

## **Department of Preventive and Social Medicine Research Advisory Committee**

### **RESEARCH PROPOSALS**

These guidelines are for students seeking approval for dissertation or thesis research projects (including Bachelors, Masters, and Doctoral degrees) that involve a supervisor in the Department of Preventive and Social Medicine. The committee needs to be satisfied that 1) the project is worthwhile and appropriate for the degree in question, 2) it is achievable, and 3) that the supervisory team is suited to the proposed research.

Bachelors and Masters students need RAC approval *before* they start. For Doctoral students it is expected that the RAC approval will be achieved in the first 6 months of study.

Proposals should be structured and concise – usually 3-5 single-spaced pages. They should include well-defined objectives and a clear outline of the methods to be used. The background section should provide the context for the project, but need not be lengthy.

Students who are primarily based in other departments can submit a copy of the proposal used for their primary Department. The Research Advisory Committee does not approve or decline these proposals but will provide feedback to the Departmental supervisor(s) and approve of their involvement.

This template is a guide only and may be modified to suit the project.

#### **1. Title page**

Name of research project, name and current academic qualifications of candidate, degree sought, proposed supervisors, and proposed date of submission of the thesis.

#### **2. Abstract**

About 150 words summarising the proposal

#### **3. Introduction or Background (500 words or less)**

A *brief* review of background factors, problems and/or issues to which the project is addressed. Include a summary of previous relevant research on the problem and identify the gap in knowledge that the dissertation or thesis aims to address.

#### **4. Research Purpose**

One or more concise, clear, and specific statements on what the project seeks to achieve. These could be framed as research questions that the project intends to answer, or the hypotheses that you intend to test.

#### **5. Methods**

This is the most important part of your proposal. This section should demonstrate that the study design and methods can be expected to enable you to answer your research question(s). This is likely to include how participants will be recruited, what data will be collected and how, and an analysis plan. If this is part of a larger project involving other researchers, make it clear what you will do.

1. For *quantitative* research, it is expected that statistical advice will have been sought and this should be reflected in the proposal. Provide details on specific statistical methods that could be used in your analyses and justify the planned sample size. If appropriate, describe how you will treat confounding, missing data, and clustering.

2. For *qualitative* research, provide details on the methodological approach, sampling, participant recruitment, and data analysis. If transcription is required, who will do this? Are there resources for external transcription services?
3. For *mixed methods* research, both of the above should be addressed.

## **6. Health Significance**

Statements conveying why the proposed topic is important: the nature and extent of the problem the research is addressing, and how this research will help.

## **7. Responsiveness to Māori**

How might your research contribute to the health needs of Māori? What is the health significance and context of this research to Māori? Have you sought advice for the study from a Māori researcher/representative? If your research is not relevant to Māori, please explain why.

## **8. Timeline**

Provide an approximate timeline for literature review, data collection, analysis, writing up, and dissemination of results.

## **9. Expected Outcome or Impact**

A concise description of the effects of the completed project. How might the findings be disseminated and/or implemented and who would be involved in this?

## **10. Resources**

What will be required to complete the project? Proposed funding sources.

## **11. Organisation of the Project**

Who is involved? How will you obtain access to the data population being studied? What are the ethical issues? What other consultation will be required?. If appropriate, describe any relevant experience that you have that will contribute to the research and describe the experience that your supervisors will contribute to the research.

## **12. References**

List the key references only.

The submitted version **must** be approved by the named supervisors. They should confirm this by signing the proposal or by email to the Research Student Convener or Administrator.

**Submit the proposal by midday on the Monday before the committee meets at the latest.**

*DPSM May 2019*