



NBS

Thesis Guide

MS Logistics & Supply Chain Management

NUST Business School

INTRODUCTION

This document is designed to provide information on how to write the research thesis for the program of MS Logistics & Supply Chain Management. It includes guidelines on the writing format, supervision details, and calendar of the submission as well as the plagiarism policy. Please read this document carefully in order to ensure that your thesis fulfills the criteria for submission. Students are expected to read this document thoroughly and be fully familiar with its contents. If there is anything that you do not understand or is unclear, you should contact your Program Head as soon as possible and seek clarification.

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THESIS FORMS AND CALENDAR 2020-2021

Please find a list of key information and forms that you may need to submit in the process of your thesis completion.

Milestones	Time/Date
Proposal Defense	1 st Month of Fall 2020 Semester
6 Monthly progress meeting	Every 6 months – Next due in Feb/March 2021
What happens if I get three poor progress reports	Possible withdrawal from the program
Pre-defense and Defense	September December 2020 March 2021 June 2021

Form No.	Nature of Form	Submission Point/Stage
TH-1	Supervisor & Thesis Committee Members Selection	After selection of supervisor
TH-1A	Change of Supervisor/Thesis Committee Member(s)	If such a need arises, it should be done before topic finalization
TH-2	Topic Proposed by the Student	3 weeks before thesis proposal defense
TH-2A	Topic is Passed/Failed by Supervisor	3 weeks before thesis proposal defense
TH-3	Thesis Final Defense Announcement	3 weeks before the presentation date
TH-4	Final Pass/Fail Grade on Thesis	After the Thesis Defense

THESIS FORMAT

A good research thesis clearly outlines the objectives of the research, key questions, research methodology, as well as strong analysis and discussion of results. It not only adds value to the body of knowledge, but it also helps the scholars understand contemporary issues and concerns in the field of logistics and supply chain management.

You should clearly discuss the details of the theoretical analysis and data compilation as well as a strong overall literature review which focuses on active discussion of published studies in your area of research. This will help you build a strong theoretical framework that will eventually build a good research question/focus. Remember to keep an objective and concise writing style rather than discussion of irrelevant areas, excessive wordiness and tangential arguments.

A GOOD THESIS

Characteristics of good thesis are:

- a) Original work
- b) Thorough understanding of the research area
- c) Clear research focus
- d) Clear and focused methods to carry out the research
- e) Methods are relevant and valid
- f) The research demonstrates a set of logical arguments regarding the problem area and the student is able to clearly highlight their value addition

WORD LIMIT, PAGE NUMBER, FONTS

- Students should remember to run a spell check on their final version of the thesis to ensure that it's free from spelling/grammatical errors. A large number of mistakes may mean that the supervisor may dock marks/grade of the thesis.
- The final thesis should contain all essential items including relevant diagrams, charts, tables, numbers, titles etc. in full detail.
- The standard fonts to be used are: Times New Roman/Calibri/Arial, size 12 with 1.5 line spacing and fully justified page alignment.
- Page numbers must be displayed on all pages *except* the title page. You must not use Roman numerals for page numbering.
- The final written thesis word limit should be between **15,000 – 20,000 words** including references/bibliography. In exceptional circumstances the student will be allowed to exceed/decrease the word limit. Student will be required to consult Program Head, HOD, and Supervisor to request it.

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

A detailed structure of the thesis usually has the following chapters.

- **Introduction:** A brief statement of problems and objectives. What are the purposes and aims of the thesis and what is the contribution to research and practice?
- **Critical Review of Relevant Research:** This is an important section, which you should structure in a meaningful way. Reciting brief synopses of articles in chronological order is not an appropriate way to review the literature. You must draw attention to research themes in the literature or analyze papers according to alternative methodologies for comparison. A good literature review is comprehensive, critical, and informative. You should conclude it by identifying your intended contribution to the current literature.
- **Development and Description of Your Research Framework and Data Collection Methods:** This is the research methods/methodology section of the dissertation. Its content will differ depending on the research undertaken. You may use this section, for example, to explain and develop researchable concepts, formulate models for estimation, or describe hypothesis you intend to investigate by specified techniques or procedures. Also describe the sources and methods of collection for your data. You must describe methods of compiling, adjusting, and transforming data in full detail.
- **Analysis and Discussion:** This section of the thesis involves the description, interpretation, and evaluation of your results. The section must include a detail discussion which must include your contribution to literature.
- **Limitations:** Discussion of strengths and weaknesses of your reported research.
- **Conclusions:** These are the summary of main findings. Comparison with the other published research. Implications of your research for future research and/or any practical implications for management or government policy.
- **Reference:** Students must enter references in an appropriate format. You must check to make sure that no references are missing, and the format is correct. It is highly suggested to use software such as endnote to insert references in your document. You can either use APA or Harvard referencing style for your thesis. The guidelines to these styles can be found on the following links,
 - <https://www.mendeley.com/guides/apa-citation-guide>
 - <http://www.citethisforme.com/harvard-referencing>
- **Appendices** (where necessary): It is good practice for candidates to provide an appendix a full listing of all data sources used in a project (if this is appropriate and feasible).

SUPERVISION OF THE THESIS

ROLE OF THE SUPERVISOR

Students must understand the role of their supervisor during the entire research period. The main responsibilities of the supervisor include:

- a) Discussion of research areas in accordance with the research interests of the supervisor. He/she can provide you guidance to help you identify your area of study.
- b) The supervisor will provide guidance regarding the nature of the research, relevant readings/authors/scholars of the research areas as well as help you regarding your research methodology technique.
- c) Your supervisor will maintain contact through meetings which should be agreed in advance through the supervisors preferred method of communication (email/phone etc.) Your supervisor is accessible at their set office hours and it's the students' responsibility to inform them of updates regarding the thesis.
- d) The supervisor will provide feedback where necessary regarding your research especially in terms of research methodology as well as literature review to improve the quality of the thesis (wherever necessary)

STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Students must:

- a) Take the initiative in identifying possible problems or difficulties in a timely manner in order to discuss solutions with their supervisor.
- b) Check the feasibility of their research area so that required information and data is discussed in advance. You need to plan your project with your supervisor to ensure that the workload is not too difficult and does not conflict with the time requirement to submit the completed thesis.
- c) Maintain progress of your work in accordance with the stages agreed with your supervisor.
- d) Remember that the supervisor is also one of the examiners of your thesis. Therefore, other members in your Guidance Examination Committee (GEC) will also need to approve your thesis. Your supervisor gives help and advice on how to carry out the research, but he/she ultimately assesses and examines that research. Your supervisor must balance these two roles while avoiding conflict between them. In practice, this feature of the thesis process limits the amount of help and advice that you can expect to receive from your supervisor. The purpose of the thesis is to examine your (not your supervisor's) research abilities.
- e) It is your responsibility to demonstrate that you can write a dissertation of satisfactory (Masters) standard. This is a responsibility that you cannot and should not share with any other person—be it another student, your supervisor, or anyone else.

SUBMITTING YOUR THESIS

Students should submit their thesis in the form of a hard copy as well as generate a Plagiarism report through Turnitin.

PLAGIARISM

You need to carefully consider NUST Business School's policies regarding plagiarism. Please know that plagiarism is a crime and will not be tolerated. Strict action will be taken against any student found plagiarizing any material and submitting it as his/her own. You are responsible for knowing and enacting academic conduct that is in line with the University's statement entitled "Academic Dishonesty" available in the student handbook. The statements highlight examples of unacceptable behavior which includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- **Cheating:** Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise; copying from another student's examination; submitting work prepared in advance for an in-class examination; taking an examination for another person or conspiring to do so.
- **Plagiarism:** Intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise; failure to attribute direct quotation, paraphrase, or borrowed facts or information.

It is expected that all work that is handed will be your own. Any ideas or content that come from another source must be properly cited (including any content taken from the Internet, books, articles and lectures).

REQUIRED PAGES

- a) **Title Page:** Please refer to the sample page attached at the end of this document.
- b) **Declaration:** A declaration stating:
No portion of the work referred to in the dissertation has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.
- c) **Table of Contents:** A list of all headings and sub-headings within the thesis. The final word count, including footnotes and endnotes, must be inserted at the bottom of the contents page.
- d) **List of Tables and Figures:** A list of all tables and figure in the document with page numbers.
- e) **Abstract:** This is a summary of your research. It should include the importance of your topic, your findings as well as the contribution of the study to the field of knowledge. This should not be more than 300 words.
- f) **Thesis:** Complete thesis including all the important chapters
- g) **References:** A reference list should be inserted at the end of the main body of research.
- h) **Appendix:** This section would include all tables, figures, diagrams, photographs, list of abbreviations etc.

- i) **Other Pages (if needed):** Students may also choose to (not compulsory) attach additional pages with their thesis report including:
- i. Dedication/Acknowledgement
 - ii. Brief statement about the student's research experience (Preface/About the Author)

PROCEDURE OF ARRANGING THE PRE-DEFENSE AND DEFENSE

The defense and pre-defense will be arranged thrice in an academic year. Subject to the availability of HOD, supervisor, GEC, and faculty panel, it will be held in December, April, and September each year (Also referred as Defense Months). Since the GEC needs at least 4 weeks to assess a thesis, student needs to submit the thesis on 01st March 2021 to qualify to defend the thesis in April 2021 (Similar timeline is applicable to other defense months). The step by step procedure is following.

STEP 1	After the thesis completion supervisor and student will ensure that the thesis fulfills all the requirements set out in thesis guidelines document including the word limit (Max 18,000 including references) and formatting. The supervisor approves the thesis and sends an email to the Program Head (MS LSCM) suggesting that student is now ready for pre-defense.
STEP 2	The student needs to submit two hard copies (soft bound) to the two GEC members (As assigned in TH1 form). The student would be required to send an email to the Program Head confirming the same.
STEP 3	The Program Head will assign deadline to GEC members to provide detailed in-depth feedback. The feedback should be provided in writing within four weeks of the assignment.
STEP 4	Once written feedback is received from the GEC, the Program Head will arrange the Pre-defense in the next available defense month.
STEP 5	Student will be required to give a 20 minutes presentation on the day of Pre-defense in front of a faculty panel.
STEP 6	The Program Head will email the written comments by GEC and Panel within one week of Pre-defense.
STEP 7	Student will be required to address the comments in consultation with their supervisor. Once the student has addressed the comments they will be required to send (email) the amended thesis along with a document detailing the changes to GEC members. The student will be required to answer each and every comment (changes made in the thesis with page numbers) given out in the written document.
STEP 8	Supervisor will go through the changes to see if they have been up to the mark. Once Supervisor has approved the changes, they will be required to email the Program Head so a defense can be arranged. Student will be required to submit TH3-A form in written and scanned form. The Program Head will then arrange the final defense in the next available Defense Month.
STEP 9	The final defense will include a 25 minutes presentation of completed thesis including the changes that were made as result of pre-defense. Student should bring two hard copies of the thesis for the faculty panel on the day of the defense.
STEP 10	After the defense presentation, student will be informed about the outcome. Subject to passing student will submit the necessary forms to complete clarification process and obtain the degree.

Important to remember

- The presentation times for pre-defense and defense will be strictly followed. Students are advised to prepare their presentation within the defined timeline.
- Students are advised to stay in touch with the GEC throughout the duration of their thesis. With the help of GEC and supervisor's feedback students should improve their research. However, once they have submitted the final draft they cannot ask for feedback or make changes in presentation or thesis prior to pre-defense.
- Pre-defense and defense will possibly be cancelled in absence of any of the following:
 - Supervisor
 - GEC Members (at least one GEC member must be present to meet the quorum).
- A 'representation and resubmission' outcome of pre-defense would mean to repeat the process.

BINDING AND PRESENTATION

NUST Business School will accept the final hard bound copy of the thesis (After Defense and Changes) of MS LSCM in the following format:

- Standard hard-bound sewn, with **gold lettering on the spine**
- Your thesis must be bound in Green covers in-line with University approved binding.
- *Thesis in ring binding, spiral binding or any other non-approved bindings will not be accepted.*

The spine must be **inscribed in gold lettering** with:

- The degree for which the dissertation is submitted (MS LSCM);
- The name of the candidate
- The year of submission.
- These must run from the top of the spine as follows. Please note writing on the spine with a gold pen is *not* acceptable:

Example of Spine of the Thesis:



The forename(s) and surname/family name on the spine and title-page must be the same as those under which the candidate is currently registered or was last registered at NUST Business School.

Following are the sample of pages to be added before the acknowledgement (Do not add 1st page, 2nd page heading on them – they are for your guideline only)

TITLE PAGE

TITLE OF THESIS



AUTHOR NAME

BATCH NUMBER

A thesis submitted to NUST Business School for the partial fulfillment of the degree of Master of Science in Logistics & Supply Chain Management

YEAR OF SUBMISSION

TITLE OF THESIS



AUTHOR NAME

BATCH NUMBER

SUPERVISOR NAME

A thesis submitted to NUST Business School for the partial fulfillment of the degree of Master of
Science in Logistics & Supply Chain Management

YEAR OF SUBMISSION

THESIS ACCEPTANCE CERTIFICATE

It is certified that the final copy of MS LSCM thesis written by Mr/Ms _____ Registration No. _____ of _____ has been vetted by undersigned, found complete in all aspects as per NUST Statutes/Regulations/MS Policy, is free of plagiarism, errors, and mistakes and is accepted as fulfilment for award of MS degree. It is further certified that necessary amendments as pointed out by GEC members and foreign/local evaluators of the scholar have also been incorporated in the said thesis.

Signature of Supervisor with stamp: _____

Date: _____

Program Head Signature with stamp: _____

Date: _____

Signature of HoD with stamp: _____

Date: _____

Countersigned by

Signature (Dean/Principal): _____

Date: _____

I hereby state that no portion of the work referred to in this dissertation has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other University or other institute of learning

Student's Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____