



## Doctoral Research Prospectus Submission Checklist

### Attention Students:

Before submitting your Prospectus to the Dissertation Department for review and college approval, carefully complete this checklist to ensure that your document is **complete, properly formatted, and fully aligned** with university expectations.

Failure to include any required elements, follow APA 7th edition style, or use the approved [Prospectus Template](#) will result in the prospectus being **returned without review**.

### Template and Formatting

- ☐ I have used the official [Westcliff University Doctoral Research Prospectus Template](#) with all instructional text removed.
  - ☐ I have formatted all sections, headings, page numbers, and references in **APA 7th edition** style.
  - ☐ I have written the document in **future tense** (e.g., “This study will...” or “This project will...”).
  - ☐ My title page, copyright notice, and table of contents match the template format.
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### Introduction

- ☐ My introduction provides a brief, clear overview of the **research topic, context, and relevance** to the discipline or practice setting.
  - ☐ I have previewed the structure of Chapter One and its connection to the rest of the study.
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### Problem Background

- ☐ I have described the **broader academic and/or practical context** of the central problem.
  - ☐ I have supported the background with **current, peer-reviewed sources** (and, if applicable, practitioner or industry evidence).
  - ☐ I have clarified **who or what is affected**, the **extent of the issue**, and **why it matters now**.
  - ☐ I have demonstrated how this issue is represented or debated in the current literature.
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### Problem Statement

- ☐ I have provided a **single, clear, evidence-based problem statement** beginning with:
  - ☐ “*The specific problem being investigated is...*” (quantitative or mixed methods) OR
  - ☐ “*The specific problem being explored is...*” (qualitative).
- ☐ I have followed the problem statement with a discussion of the **origins, context, and impact** of the problem.
- ☐ I have used **recent, peer-reviewed sources** to establish the problem’s **relevance and timeliness**.

- ☐ I have clearly linked the problem to a **research gap or problem of practice**.
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### Purpose of the Study

- ☐ My purpose statement begins with *"The purpose of this [methodology] [design] study is..."*.
- ☐ I have identified the **method, design, population, and overall goal** of the study or project.
- ☐ I have demonstrated clear alignment between the **problem** and **purpose** statements.
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### Research Questions (and Hypotheses, if applicable)

- ☐ My research questions are **aligned** with the problem and purpose, **open-ended**, and **focused** on a single issue.
- ☐ Each question is **appropriately worded** for the selected methodology (e.g., "how," "what," or "why" for qualitative; "to what extent" or "what is the relationship" for quantitative).
- ☐ I have provided a **brief rationale** after each question explaining how it contributes to the purpose.
- ☐ If my study is quantitative or mixed methods, I have included **both null ( $H_0$ ) and alternative ( $H_1$ )** hypotheses written in clear, testable form.
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### Theoretical or Conceptual Framework

- ☐ I have identified whether my study uses a **theoretical** or **conceptual** framework (not both).
- ☐ I have **updated the heading** in my Prospectus to match my chosen framework type (e.g., Theoretical Framework or Conceptual Framework).
- ☐ I have named the **theory, model, or key concepts**, including **originating author(s)** and **year introduced**.
- ☐ I have summarized the **core components** of the framework and described how it informs the problem, purpose, and research questions.
- ☐ I have supported the framework's relevance and application with **current, peer-reviewed sources**.
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### Nature of the Study

- ☐ I have provided a **concise overview** of my study's method, design, data collection, and data analysis approach.
- ☐ I have justified briefly why this design is **appropriate** for addressing the stated problem and purpose.
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### Research Method, Design, Data Collection, and Analysis

- ☐ I have clearly identified whether my study is **qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods**.
- ☐ I have named and briefly justified the **specific research design** (e.g., case study, phenomenology, quasi-experimental).



- ☐ I have summarized the **type of data** to be collected, **sampling approach**, and **anticipated sample size**, supported by literature.
  - ☐ I have described how data will be **analyzed**, aligned with the chosen method and design.
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## Scope of the Study

- ☐ I have clearly defined the **boundaries and limitations** of my study (population, setting, time frame, or focus).
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## Significance of the Study

- ☐ I have described the **potential contributions** of the study or project to theory, research, or professional practice.
  - ☐ I have explained how the findings **may benefit** scholars, practitioners, organizations, or industries.
  - ☐ My language appropriately reflects the **proposal stage** (using “may” or “has the potential to” rather than definitive claims).
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## Summary

- ☐ My summary synthesizes (not repeats) the key components of Chapter One.
  - ☐ I have reaffirmed the **alignment** among the problem, purpose, research questions, methodology, and framework.
  - ☐ I have concluded with a clear preview of the study’s next steps (e.g., upcoming literature review).
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## References

- ☐ My reference list includes **every source cited** in the text and **no additional sources**.
  - ☐ All entries are formatted according to **APA 7th edition**, with active hyperlinks and correct DOI formatting.
  - ☐ The list uses a **0.5-inch hanging indent**, **double spacing**, and **alphabetical order by author**.
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## Final Confirmation

- ☐ I understand that if my prospectus does not follow the **required template**, **include all sections**, or **adhere to APA style**, it will be **returned without approval**.
- ☐ I have reviewed my **Program Learning Outcomes** and confirmed that my proposed research or project is **in alignment** with my degree program.