Preparing Your PhD Application at LSBU

Before submitting your application, it's essential to confirm that your chosen research area aligns with the expertise of our academic staff. You can explore LSBU's academic profiles by searching for themes, subjects, or individual names as well as each PhD advertisement will let you know of the name and contact details of the corresponding supervisor.

Research Proposal Requirements
Some programmes have specific guidelines for research proposals. Please refer to the relevant course information page for detailed entry requirements.
Unless otherwise stated, your proposal should be between **1,500 – 2,000 words** and include the following components:

A Working Title
Choose a title that is clear, descriptive, and goes beyond listing keywords. A compelling title can spark interest and positively influence how your proposal is received.

- Consider a title that reflects a functional relationship (e.g., between variables or concepts).
- Aim for something informative yet engaging.

An overview of the Research Area

Provide a brief abstract outlining your general area of study and the academic discipline(s) it falls under.

- Highlight your relevant background and experience.
- Include your research question, rationale, hypothesis (if applicable), and proposed methodology.
- Describe your research design, procedures, sample, and instruments you plan to use.

Literature Review
Demonstrate your understanding of current debates and key issues in the relevant literature.

- Reference influential texts and articles to show awareness of your field.
- Identify the gap your research will address—your unique contribution.
- Avoid common pitfalls:
    - Poor structure or organisation
    - Lack of focus or coherence
    - Repetition or irrelevant citations
    - Overreliance on secondary sources
    - Failure to engage critically with key works

Principal Research Questions

- Define focused, manageable questions that reflect your niche and can be addressed within the timeframe of a PhD.

Methodology

Show that you understand the research methods available and can justify your chosen approach.

- You might use qualitative methods (e.g., interviews), quantitative techniques (e.g., modelling or forecasting), or a mixed-methods approach.
- Be specific about your preferred methodology and why it suits your research.

Timescale and Preparation

Outline a realistic timeline for your research, demonstrating your ability to plan and manage the project effectively.

Bibliography

Include a concise list of key references that support your proposal and reflect your engagement with the field.