

GUIDELINES FOR POSTGRADUATE DISSERTATIONS

2026 VERSION

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FUNCTIONS OF FACULTY BOARD

1. Approval of Dissertation Titles and Proposals

When considering a dissertation title and proposal for approval, the Faculty Board should determine whether that particular area to be researched has already been allocated to the subject of a thesis, dissertation, long essay, research paper or term paper. This function is delegated to the Head of Department within whose area the area to be researched falls. The form for submission of titles and proposals (ANNEX A) is available at <https://www.um.edu.mt/laws/students/forms>

Where the area to be researched substantially overlaps with the subject of another written work which has already been approved or which is to be submitted by some other student, this should normally hinder the approval of the title unless the student makes a case and satisfies the Faculty Board that the approach to be adopted by the student varies significantly from that adopted in the previously approved title.

No dissertation shall be accepted which is identical in substance to written material already submitted for a degree in this or any other University or to any other published material. Students are not, however, precluded from incorporating such previous work as may be necessary to the presentation and further understanding of their exposition, provided that the nature and extent of such incorporation are clearly indicated in the dissertation itself.

The dissertation title and proposal form (for Postgraduate Courses, ANNEX A) should be accompanied by a Declaration of a member of the Academic Staff (for Postgraduate Courses, ANNEX B) available at <https://www.um.edu.mt/laws/students/forms> confirming that he/she has been consulted by the candidate and that he/she sees room for the writing of such a Dissertation.

2. Appointment of Supervisor/Co-Supervisor

The Head of Department under whose department the research proposal falls should recommend to the Faculty Board the name of a supervisor and, where appropriate, that of a co-supervisor.

A co-supervisor can be appointed if a qualified person from within/outside the Faculty/University is required, or if the dissertation covers two areas of law.

3. Board of Examiners

- Senate on Faculty Board's recommendation shall appoint a Board of Examiners for each dissertation
- The Board of Examiners shall be composed as detailed on the Assessment Regulations available at

https://www.um.edu.mt/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/24868/Assessment_Regulations.pdf

4. The Examination Process

The submission deadline must be respected, and an extension will only be granted by Faculty Board should the request be submitted prior to the deadline, for a justified reason and subject to a favourable progress report submitted by the respective supervisor. Where a Dissertation is submitted for examination after the due date or following a non-submission, a student shall receive a mark 0, grade F. The same applies to students who fail their Dissertation. However, all students will be entitled to a final opportunity to submit their Dissertation for examination under resit conditions.

5. Establishment and Functions of the Dissertations Committee

The Dissertations Committee shall review all dissertation titles and proposals and allocate each title under its respective department or, should there be more than one department, indicates the lead department. It shall request Heads of Department to vet the dissertation titles and proposals and to recommend supervisors and co supervisors, if necessary. Each Head may recommend to the Dissertations Committee changes to dissertation titles and/or proposals as well as reject them.

The Faculty Board shall approve/reject the proposed titles and supervisors/co supervisors.

6. Faculty Research Ethics Committee

Researchers have a responsibility to take all steps possible to ensure that the social, psychological or physical well-being of research participants is not adversely affected by participation in their research study. Consequently, all researchers at the UM are now required to fill out the online Ethics and Data Protection Form after the dissertation title and supervisor have been approved by Faculty Board and the student would have made contact with his/her supervisor. For further guidance and access to the form please refer to the following link:

<https://www.um.edu.mt/laws/students/facultyresearchethicscommitteefrec>

B. REGULATIONS FOR THE SUBMISSION OF DISSERTATIONS

1. Log Book

Each student shall keep a log book to document progress on his/her Dissertation. The student shall be responsible to ensure that the log book is duly filled by him/herself and by his/her supervisor. The student shall keep one log book for his/her supervisor and a separate log book for his/her co-supervisor. The supervisor/co-supervisor is entitled to add any comments he/she wishes to make at the end of each meeting.

The log book (ANNEX C) duly filled has to be submitted by the student on the date indicated by Faculty Office, together with the dissertation for examination. The Dissertations Committee may request a student to submit his/her log book for inspection at any other period in time.

The log book (Annex C) is available at <https://www.um.edu.mt/laws/students/forms>

2. Declaration of Authenticity and Copyright Release

Each student must fill in and sign two Declarations of Authenticity and Copyright Release (ANNEX D and ANNEX E) whereby s/he declares that s/he has read the University of Malta's Guidelines on Plagiarism and that the Dissertation is his/her original work.

The form for the Declaration of Authenticity and Copyright Release must be submitted separately, both with the proposal and with the Dissertation and is available at

<https://www.um.edu.mt/laws/students/forms>

Furthermore the Guidelines on Plagiarism and Collusion are available at

https://www.um.edu.mt/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/436651/UniversityGuidelinesonPlagiarism.pdf

The University of Malta has its own intellectual policy on this matter and reference is being made to this policy which is available at

<https://www.um.edu.mt/knowledgetransfer/templatesforms>

3. Library Guide for Digitized Dissertations

All dissertations should be in the format set out in the Library Guide for Digitized

Dissertations. The text of this guide is available on <http://www.um.edu.mt/library/dissertations>

4.Submission of Dissertations for Examination

Students submitting a Dissertation for examination should ensure that their work:

- is of an advanced or original nature in the area of study;
- satisfies the requirements of presentation;
- fulfils the requirements of relevant regulations as regards format and length; and
- complies with these guidelines.

When submitting the Dissertation, the student must always hand in the submission note signed by his/her supervisor. In the case of disapproval, the supervisor should send an email to the Faculty Office giving a reason. A student may opt to submit his/her Dissertation notwithstanding any negative advice from the supervisor. Should the student submit without the supervisor's consent, he/she will do so at his/her own risk and peril.

By the imposed deadline students are to submit the following:

- 1) A soft copy of the Dissertation on a Pen-Drive or submitted via e-email. The document should be in PDF format which should NOT be password protected
- 2) A spiral-bound copy printed back to back if required from the student should it be requested by the Board of Examiners;
- 3) An original copy of the Declarations of Authenticity (Annex D and Annex E for Postgraduate Courses) available at <https://www.um.edu.mt/laws/students/forms>
- 4) A hard copy of the log book and submission note (Annex C) available at <https://www.um.edu.mt/laws/students/forms> endorsed by the supervisor and co-supervisor (if applicable);

A receipt will be provided by the Faculty on submission.

5. Uploading of Dissertations on the Virtual Learning Environment – VLE (Moodle)

Plagiarism, at any stage of the preparation and finalisation of a Dissertation/Long Essay is prohibited. For this purpose, the Dissertation/Long Essay is passed through plagiarism software. Students may upload their draft and final version as many times as required in both containers, provided that uploading is carried out prior to the submission due date.

Prior to submission of a Dissertation for examination/Long Essay for examination, students must upload the Dissertation on the VLE (Moodle). Information regarding Turnitin is available at <http://www.um.edu.mt/vle/pds/students>

6. Submission of Final Copies for Faculty/University records

Once the final version of the Dissertation has been approved and prior to the publication of the respective result, students are to submit the following to Faculty Office:

- A soft copy of the Dissertation on a Pen Drive or submitted via e-mail. The document should be in PDF format which should NOT be password protected and should comply with the library guidelines.

A receipt will be provided by the Faculty on submission.

Following publication of final classification, students and their respective supervisors, will be provided with a copy of the final dissertation report.

7. Deadlines

The approximate deadlines for the submission of Postgraduate Dissertations are as follows:

M.A. in Financial Services: ***last week of January*** (on full-time basis) or ***first week of May*** (on part-time basis)

M.A. in Law: ***first week of September***

M.A. in Human Rights Law and Practice: ***first week of September***

M.A. in Mediation: ***first week of September***

M.A. in Ocean Governance: ***second week of September***

M.A. in European Legal Studies: ***second week of September***

LL.M. in European and Comparative Law: ***second week of September***

LL.M. in European Business Law: ***second week of September***

LL.M. in International Law: ***first week of September***

C. REGULATIONS FOR THE PRESENTATION OF MASTERS DISSERTATIONS

1. Typographical Detail

1.1. Methods of Production

Dissertations shall be presented in font style Calibri 12 and typing should be of even quality, with clear black characters.

1.2. Layout

Margins on the right and left hand side shall be 3cm and the top and bottom margins shall be 2.5cm. Double or one-and-a-half spacing shall be used, except for indented quotations or footnotes, where single spacing shall be used.

2. Pagination

2.1. Page numbering

The page numbers for the first few pages (up until just before the first page of the Introduction) should be in Roman numerals. Subsequent page numbers should be in Arabic numerals. Additionally, the page number should not be printed on the title page. In order to apply different number types to the same document, one must use section breaks.

2.2. Position of Page Numbers

Page numbers shall be located centrally at the bottom of the page.

3. Word Limit

Word limits vary from one dissertation to another (as indicated in the course bye-laws).

These are as follows:

M.A. in Law (as from October 2026 intake)	<i>Between 30,000 and 35,000 words</i>
M.A. in Financial Services	<i>Not less than 20,000 and not more than 25,000 words</i>
M.A. in Ocean Governance	<i>Not less than 20,000 words and not more than 25,000 words</i>
M.A. in Human Rights Law and Practice	<i>Not less than 15,000 words and not more than 20,000 words</i>
M.A. in Mediation	<i>Not less than 15,000 words and not more than 20,000 words</i>
M.A. in European Legal Studies	<i>Not less than 15,000 words and not more than 20,000 words</i>
LL.M. in International Law (as from October 2026 intake)	<i>Between 30,000 and 35,000 words</i>
LL.M. in European and Comparative Law	<i>Not less than 15,000 words and not more than 20,000 words</i>
LL.M. in European and Business Law	<i>Not less than 15,000 words and not more than 20,000 words</i>

No extension on the word limit may be granted, and as per Faculty Board decision, any text exceeding the maximum word limit will not be read [at the Board's discretion] and be awarded a grade for material presented at that stage.

The prescribed length refers to the whole Dissertation including the main text, quotations, footnotes, but excluding preliminaries and other functional parts, such as bibliography, tables, abstract and index. Annexes and appendices do not form part of the word limit.

4. Preliminaries

4.1. Title page

The title page shall give the following information in the order listed:

- The full title of the dissertation and the subtitle, if any;
- The full name of the author, followed, if desired, by any qualifications and distinctions;
- An indication that the dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of a specified degree, for example, M.A. in Law;
- The designation 'Faculty of Laws, University of Malta';
- The month and year of dissertation submission;

4.2. Annex E

The title page should be followed by ANNEX E for undergraduate courses (available via the following link: <https://www.um.edu.mt/laws/students/forms/>).

4.3. Abstract and Keywords

Annex E should be followed by an abstract consisting of no more than 300 words. The abstract should be a concise summary of the work, containing the fundamental concepts and conclusions. Students must also include **five keywords** together with their abstract. Students are to note that the abstract should not be written in the first person and should not contain footnotes.

4.4. Dedication

Some candidates like to dedicate their work; however, to do so is entirely optional.

Where a dedication is made, the dedication pages should follow the Abstract.

4.5. Table of Contents

The table of contents shall immediately follow the Abstract. It shall list in sequence, with page numbers, all relevant subdivisions of the Dissertation, including the table of judgments; the table of statutes; the table of treaties; the list of abbreviations; all relevant subdivisions of the dissertation, including the titles of chapters, sections and subsections; the bibliography; any appendices and the index (if provided).

4.6. Tables of Statutes, Judgements and Treaties

The tables of statutes, judgements and treaties, and any other tables, if required, shall follow the table of contents.

4.7. Acknowledgements

Any acknowledgements shall be on the page following the tables of statutes and judgements.

4.8. Abbreviations

Where abbreviations are used a key shall be provided. Abbreviations may be used at the discretion of the author. For an abbreviation not in common use, the term shall be given in full at the first instance followed by the abbreviation in brackets.

5. Text

5.1. Introduction

The Introduction shall be followed by the first chapter of the Dissertation. The Introduction should be used to set out the dissertation question and dissertation sub-questions as discussed in subsequent chapters, the methodology used, any problems encountered in carrying out the research, defining key terminology, identifying gaps in existing literature and how you propose to address them, and the limitations to the dissertation.

5.2. Chapters and Sections

Dissertations shall be divided into an Introduction, a number of chapters and a Conclusion. The system of headings shall be consistent and should provide a clear indication of changes in content, emphasis and other features which occur at each stage of the work.

5.3. Conclusion

This should bring together all the issues of the research and link back to the aim and objectives which were outlined in the introduction. Any recommendations should always be based on evidence. Any suggestions for future research may be also included in this area.

The Conclusion should be original. It should identify areas for future research related to the topic of the Dissertation, propose changes to the law, contain a list of the main conclusions of the work, and answer the dissertation question and sub-questions. The Dissertation Conclusion is the most important part of the dissertation and should be a substantial piece of work.

5.4. Headings

The headings recommended are:

- Main headings, which should be used for chapters or sections and should be in full capitals;
- Subsidiary headings, which should be used for subsections consisting of associated paragraphs, should be above the line of the text and should use initial capitals.

5.5. Note Numbering

Numbers typed as superscripts, or, if on the line, in square brackets, immediately following the relevant word or phrase in the text should identify footnotes in the text.

Footnotes should be restricted to serving the following functions:

- to state a source
- to acknowledge a borrowing
- to refer the reader to another part of the dissertation
- to develop an idea or expand a quotation (where doing so in the text would disturb the flow or the balance of the writing)

Footnotes should always be used with restraint. If none of the above criteria are met, then an appendix is probably more suitable.

6. End Matter

6.1. Appendices

Appendices shall follow the main text and precede the index (if provided). Appendices may consist of supporting material of considerable length or of lists, documents, commentaries, a copy of the questionnaires ideally in both English and Maltese and/or the list of questions ideally in both English and Maltese, or other evidence, which, if included in the main text, would interrupt its flow. The style of appendices shall be consistent with the style of the main text.

D. OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

1. The student must submit a dissertation which shall be an original work on the approved subject showing that he/she has carried out sufficient research therein.
2. Before the closing date for the submission of the dissertation title, the student is advised to discuss his proposed area of research and title with the appropriate Head of Department and/or other member of the University academic staff prior to submitting the title to the Faculty Office.
3. The student shall submit the appropriate form (Appendix A) requesting the approval of the title of the dissertation.
4. After receiving notice of the acceptance of the title as proposed, the student should seek regular meetings with his/her supervisor and co-supervisor. As a general guide, it is recommended that meetings should be held on a monthly basis throughout the period of research. It is usually convenient to arrange the date and time of the next meeting at the conclusion of each supervision meeting. In the event that the student encounters an urgent problem, the supervisor should, as a rule, attempt to deal with the matter over the telephone, email or otherwise arrange a meeting at short notice.
5. Every effort should be made by the student to be well-prepared for each meeting.
6. Written work should be regularly submitted to the supervisor and co-supervisors, if any. The written work will initially consist of a tentative framework of the whole work, then outlines of specific chapters

and eventually complete chapters or sections thereof. For further information with regard to the principles of procedure on the supervision of Masters' Dissertations please refer to <http://www.um.edu.mt/registrar/staff>.

7. In the initial stages of the research, the student shall plan out the various aspects of the research. Special attention should be given to the following matters:

- The formulation of a plan of action within the time available for the research. Such a plan should identify the stages at which the various points of the research should have been completed. Every effort should be made to register progress within the parameters of such a plan.
- The drawing up of a broad framework or outline of the intended work. The framework or outline should be regularly updated and expanded.
- To identify and add any treatises, statutes, treaties, periodical literature and judgements that may be relevant to the area of study.

E. RECOMMENDATIONS TO STUDENTS UNDERTAKING RESEARCH FOR MASTERS DISSERTATIONS

1. General Observations

The dissertation has to be "an original work on the approved subject or other contribution to the knowledge thereof showing that the student has carried out sufficient research therein.

Unlike a student assignment, the Masters dissertation is intended for use by other individuals. Even though the dissertation is not usually published, it may be available at the law library and at the main library and may be consulted by others – the judiciary, practitioners, academics or students – interested in the general field of study or particular aspects thereof. A dissertation should however go further than merely imparting information. It should invite the discipline of other minds. An author should not fear the criticism or debate that a good dissertation generates, but instead the lack of interest in what has been written. There is little to be gained by writing something that others may already know. The dissertation should make a difference to what is already known.

The dissertation is not merely an exercise in essay writing on an extended scale. The dissertation has to be more severely argued and more rigorously shaped and presented. In addition, the dissertation must be accurately and consistently documented. Proper methodology is a key aspect to the successful completion of the dissertation.

Research work is an exercise in intellectual exploration and development. Attention to research techniques is essential.

The student should adopt a critical approach to the research. A dissertation cannot be approved if it lacks evidence of the student's own contribution.

The dissertation should be clearly expressed. Proper use of the British English language (not American), clarity of thought and a logical flow of ideas and argumentation are essential.

The dissertation should be concise. Repetition and irrelevant side issues should be avoided.

Basic editing rules should be observed, especially regarding quotations, footnotes and the citation of statutes, judgements, treatises, periodical literature and other documentation.

Students are advised to acquire keyboard and word-processing skills. This will enable the student to make more efficient use of the time available.

2.What is Research?

Research is the investigation about a properly limited topic, and the presentation of its results in a carefully organized and documented paper. Moreover, to research is to pose and answer to a problem, or at least to attempt a convincing answer. It is not merely to study it. Study is of course a necessary tool of research, but only as a means to an end.

There are different types of research: e.g.,

- Academic Research: through the resources of libraries, this type of research yields significant data and values on a given topic. This type of research takes place mostly in the library. Legal research usually falls within this category.

- Scientific Research: same as above. In a more restricted sense, it has to do with the exact sciences and takes place mostly in the laboratory.
- Social Research: studies man in his social environment and seek to improve his understanding of groups and institutions. Fieldwork is its main resource.
- Technological Research: the application of the sciences to the needs of industry and production. This type of research mostly takes place in laboratories and factories.

A dissertation should not consist of a restatement of what is already known. Rather, it should be concerned with what is unknown, misunderstood or misinterpreted. Facts, which are already familiar to potential readers, should therefore be stated as concisely as possible. Only when the critical aspects of the research are reached should the discussion be expansive.

It follows from what has been said above regarding the nature of research that considerable care must be exercised when choosing a theme. Students are therefore urged to discuss with members of the academic staff the potential of their proposed theme before submitting a title and proposal to the Faculty Board.

3. Methodology

Methodology is the science of method for the sake of research. Methodology establishes rules and principles governing the effective use of the sources of information, leading to a systematic exposition of the fruit of one's research.

In legal research, the sources of information can be many and varied, ranging from newspapers and interviews to treatises, judgements, periodical literature, treaties and official and unofficial records and documentation. The use made of the information from these sources is more often than not unsystematic. Methodology is an essential key to effective research.

4. Basic Rules

A number of basic rules need to be highlighted. Their implementation will go a long way towards ensuring successful research:

- Define properly and limit the topic of your research (according to time and space).
- Develop an interest and possibly an enthusiasm for it, through reading, questioning, reflecting.
- Read as much as possible of the material available on the chosen field, including the work of other researchers and commentators.
- Assemble this material in a synthetic and systemic way.
- Examine such material critically, adding your own reflections and conclusions, thus making a real contribution to knowledge.
- Start drafting as early as possible, even before having collected most of the materials needed. Early drafts will no doubt require considerable re-writing but the process involved in re-writing will provoke a considerable degree of thinking and rethinking that is essential to proper analysis and originality.

5. Use of the Library

Legal research is essentially a library-based exercise. An effective working knowledge of the library where the research is being carried out will pay considerable dividends.

Students who do not familiarise themselves with the law collection and associated materials will find the time spent in the particular library to be frustrating and unproductive.

Legal research usually requires knowledge not just of the present law but also of its development, including criticism and suggestions for reform as have been made.

To find information about the chosen subject, the following sources may need to be consulted:

- Acts of Parliament
- Delegated legislation
- Judgements

- Textbooks and treatises
- Periodical articles
- Treaties
- Relevant government publications
- Reports and commentaries in newspapers
- Bills and Parliamentary Debates

6. Resources in the Library

- Bibliographies: these are comprehensive or special lists of books brought together with some unity of subject or purpose.
- Current Periodicals and Magazines: these too are usually displayed in the reading room and can be consulted, but usually not borrowed.
- Call Materials: Books, which can be borrowed through the library assistants, electronic computers, etc.

7. Using the Sources in the library

Get familiar with the Library's online search engine and databases.

8. Evaluation of Sources

Not all the material you find will be of equal value or equally useful: hence evaluation is necessary. It can be of two kinds:

a) Personal Evaluation (internal evidence):

- By reading the biographical note on the book flap
- By reading through the table of contents
- By reading the preface or introduction

- By reading a sample passage here and there
- By asking the librarian or his assistants

b) Reader's Evaluation (external evidence):

- Look around for critical reviews published in newspapers or periodicals
- Consult a Book Review Digest, containing reviews of books in general or in a given area. A number of periodicals (for e.g., the *Lloyds Maritime and Commercial Law Quarterly*) publish reviews of books and articles on legal subjects.

9. Writing the Dissertation

9.1. Reading

After having established the topic of your dissertation, start using the material you have acquired by reading extensively. This may lead you to a further limiting of your topic, especially if you should soon discover that the original topic was too vast for your purpose. Reading at this stage need not necessarily be too systematic, especially if the books you want to read are not available to you all at one go. What is important, however, is that you take note of what you read.

9.2. Note Taking

Various ways of note taking are possible, depending on the means available.

9.3. Organising the Paper

When you have gathered enough material, covering sufficiently the topic in its main aspects, work on the principle of analysis and synthesis.

9.4. First Draft

After the work has been structured, be prepared to note down any ideas or intuitions that might come to mind. Following this, the writing, mentioning, explaining and elaborating one by one the different items, showing their nexus and mutual relationship, in the form of any Essay may commence. At these stages, one will also include important quotations to corroborate the main points.

The first draft will usually form an appropriate basis for the subsequent re-writing that will almost certainly be necessary. Each draft should be read over a couple of times for possible improvements and corrections.

9.5. Oscola Referencing System

The latest version of the Oscola Referencing System should be used where applicable.

The text of Oscola is available on <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2026-03/OSCOLA%205.pdf>

9.6. Maltese Legislation

Maltese Legislation should be cited by reference to the Laws of Malta. Primary Laws are arranged by chapter numbers. These should be cited as follows:

“Criminal Code, Chapter 9 of the Laws of Malta”. Subsidiary Legislation should be cited as follows: “Pornography and Obscenity Regulations, S.L. 9.04”.

9.7. Maltese Judgements

Where available, reference should be made to the “Kollezjoni ta’ Decizjonijiet tal-Qrati Superjuri ta’ Malta”. The citation should be as follows: *Generoso Sive Jimmy Sammut v. Onor. Prim Ministru et, Kollezjoni ta’ Decizjonijiet tal-Qrati Superjuri ta’ Malta*, Volum LXXX (1996) Pt.I, p.1.

Where the judgement is not available in the Kollezjoni, it should be cited as follows:

- *Joseph Borg v. Josephine Borg*, Court of Appeal, 24 June 1995, p. 6.
- *Joseph Borg v. Josephine Borg*, Civil Court, First Hall, per Mr. Justice V. Borg Costanzi, 24 June 1990, p. 10.

When the judgment is available on <http://www.justiceservices.gov.mt>, students should add this link or the link from where the information was retrieved.

When compiling the Table of Cases, case law should be sub-divided as follows:-

- Cases in the *Kollezzjoni ta' Decizjonijiet tal-Qrati Superjuri ta' Malta*
- Cases available on the Ministry of Justice website
- Cases available at the Archives of the Courts of Justice
- Other sources for Case Law (e.g. Judge William Harding's book; Judge Joseph Filletti's book; Judge Oliver Gulia's book; Ghaqda Studenti tal-Ligi two volume book on Constitutional Law, Prof. Kevin Aquilina's book on Development Planning Legislation, etc.)

9.8. Hints to Submitting Well-Written Dissertations

- Avoid quoting one and the same source repeatedly throughout the dissertation;
- Avoid paragraphs made up of one sentence or a few sentences;
- Cite the source information you provide through a footnote, especially where you are referring to factual data such as statistics and figures;
- Ensure that adequate and proper use of footnotes is made throughout the whole Dissertation.

9.9. Translation of Quotations

Any English translation of verbatim quotes in Maltese (if applicable) are to be included as an APPENDIX.

9.10. Inter-Disciplinary Content

In so far as content of a Dissertation is concerned, it might benefit the study to refer to non-legal materials and to write a Dissertation from an inter-disciplinary perspective. When a student intends to study a particular subject from both a legal and non-legal perspective, the following considerations have to be taken on board:

- the student must declare in his/her Dissertation proposal that s/he will be studying a particular subject from an interdisciplinary point of view identifying clearly the non-legal discipline; and;
- although a Dissertation might be written from an interdisciplinary point of view, the predominant focus of the Dissertation should be legal with the non-legal discipline assisting in understanding better the legal implications of the subject under consideration. At no point should the non-legal discipline predominate over the legal subject of the Dissertation.

9.11. Methodology

It is permissible for students writing a Dissertation to write a chapter on literature review and use various qualitative and quantitative skills used in the social sciences such as questionnaires, focus groups, statistics, face-to-face interviews, etc. Interviews are the exception not the rule, but where a student thinks that this benefits his/her research question, approval from the Faculty Research Ethics Committee will need to be obtained.

9.12. Ethical Implications

Researchers have a responsibility to take all steps possible to ensure that the social psychological or physical well-being of research participants is not adversely affected by participation in their research study. Consequently, all researchers at the UM are now required to fill out the online Ethics and Data Protection Form after the Dissertation/Long Essay title and supervisor have been approved by Faculty Board and the student would have made contact with his/her supervisor. For further guidance and access to the form please refer to the following link:

<https://www.um.edu.mt/laws/students/facultyresearchethicscommitteefrec>