Your proposal is an outline of the research project that you intend to undertake for your research degree. As the research project and the resulting thesis is the major component of the degree, it is important that your intended research be well thought out and planned, in conjunction with your potential supervisor. For applicants to doctoral degrees you will also need to ensure that it is original research. While the smaller details of the intended research will be clarified as the project proceeds, you are expected to have developed a research question or topic, which you have identified through review of the relevant literature and discussion with your potential supervisor. You will need to address how you intend to approach, answer or address the question (study design, methodology, etc). Applicants are also encouraged to consider the practical aspects of the project, including budgeting and a realistic timeline that fits within the time allocated for the degree.

Length of proposal: Your proposal should generally be 2-5 pages in length or 1500-2500 words

You should use the headings and layout below as a guide for your proposal

Title of project
(maximum 25 words)

Background, Significance and Research Question
(should make up 50-60% of your total proposal)

In this section you need to clearly state the research question which you are seeking to answer by undertaking the research. You should include the aims of the research project and identify potential outcomes. You will need to provide a synthesis of the literature in this area and a summary of what research has been done to date on this research topic. You will need to outline the significance of this study and what contribution it makes within the research area and more broadly. For doctoral students you should also identify how this research will be unique.

Research design and methodology
(should make up 40-50% of your total proposal)

In this section you will need to outline how you intend to approach, address or answer the research question. You will need to give details of the research design and explain how that will allow you to answer the research question, what kind of data you expect to obtain and how you will analyse this data (the methodology). It should include a brief outline of the methodology/ies you intend to use and their appropriateness for the study. Where possible, you should consider potential limitations and difficulties of the design and methodology, and how you will address these, for example, ensuring a sufficient response rate to a survey to be able to obtain a meaningful and valid result.

Updated as on 5 June 2013