

Guidelines on Writing the Detailed Scheme of Research
for Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programmes

General Notes:

1. For confirmation/transfer of candidature, all MPhil and PhD candidates are required to submit a research proposal providing a clear indication of their intended research.
 2. There is no prescribed length for the proposal, although a PhD proposal will be longer and more expansive than one for MPhil. Information must be given to justify cases of transfer from MPhil to PhD.
 3. Adoption of the following template is recommended, although the candidate can add or omit sections as appropriate after discussion with his/her Supervisor(s): not all sections are relevant to all research fields or to non-laboratory-based sciences.
 4. Candidates are advised to discuss in good time with their supervisors how to write the research scheme, which will be submitted to the Faculty only if it has been endorsed by the Supervisor(s) and the Departmental Research Postgraduate Committee (DPRC).
 5. Candidates are required to give a qualifying research seminar before their candidature can be confirmed, to be assessed by an Advisory Panel to be approved by the supervisor and the DRPC Chair. Evidence that such a seminar has been given (e.g. provision of a copy of the seminar announcement or poster, or a statement that the seminar is assessed as satisfactory) should be provided together with the confirmation report.
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1. Applicant's name/Student Number
 2. Title of research project
 3. Summary of research
 - Maximum 500 words, comprehensible to a non-specialist.
 4. Introduction and literature review
 - Provide adequate background so that your proposed work can be understood and its relevance or importance appreciated in the context of existing knowledge.
 - Explain the motivation for your study.
 - Review the literature and discuss the key/relevant publications (with citations) in the proposed research area.
 - Formulate your research problems explicitly and clearly, and describe the significance of the proposed research, and its anticipated outcomes.
 5. Research plan and methodology
 - Explain what you are studying and how you intend to undertake the research.
 - What is your strategy for addressing the questions or issues posed? Explain why you believe the adopted strategy can help provide the answer to the questions/issues posed.
 - Describe experimental apparatus, experiments and analyses, if applicable, in detail (with citation of sources); this part of the report is especially important for laboratory-based sciences.
 - Since you will have already conducted part of the proposed work, describe what you have done, the preliminary results or findings, and what they indicate.
 6. If applicable, explain why you are applying for an upgrade of candidature from MPhil to PhD.
 7. Literature cited in the report
 - Provide bibliographic details of all references cited, including the necessary information: title, full list of authors, journal name, volume, page number, and publication year.