

Research Fundamentals Workshop series 2006 – 2007

One unit credit of postgraduate advance standing will be awarded for this workshop series through Southern Cross University, School of Health and Human Science upon completion of this assessment and attendance at all sessions (excused absences allowed) of the series.

Assessment task: Write a research proposal

Choose a problem, preferably from within your field of study, and write a research proposal that addresses it. Your proposal should be approximately 3000 words in length.

Your proposal should consist of:

- Your research question. Clearly define your topic and briefly describe the variables on which you intend to focus.
- Background and rationale. From your reading of the literature, and your personal and professional experience or interest, develop the backgrounds and rationale of your intended study. What is important about this study and what will it contribute to the knowledge base.
- Literature review. Write a concise literature review that demonstrates your ability to critique the work of other researchers. Include gaps, shortcomings, or inconsistencies in the literature and suggest how your research can cover those gaps.
- Ethical issues and how you plan to deal with them
- Research design. Including data collection and analytic methods you plan to use. Address possible threats to validity and reliability (sources of bias and confounding), and describe how your research design or analysis methodology will accommodate these.
- Define your sampling technique. Include the population that your sample will be drawn from, and inclusion/exclusion criteria for study subjects.
- Statistical tests and analysis.
- A discussion of potential shortcomings or weaknesses of your study, and how you plan to disseminate your findings.

Your assignment will be assessed using the following marking guide;

Criteria	Marks available
research problem framing	10
background and rationale	10
Literature review	20
ethical issues	10
research design	20
sampling/subject selection	10
data analysis	10
shortcomings and dissemination	10
Total	100

Assessment guidelines

Standards of student's performance in relation to each of the assessment criteria will be interpreted by using the following guidelines:

In the area of content, the following will be taken into account:

- The selection of literature reviewed on the topic
- Appropriateness of the research design selected
- Clarity of understanding of the range of research designs available/selected.

In the area of presentation skills, the following will be taken into account:

- Clarity of expression
- Proper acknowledgement of sources
- Logical planning and sequence
- Overall presentation, including correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation