

Guideline for MA Thesis Writing
Department of Linguistics
University of Kelaniya

1. Cover Page

- **Degree Name:**
Font: Times New Roman, Size 16, Bold, Uppercase
- **Thesis Title:**
Font: Times New Roman, Size 22, Bold, Uppercase
- **Candidate's Full Name:**
Font: Times New Roman, Size 16, Uppercase
- **Department and University Name:**
Font: Times New Roman, Size 14, Uppercase
- **Month and Year of Submission:**
Font: Times New Roman, Size 14
- **Index Number:**
Font: Times New Roman, Size 14

Sample Layout:

M.A. THESIS IN LINGUISTICS Main Topic Sub Topic Full Name Department of Linguistics University of Kelaniya Month / Year FGS/LING/MA/...../.....

2. Declaration (*Font size 18, Uppercase, Centered*)

- **Declaration by the Candidate** (*Font size 14, Uppercase, Centered*)

I hereby declare that the work embodied in the thesis was carried out by me in the Department of Linguistics, University of Kelaniya. It contains no material previously published or written by another person. It has not been submitted for any degree to this university or to any other institution.

Name:

Signature: Date:

(Candidate)

- **Supervisor's Certification of the Declaration** (*Font size 14, Uppercase, Centered*)

I hereby certify that I have supervised this dissertation.

Name:

Signature: Date:

(Supervisor)

3. Abstract

- **Structure:**

- Introduction
- Objectives
- Research Problem
- Methodology
- Key Results with Actual Values
- Findings and Recommendations
- Five Keywords (Alphabetically Arranged)

- **Word Limit:**

Maximum 250 words, Justified, Font size 12, Single block paragraph

4. Acknowledgements

- Formal recognition of support from individuals and institutions.

5. Table of Contents

- List all major headings, subheadings, and page numbers using Roman numerals for preliminary sections.
- For chapters, use Arabic numerals.

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6. List of Tables

A compilation of all tables used in the thesis, along with their titles and page numbers, for quick reference.

7. List of Figures

A detailed index of all figures, including graphs, charts, and diagrams, with their titles and page numbers.

8. Abbreviations

A glossary of acronyms and abbreviations used in the thesis, providing their full forms for clarity.

9. Chapter Formatting

- **Chapter Title** (*Centered, Font size 18, Uppercase*)
- **Subheadings:** (*left-aligned, Font size 14*)
- **Spacing:** 1.5 line spacing
- **Footnotes:** Should be included where necessary, with author, year, and page numbers for direct quotes.
- **Examples:** Must be numbered within each chapter.
- **Tables, Figures, and Charts:** Number them and refer to their numbers when discussed in the text.
- **Numbering**
 - **Chapters:** Number chapters sequentially.
(Example: *Chapter 1: Introduction, Chapter 2: Literature Review*)
 - **Main Subheadings:** Use the chapter number followed by a sequential subheading number.
(Example: *1.1 Research Background, 1.2 Research Objectives*)
 - **Secondary Subheadings:** Add another level after the main subheading number.
(Example: *1.1.1 Historical Context, 1.1.2 Social Context*)
 - **Tertiary Subheadings:** Further divide secondary subheadings if needed.
(Example: *1.1.1.1 Ancient Linguistic Practices, 1.1.1.2 Modern Linguistic Practices*)

10. Chapter Organization

Depending on the type of research one carries out, there can be variations in the below order.

Chapter 1: Introduction

- **1.0 Introduction:** Brief overview and purpose of the chapter.
- **1.1 Research Background:** Context and relevance of the study.
- **1.2 Previous Research:** Summary of key studies and their connection to the topic.
- **1.3 Research Problem/Questions:** Identification of the main problem and questions being addressed.
- **1.4 Research Aim and Objectives:** The primary aim and specific objectives of the research.
- **1.5 Methodology:** Description of the research approach and methods used.
- **1.6 Limitations of the Research:** Boundaries and constraints of the study.
- **1.7 Significance of the Research:** The importance and impact of the study on theory, practice, and society.

- **1.8 Chapter Breakdown:** Overview of the purpose and content of each chapter.
- **1.9 Summary:** Recap of the chapter's key elements and transition to the next chapter.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

- **2.0 Introduction:** Brief overview and purpose of the chapter.
- **2.1 Key Concepts and Theories:** Summary of foundational theories and concepts.
- **2.2 Review of Existing Studies:** Analysis of relevant studies and findings.
- **2.3 Identified Research Gaps:** Areas requiring further exploration.
- **2.4 Theoretical Framework:** Explanation of the theoretical lens guiding the research.
- **2.5 Summary:** Key insights from the review and their relevance to the research.

Chapter 3: Methodology

- **3.0 Introduction:** Brief overview and purpose of the chapter.
- **3.1 Research Design:** Description of the overall research approach (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods).
- **3.2 Data Sources:** Explanation of the types of data used (e.g., primary or secondary).
- **3.3 Data Collection Methods:** Description of tools and techniques for data gathering.
- **3.4 Data Analysis Techniques:** Explanation of methods for analyzing the collected data.
- **3.5 Ethical Considerations:** Overview of ethical guidelines followed during the research.
- **3.6 Summary:** Recap of the methodological approach and its alignment with research objectives.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

- **4.0 Introduction:** Brief overview and purpose of the chapter.
- **4.1 Data Presentation:** Display of data using appropriate visual or textual formats.
- **Note:** Subheadings of this chapter depend on the way you are analyzing the data.
- **4.2 Summary:** Main findings and their contribution to answering the research questions.

Chapter 5: Discussion

- **5.0 Introduction:** Brief overview and purpose of the chapter.
- **5.1 Interpretation of Results:** Explanation of findings in relation to the research objectives.
- **Note:** Subheadings of this chapter depend on the way you interpret and discuss the findings.
- **5.2 Summary:** Recap the key points and insights gained from the discussion.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

- **6.0 Introduction:** Restatement of the research purpose and objectives.
- **6.1 Summary of Key Findings:** Concise recap of the research results.
- **6.2 Recommendations:** Practical advice for stakeholders or suggestions for future action.
- **6.3 Contributions to Knowledge:** Highlights of the study's value to the field.
- **6.4 Directions for Future Research:** Suggestions for further exploration on the topic.
- **6.5 Summary:** Final thoughts and overall conclusions.

11. Bibliography

- Follow **Harvard** or **APA** style for references.
- Books, journals, and electronic references should be listed separately and arranged in alphabetical order.
- For detailed instructions and examples on proper referencing, refer to the lecture notes provided during your course on research methodology.

12. Appendix

- Include supplementary materials such as raw data, questionnaires, additional analyses, and other relevant information that support the research but are not included in the main text.

13. Length of Thesis

- **Minimum Length:** 90 pages, excluding appendices.
- **Word Count:** Approximately 20,000 words (excluding content and appendices).

14. Formatting

- **Paper Size:** A4
- **Font:** Times New Roman (size 12) for English, Fm Abhaya for Sinhala
- **Line Spacing:** 1.5
- **Margins:**
 - Top: 2.5 cm
 - Left: 4.0 cm
 - Right: 3.0 cm
 - Bottom: 2.5 cm

15. Binding

- **First Submission:** Spiral binding (2 copies)

- **Final Submission:** Hardcover binding (1 copy)
 - **Cover:** Dark brown rexine with gold letters
 - **Spine:** Title, candidate's name, degree, year, and university (leave 50mm from the spine)

16. Submission

- **The recommendation from the supervisor is mandatory for submission.**