



**Faculty of Health Sciences: School of Health Systems and Public Health**  
**Guidelines for a mini dissertation based on article**

**Notes to the reader**

1. The Health Policy and Management Track made a decision in 2011 that all students in Health Policy and Management may only opt for this mini-dissertation option in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Public Health degree (the other option is a traditional mini-dissertation). Students from other tracks must enquire from their tracks regarding their preferences.
2. The following structure is suggested:
  - a. Part A: This section allows the student to include detail regarding their context, essential literature and the nature of the research etc.
  - b. Part B: In this section includes the chief focus of examination, namely the article with the most important findings as well as the instructions to authors for the targeted journal. It is essential that the article meet all the journal requirements as prescribed and should be able to be detached from the rest of the report and be submitted as is.
  - c. Part C: Secondary research findings as well as a more detailed health policy and management implications of the research are included here.

The headings in this guideline are **only suggestions** and need to be adapted according to the nature of the research study. Each section will have its own references as Section B is a stand-alone element.

3. The standard referencing style prescribed by the Faculty of Health Sciences is Vancouver. However this requirement is waived in the cases where the journal has another prescribed referencing style.

**STRUCTURE OF THE MINI-DISSERTATION**

- Title page
- Declaration of originality (See PG Book for wording)
- Dedication page (*if so wished*)
- Acknowledgements: These could include personal acknowledgement and should include a description of contributions made by each person listed as a co-author in the journal article
  
- Table of contents (suggested structure given in italics)

*Part A*

- *Table of contents*
- *List of Tables*

- *List of Figures*

*Part B*

- *Table of contents*
- *List of Tables*
- *List of Figures*

*Part C*

- *Table of contents*
- *List of Tables*
- *List of Figures*

*List of appendices*

- Part A
- Part B
- Part C
  
- Appendices (some examples)
  - Questionnaires and data collection tools
  - Ethics consent forms
  - Letter of approval from Ethics committee
  - Any other relevant technical appendices (i.e. sample size calculation, laboratory techniques, additional tables etc.)

**Tip:** As each section has its own list of tables and figures you can number them from 1 in each section.

## **PART A: BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH**

This section allows the student to include the required elements such as declaration of originality and is the detailed section the essential literature, the methods etc.

- Executive summary (*for the whole mini-dissertation*)
- Introduction (*may overlap with Part B*)
- Background (*may overlap with Part B*)
- Literature review (*may overlap with Part B*)
- Problem statement
- Purpose of the study
- Methods
- Ethical considerations
- Researchers' assumptions (qualitative studies)
- References (for this section)

**Tip:** the introduction; background; literature review; problem statement; purpose of the study; methods; assumptions (for qualitative studies) and references already exist in the protocol for the study and can be used here.

What is important is that the information from the protocol must be in the **past tense** and must be **updated** to reflect the reality of the implementation (what was done and not what was planned), and the operational tools (e.g. Gantt chart and budget) must not be included.

## **PART B: JOURNAL ARTICLE**

This section includes the chief focus of examination, namely the article with the most important findings as well as the instructions to authors for the targeted journal. It is essential that the article meet all the journal requirements as prescribed and should be able to be detached from the rest of the report and be submitted as is. There are two components to Part B:

- Journal article (with references in line with the journal's requirements)
- Journal guidelines (can also be inserted as an appendix depending on your preference)

**Tip:** some journals want authors to submit their tables and figures separately, but for the purposes of this examination insert your tables and figures in the text where they belong.

## **PART C: DISCUSSION OF SECONDARY FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Secondary research findings as well as a more detailed implications of the research (such as health policy and management) are included in this Part.

- Presentation and discussion of secondary findings (*those not included in Part B*)
- Policy implications (*where appropriate*)
- Limitations (*may overlap with those stated in the article in part B*)
- Conclusions
- Recommendations
- Reflections [for qualitative studies]
- References for this section

## **APPENDICES**