A logo for a computer science school

Description automatically generated **Qualifying Exam**

**Research Proposal Guidelines**

The following QE Research Proposal Template is intended to serve as a *guide* for students. The QE Research Proposal Template has been outlined below: **required versus recommended components of the QE Research proposal template are denoted in the outline (Red = Required, Blue = Recommended):**

**Format**

The QE Research Proposal must be:

* Divided into front matter, body matter, and back matter [Required]
* Proposal must be a maximum of 50 pagesin length, excluding front matter, references and appendices (back matter) [Required]
* Formatted with 12 point font, 1.5 spacing, and 1 inch margins on all sides [Required]
* Assigned page numbers on every page, excluding title page. Front matter and back matter should use unique number sequence (e.g. i, ii, iii, …) from body matter (e.g., 1, 2, 3, 4, …) [Required]

**A. Front Matter**

* *Title Page* [Required]
* *Abstract* (150 words maximum) [Required]
* *Table of Contents* [Required]
* Recommended (if applicable):
  + List of Tables
  + List of Figures, Illustrations, Plates
  + List of Symbols, Abbreviations, or Acronyms
  + List of Multimedia Objects or Files

**B. Body**

* *Introduction* [Recommended]
* *Background and Literature Review* [Recommended]
* *Proposed Research:* Description of the proposed research plan, including:
  + Specific aims/objectives and problem statement [Required]
  + Significance: Description of the merits and scholarly value of the proposed research and potential contributions [Required]
  + Methodology and preliminary results [Recommended, if applicable]
    - Note, if the student intends to complete a manuscript-based thesis, this should be specified.
  + Risks & Limitations: It is encouraged that thought be given to risks associated with the proposal, including a discussion of potential risks associated with the research proposal and considerations of backup plans and fallback positions be included to protect against worst-case scenarios [Recommended]
  + Future work: Description of the next steps that will be taken beyond the preliminary research to complete the thesis goals [Recommended]
* *Timeline* [Required]:
  + The proposed research must include a schedule of the research plan that the candidate will follow with a sequence of specific milestones and objectives
* *Conclusion* [Recommended]

**C. Back Matter**

* *References* [Required]
* *Appendices* (Required, if applicable)

**Below is the QE Proposal Template (MS Word version):**

# « Title of QE (Capitalize significant words. All formulas, symbols, or Greek letters must be written out in words if used in the title.) »

by

« Author Name »

Research Proposal

for

« Degree Program »

School of Computer Science

The University of Guelph

Advisors:

«Primary Advisor and Co-Advisor (if applicable) »

Abstract

« Abstract text goes here. Maximum 150 words. »

Table of Contents

« To create a Table of Contents (TOC) automatically, you must use Word’s built in Styles to format your thesis into chapters and sections. You can then create a TOC using, **References** > **Table of Contents**.»

Abstract ii

Table of Contents iii

List of Tables (if any) iv

List of Figures, Illustrations, Plates (if any) v

List of Symbols, Abbreviations or Nomenclature (if any) vi

List of Multimedia Objects, or Files (if any) vii

List of Appendices (if any) viii

1 «Introduction» 1

2 « Background and Literature Review » 1

3 « Proposed Research » 2

3.1 « Specific aims/objectives and problem statement » 2

3.2 « Significance » 2

3.3 « Methodology and preliminary results (if applicable) 2

3.4 « Risks & Limitations » 2

3.5 « Future Work » 2

4 « Timeline » 3

5 « Conclusion (recommended) » 3

References i

Appendices (if any) ii

List of Tables (if any)

« Tables consist of an arrangement of facts, figures, and values in an orderly sequence usually in rows or columns. If you do not have any tables, delete this page.

An automated listing can be created for tables if you caption your tables. To create a listing of tables, use **References** > **Insert Table of Figures** and select **Caption Label: Tables**. »

[Table 2.1: Example of a caption for a table. 2](#_Toc488240537)

[Table 3.1: Example of a table in landscape orientation. 4](#_Toc488240538)

List of Figures, Illustrations, Plates (if any)

« Figures include charts, graphs, maps, photographs, diagrams, etc. If you do not have any figures, illustrations, or plates delete this page.

An automated listing can be created for figures, illustrations, or plates if you use captions for your figures. To create a listing of figures, use **References** > **Insert Table of Figures** and select **Caption Label: Figures (Illustrations, or Plates)**. »

[Figure 2.1: Example of a caption for a figure. 2](#_Toc488240547)

List of Symbols, Abbreviations or Nomenclature (if any)

« If you are using special symbols, abbreviations, or nomenclature throughout your thesis, list/explain them here. You can create a separate section for each list. If you are not using symbols, abbreviations, or nomenclature, delete this page. »

List of Multimedia Objects, or Files (if any)

« Figures include charts, graphs, maps, photographs, diagrams, etc. here. If you do not have any figures, illustrations, or plates delete this page. »

List of Appendices (if any)

« List any appendices here. If you do not have any appendices, delete this page. »

## «Introduction»

« Include the text for your introduction here »

## « Background and Literature Review »

« Include the text for your background and literature review here »

## « Proposed Research »

« Include a description of the proposed research plan, including the following sub-sections (listed below) here. You can use Styles to delineate sections within the Proposed Research section. Below is an example of using Styles to create sections and sub-sections. Add or remove sections and sub-sections as required. »

### « Specific aims/objectives and problem statement »

« Include a description of the merits and scholarly value of the proposed research and potential contributions »

### « Significance »

« Description of the merits and scholarly value of the proposed research and potential contributions »

### « Methodology and preliminary results (if applicable)

« Note, if the student intends to complete a manuscript-based thesis, this should be specified.

### « Risks & Limitations »

« It is encouraged that thought be given to risks associated with the proposal, including a discussion of potential risks associated with the research proposal and considerations of backup plans and fallback positions be included to protect against worst-case scenarios »

### « Future Work »

« Description of the next steps that will be taken beyond the preliminary research to complete the thesis goals. »

## « Timeline »

« Include your timeline here. The proposed research must include a schedule of the research plan that the candidate will follow with a sequence of specific milestones and objectives.»

## « Conclusion (recommended) »

« If including a conclusion in the proposal, please include it here.»

References

« Format references according to your selected Style Guide (e.g., MLA, APA, etc.). For more information about citation styles, please see UG Library’s [Citation & Bibliography Resources](https://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/writing-studying/writing-resources-workshops/citation-bibliography-resources-style-guides) page. »

Appendices (if any)