

## Research proposal framework

The following is a suggested framework for a research proposal. Your supervisor can give more detail on the exact order and elements of your framework.

### 1. Cover Page

The cover page should show:

- the title;
- the candidate's name and student number;
- the name of the University;
- the name of the degree sought;
- the name of the principal supervisor; and
- the date of submission.

### 2. Abstract

The abstract should be short (not more than 250 words), self contained, concise and readable. It should be a standalone description of the proposed research, what is intended to be done, why it needs to be done and what the results will mean for theory and/or practice.

### 3. Introduction/literature review

The introduction to the proposal should provide a clear rationale for the research and describe the background to the proposed research based on existing theoretical literature, conceptual frameworks, or assumptions that underpin the research. The proposal should demonstrate the significance of the proposed research and make clear the specific issues that are to be addressed, thus leading to a concise statement of the questions that the research is designed to answer or the hypotheses that are to be tested. The objective is to demonstrate, through careful use of the literature, how the proposed research will make a substantial and original contribution to scholarship and knowledge. Note that the review of the literature is shorter and more focused than that required for the final thesis.

### 4. Method and materials

This is a clear outline of the proposed research, including intended participants, design and method to be employed, research procedure and data analysis, in a manner consistent with ethical guidelines. It is important to plan the data collection and data analysis carefully at this time to ensure that the research question(s) can be answered.

### 5. References

You should consult your supervisors regarding the choice of the most appropriate referencing style for their discipline. It is recommended that candidates use bibliographic software, such as EndNote, so that the reference list is generated automatically.

### 6. Appendices

The appendices must include a timetable for the research, aiming at submission approximately 36 months after date of commencement for a (full-time) doctoral candidate and 24 months for a (full-time) master by research candidate. It should also include expenses incurred from fieldwork, additional library services, specialist software, photocopying, purchase of materials or any other legitimate expense. This is to create an indicative budget that can be met by the candidate, the supervisor, the school, faculty or University. It should be updated annually. Any issues related to confidentiality or intellectual property should also be drawn to the attention of the Associate Dean (Research and Higher Degrees) of the faculty through disclosure in the appendices.