UNIVERSITY of NICOSIA

PhD in Psychology

Department of Social Sciences

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Regulations for application proposal

September 2025

Purpose
The proposal provides the School and potential research supervisors with a clear indication of the topic in which the applicant is interested. It also gives an indication of the student's ability to identify and develop an interesting research question. Most potential supervisors will consider research proposals as preliminary indicators of the applicant's area of interest and will not necessarily assume that the proposal defines exactly the research that the student will undertake. The proposal should be linked to a specific potential supervisor research area (note that applications that fall outside the areas of expertise of the supervisory team will not be considered)

Word length
We recommend that the proposal is between 4000 and 5000 words. The candidate needs to provide a word count at the beginning of the proposal. The word count should include all text and tables used in the proposal (references are not part of the word count). **PROPOSALS WITH MORE THAN 5000 WORDS WILL NOT BE EVALUATED!**

Structure
The proposal should be structured using the following headers and content.

1. *Abstract (maximum 250 words)*

   This should give a summary of the project and should be structured with the following sections:
   Objectives
   Methods
   Potential Contribution of the project

2. *Background and rationale (maximum 2000 words)*

   This section should outline the subject of research in terms of both theoretical issues and relevant empirical applications. This section provides a justification to the project based on theory and previous literature. The applicant should also demonstrate familiarity with the major lines of argument which have been developed in the area and demonstrate an understanding of the ideas and findings of key studies on the topic using the most relevant and up-to-date sources. This background section should:
   - Outline the general background to the research (key concepts and their theoretical underpinnings)
   - Identify a particular gap in the literature and/or a novel approach to the understanding of the specified field of research **(merely saying that you are repeating a previous study/ies on a local population is not enough)**
   - Provide research questions and hypotheses that you have identified.

3. *Methods and plan of analysis (maximum 2500 words).*
   This section should indicate the methods used within the study, including the sample, recruitment, procedure, design and method of analysis. If your proposed research involves empirical work, you should provide an indication of the form and location of that empirical work and where and how you might collect relevant data. You should also give consideration to the feasibility of collecting the data **(Do not expect the University to provide access to your population of Choice)**. An estimate of sample size and power should be provided (please use GPower for your calculations if using a quantitative approach - http://www.gpower.hhu.de/). Ensure that the research question and methods match. The method section should:
   - Indicate the methodological strategy or philosophy you intend to follow.
   - Identify the main features of your sample (Participants inclusion and exclusion criteria)
   - Describe the sampling strategy and how you will recruit participants
   - Identify, define and how you are going to measure the major constructs (variables) in your study/studies. Provide information regarding the psychometric properties of any quantitative measure being used.
     .

4. *Statement of contribution to research and practice (maximum 250 words).*
   This section should summarise the potential impact of the proposed research. Although no indication of the research findings can be presented, it is beneficial to demonstrate how you envisage your research to contribute to debates and discussions within the area, make a contribution to the existing work and extend understanding.

5. *References*
   Finally, you should provide references for the research proposal. **These are not counted for the word count.**

The proposals will only be accepted if written in English (UK). Candidates are required to pay particular attention to tone (an academic tone and writing in the passive voice are essential) and grammar (grammar and spelling mistakes will be taken into consideration when making a decision regarding the proposal). All proposals are assessed by the Departmental Doctoral Programs Committee and when appropriate by another member of staff with extensive expertise in the research area of the proposal.

Submission of a proposal does not automatically guarantee invitation for Interview.