**Research Proposal – Guidelines**

We have developed the following guidelines to support you in preparing your research proposal when applying for a postgraduate research degree (PhD or MPhil) in the School of Education at the University of Glasgow.

A strong research proposal gives a clear indication of *the what* (i.e., the research idea(s) that you would like to explore in depth) and *the why* (i.e., why this research area and why now?).

**The research proposal should include:**

* **Project title**: a straightforward, descriptive, and informative title that indicates the focus of your research
* **Proposed mode(s) of research**: indicate your proposed mode(s) of research (e.g., empirical study, theory-development thesis, intervention-based research, research with a creative component)
* **Research context**: provide an assessment of the key theoretical, empirical and/or policy literatures which your research builds on and which your research will contribute to. Make sure your literature review demonstrates your understanding of the current debates around your topic(s) of interest and clearly explains the gap in the literature which your work will fill. Why is this research important and worth investigating? How does your research contribute to the knowledge we have already gained in your area of research? Do you plan to extend, test, challenge or provide new insights into your area of research?
* **Research aims/objectives/questions:** provide a clear account of what you aim to achieve with this research. What research questions will you address? What do you hope to achieve with this research?
* **Proposed methodology**: explain how you plan to conduct your research. Where applicable, you may describe the context, the number of participants and the selection criteria (for an empirical study), the methods you plan to use, etc. Keep in mind what is achievable within the timeframe of your degree and how your choice of methods helps you address your research questions or the research aims/objectives/questions.
* **Research contribution**: explain why the proposed research project is worth conducting now and in the context of your choice. How do you see your research having an impact in its context? How will you disseminate your research to wider audiences, both academic and non-academic (e.g., educational contexts, policymakers, practitioners)?
* **References**: include an indicative bibliography of sources that you have consulted for this research project to date. Please use either Harvard or APA citation and referencing style. Make sure you are citing your sources consistently.

Your research proposal will change and evolve once you start working towards your degree, so we do not expect the proposal to be a definitive piece of work. However, it is important to craft a well thought-out proposal. This is a strong indicator of your starting point in your research journey, and it reflects your preparation to conduct work at the postgraduate level.

**Length**

The length of the research proposal should be ± 3,000 words, not including references.