

The proposal should be set out in five sections as follows:

Section 1

The **field of research** and the **provisional title** of the research project, with a brief description, if the title is not self-explanatory.

Section 2

The **context of the research**. This section provides the general information regarding the research that will be undertaken and should make it clear why the problem is worth addressing. It sketches the background and, where appropriate, should provide a brief theoretical framework within which the problem is to be addressed. It should address the questions: What motivates the research? Why is it being undertaken? How will the results add to the body of knowledge? Where research arises out of problems encountered in personal, social, economic, historical, political or literary contexts, these problems should be briefly stated.

Key question: WHY?

Length: 2 - 3 pages

Section 3

The **goal(s) of the research**. This section should either set out the specific question(s) to which the candidate hopes to find an answer, or, in the case of open-ended topics in the humanities, outline the subject/area/field to be critically investigated. It should indicate clearly what the research intends to achieve and what the intended final deliverable is.

Key question: WHAT?

Length: ½ - 1 page

Section 4

Methods, procedures and techniques to be followed. This section describes the manner in which the research will be undertaken. Overarching methodology (descriptive, historical, quantitative) should be described and the steps involved explained. Where the methods used are well recognised in the discipline, they need only be briefly mentioned. Where they are not standard, or are innovative, a more detailed description is required, so that their viability can be assessed. This section should contain a description of “subjects” or research participants where appropriate, details of the sample size, a description of the study site if appropriate, the intended data analysis methods/techniques, the proposed time schedule for the research and ethical issues. Where there are ethical issues relating to human and animal subjects approval must be obtained from the

University Ethics Committee. Details concerning the funding for the project and budgets should not be included.

Key question: HOW

Length: 1 page

Section 5

Provisional Table of Contents (optional). This section details a provisional table of contents for the final thesis and is a useful route map to guide the research.

Section 6

References. Important and relevant sources that support the proposed research and which provide a background to the research should be cited. Such source material referred to in the proposal should be cited in an appropriate and consistent style.