

Structure of a Research Proposal

(1-2 pages excl. bibliography)

In order to register a Master's thesis topic, a research proposal is required. This research proposal represents the rough concept of an academic thesis.

The key points that a well written research proposal should contain are summarised below. It essentially forms the later introduction to the master thesis and is therefore an integral part of the Master's thesis writing process, creating structure and clarity.

1. Overview of the topic:

- What is your specific topic and why is this topic important?
- What is the core problem?

2. Objective:

- What is the aim of the thesis?
- What is the specific research question derived from the core problem of your topic?
- What is the expected gain in knowledge?

3. Research approach – Method:

- What is the theoretical/empirical approach to your topic?
- Which research method will be applied?

4. Literature:

- Which literature is relevant to your topic?

5. Work plan & Time schedule:

- Which milestones can you define in your research project?
- What is the planned timeline for your research project?

These preliminary considerations result in the following structure of the research proposal:

1. Title of the Master's thesis, name and matriculation number of the student, and name of the supervisor

2. Topic – core problem – research subject:

Justify the scientific and practical relevance of your topic in the context of current research.

Explain the goal/the specific research question of your thesis and its contribution to current research.

3. Research approach – Method:

Describe the approach to the research question and the method in the context of the current state of research (previous relevant literature).

4. Literature:

List the literature according to the usual citation rules.

5. Work schedule & Time table:

Create a time table of the process regarding research, data collection, data analysis and written record.

6. Signatures:

The proposal must be approved by the supervisor and signed by both the student and the supervisor.