

Preparing and Formatting Capstone Research Reports

The research report should demonstrate the ability of the student to conduct research and investigation in a specified area and present the results with full documentation in a form complying with the accepted standards for scholarly writing. Generally, the contents of a research report should be organized into three major parts and several minor parts. The following is a list of these parts and their usual order of placement within the body of the report.

A- The Preliminaries

1. Title Page
2. Abstract
3. Table of Contents

B- The Text

4. Introduction
5. Report on the Study
 - a. Literature Review
 - b. Methodology
 - c. Findings / Results
 - d. Discussion
 - e. Conclusions and Recommendations

C- The Final Pages

6. References
7. Appendices (if any)

Title Page

This page is never numbered but is considered to be the first page of the preliminaries. It includes the title of the study, the name of the student, and the submission statement as well as the name of supervisor. The study's title should be an accurate and meaningful description of the content of the research.

Abstract

An abstract for the Capstone Project should not exceed one page in length. Each abstract consists of a brief statement on the problem defined in the study, a brief description of the research procedures or methodology, and a condensed summary of major findings and conclusions.

Table of Contents

This is essentially a topic outline of the report. The heading is **Table of Contents** and it is centered without punctuation at the top of the page. The table of contents usually lists all parts following it. These parts include all of the main headings and sub-headings exactly as they appear in the body of the study.

The Text

This part of the research project consists of a detailed report on the study as well as a conclusion and recommendations. Each area of the research report should be presented according to the guidelines approved by the MIST Program and the College of Graduate Studies and is divided into sections / sub-sections with clearly defined and related contents. The conclusion includes a summary of the study, its scientific benefits, and recommendations.

References

Any books, articles, or other sources that have been read and used, either in direct quotation or by reference, are listed in this part for the benefit of those who want to deepen their knowledge of the study or complete the analysis of the issue. The style manual approved by the College of Graduate Studies for documenting references in the text as well as end references, is that of American Psychological Association (APA). MIST students should consult the *APA Manual of Style*, 6th ed. for proper citation format.

Appendices

This part contains supplementary or illustrative material or explanatory data which should be included but would not be appropriate in the text of the report. The appendices can include:

- A. Copies of data collection instruments

- B. Additional tables
- C. Documented correspondence

Font and Style

An appropriate font should be used consistently throughout the report. The font size used for the body of the text is usually 12 point. It is 14 point and bold for the main headings, 12 point and bold for the sub-headings, and 12 point and underlined for the minor sub-headings. If necessary, a smaller font can be used when preparing tables.

APA Headings		
Level	Format	Font size
Main Headings	Centered, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Headings	14
Sub-headings	Left-aligned, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading	12
Sub- sub-headings	Indented, boldface, lowercase heading with a period.	12.
Sub- sub- sub-headings	<i>Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase heading with a period.</i>	<i>12</i>
Sub- sub- sub- sub-headings	<i>Indented, italicized, lowercase heading with a period.</i>	<i>12</i>

Margins

The margins on each side of the page should be at least 3 cm. to allow for binding and clipping. All tables and figures included in the research paper must conform to the same margin requirement.

Spacing

There should be 1.5 space between paragraphs and 1.5 space between lines in the paragraph. Single space is required within quotations, footnotes, lists, tables, titles, appendices, and other similar items.

Pagination

Each page of the report must be assigned a number though the number may not always appear. Blank pages, if any, are included in the pagination. Small Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, etc.) are used to number the preliminary pages. The title page is counted as page i but the number does not appear. Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.) are used to paginate the remainder

of the thesis including the text and the supplementary pages. The number is placed at the center of lower margin of the page.

Tables and figures

The term "Table" is used to designate tabulated data, including computer printout sheets. The term "Figure" is used to designate photographs, charts, maps, graphs, drawings, diagrams, etc. Each table and figure must bear an identifying number and a title. The number and title are placed above the top line in the case of a table and below the last line in the case of a figure. Many reports include tables and figures either in the text or in the appendices or both. Since the specific purposes and organization of tables and figures may vary widely among the various disciplines, the student should consult the *APA Manual of Style*, 6th ed. or his/her supervisor for guidance.

Final Preparation and Review

The student should ensure that his/her project report is written in sound language and thoroughly reviewed before being submitted for evaluation. Details on writing requirements as well as editorial assistance and proofreading are summarized below.

Writing

As the medium of instruction in the Master of Information Studies is English, project reports must be in the English language. **The student is responsible for the maintenance of accepted standards of grammar, sentence structure, and punctuation.**

Editorial assistance

A student may use the assistance of a professional editor on the recommendation of the supervisor. That assistance is limited to the use of language and not the subject matter content or meaning.

Proofreading

The student should give himself/herself enough time to adequately proofread the final copy of the research report before submitting the final version to their MIST program supervisor. It is his/her responsibility to ensure that there are no typographical, grammatical, and other errors.

Citation and Plagiarism.

Plagiarism occurs when the writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original material without acknowledging its source. Here are some tips to avoid Plagiarism:

1. **Paraphrase** - If you have found information that is perfect for your research. Read it and put it into your own words. Make sure that you do not copy verbatim more than two words in a row from the text you have found. If you do use more than two words

together, you will have to use quotation marks. Excessive use of quotation marks is unacceptable.

2. **Cite** - Citing is one of the effective ways to avoid plagiarism. Follow the document formatting guidelines found in the *APA Manual of Style*, 6th ed. This usually entails the addition of the author(s) and the date of the publication or similar information. Citing is really that simple. Not citing properly can constitute plagiarism.
3. **Quoting** - When quoting a source, use the quote exactly the way it appears. No one wants to be misquoted. Most institutions of higher learning frown on “block quotes” or quotes of 40 words or more. A scholar should be able to effectively paraphrase most material. This process takes time, but the effort pays off! Quoting must be done correctly to avoid plagiarism allegations.
4. **Citing Quotes** - Citing a quote can be different than citing paraphrased material. This practice usually involves the addition of a page number, or a paragraph number in the case of web content.
5. **Citing Your Own Material** - If some of the material you are using for your thesis was used by you, a previous one, or anywhere else you must cite yourself. Treat the text the same as you would if someone else wrote it. It may sound odd, but using material you have used before is called self-plagiarism, and it is not acceptable.
6. **Referencing** - One of the most important ways to avoid plagiarism is including a reference page or page of works cited. Again, this page must meet the document formatting guidelines found in the *APA Manual of Style*, 6th ed. This information is very specific and includes the author(s), date of publication, title, and source. Follow the directions for this page carefully.

The following samples are provided for assistance

- 1: Sample Title Page
- 2: Sample Abstract
- 3: Sample Table of Contents
- 4: Sample References

**Kuwait University
College of Social Sciences
Department of Information Studies**

**Capstone Project :1331-593
Title of the Research Project**

**:Submitted by
Student Name**

**A Research Report Submitted to the College of Graduate Studies in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Master's
Degree in Information Studies**

**:Supervised by
Name of supervisor**

**Kuwait
Month/year of presentation**

Abstract

The abstract consists of a brief statement of the problem discussed in the study, a brief description of the research procedures or methodology, and a condensed summary of major findings and conclusions.



Maximum one page, one paragraph (200-300 words), in past participle tense

Keywords: (five words)

Table of Contents

Heading	Page No.
Abstract	
Introduction	
Literature Review	
Methodology	
Findings / Results	
Discussion	
Conclusions and Recommendations	
References	
Appendices (if applicable)	

References

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