

## ***POSTGRADUATE WRITING SKILLS CHECKLIST***

### **A. FOCUS/PURPOSE**

- Is there a clear statement of the research problem?
- Are any sub-problems stated?
- Is a hypothesis or hypotheses stated?

### **B. MACRO-STRUCTURE**

- Is the research organized under appropriate headings?
- Are the data analyzed and interpreted? Is any indication given whether the hypothesis (-es) is either supported or rejected?  
Does the research refer to any related literature or supporting studies?
- Are the conclusions clearly stated?
- Is any further research suggested?
- Does the one paragraph flow naturally into the next, and have they been presented in the best possible order?
- Are there clear linking words and sentences between the paragraphs?
- Are the appendices necessary to include, and are they focused on the topic of the research?

### **C. MICRO-STRUCTURE: EXPRESSION, LANGUAGE, FLOW OF WRITING, LAYOUT**

#### **Paragraph Structure**

- Does each paragraph have a topic sentence and a clear main idea?
- Does the topic sentence indicate clearly what the paragraph is about?
- Are all the supporting statements relevant to the topic?
- Are the supporting statements presented in the best possible order?
- Do all the supporting statements have elaborating detail which is relevant, convincing and logical?

#### **Cohesion**

- Do the sentences in a paragraph have sufficient linking words so that the paragraph is fluent and logical?
- Do the connections follow one another logically?
- Have a variety of linking words been used?
- Is the linking word appropriate for the meaning of the sentence?

#### **Scientific Register**

- Is there any colloquialism or slang?
- Are there any contractions (e.g. don't)?
- Is the writing concise? (i.e. not long-winded, verbose, repetitive; no euphemisms, clichés, or exaggeration)
- 4. Has the first person or third person voice been used appropriately and consistently?
- If there are diagrams and tables, have these been integrated into the writing?

#### **Language/Editing**

- Spelling (do a spell check!)
- Verb and pronoun concord
- Punctuation
- Tenses
- Sentence structure (complete sentences, word order, sentences that are not too long)

#### **D. QUOTING AND REFERENCES**

- Are all sources of information referenced correctly?
- Are these quotations relevant?
- Do they fit into the logical flow of the argument?
- Do they adhere to correct sentence formulation?
- If arguments are paraphrased or facts obtained from another source are included; are these referenced?

#### **References**

Archer, A. 2000 'Improving Student Writing' in Improving Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: A guide for Southern African Lecturers and Tutors, edited by Sinfrey Makoni, Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press

Leedy, P. 1993 Practical Research. Planning and Design New York: McMillan Publishing