

A Guide to Writing your Research Proposal Outline (required for Master of Design)

Purpose of the Research Proposal Outline:

The purpose of the research proposal outline is to support you (the applicant/student) to assist us (the postgraduate selection panel) in understanding the scope, direction, and focus of your research project. It should situate your topic in a clearly defined territory of inquiry. For example, the territory you are interested in may be discipline specific (textiles, digital media, industrial, fashion, visual communication, spatial), or focused on an interdisciplinary approach, such as that practiced by the research clusters or labs situated in the School of Art and Design.

The research proposal outline is an important factor in a successful application to our programmes.

You can find the Research Proposal Outline template below. Please read this guide before submitting your proposal with your application.

THE PROPOSAL OUTLINE INCLUDES THESE SECTIONS:

Research Project Title: (10 words maximum)

This is a working title, so it is likely to change several times throughout your research journey. We have provided some examples of *completed* master's degree thesis titles below and links to these projects.

The title should say in as few words as possible what your research project is. This can be a statement of purpose, metaphorical/poetic in its description, or a combination of both - because it is the first thing anyone sees, it needs to focus their attention.

Past MDes examples include:

[*Motions from the Hand to the Digital: An exploration of colour mutability through material based print processes*](#), by Rose Turbott

[*Un/making Home: Spatialising Diasporic Rituals and the Poetics of Bread-making*](#), by Zeenia Porus Irani

[*Exploring personal narrative and storytelling through the recreation of a historical children's fairy tale*](#), by Manting Ding

[*The Heartside: The visual communication design of engaging with young women to address menstrual taboos*](#), by Meilin Wang

[*Kō Rimurimu 'To Be Covered in Seaweed' - Sensory knowing, holistic understanding, and meaningful encounters within a marine science centre*](#), by James Smith

[*New Pacific Standard: Using Tivaevae to inform a new strategic business model for Pacific art and design*](#), by Pouarii Tanner

[*The Materiality of Winter*](#), by Imogen Zino

Research Topic Overview: (150 words maximum)

What are you going to research through your practice?

Here you discuss your practice in relation to your topic.

Are you an animator, visual communicator, textile designer, motion graphics artist, product designer, illustrator, photographer, filmmaker, spatial designer, human-centred designer, etc.? Or do you come from another discipline area, but have experience in the design profession that you can demonstrate through your Research Proposal Outline? If so, how will you put your skills to work on a research project? What is it you imagine you will make at the end of your studies?

Thesis Statement: (350 words maximum)

How do you propose to develop your practice in relation to your chosen topic?

Discuss,

*The methods (approaches, techniques, processes etc.) you regularly use to make work.
Briefly describe your practical and where appropriate, theoretical working methods.*

What ideas are you considering in your proposed research?

Discuss,

*Why you are curious about this topic?
What do you hope to discover by undertaking this research project?
What do you consider might be revealed through your research project?*

Where do you locate this research?

For example, you might address

The directions your research might take.

Is your research proposal designed to meet the needs of a specific user group or community, is it speculative? Describe the end users of this research, or discuss who might benefit from this research?

You may consider the proposed project in relation to existing design work, relevant practitioners, theorists and other influences.

If you have a theoretical dimension informing your work state this in this section.

We recommend you include a quote that summarises the thinking informing, underpinning, or impacting the way you make and think about your practice from one of the key texts in your Bibliography.

How is this research meaningful?

Consider,

*How this research might produce new ways of looking at and being in the world?
Reflect upon the meaning/significance of your proposal in the context of the above discussion.*

Bibliography: (Example below)

Bibliography

- Akerman, Chantal. "Chantal Akerman: In Her Own Time an Interview with Miriam Rosen." In *The Cinematic*, edited by David Company. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2004.
- Allen, Richard and Malcolm Turvey, eds. *Camera Obscura, Camera Lucida: Essays in Honor of Annette Michelson*, Film Culture in Transition. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003.
- Antonioni, Michelangelo. "Deserto Rosso/the Red Desert." Videorecording. Collingwood, Vic.: Madman Entertainment: AV distributor, 2006.
- Aufderheide, Patricia. *Documentary Film: A Very Short Introduction*. Very Short Introductions. Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Bresson, Robert. "A Man Escaped." DVD. London: Artificial Eye, 2008.
- Brinkman, Dirk. "Editorial." *Silviculture Magazine* Spring (2012).
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Research Proposal Outline Template (500 words total)

Student name		Student ID number (if known)	
Programme			

Research Project Title: (10 words maximum)

Research Topic Overview: (150 words maximum)

Thesis Statement: (350 words maximum)

Bibliography: (At least 10 entries)