

University of Balochistan, Quetta

Graduate Studies Office

Handbook and Guidelines for Writing Synopsis

Outlines

- A. Preamble**
- B. Style and parts of synopsis**
- C. Documents description and specification**
- D. Plagiarism**

A. Preamble

This document provides guideline for style and layout to scholars writing synopsis for partial fulfilment of their MS/M.Phil/Ph.D degree. Here style of a synopsis deals with matters such as punctuation, use of abbreviations, capitalization, and referencing systems. While layout of a document explains the look of a page, i.e. margins, font and line spacing.

We recommend students to follow the American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual for matters that are not covered in this Guide.

B. Style and parts of synopsis

1. Style

The synopsis documentation should be written clear and concise, and use following specifications.

2. Paper size: A4 (8.27" x 11.69).
3. Font style: Times New Roman.
4. Font Size: 12pt normal for writing in English and 16pt normal for writing in Urdu.
5. All Headings: 12pt bold for writing in English and 16pt bold for writing in Urdu.
6. Line Spacing: double space.
7. Margins: Left: 1.5 in, Right: 1in, Top: 1 in, Bottom: 1 in.
8. Include a **page header**, insert page numbers flush right, in page header
9. **Parts of a Synopsis**

MS/M.Phil/Ph.D synopsis should consist of following parts:

- i. Title Page
- ii. Table of Contents
- iii. List of Tables
- iv. List of Figures
- v. List of Abbreviations
- vi. Main Text Body
- vii. References
- viii. Appendices

i. Title Page

Title page description

Item	Description
Title of synopsis	Type title of your synopsis in upper and lowercase letters, center aligned and after 2 lines space of the page using time new roman, font 16 bold for writing in English and font 20 bold for writing in urdu.
University logo	After the title, place the “University logo” center aligned having 4-lines space between title and monogram.
By	Beneath the “logo” type “by” after 3-lines spaces using font 12 bold face, center aligned.
Scholar Name	Center aligned, bold face and have 1-line space after declaration “By”
Program of study	Center aligned, bold face and have 1-line space after “Scholar name”
Supervisor	Right aligned at 2in, bold face, 12 font and have 4-line spaces after declaration “Program of study”
Name of Supervisor	Left aligned, bold face, 12 font at 2in, and on the same line as “Supervisor”
Co-supervisor	Right aligned, bold face, 12 font at 2in, and very next line after “supervisor”
Name of Co-supervisor	Left aligned, bold face, 12 font at 2in, and on the same line as “Supervisor”.
Department/Centre/Institute Name	Center aligned, bold face, 14 font and have 4-lines space after “co-supervisor”.
University Name	Center aligned, bold face, 14 font in very next line after “Department Name”.
Session	Center aligned, bold face, 12 font in very next line after “University Name”.

Note: except title all writing on title page of font 12 and 14 bold face should be written in 16 and 18 bold face for writing in Urdu.

Title page sample

The title page of your synopsis must look like this:

Title of the Synopsis



by

Scholar Name

Program of Study: MS/MPIL/PHD

Supervisor: Supervisor Name

Co-Supervisor: Co-supervisor Name

Department/Centre/Institute [Name]

University of Balochistan

Session: xxxxxxxxx

ii. Table of contents

Table of contents description

Table of contents should consist of two levels, i.e. sections titles as its first level, and sub-sections headings as its second level. The third level sub-section headings should not be included in the table of contents

First level (Chapter title)	Include	1. Introduction 2. Literature review
Second level (Sections)	Include	1.1 background 1.2 objectives
Third level (Sub section)	Exclude	1.2.1 specific objectives

Table of contents sample

Section	Title	Page No
	Title Page	No Page No
	Table of Contents	II
	List of Tables	III
	List of Figures	IV
	List of Abbreviations	V
1	Introduction	1
	1.1 Background of the Study	2
	1.2 Problem Statement	3
	1.3 Significance / Justification of the Study	4
	1.4 Objectives of the Study/Research Questions	5
	1.5 Limitation of the Study	6
2	Literature Review	7
	2.1 Theoretical/Conceptual Framework	8
	2.2 Hypotheses	9
3	Research Methodology	10
	3.1 Research Design	11
	3.2 Data Collection & Variables of the Study	12
	3.3 Sampling	13
	3.4 Research Analysis Tools	14
	References	15
	Appendices	16

III, IV & V. List of Tables, Figures and Abbreviations

- List of tables, figures and abbreviations should follow the same style as described for the Table-of-Contents page.
- List of abbreviations should be tied closely in the body of the report, and should not be included if there are less than five abbreviations in the document.
- List of tables, figures, and abbreviations pages should be numbered Roman numeral.

VI. Main Text Body

Section headings should be short and precise, and should clearly indicate the contents of the body that follows.

Item	Alignment	Font style	Example
First level(section title)	Center	12pt Bold face normal	1. Introduction
Second level (sub-section	Left-aligned	12pt Bold face normal	1.1 Objective
Third level (sub-section)	Left-aligned	12pt Bold face normal	1.1.2 Specific objectives

You are encouraged to avoid fourth level sub-section, i.e. 1.1.2.1. **The main text body of synopsis should consists of following sections and sub-sections:**

1. Introduction

The introduction identifies the specific problem of the study and describes the research strategy. It also states that why the problem deserves new research: For basic research, the statement about importance might involve the need to resolve any inconsistency in results of past work and/or extend the reach of a theoretical formulation. For applied research, this might involve the need to solve a social problem or treat a psychological disorder. When research is driven by the desire to resolve controversial issues, all sides in the debate should be represented in balanced measure in the introduction. Introduction part of the synopsis includes the following parts:

1.1 Background of Study:

The researcher has to provide the background of the topic and linked it with global, regional and local scenarios.

1.2 Problem Statement:

The researcher has to be specific in identifying the problem/issue selected for the research. The researcher needs to stick to his problem identifying the secondary effects concerned with his research problem.

1.3 Significance/Justification of Study:

The documentation of the significance of the study should among other things address the following questions:

- a) What are the specific, significant, unique/major contributions that the research work will make to the area/body of knowledge?
- b) What will be the practical implications/use of the results/outcome?
- c) How will the results/outcome of the study be implemented, including a statement on its possible impact and on what innovations will come about through its implementation (if any)?
- d) What areas/directions of further/subsequent research work are likely to arise from the expected outcome/findings or results of the research study?
- e) What will be improved or changed as a result of the research work?

1.4 Objectives of Study/Research Questions:

The objectives/questions of the study indicate the major aspects of the study to be undertaken. The objectives of the study to be achieved should be clearly mentioned and should be itemized.

1.5 Limitation of Study:

The researcher has to identify the limitation of his/her research study if applicable.

2.0 Literature Review

A review of the relevant literature is another very important part of the synopsis, showing the work done previously in the area of proposed research is essential to plan further research effectively and in a proper way. The information given in the review should be supported by references.

A scholarly description of earlier work in the introduction provides a summary of the most recent directly related work and recognizes the priority of the work of others. Citation of and specific relevant earlier works are signs of scholarly responsibility and is essential to avoid the plagiarism. In the description of relevant same time, cite and reference only works pertinent to the specific issue and not those that are of only tangential or general significance. When summarizing earlier works, avoid nonessential details; instead, emphasize pertinent findings, relevant methodological issues, and major conclusions.

- a) Refer the reader to general surveys or research syntheses of the topic if they are available.
- b) Demonstrate the logical continuity between previous and present work.
- c) Develop the problem with enough breadth and clarity to make it generally understood by as wide a professional audience as possible.

2.1 Theoretical/Conceptual Framework (If Applicable):

A Theoretical Framework /Conceptual Framework is a visual representation (or figure).It should include the dependent variable and the independent variable, and in case of moderating and intervening variables, include them too in model. This is the precise meaning that the variables or factors will have in your study and not the broader meanings that might be apparent in the literature review. Discuss the dependent variable in relation to each independent variable and in case of mediating and intervening variable presence, you might discuss how the mediating and intervening variables impact both the dependent and independent variables.

2.2 Hypotheses (if applicable):

Hypotheses must be formulated in light of the research questions and objectives of the study , which are to be tested for possible acceptance or rejection .

3.0 Research Methodology

The Methodology section is very important because it documents how you plan to tackle your research problem. Describe the research that whether it is Exploratory, Descriptive, Causal or a Case study or other method. Depending on the nature and the underlying methodological approach which has been adopted for the research, the followings may be documented in this section:

3.1 Research Design:

- Indicate which research design has been adopted/used (if any) & is the research quantitative or qualitative in nature in terms of the methodology?
- Discuss and justify your choice of research method
- Highlight and discuss the relevance of the adopted method to your study
- Describe how the adopted method is applied

3.2 Data Collection & Variables of Study:

In this section discuss the data set, its collection, and the variables that will be used from that data set in your research study. Clearly indicate whether you are going to use primary or secondary data .Also Indicate what does primary or secondary data mean (i.e. provide a theoretical. Secondary data might include documents, books, journals, periodicals, abstracts, directories, research reports, conference papers, market reports, annual reports, internal records of organization, newspapers & magazines, media, or other data sources and how you will determine which to include in the study. On the other hand, primary data sources might be surveys, interviews, observations and other sources.

3.3 Sampling:

Sampling allows you to make conclusion about the research units you are studying by selecting the units that are the representative of the population. Your selected units from the population represent the sampling frame. In addition, identify clearly the approaches or method of the sampling to be used in the research study.

3.4 Research Analysis Tools:

- Which techniques, tools/instruments, approaches etc. have been adopted and used to develop/produce, present/demonstrate the expected results of the research.
- Highlight and discuss the relevance of these techniques /tools / instruments /approaches to your study.
- Describe how these techniques/tools/ instruments or approaches have been applied or used.
- Mention the facilities/equipment's available in the concerned Department, Center and Institute or required from any other source.

VII. References

The title of references should be center aligned, bold face, 12pt time new Roman. This section should include all relevant references cited in the document. Only references cited in the text are to be included in the reference list. The students should use APA 6th manual for citation. Following are some examples provided on how to cite a study using APA 6th manual in text and references section. Furthermore, any source not mentioned below please refer to APA 6th manual for help.

How to cite a study in APA

a) In text citation

APA style has a series of important rules on using author names as part of the author-date system. There are additional rules for citing indirect sources, electronic sources, and sources without page numbers.

Citing an Author or Authors

A Work by two Authors: Name both authors in the signal phrase or in the parentheses each time you cite the work. Use the word "and" between the authors' names within the text and use the ampersand in the parentheses.

Research by Wegener and Petty (1994) supports...

(Wegener & Petty, 1994)

A Work by Three to Five Authors: List all the authors in the signal phrase or in parentheses the first time you cite the source. Use the word "and" between the authors' names within the text and use the ampersand in the parentheses.

(Kernis, Cornell, Sun, Berry, & Harlow, 1993)

In subsequent citations, only use the first author's last name followed by "et al." in the signal phrase or in parentheses.

(Kernis et al., 1993)

In *et al.*, *et* should not be followed by a period.

Six or More Authors: Use the first author's name followed by et al. in the signal phrase or in parentheses.

Harris et al. (2001) argued...

(Harris et al., 2001)

Unknown Author: If the work does not have an author, cite the source by its title in the signal phrase or use the first word or two in the parentheses. Titles of books and reports are italicized or underlined; titles of articles, chapters, and web pages are in quotation marks.

A similar study was done of students learning to format research papers ("Using APA," 2001).

Note: In the rare case the "Anonymous" is used for the author, treat it as the author's name (Anonymous, 2001). In the reference list, use the name Anonymous as the author.

Organization as an Author: If the author is an organization or a government agency, mention the organization in the signal phrase or in the parenthetical citation the first time you cite the source.

According to the American Psychological Association (2000),...

If the organization has a well-known abbreviation, include the abbreviation in brackets the first time the source is cited and then use only the abbreviation in later citations.

First citation: (Mothers Against Drunk Driving [MADD], 2000)

Second citation: (MADD, 2000)

Two or More Works in the Same Parentheses: When your parenthetical citation includes two or more works, order them the same way they appear in the reference list (viz., alphabetically), separated by a semi-colon.

(Berndt, 2002; Harlow, 1983)

Authors with the Same Last Name: To prevent confusion, use first initials with the last names.

(E. Johnson, 2001; L. Johnson, 1998)

Two or More Works by the Same Author in the Same Year: If you have two sources by the same author in the same year, use lower-case letters (a, b, c) with the year to order the entries in the reference list. Use the lower-case letters with the year in the in-text citation.

Research by Berndt (1981a) illustrated that...

Introductions, Prefaces, Forewords, and Afterwords: When citing an Introduction, Preface, Foreword, or Afterwords in-text, cite the appropriate author and year as usual.

(Funk & Kolln, 1992)

Personal Communication: For interviews, letters, e-mails, and other person-to-person communication, cite the communicator's name, the fact that it was personal communication, and the date of the communication. Do not include personal communication in the reference list.

(E. Robbins, personal communication, January 4, 2001).

A. P. Smith also claimed that many of her students had difficulties with APA style (personal communication, November 3, 2002).

Citing Indirect Sources:

If you use a source that was cited in another source, name the original source in your signal phrase. List the secondary source in your reference list and include the secondary source in the parentheses.

Johnson argued that...(as cited in Smith, 2003, p. 102).

Note: When citing material in parentheses, set off the citation with a comma, as above. Also, try to locate the original material and cite the original source.

Electronic Sources:

If possible, cite an electronic document the same as any other document by using the author-date style.

Kenneth (2000) explained...

Unknown Author and Unknown Date: If no author or date is given, use the title in your signal phrase or the first word or two of the title in the parentheses and use the abbreviation "n.d." (for "no date").

Another study of students and research decisions discovered that students succeeded with tutoring ("Tutoring and APA," n.d.).

Sources without Page Numbers:

When an electronic source lacks page numbers, you should try to include information that will help readers find the passage being cited. When an electronic document has numbered paragraphs, use the abbreviation "para." followed by the paragraph number (Hall, 2001, para. 5). If the paragraphs are not numbered and the document includes headings, provide the appropriate heading and specify the paragraph under that heading. Note that in some electronic sources, like Web pages, people can use the Find function in their browser to locate any passages you cite.

According to Smith (1997), .. (Mind over Matter section, para. 6).

b) Full citation in references of bibliography

All reference should be arranged in alphabetical order. APA style dictates that authors are named last name followed by initials; publication year goes between parentheses, followed by a period. The title of the article is in sentence-case, meaning only the first word and proper nouns in the title are capitalized. The periodical title is run in title case, and is followed by the volume number which, with the title, is also italicized. If a DOI has been assigned to the article that you are using, you should include this after the page numbers for the article. If no DOI has been assigned and you are accessing the periodical online, use the URL of the website from which you are retrieving the periodical.

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical, volume number* (issue number), pages. <http://dx.doi.org/xx.xxx/yyyy>

Article in Journal Paginated by Volume:

Journals that are paginated by volume begin with page one in issue one, and continue numbering issue two where issue one ended, etc.

Harlow, H. F. (1983). Fundamentals for preparing psychology journal articles. *Journal of Comparative and Physiological Psychology*, 55, 893-896.

Article in Journal Paginated by Issue:

Journals paginated by issue begin with page one every issue; therefore, the issue number gets indicated in parentheses after the volume. The parentheses and issue number are not italicized or underlined.

Scruton, R. (1996). The eclipse of listening. *The New Criterion*, 15(3), 5-13.

Article in a Magazine:

Henry, W. A., III. (1990, April 9). Making the grade in today's schools. *Time*, 135, 28-31.

Article in a Newspaper:

Unlike other periodicals, p. or pp. precedes page numbers for a newspaper reference in APA style. Single pages take p., e.g., p. B2; multiple pages take pp., e.g., pp. B2, B4 or pp. C1, C3-C4.

Schultz, S. (2005, December 28). Calls made to strengthen state energy policies. *The Country Today*, pp. 1A, 2A.

Note: Because of issues with html coding, the listings below using brackets contain spaces that are not to be used with your listings. Use a space as normal before the brackets, but do not include a space following the bracket.

Letter to the Editor:

Moller, G. (2002, August). Ripples versus rumbles [Letter to the editor]. *Scientific American*, 287(2), 12.

Review:

Baumeister, R. F. (1993). Exposing the self-knowledge myth [Review of the book *The self-knower: A hero under control*, by R. A. Wicklund & M. Eckert]. *Contemporary Psychology*, 38, 466-467.

VIII. Appendices

The title of appendices should be center aligned, bold face, 12pt time new Roman. This section should include all relevant materials which support the document written. Appendices should be assigned alphabets, like appendix-A. Appendix-A.1. Appendix-B.2 etc. All included appendices should be coated in the text body of synopsis.

C. Documents description and specification

1. Tables, Figures and Equation

All Tables, figures, and equations in the document should be center aligned, and numbered at chapter level. For example, first table in the second chapter should be numbered as “Table 2.1”, and first figure of the second chapter should be numbered as “Figure 2.1”.

Tables, figures, and equations should be placed as close as possible to the text where they are referred or discussed. Each figure, table and equation that is inserted in the document should be discussed in the text, and should be referenced as (for example) “We have summarized our test cases in Table 4.1.”

2. Captions and Citation

2.1 Caption

Captions of tables are required to be left aligned, and on the top of the respective table. Captions of figures are required to be left aligned, and should be below the respective figure.

2.2 Citation

If you are using a figure, or table from some other sources such as published article and book, you should cite it in the footnote of the respective object, and should be listed in the references section.

D. Plagiarism

1. Definition

Presenting someone else's idea, work, project, or words as your own. This also includes using someone's exact words, figures, tables, etc or even modifying them but not providing citation or reference to the actual work.

2. University and HEC Policy regarding Plagiarism

Every MS/M.Phil/PhD synopsis/thesis should undergoes a plagiarism test. Plagiarism if proved in any time will be grounds for dismissal of your synopsis/thesis and in worst case denial of your degree.