

Produce a Research Proposal

The proposal (including 250-300 words abstract) should be approximately 1,500 words long (not counting abstract, references and bibliography). You are required to produce a version of this proposal to give to your supervisor so that you can work with them to produce a final version that is acceptable to them and that will form a sound basis for your dissertation.

When writing the proposal you should have the following sections and sub-sections (see below). If you work through these headings it will help you to formulate and structure a good working proposal that you can send to your supervisor for further discussion.

Section/Sub-section Headings	Indicative content
Title	If necessary use a title and subtitle
Abstract	Summary of the research topic describing the major issue(s), your proposed methodology and possible findings and justification for the study.
Table of Contents	List of all major parts and divisions (including the abstract, even though it precedes the table of contents).
<p>1. Introduction (Terms of Reference)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Rationale(Statement of Problem) • Purpose of the Research (What is the study trying to achieve?) • Research question (or propositions or hypotheses) 	<p>What the research project is to achieve?</p> <p>What is the underlying rationale and aim of your research? What in your experience prompted it? Why are you doing it?</p> <p>Is your purpose to explore, describe, understand, explain, predict, change, or something else)?</p> <p>What is your research question(s)? or proposition(s) or hypothesis?</p>
<p>2 Critical Literature Review (Indication of the literature that informs your research)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theoretical frameworks (Role of theory) 	<p>This will be indicative. You will need to identify the key landmark studies in your topic area and will describe how these relate to the issues you intend to look at in your research. You are not expected to have thoroughly read and absorbed all the books and papers you discuss but you will obviously need to know what the papers are about. You will need to provide a preliminary, critical evaluation or assessment of why they are likely to be relevant to your topic.</p> <p>From the literature identify working concepts/models and theoretical frameworks that you will use to guide your research - What is the role of theory in relation to your research? In what ways are you using the theories of others? Are you testing theories or building them?</p>

<p>3. Methodology and methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Design (description of proposed research - type of study) • Research Context (e.g. industry sector, organisation) • Procedure (i.e. what happened from the participants' perspective) • Ethical considerations • Methods for data collection • Methods for data analysis 	<p>Outline how you plan to go about doing your research.</p> <p>Justify the methodological approach you intend to employ. What implications does your approach have for your research design and methods? What is the context of your proposed research? Key features, characteristics! Why is it a suitable context? Who will be studied? How many? How will they be selected (i.e. sampling)?</p> <p>Try to anticipate any problem you might have in implementing your methods. How will you access people? How will you collect questionnaire data, for example</p> <p>How will you ensure your research meets the ethical standards of the University? (see section on ethics and links to ethics forms on the Dissertation NILE site). How will you protect confidentiality?</p> <p>Describe (and justify) the methods and techniques you plan to use to collect your data. - What sort of data will you collect? How will you collect this data? Why is this method suitable for your question?</p> <p>Describe (and justify) the methods and techniques you plan to use to analyse collected data. - What type of data analysis will you use</p>
<p>4. Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significance of proposed research (Research Contribution) • Research limitations 	<p>A necessarily preliminary statement of what you may find or demonstrate by having undertaken the research. Why will be important to carry out this work? What practical or theoretical implications might there be from doing this?.</p> <p>What are the envisaged limitations to your research? All research has limitations and you will certainly be limited by the time available to do this work.</p>
<p>Provisional work schedule</p>	<p>A timetable for completing the research indicating the tasks necessary to complete each segment. Don't forget to include slippage time.</p>
<p>References</p>	<p>A list of all works cited in your proposal</p>
<p>Bibliography</p>	<p>This is a list of works not cited in your proposal, but which will be followed up in the main dissertation when you write it fully.</p>