Department of Management, University of Otago: Research proposal instructions

Please write a short, **1000 word max (excluding references),** provisional proposal using the following headings as a guide. Your proposal should be in 12-point font, single spaced and written in lay English for a general audience under the headings as indicated. **You may delete the italic text under each header (including these instructions).**

Topic/Research Question:
Provide a brief review of the literature pointing out blindspots or 'gaps' where we have insufficient theoretical knowledge of the problem.
Literature should be current (e.g., most of the discipline-focused literature should be published from 2013 onwards; keep seminal articles or older methodological articles) and relevant to the academic discipline or managerial context.
The section should culminate in a succinct statement of the research question or research problem that you are addressing.

Research Benefits/Significance:
Provide a brief outline (2-3 sentences) of the benefits/effects your research may produce – for whom, why, and in what way?
You should include two paragraphs that separately address practical benefits (e.g., to professionals) and academic/theoretical benefits (e.g., tightening a theory or evaluating boundary conditions or moderating variables).

Design/Plan of the Study:
Provide a brief outline of the potential methodology and methods/research technique(s) to be employed in the study. These should be selected to enable you to best address the question/problem/issue you are studying.
You should demonstrate a 'fit' between problem and the method you propose and you should also demonstrate familiarity with the method.
This section is crucial as:
- *it enables us to determine whether you have sufficient background knowledge and are likely to complete the project*
- *we can then match up your topic and method with our staff to ensure we can supervise the project*

Timeline (two semesters for a MCom and 3 to 4 years for a PhD):
Sequencing of activities and expected durations. Can be a table or a Gantt chart.
For PhD candidates:
- *The timeline should include 'Confirmation' – the submission of a 10,000 word document approximately 9-12 months into the programme so that the candidate can be 'confirmed'. (This is a routine and required step.)*
- *Most PhD students submit between 3 & 3.5 years. The examination process takes approximately 3 months. If changes are required these can be extensive (months of work required). Therefore, the programme often takes about 4 years.*

References
This is a scholarly proposal and it should contain references.
Are you aware of seminal or foundational work in this area?
Are you using current research and working at the cutting edge?