

It is not possible to proscribe exactly how the concept paper will look or what it will contain because it will vary depending on your topic. However as a guide, it should contain at least the sections shown in the table below.

Overall, the paper would be between 10 and 15 pages. In this case, longer is not necessarily better.

Your concept paper will look like a mini-proposal, but it doesn't need to show too much exact detail.

The concept can be quite broad at this stage. Because you won't have read too much about the topic yet, you will not know exactly where the gaps in our knowledge are, so you can't be too specific. However you should have some idea about the originality aspect of your research.

You should try and explain how your concept is 'research' rather than a 'project' or a 'management plan'.

Write it like an academic paper, use section headings as in the following table, and correct referencing.

Section	Length (pages)
Title page showing your name, research title, program etc	1
Introduction including a justification for the topic and a literature review.	4
Methodology including what kind of data you will collect, where you will collect it, how etc.	2
You might be able to answer questions like the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are you looking at primary data or secondary or both?• Is it qualitative research or quantitative or both?	
Conceptual framework is a diagrammatic representation of your idea – boxes, circles etc linked by arrows and lines.	1
Hypothesis if you have one.	1-2
Research questions that will guide you through your research.	
Originality aspect of the research.	
Timeframe for your research. This would normally cover a three year period with some benchmarks such as concept paper presentation, qualifying exam, proposal defence, data collection, data analysis, international publication, thesis defence.	1
Show it pictorially with arrows rather than a table.	
Reference list with at least 20 references using journal, book, report and internet sources (note the order of this list is in descending order of academic value).	1-2

If you have any questions, ask your advisor.