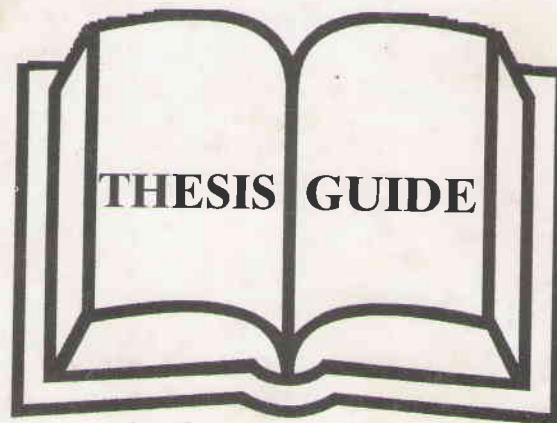


UNIVERSITY OF BUEA



2001

UNIVERSITY OF BUEA THESIS GUIDE

Publisher: Dr. Dorothy L. Njeuma
Vice-Chancellor

Editor: Professor Vincent P.K. Titanji
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Teaching)

Publications Committee:

Prof. Vincent P.K. Titanji
Dr. Nalova Lyonga
Dr. Gideon Ngwa
Mr. Roland Bama
Ms. Victorine Mbongo

Secretarial Assistants:

Emilia Ngamaleu
Likowo Frida
Regina Mambo



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
I. Preface	3
II. Official Enactments	4
II.1 Extracts from the University of Buea Decree	4
II.2 The Ministerial Order institutionalized (or stipulates on) the Ph.D. programme in Cameroon State Universities ...	5
II.3 Extracts from Regulations Governing the Award of Degrees at the University of Buea	16
III. Format for the Master's Degree Thesis *	21
IV. Format for the Ph.D. Dissertation*	27
V. Guidelines for supervision of Theses and Dissertations ...	28
VI. Procedures for Public Defence of Theses and Dissertations	39
VII. Binding and Deposition of Theses to the Library	40

* We use the words 'thesis' and 'dissertation' synonymously throughout this document even if they are used differently in American and British English.

I. PREFACE

The University of Buea Thesis Guide is a compilation of official enactments and guidelines governing postgraduate programmes at the University of Buea. They have been put together for the convenience of staff and students as well as other persons interested in postgraduate studies at this institution.

Section 2 of the Guide comprises mainly extracts from the University of Buea Decree and Ministerial Orders. Particular reference is made to Ministerial Order No. 99/0031/MINESUP/DDES of 23 December 1999 that organizes Ph.D. degree programmes in Cameroon State Universities. It describes in great detail the format for the Ph.D. dissertation, which can be either a monograph or a collection of works. This order also makes provision for petitions in case the postgraduate student feels that his/her work has been unfairly rejected.

Section 3 reproduces the Vice-Chancellor's Service Note No. 1356/UB/AcA/DTTS to lay down the format for Master's theses. The remaining sections (4-7) define guidelines for thesis supervision and procedures for public defence of theses and dissertations.

In the rapidly evolving higher education system of Cameroon, of which the University of Buea is an integral part, this guide should be employed creatively, always paying attention to new developments that may come up from time to time.

The Editor

II. OFFICIAL ENACTMENTS

II.1. Extract from Decree No. 93/034 of January 19, 1993 to Organise the University of Buea

Article 4:

For purposes of carrying out its objectives . . . the University shall have the power:

- e) to hold examinations and grant degrees, diplomas, certificates and other distinctions to persons who have pursued a course of study approved by the University and have satisfied such other requirements as the University may lay down;
- f) to grant honorary degrees , fellowships and academic titles..

II.2

ORDER No. 99/0031/MINESUP/DDES OF 23 DECEMBER 1999 TO ORGANISE THE "DOCTORAT" OR DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D.) PROGRAMME IN CAMEROON STATE UNIVERSITIES, AS AMENDED BY ORDER No. 01/003/MINESUP/DDES OF 11 APRIL 2001

THE MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Mindful of the Constitution;

Mindful of Decree No. 97/205 of 7 December 1997 to organize the Government as modified and completed by decree No. 98/067 of 28 April;

Mindful of Decree No. 97/207 of 7 December 1997 to appoint members of Government;

Mindful of Decree No. 98/231 of 28 September 1998 to organize the Ministry of Higher Education;

Mindful of Decree No. 93/026 of 19 January 1993 to create universities;

Mindful of Decree No. 93/027 of 19 January 1993 to lay down common provisions governing universities;

Mindful of Order No. 99/00MINESUP/DDES of 16 November 1999 to lay down the general provisions concerning the organization of teaching and student assessments in Cameroon State Universities;

Mindful of Order No. 99/0056/MINESUP/DDES of 16 November 1999 to fix the conditions and procedures for opening new Programmes of Study in State Universities in Cameroon;

HEREBY ORDERS AS FOLLOWS:

PART I: GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1:

Studies in the doctoral cycle shall lead to the award of the following qualifications:

- D.E.A. (Diplôme Etudes Approfondies) or Diploma of Advanced Studies;
- Master's degree with thesis;
- C.E.S. (Certificat d'Etudes Spécialisés) or Certificate of Specialization in Medical Studies;
- "Doctorat" or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Article 2:

The C.E.S., D.E.A., Master's degree with thesis and the "Doctorat" or Ph.D. shall be awarded in a discipline for which a State University has been accredited to confer the degree, diploma or certificate.

Article 3:

Studies in a doctoral programme may be organized jointly by one or several Faculties or Schools in the same or several universities that are linked by a Convention to the one authorized to offer the specific programme of study.

SECTION II: CERTIFICATE OF SPECIALIZATION DIPLOMA OF ADVANCED STUDIES, AND MASTER'S DEGREE WITH THESIS

Article 4:

Studies of the "C.E.S.", "D.E.A" and Master's degree with thesis shall be undertaken within a Post-Graduate Training Programme in a University institution.

A Post-Graduate Training Programme shall comprise:

- a Coordinator of Post-Graduate Programmes designated by the Head of the University Institution from among full-time academic staff who must be in the rank of Full Professor or Associate Professor, upon the proposal of the Dean of the Faculty or Director of the School, as recommended by the Consultative Scientific Committee of the Faculty or School concerned;
- a team of academic staff;
- one or several research teams drawn from one or several Faculties or Schools.

Article 5:

- (1) The authorization to register for the "D.E.A." and the Master's degree with thesis shall be given by the Dean of the Faculty or Director of the School upon the recommendation of the Coordinators of Post-Graduate Programmes, the Academic Department and the Scientific Consultative Committee of the Faculty or School concerned, subject to a preliminary examination of the candidate's application for graduate studies and the authorisation of the Head of the University. Admissions shall also take into consideration the intake capacity of the Post-Graduate Programmes.
- (2) The candidates must be holders of a postgraduate diploma, a non-thesis Master's degree or any other equivalent certificate. All certificates or their equivalent must have been earned with a good grade, classification or "mention" that satisfied the entry requirements set by the University into its graduate programme.
- (3) The conditions of admission into the Certificate of Specialized Studies (in Medicine) shall be fixed by special instruments.

Article 6:

The duration of the "D.E.A." or Master's degree with thesis shall be two semesters. However, the Head of the University Institution may extend the duration on exceptional and individual basis to three semesters. Such extension must be at the request of the Coordinator of Post-Graduate Programmes, and upon the recommendation of the Dean of the Faculty or Director of the School, as well as the Head of Department.

Article 7:

The duration of studies leading to the Certificate of Specialization shall be between four and eight semesters. However, this duration may be extended on exception and case-by-case basis to ten semesters by the Head of the University Institution, at the request of the Coordinator of Post-Graduate Programmes, and upon the recommendation of the Head of Department and the Dean of the Faculty or Director of School.

Article 8:

Studies leading to the Certificate of Specialization, "D.E.A." and Master's degree with thesis shall comprise:

1. Lectures, seminars, workshops and practicals;
2. Initiation into a high level of research methodology using state-of-the-art technologies;
3. Field work and practicum and internships in accordance with the requirements and expectations of each discipline;
4. Submission of a thesis under the supervision of an academic staff duly accredited to supervise post-graduate research.

Article 9:

The Certificate of Specialization, the "D.E.A." and the Master's degree with thesis shall be granted to candidates who shall have fulfilled all the course requirements and, where necessary, associated practicals, and successfully defended a "memoire" or thesis before an Examination Panel of at least three members. Members of the Panel shall be designated by the Dean of the Faculty or Director of the School, upon the recommendation of the Department, the Coordinator of Post-Graduate Programmes and in consultation with the supervisor of the thesis, from among academic staff and researchers accredited to supervise graduate research.

SECTION III. "DOCTOR" OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D.) DEGREE**Article 10:**

- (1) The title of "Docteur" or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) shall be conferred upon an individual who has fulfilled all the course requirements for the degree, and successfully defended a Ph.D. dissertation or a set of research publications. The Dissertation or "Collection of Works" must be a significant and original contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the candidate's discipline. The "Collection of Works" which could either be published or unpublished, may be individual or, if the discipline so permits, collective. If the "Collection of Works" is the result of

collective research effort, the candidate presenting such works for the award of a "Doctorat" or Doctor of Philosophy degree must write and defend a complementary thesis to allow for an independent assessment of the candidate's personal contribution to the "Collection of Works".

- (2) The various forms of preliminary examinations and assessments required for the Ph.D. Dissertation defense shall be determined by each University according to its traditions and internal regulations.

Article 11:

- (1) Studies for the " Doctorat" or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) shall be undertaken within a Post-graduate Programme as defined in Article 4 (above). However, part of the studies may be undertaken in another public or private research Centre outside the candidate's Faculty or School. However, such a Centre must have been approved by the Head of the University Institution, on the proposal of the Head of the Faculty or School, sequel to the recommendation of the Consultative Scientific Committee of the Faculty or School concerned.
- (2) During their period of study, Doctoral candidates shall be expected to participate in research seminars organized by the Doctoral Programme in which they will be required to present, periodically, the major advances being made at each critical step of their training programmes.

Article 12:

Enrolment into a Doctoral or Ph.D. programme is granted by the Head of the University Institution, upon the proposal of the dissertation supervisor, based on the successive recommendations of the Department and the Dean of the Faculty or Director of the School. The candidate must be a holder of the "Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies", Master's degree with thesis or any other recognized equivalent diploma, obtained with a good grade, and classification or "mention". The candidate must, in addition, satisfy all other admission requirements for the degree programme.

Article 13:

Thesis supervisors shall be Professors, Associate Professors, Chief Scientists, Principal Scientific Officers, or researchers and Lecturers accredited to supervise research in state universities.

Article 14:

- (1) After the approval of the thesis supervisor, the candidate shall submit the research topic to the Head of Department who shall transmit it through normal administrative channels to the Head of the University Institution.
- (2) The topic submitted shall be recorded at the Central Thesis and Dissertations Registry of the University within one month from the date of submission.

Article 15:

- (1) All doctoral research shall be conducted under the guidance and responsibility of a thesis or dissertation supervisor.
- (2) The duration of studies for the "Doctorat" or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree shall be from six (6) to ten (10) semesters with effect from the date of first enrolment into the programme; except where special duration waivers are granted on a year-by-year basis by the Head of the University Institution, at the request of the Coordinator of Post-Graduate Programmes, sequel to recommendations of both the Department and the Dean of the Faculty or Director of the School.

Article 16:

- (1) Provided that the Dissertation has been found worthy of defense by the candidate's supervisor, the candidate shall submit to the Head of Department at least three (3) copies of the Dissertation or "Collection of Works" to all members of the Scientific Consultative Committee of the Faculty or School, prior to the defense.
- (2) The approval of the Dissertation supervisor shall be presented in the form of a written report, which shall state clearly that the

Dissertation or the "Collection of Works" is suitable for defense.

- (3) The Coordinator of post-graduate programmes shall propose, through the usual official administrative channels, to the Head of the University Institution, the names of two Rapporteurs or Secretaries from among the members of the Examination Panel. None of the Secretaries shall be the supervisor of the candidate. These persons must be University academic staff, who are duly accredited to supervise research. One of them must be external to the University concerned. The secretaries shall submit their pre-defense reports to the Head of the University Institution.
- (4) If the two pre-defense reports cited in paragraph 3 (above) are favourable, the Head of the University Institution shall designate an Examination Panel, on the proposal of the Dissertation Supervisor, sequel to the recommendations of both the Coordinator of Post-graduate Programmes and the Head of the Establishment (Dean or Director of School).
- (5) In the event that the report of the two secretaries are contradictory, the Head of the University Institution may request a third report with a view to making a final decision on the status of the dissertation. This report shall be requested under the same conditions and in the same procedure as outlined in paragraph 3 (above).
- (6) If all the reports are unfavourable, the defense shall not be authorized. The candidate shall be notified anonymously of the decision contained in the reports within thirty days following the refusal to authorize the defense. The candidate may, within thirty days, present a counter-argument.

Article 17:

- (1) The Examination Panel shall be composed of at least five (5) members as follows:
 - The Dissertation Supervisor;

- Three Academic Staff members who must be in the rank of Full or Associate Professor, or two Academic Staff members in these ranks plus one Academic staff member who has been accredited to supervise research. At least one of them must come from outside the University of the candidate;
- A national or foreign personality from outside the University who should be chosen on the basis of proven scientific or professional competence. This person may not necessarily be in the same discipline as the candidate.

(2) The Chief Examiner shall be appointed by the Head of the University Institution from among academic staff members in the rank of Full or Associate Professor, on the proposal of the Head of the Establishment, sequel to the recommendation of the Department and the Dissertation Supervisor.

Article 18:

The defense shall be public, except in cases where expressed exemption has been granted by the Head of the University Institution, for Dissertations whose content is deemed confidential.

Article 19:

The Panel of Examiners shall declare the results of the defense immediately after the defense. Depending on the tradition of each University, the degree may be awarded with one of the following grades:

- Distinction;
- Credit or Good;
- Pass or Satisfactory.

The Chief Examiner shall prepare a defense report, which shall be counter-signed by all the members of the Examination Panel.

Article 20:

The University awarding the Degree shall keep a Central Register of all Theses and Dissertations defended in that Institution. Such a Register shall contain the following information for each Thesis or Dissertation:

- the serial number of the Thesis or Dissertation;
- the name of the candidate;
- the name of the Dissertation Supervisor;
- the title of the Dissertation;
- the Discipline or Area of Specialization;
- the names of the members of the Panel of Examiners;
- the grade or classification (if any) in which the degree was awarded;
- the date of the defense;
- the Department(s) in which the research was conducted;
- the Faculty or School.

Article 21:

The candidate shall submit six (6) bound copies of the dissertation to the Head of the Faculty or School after the defense, and the supervisor having certified that the necessary corrections have been made as suggested and/or recommended.

Article 22:

The diploma awarded shall be written in English and in French under the seal of the awarding Institution. It shall also clearly indicate the specialization or discipline of the candidate, and may, where applicable, include the title of the Dissertation or "Collection of Works" submitted by the candidate, as well as the grade or classification in which the degree has been awarded.

PART IV: PROVISIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 23:

Candidates who are registered at the date of signature of this Order for the Doctorat d'Etat may choose, within one year from the date of signature of this Order either:

- to pursue with a view to completing their studies under the conditions that prevail prior to the publication of this Order. Such ongoing doctoral studies must be completed by the Year 2004; or
- to transform their registration in consonance with the procedure and requirements of the "Doctorat" or Doctor of Philosophy

(Ph.D.) Programme stipulated by this Order. Such candidates may be granted a waiver to defend their Dissertation within a much shorter time than the minimum duration fixed by Article 15 (above).

Article 24:

Persons who are registered on the date of signature of this Order for the "Doctorat de Troisième Cycle" may choose, within one year from the date of signature of this Order either:

- to complete their studies under the conditions stipulated by the legislation in force prior to the publication of the present Order. These studies must be completed by the year 2004, or
- to transform their registration in consonance with the provisions stipulated in the present Order for the "Doctorat" or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree.

Such persons may be granted a waiver to defend their Dissertation according to the new provisions, within a much shorter time than the minimum duration fixed by Article 15 (above).

Article 25:

Holders of a "Doctorat de Troisième Cycle" or an equivalent degree on the date of signature of this Order, who wish to present their candidacy for the "Doctorat" or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree as defined in this Order, shall be exempt from the "Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies" and the Master's degree with thesis.

Article 26:

A special text shall lay down the conditions and procedures for Accreditation to Supervise Research.

Article 27:

The present Order repeals and retracts all previous legislation repugnant thereto.

Article 28:

The Heads of State Universities are responsible, each within his/her sphere of jurisdiction and competence, for the implementation of this

Order, which shall be registered and published in the Official Gazette,
in English and in French.

Yaounde, 11 April, 1999.

Jean Marie ATANGANA MEBARA
Minister of Higher Education

II.3 Extract from regulations governing the award of degrees in the Faculties of the University of Buea.

PART TEN: POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMAS.

Article 45:

To be admitted into a Postgraduate Diploma programme, candidates must have a Bachelor's degree with Second Class Honours or any other equivalent diploma.

Article 46:

The duration of a programme of study for a Postgraduate Diploma shall be at least 2 semesters and at most 4 semesters.

Article 47:

To qualify for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma the student must have earned 30 credits.

Article 48:

Performance in courses for a Postgraduate Diploma shall be recorded according to the schedule in article 54.

PART ELEVEN: MASTER'S DEGREES.

Article 49:

The Master's degree programme is a postgraduate programme designed for specialization in a particular domain.

Article 50:

The duration of the Master's shall be at least 4 semesters but shall not exceed 6 semesters.

Article 51:

To be admitted into the Master's degree programme, candidates must have at least a Bachelor's degree with Second Class Honours or any other equivalent diploma.

Article 52:

The Master's degree shall be awarded after the successful completion of course work based on the course credit system and research work.

Article 53:

The Master's degree shall be awarded to candidates who have earned 42 credits, including a thesis resulting from research work, which shall be defended before a panel of examiners. Additional, remedial courses amounting to a maximum of 6 credits may be prescribed at the time of first registration, depending on the candidate's background. He/she must have a GPA of at least 2.00.

Article 54:

Performance in courses for the Master's degree shall be recorded as follows:

MARK/100	LETTER GRADE	GRADE POINTS	EVALUATION
80-100	A	4.00	EXCELLENT
70-79	B+	3.50	VERY GOOD
60-69	B	3.00	GOOD
55-59	C+	2.50	FAIR
50-54	C	2.00	AVERAGE
0-49	F	0	FAIL

To earn credit for a course at the Master's degree level, the student must score at least a C grade.

Article 55:

The panel for the defence of the Master's thesis shall be composed of at least three lecturers designated by the Dean of the Faculty or Director of the School after consultation with the Head of Department.

PART TWELVE: DOCTORATE DEGREES

Article 56:

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programme shall be selective and open to holders of a Master's degree or an equivalent qualification.

Article 57:

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy shall be conferred upon the successful completion of the programme.

Article 58:

After the successful completion of two to four semesters of course work based on the course credit system and on passing the Comprehensive Examination, a candidate may be issued an attestation to that effect.

Article 59:

Performance in courses for the Doctor of Philosophy degree programmes shall be recorded as follows:

MARK/100	LETTER GRADE	GRADE POINTS	EVALUATION
80-100	A	4.00	EXCELLENT
70-79	B+	3.50	VERY GOOD
60-69	B	3.00	GOOD
55-59	C+	2.50	FAIR
50-54	C	2.00	AVERAGE
0-49	F	0	FAIL

Article 60:

The duration of studies for the Doctor of Philosophy degree shall be 3 years (six semesters) and a maximum of 5 years (ten semesters). This period may be extended by one to two years (2 to 4 semesters) by Senate on the recommendation of the Faculty Board.

Article 61:

The first year of the Doctorate programme shall be devoted to course work and acquisition of research techniques.

Article 62

- (a) A student shall be considered as having successfully completed the first year after earning 24 credits; such a student would then be eligible to take the comprehensive examinations.
- (b) The course load may be extended to a maximum of 30 credits for individual candidates who need to take remedial courses. Such remedial courses must be prescribed at the time of first registration of the candidate.
- (c) Dispensation may be granted to a candidate for all or part of the pre-doctoral course work where the candidate has completed similar course work at a recognized university or passed the prescribed examination for the course work.

Article 63:

After successfully completing the comprehensive examination the candidate shall be expected to deposit his/her research proposal to the department.

Article 64:

On the recommendation of the department, the Dean of the Faculty shall appoint a supervisor/supervisors to guide the candidate's research.

Article 65:

- (a) The duties of thesis supervisor shall devolve on Professors and Associate Professors.
- (b) Lecturers with terminal qualifications (PhD), "Doctorat" or equivalent may supervise Ph.D. thesis under the authority of (a) Professor(s) or Associate Professor(s).
- (c) Assistant Lecturers shall not be eligible to supervise Ph.D. theses.

Article 61:

The first year of the Doctorate programme shall be devoted to course work and acquisition of research techniques.

Article 62

- (a) A student shall be considered as having successfully completed the first year after earning 24 credits; such a student would then be eligible to take the comprehensive examinations.
- (b) The course load may be extended to a maximum of 30 credits for individual candidates who need to take remedial courses. Such remedial courses must be prescribed at the time of first registration of the candidate.
- (c) Dispensation may be granted to a candidate for all or part of the pre-doctoral course work where the candidate has completed similar course work at a recognized university or passed the prescribed examination for the course work.

Article 63:

After successfully completing the comprehensive examination the candidate shall be expected to deposit his/her research proposal to the department.

Article 64:

On the recommendation of the department, the Dean of the Faculty shall appoint a supervisor/supervisors to guide the candidate's research.

Article 65:

- (a) The duties of thesis supervisor shall devolve on Professors and Associate Professors.
- (b) Lecturers with terminal qualifications (PhD), "Doctorat" or equivalent may supervise Ph.D. thesis under the authority of (a) Professor(s) or Associate Professor(s).
- (c) Assistant Lecturers shall not be eligible to supervise Ph.D. theses.

Article 66:

- (a) The doctoral thesis submitted for a defence shall constitute an original contribution to knowledge. It shall be defended before a duly appointed panel constituted as follows:
- The Dissertation Supervisor;
 - Three Academic Staff Members who must be in the rank of Full or Associate professor, or two Academic Staff members in these ranks plus one Academic Staff member who has been accredited to supervise research. At least one of them must come from outside the University of the candidate;
 - A national or foreign personality from outside the University who should be chosen on the basis of proven scientific or professional competence. This person may not necessarily be in the same discipline as the candidate.
- (b) The Chief Examiner and Chairperson, as well as the other members of the panel, shall be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor from among academic staff members in the rank of Full or Associate Professor, on the proposal of the Head of the Establishment, sequel to the recommendation of the Department and the Dissertation Supervisor
- (c) The format for the presentation of theses and dissertations shall be adopted by Senate on recommendation of the Faculties and Schools.

III. THE FORMAT OF THE MASTER'S DEGREE THESES

1. TYPING OF THESIS

- a) Type on good quality white A4 paper
- b) Type on one side of the page only
- c) Use double-spacing throughout, except for quotations and footnotes (and notes) which should be typed in single spacing.
- d) Leave one extra line space between paragraphs.
- e) Provide adequate margins (3.5cm) on the left hand side and (2.5cm) on the other three edges so that the bound volume can be trimmed after binding.
- f) Page numbers should be typed at least (1.5cm) into the page (upper right-hand corner).
- g) Do not break words at the end of the lines.
- h) Use the same typewriter to ensure uniform presentation throughout the text.
- i) If the thesis is composed on a computer, a high-quality printer and a new printer ribbon should be used.
- j) Candidates should carefully proofread their theses for typographical errors and correct them before submission. The typist should be advised to do a spell check, using programmes designed for that purpose.

2. ORGANISATIONAL SEQUENCE

2.1 *Title page*

- a) The title should describe the content of the thesis accurately and concisely.

b) The title page should give the following information in the order listed.

- i) The name of the institution to which the thesis is submitted (The University of Buea)
- ii) The Faculty and Department in which the research was conducted.
- iii) The full title of the thesis and the subtitle, if any.
- iv) The qualification for which the thesis is submitted, e.g. A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in History.
- v) The full name of the author, followed, if desired, by the qualifications and distinctions (these should be exact qualifications or titles as awarded, not translations).
- vi) The full name and title of supervisor(s)
- vii) The month and year of submission

2.2 The second page should be a blank sheet of paper.

2.3 The third page should be a repeat of the title page.

2.4 The fourth page should be for dedication, if necessary. It should be numbered in Roman numerals as (ii) in the upper right-hand corner.

2.5 The fifth page is the certification page. It should be numbered in Roman numerals as (iii). Two formulations are available. Form on p iv (a) should be used before the thesis defence and that on p iv (b) should be reserved for the final version after the thesis has been approved.

2.6 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The acknowledgements page should be numbered in Roman numerals. It should not exceed one page. Acknowledgements should not be superfluous.

2.7 ABSTRACT

The abstract should not exceed 300 words. It should provide a synopsis of the thesis and state clearly the nature and scope of the research undertaken and the contribution made to the knowledge of the subject treated. There should be a brief statement of the problem investigated, the method of investigation, the principal arguments of the work, the findings of the investigation and a summary of any conclusions reached or recommendations made.

2.8 TABLE OF CONTENTS

The table of contents should list in sequence, with page numbers, all relevant subdivisions of the thesis, including the title of chapters, sections and subsections, as appropriate, the bibliography and other functional parts of the whole thesis.

2.9 A page indicating diagrams, maps, photographs, if any.

2.10 A page indicating tables (statistics), if any.

2.11 Abbreviations

Where abbreviations are used, a key should be provided. For abbreviations not in common use, the terms should be given in full at the first instance, followed by the abbreviation in brackets.

3. QUOTATIONS

3.1 USE OF QUOTATIONS

Quotations are effective in a thesis when used effectively. Quote only words, phrases, lines and passages that are of particular relevance to

the work. Quotations should be as brief as possible. The extensive use of quotations should be avoided.

3.2 PROSE

If a prose quotation runs on for more than 50 words or four lines, it should be put in quotation marks and incorporated, in the text.

"It was the best of time, it was the worst of times," wrote Charles Dickens.

If a quotation runs to more than four typed lines, it should be set off from the text by beginning a new line, indenting 1.5cm (or ten spaces if using a typewriter) from the left margin, and typed single-spaced, without using quotation marks.

4. DOCUMENTATION

4.1 DOCUMENTATION SOURCES

The research process is painstaking, especially when it comes to recording complete and accurate information about sources for use in documenting the final thesis. Therefore, whenever one draw on another person's work one must document the source by indicating that you borrowed - whether facts, opinions, or quotations - and where you borrowed it from. This should be indicated as a reference in the thesis (Surname of author and date or numbered reference should be used.)

4.2 NOTE FORM

There are many variations in the order of elements in citation depending on the discipline. Therefore, the pattern of citation used should be the one acceptable in the particular discipline.

4.3 ENDNOTES

As their name implies, endnotes appear after the text, starting on a new page numbered in sequence with the preceding page. Centre the title NOTES 1.5cm from the top, double-space, indent five spaces (if you are using a typewriter) from the left margin, and add the note

number, without punctuation, slightly above the line. Type a space and then the reference.

4.4 BIBLIOGRAPHY/REFERENCES

As in the case of citations, there are many variations in the order of elements in a bibliographic entry depending on the discipline. In any case, a bibliographic entry has four main divisions viz:

- the author's name reversed for alphabetizing, beginning with surname
- the title
- the publication date
- place of publication

Example

Surname and initials of author

Date of publication, in brackets

Title (underlined)

Journal (title, volume, pages)

(or Book title, publisher, place (city) of publication)

4.5 PLAGIARISM

The student must ensure that the work presented is his/her own, that it has not been done by someone else and that it has not been copied from elsewhere. Plagiarism is a very serious offense and will be very severely sanctioned. While quotations are allowed, they must not be extensive.

5. BINDING

- 5.1** The thesis must be submitted for examination in the first instance in a soft temporary binding. Four bound copies should be submitted to the Head of Department for the defence or *viva voce* while the corrected (final) version after the defence should be bound with Hard Cover and submitted in three copies with name, date and degree on spine. The colour and type of binding will be determined by the Faculty.

5.2 Viva Voce

The Master's thesis will be defended in public before a panel composed of at least three lecturers approved by the Vice-Chancellor.

Buea, 15 June 1999

Dorothy L. Njeuma
Vice-Chancellor

IV. FORMAT FOR THE PH.D. DISSERTATION

Ministerial Order No. 99/003/MINESUP/DDES of 23 December 1999 makes provisions in its article 10 for the presentation of the Ph.D. thesis as a monograph or a collection of works. Consequently, the format of the thesis will depend on the option chosen.

4.1 Format of the Ph.D. Dissertation as a Monograph

The format of the Ph.D. thesis (monograph) shall be the same as that prescribed for the Master's degree thesis except that:

- a) The words 'Master's degree' shall be replaced with the words 'Doctor of Philosophy Degree' in the title, certification and other relevant sections of the thesis.
- b) The abstract may be extended to 400 words.
- c) Author and subject indices shall be provided at the end of the dissertation.
- d) A curriculum vitae of the candidate (not exceeding 2 pages) shall be inserted after the bibliography. The CV shall provide information on the academic and employment (where applicable) records of the candidate; list of the candidate's publications, specifying those derived from the Ph.D. Dissertation.

4.2 Format of the Ph.D. Dissertation as a 'Collection of Works'

The candidate shall write a summary of the previously published works, outlining his/her contributions in the case of joint publications.

4.2.1 The organisational sequence described under No. 2 of the M.Sc. thesis format shall be followed.

4.2.2 The main body of the summary shall be suitably subdivided to give a brief introduction of the subject, the objectives of the

work, the methodology and the results, the conclusions and bibliography. For easy reference, the published works shall be assigned Roman numerals and listed on a separate page at the beginning of the summary, with the statement: 'The present dissertation is derived from the following works: Full citation of the published works including the names of all co-authors in the order of their appearance in their original publication shall be required (see style for citations in the Master's thesis format). The summary should not exceed 50 pages, and should contain not more than 100 references.

- 4.2.3** The summary shall be bound into a single volume together with published articles. Where books are part of the published works, they should be submitted separately. (The Academic Office will provide a sample of a Collection of Works for consultation).

V. GUIDELINES FOR SUPERVISION OF THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

CONTENTS

1. Selection of Candidates
2. Selection of thesis subject
3. Development of the thesis project
4. Acquisition of background literature and required techniques
5. Analysis of Results
6. Supervisor-Student Interaction
7. Writing the Research Results
8. Preparation for the Defence
9. The Defence
10. Correction and Submission of final copy
11. Exploitation of the results
12. A few words on conduct

INTRODUCTION

Following the review commissioned by the Committee of Deans and Directors in the 1999/2000 academic year, it became clear that the supervision of postgraduate (PG) theses at UB follow a wide variety of formats, ranging from complete abandonment of the student until the last phase of the process to almost spoon-feeding the student. In this process the expectations of students and their supervisors are not only quite different, but also sometimes contradictory. This observation calls for a clarification of the situation, hence, the present guidelines have been conceived to give a general framework of the supervision process so that both staff and students may better perceive what is expected of them.

Selection of PG Students. The PG course starts with the selection of students from a list of applicants. The procedure which obtains at UB is the following:

- The applications are received, codified by the Registrar and sent to the Faculty/School concerned.
- The applications are examined at the Departmental level where a classification of the candidates is done.
- The applications are then forwarded to the Faculty Board which ascertains that the selection respects the norms set by the Faculty and that there are not too wide discrepancies between the criteria from one department to another.
- The Faculty Executive Committee or the Faculty Scientific Consultative Committee (where it exists) may represent the Faculty Board.
- The recommendations of the Faculty are then forwarded to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Teaching, who in collaboration with the Registrar, prepares the Applications for Examination by a Select Committee (acting on behalf) of Senate. The CDD may act as a select committee. The Vice-Chancellor chairs the select committee. After deliberations, the Vice-Chancellor publishes the final list of selected candidates.
- It should be noted that the procedure outlined above does not apply to those programmes for which admission is by a Competitive Entrance Examination (e.g. ASTI programmes).
- **Orientation of PG students:** A formal orientation of postgraduate students should be organized every year shortly after the proclamation of admission results. This orientation should be spearheaded by the Academic Office and coordinated in the Faculties by the VD for Academic Affairs and Programmes in collaboration with Department Heads. The Orientation exercise should bring together new PG students and staff accredited to supervise theses. Topics to be discussed should include (but not be limited to) the rules and regulations governing PG studies, the time-table for such studies, sources of research information, the syllabuses to be followed, guidelines on dissertation writing, sources of funding for PG research, etc.

Selection of the thesis Supervisor and Research Topic

This is a two-pronged process designed to satisfy both the interests of the student and the supervisor. Well before the Faculty/Department requests for the advertisement of PG positions, academic staff duly accredited to supervise PG research will be requested to submit a one page project statement to the Head of Department, detailing the research problems, the methodology, needs and feasibility of the project. Based on these proposals, the HOD establishes and publishes a list of available topics for the Department for the particular year.

During the first phase of the programme when the students are concerned with course work, they are requested to indicate their research topics in the same manner. Students are encouraged to propose topics of their own, but they may also select topics from those published by the Department. In any case free discussions between the students and staff should lead to a consensus on research topics. By the end of the second semester all students are expected to have selected their research topics. Supervisors are then assigned by the Departmental Board, taking into account the requests of the candidates and staff.

We observe that this procedure is distinct from what obtains in other state universities. Elsewhere, even before the student submits his/her application for PG studies, he/she is expected to select a topic and supervisor who accepts to sponsor the student's application.

Though the system of co-supervision of theses is not formally required in UB, it is widely practised. Thus one student may have 1-3 supervisors. In the case of co-supervision, the roles of each of the supervisors should be declared in writing to the HOD. Furthermore, the supervisor and co-supervisor(s) should be identified. Ministerial Order 99/0081/MINESUP/DDES of 23 Dec. 1999 requires the Dean of Faculty/Director of School to publish the list of supervisors. This should be done as soon as they are known, but not later than the end of the first semester (for a 2-semester course), second semester (for a 4-semester course) two years (for a course lasting more than 3 years).

Preparation and Defence of the Research Project

Each student is expected to prepare and defend, under the authority of the Department, a research statement prepared in the UB format. This exercise should take place during the first quarter of the period reserved for the research. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that the project statement has been correctly written and, more importantly to guide the student in doing so.

The defence of the research proposal may be informal, and may take the format of a seminar presentation, before members of staff of the Department. Its main objective is to enable the student to improve on the quality of the proposal.

Student-Supervisor Consultations

During the first week of PG studies, the student is expected to meet with the supervisor to agree on the time-table of consultations and how to carry out the work. At the first meeting the student should be given information on the following:-

- the time and venue (on campus) of the consultations;
- what will be expected of each consultation;
- the material resources necessary for the project; these should be identified;
- Any special skills/techniques required for the project should be identified, and training for these skills programmed.
- together with the supervisor, a provisional time-table for carrying out the research should be agreed upon;

It is mandatory that the supervisor meet with the student for at least 1 hr per week to discuss the student's research.

Background Literature and Specialized Training:

The supervisor should realize that at the beginning the PG student is a novice who needs to be introduced to the chosen field of research. It may be thus advisable to programme a series of discussions with the student during which he/she is introduced to the background theories and concepts of the field.

Good Research Practices such as Laboratory Notebook Keeping, Safety Measures and devices, should be discussed. Above all, the supervisor should provide the student with key references in the field that are pertinent to the subject. In return, the student should use the provided literature as the springboard for a more detailed literature search.

Traditionally, the method of entering a new field of research may progress through reading text-book chapters on the subject, followed by scholarly reviews, and original journal articles. The techniques for the analysis of research literature are expected to be covered in the appropriate methodology courses. However, the supervisor may fine-tune these to ensure that they are well understood.

The Research Process Itself:

The methods for supervision of research may vary from topic to topic and between disciplines. However, one strategy seems to be common. The research topic should be broken down into its components and time frames set out for each of the sub-themes. For experimental research, the usual procedure is to ensure that one proceeds with the actual experimentation or field observation. At this stage, it is absolutely important to inculcate the questioning spirit:-

What is the aim of the current experiment/step?

What observations have been made?

What do they mean?

If the experiment has failed, why and what can be done to correct it?

If the experiment has succeeded, how can the results be validated?

What is the next step? And how does this tie in with the specific and overall objectives of the project?

Changing the Research topic:

Quite often, despite the concerted efforts of the student and supervisor, the topic originally chosen cannot be realised. Reasons for such failures abound. Sometimes crucial equipment and reagents are lacking. Inadequate funding or lack of it may also lead to the failure of a research topic. In some cases the background literature is not available. Less frequently, midway through the topic, the student realizes that the work has already been done elsewhere. All of these reasons may lead to a decision to change the research topic. As much as possible,

the decision to modify/change a research topic should be taken early. Whenever possible, a new topic that employs some of the acquired skills should be preferred.

Writing the Research Results:

Two broad approaches for the supervision of the write-up can be employed. I will term them, herein, **the Piecemeal and the Integrated Approach.**

The Piecemeal Approach:

According to this approach, as soon as the thesis project has been approved, the student sets up to research each of the component chapters or sections, writes and submits them to the supervisor for vetting. In some departments, the results obtained in a chapter are presented in a seminar followed by a discussion. Following such a seminar discussion, the chapter may be amended to the supervisor's satisfaction before taking up the next chapter. This piecemeal method is often preferred in the Human Sciences and the Arts. It often provides the framework for interaction between the supervisor and student and has an additional advantage of sustaining the dynamics of the thesis research. The major shortcoming of the piecemeal approach is that it does not allow the candidate to have a holistic view of the topic. Furthermore, where the process drags out for long, the early chapters of the dissertation may become obsolete by the end of the project.

The Integrated Approach

As an alternative, the integrated approach may be employed. Once the core of the dissertation problem has been solved, the student may write the Introduction and Literature Review whilst finalizing the analysis of the results. Subsequently, the Experimental and Results Section may follow. The Discussion and conclusions are fairly easy to write once the objectives have been clearly defined, and these may be postponed to the final stages of the write-up. The Integrated Approach is preferred by Experimental Scientists.

Where the research topic lends itself to fractionation, the piecemeal approach may be preferred, especially as it allows for the publication of research results in scholarly journals. Thus for a Ph.D. thesis project,

it may be prudent, for purposes of securing and maintaining priority, to formulate and publish the results as they appear.

The choice of method for writing will depend on the particular subject, and the consensus reached between the student and the supervisor. Whatever the case, it is not a good idea to leave everything to the tail end.

Lest it be misunderstood, the supervisor is not expected to write for the student, nor is he/she expected to override the student's style by over-editing and prompting. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that results are carefully recorded, calculations verified, and the final report carefully proofread. The student should therefore consult the special instructions for dissertation writing available from the Academic Office and Vice-Deans for Academic Affairs (and described in sections 3 and 4 of the present Guide.)

Preparation for the Thesis Defence

The supervisor has an important role to play in preparing the student for the oral defence of the thesis. First of all, he should take time to carefully read and correct the final version of the thesis before sending it forward for defence. A non-exhaustive list of some common pitfalls follows:

1. **Title of dissertation:** You should ensure that the title reflects the content of the work. Perhaps, in the course of doing the research, the original orientation has changed requiring a change of title. Discuss this with your student and make amendments as appropriate. Avoid long, cumbersome and uninformative titles. The title of the thesis should be seen as a summary of the work.
2. **Acknowledgements** - Ensure that the student has kept the acknowledgements within acceptable limits. Also watch out for exaggerations and omissions; if the University has provided facilities (however small) for the work, these should be acknowledged.
3. **Typographical Errors:** Many a good thesis has been ruined by careless typographical errors. Ensure that the student has used a 'spell-check' function if the thesis has been composed on the computer.

4. **Bibliography:** Ensure that the student has adhered to the recommended style and has read all works cited in the thesis; if in doubt, ask the student to present a copy of the cited article. All authors cited in the text must be listed in the bibliography and vice-versa.
5. **Verification of Experimental Data:** For experimental work, the supervisor should go through the raw data carefully with the student. The student must present his/her lab-book periodically for checking. Where new observations have been made, the supervisor should ensure that they have been reproduced and validated. Reproduce here means to repeat; validate here means to ensure that corollaries from the student's observation tie up with other findings in the field.
6. **Verification of calculations:** The supervisor should do a random check of calculations done by the student. Where differences are found, these should be resolved through further experimentation and/or discussion.
7. **Verification of display items:** It is important that graphs, photographs and tables be of the highest quality. The supervisor should ensure that the student has labelled all display items and provided explanatory legends as appropriate.
8. **Plagiarism and Falsification of data:** The supervisor should warn the student about the dangers of plagiarism and data falsification. These are serious offences that can lead to dismissal and nullification of the thesis. Often, students cannot easily recognize that they are using other peoples' ideas without acknowledgement, and that this is plagiarism. Although this is not common, the temptation to falsify data has been succumbed to even at very prestigious institutions. It is the duty of the supervisor to let students know that even negative results may be useful and, therefore, it is not necessary to fake results. Where such shortcomings are discovered, the supervisor must make a written report to the Dean who shall treat this as a case of examination fraud.

9. **Pre-Defence Exercise:** It is very useful to hear the student within a restricted circle of the research team before he/she goes forward to the defence. Items such as rhetorical skills, posture, language, audibility, should be commented upon. The main aim of this exercise is to build up the students' self-confidence and discourage brash behaviour.
10. **The Defence:** At the defence the supervisor should avoid pleading to the jury on behalf of the student. He/she should ask genuine and not rehearsed questions. He/she should also remember that it is the student being examined and not him/her.

Concluding Activities

Correction of the thesis: It is the supervisor's duty to ensure that the thesis has been carefully corrected as indicated by the examiners before it is deposited in the library. The supervisor should know that his/her scientific reputation is also at stake, if the final document still contains major errors. The checklist should be that already mentioned above.

Publication of thesis results: It is now commonly accepted that all research work, regardless of the field, is amenable to publication in scholarly journals, provided it meets the standards. Often, the Master's thesis does not meet the standards required of articles. However, if well planned, results from a series of Master's theses from the same research group could be combined to produce a good publication. The supervisor should, in publishing results from theses, associate the students as co-authors. This is a matter of equity that should not be over-looked. It is unfair and even dishonest for a supervisor to publish students' work without associating them as co-authors.

A few words on Conduct

The conduct of research leading to a postgraduate qualification is a partnership operation in which the student and supervisor are the main actors; but it also concerns the university as an institution, as well as sponsors and the community as a whole. Therefore, the supervisor and student, as the main actors, must be conscious of the heavy

responsibility they bear. This imposes a code of conduct element, which we recall hereunder.

- ❖ The supervisor should realize that the beginner whom he is charged to train is an independent personality who needs to be treated fairly and with consideration. Insulting language, bullying, and intimidation should be avoided. The supervisor can be firm or strict without being unpleasant.
- ❖ At all times the relationship between supervisor and student should be cordial, but not necessarily familiar. The supervisor should, not only avoid behaviour that is likely to undermine his dignity and authority, but should also be seen to do so. Never ask for financial, material or other favours from your students, in particular, avoid placing yourself in a situation that may be considered incompatible with the dignity of the Higher Education Corps.
- ❖ Sexual harassment is regrettably an acknowledged inequity of our times. Beware of this temptation and do not succumb to it.
- ❖ The virtues of hard work, fairness, objectivity and honesty are the cornerstones of civilized behaviour. Impart these to your students through your personal example, particularly in the manner in which you run your group.
- ❖ Avoid meeting your students out of campus, except when the study programme so requires. Home visits to the supervisor/supervised should be the exception rather than the rule. In all that you do remember to uphold your personal dignity and that of the institution you represent. Above all, consider your task of a thesis supervisor, as a rare opportunity to change the destiny of another human being. Strive always to merit the confidence placed in you.

Professor Vincent P.K. Titanji
Deputy Vice-Chancellor i/c Teaching

VI. PUBLIC EXAMINATION OF THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

VI.1 The public examination shall proceed in a solemn and calm atmosphere as follows:

- The candidate shall arrive at the hall and wait for the examination panel or jury.
- The candidate and members of the public shall stand up when the jury enters the hall and shall only take their seats after the jury.
- The chairperson of the jury shall call the proceedings to order and invite the candidate to present his/her findings in 15 minutes in the case of a Master's degree and 45 minutes for the Ph.D. degree.
- After the lecture, the chairperson shall invite each of the panelists to examine the candidate. Preferably, the external examiner, followed by the other examiners, should first examine the candidate before the floor is given to the supervisor(s).
- The jury shall then retire for deliberations.
- Upon resumption, the chairperson shall ask the candidate to stand and announce the results as follows:

"Mr/Ms X, after due consideration of your dissertation, lecture and response to their questions, the jury has decided to recommend you for the award of the degree of (-----) of the University of Buea. The jury could also congratulate the candidate if it deems fit.
- In the rare case where the thesis does not obtain a pass mark the Chairperson shall thank the candidate for his/her efforts and tell him/her that the results will be communicated later. The Dean, after due consultation with the Vice-Chancellor, shall inform the candidate of the results in writing.

6.2 The entire defence of the Master's thesis shall not exceed 1 hour (60 minutes); and for the Ph.D. thesis not more than 3 hours.

VII. PROCEDURE FOR BINDING AND DEPOSITING OF THE THESIS IN THE LIBRARY. *

According to the regulations describing the format for the M.Sc thesis at UB (see Section 3 of the present Guide), the candidate shall deposit two bound copies of the final corrected version of the thesis in the UB Library after the defence. The present note describes the procedure for this exercise.

1. After the thesis defence, the candidate makes all corrections requested by the jury. The candidate is expected to bear the main responsibility for ensuring that his/her thesis conforms to the prescribed style. Particular attention should be paid to the title page, the certification, footnotes, the bibliography, etc. A sample in the appropriate format will be available in the Library for consultation.
2. The supervisor checks the corrected thesis and signs the clearance sheet if he/she is satisfied with the entire document.
3. The candidate then submits the unbound (loose-leaf) document to the Librarian in a folder for verification and approval of the format.
4. Upon receiving clearance from the Librarian, the candidate submits the thesis to the Head of Department and the Dean/Director for approval and signature of the certification form.
5. Subsequent to the signing of the certification form, the candidate personally submits three copies of the document to the Librarian and pays the binding fees.

* Extract from Notice No. 0690/UB/DVC/T.