**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** |  |
| 1. **Student number** |  |
| 1. **Proposed qualification** |  |
| 1. **College** |  |
| 1. **Department** |  |
| 1. **Research focus area** |  |
| 1. **Email address** |  |
| 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 |  |