Guidelines for writing a 500 word Research Proposal to accompany applications for admission to Higher Degree Research candidature

Applications for admission to higher degree research candidature (PhD or Master of Applied Science) need to attach a minimum 500-word preliminary research proposal.

The purpose of the proposal is to encourage pre-enrolment planning/preparation by the student, supervisor and Faculty Research Group that will assist prompt commencement of research work and timely completion of the candidature. The written plan also provides the supervisor with an opportunity to judge the applicant’s writing skills.

The candidate should include information that clearly demonstrates that suitable preparation has occurred. This information will obviously vary quite widely but as a minimum, the proposal could include, but not limited to, the following:

**Title:** Working title for the thesis.

**Academic staff:** Name(s) of the supervisor or other academic staff with whom you have discussed your proposal and/or candidature.

**Synopsis:** Issues, research question and hypothesis to be investigated.

**Background:** Description of the context and background reading leading to the applicant’s interest in this research question.

**Significance:** Brief explanation why the research question is significant.

**Methodology:** The research methodology or approach to be used. This should include the sample size and criteria for inclusion; the research plan including the research design, experimental procedures and statistical analysis.

**Resources:** List any personnel, equipment, space and budget resources required for this project.

**Note:** Where research facilities/equipment/resources beyond the infrastructure normally provided by the Faculty Research Group are specified, the plan should note how these will be accessed.

**Work plan:** An initial four year plan for completion with tasks and annual milestones (e.g. literature review, submit ethics application, commence data collection, complete data analysis, thesis writing).

The expectation is that the supervisor will have read and commented on drafts of the research proposal prior to submission of the application for candidature. The proposal will be reviewed with the application by the Associate Dean Research Students, who is required to ensure, before admission to research degree candidature, that there is a high likelihood of a successful outcome.

January 2015