Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)

Dissertation Guidelines

EBU | European Business University
Luxembourg

Doctor of Business Administration, DBA.

Preamble

This document clarifies the principles of, and the minimum expectations for the submission of a dissertation.

1.1 Language

The dissertation should be written in English.

1.2 Style

Theses should be well-written and in an acceptable style. This includes:

- accuracy and clarity;
- precision and conciseness;
- a high standard of spelling, grammar and punctuation;
- sound language choice;
- sound paragraph and sentence construction;
- the elimination of redundant or ambiguous words, phrases and passages;
- thorough revision before submission; and
- correction of all typing errors.

1.3 Length of Dissertation

Doctoral Dissertation

There is no prescribed minimum length for a doctoral dissertation as this will vary with the research topic and the form of presentation. However, there is a maximum prescribed length of 40 000 words.

In general, it is expected that dissertation would not contain more than two hundred (200) pages in the main text.

Submission of the dissertation in two (2) volumes labelled I and II (Roman capital numerals) may be appropriate in exceptional circumstances when there are large, essential Appendices.

In this case Volume I shall contain the whole of the dissertation Chapters proper; and Volume II the Appendices. The Contents page in Volume I shall refer to both volumes; and Volume II shall commence with a duplicate title page.

1.4 Format and Submission of a Dissertation

The dissertation would normally be formatted with:

- one and a half line spacing;
- 12 point print size in the main text;
- A4 (297 mm x 210 mm) pages with a left-hand margin of at least 40 mm, a top, bottom and right hand margin of at least 25 mm.

Normally the dissertation will be examined using an electronic copy although an examiner may request a hard copy. In the event of a printed copy being examined the student will need to provide a temporarily-bound copy.

Plastic comb binding and single sided printing is recommended. Theses should not be stapled, clipped, glue spinal bound or submitted in a folder.

The final dissertation copy would normally be submitted electronically. However, the student or members of the supervisory team may request a hard copy.

In the cases of hard copy theses, the dissertation should be printed on A4 paper (297 mm x 210 mm) using good quality bond (at least 73 GSM). Double sided printing is recommended.

The final permanently bound copy will consist of sewing and binding with full cloth stiff covers. The spine lettering should include the author's initial/s and surname, the title (a shortened version may be used if necessary) and the year the dissertation was presented. The lettering should run from top to bottom of the spine.

Colors for the binding and lettering for Dissertation are as follows:

Award	Cloth Color	Lettering Color
Doctor of Business Administration	Dark Green	Gold

1.5 Sequencing of Sections

The contents of the bound dissertation should normally be in the following order:

- INITIAL PAGES The initial pages may be numbered using roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, etc)
- MAIN TEXT (including Figures as appropriate) Pages are numbered in sequence 1, 2, 3, 4 ...
- REFERENCES
- BIBLIOGRAPHY (if appropriate)
- PLANS (if any)
- APPENDICES

Initial Pages

The order of these pages will normally be as follows:

1. First page (this page will be blank as it forms part of the binding process)
2. Title Page

    This page should only include the

    - full title
    - award for which the dissertation is being submitted (e.g. Doctor of Business Administration)
    - full name and academic qualifications of the student
    - year of submission.

3. Abstract

    An abstract is a particular and essential form of summary of academic work. It is not the same as a Summary or Synopsis which would normally be found at the front of any technical report because it does not necessarily summarise every aspect of the work in strict order or proportion to the full work.

    An abstract is essentially a concise statement of the major conclusions of the academic work. A brief mention, usually restricted to a sentence or two, of the objectives and methodology is usually given to set these conclusions in context; and similarly, any other significant aspects of the work will be mentioned. An abstract therefore, would not normally exceed about 300 words.

Great care must be taken when writing the abstract as it is by this page, and often this page alone, that other academics will peruse the work and decide whether to delve into the full dissertation. There exist a number of "Abstract" publications containing entirely academic dissertation abstracts reproduced for this purpose. Accordingly, students may expect that examiners will take great care to check that the work of the dissertation is adequately presented in the abstract.

4. Certification Page

This is a statement headed 'Certification of Dissertation ' to the effect that the work contained in the dissertation is the bonafide work of the student, that the work has not been previously submitted for an award, and that, to the best of the student's knowledge and belief, the dissertation contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement and reference is made in the dissertation to that work. The signature and date is placed beneath the statement.

In the lower part of this page the supervisors append their signature(s) by way of endorsement that the declaration has been completed. An example of this page has been provided below.

5. Acknowledgements

It is essential that the student acknowledge assistance received whilst undertaking the project and preparing the dissertation. The student should consider carefully all forms of assistance received - academic, technical, secretarial, administrative and personal (e.g. family) as appropriate. Adequate acknowledgement should not normally exceed one page.

6. Table of Contents and Notation

The purpose of a 'Table of Contents' is to provide a clear and comprehensive index to the material presented. It should include:

1. Chapter headings (numbered 1, 2, etc. and underlined)

2. Headings within chapters (numbered 1.1, 1.2, etc.)

3. Further subheadings as appropriate (similarly "nested" and numbered 1.1.2.1 etc.)

4. The heading "References" and its appropriate page number

5. The heading "Bibliography" and its page number

6. The heading "List of Figures" and its page number

7. The heading "List of Tables" and its page number

8. The heading "List of Plans" and its page number (if appropriate)

9. Appendices; each numbered or lettered (A, B, C) in order and with its heading.

The "List of Figures", "List of Tables" and "List of Plans" (if used) shall follow in subsequent pages.

The Main Text

The main text will usually be divided into chapters. Typical chapter headings might be:

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 2 METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 3 RESULTS

CHAPTER 4 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS

Of these only two are compulsory. The first, "Introduction" which must also include a clear statement of the objectives of the research project, often as a specific subsection; and the last, "Conclusions", which will normally include suggestions for further work in the topic, as appropriate.

List of References

Any dissertation must indicate its relation to other literature in the field and this is usually accomplished by means of citation (referencing).

Referencing of documentation is also a formal mechanism for giving appropriate acknowledgement of the work of others within the main text. Proper documentation enables an author to avoid any suspicion of plagiarism to refer to the source or authority for statements made in the text, and to indicate where fuller details on a particular point may be found.

All references cited in the body of the dissertation/exegesis must be listed here in alphabetical order in accordance with the referencing system most suitable for the discipline (e.g. APA, Harvard).

Bibliography (if appropriate)

The Bibliography is a list of books which the student has found useful in an overall way, but for which there are no direct in text references - for example, books on dissertation presentation which the student has read, and background textbooks to the dissertation topic.

Plans, Diagrams, Tables, Photographs

Small diagrams and tables and photographs should be incorporated into the text and numbered.

Appendices should be labelled Appendix A, B, etc. with the order being determined by the order in which they are referred to in the main body of the text.

Page numbering may be carried through to the appendices or separate pagination such as A1, A2, A3 used if more convenient as frequently appendices are prepared in advance of the final draft of the text.

Figures, tables, etc, when used exclusively in an Appendix, may conveniently be labelled Figure A.1, Table A.1, etc.

Raw Data

Normally raw data should be presented to enable future researchers to confirm results and derive maximum benefit from the work. However, given the often-vast data volume it is left to the student and supervisor to determine the appropriate level of raw/semi processed/processed data to present.

On some occasions an examiner may wish to view raw data not directly presented in the dissertation. Hence students are advised to maintain their raw data in an accessible and presentable form.

Computer Programs

Computer programs should be listed, as appendices, only when they have been written by the student. Note that the listing(s). Note that the listing/s must be produced by direct computer output from an operational program.

Each program should be adequately "self-documenting", that is adequately furnished with comment panels outlining language, machine requirements, library function/subroutine requirements (where nonstandard), input and output variables, etc. Flow charts are not specifically required, but if there is a suite of programs or interactive subroutine one (or more) structure charts may be appropriate.

Further Guidance

1.6 THE STUDENT AND THE SUPERVISOR

Each dissertation/thesis student is assigned a member of EBU's academic staff as a supervisor whose role is:

1. To help the student sort out the overall objective and specific aims and to get the proposal in order;
2. To advise students when problems arise;
3. To read and comment on proposal drafts and chapter drafts and to do so timeously;
4. To advise the student when the dissertation/thesis is ready for examination and to undertake the administrative aspects of submission.

It is not the supervisor's role to do large-scale editing and correction of English, nor to read many drafts of the same chapter. One rule of thumb is that a supervisor reads and makes comments on a chapter once, and then the whole dissertation/thesis prior to submission. It is also not the supervisor's role to remind students of dates or to chase them to get work done.

Staff will differ in the way they supervise. Some will want to see their students on a regular basis and be closely involved in the research; others will be much more 'hands off', in which case it will be important for the student to take the initiative to keep in touch with the supervisor.

The student's role is to:

1. Write a strong research proposal;
2. Write good chapter drafts i.e. in good English, well-structured etc. and respond to the comments of the supervisor on the drafts;
3. To advise the supervisor of progress;
4. Prepare the dissertation/thesis for submission by the due date.

The final product should be 90% or more the student's own work.

THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

1.7 Doctoral Research Proposal

The initial proposal

This proposal of one or two pages is particularly relevant to prospective dissertation students looking for a supervisor within a School, in which case it would accompany the application.

In an ideal world, a student will be interested in a particular topic and a staff member will be interested in acting as supervisor. However, some topics are not attractive to potential supervisors and high workloads make staff unwilling to supervise topics which they don't find interesting. The final choice of topic may therefore be a compromise. Schools have different ways of allocating supervisors, but a personal approach to a potential supervisor can be helpful..

The formal proposal

Once accepted, each dissertation student is required to prepare a research proposal as the first step in the research process. This is completed in collaboration with your supervisor. EBU has a required APA format (follow it). Assuming full-time candidature, a doctoral dissertation proposal could require a semester to complete. For part-time students, these times can be doubled.

Doctoral research students are required to present their proposals in person to the Supervisor and a sub-committee of three members for approval. This meeting will be minuted and all approved proposals will be sent noted. The student's supervisor, in conjunction with the School's Postgraduate Coordinator, will liase with the Deans Office to set up the presentation.

ETHICAL CLEARANCE

Each dissertation/ thesis proposal must be reviewed by the supervisor and meet ethical standards.

1.8 STYLE AND GRAMMAR

A completed dissertation must be satisfactory as regards form and literary expression. Although the supervisor will point out any passages in the dissertation which are stylistically poor, or which are grammatically weak, it is not possible for a supervisor to do extensive editing. A student may, if necessary, employ someone to proofread the dissertation and correct poor expression or style.

The supervisor of a dissertation is required to ascertain that the style and grammar of the dissertation is of a sufficient standard for examination.

1.9 PLAGIARISM

A candidate may not include in the dissertation any quotations from another writer, or ideas from another writer, without acknowledgement and without reference to the source. Direct quotations must be indicated by the use of quotation marks. **It is still considered plagiarism when a candidate acknowledges the source of a direct quotation but fails to use quotation marks, thus giving the impression that the material is a summarised version of the source. In such an instance, either quotation marks must be used, or the source material must be summarised in the candidate's own words, but still acknowledging the original reference in a full citation.**

<u>**Examples:**</u>

<u>Source material:</u>

There is a growing perception that plagiarism is becoming an unmanageable problem.

(Charlatan, NO. 2009. *Plagiarism in South African Universities.* Conville: The Sham Press)

Used as a Direct Quotation

Charlatan (2009, p. 87) states that "there is a growing perception that plagiarism is becoming an unmanageable problem".

Used as a Summary

Charlatan (2009, p. 87) notes the increasing awareness that plagiarism is becoming difficult to contain.

One definition of plagiarism is an unacknowledged use of a group of five words from a source! Take great care not to be accused of plagiarism – the penalties are severe.

Websites should be used with great care. Never cut and paste from websites; print them out and use them like any other reference.

EBU supports and fosters a culture of zero tolerance towards plagiarism. Detection controls include the utilization of external examiners and software that detects the incidence of web-based material.

All dissertations and theses submitted for examination must be accompanied by a* Turnitin *plagiarism report, which must be approved by the supervisor in his/her final report.

2 DISSERTATION* LAYOUT REQUIREMENTS – SAMPLE

Every dissertation must contain the following on separate pages:

1. Title page –

EUROPEAN BUSINESS UNIVERSITY OF LUXEMBOURG

STAFF TRAINING: A STRUCTURED APPROACH TO BUSINESS AND ETHICS

By
Mary Pampam
2055555555

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
of
Doctor of Business Administration

Graduate School of Business Administration

Supervisor: Prof. ..

2018

2. Page 2:

Each dissertation must contain the following declaration by the candidate:

DECLARATION

I .... declare that

(i) The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.

(ii) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

(iii) This dissertation does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.

(iv) This dissertation does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
a) their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced;
b) where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed inside quotation marks, and referenced.

(v) Where I have reproduced a publication of which I am author, co-author or editor, I have indicated in detail which part of the publication was actually written by myself alone and have fully referenced such publications.

(vi) This dissertation/thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the dissertation/thesis and in the References sections.

Signed: …………….……..

Last appendix: The last appendix in the dissertation is the Ethical Clearance letter. Ethical Clearance application form is not to be included in the dissertation.

2.1 WHAT TO SUBMIT FOR EXAMINATION

1. DBA dissertation: four softbound (e.g. ring bound) copies to be handed to the Dean of Faculty.
2. An electronic PDF copy of the dissertation.

2.2   WHEN TO SUBMIT FOR EXAMINATION

Intention to submit for examination

The Intention to Submit must be requewsted at least three months before the submission for examination, so that examiners can be approved timeously.

Submission of dissertation for examination

A student may submit their dissertation for examination without financial implications (registering for a further semester) by submitting up to the day before the new semester starts. The length of the examination process varies according to corrections required by examiners and location of examiners.

Students must take into consideration when they submit their dissertation for examination, the time required by Supervisors and Examiners to read the entire dissertation.

Further registration will be required if major or substantial corrections are requested.

If a student who does not submit the dissertation for examination within six months after submitting the notice of the intention to submit, then the notice lapses and a new notice of intention to submit will be required to be submitted. Once the dissertation has been examined and been through the university process, the mark will be entered on to the university system. The degree is only conferred once all requirements for completion have been met. Once this is done the student will be notified by mail, by the Postgraduate office. The degree certificate (the *testamur*) is available at the graduation ceremony. If the student does not graduate in person, the certificate will be posted shortly thereafter by the graduation office. In the case of a Doctorate no percentage mark is awarded.

HARD BOUND COPIES (AFTER EXAMINATION)

Once passed, two hardbound copies of the dissertation and one cd with a PDF copy (read only) must be submitted to the Dean of Faculty for placement in the EBU Wiltz university library.