

# **MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA)**



## **RESEARCH PROPOSAL WRITING GUIDE FOR STUDENTS**

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**REGENT Business School**

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## Process of Research Proposal Writing:

Please familiarise yourself with the following research proposal writing process:

### Step 1: Familiarising yourself with relevant material

1. On successful completion of registration, you will receive a welcome pack containing the following folders:

- ***Guides and Policies*** (Research Proposal Writing Guide, Dissertation Writing Guide, Exemplar-How to Formulate a Topic Motivation, Plagiarism Policy, What is Plagiarism Resource)
- ***Templates*** (Topic Motivation Template, Research Proposal Template, Ethical Clearance Form)
- ***Dissertation Writing PowerPoint Slides*** (Introduction, Writing the Final Dissertation, FAQ)
- ***Dissertation Writing Video Support***
- ***Dissertation Exemplars*** (Examples of Completed Dissertations)

2. Kindly ensure that you read and familiarise yourself with this material, as these will be imperative resources required in the dissertation writing process

3. Access the appropriate support material by logging into your **myregent** email.

### Step 2: Submitting a Topic Motivation

1. Once you are familiar with the material, you are required to formulate and submit a **Topic Motivation**

2. Remember to access the '**Guides and Policies**' folder for an exemplar of how to formulate a topic motivation

3. Ensure that the topic motivation is written according to the template and submit this to **researchadmin@regent.ac.za**

4. Your submission will be assessed and you will be provided with feedback, if any changes are required.

5. Address these changes and resubmit (i.e. if changes are required by the research committee)

### Step 3: Submitting a Research Proposal

1. Once you are **granted approval** of your topic motivation by the research committee, you are required to **submit a Research Proposal**
2. Ensure that the research proposal is formulated according to the **Research Proposal Template**
3. Along with the research proposal, you are required to submit a completed **Ethical Clearance Form, Draft Questionnaire, and a Letter of Permission** (if you have not sent this at the topic motivation stage already).
4. Kindly ensure that the Research Proposal is submitted to **researchadmin@regent.ac.za**
5. Similar to the topic motivation, your proposal will be reviewed by the research committee, and feedback will be provided if any changes are required. Address any changes required, and resubmit to : **researchadmin@regent.ac.za**
6. Ensure that the proposal is submitted with: the letter of permission, complete ethical clearance form, and a draft survey/ questionnaire instrument. Your proposal will be approved by the committee on successful completion of changes required.

*Kindly note that the proposal will form the basis of the study you wish to conduct at the dissertation stage in the next trimester. It is compulsory to pass (i.e. have your proposal approved) before moving onto the dissertation stage.*

*\*\*\*Please note that there are stipulated deadlines for the topic and research proposal. Please adhere to all the relevant templates when submitting.*

## **What should I Expect?**

Before you start you should expect:

- To make mistakes
- To write and rewrite your research proposal many times. Nobody gets it right the first time
- To spend many hours reading books and journals relating to your topic
- To spend many hours discussing your research with others
- To have your work criticized

## **Why do I need a Research Proposal?**

Research proposals have different function. Some of these are:

- To convince people like other researchers, organisations, managers, CEOs and supervisors that your research is worth reading. You convince people of the value of your work by showing them how your research will make a difference to the organization, sector or country
- To demonstrate expertise in a particular area of study. You want to convince people that you have enough understanding of your research topic to be able to do the research properly.
- To demonstrate competency in a particular area of study. It is important that your research proposal convinces the reader that you have all the necessary skills to carry out the proposed study. You do this by describing an appropriate and feasible research method

**Notes:**

- Always keep in mind the requirements for the topic motivation and research proposal (i.e. templates).
- Also keep in mind the due dates for the topic motivation and proposal
- All submissions must be sent via email to:  
[researchadmin@regent.ac.za](mailto:researchadmin@regent.ac.za)

## **STEP 1: Formulating a Topic Motivation**

### **How do I Start?**

You need a clear research topic. You may get your research topic from different sources:

- **Observation of the world:** Often you will notice a peculiarity in your world and start to wonder about it. Sometimes this produces a research question. For example, in South Africa, the scientist Prof Makgoba stated that his foundation and orientation towards the sciences, were well established in the village and country side where nature was a big laboratory.
- **Theory:** in many areas of management there exists competing theories. That is different theories that explain the same phenomenon in different ways.
- **Previous research:** no study answers all the questions that we want to ask about a particular subject. New research findings always inspire new research questions. Sometimes, it is because these findings are surprising or because they conflict with existing theory or other research findings. For example. Philosopher and sociologist Michael Foucault spent close to thirty years demonstrating that many fundamental ideas about human nature and society, which people usually understand to be unchanging vary with the course of history.
- **Practical concerns:** very often you will be confronted by a problem in your own life or become aware of problems facing others in the community. Research is aimed at solving immediate problems in the world. For example, home delivery and internet shopping





### How do I choose my Research Topic?

It is a good idea to generate several possible research topics and then choose the best one. After all, you would not go into a shop and buy the first shirt you saw. You will look at several shirts, compare them and purchase the one that suited you the best. Well, the same applies to your research topic.

Every research topic has strengths and weaknesses and the choice of the “best” topic is a subtle one.

The following is a list of criteria which can be used to judge the usefulness of your research question:

QUESTIONS	YES	NO
Do you have access to the information needed		
Does your topic have a suitable theoretical background.		
How might this research contribute to research methodologies used in this area		
How interesting is the topic to you		
Do you have the skills or can you develop them		
Do you have the necessary time, financial support and equipment		
Does the topic meet the criteria laid down by RBS		
Is the topic challenging to meet your study requirements		
Does the topic have potential to generate further research for yourself and others in your field		

### Record Keeping [Skill]

Another important skill to develop is that of keeping good records.

Often you will reading something but will not know where you read it. If you have kept a detailed record of your reading, you should be able to track those „lost“ references down.

Make reference cards to keep detailed records of your reading.

<b>Research on:</b>
<b>Author [s]</b>
<b>Year of publication</b>
<b>Title of article/ chapter</b>
<b>Title of book/journal</b>
<b>Volume number</b>
<b>Publisher and city</b>
<b>Where available</b>
<b>Notes.</b>

## **TOPIC MOTIVATION TEMPLATE: GUIDELINE**

Your topic motivation needs to be submitted in the following format; this template can be accessed on the Learner Management System

### **Title of the Research/Topic**

The topic needs to have a management or business perspective. Generally, it should be an area that derives from your coursework (for example: job satisfaction, employee motivation, challenges facing profitability, etc).

Your topic needs to be concise and focused on a particular area or organization. In other words, avoid topics that focus on broad setting such as “South Africa” for example. Rather, decide on a topic on a particular organization or group of organizations.

Topics should be worded concisely. Avoid lengthy and ambiguous topics.

### **Brief details/motivation for the topic.**

In this section, you basically need to state why your topic is a viable and suitable topic, and what contributions can it make to the organization/ institution under study

### **The Aim of the Study**

This is a single broad statement which states what your study wishes to achieve. *For example:* The aim of this study is to assess the factors affecting retention and recruitment of Nurses in a KwaZulu-Natal based hospital.

### **The Objectives of the Study.**

Objectives refer to specific sub-statements that will allow you to achieve your aim. In other words, what objectives do you need to meet in order to be able to attain your aim (i.e. in order to assess the factors affecting retention and recruitment of nurses.

*Examples:*

- To identify the social factors affecting the retention and recruitment of nurses.
- To identify the retention and recruitment strategies in place.
- To assess the efficacy/ success of these strategies in retaining and recruiting nurses in...
- To make recommendations to improve the retention and recruitment of nurses in...

**The expected research outcomes (expected results of the proposed investigation)**

In this section, you need to state the results that you expect from the study, as well as the potential benefit that these results will have in the organization/ institution.

**Details of how data/information to carry the empirical research will be collected.**

**There following areas need to be covered in this section:**

- 1) Mention if this is a qualitative, quantitative or mixed method study.
- 2) Mention the data collection instrument that you will be using (i.e. interview schedule, face to face interviews, etc.)
- 3) Mention the setting of the study. For example, if you are using 3 organizations, mention them.
- 4) Mention who your target population is.
- 5) Mention the size of your target and sample populations.

Once your topic motivation is complete, submit to [researchadmin@regent.ac.za](mailto:researchadmin@regent.ac.za)

*Please note that due date for the topic motivation in your academic calendar.*

## STEP 2: Research Proposal Writing

### Can I begin to write my Proposal?

You should be able to write your proposal when you are confident that you can answer “YES” to the following questions

Questions	YES	NO
1. Have I read broadly and deeply in the area of my research topic		
2. Have I spent time thinking critically about the research topic		
3. Have I spent time discussing my research topic with others		
4. Have I found out how people in other disciplines think about my research topic		
5. Was my research topic approved by the research committee?		

## The Content of a Research Proposal

The following are the required sections in the research proposal

### 1. The Topic

Points to note:

- Topic must have a business focus
- Topic must be interesting to you
- You are already knowledgeable about the topic. You will be the expert
- The topic will contribute towards your career goals



#### Activity

Write down your topic

## 2. Research Problem

Before your proposal can make sense to your reader, he/she must understand clearly what the proposed research will be about.

### **For example:**

This research explores the extent to which vigilantism is growing within different sectors of the South African population. In particular the research focuses on the factors which promote and maintain vigilantism in our society.

Recent reports in the media detailing the operation of extensive and organized vigilante groups have created public interest and concern and there are important implications for policing policy.

A vigilante is defined as being a volunteer committee of citizens for the oversight and protection of any interest, especially one organized to suppress and punish crime summarily, as when the process of law appears inadequate.

In the above example the following can be answered;

Where does this research come from

Clarify or quantify any concepts which may not be clear

Note: A problem statement is one paragraph that explicitly states the purpose, nature and reasons for the study in order to achieve a specifically stated outcome.



### Activity

Fill in the blanks to help you write a precise, direct statement of what your research is all about.

The purpose of the study is to .....in order to.....so that.....ensure that.....is achieved.

## 3. The Aim/Objectives/ Research

### Questions 3.1 The Aim

Formulate a clear and definite aim that sheds light on the whole topic.

For example: The aim of this study is to investigate the causes and impact of high labour turnover in hospitals.



### Activity

Write the aim for your study.




### 3.2 Objectives

Break the aim into about FOUR objectives. These objectives form the basis of your Literature Review as well as your instrument.

For example: The following objectives are based on the above aim:

- To ascertain if salaries contribute to high labour turnover
- To assess how demotivation affects the quality of service delivery
- To assess the impact of a lack of medical equipment on hospital operations
- To make recommendations on how skilled manpower may be retained



**Activity**

Write your research objectives

### 3.3 Research Questions

Answers to your research questions ensure that your objectives have been achieved

For example: The following research questions have been based on the above objectives:

- Are salaries an issue in labour turnover?
- Does motivation affect the quality of service delivery?
- What impact does a lack of medical equipment have on hospital operations?



### **Activity**

Write your research questions

**NOTE:** the aim/objective/ research questions must be aligned. This is a critical success factor

## **4. The Significance of the Study [Importance of the Study]**

This section is referred to as the Rationale of the study. It is very important as it provides you, the researcher, the opportunity of convincing the reader, supervisor, external examiner that the research is worth undertaking.

There are different ways of doing this:

Describe how the results will be used

Explain how each stakeholder involved in the study will benefit

Describe the contributions your research will make

Think how your research may:

- Resolve theoretical questions in your area
- Develop better theoretical models
- Influence managers and decision makers
- Change the way people do their respective jobs or may change the way people live

Information regarding the above will help you in producing a convincing argument as to the usefulness of the study.

For example, the following examples are based on the Labour Turnover topic

- The results will be used to improve salaries, job expectations and working conditions of doctors/ nurses and medical personnel
- Improve awareness amongst managers and leaders about the plight of employees
- Amend the current policies on remunerations, and basic conditions of employment
- Ensure that all hospitals are equipped with adequate medical supplies and equipment
- The lives of patients will improve

## 5. The Literature Review

The Literature review presents one of the greatest challenges of the research proposal to all researchers. The literature review provides a conceptual framework, based on your objectives, so that your research questions and methodology can be better understood. It is imperative that you provide an integrated overview of your field of study. This means that you must show awareness of the most important and relevant theories, models and studies pertinent to your study.

This section gives you the opportunity to show that you have benefitted from the MBA coursework. Read widely on the topic. Ideally use current literature [not more than five years old]

**For example. The following extracts demonstrate successful and unsuccessful literature review:**

### **Unsuccessful Literature Review:**

High labour turnover among hospital health workers is a problem which management must address. The problem is critical in that the workers attending to hospitals are overworked. The workers look after un-recommended number of patients. Health workers are dissatisfied with their working conditions . Therefore, lack of job satisfaction is the cause of turnover.

### **Successful Literature Review:**

This study will draw on the diverse approaches to a study of the causes and impact of high labour turnover in hospitals. A reflection on the nature of staff and hospital organisations indicate that there are several factors that contribute to high labour and the resultant adverse effects of it (Russell and Taylor, 2004: 757). For example skilled human resources are important in successfully completing tasks and the lack of it results in failure.

Therefore, it is important that managers in hospitals appoint the right personnel for the right job in order to ensure job satisfaction and successful completion of tasks. A study by Luthans (2002: 230) revealed that if there is considerable job dissatisfaction, there is likely to be high turnover.

**NOTE:**

- The objectives of your study form the basis of your literature review as well as your instrument. Your objectives/ literature review and instrument must be aligned
- Use current literature to write up your overview (no older than 5 years)
- Use full Harvard referencing
- Length of review should be 8-12 pages in proposal

## 6. Research Methodology

You need to indicate the following under the research methodology section in your proposal:

- The research methodology (of data collection) within a quantitative or qualitative methodology
- The research strategy
- The target population [definition, who constitutes your target population, size, etc]
- The respondents and the sample size [choice of sample, definition, size]
- The techniques of data collection [questionnaire, interviews, observations, case study, etc]
- The measurement for validation of the techniques [attitudes scales, rating scales etc.]
- Data analysis techniques used
- Pilot study
- Limitations of research
- Elimination of bias
- Ethical considerations

### 6.1 Research Methodology

In this section you need to identify the research methodology to be used in your study (dissertation), explain what it is and justify its applicability for the study. For example:

#### **Research according to quantitative methodology**


In this study, the researcher utilizes a quantitative methodology to obtain primary data. Quantitative research is associated with analytical research, and its purpose is to arrive at a universal statement from analysis of the data collected.

Data can be collected by observation, pilot studies and surveys. A research instrument [questionnaire] was compiled to collect primary data. This method is considered suitable because ....

### Research according to qualitative methodology

In this study the researcher used a qualitative methodology to obtain primary data. Qualitative methodology refers to research which produces descriptive data through the written or spoken word. In qualitative research, methods such as case studies, in-depth interviews, participant observation and perusal of personal documents are used to obtain primary data.

For the purpose of the study, interviews and participant observation was used to obtain primary data. The methods were considered suitable because ....



**Activity**

Are you going to use qualitative or quantitative methodology?

Why?

### 6.2 Research Strategy

Below is a list of some of the important research strategies available to business students. You will choose a strategy and then will state the reasons for choosing a particular strategy.

#### Positivist Research Strategy

Surveys

#### Phenomenological Research Strategies

Case Study Action research Grounded theory Ethnography

### **Combined Research Strategies**

Often researchers may develop research designs that combine research strategies from those two paradigms in a single research design. You are advised to select only one.

### **6.3 Target Population and Sampling**

The process of selecting a fractional part of the whole relevant group or population is called sampling. The basic idea is that by selecting some of the elements in a population and focusing research attention on this finite group, we may apply the findings of the study to the whole population of interest. A population element is the single unit of the sample on which measurement and observations are taken. For example, each consumer questioned about his/her preference in a consumer study is a population element. A population is the full set of elements or cases from which a sample is taken.

You need to firstly, identify who your target population is, and then state the size of the population. Also define the terms target population and sampling.

#### ***Sampling***

There are two broad types of sampling – **probability** and **non-probability**. With **probability** sampling, the likelihood of any one member (or element) of the population being selected, is known. If there are a thousand rural schools and two hundred rural secondary schools, the odds of selecting one secondary school as part of the sample is 200:1000 or 0.20 (RBS, 2008)

In **non-probability** sample, the exact number of elements in the population is unknown with the result that the likelihood of selecting any one member of the population, is not known.



## Kinds of Sampling

The two broad categories of sampling designs are **probability sampling** and **non-probability sampling**. You will discuss the different types of sampling and then state the reasons for choosing a particular type.

You will choose one of the following types of sampling (explain it) and mention why it was applicable:

### ***Probability Sampling***

Examples of probability sampling include the following:

#### **Simple random**

Each population element has an equal chance of being selected into the sample. Sample drawn using random number table/ generator

#### **Systematic**

Selects an element of the population at a beginning with a random start and following the sampling fraction selects every  $k$ th element.

#### **Stratified**

Divide population into sub-populations or strata and use simple random sample on each strata.

#### **Cluster**

Population is divided into internally heterogeneous sub-groups

### *Non Probability*

Examples of non probability sampling include the following:

<b>Haphazard/convenience</b>	The researcher selects a sample that is convenient.
<b>Quota:</b>	A sample in a predetermined group is selected.
<b>Purposive/ judgemental</b>	The researcher will select anyone in a hard-to-find target population
<b>Snowball:</b>	The researcher will select a sample that connected to one another.
<b>Maximum variation</b>	The researcher identifies the categories of interest in relation to the research topic and then intentionally seeks out subjects or settings which represent the greatest possible range of differences in the phenomena being studied

**Once you have mention the sampling technique to be used, mention the size of your sample.**

The minimum size sample size is 30 for a quantitative study and 15 for a qualitative study. However, if your target population is larger than 100, then you will need to increase the size of the sample population

### **6.4 Data/ Collection Gathering**

There are three methods of data gathering

Observations: is the systematic recording of nonverbal and verbal behaviour and communication

Measurement: the researcher uses a instrument to express judgement or opinion regarding a phenomenon, based on a criteria

Questioning: is one method for gathering data. Within the questioning method, there are number of techniques such as questionnaires [structured and unstructured], interviews, checklists and diaries.

Although you may use one or several methods of data collection, it is important that you justify the reasons for use.

Remember to identify and explain the data collection instruments you will use in you proposal.



### **Activity**

List the data gathering methods you are going to use.

State the reasons for choosing these methods

## **6.5 Validity and Reliability of the research methodology**

This is crucial to scientific research

### **Validity**

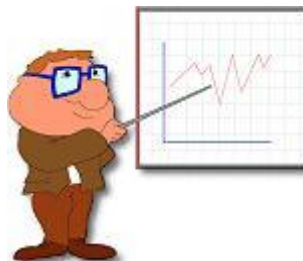
This refers to the potential of a design or measuring instrument to measure what is supposed to achieve and or measure. It is concerned with the what of data collecting procedures.

The researcher must cite the following types of validity and then explain how he applied them to his instrument:

- Content validity
- Criterion- related validity
- Construct validity
- Face validity
- External validity

### **Reliability**

This pertains to the accuracy of measures. The same instrument must be able to produce the same data at a later stage under similar conditions. The researcher may do this by means of a test – retest.



### **6.6 Data Analysis**

Once the data has been gathered, the analysis of the data is undertaken. The basic steps are:

Categorizing data: is concerned with actual assigning of data into different categories. Data about managers can be categorized by personality, age, gender

Coding data: is the process of identifying and classifying each answer with a numerical score or other character symbol. Coding is used for converting data or responses to numerical numbers so that they can be tabulated and appropriate statistics can be applied

Calculating appropriate statistics: descriptive statistics(uses measures of central tendencies: mean, median, mode) or inferential statistics (is used for making inferences or judgements about a population on the bases of a sample. It is used for hypothesis testing)

This section involves a description of the statistical tests that will be used to address the hypotheses or research questions. Examples will include descriptive and inferential statistics. The data analytic process must be explained procedurally from the time of data entry. You need to also indicate whether you are going to use tables or figures to present findings.

For a qualitative study, you may use: Narrative Analysis, Descriptive Analysis, Discourse Analysis , Content Analysis techniques. You need to explain the technique used, identify why you have used it.

## **6.7 Pilot Study**

Before administering the questionnaire to participants in the study, the researcher must test it on a small sample. The analysis of the pilot survey will reveal flaws in some questions suggest possible improvements and supply a range of possible answers to open-ended questions. Additionally, the pilot survey enables the researcher to:

- Make amendments necessary to maximize returns and minimize the error rate on answers.
- Categorize the open-ended questions to a reasonable degree.
- Perform the analysis on the pilot sample and test out all the computational procedures and produce some initial hypotheses.
- Evaluate the adequacy of the data for the research questions.

Mention what a pilot study is, and how it will be administered in the study.

## 6.8 Limitations of the Research

In this section 'limitations and delimitations' should be addressed. Delimitations imply limitations on the research design that the student imposed deliberately. These delimitations may include a restriction on the population for which the results of the study can be generalized e.g. your population may include only males in a certain age group.

Limitations refer to restriction on your study which you have no control. For example you may be limited to a narrow segment of the total population you wish to study or you may be limited to the research method you have selected to use. Mention the potential impact of the limitations provided on the study.

## 6.9 Elimination of Bias

This section will include a discussion of how the research remained objective throughout the study. The following areas may require explanation:

- Use of gender neutral words
- Identifying people by race or ethnic group unless it is relevant
- Avoid language that suggests evaluation or reinforces stereotypes
- Making assumptions about various age groups

Identify and explain the biases that will be avoided, and how these will be avoided.

You will have to consult research methodology textbooks to assist you in knowing what research methodology techniques are available and how they should be used. Remember, for each research method section in your proposal, you need to explain what the research method is (referenced information), identify which method you will be using in your study, and justify the use of that method.

### **6.10 Ethical Considerations**

When conducting research, the researcher is ultimately responsible for the integrity of the research process and the dignity and well being of the research subjects. As such, it is the duty of the researcher to recognize and balance subjectivities, provide accurate research accounts and act within the law in order to develop the required expertise. You will thus need to give consideration to various issues, such as informed consent, power and confidentiality. You should ask yourself whether your study adheres to ethical guidelines.

A discussion on the following aspects should be considered:

- **Ensuring Participants have given Informed Consent**
- **Ensuring no Harm Comes to Participants**
- **Ensuring that Permission is Obtained**
- **Ensuring Confidentiality and Anonymity**

## **7. Conclusion**

In the initial stage of research, a researcher develops a statement of the problem. He/she selects the research approach according to the nature of the problem and then proceeds to prepare his/her proposal after intensive reading around the problem under investigation in accordance with the above guidelines

### **Guidelines for Submission of your Research Proposal**

Before submission, ensure that you have satisfied the following:

#### **1. Title**

The title must be management related and contain the key concepts of the study. It must be specific. Avoid words like “a study of”, “an empirical investigation into”, “and an investigation of”. Ideally the title should be around 8 words long.

#### **2. Introduction**

Clear reference must be made to the research topic and the research problem must be introduced. You must specify what is to be expected in the proposal.

#### **3. Background Information**

In this section information about the organisation under study must be discussed as well as the researcher’s role in the organisation. This discussion must occur in direct relation to the research problem.

#### **4. Research Aim**

Ideally, it should be one major aim that directly relates to the research problem and be consistent with the research topic and objectives.

#### **5. Research Objectives**

These must be linked to the research aim, topic, and questions – they must not be repeated study aims. The objectives must be very specific and should be cross referenced with the research design/data collection method to ensure that relevant data is collected to address the objectives.



## **6. Problem Statement**

Use the problem background to explain the research problem in about 6 lines. The expected outcomes of the study must be emphasised.

## **7. Research Questions**

Each objective must be turned into a research question. Ensure the research questions, aims, and objectives are aligned.

## **9. Study Significance**

The value of the study should be made clear in terms of the benefits of the study in applying results through making recommendations, advancing theory, or particular research significance.

## **10. Literature Review**

A brief but comprehensive introduction must be provided explaining the research problem and what the literature review will cover. Ideally each section must be discussed in line with each objective. This must then be linked to the research question. MBA related theory must be discussed. Students should broadly but briefly cover theories related to the research problem, but, students must select one theory. This theory must be critically discussed and related to the

organisation under study. Subsections should be linked to form a coherent argument that is related to the research question. Scan references cited and ensure that recent literature is used. The literature should be specialist books and journal articles. Avoid reliance on the prescribed text book or course notes. Ensure that opinionated discussions are avoided.

## **11. Research Methodology**

You must clearly justify using the chosen research method using the relevant theory specific to the study. There must be clarity on the method used (qualitative vs quantitative). The method must be aligned to the objectives and aims to ensure that the relevant data is collected. The sampling method must be clarified in terms of the sampling method, the sample characteristics, and the sampling process or procedure. It is imperative that the issue of a representative sample is addressed. If students are using an interview schedule in qualitative research, they must show how the questions are created and provide this schedule in the appendix. If quantitative, you must show how the research instrument was created. This must then be linked to validity and reliability. You must also demonstrate that the data collected is valid and reliable. The data analytic process must be explained procedurally from the time of data entry. The importance of the pilot study must also be clearly shown in terms of the study procedures and how the pilot study results will be used to make necessary adjustments. See previous section on what is required.

## **12. Ethical Considerations**

Ethics should be addressed from the perspective of RBS as the educational institution, the organisation under study, and the participants.

### 13. Writing Style

The following issues should be focused on:

Sentence construction, grammar, punctuation, lay versus scientific, argument coherency

All abbreviations must be introduced before they are used in the document

Quotations must be done in italics and should not form an extensive part of the review. Any quotation should be contextualised within the study.

#### References

- Ensure that the Harvard procedure is strictly adhered to.
- Cross check with bibliography and in text citations
- Scan the extensiveness of references and suitability – ensure that reading occurs beyond the prescribed text book

#### Presentation style

- 12 point font, times new roman or Arial at 1.5 line spacing, 1.25 inches margin, and justify right.
- Length: about 4500 words.

.....

**Now that you have completed your research proposal, you may submit it to the research dept at RBS.**

**Contact details:**

**[researchadmin@regent.ac.za](mailto:researchadmin@regent.ac.za)**

**Tel: 031 3044626, Fax: 031 3047303**

# **Research Proposal (Template)**

**Name**

**Surname**

**MBA Number**

**Date**

**Topic**

**Contact Number**

**Email**

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  - **Draft Covering Letter to Respondents**
  - **Letter of Permission to conduct study (from the organisation under study)**
  - **Draft Questionnaire**
  - **Ethical Clearance Form (Signed)**

# **CHECKLIST**

**Please ensure that the following documents are included in your proposal before submission and that all headings above are adhered to.**

<b><u>Documents to be included</u></b>	<b><u>Cross (x)</u></b>
<b>Ethical Clearance Form</b>	
<b>Permission Letter from the Company</b>	
<b>Draft Questionnaire (5 point Likert Scale)</b>	