SELECTED WORK

# Research Proposal Framework

A practical planning and alignment guide

**RESOURCE TYPE** A reusable structure for an undergraduate or professional research proposal. It is a planning guide, not a submission to copy unchanged.

## Proposal architecture

| Section | Purpose | Quality test |
|---|---|---|
| Background | Explain the context and evidence behind the problem | Moves from broad context to the precise issue |
| Problem statement | Show the gap, consequence and need for inquiry | Specific, evidenced and researchable |
| Aim and objectives | State what the study will accomplish | Each objective is measurable and aligned |
| Research questions | Translate objectives into answerable questions | One clear question per objective |
| Literature review | Position the study within existing knowledge | Synthesises rather than lists sources |
| Methodology | Explain design, participants, data and analysis | Choices are justified and feasible |
| Ethics | Protect participants and information | Consent, privacy and risk are addressed |

## Alignment matrix

| Objective | Question | Data needed | Analysis |
|---|---|---|---|
| Describe X | What is the pattern of X? | Measured indicators | Frequencies and means |
| Examine relationship | How is X related to Y? | Measures of X and Y | Correlation/regression |
| Explore experience | How do participants explain Z? | Interview responses | Thematic analysis |

## Writing checks

- Use current and relevant scholarly sources for factual claims.
- Define key terms in the way the study will use them.
- Do not introduce an objective that the method cannot answer.
- Explain sampling decisions rather than naming a technique only.
- Separate anticipated findings from actual evidence.
- Use one referencing style consistently.
- Check institutional requirements before final submission.

## Common weaknesses

| Weakness | Better approach |
| --- | --- |
| Topic is too broad | Define population, place, variables and period |
| Problem is based on opinion | Support the gap with credible evidence |
| Objectives repeat one another | Give each objective a distinct analytical purpose |
| Method lists tools without justification | Explain why each choice answers the question |
| References are inconsistent | Use a reference manager or a final manual audit |

**RESPONSIBLE USE** Use this framework to plan original work. Verify all sources and follow your institution's academic-integrity and ethics requirements.