

PhD proposal guidelines

The dissertation proposal should start with a brief synopsis of the topic you wish to address and then address the following questions:

1. What is already known about this topic? What are the key works and who are the prominent scholars in the field?
2. What are the issues involving this topic which generate discussion and disagreement and warrant further investigation? Why are those issues important?
3. Which of these issues do you propose to investigate and why? And what impact do you expect your final work to have on the field?
4. What methodology will you use to answer this question?
5. To what extent will your research involve previously unexamined primary sources, 'new' analyses of existing source materials or some combination of both?
6. What languages will you use to access the relevant primary sources and what is your ability in these languages?
7. What is the importance of completing the dissertation and being awarded the PhD to your future career?

The proposal should be at least five pages in length and include an 'indicative' bibliography of sources, both primary and secondary, which you have already identified as relevant to your research.

If English is not your native language, your application should also include a recent, research-oriented example of your writing in English of 2000 to 3000 words in length.

Based on chapter three of Writing the Successful Thesis: Entering the Conversation, by Irene L Clark, Prentice Hall, PTR, 2006.