Marking Rubric for Honours Research Proposal

	N	P	C	D	HD→	
	Fail (<50%)	H3 (50-59%)	H2B (60-69%)	H2A (70-79%)	Good H1(80-89%)	Exemplary H1 (90-100%)
Background (50%) Key studies that bear directly on the development of the research project should be clearly described (i.e. shouldn't be a comprehensive review of the literature)	Very limited or no exploration of the seminal background to the issue/research focus is provided. Background research lacks focus, specificity, and/or credibility. No rationale provided for research study.	Seminal or obvious background material has been provided, but logical links between concepts are missing. The background section is mostly a description of existing research, with very limited efforts to synthesise themes or concepts. Limited description of rationale with no strong justification.	Most of the background material aligns with the focus area of the proposed research and efforts to synthesise these materials is apparent. However, some notable or key theories, concepts or literature are either missing or lack contextual elaboration, or some information presented is outside the focus of the proposed research. The focus and approach of the proposed research are informed somewhat by the current state of the literature but not convincingly justified by limitations in the literature nor the rationale presented.	The background material aligns with the proposed area of research and sufficient information is presented, however, synthesis of findings could be improved or some points expanded upon or focused on in a more considered way. This background material is organised in a mostly logical and coherent way and there are clear links to relevant theories and concepts. The current state of art and limitations in the literature somewhat justifies the focus of the intended research and the selected approach presented in the proposal, although these points require further elaboration or support to convince the reader.	The reader is provided with a sufficient summary of key background to the proposed research (including seminal/pertinent studies, issues to address, relevant definitions). The focus and approach of the background is clearly communicated in a logical and considered way with most logical links between concepts presented. Only a few minor ideas have been omitted or require further explanation or justification. A convincing evidence-based justification and rationale is provided for the focus of the research presented in the proposal with minor need for elaboration.	The reader is provided with an aligned, synthesised summary of all key background to the proposed research (including seminal/pertinent studies, issues to be addressed, relevant definitions). The focus and approach of the background is clearly communicated in a considered way with all logical links between concepts presented. A convincing evidence-based justification and rationale is provided for the focus of the research presented in the proposal.
Aims and Hypotheses (20%) *Note: Hypotheses may not be applicable for qualitative research. Where appropriate 'research questions' may be considered in replacement of hypotheses	No aims/hypotheses presented or the aims/hypotheses do not align with the background research.	Aims/Hypotheses are presented yet lack clarity. There is partial alignment, but lack of justification against the summary of the background research provided.	Statement of aims/hypotheses is provided but these are unclear or confusing. There is an acceptable alignment with the summary of the background research provided.	Statement of aims/hypotheses that are aligned with the summary provided; however, it lacks some clarity and may not be fully justified or feasible.	Statement of aims/hypotheses that are aligned with the research background provided and the aims/hypotheses are justified and feasible with some missing nuances.	A clear, logical and explicit statement of aims/hypotheses is provided with a clear alignment to the background research. The aims are entirely feasible with a nuanced justification as to the significance of the project.
Proposed Methodology & Data Analysis Plan (20%)	No replicable or appropriate method is reported - information is omitted, or lacks detail in many different areas OR The method described has very limited relevance to the research question and/or no grounding in any relevant methodology. No understanding or explanation for how the data will be processed/ cleaned/ analysed (statistically and/or qualitatively).	The method described has relevance to the research question. Justification for the selected method is missing and/or its grounding in existing research approaches lacks clarity. Some key areas of the approach that could have been adapted to allow collection of useful and relevant data and/or validation have been ignored. Significant misunderstanding or lack of explanation present for how the data will be processed/ cleaned/ analysed (statistically and/or qualitatively).	A workable method is described, but it lacks numerous details, and/or incorporates a lot of extraneous information. The methodology has been informed by existing research, but there are some key considerations that have been overlooked. The method described would allow some collection of data relevant to the research question, but its usefulness would be limited. Some errors or omissions in the explanation for how the data will be processed/ cleaned /analysed (statistically and/or qualitatively).	A workable method is clearly described with justified relevance to the research question. The methodology has been informed by existing research approaches, but the adapted approach lacks elaboration/details of the key aspects in some instances. The method described would allow collection of data relevant to the research question but there may not be comment on the replicability and reliability of the data. Explanation for how the data will be processed/ cleaned/ analysed (statistically and/or qualitatively) is provided with minor errors or some issues with clarity.	The method described is clearly justified, well-informed by the existing research approaches. The methodology has been adapted for the research focus area and would allow collection of relevant data, but aspects of replicability and reliability have not been described/lack detail. There is a clear explanation for how the data will be processed/ cleaned/ analysed (statistically and/or qualitatively).	A strongly justified and well-informed method is described, which is easily replicable and strongly aligned with the research question and context. The methodology is strongly grounded in existing research approaches, while adapting them for the specific needs of the research focus area. All areas of the approach have been thought out and would allow collection of data that is useful and relevant to the research question. A clearly structured explanation for how the data will be processed/ cleaned/ analysed (statistically and/or qualitatively) is provided.

Significance and/or innovation (10%)	No attempt to convince the reader of the significance and/or innovation of the research or the information is entirely inaccurate.	Little consideration given to the significance and/or innovation of the research project. What is available is either inaccurate or needs significant elaboration.	Some consideration given to the significance and/or innovation of the research project. What is available may have minor inaccuracies or needs some elaboration. Discussion is perfunctory.	Consideration is given to the significance and/or innovation of the research project. What is available may have minor inaccuracies or needs some elaboration but provides some compelling insight.	Section is well articulated and works to convince the reader of the significance and/or innovation of the research. Information provided is accurate and compelling but may be missing some minor critical insight.	Section is clearly articulated and works to convince the reader of the significance and/or innovation of the research. Information provided is accurate, compelling, and insightful.