How to write your research proposal

A key part of your application is your research proposal. Whether you are applying for a self-funded or studentship you should follow the guidance below. View the guidance on how to write your PhD by published work research proposal. You are encouraged to contact us to discuss the availability of supervision in your area of research before you make a formal application, by visiting our areas of research.

What is your research proposal used for and why is it important?
- It is used to establish whether there is expertise to support your proposed area of research.
- It forms part of the assessment of your application.
- The research proposal you submit as part of your application is just the starting point, as your ideas evolve your proposed research is likely to change.

How long should your research proposal be?
It should be 2000-3500 words (4-7 pages) long.

What should be included in your research proposal?
1. Title
   Your title should give a clear indication of your proposed research approach or key question

2. Background and rationale
   You should include:
   - the background and issues of your proposed research
   - identify your discipline
   - a short literature review
   - a summary of key debates and developments in the field

3. Research question(s)
   You should formulate these clearly, giving an explanation as to what problems and issues are to be explored and why they are worth exploring

4. Research methodology
   You should provide an outline of:
   - the theoretical resources to be drawn on
   - the research approach (theoretical framework)
   - the research methods appropriate for the proposed research
   - a discussion of advantages as well as limits of particular approaches and methods

5. Plan of work & time schedule
   You should include an outline of the various stages and corresponding time lines for developing and implementing the research, including writing up your thesis.
   For full-time study your research should be completed.

6. CV (Curriculum Vitae)
7. Foto of yourself
For questions regarding the PhD-programme of the University of Westminster and the application process please turn to one of the following members of Macromedia Faculty:

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