

DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DISSERTATION MANUAL

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 **DBA Dissertation Manual**

AHIBS's DBA curriculum is designed based on thorough observation of

industry/organization's issues. DBA research focuses on solving the problems in the

industry/organizations innovatively and relevance to the needs of the organization. In this

manual, some basic guidelines are discussed in order to provide better understanding about

the preparation of the DBA dissertation. However, the students are required to follow UTM

thesis manual for detail discussion on binding, formatting, notes and footnotes, referencing

style and other basic requirement.

1.2 **Objectives**

The objective of the DBA dissertation is to partially fulfill the requirements for the

award of the degree of Doctor of Business Administration (DBA). The weightage of the

research component and the course work is 50:50 where students are required to undertake 42

credits (14 courses x 3 credits) prior to start the research (40 credits). The structure of the 42

course is as follows:

3 courses: Research skills related

4 courses: Elective

• 1 course: University elective

6 courses: Core courses

1.3 Scope

The focus of the DBA dissertation is more on contributing to the practices rather than theory. Although, the rigor of the DBA dissertation should meet the expectation of the doctoral level, it differs from PhD thesis in several aspects. The basic differences between PhD thesis and DBA dissertation is highlighted in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: The differences between DBA dissertation and PhD thesis

Table 1.1: The differences between DBA dissertation and PhD thesis PhD Management Thesis Doctor of Bus. Admin. Dissertation				
D •	PhD Management Thesis			
Primary purpose	Prepare students to carry out scholarly research relevant to management theory and practice. Starting point for research – literature gap	Prepare students to carry out research- based on professional practice Starting point for research – business or managerial problem that is experienced by organizations.		
Students Profile	Normally individuals who want to prepare themselves for a research career.	Normally senior managers who want to advance in their careers by learning to solve business problems through advanced critical reasoning.		
Foundational preparation	Research theory and methodsDiscipline content	Research theory and methodsDiscipline content		
Nature of report	Research thesis addressing a research problem acknowledged as significant by the scholarly peer community	Doctoral dissertation addressing a practical problem, usually in the student's workplace, acknowledged as significant by scholarly and practical stakeholders		
What Must be There in research Proposal	 Research problem and its importance Expected significance of the work Background research Research plan and methods Evaluate by scholarly examiners or academician 	 Current situation description and problem to solve Desired outcome and its significance to key stakeholders Background research Research plan, Implementation plan and methods Evaluate by a panel including academician and qualified practitioners 		
Evaluation criteria for final thesis/dissertation exercise	 Intellectual and methodological soundness Novelty and significance of research theoretical contribution Adherence to scholarly peer community norms 	 Intellectual and methodological soundness Success of and learning from project/best practices Adherence to intellectual and ethical norms 		
Common forms of documentation	PhD Thesis	DBA Dissertation		

1.4 The Process Flow of DBA Journey

Being a DBA candidate, it is required to understand the whole process starting from registration to submission of the dissertation. The process flow of the DBA journey is outlined in Figure 1.1.

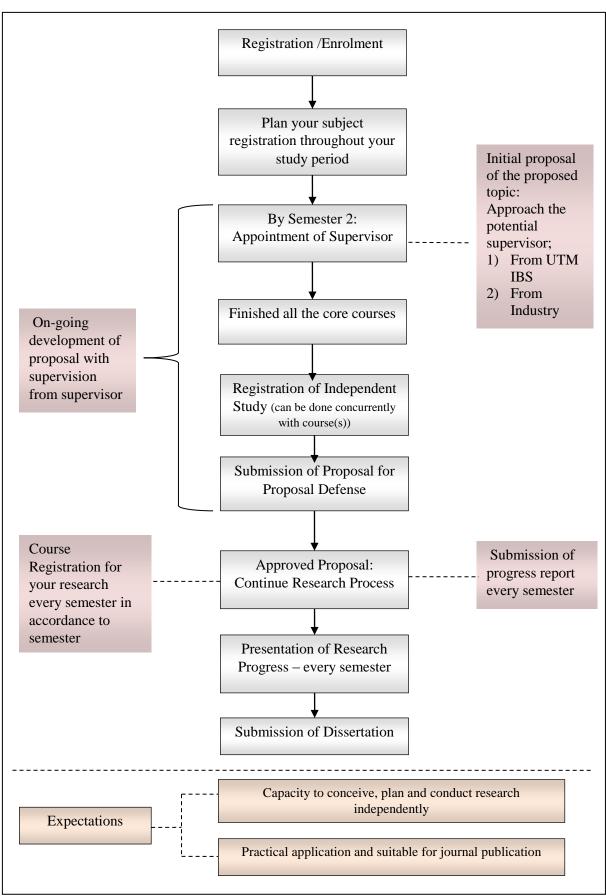


Figure 1.1: The process flow of the DBA journey

CHAPTER 2

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

2.1 Dissertation Status Declaration

Dissertation status declaration needs to be done using Dissertation Status Declaration form issued by Perpustakaan Sultanah Zanariah (PSZ), i.e., PSZ 19:16 (Pind. 1/07) form as showed in Appendix A. For more detail information, kindly see the UTM thesis manual.

2.2 Arrangement of Parts in a Dissertation

Students should adhere to the suggested arrangement of parts outlined in this section. More detail information is provided in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Arrangement of parts in a dissertation

Section	SUBJECT	STATUS	EXAMPLE (APPENDIX)	NOTES
	Blank paper	-	-	-
1.3	Declaration of the Status of Thesis	compulsory	A	without page number
1.3	Letter regarding status classification of thesis	compulsory	В	needed if classified as confidential/ restricted
1.4.1	Supervisor's declaration	compulsory	C1	without page number
1.4.2	Declaration on cooperation Certification of examination	compulsory	C2	without page number
1.5	Title page	compulsory	D	without page number but counted as (i)

1.7	Declaration of originality and exclusiveness	compulsory	F	page number using Roman numeric (ii)
1.8	Dedication	optional	G	page number using Roman numeric (if any)
1.9	Acknowledgement	optional	Н	page number using Roman numeric (if any)
1.10	Abstract (English) Abstrak (Bahasa Melayu)	compulsory	I, J	page number using Roman numeric (if any)
1.11	Table of Contents	compulsory	K	page number using Roman numeric
1.12	List of Tables	compulsory	L	page number using Roman numeric
1.13	List of Figures	compulsory	M	page number using Roman numeric
1.14	List of Symbols/ Abbreviations/Notation/ Terminology	compulsory	N	page number using Roman numeric
1.15	List of Appendices	compulsory (if any)	0	page number using Roman numeric (if any)
1.16	Text	compulsory	-	page number using Arabic numeric starting with page 1
1.17	References	compulsory	-	page number using Arabic numeric continue from the text
1.18	Appendices	optional	-	page number using Arabic numeric continue from the text

2.3 Dissertation Topics and Title

The topic of the dissertation should be grounded in a problem faced by managers and organizations (industry oriented, practical oriented) and that the results of the research should make a contribution to improving existing practice (focused on solving issues faced by organizations). The starting point for a DBA research is a live business or managerial problem that is being experienced by the organizations. The DBA research should fall within a specific subject area within business and/or management such as business innovation, management/human capital, marketing/entrepreneurship, technology/economics, accounting and finance.

The dissertation title should not exceed more than 15 words. The title should not contain formulas, symbols or subscripts, Greek letters, or other non-alphabetical symbols; rather word substitutes are used.

2.4 Abstracts

Abstracts must be bilingual. For a dissertation written English language, the abstract must first be written in English followed by Bahasa Melayu. The abstract should not exceed 300 words and should be placed in one page. It can be written using single or one and half spacing. Example can be seen in Appendix J.

2.5 Table of Content Page

The table of content page should start on a new page. It should list all sections, chapters and sub-headings. The titles must be written using the same words as those written in the text. The example of a content page is provided in Appendix K.

2.6 Other Requirements about the Dissertation Organization

Examples of the title page (Appendix D), statement of award for the thesis (Appendix E), dedication page (Appendix F), acknowledgment (Appendix H), list of tables (Appendix L), list of figures (Appendix M), list of appendices (Appendix O), quotation in the text (Appendix P), tables in the text (Appendix Q), sample of numbering a chapter and sub-

heading in the chapter (Appendix R) and sample of a reference list using author and year system (Appendix S) are shown in Appendices.

CHAPTER 3

SIZE AND FORMAT

3.1 Paper and Size

The DBA dissertation should be printed in high quality paper. White simile 80 gram high quality A4 size papers (210 x 297) must be used.

3.2 Margin

All pages should be set with the same margin. The left margin should be 4cm (for binding purposes) and 2.5 cm for the top, right and bottom margins.

3.3 Pagination

Each page of a dissertation must be counted and numbered. Pages should be numbered consecutively. The page numbers should be printed at the top right hand corner, 1.25cm from the top edge and 2.5cm from right edge. For more detail information, kindly see UTM Thesis Manual, Chapter 2.

3.4 Maximum Limits

The minimum length of a DBA dissertation can be 40,000 words which is equivalent to 160 pages. Maximum number of pages for a dissertation is as follows:

Text only: 50,000 words (160 to 200 pages; text only - without references and

appendices)

Total: 62,500 words (160 to 250 pages; total - including references and

appendices)

3.5 Other Requirements Related to Size and Formatting

Detail discussion and instruction about numbering the chapters and sub-sections, typing, spacing and format, computer printed copy, lettering and drawing, binding, cover colour and writing, front cover and spine can be obtained from UTM Thesis manual, chapter 2.

CHAPTER 4

GUIDELINE OF BASIC CHAPTERS

4.1 Basic Components of a DBA Dissertation

The basic chapters of a DBA dissertation are as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 3: Methodology

Chapter 4: Analysis and Findings

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

The possible sub-headings and discussion agenda that can be considered under each chapter are shown in Table 4.1. However, the students should organize the sub-headings with the discussion and guidance of their supervisor(s).

Table 4.1: Suggested discussion agenda

CRITERIA	Main Topics	
Chapter 1: Introduction	 Background of the study Problem Statement RQs and ROs Research scope Research Significance Definition of the study variables/terminologies Organization of the dissertation 	
Chapter 2: Literature Review	 Introduction Discussion on underpinning theory Discussion on the study variables/phenomena/issue Discussion on the overall conceptual design Chapter summary 	
Chapter 3: Methodology	 Introduction Research design Variables and measures Questionnaire design Sampling design 	

	 Reliability and validity Data collection procedure Data analysis procedure Chapter summary
Chapter 4: Analysis and Findings	 Introduction Analysis and reporting and of findings (qualitative vs. quantitative) Chapter summary
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion	 Introduction A brief summary of the findings Practical contribution Theoretical implications (if any) Research limitation and future research directions Conclusion

The problem statement in the DBA dissertation should be focused on practical or industrial-based. In line with the discussion of the problem statement, the research significance should also highlight in terms of practical or industrial. The discussion in the chapter should be made directly relevant to the problem area/statement. The discussion should be intended to further refine or justify the root cause of the problem.

In chapter 2, the discussion on variable(s) should emphasize on how the variables being embedded into the problem. Students should include previous studies on the variables/phenomenon. The structure is similar to PhD but the focus is problem-oriented or how to solve the problem.

Methodological choices should be appropriate to solve the problem or to answer research questions. The reporting of the findings should be relevant to the research problem and its structure should be similar to the PhD thesis.

The last chapter should be presented in a transparent manner. More focus should be given on managerial implications. It should highlight issues related to management practices. Also, it should display that the research has an impact on their professional practice. In addition, the practicality of the findings can be proofed through action plan that can be executed in reference to the management issue faced by the organisation.

In terms of research contribution, students should provide, (1) greater emphasis to the implications for managers and professional practice and (2) a detailed discussion on the applicability of the findings with respect to the professional practice of business. The discussion should provide a rich argument for why and how the findings are relevant to improved business practice. Additionally, accurate conclusions should be drawn from the data analysis techniques used.

APPENDIX A Example of Dissertation Status Validation Form

PSZ 19:16 (Pind. 1/07)

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA

DECLARATION OF DBA DISSERTATION AND COPYRIGHT				
Date of birth :				
Academic Session :				
I declare that this graduate p	roject is classified as:			
CONFIDENTAL	(Contains confidential in Act 1972)*	nformation under the Official Secret		
RESTRICTED	(Contains restricted inf the organization where	ormation as specified by research was done)		
OPEN ACCESS	I agree that my gradua open access (full text)	te project to be published as online		
I acknowledged that Unive	I acknowledged that Universiti Teknologi Malaysia reserves the right as follows:			
SIGNATURE		SIGNATURE OF SUPERVISOR		
(NEW IC NO./PASS	SPORT NO.)	NAME OF SUPERVISOR		
Date :		Date :		

NOTES:

^{*} If the graduate project is CONFIDENTIAL or RESTRICTED, please attach the letter from the organization with period and reasons for confidentiality or restriction.

APPENDIX B Example of a dissertation status declaration letter

Date

Librarian
Perpustakaan Sultanah Zanariah
UTM, Skudai
Johor
Sir,
CLASSIFICATION OF THESIS AS RESTRICTED
-TITLE AND NAME OF AUTHOR'S -
Please be informed that the above mentioned thesis entitled "TITLE" be classified as
RESTRICTED for a period of three (3) years from the date of this letter. The reasons
for this classification are
(i)
(ii)
(iii)
Thank you.
Sincerely yours,
NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER OF SUPERVISOR

Note: This letter should be written by the supervisor, addressed to PSZ and a copy attached to the thesis

APPENDIX C1 Sample of supervisor's declaration

"I/We* hereby declare that I/we* have read this thesis and in my/our* opinion this thesis is sufficient in term of scope and quality for the award of the degree of Doctor of Business Administration"

Signature	:	
Name of Supervisor I	:	
Date	:	
Signature	:	
Name of Supervisor II	:	
Date	:	
Signature	:	
Name of Supervisor III	:	
Date	:	

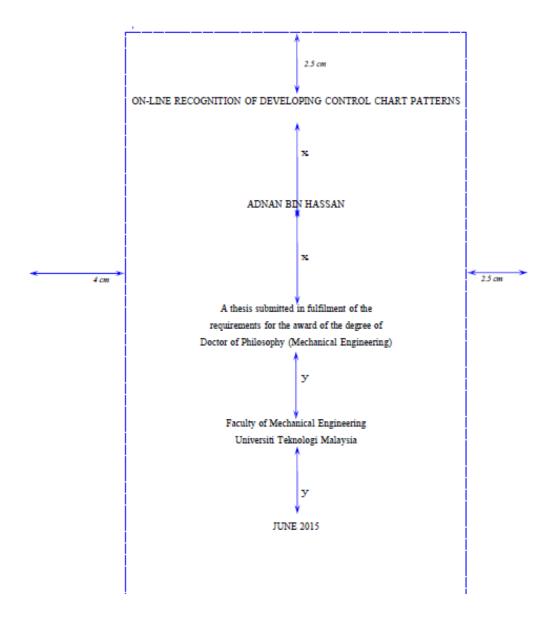
^{*}Delete as necessary

APPENDIX C2

Contoh pengesahan Sekolah Pengajian Siswazah/Fakulti/Agensi Kerjasama

BAHAGIAN A - Pengesanan Kerjas	аша~
Adalah disahkan bahawa projek penyel	lidikan tesis ini telah dilaksanakan melalui
kerjasama antara	dengan
Disahkan oleh:	
Tandatangan :	Tarikh :
Nama :	
Jawatan : (Cop rasmi)	
* Jika penyediaan tesisiprojek melibat	kan ker}asama.
BAHAGIAN B – Untuk Kegunaan P	ejabat Sekolah Pengajian Siswazah
Tesis ini telah diperiksa dan diakui olel	h:
Nama dan Alamat Pemeriksa Luar :	
Nama dan Alamat Pemeriksa Dalam:	
Nama Penyelia Lain (jika ada) :	
Nama Penyena Lam (ika ada) .	
Disahkan oleh Timbalan Pendaftar di S	PS:
Tandatangan :	Tarikh :
Nama :	

APPENDIX D Example of a title page



APPENDIX E

Sample of statement of awards for dissertation

1.	Bachelor Degree Project Report
	A report submitted in partial fulfilment of the
	requirements for the award of the degree of
	Bachelor of
2.	Master's Project Report (By course work)
	A project report submitted in partial fulfilment of the
	requirements for the award of the degree of
	Master of (specialisation)
3.	Master's Dissertation (By course work and research)
	A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the
	requirements for the award of the degree of
	Master of (specialisation)
4.	Master's Thesis (By research)
	A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the
	requirements for the award of the degree of
	Master of(specialisation) .
5.	Doctor of Philosophy Thesis
	A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the
	requirements for the award of the degree of
	Doctor of Philosophy (specialization)
6.	Engineering Doctorate Thesis
	A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the
	requirements for the award of the degree of
	Doctor of Engineering (specialisation)

APPENDIX F Sample of a dedication page

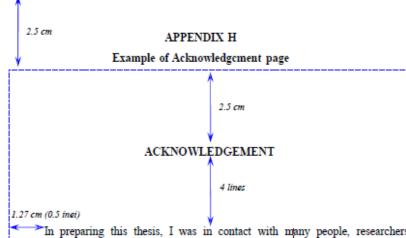
I declare that this thesis entitled " title of the thesis " is the result of my own research
except as cited in the references. The thesis has not been accepted for any degree and is
not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.

Signature	:	
Name	:	
Date	:	

APPENDIX G Sample of a dedication page

To my beloved mother and father

APPENDIX H Example of acknowledgement page



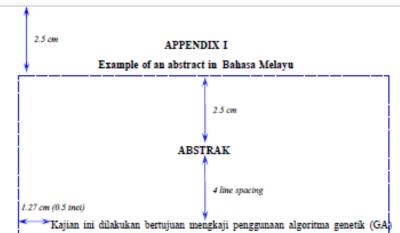
In preparing this thesis, I was in contact with many people, researchers, academicians, and practitioners. They have contributed towards my understanding and thoughts. In particular, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to my main thesis supervisor, Professor Dr. Mohd Shariff Nabi Baksh, for encouragement, guidance, critics and friendship. I am also very thankful to my co-supervisors Professor Dr. Awaluddin Mohd Shaharoun and Associate Professor Dr. Hishamuddin Jamaluddin for their guidance, advices and motivation. Without their continued support and interest, this thesis would not have been the same as presented here.

I am also indebted to Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) for funding my Ph.D. study. Librarians at UTM, Cardiff University of Wales and the National University of Singapore also deserve special thanks for their assistance in supplying the relevant literatures.

My fellow postgraduate students should also be recognised for their support. My sincere appreciation also extends to all my colleagues and others who have provided assistance at various occasions. Their views and tips are useful indeed. Unfortunately, it is not possible to list all of them in this limited space. I am grateful to all my family members.

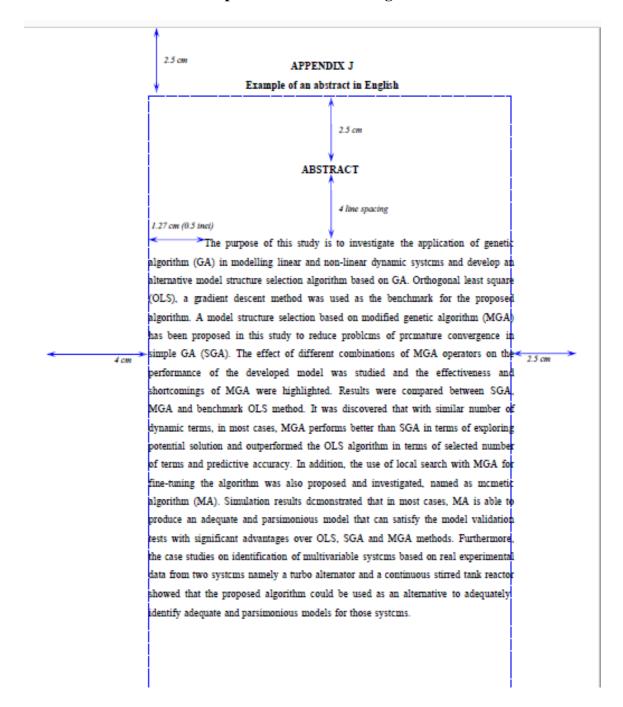
4 cm

APPENDIX I Example of an abstract in Bahasa Melayu

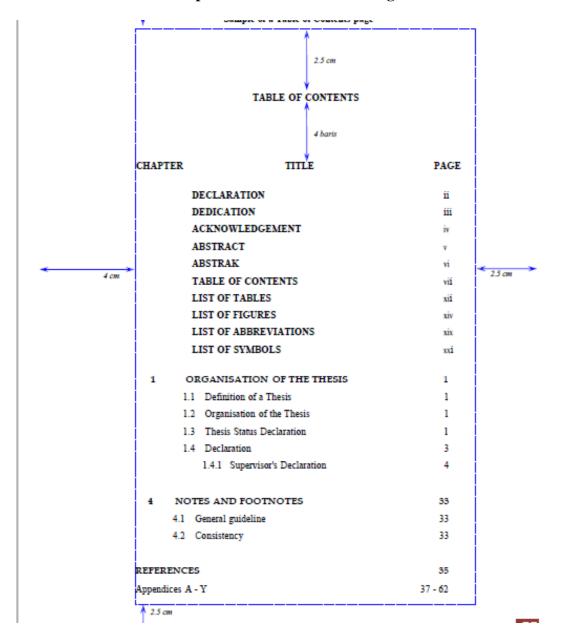


dalam pemodelan sistem dinamik linear dan tak linear dan membangunkan kaedah alternatif bagi pemilihan struktur model menggunakan GA. Algorithma kuasa dua terkecil ortogon (OLS), satu kaedah penurunan kecerunan digunakan sebagai bandingan bagi kaedah yang dicadangkan. Pcmilihan struktur model mengunakan kaedah algoritma genetik yang diubahsuai (MGA) dicadangkan dalam kajian ini bagi mengurangkan masalah konvergens pramatang dalam algoritma genetik mudah (SGA). Kesan penggunaan gabungan operator MGA yang berbeza ke atas prestas model yang terbentuk dikaji dan keberkesanan serta kekurangan MGA diutarakan Kajian simulasi dilakukan untuk membanding SGA, MGA dan OLS. Dengan meggunakan bilangan parametor dinamik yang setara kajian ini mendapati, dalam kebanyakan kes, prestasi MGA adalah lebih baik daripada SGA dalam mencan penyelesaian yang berpotensi dan lebih berkebolehan daripada OLS dalam menentukan bilangan sebutan yang dipilih dan ketcpatan ramalan. Di samping itu, penggunaan carian tempatan dalam MGA untuk menambah baik algorithma tersebut dicadang dan dikaji, dinamai sebagai algoritma memetic (MA). Hasil simulas menunjukkan, dalam kebanyakan kes, MA berkeupayaan menghasilkan model yang bersesuaian dan parsimoni dan mcmenuhi ujian pengsahihan model di samping mcmperolehi beberapa kelebihan dibandingkan dengan kaedah OLS, SGA dan MGA. Tambahan pula, kajian kes untuk sistem berbilang pembolehubah menggunakan data eksperimental sebenar daripada dua sistem iaitu sistem pengulang-alik turbo dan reaktor teraduk berterusan menunjukkan algoritma ini boleh digunakan sebagai alternatif untuk mcmperolehi model termudah yang mcmadai bagi sistem tersebut.

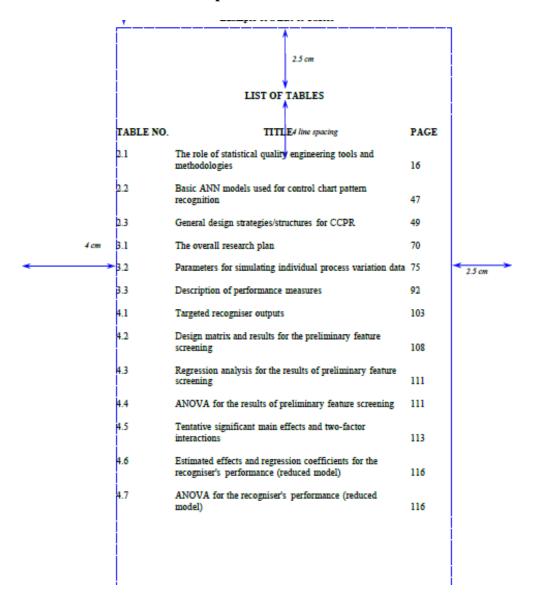
APPENDIX J Example of an abstract in English



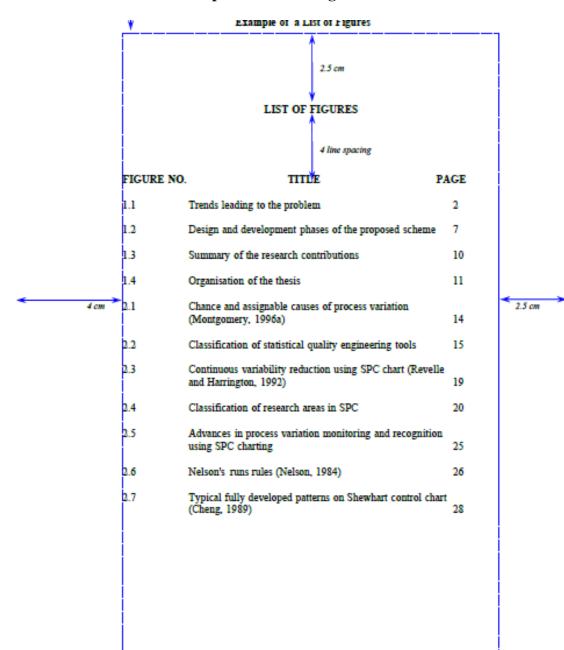
APPENDIX K Sample of a Table of Content Page



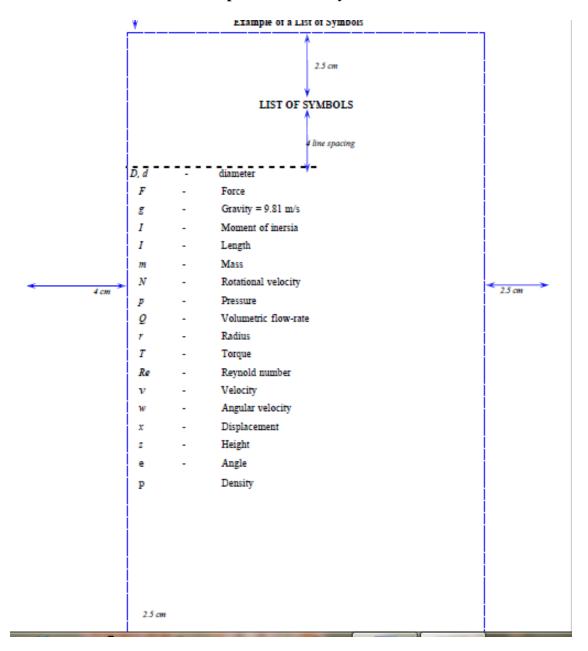
APPENDIX L Example of a List of Tables



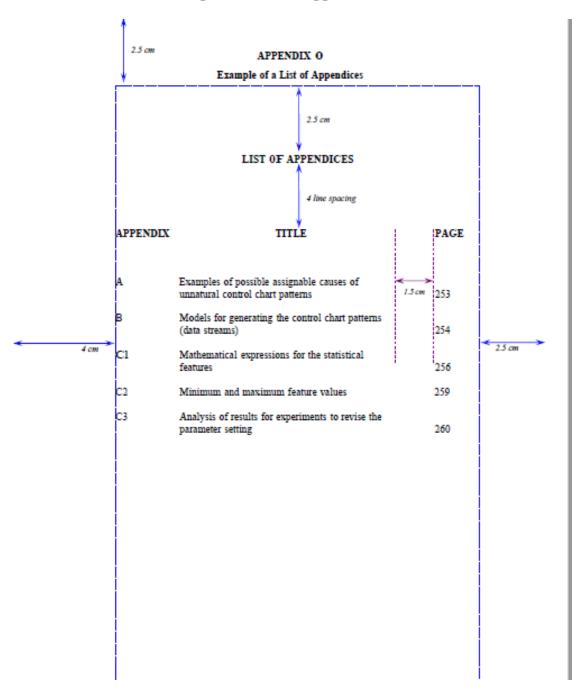
APPENDIX M Example of a List of Figures



APPENDIX N Example of a List of Symbols



APPENDIX O Example of a List of Appendices



APPENDIX P Sample of a quotation in a text

After deliberating on doctoral education in Australia in the 1990s, one observer I Australia writes:

The lack of any significant formal course work within our Ph.D. and master degrees by research has continued for three decades. The focus of our Ph.D. research type degrees continues to be the research project, and this is almost the only medium by which education is accomplished.

(Stranks, 1984:171)

4 cm

2.5 cm

APPENDIX Q Sample of a table in the text

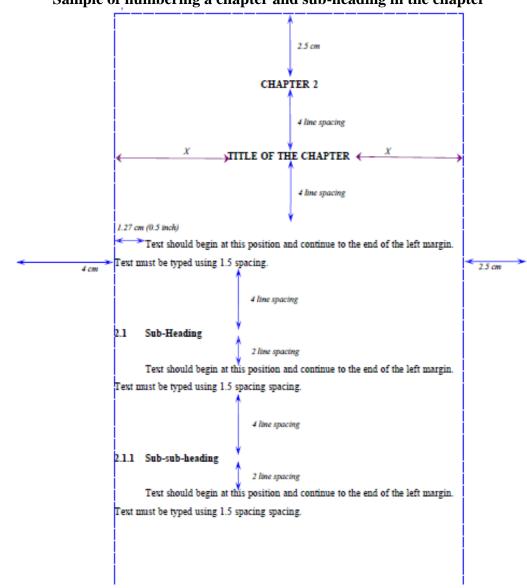
2.5 cm APPENDIX Q Sample of a table in the text

		exprimental		

Distance Ratio	Experiment (mean value)	Computer Simulation (mean value)		
0.125	0.25	0.137		
0.250	0.46	0.560		
0.375	0.63	0.738		
0.500	0.75	0.861		
0.625	0.83	0.939		
0.750	0.88	0.981		
0.875	0.93	0.997		
1.000	1.00	1.000		

2.5 cm

APPENDIX R Sample of numbering a chapter and sub-heading in the chapter



APPENDIX S

Sample of a reference list using author and year system

- Ahmad Zaki Abu Bakar (1989). Pemprosesan Teks Bahasa Melayu Untuk Pemahaman Komputer. Universiti Teknologi Malaysia: Tesis Doktor Falsafah.
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- Martin, A. M. ed. (1991). Peat as an Agent in Biological Degradation of Waste. London: Elsevier. 314-362.
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- Sheta, A. F. and De Jong, K. (1996). Parameter Estimation of Nonlinear Systems in Noisy Environments Using Genetic Algorithms. Proceedings of the 1966 IEEE International Symposium on Intelligent Control. September 15-18. Dearborn, Michigan: IEEE, 360-365.
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 Perspektif Persekitaran. Petaling Jaya: Fajar Bakti. 71-87.
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- Veres, S. M. (1990). Structure Selection of Stochastic Dynamic Systems. New York: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers.

Note: Arranged alphabetically according to author's name.