PhD Research Proposal
Kemmy Business School

As part of the **PhD** or **Masters by Research** application process at the Kemmy Business School, applicants **must have confirmed their PhD supervisor(s) before applying**. The primary supervisor must be from the KBS; additional supervisors can be from other faculties within UL or external to another university

To begin, it is recommended that applicants identify a research area that aligns with their research interests and then explore which faculty members are working in that field. A list of supervisors, including their profiles and research interests, is available here:

Find a Supervisor | Kemmy Business School (ul.ie)

Once you have identified a potential supervisor(s), you should contact them directly to initiate a conversation. This initial discussion allows you to outline your research idea, explore their availability to supervise, and ask about any relevant funding opportunities.

Pre-submission Checklist

To be considered for review, the application must include the following.

1. Completed University of Limerick application form, including required accompanying documentation (e.g., transcripts).

2. A cover letter which includes a personal statement to demonstrate how their previous studies/research and/or professional experience have prepared them for embarking on a PhD programme at the KBS. The personal statement should include the candidate's reasons for undertaking doctoral research as well as a rationale for being offered a place as a PhD student.

3. A research proposal which must carefully follow the structure and sequence of the template provided below. Proposals that fail to follow this format will not be reviewed. It should fully address each of the headings listed below and adhere to the word count requirements in each case. The research proposal should be approximately 3,000 words in total.

4. Two written references should be submitted with the application. At least one of these must be from an academic reference.

IMPORTANT: If all parts of the application are not complete, it will not be reviewed by the KBS Research Committee.

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IMPORTANT: Applications that do not use these headings will not be reviewed by the KBS Research Committee.

PhD Candidate:

Name:
E-mail:
Phone:

Supervisor 1:

Name:
E-mail:

Supervisor 2:

Name:
E-mail:

1. **Dissertation Topic/Title:**

2. **Description of proposed research, including critique of the relevant literature and alignment to proposed thesis (1000 Words)**

3. **Justification and contribution of study (appropriateness of research questions/objectives and proposed contribution/knowledge (500 Words)**

4. **Research design and methodologies (500 Words)**

5. **Time frame, deliverables, and possible challenges (200 Words)**

6. **Relevant sex/gender issues (100 Words)**

7. **The candidate's plans to acquire new knowledge and skills to achieve research aims (where appropriate) (200 Words)**

8. **Plans for dissemination and knowledge exchange in terms of proposed target conferences and publications (i.e. most likely to be target journals) (200 Words)**

9. **Potential impact of research beyond academia, for example, impact in terms of practice, policy, etc. (200 Words)**
10. **Appropriateness and fit of the proposed supervisory team for this project (100 words)**
11. **Evidence of plans to apply for funding during PhD programme, for example, to funding bodies both nationally (e.g., Research Ireland) or internationally (100 Words)**

Bibliography:

Evaluation Criteria of KBS PhD Applications

PhD applications are evaluated using three criteria: Quality of Proposal (50%), Quality of Scholar (40%) and Quality of Supervisory Team (10%). Candidates should carefully review and address each of these evaluation criteria when preparing their PhD applications:

Quality of Proposal (50%)

- Clarity and coherence of the proposed research (critique of the relevant literature and alignment to the research topic)
- Quality and appropriateness of research design and methodologies
- Justification for and contribution of the study (appropriateness of research questions/objectives and proposed study's contribution to knowledge)
- Feasibility of the proposed research plan in terms of time frame, deliverables, and challenges.
- Consideration of the relevant ethical issues and sex/gender issues
- Clarity of plans to acquire new knowledge and skills to achieve research aims (where appropriate)
- Clarity of dissemination and knowledge exchange plans in terms of proposed target publications
- Clarity of potential impact of research beyond academia, for example, impact in terms of practice, policy etc.
- Evidence of plans to apply for funding during PhD programme, for example, to funding bodies both nationally (e.g., Research Ireland) or internationally

Quality of Scholar (40%)

- Academic track record/performance, for example, academic results and undergraduate/postgraduate degree classification and research experience.
- Match between profile/relevance of qualifications and applicant’s proposed research project
- Level of funding, if any, already secured by candidate, e.g., full or partial scholarship (stipend and fees)
- Quality of references (two written references, at least one academic, are required as part of the application)

Quality of Supervisory Team (10%)

- Alignment of the thesis topic with the specific expertise of the supervisory team. Specifically, how is the expertise of the proposed supervisory team a fit for this project?
- Research output of supervisory team, for example, Quality/Quantity of Publications, PhD completions, etc.
- Evidence of joint supervision/supervisory team (e.g., complementarity of experience, more senior and early career supervisors working together) and skills.

Check List for PhD Applications

Completed PhD Application Form with required documentation (e.g., transcripts)	
Cover letter which includes a personal statement	
Research Proposal – Following Template guidelines & word count	
Two Reference Letters (minimum of one from an academic referee).	