

ACADEMIC SUPERVISION SYSTEM ON PROJECTS

Disclaimer: This document by no means claims to be an exhaustive account on the subject. All the information/guidelines contained in this document must be read in conjunction with all related King Saud University documents as updated from time to time.

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Academic and administrative approval procedures

The approval process for the research project consists of two important milestones: selection of research topic by the student then selection of supervisor. The student and supervisor then work on submitting a research topic and proposal to Executive Health Promotion Committee for review to proceed with the research project not later than the beginning of the third semester. Once approval is granted from the committee, the student can proceed with the research at the beginning of the fourth semester.

Supervision Process:

Selection of Research Topic

- The topic should be related to health education and promotion. You may write a list of topics that come to your mind and select the one that is most interesting for you. You need to think about the feasibility of conducting the research within the timeframe allowed and expertise.
- Check with your supervisor whether your research idea and question are reasonable.
- Try to finish the selection by the end of your first year so you will have enough time to pursue the course and the master's degree.
- Make sure that the topic is original.
- The research topic needs to be submitted to the Executive Health Promotion Committee for review and approval.

Selection of the supervisor

- The supervisor should be a subject matter expert in the topic area selected.
- He/she must have a substantial background in the essential methodology for the proposed project.
- The agreement in Appendix 1 should be agreed on between the supervisor and the student.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Role of the student:

- Develop the necessary skills and learning approaches suitable for the research project.
- Exhibit independent judgment, academic rigor, and intellectual honesty.
- Complete the research within the period that is typical for specific degree programs.
- Submit their material promptly to receive an adequate assessment.
- Make timely progress towards completion of degree and spend the required number of hours carrying out research activities;

Role of the supervisor:

- Ensure that the student's research project is suitably aligned with the number of credits awarded and that the project is manageable concerning the educational program objectives and the time allocated for the completion of the program.
- Assist the student in developing their research interests and help the student modify the project when unforeseeable problems arise,
- Provide the student with suitable resources.
- Provide timely feedback to writings submitted by the student following an agreed-upon schedule.
- Be open, honest, and fair with the student when performance is not meeting expectations.
- Provide appropriate mentorship and guidance from conception of idea, IRB application, conduct of study and write up of paper for publication.

Research Project's Written Report Format

Students select journals based on their supervisor's advice. The format should be based on the journal the student will be submitting to. In the case the student did not submit follow the general guidance below:

Font, Margin, and Spacing: The report should be around 6000 words. The font used for the main content of the report should be Times New Roman style and size 12, for subtitles, it should be 14-20, and for the main title 36, Line space should be 2 (double) with Margins of "1" inch (settings should not be set in cm) all sides.

Tables and Figures: They should be positioned as close as possible to where it is first mentioned in the text. They must have a short, descriptive title, numbered consecutively and complete with a heading [e.g., Table 1. Percentage of Activity]. The font and caption format should be consistent throughout the report. Either place figures, tables, charts, etc. within the text of the result being described, or refer to them in an appendix. Students should explicitly reference the number of the figures, tables, graphs, etc. in the text [i.e., "Table 6 shows..."]. Expressions such as "in the chart on the following page" or "in the table below." Should be avoided.

Referencing Citation Style: APA
Content and Order

- Title of Report, student and supervisor names and date (year)
- Table of Contents
- Abstract/Synopsis
- Introduction/rationale
- Literature Review
- Methodology
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion
- Recommendations (sometimes included in the Conclusion)
- References or Bibliography
- Appendices

Ethics and Academic Integrity

Good Clinical Practice Certificate

Most ethical approval committees/institutional review boards (IRB) will require a good clinical practice certificate. Students are recommended to get one before applying for IRB. Getting the certificate entails completing a course and examination online. The following links could be helpful for training and obtaining the certificate:

- <https://ncbeportal.kacst.edu.sa/ar-SA/Account/Login>
- <https://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php>
- <http://bioethics.kacst.edu.sa/Register/register-researcher.aspx>
 - **Registration** <http://bioethics.kacst.edu.sa/Register/Register-Resercher.aspx?lang=ar-SA>
 - **Exam** <http://bioethics.kacst.edu.sa/Account/Slides.aspx>
- <http://gcp.nidatraining.org/>
- <https://about.citiprogram.org/en/homepage/>

It's recommended that students enquire from their designated IRB whether a certificate from the organization mentioned above is acceptable before applying for ethical approval. **Students who don't need IRB, still need to get a certificate and attach it as an appendix to their report.**

KSU ethical approval committees

Details on ethical approval committees and required documents can be found on the Deanship of Scientific Research website:

<https://dsrs.ksu.edu.sa/ar/localcomm>

Two potential subcommittee students can apply for:

Research Ethics on Humans:

This subcommittee is concerned with examining the research planned to be conducted on humans and includes clinical and preclinical research all medical research procedures performed on humans, and all research conducted on patients in King Saud University Medical City.

For more information, please visit the following webpage:

<https://dsrs.ksu.edu.sa/ar/node/3245>

Human and Social Research:

This subcommittee is concerned with examining the research submitted from all faculties for research based on non-medical data.

For more information, please visit the following webpage:

<https://dsrs.ksu.edu.sa/ar/node/3251>

Plagiarism

The research report submitted is expected to be the result of the student's thought, research, and self-expression. A student will have committed plagiarism if she/he reproduces someone else's work without acknowledging its source; or if a source is cited that the student has not cited or used. Plagiarism is not only limited to text but any other material such as graphs, tables, etc. Examples of plagiarism include: submitting a research paper obtained from a commercial research service, the Internet, or from another student as if it were original work; making simple changes to borrowed materials while leaving the organization, content, or phraseology intact; or copying material from a source, supplying proper documentation, but leaving out quotation marks.

The University uses sophisticated plagiarism check software such as Turnitin in BlackBoard to check the originality of any submitted report. Students are encouraged to make available online courses that have been developed to provide a useful overview of the issues surrounding plagiarism and practical ways to avoid it.

The Research Support and Service Unit published a guideline about plagiarism and software to check for it: https://dsrs.ksu.edu.sa/sites/dsrs.ksu.edu.sa/files/imce_images/khdm_ltshb.pdf

According to the Postgraduate Regulations at King Saud University approved by the Board of Directors, Article (28):

Every graduate student at the Master's and Doctorate levels is required to pass a course in academic integrity and the rules of quoting and transferring from scientific sources and references during his study of the first level of the program's study plan, under the supervision of the Deanship and in coordination with the relevant authorities at the university. Students enter the link below and verify the completion of the requirements for passing the training course:

https://tp.ksu.edu.sa/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course_id= 453_1&content_id= 7242_1

Certificate of completion should be included in the report as an appendix.

Plagiarism percentage above 25% is not accepted.

AI Usage Policy for Students

Text generated from AI, machine learning, or similar algorithmic tools cannot be used in research project reporting. Additionally, an AI program cannot be considered an author of any research project. This policy aims to guide students in the ethical and effective use of AI tools in writing their research project reports. Work submitted should reflect the student's original ideas and voice. AI-generated content should not be presented as fully original work.

- Submitting AI-generated work as one's own violates academic integrity policies. Ensure all submissions meet originality standards.
- If an AI tool was used, you must declare its usage in the submission. Use the following declaration format:

The student(s) declare(s) they have used Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in the creation of this research report.

1. AI tools used:.....
2. How were the AI tools used:.....
3. Where in the report is the information located:.....

Evaluation

Students in this course are evaluated on three elements: the quality of their research and written report, research-related skills, and presentation skills. The course follows a rigorous approach to evaluating students using unbiased assessors for the research report and panel for the research project presentation, hence the student benefits from the varied experiences of the assessors. The report assessor and presentation evaluation panel will submit their grades and comments to the supervisor who will submit it to Edugate for the student to receive while sending the comments to the student via email or any other documented method. The evaluation tasks and details are shown in the table below with detailed criteria for each task.

Submission Deadlines and Procedures

Evaluation task	Assessor	Proportion of Final Evaluation	Deadline for Students*	Deadline for Assessors*
Research Project Report	Internal Assessor	50%	Week 16	Week 18
Research-Related Skills	Supervisor	40%		
Presentation	Panel	10%	Week 13	

*Deadlines might be subject to change, this will be updated accordingly at the start of the semester

Important Dates

Task	Deadline	Person Responsible
Research topic and abstract submission to Executive Health Promotion Committee for review	Beginning of the third semester	Student and Supervisor
Research topic approval	Mid third semester	Executive Health Promotion Committee
Once approval is granted for the research topic, students can start their research project following these submission deadlines for the final semester:		
Research project presentation	Week 13	Student
Research project submission	Week 16	Student
Submission of grades for research project presentation	Week 13	Panel
Submission of grades for research project report	Week 18	Internal Assessor
Uploading student's grades and sending program report	Week 19	Supervisor

*Deadlines might be subject to change, this will be updated accordingly.

Criteria for Evaluation

Evaluation of Research Project Report by Internal Assessor (50 points)

Criterion	Rating Scale			Assessor points	Assessor justification
	High	Average	Low		
Cover Page	Cover page contains all basic requirements, including all the specified data, and the title of the research explains all its variables and context, and it is formulated in a way that is appealing to the reader	Cover page contains most of the basic requirements, including most of the specified data, and the title of the research explains all its variables and context, but is not formulated in a way that is appealing to the reader	Cover page contains few of the basic requirements, including little of the specified data, and the title of the research does not explain all its variables and context, and it is not formulated in a way that is appealing to the reader		
Percentage: 5% High- 5 Average-4 to3 Low 2-1					
Abstract	Abstract contains all main components and format requirements (objectives, methodology, sample, key results, keywords), and word number limitation is adhered to	Abstract contains most of the main components and format requirements (objectives, methodology, sample, key results, keywords), and word number limitation is adhered to	Abstract does not include most of the main components and format requirements (objectives, methodology, sample, key results, keywords), and word number limitation is not adhered to		
Percentage: 5% High- 5 Average-4 to3 Low 2-1					
Introduction	Introduction is written in an attractive style for the reader, and structured from general to specific, explaining the importance of the research topic or its variables and the relationship between them	Introduction is written in a suitable style, and structured from general to specific, explaining the importance of the research topic or its variables, but does not clarify the relationship between them	Introduction is not written in a suitable style and is not structured from general to specific. It also does not explain the importance of the research topic, its variables, and the relationship between them		
Percentage: 10%					

High 10-8 Average 7-5 Low-4-1					
Literature Review	Theoretical research framework is characterized by its depth, information validity, comprehensiveness, and analysis. Several recent previous studies related to the research topic are reviewed, and it demonstrates the need for research	Theoretical research framework is characterized by its depth and information validity, but not by its comprehensiveness and analysis. Several recent previous studies related to the research topic are reviewed, but it does not demonstrate the need for research	Theoretical research framework is not characterized by its depth, information validity, comprehensiveness, and analysis. Several recent previous studies unrelated to the research topic are reviewed, and it does not demonstrate the need for research		
Percentage: 5% High- 5 Average-4 to3 Low 2-1					
Research Methodology	Research methodology and approach are clarified. Research context and the sample, data collection and analysis are all accurately specified, and selections are justified	Research methodology and approach are clarified. Research context and the sample, data collection and analysis are inaccurately reported using general terms, and selections are not justified	Research methodology and approach are not accurately clarified. Research context and the sample, data collection and analysis are incompletely reported, and selections are not justified		
Percentage: 10% High 10-8 Average 7-5 Low-4-1					
Results & Discussion	Research results are clearly and consecutively reported according to the sequence of research questions, and the relevant questions and previous studies are competently linked to the results. Analysis and discussion are presented, and	Research results are clearly reported, but not consecutively according to the sequence of research questions, and the relevant questions and previous studies are consistently linked to the results. Analysis and discussion are presented, and	Research results are not clearly and consecutively reported according to the sequence of research questions, and there was limited or no link between the questions and previous studies and the results. No		

Percentage: 5% High- 5 Average-4 to3 Low 2-1	summary and recommendations are skilfully included	summary and recommendations are satisfactorily included	analysis, discussion or summary are presented,		
Writing and Resources	<p>Paper is well written containing no spelling or grammatical errors and is logically sequenced, and researcher's character is evident in the analysis and associations. Information is cited in the body and reference list, and the latest version of the APA citation style is fully adhered to</p>	<p>Paper is, in general, satisfactorily written containing some spelling or grammatical errors and is logically sequenced overall, and researcher's personality is not evident in most of the analysis and associations. Information is cited in the body and reference list, and the latest version of the APA citation style is somewhat adhered to</p>	<p>Paper, in general, is not well-written containing many spelling or grammatical errors and is not logically sequenced overall, and researcher's personality is not evident in the analysis and associations. Not all information is cited in the body and reference list, and the latest version of the APA citation style is not adhered to</p>		
Percentage: 10% High 10-8 Average 7-5 Low-4-1					

Evaluation of Student Research -Related Skills by Main Supervisor (40 points)

Skills (30)	(Unacceptable) 0-2%	(Acceptable) 3-7%	(Good) 8-10%
Time management	The student seriously exceeded the scheduled time or was not able to finish the project within the scheduled time without major concessions to the quality of the research.	The project was executed in the scheduled time due to the supervisor's efforts.	The project was executed in the scheduled time without compromising on the quality of the research.
Manuscript Submission	The student didn't choose the journal to submit work on or view its submission procedures and guidelines.	The student wrote the research project report based on the selected journal guideline but didn't submit it to the journal yet.	The student submitted an email showing the confirmation of their manuscript submission to a selected journal. Their submitted research report reflects the selected journal guidelines.
Research commitment and responsibility	Not good. Student missed appointments / annulled appointments at the last moment / arrived unprepared.	Scheduled in advance. The student sent draft texts timely and came prepared.	Good. Meetings with the supervisor were scheduled well in advance. The student sent draft texts timely and came well-prepared.
Ethics	Students didn't get IRB approval and the proposal lacks informed consent, participants' privacy protection, plagiarism, and procedures to reduce harm to participants.	Students got IRB approval, but the proposal lacks at least two of those elements: informed consent, participants' privacy protection, plagiarism, and procedures to reduce harm to participants.	Students got IRB approval and the proposal contains all of those elements: informed consent, participants' privacy protection, plagiarism, and procedures to reduce harm to participants.

*Adapted from Universiteit Utrecht's Master Thesis' Rubric Found at: https://students.uu.nl/sites/default/files/geo-ies-rubric_master_thesis_imew.pdf

Evaluation of Presentation by Panel (10 points)

<i>Items</i>	<i>Inadequate (0)</i>	<i>Average (0.5)</i>	<i>Good (1)</i>
Part I: Seminar content (5)			
Content flow and organization (1 point)	Hard to follow; sequence of information jumpy	Most of the information is presented in sequence	Information presented in logical sequence; easy to follow
Information provided (1 point)	Material not related to the topic OR background dominated seminar	Material sufficient for clear understanding but not presented	Material sufficient for clear understanding and effectively presented
Information up-to-date (1 point)	The information provided is provided for literature published before 2015	The information provided includes up-to-date evidence but does not follow a sequence	The information provided includes up-to-date evidence and follows a sequence
Results, figures tables, etc. (1 point)	Some figures are hard to read or in appropriate format	The majority of figures are clear and appropriately formatted	Most figures clear and appropriately formatted
Citation and referencing (1 point)	References are not cited appropriately	The majority of the references are cited appropriately	Most of the references are cited appropriately
Part II: Presenter skills (5)			
Technical (1 point)	The presentation has more than 5 misspellings and/or grammatical errors	Presentation has no more than 2 misspellings and/or grammatical errors	The presentation has no misspellings or grammatical errors
Audience engagement (1 point)	No effort to engage the audience	Little has been done to engage the audience	The audience is well-engaged
Use media effectively (1 point)	Poor	Average	Good
Speaking well and answering questions (1 point)	Reads most slides; no or just occasional eye contact Voice is low; difficult to hear. Avoids or discourages active audience participation; demonstrates incomplete knowledge of the topic by responding inaccurately and inappropriately to questions	Refers to slides to make points; occasional eye contact Reluctantly interacts with the audience; demonstrates some knowledge of rudimentary questions by responding accurately to questions.	Refers to slides to make points; engaged with the audience Encourages audience interaction and demonstrates extensive knowledge of the topic by responding confidently, precisely and appropriately to all audience questions
Time management (1 point)	Too long or too short by 3 or more minutes	Within 1 minute of allotted time +/-	The presentation was 15-20 minutes long

Supervisor's Feedback on Drafts

Supervisors' feedback should be timely to give students enough time to refine their drafts. Effective feedback should be clear, constructive, and actionable, helping students refine their work. Supervisors should assess the overall structure, clarity, and depth of analysis, ensuring alignment with research project objectives. Comments should highlight strengths while addressing areas for improvement, such as argument coherence, methodological justification, and critical engagement with literature. Attention should also be given to academic writing, proper referencing, and formatting. Feedback should provide specific recommendations for revision, encouraging an iterative improvement process. Constructive guidance ensures that students develop their research skills while meeting academic standards.

Monitoring Efficiency of Academic Supervision

Monitoring the efficiency of academic supervision in this master's program focuses on facilitating the process rather than direct evaluation. This is achieved by sending regular reminders for deadlines, organizing orientation workshops for both supervisors and students, and maintaining open communication as a committee to address any concerns. These efforts ensure that all parties are aware of their roles, responsibilities, and timelines, creating a structured and supportive environment for academic progress.

Monitoring Fairness, Objectivity, and Credibility of Evaluation, Discussion and Approval

Monitoring fairness, objectivity, and credibility in evaluation, discussion, and approval within the master's program relies on a structured assessment framework. The evaluation process is based on three predefined criteria: (1) quality of the report, assessed by an internal assessor according to specific standards, (2) research-related skills evaluated by supervisors using clear criteria, and (3) presentation skills, reviewed by a panel of experts, including committee members and all supervisors. This multi-layered approach ensures that assessments are aligned with academic standards and minimizes bias by incorporating diverse perspectives in the evaluation process.

Additionally, transparency is maintained through clear criteria and expert involvement, reinforcing the credibility of the review and approval process.