

Written Task for Applicants: Knowledge, Power, and Politics (KPP) Route

Applicants are required to submit a 1,500–2,000-word essay (including references) that outlines and critically develops their research interests in relation to the study of knowledge, power, and politics in education. Your essay should demonstrate:

- Conceptual clarity and critical engagement with relevant theoretical and/or empirical literature
- Original and well-justified research thinking
- Reflexivity, including explicit consideration of your positionality as a researcher

We are particularly interested in your ability to:

- Situate your research within key debates about knowledge production, power relations, and educational inequality.
- Engage substantively and critically with relevant theoretical frameworks (e.g. critical pedagogy, sociologies of education, post-structural or decolonial approaches)
- Connect your research interests to contemporary educational challenges (e.g. policy, practice, access, curriculum, governance)

Your essay should address the following dimensions (integrated into a coherent argument):

1. Research Focus: What are your proposed research interests, and how do they contribute to understanding the relationships between knowledge, power, and politics in education?
2. Theoretical Engagement: Which theoretical perspectives inform your thinking, and how do you critically engage with them?
3. Global and/or Local Context: What broader educational debates, inequalities, or policy contexts does your research engage with?
4. Prior Knowledge and Experience: How have your academic, professional, or lived experiences shaped your research interests and perspective?
5. Positionality and Reflexivity: How do your social, cultural, or epistemic positions shape your approach to this research? What are the implications for how you produce and interpret knowledge?

We encourage you to:

- Engage with specific authors, concepts, or traditions relevant to your topic
- Develop a clear and coherent argument, rather than addressing each section separately
- Demonstrate critical analysis, not just description of theory or experience
- Write in a reflexive and academically rigorous voice

Submission Requirements

- Essays must be within the stated word limit (1,500–2,000 words, including references)
- Applications will not be considered without submission of this task
- Essays exceeding the word limit will not be accepted

Essays will be assessed on:

- Conceptual and theoretical depth
- Clarity and coherence of argument
- Critical engagement with literature
- Reflexivity and positional awareness
- Relevance to KPP themes