

Qualifi Level 5 Diploma



# Research Project

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Level 5: Diploma in Hospitality & Tourism Management  
UeCampus Study Guide



Academic Module



Study Guide



Online Learning

# Course Overview

## 01 Chapter One

The Research Proposal

- ✓ **Outline** a potential research proposal
- ✓ **Address** factors contributing to research process
- ✓ **Develop** proposal with critical review of sources
- ✓ **Create** appropriate plan and procedures

 Learning Outcome: Develop a research proposal

## 02 Chapter Two

Devising a Research Project

- ✓ **Develop** research questions and hypothesis
- ✓ **Match** resources efficiently to project needs
- ✓ **Undertake** research using suitable methods
- ✓ **Record** and collect relevant data systematically

 Learning Outcome: Carry out a research project

## 03 Chapter Three

Evaluate & Present Outcomes

- ✓ **Apply** suitable techniques to evaluate outcomes
- ✓ **Interpret** outcomes to form conclusions
- ✓ **Develop** recommendations for future projects
- ✓ **Present** outcomes using appropriate format and media

 Learning Outcome: Evaluate and present research outcomes

 **Unit Purpose:** Develop skills in carrying out independent research and enquiry into hospitality and tourism topics

Assessment: Research Project  
Level: 5 (Diploma)

# The Research Proposal

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**Learning Outcome:** Develop a research proposal

**Assessment Criteria:**

- 1.1 Outline a potential research proposal
- 1.2 Address factors contributing to the research process
- 1.3 Develop proposal including critical review of key sources
- 1.4 Develop appropriate plan and procedures

# Essential Components of a Research Proposal

## 1 Working Title

Clear, focused title that may evolve. Example: "To examine tourists' perceptions of safety whilst on a Jack the Ripper tour"

## 2 Introduction & Research Problem

Broad view of topic, context, key terminology. Explain how you're filling a research gap.

## 3 Research Aim & Objectives

**Aim:** Concise statement of intent. **Objectives:** 4-8 SMART steps to achieve aim.

## 4 Scope & Literature Review

Narrow focus definition. Review of existing research related to your aim and objectives.

## 5 Research Design/Methodology

How you will execute the research:

- Philosophy (interpretivism, positivism)
- Methods (qualitative, quantitative, mixed)
- Sampling strategy and size
- Data collection tools
- Analysis techniques (SPSS, CAQDAS)

## 6 Reference List & Practicality

Demonstrate research skills using Zotero/Mendeley. Include time plan, resource plan, budgeting.

## 7 Ethical Standards

How research will comply with ethical requirements: informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation.



**3 Key Tips:** 1) Understand current research thoroughly 2) Don't rush—good proposals take time 3) Polish your document for grammar and presentation

# Seven Key Factors for Research Success

## 1 Selecting & Justifying Topic

Address issues, trends, challenges in tourism/hospitality:

- Personal interest and relevance
- Industry importance
- Feasibility (time, resources, access)

Examples: Tourist safety perceptions, digital marketing impact, sustainability practices

## 2 Formulating Aim & Objectives

**Aim:** Overall purpose statement

**Objectives:** Manageable steps

**Example Aim:**

"To investigate influence of social media advertising on destination choice among young travellers"

## 3 Developing Research Questions

Provides focus and direction:

- Specific and researchable
- Aligned with aim and objectives
- Clear and unambiguous

Example: "How does social media advertising affect destination choices of travellers aged 18–30?"

## 4 Brief Literature Context

Demonstrate awareness of existing studies:

- Key concepts related to topic
- Gaps or debates in research
- Relevance of proposed study

## 5 Outlining Methodology

Explain HOW research will be conducted:

- Research approach
- Sampling strategy
- Limitations
- Data collection methods
- Ethical considerations

## 6 Proposed Structure

Typical structure: Introduction → Literature Review → Methodology → Data Presentation → Discussion → Conclusions

## 7 Expected Outcomes

Explain what study may reveal and why it matters—demonstrates value of research to industry or academia

# Conducting a Critical Review of Key Sources

## What is a Critical Review?

A critical review does **NOT** simply summarise what authors have said. Instead, it:

- ✓ Evaluates strengths and weaknesses
- ✓ Identifies gaps and inconsistencies
- ✓ Compares and contrasts viewpoints
- ✓ Shows how your study extends knowledge

## Sources to Include

- 📄 Peer-reviewed journal articles
- 📖 Books and book chapters
- 📊 Industry reports (UN Tourism, WTTC)
- 📰 Professional publications
- 🌐 Credible digital sources

## Checklist for Critical Review Writing

- ✓ Identify key theories and debates
- ✓ Discuss methods influencing conclusions
- ✓ Link material to your proposed study
- ✓ Highlight agreements/disagreements
- ✓ Note limitations in previous studies

## Sample Proposal

### Title:

The Role of Sustainability Certifications in Influencing Hotel Choice Among Eco-Conscious Travellers

### Research Aim:

To examine how sustainability certifications influence hotel selection among eco-conscious travellers

### Research Question:

To what extent do sustainability certifications affect hotel choice for environmentally aware travellers?

### Research Objectives:

1. Explore travellers' awareness of certifications
2. Investigate perceptions of certified vs. uncertified hotels
3. Assess influence on booking decisions

### Methodology:

**Approach:** Quantitative | **Method:** Online questionnaire | **Sample:** 120 eco-conscious travellers | **Analysis:** Descriptive statistics

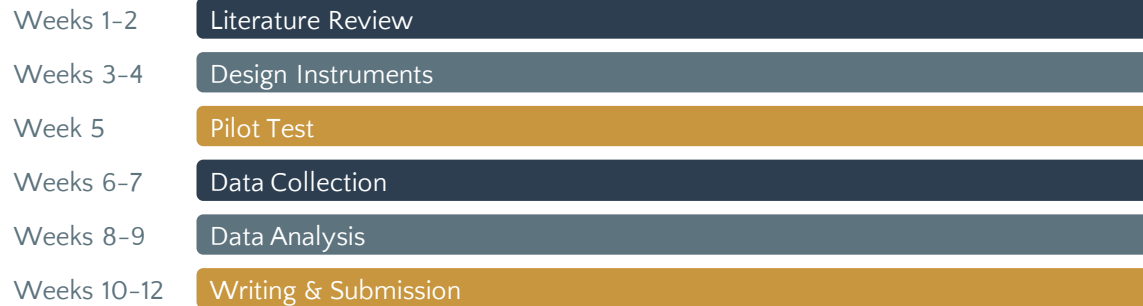
**Ethics:** Informed consent, no identifying data, secure storage

**Limitations:** Self-selection bias, self-reported attitudes

# Developing an Implementation Plan

### Research Timeline (Gantt Chart)

Typical 12-week schedule for Level 5 projects:



### Data Collection Procedures

Clear description of how you will gather information:

- Survey distribution (online platforms, email, QR codes)
- Interviews/focus groups (location, duration, recording)
- Secondary data collection (reports, statistics)
- Observations (site visits, behaviour tracking)

### Sampling Plan

Common sampling methods:

- **Convenience:** Easily accessible participants
- **Purposive:** Chosen for relevance to topic
- **Random:** Selected at random from population
- **Snowball:** Participants recruit others

### Data Analysis Procedures

**Quantitative:** Descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations, correlations

**Qualitative:** Coding, thematic analysis, pattern identification

Software: Excel, SPSS, NVivo

### Risk Management

Anticipate challenges and provide solutions:

- Low response rates → Extend recruitment channels
- Participant cancellations → Increase sample size
- Access issues → Use alternative data sources

# Devising a Research Project

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**Learning Outcome:** Carry out a research project considering relevant aspects

**Assessment Criteria:**

- 2.1 Develop research questions and hypothesis; match resources efficiently
- 2.2 Undertake the proposed research project using suitable methods
- 2.3 Record and collect relevant data

# Developing Questions and Matching Resources

## ? Developing Effective Research Questions

Research questions form the foundation—identify what the study aims to investigate.

### Characteristics of Strong Questions:

- ✓ Focused
- ✓ Aligned
- ✓ Clear
- ✓ Researchable
- ✓ Relevant

Examples in Tourism & Hospitality:

- What factors influence tourists' perceptions of safety in urban destinations?
- How do sustainability certifications affect guests' hotel booking decisions?

## 🔪 Understanding Hypotheses

A hypothesis is a predictive statement proposing a relationship between variables.

### Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ )

Suggests NO relationship exists

Example: Online reviews do NOT influence hotel booking decisions

### Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_1$ )

Suggests a relationship DOES exist

Example: Online reviews significantly influence hotel booking decisions

## ⚙️ Matching Resources Efficiently

Ensure resources, tools, and time are appropriate for answering research questions.

### Time Resources

- How long will data collection take? · Can participants be accessed within timeframe?

### Human Resources

- Yourself as researcher · Potential participants · Gatekeepers (hotel managers, DMOs)

### Material & Technological

- Survey platforms (Google Forms, SurveyMonkey) · Analysis software (Excel, SPSS) · Recording devices

### Access & Permissions

- Permission from hotels/attractions · Ethical approvals required

### Financial Resources

- Printing costs · Travel for interviews · Paid access to tools

## Ensuring Alignment

Research questions, hypotheses, and resources must align logically:

- **Quantitative question** → Need statistical analysis resources
- **Qualitative question** → Need interview access and transcription time
- **Hypothesis testing** → Need appropriate analysis software

# Applying Research Methods in Tourism & Hospitality

## Surveys (Questionnaires)

### Suitable for:

- Collecting quantitative data
- Reaching large groups
- Identifying trends/patterns

**Advantages:** Cost-effective, easy distribution, generates statistical data

## Interviews

### Suitable for:

- Exploring experiences
- Collecting rich qualitative data
- Understanding perspectives

**Advantages:** Flexible, conversational, deeper understanding

## Focus Groups

### Suitable for:

- Comparing views among groups
- Understanding collective opinions
- Exploring group dynamics

**Advantages:** Interactive, generates diverse perspectives

## Observation

### Suitable for:

- Capturing real-time behaviour
- Studying activities in natural settings
- Visitor flow, service interactions

## Secondary Data Analysis

### Suitable for:

- Using industry reports, academic studies
- Supporting primary data
- UN Tourism reports, hotel performance data

## Preparing Research Instruments

**Survey:** Closed questions, rating scales, pilot test

**Interview:** Semi-structured guide, neutral questions

**Observation:** Clear checklists, consistent recording

## Step-by-Step Data Collection

1. Brief participants on purpose
2. Obtain informed consent
3. Use instrument consistently
4. Record responses accurately
5. Store data securely
6. Monitor progress

# Systematic Data Collection and Recording

### Understanding Relevant Data

Relevant data directly supports research questions and objectives:

#### Relevant data should:

- Address the research question(s)
- Reflect variables/themes investigated
- Come from appropriate sources
- Be accurate, reliable, ethically obtained
- Be recorded systematically

Example: Guest satisfaction study needs ratings, service feedback, interaction observations—not competitor information

### Collecting Quantitative Data

#### Common methods:

- Surveys/questionnaires with closed-ended questions
- Rating scales, multiple choice
- Secondary data: tourism statistics, booking records

Numerical data analysed statistically

### Collecting Qualitative Data

#### Common methods:

- Interviews (structured, semi-structured, unstructured)
- Focus groups
- Open-ended survey questions
- Observations (behaviour, service encounters)
- Document analysis

Provides depth and insight into experiences, motivations, attitudes

### Recording Data Accurately

#### Quantitative Recording:

- Enter into spreadsheets (Excel) · Check for missing responses · Code responses · Back up files securely

#### Qualitative Recording:

- Audio-record with consent · Take detailed notes · Transcribe accurately · Label clearly (date, participant ID)

### Best Practices

- Record immediately after collection
- Keep data organised with folders/labels
- Maintain reflective logbook
- Check for completeness before analysis

# Evaluate & Present Outcomes

**Learning Outcome:** Evaluate and present the outcomes of the research project

**Assessment Criteria:**

- 3.1 Apply suitable research techniques to evaluate outcomes
- 3.2 Interpret outcomes to form conclusions and recommendations
- 3.3 Present outcomes using appropriate format and media

2015-2022

\$274b

\$189b

\$169b

\$100b

2015

2018

2019\*

...

2022\*

# Evaluating Research Outcomes

## 🎯 Purpose of Evaluation

Evaluation helps you:

- Determine whether research objectives have been met
- Identify patterns, themes, or relationships in data
- Compare findings with literature and industry trends
- Assess reliability and validity of results
- Draw meaningful conclusions contributing to knowledge

## 📈 Techniques for Quantitative Data

### 1. Descriptive Statistics

Summarise data: frequencies, percentages, averages (mean, median, mode), charts and graphs

### 2. Cross-Tabulation

Shows relationships between two variables (e.g., age vs. satisfaction levels)

### 3. Correlation Analysis

Explores whether two variables are linked (e.g., reviews read and booking confidence)

### 4. Comparative Analysis

Comparing groups or responses to identify differences

## 💬 Techniques for Qualitative Data

### 1. Thematic Analysis

Identifying recurring themes across interviews or open-ended responses. Steps: read transcripts → code key words → group codes into themes → interpret meaning

### 2. Content Analysis

Quantifying frequency of certain words, ideas, or concepts within qualitative data

### 3. Comparative Coding

Comparing responses across participants to identify similarities and differences

### 4. Narrative Analysis

Examining story or sequence of events described by participants

## 🔍 Interpreting the Outcomes

Evaluation requires interpreting what results mean:

- Link findings back to research questions
- Compare results with literature review
- Identify whether findings support or challenge theories
- Consider implications for tourism/hospitality practice

## 📊 Assessing Strengths & Limitations

**Strengths:** Clear patterns, rich themes, high relevance

**Limitations:** Small sample size, access issues, researcher bias, time constraints

Being transparent strengthens credibility

# From Data to Actionable Insights

### 💡 Understanding Interpretation

Interpretation goes beyond reporting numbers or describing themes:

- Explaining the meaning of findings
- Identifying what findings reveal about research questions
- Considering how outcomes connect to theories and literature
- Drawing out implications for organisations, destinations, staff, visitors
- Reflecting on strengths and limitations

Interpretation transforms raw data into meaningful insight

### ✅ Forming Conclusions

Conclusions summarise the key messages from your research:

#### Good conclusions should:

- Directly address each research objective
- Summarise most important patterns in data
- Explain whether findings support or challenge previous research
- Reflect strengths and limitations
- Be evidence-based—not assumptions

### ☰ Developing Recommendations

Recommendations are practical suggestions arising from conclusions:

#### A. For Industry Practice

- Improve customer service training · Enhance visitor information systems · Strengthen digital marketing

#### B. For Policy or Management

- Implement safety communication campaigns · Develop sustainability guidelines

#### C. For Future Research

- Explore with larger sample · Conduct comparative study · Use additional qualitative interviews

### Linking Conclusions & Recommendations

Recommendations must follow logically from conclusions:

Conclusion: "Guests value personalised service more than price when choosing boutique hotels"

→ Recommendation: "Boutique hotels should invest in personalised guest experience strategies"

**Conclusions** explain WHAT findings reveal

**Recommendations** explain WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN NEXT

# Communicating Your Research Effectively

## Written Report

**Suitable for:** Academic submission, detailed analysis

Components: Executive summary, introduction, methodology, findings, conclusions, references

## PowerPoint/Slides

**Suitable for:** Managers, tourism boards, visual summaries

Advantages: Clear visuals, charts, graphs, easy to share

## Poster/Infographic

**Suitable for:** Exhibitions, quick overviews, events

Advantages: Highly visual, ideal for summarising trends

## Identifying Target Audience



Different audiences require different approaches:

- ✓ Academic assessors
- ✓ Hospitality managers
- ✓ Community stakeholders
- ✓ Tourism boards/DMOs
- ✓ Marketing teams
- ✓ Fellow students/colleagues

Consider: strategic recommendations needed? Operational insights? Familiarity with terminology?

## Using Appropriate Media

Visual representation is highly effective in tourism and hospitality:

-  Charts and graphs
-  Images from fieldwork
-  Maps for destinations
-  Tables summarising results
-  Infographics
-  Participant quotes

Media should support, not distract from, your message

## Effective Presentation Structure

1. Title and purpose
2. Background and context
3. Research questions/aims
4. Methods used
5. Key findings (with visuals)
6. Interpretation
7. Conclusions
8. Recommendations

## Writing Style & Communication

- Be clear and concise
- Avoid jargon or explain technical terms
- Use bullet points for readability
- Highlight key statistics or quotes
- Maintain professional tone
- Ensure consistent formatting

In hospitality/tourism, stakeholders appreciate accessible, solution-focused communication