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Odisha State Open University, Sambalpur, Odisha
Established by an Act of Government of Odisha.

**DISSERTATION GUIDELINES
FOR
PGDRD/ MARD**

**ODISHA STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY
SAMBALPUR, ODISHA**

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1.0 Introduction

Every learner will have to submit a dissertation under the guidance of a supervisor. A dissertation is a formal document and there are rules that govern the way in which it is written. It gives learners an opportunity to show that they have gained the requisite knowledge and skills to organize and conduct a research project. The present document will guide you through the dissertation process.

1.1 The aims of the dissertation are to enable the learner:

- To identify a research issue / problem
- To put into practice theories and concepts learned during the program
- Show evidence of independent investigation
- Identify and apply relevant theories to support the given study
- Develop the ability to plan and manage a project within a stipulated time frame

1.2 Learning Outcomes:

After completing the dissertation the learner should be able to:

- Identify a research problem from the existing literature
- Define, design and deliver an academically rigorous piece of research
- Understand the relationships between the theoretical concepts and their application to specific situations
- Appreciate practical implications and limitation of a research project

2.0 Dissertation Supervision

You will be supported throughout the dissertation by a supervisor. Supervisors will be allotted by the Coordinator of your respective study centers. The supervisor should have expertise in your area of study.

2.1 Role of Supervisor

The supervisor shall facilitate your research. Ideally a supervisor's role includes the following:

- To assist the student during formulation of research questions/ hypothesis, obtaining relevant literature and adopting a suitable method of research
- To assist the student in tailoring the proposal to meet the time and other resource constraints
- To monitor progress

- To educate and caution the student against plagiarism and violation of Copyright Act.

2.2 Responsibilities of the Learner

- To maintain regular contact with the supervisors and inform them of the progress made.
- To prepare the final draft with the help of the supervisor.

2.3 Role of the Study Center

- To identify and allot supervisors for the learners
- To arrange counseling sessions, as per University rules, on research methodology
- To preserve a copy of the dissertation report for use in study centers' library for record
- To arrange the viva-voce for evaluation of dissertations, as per University rules

3.0 The Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation proposal is an important working document which, when approved, becomes a road-map of the dissertation process. An ideal dissertation proposal must contain a working title, aims, objectives, research questions, a preliminary literature review and detailed research methodology to be adopted for the study.

All dissertation proposals need to be approved by the University. Work on the dissertation can only begin after due approval from the University.

4.0 Writing the Dissertation

The learner has to ensure that the final dissertation includes the following:

4.1 Title Page / Cover Page

Title page carries the topic of research as well as the institutional affiliation of the learner. Ideally the title of dissertation should not exceed 12 words.

4.2 Certificate

Dissertations should be accompanied by a certification from the supervisor. The certificate should declare that the researcher is a bonafide learner of OSOU and that the work carried out by him / her is original and hasn't been published elsewhere.

4.3 Declaration

Dissertations should be accompanied by a declaration from the learner that the work carried out by him / her is original and hasn't been submitted / published anywhere.

4.4 Acknowledgement(s)

In this section the learner acknowledges people and / or institutions for their support and assistance during the research.

4.5 Abstract

The dissertation should contain an abstract within 300 - 350 words. A good abstract ideally sums-up the aims and objectives, gap area, methodology, results, analysis and conclusions of research.

4.6 Table of Contents

This page spells out the chapter headings, appendices, references and pages on which they can be found.

4.7 Introduction

The introduction provides the background, rationale and objective of the study. It positions the research problem. It also gives a brief idea about the chapters that follow.

4.8 Literature Review

Literature review is an integral part of any research project and hence its inclusion in a dissertation is mandatory. The literature review should present and analyze the relevant published literature pertaining to the topic of research. While writing the review of literature the researcher must keep in mind the research objectives as mentioned in Introduction. Suitable Gap areas should emerge from the literature.

Theoretical perspectives as employed in the dissertation can be included in this section.

4.9 Research Methodology

In this section the researcher justifies to the reader the process by which the research questions, derived by analysis of the relevant literature, were answered. Details of the research design such as the sample size, sampling techniques as well as methods / tools of data collection should be discussed.

4.10 Findings / Results / Analysis

The results of research carried out will be presented in this chapter.

Results of inferential research should be accompanied by their corresponding *p*-values (probability

values). For carrying out the test of significance chi-square, ANOVA or any other prescribed method may be employed.

In case of qualitative research, select transcripts, as obtained during in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, can be furnished.

4.11 Analysis and Discussion

While analyzing the results obtained researchers need to make their own inferences. Mere quoting of figures and percentages already obtained in the results section should be discouraged.

4.12 Conclusion

Conclusions summarize the research and help the readers to have a wider understanding of the issue at hand. They can also include the implications of study as well as future areas of research.

4.13 Reference:

An appropriate style of referencing (APA / MLA) should be employed by the researcher. Learners need to provide both in-text as well as end-text referencing.

- American Psychological Association (APA) style sheet is followed in most works related to Social Sciences and Management.

Example:

Derwing, T. M., Rossiter, M. J., & Munro, M. J. (2002). Teaching native speakers to listen to foreign-accented speech. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 23(4), 245-259.

- Modern Language Association (MLA) style sheet is followed in most works related to literature.

Example:

Derwing, Tracy. M et al. "Teaching native speakers to listen to foreign-accented speech" *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, vol. 23, no. 4, 2002, pp. 245-259

4.14 Appendix

In the Appendix the researcher furnishes the tools of data collection (such as questionnaires, interview schedules) employed during the research.

5.0 Layout, Style and Writing Suggestions

5.1 Dissertation Formatting, word count

Ideally the Master's degree dissertation should be within 12,000 words (not including appendices and references).

5.2 Writing Style

Dissertations have to be written in 12 fonts, Times New Roman, with 1.5 Line spacing.

6.0 Submission

The work on the dissertation should ideally start as early as the Third Semester so that it can be submitted in time. A deadline for submission will be specified by the University and the student should submit it as per the schedule.

6.1 Date of Submission

Session	Last Date of Submission
January	31st May of each academic year
July	30th November of each academic year

7.0 Dissertation Ethics: Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of cheating and the University adopts a zero tolerance policy towards the same. **Using downloaded content from the Internet is strictly prohibited.** The University uses anti-plagiarism software (such as Turnitin) to cross-check the authenticity of the work. Learner must submit both the hard and soft copies of dissertation to the University.

As per the current UGC norms, dissertations carrying more than 10% plagiarism level have to be resubmitted after making the necessary changes.

8.0 Assessment and Evaluation

Dissertations should be evaluated on the following criteria:

- 1) Originality
- 2) Awareness of relevant literature
- 3) Methodological rigor

- 4) Ability of the researcher to critically analyze the results obtained
- 5) Documentation

Emphasis should also be laid on the clarity of language employed by the researcher.

9.0 Suggested topics for dissertation

Learners are advised to take any issues, problems and schemes of rural development for developing the dissertation.

10.0 Specimen Copy

(Cover page)

"Title of the dissertation"

A dissertation report submitted to Odisha State Open University, Sambalpur in partial fulfillment for the award of degree in/..... (year)

Submitted

By

'Name'

'Enrollment no.'

'Programme'

Under the Supervision of
(Name and Designation of the Guide)

(Month and Year of Submission)



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Odisha State Open University, Sambalpur, Odisha
Established by an Act of Government of Odisha.

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that dissertation entitled “Title of the dissertation” submitted by (Name/Course/Programme/Enrolment No.) is her/his own work and has been prepared under my guidance and supervision.

This project is a bona fide work done by Mr./ Ms. _____ and is submitted to Odisha State Open University, Sambalpur in partial fulfillment for the award ofProgramme.

To the best of my knowledge, the work has not been submitted elsewhere for the award Degree / Diploma / Certificate. It is recommended that this Dissertation be placed before the examiner for evaluation.

Signature of the Supervisor

Name & Designation

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation titled, “_____”

is a bona fide work done by me under the Supervision of Mr. / Mrs. / Dr._____.

The present work is original and has not been submitted at any University / Institution for award of Degree / Diploma / Certificate.

Signature of the Learner

Name

Enrollment No.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT(S)

Signature of the Learner