

Evaluation Criteria of KBS PhD Applications

Instructions: PhD applications are evaluated under the three criteria of Quality of Proposal (50%), Quality of Scholar (40%) and Quality of Supervisory Team (10%) below. Under each of these three criteria, there is a list of factors which do not have a specific weighting that will be considered by the KBS Research Committee when evaluating applications. Candidates should carefully review and address each of these evaluation criteria below when preparing their PhD applications.

Quality of Proposal (50%)

Clarity and coherence of the proposed research (critique of the relevant literature and alignment to research topic)

Quality and appropriateness of research design and methodologies

Justification and contribution of study (appropriateness of research questions/objectives and proposed contribution to knowledge)

Feasibility of the proposed research plan in terms of time frame, deliverables and contingency

Consideration of the relevant ethical issues and sex/gender dimension

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 e.g. impact in terms of practice, policy etc.

Evidence of plans to apply for funding during PhD programme e.g. to the Irish Research Council or other funding bodies both nationally and internationally

Quality of Scholar (40%)

Academic track record/performance i.e. academic results and undergraduate/postgraduate degree classification

Match between profile/relevance of qualifications and applicant's proposed research project

Level of funding, if any, already secured by candidate i.e. full or partial scholarship (stipend and fees)

Quality of references (two written references required)

Quality of Supervisory Team (10%)

Alignment of the thesis topic with the specific expertise of the supervisory team

Research output of supervisory team e.g. Quality/Quantity of Publications, PhD completions, etc.

Evidence of joint supervision/supervisory team (complementarity of experience (i.e. more senior and early career supervisors working together) and skills.

Structure and Word Count of Research Proposals

In submitting a PhD application to the KBS, candidates must provide the following:

1. A covering 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 should be provided as well as a rationale for being offered a place as a PhD student.
2. Two written references
3. A research proposal must carefully follow the structure and sequence of the template provided below. 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.

Template to be Followed for Research Proposals

- Description of proposed research including critique of the relevant literature and alignment to research topic (1000 words)
- Quality and appropriateness of research design and methodologies (500 words)
- Justification and contribution of study (appropriateness of research questions/objectives and proposed contribution to knowledge) (500 words)
- Feasibility of the proposed research plan in terms of time frame, deliverables and contingency (200 words)
- Consideration of the relevant ethical issues and sex/gender dimension (100 words)
- Clarity of plans to acquire new knowledge and skills to achieve research aims (where appropriate) (200 words)
- Clarity of dissemination and knowledge exchange plans in terms of proposed target publications (200 words)
- Clarity of potential impact of research beyond academia e.g. impact in terms of practice, policy etc. (200 words)
- Evidence of plans to apply for funding during PhD programme e.g. to the Irish Research Council or other funding bodies both nationally and internationally (100 words)