

**GUIDELINES FOR PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL  
(Masters in Linguistics/Master of English as Second Language/  
Master of Arts (Linguistics)/PhD)**

**(A) THE PROPOSAL**

Submission of a Research Proposal (not more than 2500 words for Masters & not more than 5000 words for PhD) which includes:

- Title Page:
  - Title
  - Research Area
  - Name
  - Matric number
  - Programme
  - Semester
  - Contact number
  - E-mail address
  - Supervisor(s)
- Abstract:
  - The abstract should contain a suitable synopsis of not more than 150 words.
  - The abstract should focus on the structure of the proposal, and concisely summarise the major components of the research proposal by providing AIM, METHODOLOGY, PROPOSED FINDINGS and LIMITATION
- Working Title:
  - The title must be appropriate to the proposed research and contain key words.
  - It should be concise and carry some impact of the research area
  - It should not be longer than 16 words
- Background to the Research:
  - Give a general overview of the research
  - Inform readers of the context of the proposed research
- Explanation of the research problem and significance of the research
- Explain very clearly why it is necessary to investigate the problem
- The research objectives
- Key research questions
  - Explain how the research questions will be operationalized
- Summary of Literature Review:
  - The candidate should demonstrate familiarity with the research topic or area.
  - The candidate should be able to show critical issues raised in a wide range of scholarly literature relevant to the research topic
- Summary of the proposed research design:
  - Demonstrate an understanding of the possible methodological tools to be used.
  - Show an understanding of the possible approaches available
  - Be able to justify the specific approach selected
- Timescale/Research Planning:
  - Be able to clearly indicate the timescales for both planning and executing the proposed research project

- Must demonstrate that the proposed research project can be satisfactorily completed within the normal allocated period of time (Gantt Chart is required)
- References:
  - Must include a list of references to key articles and texts
  - Include seminal reading
  - Include a list of most current references within the last five years

## **(B) THE PANEL**

1) Comprises at least 3 - 4 members:

- Chair/Moderator
- One Expert for Masters / Two experts for PhD
- Supervisor

2) Functions and roles of the Panel:

- To assist with, give advice and feedback on the development of Research Proposals
- To collaborate with the supervisors to ensure the candidates are on track in their research journey
- To read the documents put forward by the candidates and submit written reports before the day of the presentation
- Panel members must attend the presentation by the candidate concerned and the Post Graduate Office needs to be informed if any panel member is unable to be physically present
- As the primary function of the panel members is to work together with the supervisor to improve the quality of the research undertaken by the candidate, it is imperative that
  - the panel is conducted in student friendly and professional atmosphere
  - the comments given are constructive and encouraging
  - the panel members must take into account that the dissertation is a partial requirement for Masters' candidates
- Terms of reference for Panel Members:
  - the **Chairperson** of the panel
    - conducts the meeting,
    - ensures that the focus is kept on the issues decided upon earlier
    - ensures that the meeting is completed within the time allocated
    - moderates when the panel seems to be in disagreement
    - submits a report to the Post Graduate Office, summarizing the comments given by panel members
    - review the plan of the research
    - evaluate the viability of the research
    - provide critical and constructive feedback on the research (methodology, research questions)
    - identify flaws and gaps in the research and provide guidance and advice on the best ways to develop the research

- the **Panel Members**
  - possess appropriate expertise in the field(s) related to the candidate's research
  - review the plan of the research
  - evaluate the viability of the research
  - provide critical and constructive feedback on the research (methodology, research questions etc)
  - identify flaws and gaps in the research and provide guidance and advice on the best ways to develop the research
  
- the **Supervisors**
  - are fully fledged members of the panel
  - provide their own evaluations to the student
  - review the progress of the research
  - evaluate the candidate's research
  - provide critical and constructive feedback on the research (methodology, research questions etc)
  - identify flaws and gaps in the research and provide guidance and advice on the best ways to develop the research
  - takes note of the issues raised by the panel
  - assists in clarifying the issues and /finding ways to address the issues in the research

### **(C) THE STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL PRESENTATION**

- Before the student is invited in, the Chairperson will discuss with the panel members to reach a consensus about the more pertinent issues to be highlighted to or clarified with the student (10 mins)
  
- The student will be invited in and asked to present the proposal. Candidates are given 20 minutes to present their Proposals. Questions may be asked during the presentation or left to the end (the decision should have been made prior to the start of the presentation)
  
- The chairperson will open the roundtable discussion. The student is expected to answer questions put forward by the panel members. Panel members are encouraged to provide recommendations to the student regarding the issues raised (25 mins)
  
- The candidate may record the discussion or may bring one colleague/friend along to take notes (this person is to remain silent throughout the session)
  
- The candidate is asked to wait outside the discussion room while the panel makes their decisions/recommendations. The candidate is invited back into the room and the chairperson will deliver the decision of the panel to the candidate