

QUICK GUIDE: DISSERTATION PROPOSALS

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TITLE	The title should be clear, succinct and accurately reflect the content of the proposal.
AIMS & OBJECTIVES	The aim is what you hope to achieve and is usually written in broad terms. Objectives are the specific actions you take in order to achieve the aim. When writing objectives use strong positive statements and strong verbs, using terms such as: collect, derive, construct, classify, develop, devise, measure, produce, revise, select or synthesise. Each objective should lead to an outcome.
RESEARCH CONTEXT	<p>This section is an evaluation of previous research on your topic. You're expected to demonstrate that: (i) you recognise the relevant and important research in your field, (ii) you understand this research, by organising and evaluating it, and (iii) You see where there is a gap in the research which your study will attempt to fill. You can organise this (i) thematically, around key themes or debates, (ii) methodologically, around different methodological approaches used in your field, or (iii) sequentially, from the original research that influenced the field to the most recent developments.</p> <p>It comprises three sections: (i) An introduction that explains the broad context of your research area and the main topics you are investigating. It briefly highlights the relevant issues or debates that have characterised your field of research. (ii) The main body, an analysis and critical review of the literature according to a number of themes or topics or methods that overlap with your research. It should have headings and show how your research builds on what has been done before. Based on previous research, you provide justifications for what you are doing, why you are doing it, and how you are going to do it. Use figures to illustrate the points you make. (iii) Conclusion, summarising the current state of the research in your field as analysed in the main body. Identify any gaps or problems with the existing research, and explain how your investigation is going to address these gaps or build on the existing research.</p>
METHODOLOGY	Tells readers how you will conduct your study. It includes information about the methods and equipment you will use, and the data and samples you will collect. It should be written in sufficient detail that a competent scientist could follow your methodology and replicate your results. Use subheadings if appropriate (e.g. data collection, data processing, data analysis). Write this section in the future tense. It should be informed by the literature.
TIMETABLE	Use a Gantt chart to illustrate the proposed timeline, step-by-step, from start to finish.
REFERENCES	Use the Harvard Referencing System to reference material cited in the proposal.
ETHICS APPROVAL	All final year research projects which involve human or animal subjects require ethics approval. http://www.ulster.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/75637/HumanParticipantsPolicy.pdf
RISK ASSESSMENT	Familiarise yourself with the UU policies relating to fieldwork, display screen equipment, manual handling, and the control of substances hazardous to health. http://www.ulster.ac.uk/healthandsafety/procedures_safety.html