**Thesis Proposal recommended outline with suggestions and guidelines for inclusion in each section**

**Title:** State the working titles of the proposed empirical study.

**Programme:** DEdPsych

**Date:** Submission date

**Investigator:** Candidate’s full name

**Research Supervisors:** Name and position held of supervisors

**Background:** Briefly (two paragraphs) describe the background to the proposed investigation (psychological theory and research findings). Present the rationale for conducting the research that makes a logical link with the hypotheses or research questions.

**Hypotheses/Research Questions:** Clearly state the main hypotheses (for quantitative methods) and/or research questions to be investigated.

**Design:** Give a brief outline of the type of design to be used and the rationale behind its use. Where appropriate, describe the design in terms of independent (IV) and dependent (DV) variables.

**Participants:** Describe the proposed participant group(s) in terms of recruitment, selection and sample size. Please provide a sample size calculation for quantitative projects or a cited rationale for sample size recruitment for qualitative projects.

It is crucial that you estimate the effect of participants dropping out of your study, and/or of difficulties in recruitment. You should consider this when planning your research. It is not uncommon to achieve only 20-25% successful recruitment of those participants identified as suitable and approached. While some trainees have been more successful, it is very important that you consider that the number of participants who either consent or are suitable for your study may be considerably lower than anticipated.

**Measures:** List all assessment measures to be used, accompanied by a brief statement of the rationale behind each measure. State whether the measures to be used are published and/or in standardised format, briefly noting their statistical properties for validity and reliability. Describe any other materials or apparatus to be used.

Any interview schedules for qualitative work must be attached to the Research Proposal. Enclose one copy of any unpublished measure or questionnaire with your proposal.

We do not usually require you to include standardised tests or copyright materials. However, you should ensure that you deal with the issue of conceptual overlap when using multiple questionnaires. For example, if you want to assess the relationship between ‘depression’ and ‘adjustment to disability’, ensure that you deal with potential item overlap within the scales you choose to measure these two factors. This is because a measure of ‘adjustment’ may include items which relate to depression, such as feeling content with one’s life, feelings of regret or sadness. However, people who are depressed also tend to feel unable to cope with many aspects of life, and they find it difficult to feel that they can have a fulfilling life; so that such items would be common in a measure of depression. As a result, there will be, almost inevitably, a relationship between your measure of adjustment and your measure of depression. Such a finding is not very informative if the items in your scales are measuring similar things. If this appears to be an issue in your research, please include the questionnaires, note any items that seem problematic and discuss how you might deal with this issue.

**Procedure:** Give a brief description of the procedure planned, for example, how questionnaires will be administered (by hand, post, etc.) and completed (anonymously by each participant, read out by experimenter, etc.). Details should be given on how consent will be obtained. Evidence should be supplied to show that the suggested procedure is practicable (candidates should consider the time required for data collection, the availability of participants, etc.). Candidates must include a statement showing that there is agreement within the clinical/educational setting for the piece of work (i.e. confirmation from supervisors, management agreement).

**Data Analysis:** A brief outline of the method(s) of analysis which are to be used should be given. Be sure to describe the analysis you will use for each hypothesis or research question identified. If specialised advice will be required in analysing your study, please indicate the sources of support you have negotiated to provide this specialised help.

**Systematic Review:** Please also state the working title of the proposed systematic review (this could be the question you are seeking to answer in the systematic review) alongside proposed search terms and databases you will be using.

**Contribution to knowledge and implications for educational psychology:** Briefly outline the potential benefits and the original contribution to child /educational psychology which the research will make.

**Cost:** All proposals must be accompanied with completed research budget form which has been approved by your supervisor (see Appendix 3.2 for form). These costs might include funds to pay participants, to order materials or tests or to attend specialist training courses that are essential to your research project. Please set out briefly in your proposal the rationale for these costs and what will need to be provided. You must indicate the total cost for the project and your proposal cannot be approved without this. Travel expenses for you to visit participants need not be itemised in the proposal as these can be claimed in the normal way.

**Timelines:** Please plan timelines for completion of work, key dates and stages of the project, through completion and submission of a Gantt chart. Agree these timelines with your supervisor prior to submission of your thesis proposal. See [http://www.gantt.com](http://www.gantt.com/) for further information about Gantt charts.