Study and Presentation Skills

Paper A - Research Proposal

Spring 2024

Assignment Marking Scheme

Sample Assessment

Markers are advised that, unless a task specifies that an answer be provided in a particular form, then an answer that is correct (factually or in practical terms) **must** be given the available marks. If there is doubt as to the correctness of an answer, the relevant NCC Education materials should be the first authority.

This marking scheme has been prepared as a **guide only** to markers and there will frequently be many alternative responses which will provide a valid answer.

Each candidate's script must be fully annotated with the marker's comments (where applicable) and the marks allocated for each part of the tasks.

Throughout the marking, please credit any valid alternative point.

Where markers award half marks in any part of a task, they should ensure that the total mark recorded for the task is rounded up to a whole mark.

Marker's comments:

Moderator's comments:

Mark:	Moderated mark:	Final mark:

Penalties applied for academic malpractice:

Task Element	Guide	Maximum Marks
1	*The length of a research proposal is appropriate.* • *4 marks - Proposal between 900 and 1100 words.* • *2 marks - The proposal is fewer than 800 words.* • *0 marks - Proposal is more than 1100 words.*	*4*
2	*A research proposal is appropriately structured.* • *10 marks - The structure is very logical, appropriate, and easy to follow. The sections are clear and links between paragraphs and sections are made effectively.* • *8 marks - The structure is logical and easy to follow. Clear sections and some links between paragraphs and sections are generally made effective.* • *6 marks - The overall structure is generally clear. Sections are largely appropriate and there is an attempt in places to link paragraphs and sections, and this is generally effective.* • *4 marks - There is an overall flow to the proposal, although the structure makes it difficult to follow in places. Some sections may not be sequenced logically. Though links between paragraphs and sections are attempted, this is not always effective.* • *2 marks - There is no overall flow to the proposal, although some sections do have internal structure. Sections are unclear and attempts at linking between paragraphs and sections do not improve the flow.* • *1 mark - There is no logical order to the proposal, and it is difficult to follow. The sections are unclear and linking throughout is inaccurate or inappropriate.* • *0 marks - The information is disorganised and cannot be followed. The proposal is not broken into sections and there is no linking of the elements*	*10*

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3	*Explain the proposed research topic and research objective.*	
	• *10 marks - The title, topic, and research objective are explained clearly. Sets the parameters very effectively. Very well-defined and appropriate research question or hypothesis. A very good understanding of the research process is displayed.*	
	• *8 marks - All required areas are covered. Sets the parameters effectively. Well-defined and appropriate research question or hypothesis. A good understanding of the research process is displayed.*	
	• *6 marks - All required areas are covered though there are some faults. Sets the parameters well. An appropriate research question or hypothesis. Shows some understanding of the research process.*	
	• *4 marks - Most required areas are covered though there are some faults or gaps. Parameters are not entirely clear. An appropriate research question or hypothesis though could be clearer. Some of the steps in the research process, or some issues, are not clear.*	
	• *2 marks - Some required areas are covered, though there are some faults and gaps. The parameters are not clear. A vague or inappropriate research question or hypothesis. Some of the steps in the research are not clear.*	
	• *1 mark - Little is said about the required areas and there are faults. Fails to set the parameters effectively. A vague and inappropriate research question or hypothesis. The steps in the research are not clear.*	
	• *0 marks - No content covering the required areas. Research question or hypothesis not defined or appropriate. Parameters are not set. No understanding of the research process is displayed.*	*10*

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4	*Presents key findings from existing research and literature on the topic of the proposed research.*	
	• *14 marks - Identifies key information from appropriate sources. Shows evidence of critical analytical thinking to evaluate the evidence and draw conclusions. Highlights how proposed research can fill a gap or extend existing research.*	
	• *12 marks - Identifies key information from appropriate sources, though with omissions. Some evidence of critical and analytical thinking to evaluate the evidence and conclude. Suggests how the proposed research might add to existing research.*	
	• *9 marks - Identifies some information from appropriate sources, though may miss key studies or use less appropriate sources. Some evaluation of the evidence and conclusions. Suggests how the proposed research might fit with existing research.*	
	• *7 marks - Identifies some information from appropriate sources, though may have missed some key studies and used sources lacking authority. Some evaluation of the evidence and valid conclusions. Unclear about how the proposed research might fit with existing research.*	
	• *5 marks - Some relevant information from several sources, not all authoritative. Some evidence of evaluation to conclude. Limited suggestions of how the proposed research might fit within the existing literature.*	
	• *2 mark - Limited relevant information from appropriate sources. Little evaluation of the evidence. Unclear how the proposed research might fit within the existing literature.*	
	• *0 marks - Fails to identify any relevant information from appropriate sources. No evaluation of evidence nor conclusions were drawn. No indication of how the proposed research might fit within the existing literature.*	
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5	*Justifies the methodology, research design, and timescales.*	
	• *14 marks - Full justification of choices and explanation of methodology and research design. Thorough consideration of how data will be collected and theoretical issues influencing the decision. Fully explains and then selects appropriate data collection methods.*	
	• *12 marks - Sound justification of choices. Clear explanation of methodology and research design. Considers how data will be collected and theoretical issues influencing the decision. Explains and select appropriate data collection methods.*	
	• *9 marks - Clear choices and explanation of methodology and research design. Considers how data will be collected and some theoretical issues influencing the decision. Explains and select appropriate data collection methods.*	
	• *7 marks - Clear choices and explanation of methodology and research design, though with some omissions. Considers how data will be collected, though limited discussion of theoretical issues influencing the decision. Selects appropriate data collection methods with little explanation.*	
	• *4 marks - Some appropriate choices of methodology and research design. Some omissions and limited explanations. Considers how data will be collected through limited discussion of theoretical issues influencing the decision. Select appropriate data collection methods.*	
	• *2 marks - Limited explanation of choices of methodology and limitations in research design. Little consideration of how data will be collected or theoretical issues influencing the decision. Select some appropriate data collection methods.*	
	• *0 marks - No explanation of choices of methodology and no (or inappropriate) research design. No consideration of how data will be collected or issues influencing the decision. Do not select appropriate data collection methods.*	
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6	*Appropriate treatment of ethical considerations and other challenges.*	
	• *10 marks - Fully addresses ethical considerations such as informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, and codes and guidelines. Discusses the challenges and obstacles relating to the proposed research such as implementation.*	
	• *8 marks - Addresses the range of ethical considerations Discusses key challenges and obstacles relating to the proposed research including implementation.*	
	• *5 marks - Some discussion of the range of ethical considerations, though with omissions. Some discussion of challenges and obstacles relating to the proposed research.*	
	• *2 marks - Limited discussion of either the range of ethical considerations or other challenges and obstacles relating to the proposed research.*	
	• *0 marks - No discussion of ethical considerations and other challenges and obstacles relating to the proposed research.*	*10*
7	*Demonstrates correct referencing and provides a full bibliography using Harvard referencing. Written in appropriate style.*	
	• *8 marks - Fully complete and accurate in-text citation and bibliography using Harvard protocols. Appropriate written style; clear and follows academic conventions.*	
	• *6 marks - Largely complete and accurate in-text citation and bibliography using Harvard protocols. Appropriate written style, largely clear and follows academic conventions.*	
	• *4 marks - Mostly complete and accurate in-text citation and bibliography using Harvard protocols though with some gaps or errors. Acceptable written style, though with some errors.*	
	• *2 marks - Incomplete and/or inaccurate in-text citation and bibliography, though with some gaps, errors or not using Harvard protocols. Written style affects clarity.*	
	• *0 marks - No attempt at referencing; no bibliography or reference list. Inappropriate written style.*	*8*
	Candidate total marks	*/70*

Learning Outcomes Matrix

Task	Learning Outcome(s) / Assessment Criteria assessed	Marker can differentiate between varying levels of achievement
1	1,4	Yes
2	4,	Yes
3	2,3, 5	Yes
4	2,3,5	Yes
5	1, 5	Yes
6	4, 5	Yes

Grade Descriptors

Learning Outcome	Pass	Merit	Distinction
1. Understand the nature and requirements of study at this level, and the skills needed to succeed.	Demonstrate adequate understanding of skills and requirements of HE study.	Demonstrate a robust understanding of skills and requirements of HE study.	Demonstrate a highly comprehensive understanding of skills and requirements of HE study.
2. Be able to gather key information effectively from a variety of appropriate sources.	Demonstrate ability to use a variety of appropriate sources.	Demonstrate ability to use a variety of appropriate sources consistently well.	Demonstrate ability to use a variety of appropriate sources highest standard.
3. Be able to use critical thinking both to analyse and to construct arguments.	Demonstrate adequate and appropriate application of critical thinking and reasoning.	Demonstrate sound and consistently appropriate application of critical thinking and reasoning.	Demonstrate detailed and highly appropriate application of critical thinking and reasoning.
4. Be able to produce a piece of academic work appropriate for this level.	Demonstrate ability to perform the task.	Demonstrate ability to perform the task consistently well.	Demonstrate ability to perform the task to the highest standard.
5. Understand the context, nature, and elements of research.	Demonstrate an adequate level of understanding of the context, nature, and elements of research.	Demonstrate a robust level of understanding of the context, nature, and elements of research.	Demonstrate a highly comprehensive level of understanding of the context, nature, and elements of research.
6. Be able to present a piece of academic work to others.	Demonstrate adequate ability to present to others.	Demonstrate sound and consistent ability to present to others.	Demonstrate ability to present to others at the highest standard.