**Guidelines for Submitting a Research Proposal**

**and Transition to Stage B** |

**Guidelines for Writing a Research Proposal –**

**In the Humanities and Social Sciences**

**and in the Experimental Sciences**

The doctoral program consists of two stages: Stage A and Stage B. The first stage is intended for formulating the research plan and evaluating its feasibility.

The transition to Stage B requires that both the Advisory Committee and the Authority for Research Students approve the topic and the research questions and estimate there is a reasonable chance of completing a satisfactory doctoral thesis in five years.

The research proposal, signed by the student and the supervisor, is to be submitted to the Authority for Research Students, along with a proposed program of doctoral coursework, and a proposal for the composition of the Advisory Committee, not later than 18 months after the student’s acceptance to doctoral studies (unless the relevant academic unit demands a shorter timetable).

**Order of Actions Ahead of Progression to Stage B**

1. After the student has prepared his/her research proposal and had it approved by his/her supervisor, the following documents must be submitted to the Authority for Research Students: research proposal; proposed program of doctoral coursework; proposal for the composition of the Advisory Committee;
2. Advisory Committee appointed by the Authority for Research Students;
3. Advisory Committee convened by the supervisor, with the student present;
4. Advisory Committee report submitted to the Authority for Research Students;
5. Following the approval of the Advisory Committee’s report, the Authority will authorize the student’s transition to stage B.

**1. Documents to be submitted ahead of the progression to stage B:**

Research Proposal

Students should prepare their research proposal in consultation with their supervisor and submit it, approved and signed by the supervisor, to the Authority for Research Students, in accordance with the timetable described above. The proposal should be submitted in PDF format. In the experimental sciences, the proposal should be no longer than 10 pages in Hebrew or 13 pages in English, not including the list of references. In the Humanities and Social Sciences, the proposal should be no longer than 15 pages in Hebrew or 19 pages in English, not including the list of references.

Proposed Program of Doctoral Coursework

This will include all the courses that the student has taken and will take as part of their degree and must be submitted using the appropriate form. For more information about the structure of the proposed list of courses, please see section 6.12 of the Authority’s [regulations for research students](https://academic-secretary.huji.ac.il/sites/default/files/acs/files/talmidei_mehkar_2023_eng.pdf).

Proposal for Composition of the Advisory Committee

To be submitted using the appropriate form. The relevant regulations can be found in section 5 of the Authority’s [regulations for research students](https://academic-secretary.huji.ac.il/sites/default/files/acs/files/talmidei_mehkar_2023_eng.pdf).

Approval from the Ethics Committee

The supervisor and the student are responsible for checking whether ethics approval is required, depending on the topic and research method. Details and forms can be found here: <https://en-research.huji.ac.il/ethics>

**2. Appointment of the Advisory Committee:**

The Authority for Research Students will appoint the Advisory Committee and will forward to the committee members the student’s research proposal and proposed program of doctoral coursework.

**3–5. The Advisory Committee meeting, submission of the committee’s report, and the decision on transition to stage B:**

The Advisory Committee must convene (in person or virtually) no later than two months after being appointed, with the student present, to discuss the student’s research proposal and proposed program of doctoral coursework, and to assess the readiness of the student to begin his/her research work (see article 6.7 of the [Regulations for Research Students](https://academic-secretary.huji.ac.il/sites/default/files/acs/files/talmidei_mehkar_2023_eng.pdf)). The committee will formulate its conclusions, notify the student of them, and submit a detailed report to the Authority for Research Students, signed by all committee members.

Based on the report submitted, the Authority will decide whether to approve the student’s progression to stage B or to require revision of the research program and/or program of doctoral coursework. The Authority will notify the student of its decision.

Students who are required to amend their research program and/or program of doctoral coursework will submit the revised version(s) to the Authority for Research Students. These versions should be clearly marked “Revised Program,” and should be accompanied by a document detailing the revisions made.

**Guidelines for Writing a Research Proposal for a Doctoral Dissertation in the Humanities and Social Sciences**

In the humanities and social sciences (humanities, social sciences, law, social work, and business administration), research students should construct the research program proposal they submit to the Advisory Committee for approval based on the following principles:

The title page should contain the following details:

Title: **“Research Program Submitted for Approval as a Program for a Doctoral Dissertation”**

Below the title:

* Date of submission
* Name of student (in Hebrew and English)
* Name of supervisor (in Hebrew and English)
* Subject of the dissertation (in Hebrew and English)

The supervisor’s approval should appear in the upper right-hand corner of the title page, using the following formulation:

“I hereby approve the dissertation subject and program and agree to act as the candidate’s supervisor in the execution of this program.”

Experiments with human or animal subjects require a priori approval from the ethics committee of the relevant faculty or school.

The research proposal will include the purpose of the research, the theoretical background, the research approach, the expected contribution to the advancement of knowledge, and a list of sources. See examples of research proposals on the Authority's website.

Editing and Technical Guidelines:

1. The proposal should be concise, to the point, and easy to read, using 12-point font ‘David’ and 1.5-line spacing.
2. The file should use the following naming convention:

(last name) (first name)\_proposal

If a revised plan is submitted, it should be named:

(last name) (first name) revised\_proposal

Students should ensure that the language used, and the list of references provided meet academic standards.

Supervisors must sign the proposal or send their confirmation by email (even if they are on sabbatical).

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(\*) Submission of a research proposal / doctoral dissertation in a language other than Hebrew or English requires approval, based on a reasoned request submitted in advance (see section 10.4 of the Authority’s [regulations for doctoral research students](https://academic-secretary.huji.ac.il/sites/default/files/acs/files/talmidei_mehkar_2023_eng.pdf))

**Guidelines for Writing a Proposal for a Doctoral Dissertation**

**in the Experimental Sciences**

In the experimental sciences (natural sciences, medicine, dental medicine, brain sciences, and agriculture), research students should construct the work program they submit for approval to the Advisory Committee in accordance with the following principles:

The title page of the program should contain the following details:

Title: **“Research Program Submitted for Approval as a Program for a Doctoral Dissertation”**

Below the title:

* Date of submission
* Name of student (in Hebrew and English)
* Name of supervisor
* Subject of the dissertation (in Hebrew and English)

The supervisor’s approval should appear at the foot of the first page, using the following formulation:

“I hereby approve the dissertation subject and program, and agree to act as the candidate’s supervisor in the execution of this program.”

**The following pages should present the research program, organized as follows (supervisors should note that the research program should be written in the form of a research grant proposal, using the following sections):**

Abstract

Background

Review of the current state of knowledge in the relevant field and experimental approaches. The review should be up-to-date and comprehensive, but concise.

Research Goals

This section should provide details of initial results, including graphs and tables, which support the evaluation of the feasibility of the study.

Description of Research Program

This section should be divided into chapters based on the planned work stages, and each chapter divided into anticipated sub-chapters. Thus, it must include a general description of the methodology, and a description of the experimental approach in each stage and sub-stage of the research, wherever possible.

Materials and Methods

This section can be short and should include the main methods to be used in the planned research. Where existing methods can be used, introductions to these methods should be presented; where new methods will need to be developed, details should be given.

If ethical questions are liable to arise during the course of the study, the student should refer to these questions and explain how they intend to address them. Experiments with human or animal subjects require a priori approval from the relevant committees.

List of References

Editing and Technical Guidelines:

1. The proposal should be concise, to the point, and easy to read, using 12-point font and 1.5-line spacing.
2. The proposal should not exceed 10 pages, not including pictures, diagrams, tables, and list of references (in English—no more than 13 pages).
3. The document should be submitted in a PDF format, using the following naming convention:

(last name)(first name)\_proposal

If a revised proposal is submitted, it should be named:

(last name)(first name)revised\_proposal

Supervisors must sign the proposal or send their confirmation by email (even if they are on sabbatical).

(\*) Submission of a research proposal / doctoral dissertation in a language other than Hebrew or English requires approval, based on a reasoned request submitted in advance (see section 10.4 of the Authority’s [regulations for doctoral research students](https://academic-secretary.huji.ac.il/sites/default/files/acs/files/talmidei_mehkar_2023_eng.pdf)).

(\*\*) If part or all of the research will be conducted in a laboratory outside of the Hebrew University, this should be expressly stated.