What should be included in a research proposal?

1. **Topic** = Preliminary title
2. **Research context and rationale:**
   - **Practical relevancy** of your topic (incl. non-academic/academic reference)
   - What has been written in academic literature (= high-quality recent journal articles) about your topic? (2-4 academic references) → What do we know about your topic from recent academic work?
   - What is an interesting research gap in the academic literature on your topic and why is it important to address it (academic reference)? → What do we NOT know but is important to know?
   - How do you address this research gap with your study and why do you think you will contribute to novel and relevant insights?
3. **Research question:**
   - “How/Why” Question = qualitative
   - “To what extent” Question = quantitative
4. **Methods:**
   - **Type of research:** qualitative/quantitative
   - **Data source & collection** (where, how, from whom, how much, why?)
   - **Data analysis & results presentation**
5. **Literature:** 10 key academic references
6. **High-level time plan:** time plan for completing each chapter and related key activity of your work
7. **Table of contents:** Chapters & sub-chapters (aligned to typical academic paper structure)