



# Proposed Research Project Outline Template

## Proposed Research Project Outline Template (for CDU HDR admission application)

(1500–1700 words total / approx. 3–4 pages)

### {INSTRUCTIONS/ OVERVIEW

This document is intended to guide applicants preparing their HDR admission project outline in terms of the headings, content and indicative word count.

This outline should be developed in collaboration with your agreed principal supervisor. Before admission, your supervisor must formally agree to supervise you and meet with you (in person or online) before approval.

Usually, you would *send a draft of this outline to your agreed supervisor with your initial ideas*. The supervisor may review, provide feedback, and suggest improvements before you work together on the final version.

Word counts per section are indicative only.

If admitted, you will develop a more detailed research proposal with your supervisor during the confirmation of candidature process (first 6–10 months of enrolment).

Please include ALL sections in your outline, *even if they are not applicable*, as they help reviewers assess your project — including what does not apply. For sections that do not apply, state this briefly (e.g., “My research will not involve collecting data from human participants”).

If you are using this document as the basis of your outline, please ~~delete~~ the instructions and the dot points below each heading}

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### 1. Project Title (~10–15 words)

- Write a concise, specific, and descriptive title.
- Ensure it reflects the main focus of your research.
- Help readers understand your topic quickly.

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### 2. General Field of Research (~50 words)

- State the broad research area and relevant discipline(s).
- Optionally, identify relevant Field of Research (FoR) and/or Field of Education (FoE) codes from the ABS classification lists.
- Briefly mention your previous qualifications/ experience in this area.

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### 3. Agreed Principal Supervisor (<25 words)

- State the name, title, and affiliation of your agreed principal supervisor.
- Confirm they have agreed to supervise you.
- Describe any meetings or discussions you have had with them.

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### 4. Brief Description of the Proposed Research (~300–350 words)

- Summarise the research problem or question.
- Explain the background and rationale — why the topic matters.
- State the key objectives or aims.
- Describe the potential contribution to the field.

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### 5. Brief Description of Methods / Methodology (~200–250 words)

- Outline your overall research design (qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, experimental, theoretical, etc.).
- Describe key methods or techniques.
- Identify any frameworks or analytical approaches.
- Explain how these methods address the research aims.
- Outline your experience with these methods and note any you will need training in.

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### 6. Your Experience / Skills with the Methods (~150–200 words)

- Describe relevant research training, courses, or prior project work.
- Identify specific technical, analytical, or field skills.
- State your proficiency with your proposed methods and methodology • List any training needs for the project.

## 7. Ethical Considerations (~150–200 words): [Research Ethics and Integrity](#)

- State whether the research will involve or impact people or animals.
- Describe potential ethical risks or sensitivities.
- Explain participant recruitment, consent, and data privacy considerations.
- Identify relevant ethics approval requirements (e.g., HREC application).

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## 8. Resource Implications (~100–150 words)

- State whether the project is lab-based.
- List required equipment, software, and facilities.
- Identify any specialist staff or technical support needs.
- Estimate costs and potential funding sources (note: HDR students at CDU have access to some faculty funds for research costs — discuss with your supervisor).

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## 9. Fieldwork and/or Travel Requirements (~100–150 words)

- State whether the project will involve fieldwork or travel.
- List the locations and duration of planned fieldwork.
- Outline travel logistics, costs, and safety considerations.
- Identify any necessary permits or approvals.

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## 10. Intellectual Property Considerations (~50–100 words)

- State who will own the research outputs/data.
  - Note that generally CDU HDR students own their IP, but external funding arrangements or Indigenous Knowledge may require special agreements.
  - Identify any existing IP agreements or constraints.
  - Describe commercialisation potential (if applicable).
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## 11. Research Impact (~150–200 words)

- Identify the intended end users (e.g., policymakers, industry, practitioners, communities, specific groups).
- Explain how the end users will benefit from the findings.
- Describe potential social, environmental, economic, or cultural contributions.
- Identify any United Nations Sustainable Development Goals your research addresses.

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## 12. Research Translation (~150–200 words)

- Explain how you will communicate results to end users, stakeholders, or communities.
- List academic dissemination strategies (e.g., journals, conferences).
- List non-academic strategies (e.g., policy briefs, reports, workshops, media, social media).
- Describe how you will make findings accessible and usable for your intended audiences.

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## 13. End-user Engagement, Collaboration, and HDR Internship Ideas (if relevant) (~50–100 words)

If your research impacts community groups, industry, or government, or if you want practical industry experience and networking opportunities, consider and discuss with your supervisor the options of:

- Collaborating with end users to increase the real-world impact of your research through codesign, consultation, participation, or translation activities.
- Undertaking an HDR internship of 60 days or more (part-time or full-time) to gain industry experience, build professional networks, and develop practical, sector-relevant skills.
- Identifying potential industry, government, or community partners who could benefit from your research.
- Designing an internship focus that applies your research in real-world settings, addresses stakeholder needs, enhances translation, or builds sector capacity.

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## 14. Other Relevant Issues (~50–100 words)

- Describe any risks, challenges, or constraints not covered elsewhere.
- Note any interdisciplinary or cross-institutional collaborations.