



REFINING YOUR DRAFT PROJECT PROPOSAL

Week 4 - BMSS6007

WEEK 4 – DEVELOPING YOUR PROPOSAL

- By the end of week 5 you should have:
- Contacted a member of staff / your allocated supervisor
- Have discussed your initial ideas
- Submitted a plan / draft proposal to your supervisor if you required early feedback
- Submitted your proposal to the Turnitin link on Moodle – Friday 29th October
- Started to work through the 'Stage 1 resources – design and explore'



PROPOSAL-SPECIFIC ADVICE:

- Understand that the proposal will be a negotiated document, so be prepared to draft, redraft, and resubmit it.
 - Think of the proposal as an introduction to your thesis—not a chapter, not an extensive literature review, not an opportunity to rehearse the major conflicts in your field.
 - You are “bridging the gap” between existing work and your work.
 - Remember that the proposal is not a contract that determines what your thesis will demonstrate.
- You will likely modify and refine your scope, argument, and methods.
- Remember that your proposal is not meant to limit your ideas, but to help you think in practical terms about how you intend to research and write your dissertation.



TITLE

- At this early stage, you need only provide a working title.
- You can decide on the exact wording for your title when you are nearer to completing your dissertation.
- Nevertheless, even at the start, aim to create a title that conveys the idea of your investigation.
- Normally, a title beginning “A study in . . .” is too vague; decide whether you want to compare, collate, assess, etc.
- A good title should:
 - Orient your readers to the topic you will research.
 - Indicate the type of study you will conduct.
- Examples: Have a look at a couple of research articles in your chosen area.

THE INTRODUCTION HELPS PUT YOUR PROJECT IN PERSPECTIVE WITH OTHER PROJECTS ON SIMILAR TOPICS.

- Generally, the introduction provides necessary background information to your study and provides readers with some sense of your overall research interest.
- A good introduction should:
 - Establish the general territory (real world or research) in which the research is placed.
 - Describe the broad foundations of your study, including some references to existing literature and/or empirically observable situations.
- In other words, the introduction needs to provide sufficient background for readers to understand where your study is coming from.
- Indicate the general scope of your project, but do not go into so much detail that later sections (method) become irrelevant.
- Provide an overview of the sections that will appear in your proposal (optional).
- Engage the readers.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

- This section may be incorporated in your introduction.
- At some point you need to clearly identify the problem or knowledge gap that your project is responding to.
- This section should answer the question: “What is the gap that needs to be filled?” and/or “What is the problem that needs to be solved?”
- State the problem clearly early in a paragraph.
- Limit the variables you address in stating your problem or question.
- You may want to consider framing your problem “statement” as a question, since you are really seeking to answer a question (or a set of questions) in your study.



PURPOSE/AIMS/RATIONALE/RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Most proposals include a clear statement of the research objectives, including a description of the questions the research seeks to answer or the hypotheses the research advances.
- This may be included as part of the introduction, or it may be a separate section.
- Once you begin your dissertation research, you may find that your aims change in emphasis or in number.
- What is essential for you at this point, though, is to specify for your readers—and for yourself—the precise focus of your research and to identify key concepts you will be studying.



A CLEAR STATEMENT OF PURPOSE WILL:

- Explain the goals and research objectives of the study (what do you hope to find?).
- Show the original contributions of your study by explaining how your research questions or approach are different from previous research (what will you add to the field of knowledge?).
- Provide a more detailed account of the points summarized in the introduction.
- Include a rationale for the study (why should we study this?).



IN ADDITION, THIS SECTION MAY:

- Describe the research questions and/or hypotheses of the study.
- Include a subsection defining important terms, especially if they will be new to some readers or if you will use them in an unfamiliar way.
- State limitations of the research.
- Provide a rationale for the particular participants of the study.



OUTLINE OF PROPOSED METHODOLOGY FOR THE STUDY - PROVIDING A STRONG RATIONALE FOR THE CHOICES MADE.

If gathering data / provided with data...

- Design – what? Qual / Quant / Review / Mixed methods
- Participants – who?
- Procedures – how? Type of testing / location / timing



PARTICIPANTS

- Examine the proposed participant sample for your project.
- For your project, consider the following...
 - Is it realistic?
 - Is the number appropriate?
 - Is it appropriate for the proposed study?
 - Are there any potential problems with the sample that you need to be aware of?

If in doubt, ask!

PROCEDURES AND DESIGN

- Look at the method for your proposed project.
 - Interview (type) / survey / lab data / questionnaires / systematic review / narrative literature review
- Is this appropriate to answer the question?
 - Why narrative rather than SR
- Would any different methods be better to answer the question?
 - Motivation to exercise – several measures available + qual methods
- Is it possible / realistic to add any further methods to gather information.
 - Mixed methods – questionnaire and follow up interview

IDENTIFICATION OF DATA ANALYSIS METHODS TO BE USED.

- Literature review – How will this be managed? Checklist of criteria for inclusion / databases to include / timescale / languages / dates of publication
- Statistical analysis?
 - Questionnaires
- Parametric / non parametric (scale answers / frequency of yes or no answers)?
 - If you do not know what data analysis you will need, speak to a member of staff from your area of study about this...
- Analysis of qualitative data?
 - Interviews
 - Open ended questionnaires



OUTLINE OF PROPOSED TIMETABLE FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE SECTIONS OF THE DISSERTATION.

- Completely up to you however check this is realistic.
- Be honest...when do you have other commitments to consider.
- Discuss with the rest of your group how long you foresee each section taking to complete.



PROPOSAL SECTION EXAMPLES...

- Critique of proposal...
- Have a look through those provided on Teams / Moodle if you have not already done so.

PROGRAMME GROUP - PROPOSAL TUTORIALS AVAILABLE WEDNESDAY 27TH OCTOBER.

Programme group tutorials (optional) – refining your project proposal - available Next Wednesday 27th October.

Opportunity for any last minute questions...

- 10.00 -10.20am – Health, Nutrition and Lifestyle
 - 10.30 -10.50am – Outdoor Adventure Education
 - 11.00 -11.20pm – Sport and Exercise Science
 - 11.30 – 11.50pm – Physical Education
-
- If you cannot make your allocated time, please let me know.