**Guidelines for research outline form for prospective master’s and doctoral students**

A research outline is a brief outline of the research project that you have in mind. It is usually between 5 and 10 pages in length

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| **Items** | **Information** |
| 1. **Proposed title**

*a. Should have less than 40 words**b. Should not be ambiguous and should convey the focus of the study* |  |
| 1. **Name**
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| 1. **Student number**
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| 1. **Proposed qualification**
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| 1. **College**
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| 1. **Department**
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| 1. **Research focus area**
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| 1. **Email address**
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| 1. **Problem statement**

*a. The problem statement should define the extent of the problem including its distribution, quantity* *b. What is the current problem or opportunity which indicates the necessity for the research**c. What is the gap in knowledge?**d*. *For PhD add novelty or innovation of the study /concepts from relevant theory or conceptual framework or originality* |  |
| 1. **Significance of the study**

*a. Why it is important to conduct this research?* *b. Why does this rese arch need to be conducted?*c. *What are the consequences of not conducting this research*? |  |
| 1. **Aim and objectives**

*a. There should be one general aim starting with the word “To”**b. An aim explains should clearly what you want to do research on**c. Objectives should be* ***s****pecific,* ***m****easurable,* ***a****chievable,* ***r****elevant and* ***t****ime-bound**d. The objectives should be based on and clearly relate to the research problem or title**e. The identified variables/constructs deduced from relevant theory or conceptual framework* |  |
| 1. **Research questions**

*a. What are the main questions that flow from your problem statement?**b. State the unknown in terms of quest ions or in terms of solutions* |  |
| 1. **Literature review** (this depends on the discipline)

*a. Write reasons for choosing the topic**b. How is your study aligned to the chosen focus area* *c. What literature do you intend to review and why?**d. It should substantiate the identified gap of the study**e. It should be informed by the research: problem/questions/objectives/hypothesis**methods/models employed by other researchers under similar circumstances may be covered* |  |
| 1. **Research design or Research or methodology or Theoretical framework or Materials and methods or Procedures including the study area**

*a. Methodologies are discipline specific \_– ensure you use a relevant methodology.**b. Describe the methods that will be used to achieve the research objectives**c. How will the study be conducted?**d. How will the data be analysed?**e. Include the time frame of all research planned activities* |  |
| **15. References or Bibliography***a. Research is built on existing knowledge. It implies that all research must have references.**b. Use only one of the prescribed referencing styles (for example APA, Harvard, Mendeley Oxford, IEEE, MLA)**c. Use original sources from accredited publications (reviewed journal, reviewed book etc.)* |  |
| Proposed Budget for the project and how the study will be funded |  |