



The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

Guidelines on Thesis Preparation

(Effective from September 2009)

A. Introduction

1. The guidelines described in this document have been established so that theses are presented in a form suitable for library cataloging and shelving. The document takes its place in the library as a product of original thinking and research, and it is, therefore, designed to appear in a form comparable to published works.
2. This document covers the general rules of format and appearance. Students should consult their Thesis Supervision Committee for specific content requirements.
3. It is the student's responsibility to read and follow the requirements presented here and to submit documents of the highest quality. The final copies will not be accepted with corrections, insufficient margins, or if they are of such poor quality that reproduced and/or microfilmed copies cannot be made.
4. Because of refinement in requirements, students should not use existing library or departmental copies of theses as examples of proper format.

B. Originality

1. An MPhil thesis shall
 - 1.1 Consist of the student's own account of his/her investigations;
 - 1.2 Be either a record of original work or of an ordered and critical exposition of existing knowledge and shall provide evidence that the field has been surveyed thoroughly;
 - 1.3 Be an integrated whole and present a coherent argument;
 - 1.4 Give a critical assessment of the relevant literature, describe the method of research and its findings and include a discussion on those findings; and
 - 1.5 Include a full bibliography and references.
2. A PhD thesis shall
 - 2.1 Consist of the student's own account of his/her investigations and must indicate how they appear to him/her to advance the study of the subject;

- 2.2 Form a distinct contribution to the knowledge of the subject and afford evidence or originality by the discovery of new facts and/or by the exercise of independent critical power;
- 2.3 Be an integrated whole and present a coherent argument;
- 2.4 Give a critical assessment of the relevant literature, describe the method of research and its findings, and include a discussion on those findings, and indicate in what respects they appear to the candidate to advance the study of the subject;
- 2.5 Include a full bibliography and references; and
- 2.6 Be of a standard to merit publication in whole or in part or in a revised form (for example, as a monograph or as a number of articles in learned journals).

C. Components

1. A thesis should contain the following parts in the order shown:
 - 1.1 Title page ([please see sample](#)), containing:
 - the thesis title;
 - the full name of the candidate;
 - the degree for which the thesis is submitted;
 - the name of the University, i.e. The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology; and
 - the month and year of submission, e.g. September 2009.
 - 1.2 Authorization page ([please see sample](#));
 - 1.3 Signature page ([please see sample](#));
 - 1.4 Acknowledgments;
 - 1.5 Table of content, list of figures and tables ([please see sample](#));
 - 1.6 Abstract ([please see sample](#));
 - 1.7 The thesis body ([please see sample](#));
 - 1.8 A thorough bibliography or reference list; and
 - 1.9 Appendices and other addenda, if any.
2. Abstracts
Every copy of the thesis must have an English abstract. Abstracts must provide a concise summary of the thesis (300 words or less).

3. **Acknowledgments**
The student is required to declare, in the acknowledgments section, the extent to which assistance has been given by his/her faculty and staff, fellow students, external bodies or others in the collection of materials and data, the design and construction of apparatus, the performance of experiments, the analysis of data, and the preparation of the thesis (including editorial help). In addition, it is appropriate to recognize the supervision and advice given by the thesis supervisor and members of the thesis supervision committee.
4. **Final Version**
The final version of the thesis must be free from typographical, grammatical and other errors when submitted to the Admissions, Registration and Records Office. While this is the responsibility of the student, the supervisor and the department/division head should not sign off on theses that are not, to the best of their knowledge, error free.

D. Language, Style and Format

1. **Language**
Theses should be written in English. Students in the School of Humanities and Social Science who are pursuing research work in the areas of Chinese Studies, and who can demonstrate a need to use Chinese to write their theses should seek prior approval from the School of Humanities and Social Science via their supervisors and the divisional head. If approved, their cases will be reported to the Senate Committee on Postgraduate Studies for information. Students are also required to produce a translation of the abstract of their thesis into English.
2. **Scripts and Page Format**
 - 2.1 A thesis should be presented in a permanent and legible form either in original typescript, or a comparably permanent process.
 - 2.2 Paper and print quality are vitally important for successful microfilming and legibility. Normally, international A4 80 to 90 gsm woodfree white paper (297mm x 210mm) of good quality should be used for the thesis which should be printed on both sides of the paper. Exceptionally, paper other than international A4 size may be used when the nature of the thesis requires it. Any thesis not typed or printed on the correct size of paper will not be accepted.
 - 2.3 Double-sided printing of a thesis (including drafts, initial submissions and the final thesis).
 - 2.4 A conventional font, size 12-point, 10 to 12 characters per inch must be used. One-and-a-half line spacing should be used throughout the thesis, except for abstracts, indented quotations or footnotes where single line spacing may be used.
 - 2.5 All margins should be consistently 25mm (or at a maximum of 30mm) in width. The same margins should be used throughout a thesis. Exceptionally, margins of a different size may be used when the nature of the thesis requires it.

3. **Pagination**
 - 3.1 **Pagination of the body of the text and appendices** is to be in Arabic numerals centered at the bottom of the page. The pagination begins with the first page of the first chapter and continues throughout the rest of the text. Pages with tables, maps, photographs, etc. are to be numbered as well. Open a new page only after each chapter or section but not a sub-section.
 - 3.2 **Pagination of materials preceding the body of the text** is to be in small Roman numerals centered at the bottom of the page.
4. **Footnotes, References and Appendices**

These should conform to a scholarly style appropriate to the discipline. Footnotes may be placed at the bottom of the page, at the end of each chapter or after the end of the thesis body. Consistency of formatting for footnotes and references is required throughout the thesis.
5. **Figures and Illustrations**

Figures, tables, graphs, etc., should be positioned according to the scientific publication conventions of the discipline. Illustrations must be drawn using ink that permits microfilming and high quality photocopying. (For the same reason, color-coding is not ideal for graphs, charts, etc.). Charts, graphs, maps, and tables that are larger than the standard page should be avoided. Overlays must be meticulously aligned and positioned.
6. **Photographs**
 - 6.1 **Photographs** may be incorporated into the thesis. High contrast photos reproduce well. Photographs with a glossy finish and photographs with dark backgrounds should be avoided.
 - 6.2 **Illustrative materials** which cannot be conveniently bound in the text (such as maps and slides) should be packed in such a way that it can be bound with the thesis. If the amount of such materials is substantial, it should be gathered into a supplementary volume and packed in a rigid container similar in format to the bound thesis. All loose materials should be marked with the candidate's name and degree for which the work is submitted so that it can be readily linked with the thesis and a list of the loose items should be provided.
7. **Additional Materials**

Slides, tapes, diskettes, etc. can be included.

E. Thesis Submission

1. For examination purpose, four copies of the thesis for an MPhil degree and seven copies for a PhD degree are to be submitted to the department/division/program office at least four weeks before the thesis examination. These copies should be unbound.
2. On successful completion of the thesis examination, an MPhil or PhD student must submit two identical clean unbound original copies of the thesis to the department/division/program office, which will arrange for the appropriate signatures

of approval to be obtained. The department/division/program office will then forward the signed copies to the Admissions, Registration and Records Office (ARRO) for follow-up action. When bound, one copy will be retained by the department/division and one by the Library as an archival copy in the open collection for the student author and other interested visitors to access on campus.

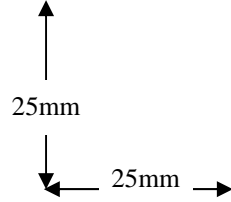
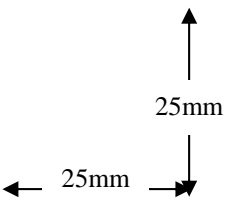
3. At the time of submission of the printed copies to the department/division/program office, an MPhil or PhD student should have submitted an electronic copy of the thesis to the University Library's E-thesis Database (<http://library.ust.hk/th-submit.pl>). Students are required to provide a printed copy of the email acknowledging receipt of the e-thesis when they submit the printed copies of the thesis to the department/division/program office for forwarding to ARRO as proof.

F. Copyright

1. Until now, the University's Copyright Policy does not speak directly to thesis copyright, yet it has become common for students to wish to copyright their theses in their own names.
2. According to the advice of the Vice-President for Research and Development (VP-RD) of July 1999, based on existing policy, copyright in materials produced by "university-assisted individual efforts" should vest jointly in the University and the Member of the University if significant University support (library and computers excluded) was involved. However, after considering the need for rapid publication to contribute to literature, and the administrative process required, VP-RD had agreed to let the students hold sole copyright ownership of their thesis.

Prepared by PG Secretariat
Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
Last updated in July 2009

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[SAMPLE TITLE PAGE]

[Thesis Title]



(5 lines)



by



(single line)

[Your name as found in official HKUST records, excluding any titles]



(5 lines)



A Thesis Submitted to

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in [Name of Program]

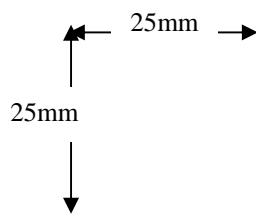
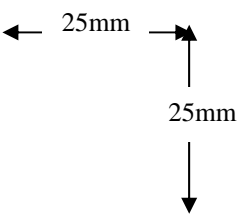


(3 lines)



[month and year], Hong Kong

[Adjust spacing so that all Title Page information appears on one page.]



[SAMPLE AUTHORIZATION PAGE]

Authorization

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of the thesis.

I authorize the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology to lend this thesis to other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research.

I further authorize the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology to reproduce the thesis by photocopying or by other means, in total or in part, at the request of other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research.

[type under signature line your name as found in official HKUST records,
excluding any titles]

[Date]

[SAMPLE SIGNATURE PAGE]

[Thesis Title]

by

[Your name as found in official HKUST records, excluding any titles]

This is to certify that I have examined the above PhD thesis
and have found that it is complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the thesis examination committee have been made.

[type the name of your thesis supervisor beneath signature line]

[type the name of your Department/Division/Program Office Head
beneath signature line]

[Name of Department/Division/Program Office]

[Date, e.g. 1 September 2009]

[SAMPLE CONTENTS PAGE]

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[SAMPLE ABSTRACT PAGE]

[Title of thesis]

by [Your name as found in official HKUST records, excluding any titles]

[Name of Department/Division/Program Office]

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

Abstract

[Abstract text, 300 words or less]

[THE THESIS BODY]

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Sections

White A4 paper of good quality (80 to 90 gsm woodfree paper, i.e. photocopying paper) is to be used. Lines should be one-and-a-half line spaced throughout the thesis, except for abstracts, indented quotations or footnotes where single line spacing may be used. Each page should begin with a new paragraph. The IEEE style* is recommended for the references. Reference citations within the text should be in the form of numbers within square brackets (e.g. [1]).

All margins should be consistently 25mm (or a maximum of 30mm) in width. The same margins should be used throughout a thesis. All preliminary pages (title, approval, abstract, acknowledgement, etc.) should be numbered using lowercase Roman numerals (e.g. i, ii, iii, iv, ...) but *i* is not shown on the title page. On all other pages use Arabic numerals, i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4, ...

1.2 Sections

1.2.1 Subsection

* References should be in a separate section at the end of the thesis, with items referred to by numerals in square brackets, using the IEEE style as follows:

Papers : Author(s) (first initials followed by last name), title, periodical, volume, inclusive page numbers, month, year.

Books : Author(s) (first initials followed by last name), title, location, publisher, year, chapter, page numbers.

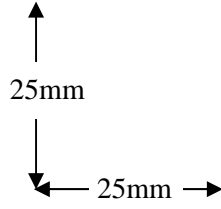
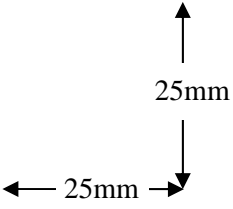
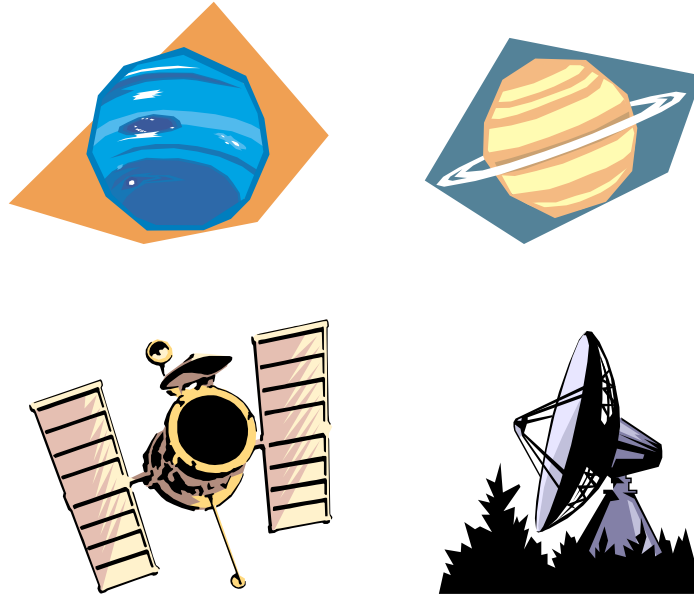


Figure 2. The Pictures



(a) Top left.

ABC.

This is a sample page. This is a sample page.
This is a sample page.

(b) Top right.

DEF.

This is a sample page. This is a sample page.
This is a sample page.

(c) Bottom left.

GHI.

This is a sample page. This is a sample page.
This is a sample page.

(d) Bottom right.

JKL.

This is a sample page. This is a sample page.
This is a sample page.

Sample page: A page of illustrations with legends

