

Quick Guide for contacting potential supervisors for postgraduate studies: Do's & Don'ts

For undergraduate and early career members, continuity for higher academic qualifications is sometimes desirable and/or required. However, in most countries, securing a supervisor who is ready to supervise the candidate's dissertation/thesis is a prerequisite for admission. This document highlights a few guidelines of do's and don'ts when contacting a potential supervisor.

Do:

- Decide on your preferred area of research and identify suitable potential supervisor(s) in the field.
- Read about the past and current works of the potential supervisor(s) from the university website, ResearchGate, Scopus, etc. to get acquainted with their research.
- Develop a research proposal. You may not end up using it but it will demonstrate to potential supervisors that you have thought about what you would like to do. It is not usually a requirement for Masters but almost always required for PhD admissions.
- Compose a compelling message (not more than 400 words) describing how you could be a great addition to the research team if accepted. Send the email with your CV (that includes publications if any) and research proposal attached.
- Send a gentle reminder if you receive no response after a week.

Don't:

- Contact a potential supervisor unprepared.
- Send a wordy email. Potential supervisors are busy, so make it brief and straight to the point
- Focus too much on yourself in an email. Let the potential supervisor know what you have to offer and how much you can add to their research group.
- Forget to send a reminder if no response after a week.

If you have any questions please contact:

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