



## **THE POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

### **RESEARCH PROPOSAL GUIDELINE FOR M.PHIL /PH.D. AND PH.D. STUDENTS**

The purpose of this paper is to assist the students in preparing their proposals. Students are expected to submit a Ph.D. research proposal to the PGS not later than six months after receiving their admission letter. Continuation of a student's enrolment is dependent on the approval of this research proposal. Late submission of the Research Proposal may result in discontinuation of candidature. The proposal will be presented at the faculty with PGS representative in attendance. After necessary corrections have been made to the proposal, a duly signed proposal will be forwarded by the Head of Department through the Dean of the faculty to the PGS.

The proposal should be developed under the supervision of the supervisors. The purpose of this process is to allow the PGS monitor the progress of the students. It is also possible for a student to change his/her topic after due consultation with the supervisor. In such cases, the PGS should be duly notified and appropriate form should be filled and submitted for approval. Students are expected to have a clear sense of the general research project that they will complete during their studies at LAUTECH. The expected length of the proposal is between 500 and 2000 words. The proposal may be double spaced in A4 Paper with about 6 and a maximum of 10 pages.

#### **Structure of the Research Proposal**

The proposal to be developed and submitted should contain the following elements,

##### **i. Title.**

The proposed title should immediately give a clear idea of the proposed research project or the study. Try as much as you can to include the keywords in the title. Avoid any figurative or idiomatic expressions in the title. The title should be descriptive and focused without being overly wordy. On the title page, you should have your full name, Matriculation Number and your current academic qualification

##### **ii. Introduction.**

Every research project is aimed at solving a problem. The introduction gives the necessary background to the research problem so that the reader can understand the context of what you plan to do. You should expressly write the purpose of the research and, if possible, the research questions that would be answered by the study. Most research is conducted to test a hypothesis or to seek answers to questions that you have raised. The introduction section must outline the significance or the rationale of the study. Therefore, this section, should convince the reader that your study will not only answer the research questions or solve the problem you have raised, further the understanding in the area, and possibly lead to further research projects. The Introduction should be concluded with an overall aim (what you hope to achieve) of the study. Be careful not to repeat the title word for word when writing the aim. After the aim a list of objectives should be made. The objectives should be specific statements that define measurable outcomes. When writing your objectives, try to use strong positive statements. For a Ph.D. work we will expect your objectives not to be less than four and not to be more than eight.

##### **iii. Methodology.**

In this section, you are expected to write the steps you would take to find the answers to the questions you have posed. The steps taken are sometimes preceded by considerations of

theoretical and/or conceptual framework and how these considerations fit and guide your methods. You may like to include the dependent and independent variables, the sampling you would adopt, the data sources and the instruments used to collect the data. If you are going to use structured interviews, for example, you will describe how you will develop and pilot them.

**iv. Analysis of data.**

This section describes how the data you collected using the methods proposed will be analyzed to answer your research questions. You can mention the statistical or data analysis methods and packages you will be using if your data is mainly quantitative. If your research design incorporates elements of qualitative methods, you may describe what you would do to the data to achieve your objectives.

**v. Literature Review.**

The purpose of the literature review is to demonstrate your knowledge of the topic and the critical issues regarding the subject. The review increases your familiarity with the topic and identifies the implications for your project. At the same time, it helps to place your study in the larger context of previous studies. The information is useful to the researcher in designing the study to avoid pitfalls and replication of previous studies.

**vi. The time frame of the study.**

The proposed periods of time you would be engaging in various activities of the project should be listed. This help the students and supervisors to be aware of the magnitude of the tasks and has a plan of action. We will encourage you to present the time frame of the study with a Gantt chart. An example is given below:

Activities	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Proposal presentation					
Field work					
Laboratory analysis					
Objective 1:					

**vii. Limitations and delimitations.**

The limitations describe the practical or theoretical limits that are placed on the study, which are beyond your control. For example, if you wish to study obesity of grade-7 children in the Maldives, it would not be possible to get data of the relevant cohort of the whole population. You may have to sample islands. Delimitations are what you wish to exclude for some reason. They are the limits that you determine. Both limitations and delimitations restrict the conclusions you can draw from your data.

**viii. Resources required**

Outline the resources needed for the work and how the resources will be sourced. This can be presented in a simple tabular format.

**ix. References.**

This section lists the references you have cited in your proposal.

***The proposal should be signed by the student and the supervisors and submitted with a signed copy of Form PG08***