L-Università ta' Malta
Faculty for the
Built Environment

Research Proposal Guideline
Master of Science by Research

We are pleased that you are considering joining us at the University of Malta on one of our Research degree programmes. One of the most important parts of your application is your research proposal, which will be the main item used to determine your suitability for joining us.

Prior to starting your research, you must go through writing up your proposal document during which you are tasked to read our guidelines. This means that you will need to understand the planning phases involved and background research work before the start of the first semester research. Your proposal will be reviewed once this form is submitted online together with a CV and transcript (See Section 1.9 for additional information).

Web-links for Regulations and By-laws are given in this document. Links to the General Regulations for University Postgraduate Awards, 2008[i] and the Bye- Laws of 2010 in terms of the General Regulations for University Postgraduate Awards, 2008 for the Degree of Master of Science - M.Sc., under the auspices of the Faculty for the Built Environment, are found below. The web-links must be carefully read before submitting an application or proposal.

A statement on whether studies will be undertaken on a part-time or full-time basis is to be included. In the case of part-time studies, please list the number of hours that shall be dedicated to the work[iii].

Research Proposal – guidelines

This is a proposal guideline that should be submitted to the Faculty for theBuilt Environment in preparation for your Master programme. It shows theimportant sections to be included, and an indication of the word count of each.In all, the proposal should be around 3000 words long (not including references).

Summary of research proposal

1.1 Title

Provide a brief and meaningful title to your project. A subtitle can be included if relevant.

1.2 Introduction (500 words)

A background or introduction section provides a description and context of the basic information and importance of the research area.
What is your research area, the motivation of your research, and how important is it for the industry practice/knowledge advancement?

1.3 Problem Statement (200 words)

The problem statement should provide a clear and concise description of the issues that need to be addressed. Include your research questions here.
What is the specific problem in your research area that you will address (e.g. lack of understanding of a subject, lack of specialist knowledge in the field)?

1.4 List of Objectives (250 words)

Objectives provide a list of goals that will be achieved through the proposed research. Please do not provide more than three objectives and include your stated hypothesis.
What are the benefits/impact (e.g. better understanding, improved productivity) that will be generated if the research problem is answered?

1.5 Preliminary Literature Review (bet 1000-1200 words)

Provide an outline of the background work already existing which underpins your proposal, based on publications and other documents. This will give the background to the research problem and its strength and weakness, to support the justification of your research. Include authors who have contributed to your chosen topic of research taking into account the timeline of the contributions.
What is known/what has been done by other researchers in the field? Why is your research necessary?

1.6 Methodology (500 words)

The research methodology defines the research methods and logical steps to be followed through to get you to the desired outcome, as well as explaining why you feel these methods will best achieve your stated objectives.

How are you to solve the problem and achieve the proposed objectives? Which research methods (e.g. survey, data modelling, a case study) will be used? Why these? Attach a project schedule table.

1.7 Ethics (250 words)

The ethical issues affecting the proposed research and matters arising from the inquiry process should be identified and reported as per guidelines below, which refer to the University Ethics guidelines.

Download form from this link https://www.um.edu.mt/ben/students/frec

1.8 Key references

At least five main key references must be given. Full and correct referencing is required. All factual material that is not original must be accompanied by a reference to its source. Please use APA guidelines on reference and citation styles.

1.9 Research Approval Process (100 words)

Your research proposal is to be submitted at the time of application after discussing it with the Faculty and written in close collaboration with an academic member of staff who eventually will be proposed as the supervisor [v]. The final decision on the supervisor will be done at Faculty Board level.

When your research proposal is being considered for approval, you may be invited to an interview to present your work.

2.0 Main challenges to be overcome and how to address them (100 words)

Starting any new endeavour such as a research project may sometimes require a nudge to get initiated. List the challenges you expect to face and how you intend to address those challenges.

Examples: a) I need to learn new software; b) I will need to attend workshops to learn how to use HYDI