

## Developing a short concept proposal for a DHSc application

A DHSc concept proposal should be ~ 1 paragraph in length (150-300 words). This provides us with context when assessing your application. It helps us evaluate if you have five years of professional experience in an area relevant to your area of research and allows us to consider if we have supervisory expertise relevant to your area of study.

### Areas to cover in your concept proposal

- Briefly describe your professional role and the practice setting where your research would be based.
- Provide a brief background to the area that you are going to focus on, drawing on your professional knowledge and expertise. Explain why it matters, and for who. You don't need references.
- What is the specific thing you are going to focus your research on and what you hope to learn? This might be framed as it might be a problem that needs solving, a gap in knowledge or services, or there is an area of practice that is working well and that you want to understand more deeply or help others learn from.
- Outline what you hope will be different as a result, keeping this grounded in your area of practice or influence.

### Example concept proposal for a DHSc application

I am a speech-language therapist working in stroke rehabilitation and in the education of undergraduate and postgraduate allied health students. People with communication difficulties (aphasia) after stroke are commonly excluded from their own rehabilitation because of the way healthcare professionals interact with them — many staff lack confidence, knowledge, or the time needed to communicate effectively with this group. This has serious consequences: people with aphasia have poorer physical recovery outcomes than those without, are more likely to be discharged to residential care, and healthcare professionals themselves can experience helplessness and distress when they feel unable to engage this patient group fully. To improve this situation, my research will focus on understanding how healthcare professionals communicate with people with aphasia during stroke rehabilitation, examining what supports effective engagement and what gets in the way. I hope this research will generate practical, evidence-based guidance that supports current clinicians to reflect on and develop their communication practice, and that strengthens how we prepare future allied health students to work confidently and effectively with people with aphasia.