

Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology (Industrial and Organisational Psychology) (90042 IOP)

RESEARCH PROPOSAL GUIDE

As part of your application for the above qualification, you are required to write and submit a well-thought through RESEARCH PROPOSAL.

Before you start writing the RESEARCH PROPOSAL, make sure that you have thoroughly perused the Industrial and Organisational (IO) Psychology department's Research Focus Areas. The Department has 13 Research Focus Areas, each with a unique research subject focus and scope. You can access the Research Focus Areas on the departmental [website](#). Reading through each Research Focus Area will help you choose a topic and write a research proposal that aligns with the research expertise and research focus of the IO Psychology department.

Follow the guidelines below to ensure that you submit a RESEARCH PROPOSAL that will support your application and enhance your chances of admission and securing a research promotor.

LENGTH & FORMAT OF THE PROPOSAL

The research outline should not exceed 20 pages typed A4 pages in length. For technical writing style:

- Do not indent – set whole page justified.
- Font Arial 11, spacing 1.5.
- Use APA 7 referencing style. For guideline see <https://www.scribbr.com/category/apa-style/>

SECTION A

1. Front page

- Provide your name and contact information.
- Specify the name of the degree you are applying for.
- Indicate the relevant Research Focus Area to which the research proposal applies.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The background and motivation must be based on an <i>adequate literature review</i> that is focused on the topic and <i>referenced</i> appropriately, using the seminal and recent (published within the past five years) sources.
2. Research problem statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify what is lacking in the literature or practice of IO Psychology, and explain the manifestations of the problem. Convince the reader that such a problem exists within IO Psychology, that it is worth investigating, that IO Psychology will benefit from this investigation, and that the problem is solvable. ➤ Then, formulate the research question congruent to the title of the research. Ensure that the line of reasoning flows logically from the background into the problem statement and then to the research question. ➤ You will also need to ensure that the problem identified here are viable for investigation through the research that you propose.
3. Aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Formulate research aims on the basis of the research problem and question. Ensure that the line of reasoning flows from the background, through the problem statement, into the aims. Formulate literature and empirical aims consequent to the overall research aim. For example: “The general aim of this research is to...” (formulated congruent to the title/question) “The specific literature aims are...” “The specific empirical aims are...”
4. Paradigm perspective	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is your <u>research paradigm</u> and why? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary research paradigms include positivism, post-positivism, interpretivism/constructivism or critical theory. There are others, yet at this stage you only need to locate your position in terms of one of the primary paradigms and need to provide a brief explanation thereof. 2. Demarcate the <u>disciplinary boundaries</u> of your study: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does your research relate to the discipline of IO Psychology? Explain as well, how it relates to a specific sub-discipline (e.g. career psychology, psychometrics and assessments, organisational psychology, and personnel psychology).

	3. Explain how your intended study within the stated disciplinary boundaries, relates to the research scope within the chosen <u>Research Focus Area</u> .
5. Literature review	➤ Provide a brief description/ discussion of the theories and theoretical constructs that will be relevant to your intended study. Ensure that the constructs are congruent with the specific literature aims mentioned above as well as with the chosen Research Focus Area.
6. Research design	<p>➤ Choose between qualitative, quantitative, or mixed method study. Then specify the appropriate research methods as noted below:</p> <p>For quantitative research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give a brief description of the <u>research approach</u> that you intend following in the study (i.e. will your study follow a quantitative tradition? and further explain whether your study is to be a cross-sectional field survey, an experiment or a factorial design and why this design was chosen) • For the <u>research procedure</u>, explain how you will access the research site and how you will access and recruit the research participants. • Furthermore, to specify the <u>research methods</u>, explain the context of your study, the population, sampling strategy, the sample (sample size, biographical details), measuring instruments and statistical analyses. <p>For qualitative research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give a brief description of the <u>research approach</u> that you intend following in the study (i.e. will your study follow a hermeneutic phenomenological, grounded theory, case study, IQA or socio analytic methodology? Explain briefly why this design was chosen as most appropriate to answer your research question/s) • For the <u>research procedure</u>, explain how you will access the research site and how you will access and recruit the research participants. • Furthermore, to specify the <u>research methods</u>, explain the context of your study, the population, sampling strategy, sampling criteria, envisioned sample size, data collection methods and data analysis method. <p>Mixed methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give a brief description of the research approach that you intend following in the study (i.e. which mixed method design will you follow and how will you combine the quantitative and qualitative strategies in the design?) • For the <u>research procedure</u>, explain how you will access the research participants and the research site and clearly distinguish how you will conduct the quantitative and qualitative stages of the research.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furthermore, to specify the <u>research methods</u>, explain the context of your study, the population, sampling strategy, sampling criteria, envisioned sample size, data collection methods, and data analysis methods.
7. Ethical considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Briefly explain how you intend to obtain informed consent to conduct the research from the participants and/or the management of the relevant organisation. ➤ Briefly explain how you will adhere to security procedures for the protection of privacy
8. Potential value add/ contribution of the study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Briefly motivate what value will the study add to the theory and practice of IOP.
9. Reference list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Follow the APA 7th edition guidelines. ➤ All the references used in your research proposal should be listed in a separate reference list.

Wishing you all the best with your application.