



**Jill Berry**

**Preparing for and experiencing the viva**

**EdD, University of Nottingham**

**Summer School**

**28 July 2016**

## **My EdD timeframe:**

<b>Sept 2010</b>	<b>EdD course started</b>
<b>Autumn 2012</b>	<b>Research project planned</b>
<b>2013/2014</b>	<b>Data generation and transcription</b>
<b>2014/2015</b>	<b>Analysis and writing</b>
<b>end of Dec 2015</b>	<b>Writing completed (Application for restriction on publication submitted and accepted) Notice of submission form sent</b>

## **My EdD timeframe:**

<b>1 Feb 2016</b>	<b>Two soft-bound copies submitted</b>
<b>5 Feb 2016</b>	<b>Confirmation of examiners (one internal to the university, one external)</b>
<b>8 March 2016</b>	<b>Notification of date of viva</b>
<b>9 May 2016</b>	<b>Viva</b>
<b>10 May 2016</b>	<b>Email confirmation of minor amendments required</b>

## **My EdD timeframe:**

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>18 May 2016</b>  | <b>Amendments emailed to internal examiner</b>   |
| <b>21 May 2016</b>  | <b>Email confirmation that amendments had been accepted. Copy uploaded to the university's e-theses service (NB. Hard-bound copies not now required)</b> |
| <b>27 May 2016</b>  | <b>Official notification of the award received</b>   |
| <b>18 July 2016</b> | <b>Graduation</b>  |



## **How did I prepare for the viva?**

- 1. Rereading my thesis**
- 2. Anticipating possible questions**
- 3. Planning and practising answers**



**Anticipating possible questions:**

**When rereading the thesis**

**When rereading Educational Research  
(Woods and Smith, 2016)**

**Using the Vivacards ([vivacards.co.uk](http://vivacards.co.uk))**



**I also:**

**Had a supervision session devoted to discussing the viva and my preparation**

**Discussed the viva with an academic contact at another university:**

**“Where’s the new knowledge?”**



## **The viva itself:**

**Was two hours long**

**A stimulating professional conversation**

**Very firmly focussed on my research/my  
thesis**

**My main supervisor sat in and took notes**





**Some of the questions asked:**

**Why this topic?**

**Why these specific research questions?**

**Why did you order the presentation of your six cases in this way? What difference would it have made if you had chosen an alternative sequence?**

**Why did you choose to focus on role theory?**

**How did you decide which literature to include/leave out?**



**Some of the questions asked:**

**Talk about your sampling: why these six?**

**Talk about your methodology/methods/  
coding process. Discuss and justify the choices  
you made.**

**Is there anything you would change were  
you to rewrite the Discussion chapter?**

**Discuss the clear connection between the  
literature and your data in the Discussion  
chapter. (This needed to be stronger.)**

## Summary of Examiners' Recommendations

Please tick the appropriate box (s)

### Award of EdD

- without conditions
- subject to correction of typographical errors within 1 month<sup>1</sup>
- subject to minor amendments<sup>2</sup> to be completed within 3 months<sup>3</sup>

### Referral, with

APPROVED	LS
LETTER	
SATURN	
DATE	18/5/16

### EITHER

a) resubmission of the thesis within 12 months for EdD:

- viva voce* required
- viva voce* not required

If re-submission for EdD recommended but the student is unable to re-submit (please complete this section if **a**) is selected):

- MPhil to be awarded now
- MPhil to be awarded now subject to minor amendments<sup>2</sup> to be completed within 3 months<sup>3</sup>
- Thesis not currently at MPhil level

### OR

b) another *viva voce* examination although thesis is accepted

- without conditions
- subject to minor amendments<sup>2</sup> to be completed within 3 months<sup>3</sup>

### OR

- Failure** at EdD standard<sup>4</sup>

**Joint Post Viva Voce Report  
Ed.D University of Nottingham**

**Candidate:** Jill Berry

**Thesis Title:** The Transition to Headship

**Date of Viva:** 9<sup>th</sup> May 2016 15:00

**Summary**

The candidate offered an excellent defence of the thesis and responded effectively to the the issues raised by the examiners.

Recommendation: Award with minor revisions to be completed within three months

Minor revisions to be approved by Professor Tony Bush (Internal Examiner)

1. Review the title of chapter 2. Mapping the field: A literature review of transition into headship
2. P12. Remove or substantiate the claim re headteacher shortages
3. Expand the explanation of sampling processes, including how final decisions were made
4. Add a section on 'additional data collection' after section on semi-structured interviews (top of p. 43)
5. Add a summary table highlighting the quantity of data collected e.g. Robert 15 hrs semi structured interviews
6. Move 'Processing the data' (and change to 'Data Analysis') from p. 53 to before 'My position...'
7. Enhance the use of literature and be bolder in chapter 5
8. Be explicit about the significance/ contribution of your work and offer some implications for future research, policy and practice.



Professor Christopher Chapman  
Director, Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change  
University of Glasgow

*Tony Bush*

**Professor Tony Bush  
Internal Examiner**



**Guest post written for Pat Thomson's blog,  
'patter':**

**<https://patthomson.net/2016/06/02/preparing-for-then-surviving-the-viva/>**



**For info - post on the BELMAS (British Educational Leadership, Management and Administration Society) blog on the outcomes of my research:**

**<https://www.belmas.org.uk/BELMAS-Blog/making-the-leap-moving-from-deputy-headship-to-headship>**



**Graduation: 18 July 2016**



[jillberry102@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jillberry102@hotmail.co.uk)

**@jillberry102**