

Module 2 - Doctoral Thesis Research Proposal

This module focuses on the development of the Thesis Research Proposal. The purpose of the module is to provide the student with knowledge concerning the constituent elements a research project proposal should include. Students are expected to apply this knowledge in development of an initial research proposal draft, which, it is anticipated, will subsequently be refined, and developed to appropriately address a clearly defined research gap that has relevance within business and management, and can be executed.

Module 2 consists of three study units:

1. An advanced course on “Developing your Doctoral Thesis Research Proposal” of 8 weeks duration that will be completed over the first two months. The course is available from: https://www.doctoratehub.com/advanced_courses/206
2. A two-month club journey period geared at self-directed learning where the student will be expected to engage with the literature so to (i) clearly position the research project within the identified research gap, and to (ii) work out the exact methodology and timeline for the research implementation.
3. A conference where the student presents the results and outcomes of the module to two expert academics.

Research scoping lectures and supervisor identification

During Module 2, students will be provided with a number of research ‘scoping’ lectures to enable perspective as to the orientation they consider their research should follow. The following module specific research scoping lecturers will be provided:

1. Conceptual versus theoretical frameworks.
2. An introduction to mixed-methods research.
3. Formulating research question(s) & designing your research framework.
4. How to write a good discussion chapter?
5. How difficult is it to write a doctoral research proposal?
6. How to identify and defend your research methods and methodology?
7. Research strategies: Why & which one to select?
8. Formulating thinkable research question(s) or hypotheses.

In addition to this, the DoctorateHub faculty members will run research scoping lectures where they introduce their research fields to provide students with a perspective on how to develop their research. The lectures will also serve as a mean for students and faculty members to get to know each other and therefore to support the matching of students and future supervisors.

a) Knowledge gained through Module 2

At the end of the module/unit the learner will:

- a) Acquire a systematic understanding of a highly specialised field of study which builds upon specialised or multi-disciplinary knowledge based on examining the world in which business practitioners operate;
- b) Develop critical knowledge of the doctoral research process with reference to business processes and the social world of organisations;
- c) Show understanding of diverse scholarly sources to present and justify doctoral research and critically examine their relevance when applied to business and management practice;
- d) Demonstrate understanding of business and management theories, frameworks, models, and methodologies to explore and resolve contemporary research issues in the student's workplace/chosen organisation;
- e) Creatively apply the knowledge learned in the module to develop and communicate critical and original solutions for doctoral research in the selected research topic;

Extend, redefine, and/or make an original contribution to existing practice and/or knowledge in the area of research with practical relevance to the organisational development and/or business processes.

b) Skills gained through Module 2

At the end of the module/unit the learner will have acquired the following skills to:

- a) Demonstrate mastery in business and management skills with direct reference to the selection of an apposite research topic, conducting analysis of extant research literature and, in writing, planning and design of research project using logical and systematic argumentation to justify and present innovative scholarly research;
- b) Autonomously acquire data and information from different sources of evidence and consolidate it in a unique research project leading to its presentation to a variety of audiences including, initially, academic peers followed by dissemination to business and management professionals;
- c) In consultation with tutor, to develop competence in writing a research project proposal of 'publishable quality' explaining the basis of a specific topic based on communication expertise to a wide audience including peers and the general public;
- d) Consider and respond to workplace-based management and business problems that are technological, social, cultural, as well as consideration of ethical issues to explicitly address the changing needs of a knowledge-based society;

Demonstrate expertise in critical evaluation and analysis through working with incomplete or limited information in order to solve organisational and/or business problems in new or unfamiliar situations using original research.

c) Competencies gained through Module 2

At the end of the module/unit the learner will have acquired the responsibility and autonomy to:

- a) Demonstrate command and authority in a specialised field of research with reference to business and management and make appropriate judgement(s) involving a multitude of interacting and potentially complex factors to independently develop, write and defend the doctoral thesis research proposal;
- b) Consider and promote social, scientific, technological and ethical advancement in the specialised field of business and management research;
- c) Show a sustained commitment in the development of novel and unique ideas and solutions with practical implementation in business or not-for-profit organisations;
- d) Develop independent thinking in identifying, presenting and justifying research issues related to doctoral research carried out in the student’s chosen organisation;

Carry out planning and organisation of a doctoral research project situated in a business or not-for-profit organisation in a way that shows evidence of scholastic development and confidence in critical thinking.

d) Learning hour estimates – full time

Module Weekly learning hour distribution	Course / Mentoring	Clubs	Sum
A. Reading	15	15	240
B. Writing (assignments, drafts, etc.)	5	5	80
C. Practicing (training, presenting, data collection, etc.)	5	5	80
D. Peer work (group discussions, peer feedback, etc.)	5	1	48
E. Assessment (of assignments / drafts)	1	1	16
F. Live sessions	1	1	16
G. Formative Feedback (by supervisor, mentor, chairs)	1	1	16
Sum weekly hours	33	29	496
H. Research Scoping Lectures (90min per session)	6	6	12

I. End of module conference	0	4	4
Sum of hours per module*	270	242	512
Module total	512		
Contact (D, F, H)	76		
Supervised (G)	16		
Self-Study (A, B, C)	400		
Assessment (E, I)	20		
Average weekly learning hours	32		
* Considering 8 course/mentored weeks followed by 8 club weeks per module.			

e) Learning hour estimates – part time

Module Weekly learning hour distribution	Course / Mentoring	Clubs	Sum
A. Reading	15	7,5	300
B. Writing (assignments, drafts, etc.)	5	2,5	100
C. Practicing (Training, presenting, data collection, etc.)	5	2,5	100
D. Peer work (group discussions, peer feedback, etc.)	5	0,5	52
E. Assessment (of assignments / drafts)	1	0,5	20
F. Live sessions	1	0,5	20
G. Formative Feedback (by supervisor, mentor, chairs)	1	0,5	20
Sum weekly hours	33	14,5	612
H. Research Scoping Lectures (90min per session)	6	6	12
I. End of module conference	0	4	4
Sum hours per module*	270	358	628
Module total	628		
Contact (D, F, H)	84		

Supervised (G)	20
Self-Study (A, B, C)	500
Assessment (E, I)	24
Average weekly learning hours	19,63
* Considering 8 course/mentored weeks followed by 24 club weeks per module	

f) Assessment grid

<u>Module</u>	<u>Weekly course assignments & mentoring drafts to be submitted for formative assessment and feedback</u>	<u>End of course / mentoring written and oral assessments</u>	<u>End of module conference assessments</u>
<p>Module 2:</p> <p>Doctoral Thesis Research Proposal</p>	<p>Week 1 - Summary that outlines the exact problem or issue that the research will be tackling.</p> <p>Week 2 - Document providing an overview of existing studies that have looked at this problem.</p> <p>Week 3 - Document outlining what is already known about the research problem, what still remains unknown and therefore, what your research wants to examine further.</p> <p>Week 4 - Document outlining who the stakeholders are to whom the issue and problem relates.</p> <p>Week 5 - Diagram that illustrates the relation in between the (research) problem, (research) question(s), and the outcome expectations of your research.</p>	<p>A draft thesis research proposal. The proposal shall integrate the proposal development and enhancement achieved during the course, a comprehensive literature review and a dedicated methodology section.</p> <p><i>Type: Individual assignment.</i></p> <p><i>Weighting: 20%.</i></p> <p><i>Written component: Word count: 3,000 words (excluding table of content, figures, references).</i></p> <p><i>Oral component: Presentation of 10 minutes.</i></p> <p><i>Submission: on-line in the DoctorateHub system.</i></p>	<p>A revised draft (final draft) of the thesis research proposal and its presentation.</p> <p><i>Type: Individual assessment.</i></p> <p><i>Written component: Word count: 8,000 words.</i></p> <p><i>Weighting: 70%.</i></p> <p><i>Oral component: Presentation of 5 minutes, followed by a 15 minutes Q/A session, and a final 10 minutes on the next development steps.</i></p> <p><i>Weighting: 10%</i></p> <p><i>Submission: on-line in the DoctorateHub system.</i></p>

	<p>Week 6 - Document based on the previous studies identified in Task 3, what research methodology will be considered and what are the research methods to be adopted for the research.</p> <p>Week 7 - Skeleton draft doctoral thesis research proposal.</p> <p>Week 8 - First working draft of your Doctoral Thesis Research Proposal.</p>	<p><i>Due date:</i> 1 week after the last lecture of the module.</p>	<p><i>Due date:</i> 1 week before the conference.</p>
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