1. **University requirements and compulsory pages:**

Please consult the University’s SUNScholar thesis/dissertation submission platform which can be found at: [http://library.sun.ac.za/English/howdoi/Pages/Submit-my-thesis-online.aspx](http://library.sun.ac.za/English/howdoi/Pages/Submit-my-thesis-online.aspx) and the SU General Calendar (also known as the “Jaarboek”) on pages 143 – 148 for Masters theses and pages 156 – 165 for PhD dissertations which can be found at: [http://www.sun.ac.za/english/Documents/Yearbooks/Current/General.pdf](http://www.sun.ac.za/english/Documents/Yearbooks/Current/General.pdf) for clear guidelines regarding the formatting, final submission, duplication and binding of your thesis/dissertation.

**NB:** Also consult with your supervisor/ promoter/ postgraduate coordinator in your specific department regarding faculty specific requirements. This guide merely provides generic information on generally accepted format and structure of a dissertation.

A generic example of a possible layout follows at the end of the formatting requirement section.

If you are not well practiced in formatting large documents, it is a good idea to consult the PG Skills [website](http://library.sun.ac.za/English/howdoi/Pages/Submit-my-thesis-online.aspx) for information regarding the MS Word for Large Documents workshops that you can attend before you start your writing process. You will learn here how to create a template (including how to compile your content table; how to prevent tables or figures from shifting and how to insert different types of page numbering using section breaks; etc.)

### 1.1. **General Formatting**

- **Font:** Arial or Times New Roman
- **Font Size:** 10 or 11 or 12pt
- **Font Colour:** Black
- **Line Spacing:** Double, Single or 1.5
- **Borders:** At least 2cm all around
- **Paper Size:** A4

Updated 3.09.15
For example: A safe font size to use is 11, with 1.5 spacing, however, check with your supervisor too, as he/she may have a specific preference.

Please note: It is very important to format your document to A4 size. This will affect numbering.

1.2. Compulsory first 4 pages

Please note:

- all SU theses and dissertations have 4 compulsory first pages that must be placed BEFORE the Table of Contents;
- regarding the SU logo, some faculties require that no SU logo be placed on the title page of the thesis or document when the copies are sent off to the examiners, whereas others do – check with your department or faculty what their requirements are. However,
- the University’s crest must be placed by the student/supervisor/the SU library as a watermark on the title page of the thesis or dissertation during the process of converting it to a PDF document for SUNScholar after completion of the examination process, so as to establish the institution’s intellectual property.

Please refer to the University’s thesis/dissertation platform, SUNScholar, for the official SU guidelines, Step 2, regarding the exact wording and formatting: http://library.sun.ac.za/English/howdoi/Pages/Submit-my-thesis-online.aspx and the General Yearbook Sections 5.7 and 6.9.

2. Other General Conventions:

2.1. Tables

Tables should be numbered according to chapter i.e. in Chapter 1 all tables are numbered Table 1.1, 1.2 and in Chapter 2 Table 2.1, 2; 2 etc.

2.2. Figures

The same applies to figures – Figure 1.1, 1.2 in Chapter 1 and Figure 2.1, 2.2 etc. in Chapter 2.

Updated 3.09.15
2.3. **Numbers**

Page numbers are usually Roman up to your Chapter 1 (Arabic numerals starting from Chapter 1 onwards.) You should therefore set up your document with a Section Break between Chapter 1 and the preceding text.

3. **Dissertation Layout**

There are numerous sources that provide generic outlines for dissertations that you may use as a starting point. Worthwhile books to read regarding layout are:

**Hofstee, E.** 2006. *Constructing a good dissertation.* Johannesburg: EPE Publishers. (On page 36 there is a typical dissertation structure)


Other worthwhile books to read regarding writing dissertations in general are:


A further basic google search will reveal many more similar books or articles that give more specific guidance regarding specific thesis/dissertation writing within certain disciplines.

**NB:** Once again, it is very important to check with your supervisor/promoter/postgraduate coordinator in your specific department regarding Faculty specific styles/requirements/preferences. A good idea is to browse the SUNScholar e-platform too to see how previous students within your faculty, department or supervisor (search by advisor) have structured their theses/dissertations. The following link will take you to the SUNScholar thesis/dissertation repository: [http://scholar.sun.ac.za](http://scholar.sun.ac.za).

Updated 3.09.15
4. **Example**

In the *example dissertation* that follows, the first four pages are compulsory for any dissertation and these have been set up according to SU provisions.

The rest of this document is based on Hofstee’s structure. Please note that the NAMES of your Chapters and sections will be different from those given here, depending on the content on the chapter. For example, you might have a section named ‘Problem Statement’ (1.2) but not one called ‘Section!’(4.2).

The following example dissertation is done according to a possible Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences layout.
Psychological factors contributing to the successful cessation of smoking in previously addicted adult men in the Western Cape, South Africa

by Anony Mous

Dissertation presented for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, at Stellenbosch University

Supervisor: Dr Tom D Harry
Co-supervisor: Dr Jan Alleman

December 2015
Declaration

By submitting this dissertation electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

December 2015
Abstract

All assignments or theses, which must be submitted electronically to the University Library after the examination process, are required to contain an abstract of not more than 500 words each in English and in Afrikaans (called Opsomming), placed on the page immediately following the title page and the author's declaration.

In her thesis guide for students, Prof. Nelleke Bak (2002), for example, suggests that the abstract should “provide a crisp summary of what the thesis undertakes and what major conclusions are drawn. Someone reading the abstract must be able to form a fairly accurate impression of what is in the thesis.”

She goes on to say that “as the abstract will be reproduced in various registers and publications (like Dissertation Abstracts International) available in libraries across the world, it is important that it should be accurate and well-written. A good abstract greatly improves the chances of a thesis being referred to by other scholars.”

Prof. Bak also says the following:

The Abstract should reflect the balance of the thesis. You should not give much weight to what is a relatively minor part of the thesis, and you should give appropriate weight to an important part of your thesis.

The Abstract is written last, when you know exactly what the thesis covers and what its main conclusions are. Being thoroughly familiar with the work, you should be able to write it fluently and quickly.

You may need assistance in translating your Abstract. It is your responsibility to ensure that the translation is accurate, fluent, and grammatically correct.

(www.uwc.ac.za/Students/Postgraduate/.../Survival%20Guide.pdf)
Opsomming
Acknowledgements

This is optional.

You thank your supervisors and all others who supported you.

You acknowledge if the research was funded by any organization – this is so that you can declare your interest.

You mention if the work has been presented at any conference either orally or as a poster or has appeared in any publication. Give full details.
Dedications

This is also optional if you would like to dedicate your work to someone or the memory of someone (quite personal).
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(Optional)

A glossary contains brief explanations of words within a certain topic or field of research. The entries are arranged alphabetically and will typically include terms that are uncommon, specialized or newly introduced into a field.
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