

Colloquium Series 3
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Innovating Solutions

The 10 Most Common Mistakes in Thesis Writing: An Examiner's Perspective

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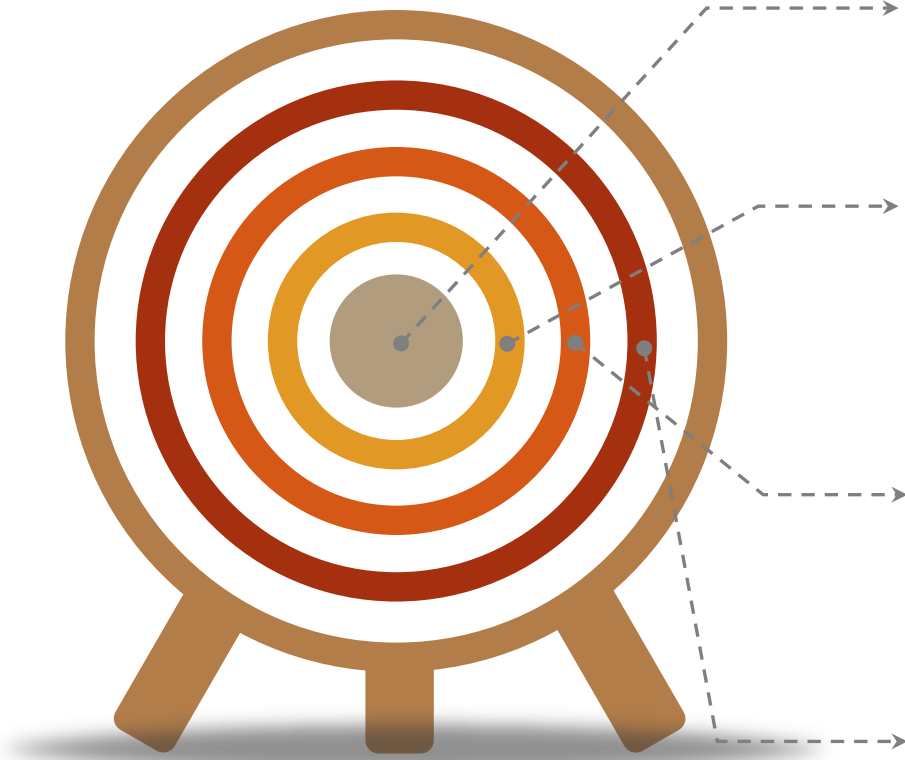
Contents

- 1 INTRODUCTION**
- 2 THESIS FORMAT**
- 3 THE 10 COMMON MISTAKES**
- 4 COMMON MISTAKES VS. CHAPTERS**
- 5 CONCLUSION**





Introduction



Who?

Know your target readers: Examiners, other researchers, funders (if any)

Why?

The reason to write: Proposal defense, publication (part of thesis outcomes), viva (oral)

When?

Every semester: From the 1st semester towards the proposal defense (Sem. 2/3), research progress, final thesis for viva

How?

Effective writing: Use the thesis template as early as possible, ICT skills e.g. Word, SPSS, Excel, EndNote/Mendeley

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA

THESIS WRITING GUIDELINES 2023



Prepared By:
School of Graduate Studies

UTM Thesis Format

- Ensure you have downloaded the latest guideline
- URL: <https://sps.utm.my/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Thesis-Guideline-18.10.2023-1-1.pdf>



The 10 Common Mistakes



1. **Poorly Defined Research Problem or Question**
2. **Weak or Inadequate Literature Review**
3. Incoherent Structure and Organization
4. Methodological Flaws
5. Weak Argumentation or Analysis
6. **Lack of Original Contribution**
7. **Poor Writing Style and Language**
8. Inconsistent or Incorrect Referencing
9. **Overgeneralized or Unsupported Conclusions**
10. Ignoring Examiner or Supervisor Feedback



1. Poor Research Question/Hypothesis
2. Weak Literature Review
3. **Methodological Flaws**
4. **Theoretical Weakness**
5. **Data Analysis & Interpretation Errors**
6. Structural & Organizational Issues
7. **Citation & Referencing Problems**
8. Poor Academic Writing
9. Inadequate Discussion/Conclusion
10. **Formatting & Presentation Issues**

Prompt: List 10 common mistakes in thesis writing from an examiner's perspective

Common Mistakes vs. Chapters

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Chapter 4: Proposed Work

Chapter 5: Evaluation

Chapter 6: Conclusion

- 1) Problem statement too lengthy, **almost similar** to the research background
- 2) Research Questions (RQs) **does not map** to Research Objectives (ROs)

- 1) Do not include systematic review, **simply cite** any works, do not support the RQs (Chap.1)
- 2) Do not describe, summarise, criticise, link (DSCL), **simply write**

- 1) Do not include theoretical framework and/or **confused** with own research framework or procedure
- 2) Do **not know the difference** between research method vs. research methodology

- 1) Do **not highlight** the specific work (algorithm, method, technique, model, framework) in the chapter heading
- 2) Still **citing other works** instead of elaborating own works

- 1) Still **confused** between analysis and findings, results and discussion, and **missing the benchmark**
- 2) Still **citing others works** and/or repeating what have been explained in the research methodology (Chap. 3)

Listing **too many** limitations or future work

Thesis title?

2.4 Thesis Title

A thesis title must adhere to the following guidelines:

- (a) It should be a clear and concise description of the focus and contribution of the research.
- (b) It should not contain redundant phrases reflecting a research exercise, such as ‘An investigation of...’, ‘A preliminary study of...’, ‘A study of...’, ‘Analysis of...’, ‘On the...’, ‘Theory of ...’, ‘Some...’, and ‘Toward a...’.
- (c) The thesis title may contain common acronyms used in the field of study.

Refer to pg. 18 of UTM Thesis Writing Guidelines 2023

Thesis Title: “Save the best for last”

- Clear, concise, focus, contribution
- Avoid research phrases e.g. “A Study...”
- May contain common acronyms in the field e.g. ? (need to confirm with the Academic Office for Computing field)



Conclusion

- Discipline to write and update your thesis every semester
- Great research deserves a great thesis
- Sharpen your writing skills, do not just rely on AI assistance
- Thick thesis does not mean a better thesis



Acknowledgement

- Faculty of Computing
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- IIRG Members
- IIRG PG Students



THANK YOU



In the Name of God for Mankind

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