

FHES Guideline for Research Proposal Document

Introduction

This guideline is intended to assist students in the Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences (FHES) at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) in completing their Research Proposal document (formerly PGR1). It provides an overview of the required sections, key considerations, and references to relevant documents and resources. For further information and resources refer to the [Postgraduate Handbook](#), [GRS documents](#) and the [FHES Canvas page](#).

The development of your Research Proposal should be informed by ongoing discussions with, and feedback from, your supervisors. Your proposal should be consistent with methodological and disciplinary norms in your field of research. Suggested headings, word counts and links to resources are provided for guidance only.

Research Proposal

Working Title (10-15 words)

Provide the current proposed title of your research. Usually, the title embodies the research question and methodology.

Research Question(s) (10-20 words)

Clearly state the research question(s). Ensure they are focused, methodologically congruent, and framed as a question.

Abstract (75-100 words)

Provide a brief, non-technical summary of your research proposal. Write this section last.

Literature/Past Research Review (350-500 words)

The review of literature along with other sources as appropriate, should define key concepts and terms, and provide a brief synthesis of the existing knowledge in the field. The literature review should illustrate where the proposed research may extend, contribute to, or address gaps in the current body of knowledge.

Design of the Study (750-1,000 words)

In collaboration with your supervisors as you prepare your study design, carefully consider the size, scope and complexity of the proposed research. It is important that your proposal is consistent with your qualification and feasible within the learning hours and timeframe.

RESEARCH COMPONENT	COURSES	POINTS	HOURS OF LEARNING
RESEARCH PROJECT	PHTY995 BHSc(PHTY)(Hons) NURS987 MNSc	30	300
RESEARCH PROJECT	HEAL996 MHSc/MPsych/MPhyPrac, HEAL805 BSR(Hons)/BHSc(Hons), SCIE896 BSc, SCIE996 BSc(Hons)	45	450
DISSERTATION	HEAL901 MHSc/MPH/MDRMD, PSYC997 MHSc, HEAL997 MDRMD/MHPrac, SPOR997 MSEH, SCIE997 MSc/BAdvSc (Hons), MATH997 Msc	60	600
THESIS	HEAL998 MHSc/MPH/MDRMD, SPOR988 MSEH	90	900
THESIS	HEAL999 MHSc/ MSpEx/MPH, SCIE999 MSc (Res), MELS999 MMLS MPhil	120	1200

Methodology and Methods

- Describe and justify your overarching methodology and research design. Some disciplines require discussion of the research paradigm, underpinning theoretical frameworks, methodology, and researcher positionality.
- Describe and justify the sample, sampling/recruitment strategy, data collection and analysis methods.
- If statistical analysis is planned. Specify the sources of expert advice consulted, such as the School Biostatistician, an External Biostatistician, or your supervisor.

[Refer to the Biostatistics and Epidemiology department page and clinic booking system](#)

Cultural Considerations

- Ensure cultural considerations are thoughtfully incorporated throughout your research proposal, including in the background, methodology, and methods sections where relevant.
- Identify the social, cultural, and ethnic groups likely to take part, benefit from, or be impacted by your research. Discuss the relevance of your proposed research to tangata whenua specifically.
- Describe your current and planned engagement with social, cultural, and/or ethnic groups likely to take part, benefit from, or be impacted by your research.
- Identify how commitment to te Tiriti o Waitangi is reflected in the proposed design and conduct of this research.

Refer to [Te Tiriti o Waitangi in Research in Aotearoa](#) resources

Hazards and Risks

- Summarise the potential hazards and risks associated with the research. Separately complete the Postgraduate Research Hazards and Risks Assessment.

[Refer to the Postgraduate Hazards and Risks Protocol](#)

Ethics (50-150 words)

- Identify the key ethical issues your research raises for participants, yourself as the researcher, and the wider community or institutions.
- Identify and provide details of all ethical, legal, public health, environmental and locality obligations or approvals required for the jurisdictions in which the research is being undertaken, and your progress toward achieving approvals.
- Please note:
 - For research components under 90 points where required, ethics approval should have been obtained by the supervisor *prior* to the proposal stage. Proposals without ethics approval will not normally be approved.
 - It is the responsibility of the student and supervisors to ensure that all required ethical, legal, public health, environmental and locality obligations or approvals are obtained prior to commencement of the data collection. In addition to any required jurisdictional ethical approvals, AUT postgraduate students must also have approval from Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) before commencing their research.

Refer to [AUT Research Ethics /Matatiak Rangahua](#)

Resources and Budget (50-100 words)

- Identify the key university resources needed for the conduct of this research.
- Where relevant, identify any training and resources required beyond that provided through [Faculty, Library and Graduate Research School researcher development opportunities](#).
- Use a table to provide an itemized budget for all research-related costs. This may include equipment, consumables, travel, gifts, koha, staffing, analytical support, access to specialist facilities, and/or access to specialist IT platforms/software.
 - For each item, list the source of funding that will cover its cost.
 - Where these costs are covered through in-kind support from another institution or external organisation, or an external research grant, this should be noted and supporting evidence made available on request.

- Acknowledge that any costs exceeding approved faculty research funds and any external grant funding will be covered by the student.

Refer to *Research Basics of the Faculty PGR Canvas page for an example budget and ASSIST Fund Guidelines*

Location (50-100 words)

- State where the research will be conducted. If not at an AUT campus, justify the location (either within New Zealand or internationally) and provide a brief summary of the 'Off-campus plan'.
- For international research locations identify the local supervisor/advisor and their contribution to the research. [Refer to the Off-Campus Registration Protocol](#)

Timetable for Completion (50-100 words)

- Provide a comprehensive timeline for completion of the research using a Gantt chart or similar.
- Outline the major activities required to complete each phase of the research and thesis chapter write-up, with expected completion dates.

Refer to [Research Basics on the Faculty PGR Canvas Page for a sample Gantt chart](#)