



UMT

MPhil/PhD ENGLISH LITERATURE THESIS PROPOSAL-WRITING FORMAT

Department of English and Literary Studies

School of Liberal Arts

In addition to the requirements shared by the department for writing an MPhil/PhD thesis, following are some guidelines for producing a good MPhil/PhD thesis proposal:

1. Title

A *title* that is appealing and meaningful, reflecting the content/argument of the thesis. This is just a tentative title for your intended research. You might be asked to revise your title at the time of your presentation at the Board of Studies (BOS) or Department Graduate Committee (DGC) meeting after which you will not be allowed to change it.

2. Abstract

The proposal should include a concise statement of your intended research of no more than 100 words. This may be a couple of sentences setting out the problem that you want to examine or the central question that you wish to address. The abstract should end with about five keywords that can guide the reader towards the main contents of the thesis.

3. Introduction

Introduce the proposal by outlining the research topic and its relevance to the theoretical/conceptual and recent debates on the topic. This will allow you to demonstrate a

familiarity with the relevant field as well as the ability to communicate clearly and concisely. The problem statement should be clearly defined (if you have one), the research purpose well formulated and the research questions or objectives or both clearly articulated. The significance of your research should be sound and with a strong motivation (i.e., the relevance to practice or to theory or to both).

4. Brief Literature Review

The proposal should demonstrate the originality of your intended research. You should therefore explain why your research is important (for example, by explaining how your research builds on and adds to the current state of knowledge in the field or by setting out reasons why it is timely to research your proposed topic). A brief background / context should be developed to bring out the originality of the research.

5. Research Methodology (Framework) and Method

This section should clearly chart out the Critical Framework or theory used in your research. It should also outline your method of analysis, explaining how you are going to conduct your research; e.g., is it through textual analysis, discourse analysis, thematic analysis etc. Although the specific methods of your research may change during the course of your studies, it is important at this stage to provide a well-reasoned suggestion for how you aim to conduct research on your chosen topic and the rationale of this approach is best suited to your area of research.

6. Bibliography

The cited references should appear at the end of the thesis under the heading *References*. All cited sources throughout the thesis should appear in this section. References should follow the latest version of MLA (Modern Language Association) format style. The candidate should use information ethically, i.e., there should be no evidence of plagiarism. All ideas, text, graphics, tables and media should be credited to the source. Overall acceptance of similarity is 15% with no single source more than 4%.

Note: The MPhil document should have a sound structure and a clear writing style. All expressions and grammar should be used in the correct way. Remember that the proposal is intended as a preliminary indication of your credibility for postgraduate research and so first impressions do matter. The word-limit of the proposal should be between 3000-3500 words (including the bibliography).