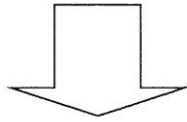


Research Proposal – Content Focus.



(I.e: Writing up what area of investigation you 'could' do for a research project – such as a dissertation)

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

- Give your research a working title.
- Describe clearly the background to the subject area of study. This should involve a mini critical review of the literature pertaining to your research topic (diverse sources such as academic, governmental and industrial literature). Ensure that all literature sources identified are referenced correctly (use the Harvard system of referencing, and append a bibliography).
- Provide the reader with an understanding of the field in which your study lies and an idea of where and how your study fits into this field. In other words, you must justify a rationale for the study, based on the literature review. Why is the research worth doing? Is it topical, interesting, controversial, applied in a new context, etc? Have there been similar studies? Is there a gap?
- If relevant, introduce the industry/organisation/context that is being investigated.
- **Define one overarching aim of the study** (the research purpose). **Construct a series of objectives that specify what you will do to achieve the aim (typically 3 or 4 objectives).** The objectives represent major components that direct your activity, i.e. to breakdown the study into identifiable sub-tasks. Ensure that they are SMARTly phrased, incorporating higher order verbs (to analyse..., to evaluate..., to design and develop... etc.).

2. RESEARCH METHODS

- Identify and *justify* the research methods that you will use to gather your data and/or evaluate your results. This may include:
 - Research philosophy and approach (positivism or phenomenology? Induction or deduction? Quantitative or qualitative?)
 - Research strategy (action research, experiment, case study, survey, etc.)
 - The study population and sample (who are they, do you have access?)
 - Data collection methods for each objective (interview, questionnaire, observation, document review, etc.).
 - Reliability and validity
- Identify risks/limitations/ethical/legal issues and ways that you might deal with those risks. Append an 'Ethics Approval' form
- How will you analyse the data/evaluate your results? (e.g. SPSS, Survey Monkey, content analysis, qualitative data matrix etc.)

3. RESOURCES & PLANNING

- Identify any **resources** required (computer systems, application packages and specialist equipment, access to journals).
- Construct a Gantt chart (time planning chart) that demonstrates evidence of project planning and management. Identify the timescales for each component of the study.

Marking scheme (and lecturer comments)	Marks available	Marks awarded	2 nd marker
INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSED RESEARCH WHAT are you trying to achieve (objectives)? WHY? What is the background rationale? Brief literature review.			
RESEARCH METHODS HOW will you do it – research methods to achieve the objectives WHO will you question (sample) and do you have access to them?			
RESOURCES & PLANNING WHAT resources will you need? WHEN (timescale)?			
PRESENTATION (Professionalism, correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, appropriate sections, flow of narrative/fluency, coherence.)			