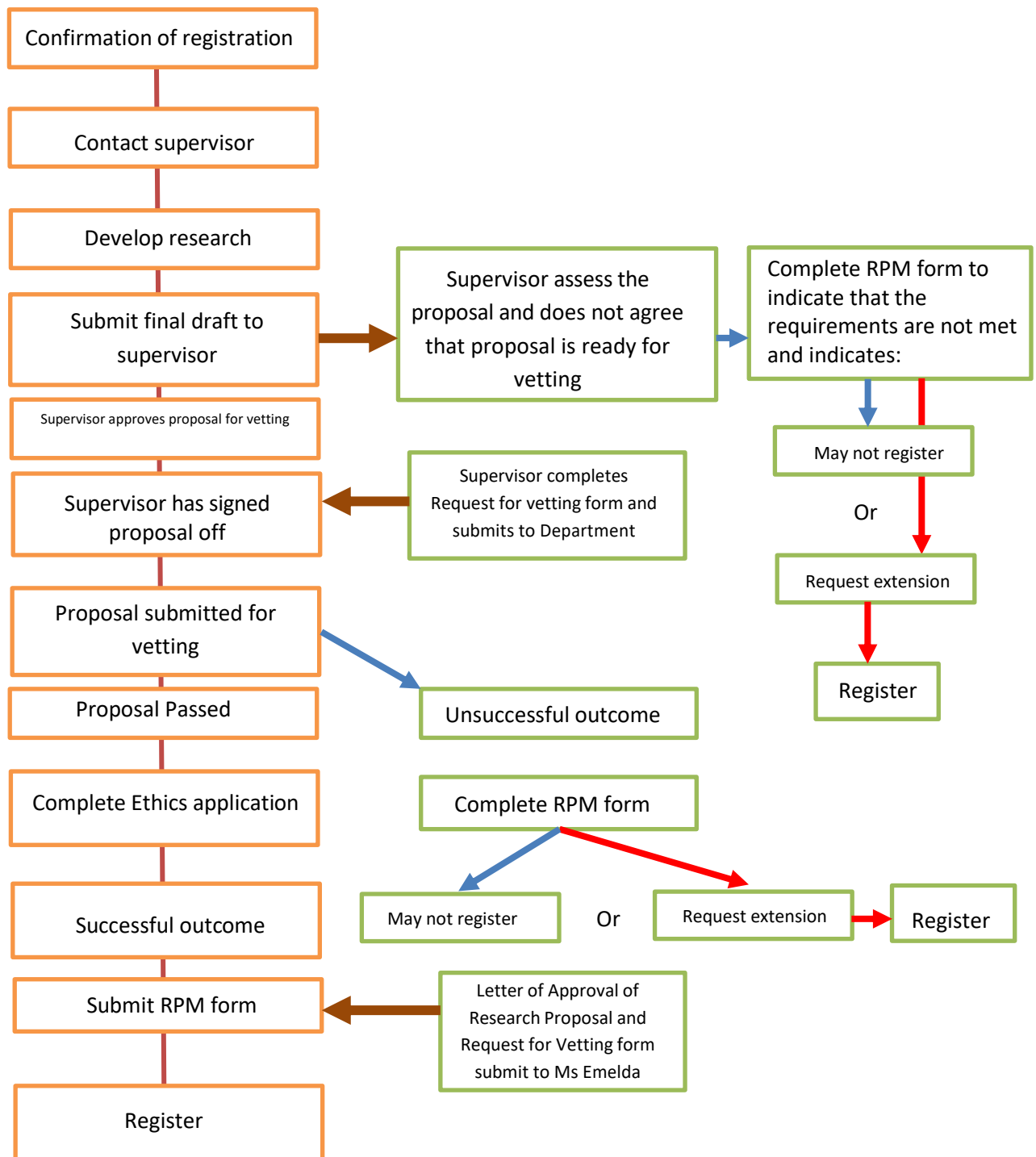
7.1 Successful Research Proposal module completion

When you have successfully completed your Research Proposal module you may register for the next module which will be the Dissertation module or the Thesis module. You are again reminded that your first registration is not carried over for the duration of the program. If you have been given another opportunity to complete the Research Proposal module you have to register for the Research Proposal module to do so. If you do not register you will not be considered an active student in the college and may not receive supervision. You may complete the research proposal very early in the year and start working on your dissertation or thesis after which you may register for any one of these modules in the following year.

7.2 Deferment of your studies

If you have decided not to register for the next academic you should notify the college of your decision. This is done through the completion of the following **Deferment form** which can be found on the College website under Postgraduate Matters under Forms. This form must be submitted to Ms Emelda Pimentel at Pimente1@unisa.ac.za. A deferment is only official if it has been recorded as per the submission. **You may only defer twice during your study at Unisa.** Also consult paragraph 4.14 of the M and D Procedures for more clarity. You may not receive any supervision during the deferment year.

8 Summary of processes in the Research Proposal Module



8. Summary of suggested due dates for the Research Proposal Module

Registration closes	Mid-March
Target date for Completion of Research Proposal (discuss with supervisor)	1 September or earlier
Ethics clearance	November
Submission of RPM form	31 January
Registration for Dissertation or Thesis	By Mid-March of the following year

SECTION B: PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE DISSERTATION OR THESIS PHASE

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Dissertation or Thesis phase of your qualification is to allow you to execute the proposed research you developed during the Research Proposal module of your qualification. The purpose of this module is also to develop skills in presenting your research through a report in the form of a dissertation for a Master's degree or a Thesis for a Doctoral degree. The Dissertation or Thesis module will also give you the opportunity to develop the necessary skills to collate part of the dissertation or thesis findings into a research article(s) which could be submitted to an accredited journal.

In Summary: During this module you will be completing 5 important activities

- *Gather data or do experimental work according to the methods you described in the research proposal*
- *Analyse the data obtained during the data gathering phase of your research*
- *Write specific chapters to be collated into a dissertation or thesis which would be to the standard for submission for examination purposes*
- *Submit the compiled dissertation or thesis for examination purposes*
- *Draft a research article which could be submitted to an accredited journal.*

Students should be advised that currently students in Masters or Doctoral qualifications in CAES may only submit dissertations and thesis in CHAPTER FORMAT. Article format used at other universities are not supported. Detail is given under section 4 of this document.

Students in the Dissertation or Thesis module of a Master's qualification or a Doctoral qualification should study this section. This section will cover all aspects related to the Dissertation or Thesis module which will assist you to successfully complete the program and also contains specific requirements which should be adhered to within the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences.

A further requirement as from 2020 is that all PhD thesis candidates should show evidence of the **submission of 1 Article to an accredited non-predatory journal during the course of the Thesis to graduate. This evidence must be submitted with the final sign off of the thesis by the supervisor.** Masters students as from 2020 may also opt for the inclusion of a draft article in the dissertation which will not be examined but commented on by the examiner.

2. HOW TO START THE DISSERTATION OR THESIS MODULE?

2.1 Make contact with your Supervisor

When you have registered your first responsibility is to make contact with your

supervisor. As a registered student you would have received the Confirmation of Registration Letter. Read this letter carefully to ensure that the correct details have been captured on the system. The same forms of contact Unisa supports such as email, face to face appointments where necessary, video conferencing and others indicated in the **Quick Guide for M&D students 2020** will apply.

2.2 Your supervisor

Usually the supervisor that supervised you through the Research Proposal module will continue to be your supervisor through the Dissertation or Thesis module of your qualification. If you were allocated a co-supervisor this supervisor will also remain the co-supervisor to your study throughout the Dissertation or Thesis. Please note that if you are not happy with your supervisor for whatever reason, it will not be possible for the College to immediately find another supervisor as. It is your responsibility as student to cultivate a positive and fruitful relationship with your supervisor and to ensure that good relations prevail throughout your study. Delays in supervision may result which might be unavoidable.

2.3 Plan your activities and submissions

It is again very important that you draft a plan of action which contains the activities you need to complete during a specific time as well as submissions to assess by your supervisor which are part of the dissertation or thesis you are compiling. An example of such a plan was presented in the **Quick Guide for M&D students 2020** for the Research Proposal Module. Your activities should be planned with the following in mind:

- When registering for a Masters dissertation module you are given **2 years to complete the research and submit for examination.** This calculation is made by subtracting the year it took you to complete the Research Proposal module as you are allowed 3 years in total to complete the qualification.
- When registering for a Doctoral Thesis module you are given **5 years to complete the research and submit for examination.** This calculation is made by subtracting the year it took you to complete the Research Proposal module as you are allowed 6 years in total to complete the qualification.

If you completed your research proposal in more than 1 year, you have fewer years to complete the Dissertation or Thesis. You should discuss the possibility of either finishing on time or extending your submission to the following year.

Nevertheless, you should draft a plan of action for the year in which you set targets for completion and due dates. This is an important part of successfully completing your qualification. If you are still within the 2 years of completing the dissertation and 5 years for completing the thesis you should be considering the following which is only a suggestion which you should discuss with your supervisor who might want you to go about your first year in the dissertation or thesis phase differently:

For Master's students:

- Plan your data gathering activities and analysis for the first year of registration

in the dissertation module

- Plan additional chapters to be written for this year as well such as the Literature chapter (Chapter 2), Introduction chapter (Chapter 1) and Methodology chapter (Chapter 3).
- Plan the writing up of your data and the discussion about your results as Chapter 4 as well as Chapter 5 which is usually the Conclusion chapter for the final year of your dissertation.
- Also plan the referencing list, editing, list of chapters, list of figures and all other details required for your dissertation for the last year of your studies.

For Doctoral students:

You have more years to complete your Doctoral degree than a Master's student. Have a discussion with your supervisor to decide where to start your Thesis module and what aspect of your research you should start with first. Because of the nature of a Thesis you may not be required to start with data gathering first as recommended for Master's students. The nature of your study will possibly dictate where you will start. Wherever you start you should plan activities for every year of your study. You do not need to make use of all the study years allocated to the qualification. You may finish in a shorter period depending on the time you have available to complete the research and thesis and the nature of your study. However, always keep paragraph 4.13 of the M and D Procedures in mind when determining the number of years you would like to spend completing your Doctoral degree. It is critical that you plan enough time for the completion of the referencing list, editing, list of chapters, list of figures and all other details required for your dissertation for the last year of your studies.

Remember the last year of your Dissertation or Thesis module might be a short year if you are planning to submit for the April-May graduation dates. You may also not have a lot of time left for detailed work on your Dissertation or Thesis when you intend to submit for the September – October graduation.

3. PROCESSES WITHIN CAES DURING THE DISSERTATION AND THESIS MODULES

3.1 Regular submissions to your supervisor

During the Dissertation and Thesis phase of your qualification it is critical that regular submission of your work is made to your supervisor. It is not advisable to disappear for long periods of time and then to make a submission to your supervisor which you consider an examinable copy. The purpose of regular submission is to ensure that you remain focused and that the quality of your work is assessed as you progress through the dissertation or thesis. It is important to always keep in mind that your dissertation or thesis should be compiled in such a way that it is an examinable submission and not a submission that will be rejected by the examiners.

3.2 Activities to capture on myUnisa

The regular submission according to your research plan will be captured as myUnisa activity. The myUnisa system has a section which is called M&D activities. This is the section your supervisor uses to capture discussions with you, comments on chapters and various other activities you may have completed as well as final submission of your research proposal and approval of your research proposal. It is very important that information is captured to show your progress.

These activities are used as a progress report for each student. When there has been no progress irrespective of a research plan, registration may be declined for the next year. Paragraph 4.10 of the M and D Procedures explains this point. If there is no progress the myUnisa system automatically blocks registration. The College hopes to have engaged with you before such measures are necessary.

3.3 Progress report

During August of the academic year, your supervisor will be requested to complete a progress report where no progress has been experienced. In such a case the college would require a progress plan in which activities are indicated and due dates listed. If this plan does not result in progress, your registration may be declined for the next academic year. According to the M and D Procedures Paragraph 4.11 states you may appeal which will then be considered by College Management.

4. REQUIREMENTS FOR A DISSERTATION OR THESIS

4.1 Conventional Chapter format

The format in which your dissertation or thesis is submitted for examination should be the best possible way through which the quality of the dissertation or thesis is presented. Some Chapters in the conventional writing format may still apply for a Thesis in Article format. The guidelines below will help you construct the chapters in the most appropriate format. Remember you are writing a dissertation and thesis in the best way for the examiner to understand the work that you have done. It is important that the presentation of your dissertation and thesis should therefore be a professional document that presents your research in a scientific way which will be what the examiners will be looking for.

4.2 Structure of Dissertation or Thesis in the conventional chapter format

A dissertation or thesis compiled in the conventional Chapter format contains several different chapters. The most common chapter format that is used is as follows:

Chapter 1 is an introductory chapter which contains the background to the research, problem as well as the objectives of the study. In this chapter you may also include a justification of the study should it be necessary. The chapter may also include a brief overview of the research methodology and analysis procedures as well as the chapter layout of the dissertation or thesis. In some instances a summary might be required

for the chapter in which the next chapter is introduced as a follow on of chapter 1.

Chapter 2 usually contains the literature review related to the study. There may be more than one such a chapter especially in a Thesis.

Chapter 3 is usually a methodology chapter in which the design of the study is presented in an argumentative and referenced way. This is also the chapter in which you make mention of the Ethics clearance you received for your study.

Chapter 4 is presented as the chapter in which the analyzed data is presented and discussed. This chapter does not usually contain any conclusions only referenced paragraphs where the results or findings are discussed in terms of where other authors agree or disagree or support what you have found.

Chapter 5 is the conclusion chapter in which the final conclusions are made about the results or findings. This is the chapter where you have to show what your study has come up with in terms of each of the objectives and what the results of findings mean or suggest. This chapter also includes a section in which you show the limitations of the study as well as suggestions for future research. The contribution of your research should also be included in this chapter.

You end the dissertation or thesis with a reference list as well as addendums which include relevant documents such as questionnaires, ethics approval letters, the consent form used and any other relevant documents which would help the examiners form a total picture of your research process.

Always discuss the suggested layout with your supervisor to determine where your submission will deviate to present your study in the best possible way and what your supervisor prefers. Also remember that the content and way in which the information is presented may differ because of the nature of the study and preferences of supervisors. The point remains that you should submit a dissertation or thesis that best presents your work and brings across a clear understanding of what you did, when you did it, why you did it and what you found.

4.3 Guideline for the structure of a chapter.

This is where supervisors greatly differ and something you have to clarify with your supervisor. However, your goal is to deliver a chapter that clearly stipulates what it is about or what the reader may expect in the chapter, information that is clearly set out and reads easily and a conclusion to the chapter. The purpose of the chapter should be clear and that should form the reference a writer should use to align all the information to. If you decided to write about the Different species of Flies found in the Amazon dessert and the relationship to agricultural production, all information should related to this purpose and help to establish the different points of view and information related to this purpose. In most cases the following guidelines can be followed to assist you with the content and structure of a chapter.

4.3.1 Chapter heading

A Chapter always starts with the words Chapter and the number of this Chapter as well as a heading for this chapter.

Example:

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Note: The headings of a chapter may be styled in any way as long as it remains in the font the dissertation or thesis is presented in and is clearly visible and stands out to some extent but not overpowering. The best option is to have this caption in bold font. The size may be increased slightly but not overly enlarged to disrupt the proportions of your typing and styling.

4.3.1 The Introduction

After the heading of the chapter, the writer moves to introducing the chapter. This is usually called Introduction and numbered as 1. Always remember that headings and sub-headings should have numbers. In the Introduction section most supervisors prefer to see a link to the previous chapter and a follow on to what will be expected in this chapter.

This section introduces the reader to all the main discussions the chapter will present and then allows the writer to introduce the first heading to follow the introduction. Some supervisors may not prefer this type of introduction which may require you to get some examples of how your supervisor would like you to present an introduction to the chapter. Some supervisors also prefer that you adopt a challenging writing style in the introduction in which you may present well referenced statements which will be discussed in the chapter or unpacked in the chapter. This style would be very well positioned in a Thesis format.

4.3.3 The body of the chapter

4.3.3.1 How to write the body of the chapter?

The body of the chapter contains the sections that relate to the purpose of the chapter. In this section you should always adopt the approach not to write long winded sentences and sections in which instance the reader loses the purpose of the section. Always read the section you have written to determine if all the information is relevant to the section or if you have in fact started another section but not included it under its own heading. You should also not be writing about one argument in a paragraph and then jumping to the next paragraph with something else and then following this paragraph with information related to the first paragraph. You should always sort the

information out so that information pertaining to a particular topic is kept together. Paragraphs should also not be pages and pages without a break. Paragraphs should be kept as short as possible but containing the relevant information to strengthen the point you want to bring across.

The chapter should always be evident of headings and sub-headings. In the end you should be able to use the headings to write your Introduction as these should form the main discussion sections of the chapter. Headings and sub-headings are used to make it easier to read the information in the chapter and follow the content being presented.

In most cases it is preferred that you don't use bullets to indicate sub-headings nor exceed 3 or 4 digits in the numbering format. Mouton (2009:126) explains that it is not

Example of numbered headings and sub-headings

2. Elements of Behaviour

2.1 Impulsive behavior

2.2 Planned behavior

2.2.1 Experiencing control

2.2.2 Experiencing comfort

2.2.3 Experiencing relaxation

2.2.3.1 Internal relaxation elements

2.2.3.2 External relaxation elements

4.3.3.2 How to style the numbering of a chapter?

As indicated in the example above, some supervisors may request you to follow an indented writing style in which the numbering style does not stay flush with the numbering of the main heading. Each numbered heading starts below the lettering of the previous heading. This styling method uses up a lot of space and should be discussed with your supervisor.

The most common styling method to use is the flush styling method where all numbers appear against the left margin.

Example of the flush styling method:

3. Elements of Behaviour

3.1 Impulsive behavior

3.2 Planned behavior

3.2.1 Experiencing control

- 3.2.2 Experiencing comfort
- 3.2.3 Experiencing relaxation
 - 3.2.3.1 Internal relaxation elements
 - 3.2.3.2 External relaxation elements
- 4.3.3.3 What line spacing to use?**

Paragraph 7.7 of the M and D Procedures advise that all dissertations and Thesis should at least be written in 1.5 line spacing. The following lines are presented in 1.5 line spacing for you to see the difference.

Example of 1.5 line spacing

Mouton (2009:125) discusses the different levels at which a chapter should be structured. According to Mouton (2009:125) in particular the triad method is suggested which is the same as what was presented in point 4.2 and 4.3 thus far. The only section of the triad method that has not been discussed is the summary or conclusion part of a chapter.

4.3.3.4 What spacing to use between paragraphs?

It is always a good idea to have a space between headings and paragraphs. This space may be the same as the line spacing you use. By entering twice after a paragraph a big enough gap will be formed for you to start the paragraph on the second enter.

You may also want to indicate the start of a next section with a larger gap than ordinary paragraphs. This will create a better impression of a new section that will follow. An example of this is given below. Please carefully read through the example as it contains information you might find useful to assist you in writing scientifically. Also note when capital letters are suggested at the heading level, when bold 2nd level sub-headings are used (not in capital letters) and when 4th level sub-headings are used in bold italic. This is only a suggestion for styling. You should be styling your writing to create a profession image that has been considered at all levels which includes styling.

Example of space between sections and paragraphs with sub-headings

2. STRUCTURE AT CHAPTER LEVEL

2.1 The Triad

Mouton (2009:125) discusses the different levels at which a chapter should be structured. According to Mouton (2009:125) in particular the triad method is suggested which is the same as what was presented in point 4.2 and 4.3 thus far. The only section of the triad method that has not been discussed is the summary or conclusion

part of a chapter.

2.2 Assistance with the structure

Mouton (2009:126) also explains that a discussion should include bridging sentences as well as bridging paragraphs. According to Mouton (2003:126) this is a way of forward and backward-looking into the main points of your argumentation. This will help the reader to find the relationship between sentences or paragraphs that follow on the previous ones.

2.2.1 Linking devices

2.2.1.1 Elaboration

Through the use of elaboration the link between a particular point that the writer wants to make, can be found. Mouton (2009:127) explains that at some point in the formation of the paragraph and to support critical thinking where a master's degree or thesis is concerned, the writer may want to elaborate and draw out the implications of what has been said through the use of devices such as: "*more specifically, or this (also) implies that...*"

2.2.1.2 Reaffirmation

Mouton (2009:127) further explains that reaffirmation may be used where a writer wishes to repeat an argument or point made, especially if central to the overall argument. In this instance reaffirmation is used to repeat the point in a slightly different way (Mouton 2009:127). Words and phrases that are used in this instance are: "*stated differently*", "*in other words*", "*in short*", etc.

2.2.1.3 Conclusions (Note that it is not recommended that a heading of any kind be left on the bottom of a page without the discussion – always move the heading to next page to accompany the discussion)

2.2.1.3 Conclusions

Mouton (2009:127) advises that after a lengthy set of arguments or having presented the evidence for a particular point of view, the writer may want to indicate that a conclusion is about to follow by using linking devices such: "*therefore*". "*hence*", "*thus*" "*it follows that*", "*then*" and "*consequently*".

2.2.1.4 Contrasts

Mouton (2009:127) highlights that when the writer has argued in favour of a particular point of view or position, it is good practice to also present opposing and contrasting views. Mouton (2009:127) suggests that this is indicated by the use of such construction as: *“however”, “on the other hand”, “conversely” and “in contrast”*.

3 LOGIC OF SECTION HEADINGS

Mouton (2009:126) argues that a well-structured chapter will exhibit logical and systematic section headings as a heading embodies the core idea or topic of that section. It is also good practice to reconsider the headings used so that they best reflect the information presented under such a heading. In some instances you should approach the heading in terms of if it is able to stand alone and inform the reader of what is about to be presented. If a heading does not make sense in this way it should be reconsidered.

3.1 No dangling subsections

In this instance Mouton (2009:126) argues that since each section and subsection should ideally explore one and only one main idea or themem, it does not make sense to have one subsection, e.g: 1.1 with another sub-section 1.1.1 followed by 1.2. The sub-section 1.1.1 is referred to as a dangling subsection. Since there is no 1.1.2 Mouton (2009:126) is of the opinion that it does not make sense to have section 1.1.1 in the section 1.1 and should section 1.1.1 be incorporated into 1.1 without a heading.

3.2 Too many levels become confusing

4.3.3.4 How to neaten the end of paragraphs?

You are advised to consider justifying paragraphs so that the ends of sentences are aligned. An unjustified paragraph appears untidy. Below are examples of an unjustified paragraph and a justified paragraph. Study the examples below as these pieces will help you understand the requirements of Scientific writing.

Example of an un-justified paragraph

The structure of a paragraph forms an important part of the professional delivery of your Dissertation or Thesis. According to Mouton (2009:128) a paragraph is a sequence of related sentences that carry and develop a single idea. Mouton (2009:128) further states that a well-structured paragraph consists of three elements which are; (1) a lead-in or main sentence that makes the topic of that paragraph explicit, (2) the core sentence or sentences in which you elaborate on the main topic or point made in the first/key sentence and (3) a concluding sentence that

summarises the argument of the paragraph.

Example of a justified paragraph

A Rule you should always try to implement is to write clearly, simply and to the point (Mouton, 2009:129). According to Mouton (2009:129) writing scientifically is not to write long and complex sentences which contain flowery words, scientific jargon, exaggeration and other rhetorical devices that merely serve to detract from the meaning of the sentence. Mouton (2009:129) goes on to state that unnecessary use of words and redundant phrases should be avoided and repetition should not be entertained. Sentences should be kept simple and short (Mouton, 2009:129).

4.3.3.5 What are the specifications of page margins?

Paragraph 7.7 of the M and D Procedures states that a left margin of 3 centimeters should be kept right throughout the dissertation or thesis. The right margin should be kept at 2.54 centimeters which is the default formatting within Word. The right margin should never be too narrow that it detracts from the proportions of the page. (This paragraph has been formatted to a 3 cm left margin as an example).

4.3.3.6 What are the specifications when including Figures or Tables?

When using figures in a chapter the caption of a Figure should be at the bottom of the figure as presented in the example. Figures should be numbered in sequence in which they appear in the chapter and should include the chapter number as well. For example: The figure below is from Chapter 3 (first digit) and is the second figure in this chapter which is the second digit.

Students sometimes forget to include referring to the figure in the section which deals with this figure. In some instances figures are used without referring the reader to consider the figure together with the discussion. Reference to a figure in a discussion should be with a capital letter F as indicated in the example below. An example of how a figure should be referred to in the discussion is presented in the next example:

Example:

TRA model was expanded on by Rehman et al (2007), as indicated in Figure 3.2, to include internal variables and external variables which have an influence on the attitude and subjective norm. In the expanded model Rehman et al (2007) included beliefs that specific behaviour could lead to certain outcomes and that the evaluation of the outcomes will have an influence on the attitude. Rehman et al (2007) furthermore expanded the TRA model and stated that there are beliefs that specific referents would think what a person should or should not perform the behaviour and the motivation to comply with the specific referents to influence the subjective norm, as per Figure 3.2.

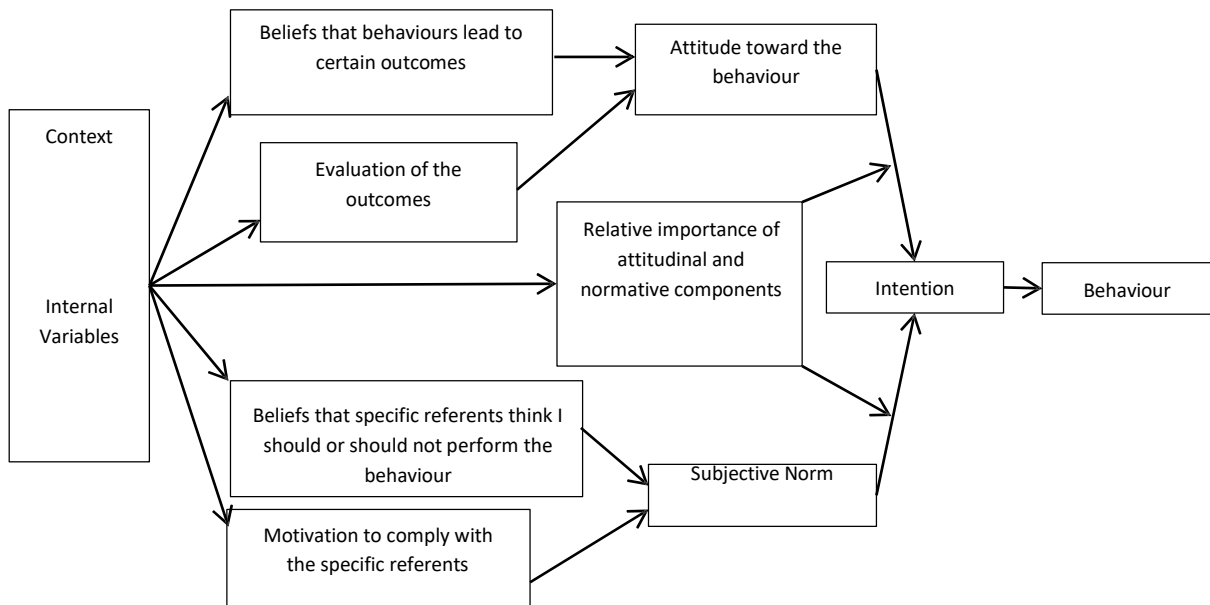


Figure 3.2 Components of Ajzen and Fishbein’s theory of reasoned action from Rehman et al (2007)

When including a table in a chapter the caption of the table should be typed at the top of the table. Follow the same format as for a figure. When referring to a Table in the discussion the t in Table should be in capital letters. An example of how to refer to tables is presented in the example below:

Example:

As indicated in Table 5.1, the non-adventurous consumer is comfortable with their current product and are “too scared to try something new” as one participant stated. They would also rather avoid trying new products, “I very seldom look at new products” and “I wouldn’t just buy the product and go and try it out”. The product familiar consumer does not want to try new products because they are satisfied with the products they know and are comfortable with them, as indicated by the quotes from Table 5.1 which are evident in some of the quotes by these participants, “I’m fixed on my usual products” and “I’m looking for things in particular”. They do not browse the shelves looking for new products,

Table 5.1 - Product Comfortable Consumer Behaviour

Sub-Category	Quote
Non Adventurous Consumer Behaviour	1 "Too scared to try something new"
	2 "I try to stay away"
	3 "I very seldom look at new products"
	4 "I don't really look at new products"
	5 "I wouldn't just buy the product and go and try it out"
	6 "I think strange firstly around, I mean are you going to like the product or not?"
	7 "You would investigate as well to see if you can find out anything about it; I wouldn't just buy it"

The examples of the Tables and Figures were sourced from Mrs Tineke Quinn a Masters student within the Department of Life and Consumer Sciences.

4.3.4 Conclusion of the chapter

It is recommended that a chapter has a conclusion which is the last paragraph to this chapter. The conclusion should include a summary of the most prudent sections of the chapter and stating the importance or relevance of those sections. It should also not introduce new references as this is a summary of what was discussed and the sources used. The conclusion is also significant of an introduction to the following chapter and is considered the lead-in paragraph to the next chapter.

This section is not very long and could include 2 or 3 paragraphs if the chapter has entertained several debates. The conclusion can also be one paragraph which is well structured and captures all the necessary information.

In some instances students forget to conclude chapters with the highlights of what was presented in the chapter and what the purpose of the chapter was. These chapters appear unfinished and leaves the reader wondering about whether the chapter is finished or not. Do remember that you are also writing for the examiner who needs a clear indication of what the purpose of the chapter was and how it is closed.

4.4 Article Format Thesis

At present Thesis in article format may not be compiled for examination in CAES.

5. GIVING INTENTION TO SUBMIT

When you have compiled the first full draft of your dissertation or several chapters it is advisable to discuss with your supervisor the possibility of intention to submit.

The process for submission of the dissertation or thesis for examination starts with the intention to submit. All procedures are discussed and flow diagrams are provided to clarify the descriptions. Only students in the Dissertation or Thesis module will be

eligible to follow the intention to submit process. Proposal module students do not conform to this procedure.

INTENTION TO SUBMIT

Submission is a term used to indicate the readiness of the student's dissertation or thesis for examination purposes. The submission process starts with the intention to submit. In order to start the process of intention to submit, the student and supervisor should have agreed that the student is ready to submit the dissertation or thesis for examination purposes. It is advisable to have this conversation with a student who has made significant process for possible examination purposes.

A student should consider the following:

- It is not advisable to submit the dissertation or thesis for examination purposes without the approval of the supervisor.
- If a student wishes to do so for some or other valid reason, the student may seek approval from Senate Research Innovation and Higher Degrees Committee to submit the dissertation or thesis for examination.

A supervisor should consider the following:

- It is not advisable to suggest to the student to give intention to submit when a complete first draft of the dissertation or thesis has not been assessed; or
- When the supervisor does not feel comfortable with the quality of the dissertation or thesis to date, the supervisor may request the student to postpone the intention to submit or
- When the supervisor has not seen the final corrections and complete overview of the dissertation or thesis.

In general a supervisor should be comfortable with the quality of the dissertation or thesis to be submitted for examination purposes and therefore in agreement that the student should submit. The supervisor should also have emphasised the importance of submitting a dissertation or thesis of good technical quality (grammar, referencing, sentence construction, punctuation etc.).

Intention to submit can be given during two (2) periods of the year. The first date is before **15 April** for graduation in September of the same year. The second date is before **30 September** for graduation in April/May of the following year.

Procedures to follow to give notice of Intention to Submit

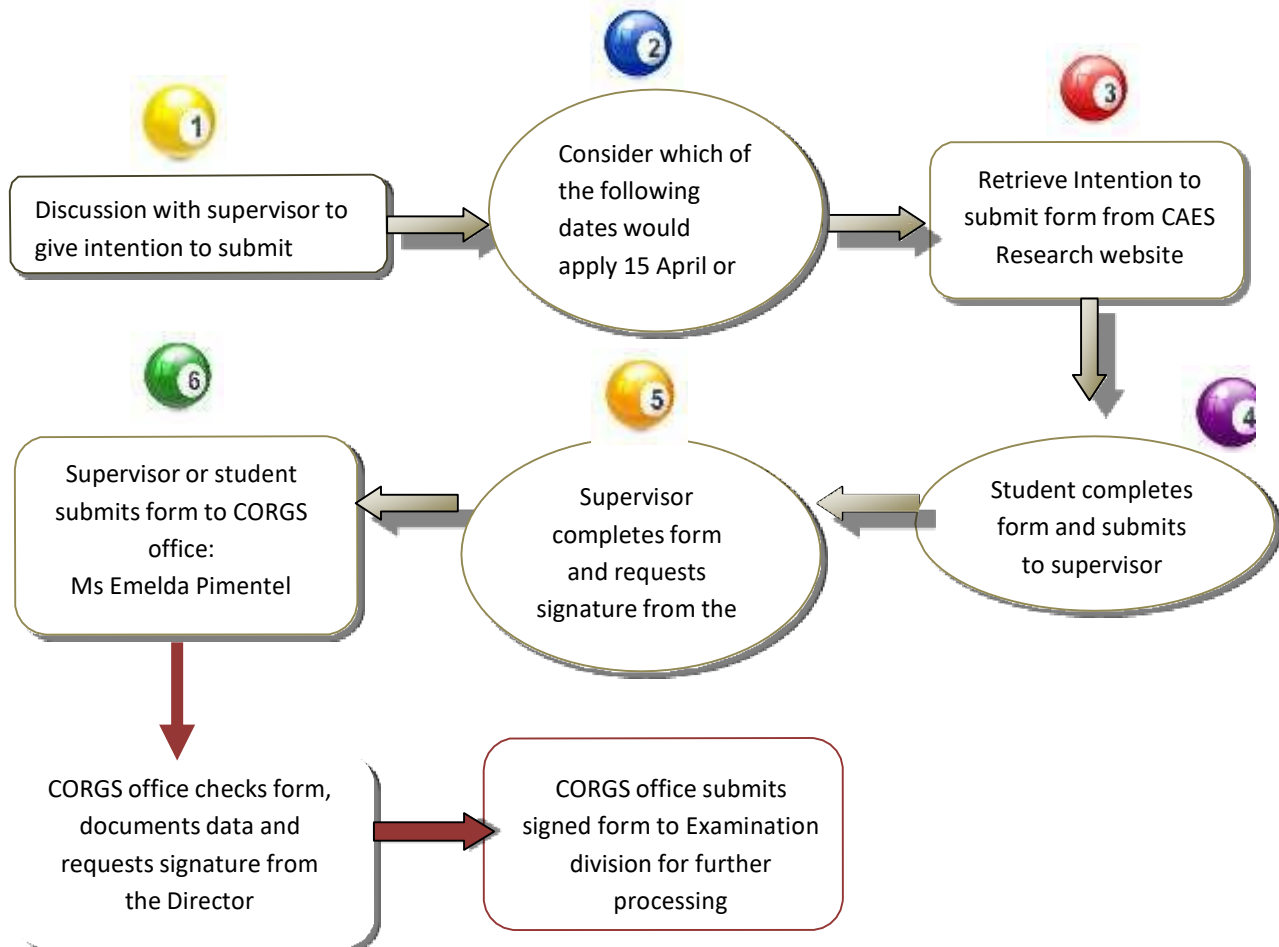
The student needs to complete the attached form and submit to the supervisor for further completion. The supervisor or student submits the completed form to the College office for Research and Postgraduate studies (CORGS) in the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences via email to: Ms Emelda Pimentel at pimente1@unisa.ac.za or personally to her office on the Florida campus.

When the notice for intention to submit has been processed by the College office for

Research and Graduate studies, it will be forwarded to the Examination division at Unisa for further processing. Thereafter the student will be notified by the Examination division of the due dates for submission and provided with the necessary documentation. If the supervisor does not agree with the intention to submit and reasons for the disagreement has been given on the form, the CORGS office will start the process of elevation to Senate through the college structures.

A process flow for Intention to submit is suggested in the Diagram below.

Diagram 1: CAES process flow diagram for the Intention to Submit



The following form is used to give intention to submit which is a CAES specific form obtainable on the College website

<https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Colleges/Agriculture-&-Environmental-Sciences/Masters-&-Doctoral-information>

6. COMPILING THE DISSERTATION OF THESIS

When putting the dissertation or thesis together there are a number of sections and documents that need to be included in the dissertation or thesis. You are at this point reminded again that if you followed the Article format Thesis you should have used the guidelines that are particular to how the Article format Thesis should be presented. Please make sure you have followed the correct procedure by contacting Ms Emelda Pimentel. However, irrespective of the way the chapters in the Article format Thesis are presented, the following inclusions should be attended to.

6.1 Title page of the dissertation or thesis

The title page of your dissertation or thesis has to contain specific information. An example is as follows: The title of the study which corresponds with the title used on the intention to submit form should be used and comes at the top of the title page. Thereafter the student submitting the document for examination is mentioned and written as “ by Tineke Quinn”. the specification of the purpose of the submission is then given which reads “submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree master of consumer science” and where this degree is situated is then presented which is college of agriculture and environmental sciences, department of life and consumer science, at the, university of South Africa, Florida campus. Thereafter the details of the supervisor and co-supervisor are given and the month and year of submission is indicated.

The styling of the title page may follow this format of the example in terms of the use of Capital letters, line spacing and Bold fonts.

Always remember that the title page does not include any page numbering. The title page may also have a page boarder if preferred.

The examination division has specific requirements regarding the title page that should be followed.

**EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF EXTERNAL PRODUCT
ATTRIBUTES ON CONSUMERS' PERCEIVED ACCEPTANCE OF
PEA PROTEIN AS A PROTEIN SUBSTITUTE IN FOOD PRODUCTS**

by

Tineke Quinn

Submitted in accordance with the requirements

for the degree

Master of Consumer Science

in the

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF LIFE AND CONSUMER SCIENCE

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

FLORIDA CAMPUS

SUPERVISOR PROF.

E. L. KEMPEN June

2014

6.2 Dedication

A dedication may be included after the title page on be submitted on one single page. The dedication is page number 1 of the dissertation but this number should be in Roman lettering as shown in the condensed version of the page. The page numbering should be at the same level and position as the whole dissertation or thesis and not where the example is. This is only a condensed version for example purposes. An example of a dedication is given below.

DEDICATION

To my husband, who always believed in me.

6.3 Declaration

The College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences has a specific declaration which you are required to include in your dissertation of thesis. This declaration must include the title of your thesis. The declaration can be found on the College website under M and D matters under forms. The declaration will carry page number ii of the dissertation or thesis in Roman lettering and follows the dedication. The example of the CAES declaration is given below. You may format the declaration to follow the Arial font and size. It is advisable that this declaration is captured on one page.

Declaration

I _____ hereby declare that the dissertation/thesis, with the title: _____ which I hereby submit for the degree of _____ at the University of South Africa, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other institution.

I declare that the dissertation /thesis does not contain any written work presented by other persons whether written, pictures, graphs or data or any other information without acknowledging the source.

I declare that where words from a written source have been used the words have been paraphrased and referenced and where exact words from a source have been used the words have been placed inside quotation marks and referenced.

I declare that I have not copied and pasted any information from the Internet, without specifically acknowledging the source and have inserted appropriate references to these sources in the reference section of the dissertation or thesis.

I declare that during my study I adhered to the Research Ethics Policy of the University of South Africa, received ethics approval for the duration of my study prior to the commencement of data gathering, and have not acted outside the approval conditions.

I declare that the content of my dissertation/thesis has been submitted through an electronic plagiarism detection program before the final submission for examination.

Student signature: _____

Date: _____

[Look at page numbering in Roman numbers](#)

6.4 Acknowledgements

The section following the declaration is acknowledgements. This is where you thank certain people or organisations for the contribution they have made to your successful completion of your study. The Acknowledgements are usually in bulleted form and each acknowledgement is written as a separate paragraph. The acknowledgements should not be a lengthy discussion rather to the point and specific. This page is number 3 and also formatted in Roman lettering as iii. An example of acknowledgements are given below.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following individuals and organisations for their assistance and support towards the completion of this study:

- ✓ Firstly I would like to thank my Father God for giving me the opportunity to further my studies and then giving me the strength and determination to complete it.
- ✓ My husband, without his encouragement and love I could not have finished. Thank you for increasing your own burden only to lighten mine. I will love you forever.
- ✓ My family, for everyone's continuous love and infallible support during my studies. Dad, I made it!
- ✓ Prof. Elizabeth Kempen, my study supervisor, for her inspiration, valuable advice and encouragement, dedication, time and above all patience. Thank you for believing in me.
- ✓ Orkila South Africa, my employer, thank you for your support and encouragement and most importantly for your understanding and patience.
- ✓ Roquette Freres, for providing information on Nutralys Pea Protein.
- ✓ All the participants of the various focus groups for their valuable input.

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6.4 Editing

According to the M and D Procedures (paragraph 5.50) it is important that the dissertation or thesis should be written in a language that complies with the Unisa Language Policy. In instances where English is not the candidates first language, it is advisable to have the dissertation or thesis submitted to an editor. Such an Editor should be an accredited editor who can provide you with a document of acknowledgement of their accreditation affiliation and number for accreditation

purposes. This document should be attached to the dissertation as an addendum as some examiners may request such proof.

Editors do charge for their services. However, if you apply for a Unisa M&D bursary and is awarded such a bursary, you are allowed to include charges for editing of your dissertation or thesis.

It is not recommended that examiners should point out lists and lists of grammatical and technical errors in your dissertation or thesis. This creates an unprofessional impression which may result in a possible distinction being forfeited. It is recommended that such errors should be minimised either through the use of an editor or by means of other assistance.

6.5 Referencing

There are different referencing styles. The college has adopted the following generic style. Should your supervisor want another referencing style to be used, you may apply in your dissertation or thesis as long as the referencing style remains consistent. See page 11 of this document for some general guidelines.

6.6 Summaries in different languages

Specifications on the summaries required in different languages are found in the M&D procedures of Unisa. Please consult the following from the procedures:

7.8 A summary of not more than 350 words for doctoral theses, or 150 words for Master's dissertations, in the language in which the thesis or dissertation is written, must be bound in the front of each examination copy of the thesis or dissertation, between the title page and the table of contents. If the thesis or dissertation is not in English, each copy must also contain a summary in English, which must be bound in the front of each copy of the thesis or dissertation, between the title page and the table of contents.

Summaries of not more than 350 words for doctoral theses, or 150 words for Master's by research dissertations, in at least three official South African languages, one of which must be English, and also in the language in which the thesis or dissertation is written, if not an official South African language, must be included in the front of the electronic post-examination copy of the thesis or dissertation, between the title page and the table of contents. After the examination has been completed and the candidate's thesis or dissertation has been approved, the supervisor may contact Language Services to provide translations of the English summary in the additional official South African languages. The student does not incur any costs in this regard and his or her graduation should not be delayed if the translations are not obtained timeously.

7. COLLEGE PROCEDURES FOR FINAL SUBMISSION OF YOUR DISSERTATION OR THESIS

7.1 Submit final draft to supervisor

The final draft of your dissertation should be submitted to your supervisor. This is the draft which your supervisor has commented on for the last time and you have made the necessary improvements. The draft is submitted back to your supervisor for further processing in the department.

7.2 Submission through Turn-it-in

The final submission of your Dissertation or Thesis in the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences has to be submitted through Turn-it-in. You may not at this point submit any copies for examination purposes before the Turn-it-in submission has been completed and the results considered by your supervisor. This submission is made by your supervisor. The dissertation or thesis should be submitted as a word document to your supervisor to complete the process. Your supervisor will then submit the dissertation or thesis to Ms Marthie van Wyk at vwykmj@unisa.ac.za to submit through the Turn-it-in software program. Once the process has been completed the document will be returned to your supervisor through Dropbox or Word. The outcome of the submission will then be discussed with you.

Together with this outcome the supervisor will receive the final sign off document to be submitted to Ms Emelda Pimentel.

CAES does not accept a 30% - 35% similarity index cut off across the different reference indicators anymore. However, your supervisor may identify high levels of indicators which need to be addressed before the final submission for examination can be made. Only when your supervisor agrees that the similarity index concern has been addressed and can be justified will he/she approve the submission of your dissertation or thesis for examination purposes.

The Similarity index (first page of the Turn-it-in report) or PdF receipt should be included as an annexure in the thesis or dissertation. Do not include the full report.

7.3 Supervisor signs off dissertation or thesis

When the final submission has been through the turn-it-in software and amendments have been made if necessary, and your supervisor and co-supervisor agrees that the dissertation or thesis is of an appropriate quality to submit for examination purposes will he/she proceed to sign the dissertation off. The following form should then be completed and submitted to Ms Emelda Pimentel at pimente1@unisa.ac.za in hard copy or electronic format together with the Turn-it-in similarity report. Ms Van Wyk attaches this from when the Turn-it in report has been generated. It is for the supervisor

to complete. Evidence of the article submitted to an accredited journal when you are in the PhD thesis phase, should be attached to this form.

7.4 Submission for examination and appointment of examiners

Although you might have been able to complete the internal processes for submission for examination purposes within CAES, the process for the appointment of examiners continues outside of the college. When the examiners have been appointed (which is a process completed by the Examination division) the examination division will inform you to submit for examination purposes. The examination informs you via your *mylife* account as well as through the additional emails you indicated on the intention to submit form. If you did not stipulate an additional email address on your intention to submit form you are requested to check your *mylife* email regularly or link the email account to your cell phone so that you receive a reminder when you have been mailed.

You may not know who the examiners are and your supervisor may not discuss appropriate candidates with you. Your supervisor will propose appropriate examiners for your dissertation or thesis. Should the examiners at any point make themselves known to you such as at a conference you are requested to inform your supervisor immediately so that another examiner may be appointed.

7.4.1 Electronic submission of dissertation or thesis

Previously candidates were required to submit paper copies for examination. Please study the documentation carefully as the process has changed and a pdf document is required for submission. This is done via a link that will be forwarded to you from the examination division. The guidelines provided by the examination division is the requirement for submission for examination purposes. NO submissions are made to Ms Pimentel.

8. EXAMINATION PROCEDURES OUTSIDE OF THE COLLEGE

Once you have submitted your dissertation or thesis the examination process continues outside of the college. At this point you have no control over the examination process which is handed to the Non-examining chair assigned to your examination. As a student you are advised not to interfere in the examination process or to contact any of the examiners. By interfering with the examination process your examination may be compromised. You will from now on be informed by your supervisor of the progress made with the examination process.

9 PROCESS FOLLOWED TO ENABLE EXAMINATION FROM THE EXAMINATION DIVISION

9.1 Completion of V35

When you give intention to submit the examination process is started. When the examination division is advised of your intention to submit, the examination division prepares your file with a V35 form. This form requires your supervisor to recommend examiners who will be able to assess your dissertation or thesis. These recommended examiners are considered by the COD who makes the final decision. In the case of a masters students 2 examiners are required and for a thesis 3 examiners of which one may be an international examiner. The examiners may be selected outside of Unisa which are considered external examiners or outside of the department but internal to Unisa which are also considered external examiners. An internal examiner is part of the department and may be part of the 2 examiners appointed for the examination of the masters candidates or one of the 3 examiners where a PhD is concerned. All the examiners for a masters or phd may be external. As a student who will be examined you should not know who the examiners are as this may also compromise your examination. Your supervisor will also not discuss the appointment of examiners with you. The completion of the V35 is not your responsibility but will be completed by the COD of the department. A motivation for the recommendation of each of the examiners to be used in the examination of a PhD is required.

9.2 Appointment of Non-examining chair

Your supervisor will then submit the file to the COD of your department for the appointment of the Non-examining chair (NEC) who will be in control of your examination. You should also not be contacting the NEC who will not be made known to you. This may compromise your examination. You should be following up with your supervisor who will inform you about the progress being made if and when the NEC communicates with the supervisor.

9.3 Role of Non-examining chair

All examination reports are sent to the NEC who will then determine what comments were made and outcome the examiner(s) have suggested. The NEC will communicate with your supervisor in terms of the corrections to be made. You may study the role of the NEC as specified in paragraph 7.52 in the M & D Procedures.

10. PROCESS WHEN DISSERTATION OR THESIS HAS BEEN EXAMINED

10.1 Communication from supervisor

Your supervisor will be informed by the NEC what the requests of the examiners are.

When your dissertation or thesis has been examined you might be required to make the necessary changes as stipulated by the examiners. If option 1.2 has been selected unanimously by all examiners you are advised to make the corrections as quick as possible to ensure that you meet the graduation date but not compromising the attention to the correction. Your supervisor will discuss with you how to approach the corrections.

If you were granted a 1.3 which means a resubmission for examination purposes you should make the next submission for re-examination within a year. A re-examination of a dissertation or thesis means that you have to give intention to submit again, your file will be sent to the college again for the appointment of examiners and a NEC. However, the same panel of examiners is usually re-appointed. Consider paragraph 7.65 in the M and D Procedures in this regard.

If you are granted 1.4 which is an outright fail, you may not reregister with the department in the particular program you were registered for.

10.2 Correcting the dissertation or thesis

You are advised to do the corrections in a systematic way as per the recommendation of your supervisor. The following is suggested. Draft a table in which you have one column for the correction recommended by the examiner, the next column indicating if the correction has been made and how the improvement was executed and a third page on which page of the dissertation or thesis the correction can be found. This will greatly assist your supervisor who will have to go through all the comments to see where you have made the change and if you did do as requested by the examiners. You may also indicate if a correction cannot be made and justify the decision in column

2. An example of such a table is presented below.

Example of correction table

Corrections/Improvements	Action taken	Page
Ensure that the reference list is in alphabetical order, GUTMAN comes after GREEF.	Corrected the reference list.	213
When the same authors have 2 publications in one year, it is best to put a and b to distinguish in the text – for example SIMMONS <i>et al.</i> (2004a) and (2004b). On page 24 in the text you refer to Simmons <i>et al.</i> (2004:1), but which article – part I or part II?	Distinguished the SIMMONS <i>et al.</i> (2004) articles with either (a) or (b) in the text and reference list.	3,4, 24,34, 44,47 51

Submit the correction table to your supervisor as well as a new draft of the dissertation or thesis to check. Your supervisor will check the table against the new draft of the

dissertation or thesis in order to confirm if the requested corrections were made.

10.3 Waiting for confirmation of the final outcome of the examination process

When the corrections have been submitted to the supervisor, the supervisor will write a memo to the NEC to confirm that the corrections have been made and submit your correction table. The NEC will submit all documentation and examination report to the College office for Research and Postgraduate studies where it will be checked and submitted to the Executive Dean for final sign off. The reports are then returned to the College office for Research and Postgraduate studies where it will be signed out and submitted to the Examination division for further processing. The examination division also does a quality check on the examination reports for auditing purposes. If all is in order the result will be finalized by the examination division.

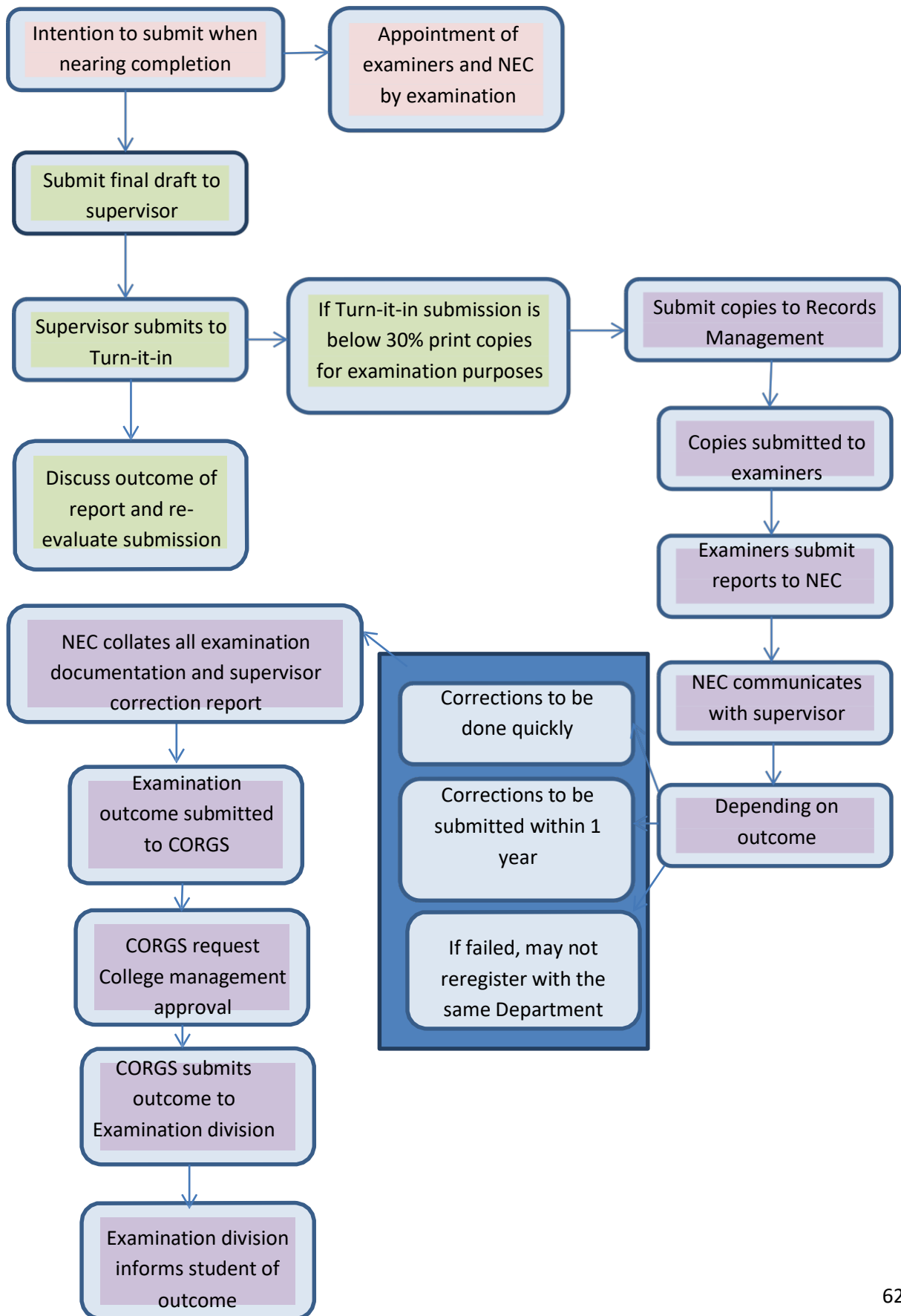
10.4 After confirmation of the result

When a student has been informed by the examination division that the student has passed, and before conferment of the degree you should submit a final version of the dissertation or thesis. The supervisor will be required to upload the document as per the letter issued to the supervisor.

10.5 Graduation ceremonies

There are two ceremonies per year depending when your examination results have been released. The first session is between April – June and the second is from September to October. You will be notified by the Graduation division when your graduation date has been set.

SUMMARY DIAGRAM OF THE EXAMINATION PROCESS



Conclusion

The College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences hopes that you have found this document useful in preparing the different documents required for a Masters or PhD in CAES. We also hope that this document has given supervisors and students a better picture of the processes involved during the completion of any of the qualifications.

Kind regards

Prof Elizabeth Kempen

Head: College office for Research and Postgraduate studies