

# Research Proposal Writing: Alternative Considerations

Prof. Peter Fong

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## UWTSD Research Proposal

- Your research proposal should incorporate an introduction and **justification for the study, critical engagement with current research** at the forefront of business and management studies, a **clear and advanced research methodology, and clear contributions** on how this research will create new knowledge, advance business/management theory and management/organisational practices.
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## UWTSD DBA Requirements

- Ensure that all sources of primary and secondary data are appropriately referenced and acknowledged. You should refer to the DBA programme's (Harvard) referencing guide to reference your work and to quote from the contributions of others. As a general practice, every piece of literature listed should have been cited in the content of the proposal, which can be traced with proper citation.

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## UWTSD DBA Requirements

- The use of a range of information sources is expected – academic books, peer reviewed journal articles, professional articles, press releases and newspaper articles, reliable statistics, company annual reports and other company information. All materials must be consistently referenced with a separate Harvard style bibliography. They will be submitted via Turnitin and checked for plagiarism.

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## Typical contents of a research proposal

### 1. Introduction

- Background and significance of the chosen topic and study.
- Aims and objectives and expected outcomes of the study.
- Research problems and research questions.
- Implications and contributions to theoretical and practical knowledge.

### 2. Literature review

- Critical review of related literature on the subject and theories.
- Explain why choosing certain theories and research gap to be filled.
- Develop a conceptual or theoretical framework for the study.

### 3. Methodology

- Explain the rationale of the chosen method/methods.
- Provide detailed research design.
- Explain how the information and data will be collected ethically.
- List the procedures and timeframe of the study, including pilot test if necessary.
- State limitations of the study.

### 4. References

- Provide a list of references for the study

(You may add other sections in the contents as appropriate )

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## Suggested contents in a proposal

- Provide a specific title that contains the theme of the study.
- Once you have the topic or subject area, begin to examine that topic and write some written responses for your research portfolio.
- State the aims and objectives of the study. List the research problems and research questions which you want to address and find the answers to achieve your aims and objectives.
- Highlight the significance and plausible theoretical and practical contributions of the study.
- Provide a critical literature review that covers what has been studied by far and what has not been adequately addressed. Identify and discuss the research gap(s) that are related to your study.

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### **Suggested contents in a proposal**

- On the basis of the literature review, propose a research model or framework for the study.
- Explain why you choose certain methods: quantitative, qualitative, or mixed method to conduct the study.
- Prepare a research design that involves sampling method, selection of respondents, sample size, data collection method, and procedures of data collection etc.
- Propose a work plan timetable for the research.
- Discuss the potential findings and outcomes of the study.

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### **Typical Research Proposal contains (1)**

- Title.
- Background of the study.
- The problem statement.
- The purpose of the study.
- Research questions.
- The scope of the study.
- The significance of the study.

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## Typical Research Proposal contains (2)

- The research design offering details on:
  - a. Type of study
  - b. Data collection methods
  - c. The sampling design.
  - d. Data analysis.
- Time frame of the study
- Selected references.

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## The Research Proposal

- **Essential to successful research**

- **Includes**

- clearly stated problem and sub-problems
- articulated hypotheses and/or questions
- precise definitions of terms
- carefully spelled out delimitations
- explanation of the purpose of the study
- specific details about all data collection and interpretation

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## Organization of a Proposal

- I. The problem and its setting
- II. The review of the related literature
- III. Research methodology
- I. An outline of schedule
- II. References
- III. Appendixes

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## Research schedule

| Activity                          | October | November | December | January | February | March | April | May |   |
|-----------------------------------|---------|----------|----------|---------|----------|-------|-------|-----|---|
| Week number                       | 1       | 2        | 3        | 4       | 5        | 6     | 7     | 8   | 9 |
| Holiday                           |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Read literature                   |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Finalise objectives               |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Draft literature review           |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Read methodology literature       |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Devise research approach          |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Draft research proposal           |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Develop questionnaire             |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Pilot test & revise questionnaire |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Administer questionnaire          |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Enter data into computer          |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Analyse data                      |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Draft findings chapter            |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Update literature                 |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Complete remaining chapters       |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Submit to tutor                   |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Revise draft & format             |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Print & bind                      |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Submit                            |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |
| Reflective diary                  |         |          |          |         |          |       |       |     |   |

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### **Practical Application: Writing Your Proposal (1)**

1. Adhere to guidelines required by the institution.
2. When writing the first draft, focus more on organization and logical thought sequences than on exact wording, grammatical correctness, and spelling.
3. Present the research problem at the beginning of the first chapter.
4. Provide a context for your research problem.
5. Convince the reader of the importance of your project.

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### **Practical Application: Writing Your Proposal (2)**

6. Assume your readers know nothing about your proposal.
7. Communicate with an open mind about what you will find.
8. Describe your methodology in detail and precision.
9. Explain where and how you plan to obtain the data.
10. Describe how you will use the data to answer your research questions.
11. Use appendices to present consent letters, specific measurement instruments, and other detailed materials.

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### Guidelines: Revising Your Proposal (1)

1. Put the proposal aside for a few days.
2. Read a paper copy ( not an electronic) of your first draft.
- 3. Carefully scrutinize what you have written, looking for disorganized thoughts, illogical thinking, and inconsistencies in terminology.**
4. Look for places where you are not as clear as you might be.
5. Keep your sentences simple and straightforward.
6. Choose your words carefully.

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### Guidelines: Revising Your Proposal (2)

7. Check carefully for errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
8. Make sure that items in bulleted lists are parallel in structure.
9. Make sure there is a one-to-one correspondence between the citations in the text and the references in the reference list.
10. Consider the feasibility of your project once again.
11. Print out your second draft and read your proposal carefully once again.
12. See the feedback of others.

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## Common Weaknesses (1)

- **Weaknesses related to the research problem:**
  - unclear purpose of the research
  - unimportant problem
  - poorly supported hypothesis
  - problem is too complex
  - problem has limited relevance to the field
- **Weaknesses on research design & methodology:**
  - vague and unfocused description of design and method
  - data inappropriate for the research problem
  - methodology/procedures inappropriate for the research problem
  - appropriate controls lacking or inadequate
  - outdated or inappropriate equipment
  - poorly considered statistical analysis

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## Common Weaknesses (2)

- **Weaknesses related to the investigator:**
  - unfamiliar with the literature relevant for the proposed research
  - insufficient time to devote to the project
- **Weaknesses related to resources:**
  - institutional setting is unfavorable for the proposed research
  - proposed use of other resources is unrealistic.

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## Ineffective Research Proposal

1. The statement of the problem is vague.
2. The methodology is incompletely described.
3. The proposed treatment of each sub-problem is too general.
4. Criteria for the admissibility of the data are weak.
5. The proposal lacks clear focus.
6. The proposal is phrased in terms that are not useful for evaluation.
7. The format of the proposal deviates from institutional guidelines.
8. Some cited sources do not appear in the reference list, or they are incompletely or incorrectly cited.

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## Good Research Proposal Includes

- Discuss how the data will be handled.
- Spell out detail of procedure.
- Support your choices with a rationale based solidly on accepted research methodology and analytical thinking.
- The basic elements of the research problem, the methodology, the data, and other factors critical to conducting the inquiry must be clearly set forth before the actual research activity can begin.

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <b>大學教育資助委員會</b><br><b>University Grants Committee</b>                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 本署檔號 OUR REF.: UGC/GEN/233/41/2017<br>來函檔號 YOUR REF.:<br>電話 TELEPHONE: (852) 2844 9916                                                                                                                                                                          | 中國香港灣仔港灣道6至8號瑞安中心7樓<br>7/F Shui On Centre, 6–8 Harbour Road<br>Wan Chai, Hong Kong, China<br>電話 Tel: (852) 2524 3987<br>傳真 Fax: (852) 2845 1596<br>電子郵件 E-Mail: ugc@ugc.edu.hk<br>網址 Homepage: www.ugc.edu.hk |
| 20 July 2018                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Professor Peter Fong<br>14A, Block 19<br>Baguio Villa<br>555 Victoria Road<br>Pokfulam<br>Hong Kong.                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Dear Professor Fong,                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Research Assessment Exercise 2020</b><br><b><u>Panel Membership</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Thank you for agreeing to serve as a Member of the Built Environment Panel of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2020 to be conducted by the University Grants Committee (UGC) of Hong Kong. I am writing formally to appoint you as a Member of the Panel. |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <b>大學教育資助委員會</b><br><b>University Grants Committee</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 本署檔號 OUR REF.: UGC/GEN/233/35/2016<br>來函檔號 YOUR REF.:<br>電話 TELEPHONE: (852) 2524 1795                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 中國香港灣仔港灣道 6 至 8 號瑞安中心 7 樓<br>7/F Shui On Centre, 6–8 Harbour Road<br>Wan Chai, Hong Kong, China<br>電話 Tel: (852) 2524 3987<br>傳真 Fax: (852) 2845 1596<br>電子郵件 E-Mail: ugc@ugc.edu.hk<br>網址 Homepage: www.ugc.edu.hk |
| 5 November 2020                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Local Members of Built Environment Panel                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Dear Members of Built Environment Panel,                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2020</b><br><b>Updated Concluding Meeting Arrangement and</b><br><b>Post-results Announcement Engagement and Publicity Programme</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Thank you once again for your outstanding work and commitment to RAE 2020 under the challenging coronavirus pandemic situation. Mr. Carlson Tong, Chairman of the University Grants Committee (UGC), and Professor Chris Brink, Convenor of the RAE Group, have asked me to extend their personal appreciation to all of you for your dedication and support to the exercise. I would also like to express my personal gratitude for all your hard work and contribution to the success of the assessment process during the past months. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

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## UGC-RGC Research Grant Application Form

Part I: **Summary** of the Research Proposal

Part II: **Details** of the Research Proposal

Part III: Institutional Endorsement and  
Declaration of Research **Ethics** / Safety  
Approval.

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### Part I : Summary

- **Particulars of Principal Investigator**
- **Particulars of Project: Title**
- **Abstract (1 page)**

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## Project Title

- Informative: highlights **key issues/topics** of the study
- **Short, concise, and precise**
- **No abbreviations, no jargons**

Example of a title:

**How Capitalism Works in China State-Owned Enterprises:  
An Agency Assessment of their Corporate, Social and  
Societal Performance**

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## Business Studies

- The **Impact of Housing Status** on **Labor Market Outcomes** (Dr Chan William; HKU; 325K; 2013)
- Organizational Citizenship Behavior: A Multilevel and Cross Cultural Study (Prof Lam Simon Sing Kwong; HKU; 295K; 2013)
- The **Drivers and Impacts of** Knowledge Exchange within a Supply Chain: **An Empirical Study** (Dr Lee Hsiao-Hui; HKU; 828K; 2013)
- **How Capitalism Works in China State-Owned Enterprises: An Agency Assessment** of their Corporate, Social and Societal Performance (Prof Tse David K; HKU; 350K; 2013)
- Time to leave? The **influence of resource dependence structures** on **sequential investment termination** by **venture capital firms** (Dr Zheng Yanfeng; HKU; 583K; 2013)
- **Consumer Responses to** Food Assortments, Menus, and Nutrition Information (Prof Mukhopadhyay Anirban; HKUST; 390; 2013)

Source: [http://www.ugc.edu.hk/cgi-bin/ugc/search\\_project.pl](http://www.ugc.edu.hk/cgi-bin/ugc/search_project.pl)

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## Abstract

### 3 key questions:

1. **What** do you want to find out, and **why**?
2. **How** will you do it (& **theory**)?
3. What do you **expect** to get and **so what**?

- Maximum **one** A4 page
- **Comprehensible** to a non-specialist
- First impression to reviewers
- Informative and indicative of the nature of the research
- If funded, abstract will be posted on RGC website
- **Chinese and English** version

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### Example of Abstract: 194913

Dr Wang Junbo (City U, HK), **Trading Activity and Price Volatility in Corporate Bond Market** (企业债券市场的交易和价格波动)

Source: <https://cerg1.ugc.edu.hk/cergprod/scrrm00542.jsp>

Price volatility and volume are two of the most closely watched trading variables in the financial market. A bulk of literature has attempted to understand the relation between these variables. Most **theoretical models** of market microstructure have generated some sort of predictions for volatility and volume. **Empirical investigations** of the volatility-volume relation are thus essential for validation of theories. **Understanding the volatility-volume relation is also important for trading strategies of portfolio managers, firm-level issuance decisions, and assessing market quality.**

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## Part II: Details of Project

- Long-term Impact and Objectives
- Background of research, research plan and methodology
- Cost and justification
- Declaration of similar or related proposals
- Grant record of investigator(s)
- Ancillary information

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## Impact and Objectives

- What do you want to achieve through this study?
- What are the key issues and problems being addressed?
- Why do you undertake this project?
- Objectives must be presented in point form
- The “so what” question
- The possible outcome of the research project, its relevance, significance and value, such as contribution to academic, educational, scientific or professional development or potential for practical application
- Max: two A4 pages in standard RGC format

Source: <http://ugc.edu.hk/eng/rgc/sf/sf.htm>

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### Example: Long-term Impact: Project 844011 (1 of 2)

Mok, MMC (HKIED)

There is strong consensus among governments that building the capacity for self-directed learning and sustaining the motivation to learn are key educational pursuits...(literature)...It would be beneficial to both students and teachers if ways could be identified to capitalize on this collaborative culture and empower students with self directed learning. ...

This project presents the first longitudinal study in Hong Kong with a mixed approach comprising focus-group interviews and controlled experiment in naturalistic classrooms with the aim to inform educators on factors that support or impede the development of self-directed learning at the primary levels and how self-directed learning affects school outcomes. In this study, a theoretical model on the pedagogical expediency of specific intervention that combines feedback and self-directed learning on school achievement will be field-tested.

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### Example: objectives Project 844011 (2 of 2)

Mok, MMC (HKIED)

1. **Identify effective approaches** for the implementation of self-directed learning in schools;
2. **Establish a conceptual framework** on feedback, self-directed learning, and school achievement that aligns with Hong Kong's education aims;
3. **Evaluate the quality** of teacher feedback practice and students' self-directed learning in local primary classrooms;
4. **Determine whether the combined effect** of feedback and self-directed learning can improve the school achievement of primary students.

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**Approved research grant projects - Subject Area: Business**  
**Project Title Keywords: Marketing**

| Project Number | Project Title                                                                                                                                              | Principal Investigator |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 194913         | Trading Activity and Price Volatility in Corporate Bond Market                                                                                             | Dr Wang, Junbo         |
| 198213         | Marketing Assets, Marketing Actions, and Firms' Response Strategies to Exogenous Shocks                                                                    | Dr Zheng, Xu           |
| 490113         | Component procurement in a competitive market                                                                                                              | Prof Bolandifar, Ehsan |
| 491213         | Insider Trade and Open Market Stock Repurchase                                                                                                             | Prof Kim, Sunyoung     |
| 548713         | The efficiency of internal capital markets and the quality of internal accounting information                                                              | Dr Zhang, Yong         |
| 591813         | Effects of U.S. Oversight and PCAOB Inspections on International Auditors and Quality Spillovers to Non-U.S. Clients: A Study of U.S. and non-U.S. Markets | Dr Fung, Yu Kit        |
| 594613         | Employees' Legal Protection and Equity Market Development: Rigidity of Employee Protection Laws, Firms' Going-public Decisions and IPO Characteristics     | Dr Lee, Woo Jong       |
| 692813         | Proximity and product market relationships                                                                                                                 | Prof Sen, Rik S        |
| 694213         | Do Social Media Reduce Information Asymmetry in Capital Markets?                                                                                           | Prof Zhang, Michael X  |
| 790213         | The Impact of Housing Status on Labor Market Outcomes                                                                                                      | Dr Chan, William       |

Source: <https://cerg1.ugc.edu.hk/cergprod/scrrm00541.jsp>

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## Research Plan and Methodology

- **Design**
- **Variables or Data to be Collected**
- **Sample and Sampling**
- **Data Collection Instruments**
- **Analysis**

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## Research Design

- **How** are you going to do it?
- **Clarity**
- Give references if it is a special type of design
- The design may involve several stages/phases
- May use figures to explain your design
- May use mixed methods approach
- It is important to **explain** the reason behind specific components in your design

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## Example: Design

- The research is a **24-month longitudinal multi-cohort multi-occasion** (Marsh, Craven, & Debus, 1998) **between- and within-group quasi-experimental field design** using **mixed methods** (Creswell, 2007) and incorporating within it **both quantitative and qualitative strategies**.
- The complexity of the self-directed learning processes and the dynamics of classroom interactions require a **stringent research design that ensures ecological validity and methodological rigour**.
- In this study, P3 and P4 students are followed for two school years...
- **The longitudinal design will enable the researchers to track changes** due to developmental and experimental treatments
- The quasi-experimental design with an experimental group and a control group (the “matched-waiting control” group) enables ...
- A matched-waiting, instead of no-treatment, control group is included to...

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## Example: Design

### Phase 1. Month 1: Preparation and Sampling

This phase focuses attention on the refinement of the conceptual framework,...

### Phase 2. Month 2: Baseline

Baseline data will be collected from the experimental and control groups

### Phase 3. Months 3 – 10: Intervention

Day Camp will be conducted for the teachers...

### Phase 4. Months 11-14: Post-test

Post-test data will be collected

### Phase 5. Months 15 – 24: Maintenance and Consolidation

Day Camp will be conducted for teachers

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## Key Variables & Data to be Collected

- What data are to be collected?
- What are the key variables in the study?
- Conceptual definition of the variables
- Be clear and specific
- Avoid jargons
- Give references if the variables are unfamiliar to researchers in general
- Concordance between design and variables

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### Example: 144310

Prof Kim, Jeong Bon, City U HK, **Accounting Conservatism, Internal and External Governance, and Stock Price Crash Risk: Evidence from China**

(會計穩健型・內部和外部治理・以及股票價格大跌風險：中國實證分析)

Source: <https://cerg1.ugc.edu.hk/cergprod/scrrm00542.jsp>

The **primary research objective is to test the hypothesis** that ceteris paribus, accounting conservatism reduces not only the likelihood of future crash occurrences, but also delays the timing of such occurrences. In addition, we **also aim to provide evidence on** whether the ability of conservatism to predict the likelihood and timing of future crash occurrences is accentuated for firms with concentrated ownership and less effective external monitoring. **Given the scarcity of evidence on the issue, the results of the proposed research should provide useful insights into** whether the lack of accounting conservatism plays a role in recent stock market crashes around the world, and are **expected to offer important policy implications for** accounting regulations in China and other emerging economies.

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## Sample and Sampling

- Sample: Who are they?
- **Why** do you need this group of people?
- Sample size: How many do you need?
- **Why** do you need this size of sample?
- Sampling: **What** is the method of recruitment?
- It is important to **link** these questions with your research objectives and research design

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### Sample and Sampling: Example 844011

Mok MMC, HKIED.

Participants will include P3 (typically 8 years of age) and P4 (9 years) students in Hong Kong. All local primary schools will be invited to express interest in joining the project, and among them 16 schools will be selected to provide adequate representation of the different locations involved (Hong Kong/Kowloon/New Territories) and funding mode (government/aided). Another 16 schools will be selected to match the original sample. The two schools in each matched-pair will be randomly allocated to the experimental and control groups.

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### Sample and Sampling: Example 844011 (2 of 2)

Mok MMC, HKIED.

- The sample size is estimated as follows: the Statistics of Education Bureau (2010) shows that there are 523 primary schools in Hong Kong in 2009-2010. Mok's (2010) study found a response rate of 8% to calls for voluntary participation in longitudinal studies, with an attrition rate of about 10% each year. Consequently, around 40 schools are expected to respond.
- From among them we will select 32 and about 13 in each group are expected to remain to the end of the study.
- This fits the guideline (Raudenbush & Liu, 2000; Snijders, 2005), that is based on simulation studies, of at least 12 schools for adequate statistical power for designs with cluster samples.
- The achieved sample size is expected to be around 2,560 students (= 16 schools x 2 year-levels x 2 classes x approx. 40 students/class) at baseline and 2,080 students at the end of the study.

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### Data Collection: Example 844011 (2 of 2)

#### Mok MMC, HKIED

- **Mathematics Learning Motivation** is to be measured by **The Inventory of School Motivation** (ISM; McInerney & Ali, 2006) measures 8 dimensions of motivation: task, effort, competition, social power, affiliation, social concern, praise, and token.
- It has been **translated** for and **validated in Chinese populations** (Watkins, McInerney & Lee, 2002) and has been shown to have **strong reliability and validity across a wide range of cultural groups** (McInerney & Ali, 2006).
- A recent study in Hong Kong (Mok, \* et al., 2010) supported the **8-factor structure** (**GFI and NNFI**: 0.89 to 1.00; **RMSEA**: 0.04 to 0.14), and found ISM to have good **reliability and validity** (**Cronbach's Alphas**: 0.77 to 0.89; **Rasch reliability** = 1.00; **INFIT and OUTFIT**: 0.99 to 1.03).

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## Proposed Analysis

- **How** will the data be handled?
- Alignment between hypotheses and analysis methods
- Give **names** of statistical methods (e.g. do not just say, "data will be analysed", instead say, "The groups will be compared using independent-t test").
- For sophisticated methods, give **references**.
- Give **reasons** why particular methods of analysis are used.

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### Proposed Analysis: Example 844011 Mok MMC, HKIED

- For RQ1, the videos will be **content analyzed according to the framework of** Tunstall and Gipp's (1996) feedback typology, which classifies assessment feedback into four types: (A: Rewarding/ Punishing; B: Approving/ Disapproving, C: Specifying attainment/ Specifying improvement, D: Constructing achievement/ Constructing the way forward). These are representative of an evaluative-descriptive continuum on feedback approaches.
- For RQ2, the videos will be **content analyzed** according to the framework of Mok,\* Cheng, Moore and Kennedy (2006) for primary students' self-directed learning.

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### Summary: Guideline for Doctoral Research Proposal

#### Introduction:

- (1) State the **aims & objectives** of your research.
- (2) State the **significance** of your research.
- (3) Explore the potential **research's contribution** in advancing the knowledge and understanding of the area of study in the field.
- (4) Identify the **research problem** and its context.
- (5) Develop your **research questions or hypotheses.**

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## Guideline for Doctoral Research Proposal

- (6) Provide a sound **conceptual framework** of your study based on a comprehensive literature review.
- (7) Make sure that you **cite the most influential works** from key scholars related to your study.
- (8) Provide a **persuasive argument and justification** of your research.
- (9) Outline the **methodology**.
- (10) Provide **a time schedule** of your research and completion of the thesis.
- (11) Expore the **likely results** of your research.
- (12) Use the **KISS principle** to write clearly in **good English**.

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## Guideline for Doctoral Research Proposal

### Required information:

- (1) **Proposed title** in a concise and clear manner.
- (2) Short description of the **research problem and its context** – include the background of your research and the research questions that you are seeking to answer.
- (3) **Positioning the research** – provide a summary of the academic debate surrounding your research topic with reference to some of the more important literature. Also explain the relevance of your research to field.
- (4) **Research methodology and methods** – identify how you plan to approach the problem and what kinds of data you need to undertake to answer your research questions.
- (5) **List of References**.

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## Guideline for Doctoral Research Proposal

### Assessment Criteria:

- It should be a clearly written and presented document which demonstrates the ability to think critically about research problems with evidence of critical review of available literature.
- You need to demonstrate the originality in considering the purpose of your research and how you can contribute to applied knowledge or the development of new practices.
- It is crucial that the proposed research is feasible with regard to access to data and timeframes for completion.
- The Keys are **Appropriate, Manageable, Achievable.**

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## Guideline for Doctoral Research Proposal

**Samples of successfully completed  
DBA dissertations from graduates of  
University of Wales TSD**

### PhD dissertations:

The link to the HKU Scholars Hub:  
Dissertations

<https://hub.hku.hk/>

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