



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

Research Proposal Format

Your **research project** has a synopsis that gives a glimpse of what is presented on the project, as well as the work's significance. This summary is known as your research proposal; this is what allows your readers to understand the importance of your paper and how you came about the project. The **Research proposal format** should also have the vital elements of the proposal; it must include the title, the abstract, your work's objectives, historical background and references.

A research proposal needs to be more detailed or specific compared with other project proposals. The proposal should also include the methodology used for the research project. A research proposal has the following important aspects:

- **Title page.** Your title page must be complete. Make sure that it gives a glimpse of the nature of the proposed project
- **Purpose:** Statement about the general **problem addressed**. This specifies the topic or area of work. It sets the stage for broadly identifying the area of research and the problems encountered in that area.
- **Statement of the problem.** A research proposal is done based on a problem and questions. It is therefore imperative to give emphasis to the problem and let the readers identify it. The problem must have been the issue that brought about the study, the concern that required such extensive investigation. A research proposal may not be considered acceptable when the researcher fails to clearly identify the problem.
- **Literature Review/Previous work:** a review of the most pertinent literature, works or achievements related to the problem at hand. This can include a few general works and a few significant applications or research studies. This can be a sample of the relevant literature, stated as an indication of what will be extended.
- **Objectives.** Clearly identify the purpose of your study. Make sure to keep your tone formal or conventional. A common mistake made in research projects and proposals, especially for beginners who do not really know **how to write a research paper**, is that they tend to use emotional words and terms in their objectives and other parts of the paper.
- **Justification/Significance of the study.** The significance of your study may include the meaning of the research work to you and to those who might benefit from the research.
- **Methodology:** methods and procedures to be used for each research question in gathering of data. These methods may include survey of literature on basis of which models may be developed or extended; collection and synthesis of data; surveys of given populations or institutions; observation of practices or behaviors; experiments; etc. Social science, ethnographic, systems, historical, political science and other methodologies can be used.
- **References. Research paper writing** has certain rules that some are not even aware of. Plagiarism is a serious issue and it is essential for the writer to cite the sources used in his project. The University has a Policy on Plagiarism with penalties that apply.

NB: You are strongly advised to prepare this research proposal with the assistance of the proposed supervisor. Kindly contact the relevant Department for researchers/lecturers in your field of study.