



WARWICK BUSINESS SCHOOL
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Supporting documentation

The **full documentation** required in support of your application is:

1. Research proposal
2. Two academic references are required which have to be valid and recent. These can be uploaded or you can make use of the e-reference facility (If you have supplied the email contact details for your referees, they will be sent details regarding how to supply an e-reference). It is important that the referees which have been named on your application form are the ones who supply a reference for you. Failure to do so could impede on our decision.
3. Degree transcripts (undergraduate and masters). We require your marksheets which show all the modules taken and marks received.
4. English language test certificate, which will be required unless you have been working or studying in the UK or in a majority English speaking country within 2 years of the proposed start date of your doctoral degree, although language competence is still a requirement. TOEFL internet based testing score of 100 or IELTS score of at least 7.0.

Your application will not be progressed without this documentation.

Please upload your supporting documents online.

Your proposal

Please note that before the University can formally make you an offer of a place on the programme, your proposal will be uploaded to Turnitin. Turnitin is an externally hosted similarity detection software used to assist in the detection of plagiarism or collusion.

University policy requires all non-confidential student work to be submitted to Turnitin. By submitting your proposal to the University, as part of your application, you are confirming that the work contained within is your own original work.

Should it be found that a student has submitted work that is not their own, after an offer of a place on the programme has been made to the student, the University reserves the right to withdraw the offer.

Writing your proposal

We expect you to provide evidence of your ability to plan and organise independent research, and of the relevance of your research topic to the interest and expertise of a WBS academic who could supervise your study.

It's crucial that your research proposal is written to the guidelines specified. Don't risk getting your proposal rejected simply because you haven't read them.

Proposal format

Please provide approximately 2,000 words, plus your timetable and references or a short bibliography. We do not expect the proposal to be perfect at this stage, nor do we expect you to stick to it very closely as your ideas will almost certainly change once you start to study, but we do expect you to write it as follows:

- Provide an overview of your research question, explaining why it is of academic and or practical importance
- Outline the main objectives of your research, providing details of two or three key aspects
- Write a short literature review, indicating the importance of previous related research and how your own research question might make a useful contribution to the area
- State the main research techniques (interviews, case studies, modelling etc.) you might use
- Indicate your suggested data collection procedures and sources and outline any possible difficulties
- Explain any analytical techniques you intend to use
- Add your proposed timetable of activities.

Finally, list the references in your proposal or provide a short bibliography. Please organise your proposal under the following headings:

- Title
- Research question
- Objectives
- Literature reviews
- Research techniques
- References & bibliography
- Prospective supervisors.

Common problems

There are three very common reasons why proposals from well qualified candidates fail to be accepted.

- The research topic is inadequately specified. You need to write to a very tight format stating what you plan to research, why and how. The format is clearly outlined above.
- The proposal may identify a practical managerial problem but it does not demonstrate its analytical importance. A study that merely aims to discover new empirical information or simply solve an important business problem will probably not be accepted. Your proposal must engage with controversies and demonstrate strong critical insight in one or more academic disciplines to succeed.
- The geographical focus does not fit with our supervisory competencies. While our perspective is international, some overseas students seek to study an issue exclusively in their home country in which our staff have no research expertise. If this is your intention, you must explain clearly why a supervisor at WBS will find your work interesting and how being at WBS will add value to your work. Generally, a comparative project that involves research both in your home country and the UK is more likely to achieve analytically significant results.