

MSPH/PHD RESEARCH PROPOSAL EVALUATION RUBRIC

Suggested Guidelines (For Reference Only)

This rubric is designed to assist in the evaluation of research postgraduate students' ability to successfully prepare their proposal and is applicable to all programmes that have a proposal requirement. The rubric includes evaluation criteria, and allows for the addition of criteria important to individual departments/programmes. The rubric below is for reference only and examiners are invited to complete the “*Thesis Assessment Form*” sent with the thesis and rubric.

This rubric should:

1. provide research postgraduate students with a clear understanding of the elements of their written PhD thesis deemed most important to the defense committee;
2. provide multiple perspectives on students' ability to successfully prepare their research in respect to their chosen field of study;
3. encourage conversations among departmental colleagues about improving graduate student learning outcomes and assessment;
4. serve as a potential source of programme-level data on the attainment of the programme's learning outcome, for submission as part of their assessment report.

Characteristics of the Introduction/Literature Review:

1. Includes a substantive literature review that places the student's research within its appropriate scientific context;
2. Identifies the specific gaps in knowledge that the student intends to address;
3. Makes an argument for the broader significance of his/her research when addressing these.

Characteristics of the Methodology:

1. Provides an overview of the methodological approach;
2. Provides sufficient details so that readers can judge the appropriateness of the quantitative/qualitative methods;

Characteristics of the Results:

1. Describes the experimental rationale, approach and findings;
2. Interprets the results within the specific scientific context constructed in the Introduction ;

Characteristics of the Discussion/Conclusion:

1. Briefly highlights major findings, acknowledging complexities of the data, as well as inconsistencies and limitations;
2. Explicitly relates the implications of their research findings (results) within the scientific context constructed in the introduction. The narrative should draw connections between the student's research findings and other published work;
3. Highlights how the study could lead to future research within the field;

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Student Name:		Registration No:	
Proposal Title:			
Supervisor			
Date			

For each of the categories, assign a score of Unsatisfactory through Excellent. Enter scores in the rightmost column. Evaluators are encouraged to assign 'Unsatisfactory' to any work sample that does not meet the benchmark level performance.

	Criteria	Unsatisfactory (40-45%)	Fair (50%-59%)	Satisfactory (60%-69%)	Good (70%-79%)	Excellent (80% and above)
Introduction/Literature Review						
1	Introductory Matters: Title and Abstract	Title or abstract were omitted or inappropriate given the problem, research questions, and method.	Title or abstract lacks relevance or fails to offer appropriate details about the educational issue, variables, context, or methods of the proposed study.	Title and abstract are relevant, offering details about the proposed research study.	Title and abstract are informative, and offer sufficiently details about the issue, and proposed methods of the study.	Title and abstract are informative, succinct, and offer sufficiently specific details about the issue, variables, context, and proposed methods of the study.
2	Introduction: Problem, Significance, & Purpose of the Study	Statement of the problem, significance, purpose, questions/hypotheses, or definitions of constructs and variables were omitted or inappropriate.	Although a research issue is identified, the statement is too broad or the description fails to establish the importance of the problem area. The research purpose, questions, hypotheses, or definitions of constructs and variables are poorly formed, ambiguous, or not logically connected to the description of the problem. Connections to the literature are unclear or debatable.	Identifies a relevant research issue. Research questions are succinctly stated, connected to the research issue, and supported by the literature. Constructs and variables have been identified and described. Connections are established with the literature.	Presents a significant research problem related to public health. Articulates clear, research questions given the purpose, design, and methods of the proposed study. All constructs and variables have been appropriately defined. All elements are mutually supportive.	Presents a significant research problem related to public health. Articulates clear, reasonable research questions given the purpose, design, and methods of the proposed study. All constructs and variables have been appropriately defined. Propositions are clearly supported from the research and theoretical literature. All elements are mutually supportive.
3	Literature Review: Organization	The structure of the literature review is incomprehensible, irrelevant, or confusing.	The structure of the literature review is weak; it does not identify important ideas, constructs or variables related to the research purpose, questions, or context.	A workable structure has been presented for presenting relevant literature related to the constructs and variables of the proposed study.	Structure is intuitive and includes important constructs and variables of the proposed study.	Structure is intuitive and sufficiently inclusive of important constructs and variables of the proposed study.
4	Literature Review	The review of literature was missing or consisted of non-research based articles. Propositions were irrelevant, inaccurate, or inappropriate.	A key construct or variable was not connected to the research literature. Selected literature was from unreliable sources. Literary supports were vague or ambiguous.	Key constructs and variables were connected to relevant, reliable theoretical and research literature.	Narrative integrates logical details from the peer-reviewed theoretical literature. Attention is given to different perspectives, conditionalities, threats to validity, and opinion vs. evidence.	Narrative integrates critical and logical details from the peer-reviewed theoretical and research literature. Each key construct and variable are grounded to the literature. Attention is given to different perspectives,

						conditionalities, threats to validity, and opinion vs. evidence.
Methodology						
5	Methods: Research Design	The research design is inappropriate or has not been identified and or described using standard terminology. Limitations and assumptions are omitted.	The research design is confusing or incomplete given the research questions and sampling strategy. Important limitations and assumptions have not been identified.	The research design has been identified and described in sufficiently detailed terms. Some limitations and assumptions have been identified.	The purpose, questions, and design are mutually supportive and coherent. Appropriate and important limitations and assumptions have been clearly stated.	The purpose, questions, and design are mutually supportive and coherent. Attention has been given to eliminating alternative explanations and controlling extraneous variables. Appropriate and important limitations and assumptions have been clearly stated.
6	Methods: Context, Population, and Sampling	The context, population, or sample was not identified or described. The sampling strategy was inappropriate for the research questions.	The description of the context, population, or sampling strategy was confusing, lacked relevance to the purpose, was incomplete, or failed to identify specific quantitative or qualitative details.	The context, population, and sampling strategy was adequately identified and described. The size of the population, sample, and comparison groups was identified.	The description of the context and population was meaningful. The sampling process was reasonable to recruit a representative sample of the population. Attention was given to controlling for extraneous factors and sampling error.	The description of the context and population was meaningful, including both quantitative and qualitative description. The sampling process was reasonable to recruit a representative sample of the population. Attention was given to controlling for extraneous factors and sampling error.
7	Methods: Instruments	Instruments and observation protocols for gathering data were not identified by name or described in a meaningful way. Validity and reliability information was omitted.	Description of the instruments (purpose, form, and elements) or observation protocols were confusing, incomplete, or lacked relevance to the research questions and variables.	Instruments and observation protocols were identified by name and described.	Descriptions of instruments and observation protocols included purpose statements, and type of scores. Evidence of the validity and reliability was presented.	Descriptions of instruments and observation protocols included purpose statements, type and number of items, and type of scores. Evidence of the validity and reliability was presented.
8	Methods: Procedures	Procedures for treatments and gathering data were omitted.	Procedures (permissions, treatments, and data gathering) were confusing, incomplete, or lacked relevance to purpose, research questions, or sampling strategy.	Procedures for implementing the study (permissions, treatments, and data gathering) were identified and described in a chronological fashion.	Procedures were thorough, coherent, and powerful for generating valid and reliable data. Clear and reasonable strategies were presented for seeking permissions and for the ethical treatment of human subjects.	Procedures were thorough, manageable, coherent, and powerful for generating valid and reliable data. Procedures were chronological and replicable, with clear distinctions between researcher and participant actions. Clear and reasonable strategies were presented for seeking permissions and for the ethical treatment of human subjects.
9	Methods: Data Analysis	Analytical methods (descriptive, inferential test, and significance level) were missing or inappropriately aligned with data and research design.	Descriptive or inferential methods were confusing, incomplete or lacked relevance to the research questions, data, or research design.	Both descriptive and inferential methods were identified. Level of significance was stated.	Analytical methods were sufficiently specific, and appropriate given the research questions, research design, and type of distribution.	Analytical methods were sufficiently specific, clear, and appropriate given the research questions, research design, and scale of measurement, and type of distribution.
Discussion and Conclusion						

11	Conclusion (if proposal, intention to draw conclusions)	Not supported by the results or cannot be drawn due to the limitation of the study	Not clearly supported by the results potentially importance of conclusion discussed	Generally supported by the results, importance of the conclusions discussed in general terms	Stated well and or supported by the results importance of the conclusion discussed suggestions for future work were provided	Stated clearly and concisely well supported by the results importance of the conclusions is stated clearly suggestions for future work provided
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References

10	References & Citations	<p>Very few or no peer-reviewed references are used. No reference list is included. References are not cited appropriately throughout the document.</p> <p>Few appropriate citations are used. Citations and references are not presented in proper format and need significant revision.</p>	<p>Less than half of the references are peer-reviewed. References are listed on the reference list but rarely cited in the text. A moderate number of appropriate citations are used, but more may be needed. Citations and references are not presented in proper format, and are in need of moderate revision.</p>	<p>At least half of the references are peer-reviewed. The majority of the references are appropriately cited using a reference manager. A high number of appropriate citations are used, Few, if any, additional sources may be needed. The Majority of citations and references are presented in proper format, and are in need of minor revision.</p>	<p>All or the majority (2 or less are not peer-reviewed) of the references are peer-reviewed. All references are appropriately cited using a reference manager. All citations are appropriate. Additional sources are not needed. All citations and references are presented in proper format and do not need revision.</p>	<p>All of the references are from peer-reviewed publications. All references are appropriately cited using a reference manager. All citations are appropriate. Additional sources are not needed. All citations and references are presented in proper format and do not need revision.</p>
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Sr	Chapter No	Comments

Overall Marks of written work _____

(Tick appropriate box)

Thesis is recommended without any change.

Thesis is recommended with minor changes verified by Supervisor

Thesis is recommended with Major changes verified by Supervisor/ Examiner

I am not convinced and do not recommend the Thesis

Examiner Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____