

COMPLETING YOUR EdD

Praise for 'Completing your EdD'

Completing Your EdD: The Essential Guide to the Doctor of Education is designed to support anyone undertaking, or thinking about undertaking, a Professional Doctorate in Education (EdD). This book focusses on supporting EdD students at each stage of their study, from understanding the structure of EdDs to providing helpful information and guidance relating to the requirements of the thesis and preparing for the viva voce examination and beyond.

A particular strength of this book is that it starts from the perspective that the student is a complete beginner, making it accessible to those new to doctoral study. *Completing Your EdD: The Essential Guide to the Doctor of Education* addresses issues relating to several aspects of the EdD with which students frequently struggle including, for example, issues relating to understanding the essential components of the literature review, understanding what developing a theoretical framework really means and developing insights into the requirements of the final EdD thesis. This book covers important ground relating to the different chapters which traditionally make up an EdD thesis, as well as information about the supervisory support that can be expected. It also suggests ways in which students can share their research and develop a research profile following the successful completion of their EdD. Each chapter poses reflective questions to help the reader reflect critically on different aspects of their doctoral work. Case studies and real-life examples of EdD student experiences are also included, providing valuable insights into some of the situations doctoral students are likely to encounter and the factors that need to be considered at different stages of the doctorate.

The authors bring a wealth of experience in leading Professional Doctorate programmes and doctoral supervision and examining. This book provides essential reading to help students understand what an EdD entails. Through providing helpful guidance which addresses many of the issues and concerns frequently raised by EdD students, this book is also a valuable resource for EdD programme leaders and supervisors.

Carol Robinson, Professor of Children's Rights, Edge Hill University, UK.

We often use the metaphor of journeys in education, and doctoral study has been likened to a spiritual quest or voyage of discovery. For many, this will be a journey into the unknown, a journey without maps, and whilst there may be fellow travellers along the way, it is essentially a solo sojourn. Written by experienced supervisors of professional doctorate programmes in education (EdD), this edited collection is an essential guide for not only for those about to embark on a EdD but also those who have begun their studies.

This edited guide opens with a chapter designed to enable the reader to understand the distinctive nature of an EdD and how to select a programme to meet their individual needs. Subsequent chapters consider the essential components of a doctorate, such as writing the literature review; developing a theoretical framework; research design, methodological approaches and data collection methods; and data analysis. The guide also usefully includes chapters on research ethics, managing the supervisory relationship and how best to prepare for and perform at the viva. The final chapter, which focuses on what to do, and how you might feel post qualification, draws on the experiences of some of the authors. The chapter I return to most frequently is: 'Getting over the finish line' which provides constructive advice on bringing the various elements – chapters and sections – of the thesis together as a cohesive whole with the metaphorical 'golden thread'.

Each of the 10 chapters is written in an accessible style, with judicious use of call-out boxes and bulleted lists which break up the text; in some instances, posing reflective questions and exercises; and providing short case studies and suggested further reading. When research becomes 'curiouser and curiouser' and you become lost in a sea of texts, caught up in theoretical paradigm wars, dipping back into the guide will help you regain your focus and get you over the finish line.

Anthony Hudson, Doctoral Student, University of East London, UK.

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The Essential Guide to the Doctor
of Education

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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Professor Mike Watts is Professor of Education at Brunel University London, conducting ‘naturalistic’ people-orientated research principally in science education and in scholarship in higher education. He enjoys exploring new technologies for learning and writing about creative pedagogical approaches to learning and teaching. He is the Director of Internationalisation for the Department of Education at Brunel, teaches at all levels and currently supervises 14 PhD students.

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FOREWORD

Gina Wisker

*Professor of Contemporary Literature and
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Director of Brighton's Centre for Learning and Teaching.*

Many books and articles guide us with the doctorate. However, few offer insights on the doctorate based in professional practice. One of the strengths of this book on Education Doctorates, as professional doctorates, is its accessibility of structure and direct address. Another is its insider knowledge, which is turned in each chapter to clarify the shape, expectations and practice of the EdD, demystifying its structures and taking readers step by step through the expectations and the ways of working with the literature review, theories, ethics, research design, data analysis and writing for completion and the examination. It also tackles the practices of working effectively with your supervisor and directions after the doctorate, a contribution Sue Taylor notes, of the supervision relationship, that 'As mature professionals in demanding professional roles, you need particular support and guidance along your EdD journey'. The time pressures and demands, the relationship between that professional practice and the demands of researching it, often as insiders, to make effective research-based change, all of this lies behind the book as a whole. This is an accessible, well considered, well structured, essential insider guide.

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INTRODUCTION

Iona Burnell and Jodi Roffey-Barentsen

Welcome to *Completing Your EdD: The Essential Guide to the Doctor of Education*, an accompanying guide that is somewhere between a handbook and a textbook. This book is designed specifically for anyone undertaking the Doctor of Education (EdD) programme, and can be utilised by students, lecturers, and anybody who is involved in facilitating the EdD.

We are very excited to present you with a comprehensive yet concise collection of chapters, each one related to an important aspect of the EdD. They have been expertly written by academics who are either working on, managing, or have been working on an EdD programme. Whether you have not yet started your EdD, are at the taught stage, or at the thesis writing stage, the collection of chapters within this book will be vital to your decision-making, your progress, and your success.

Education doctorates are a relatively new qualification in the doctoral series. Described as a professional or practitioner doctorate, it is distinctly different from the traditional PhD and is structured as part taught, part research. Another distinct factor of the EdD is the specialism – education. All professional doctorates have a specialism: Doctor of Engineering, Doctor of Social Science, and Doctor of Clinical Psychology. The EdD requires a text that has been specifically written for this specialism, and that is what we are presenting to you here.

Although there are many books that offer advice and guidance on PhDs and writing theses (some are recommended within this book

as further reading), our book is a collection of 10 chapters; each chapter, as detailed below, covers a specific aspect of the EdD. Each chapter may aid you twice: once at the taught stage and again at the thesis writing/research stage. You may refer, for example, to the chapter on ‘Research Design and Methodological Approaches’ while undertaking a taught module in the first phase of the programme and again later while designing your research and writing your thesis.

The book chapters are laid out in what could be considered the chronological order in which your doctoral journey might take you – from making the decision to undertake the EdD, and meeting whoever may become your supervisor, to gaining ethical approval, writing the literature review and developing a theoretical framework, through to submission, and finally the viva. The last chapter in the series explores some options and suggestions for the post-qualification stage. Each chapter author was chosen for his or her expertise in that area of the EdD programme. Therefore, what you have here is a collection of professionals who are imparting their expertise and knowledge in order to enable you to succeed on your quest to fulfil your ambition to be a Doctor of Education.

The first chapter of this book is an in-depth look at what the EdD programme is, in relation to other professional doctorates, and the traditional PhD. Jane Creaton writes a fascinating account of the history of the EdD, and what makes it distinctly different from the PhD. This chapter identifies the key characteristics of the programme, including the potential advantages and disadvantages of the various programme structures, helping you to make an informed choice. Such choices may include the mode of delivery (weekends, evenings, etc.), content of the modules, the nature of the assessments, and supervision arrangements. Deciding to pursue a doctorate is a serious commitment, both financially and in terms of time and effort. It will form a large and important part of your life so making the right decision early on is very important.

The following chapter, Chapter 2, offers some very valuable advice about your relationship with your supervisor(s). Sue Taylor guides you through what, for some students, can be an awkward experience in unknown territory. Sue’s advice includes identifying and approaching potential supervisor(s) (if your institution expects this of you), developing effective working relationship(s), and

identifying possible measures if things do not go smoothly. She also draws on the benefit of her own experience by presenting in the case study, an example of best practice.

Chapter 3 raises some very important questions about ethics within educational research. Paula Zwozdiak-Myers discusses various theories of ethics and why this has become a crucial area for consideration for any research that involves human participants. This chapter encourages you to think through principles of ethics, scrutinise ethical guidelines, and very importantly, think reflexively. By the end of this chapter, you will have acquired a clear understanding of what ethical theories underpin research and what to consider when planning the design of your own research. Another important point that is raised here is – how to defend your ethical decision-making during your viva. This may seem like a long way off right now! But the importance of decision-making in the early stages cannot be stressed enough.

Chapter 4 is about writing the literature review. Leena Helavaara Robertson presents a thorough account of what constitutes a literature review. Leena demystifies what is sometimes a complex undertaking where many students feel lost and confused about what to include in their literature review. All of the important points are covered here including the purposes of a literature review, the selection process, developing criticality, and linking the literature to the research questions and your theoretical framework.

Chapter 5 is concerned with developing the theoretical framework within your thesis. Mike Watts explains why there is a need to articulate a theoretical framework for your research, and how this will inform the choices and consequential decisions you then need to make. Mike points out that defending your thesis at viva is, in fact, defending the numerous decisions you have made along the way. With that in mind, this chapter will guide you through the construction of your theoretical framework, ensuring that those choices and consequential decisions are the right ones for your research.

Chapter 6 begins with Kate Hoskins telling you that a key challenge for you as a doctoral researcher is deciding upon the research design that you will use to address your research questions and understanding how to justify your decisions about design.

This chapter clearly lays out the design process and what you will need to do in order to produce an effective methodology. From identifying the key features of quantitative and qualitative research, and making decisions about the various methods of collecting data, to defending your choice of methodology and methods, Kate provides you with valuable advice and guidance.

Chapter 7 is about analysing and interpreting your data. After gaining ethical approval, writing your literature review, decided on your theoretical framework, and designing your methods and methodology, how then to present the crucial and possibly final section: your findings from the data. Jim Crawley explains that analysing and interpreting data is at the heart of every piece of research and succeeding with this stage is crucial. Among other important advice within this chapter, Jim asserts that, in order to ensure validity, data analysis and interpretation must be adequate for the whole research project to be valid.

Chapter 8 is called 'Getting over the finish line' because, by now, you may well be thinking about making finishing touches in readiness for submission. As part of this chapter, Iona Burnell and Gerry Czerniawski offer some useful tips and insights to improving what could be the final stages of your draft thesis. The 'golden thread', for example, is the central argument that pulls through the thesis, creating cohesion, and connecting all of the parts together. Checking that the abstract is an appropriately distilled version of the thesis and that the introduction explains what you have done, how you have done it, and why, are important finishing touches. Iona and Gerry also include guidance on making last-minute checks to the methodology, presenting your findings, the criticality of your writing, and writing your conclusion. One of the aims of this chapter is for you to present a thesis that helps to reduce the amount of potential questions examiners ask in your viva.

Chapter 9 will help you to prepare for that crucial final stage: the examination process and the viva. Jodi Roffey-Barentsen and Richard Malthouse begin this chapter by explaining the examination process following submission of your thesis. They include very useful advice on preparing for your viva, including the importance of the mock, and guidance on how to anticipate questions from the examiner. Nobody can ever really know what the examiners will

ask, but there are some questions that commonly occur in vivas, and this chapter will help you to prepare for those. Jodi and Richard also cover the possible outcomes of the examination process – what the outcomes are and what each one means, although these may vary slightly from institution to institution.

Chapter 10 is the final chapter in the book. Jodi Roffey-Barentsen presents a collection of interesting contributions from Jane Creaton, Kate Hoskins, Sue Taylor, Mike Watts, and Gina Wisker, in this chapter called ‘Post qualification – now you’re a doctor, what next?’ The contributing authors offer guidance for publishing in journals, and they refer to general advice for Early Career Researchers. At the end of this chapter, you will be able to consider ways of sharing your research with the wider world, convert your thesis into (an) article(s) suitable for publication in a journal, and take steps to develop from an Early Career Researcher to a more experienced one.

In addition to the information provided in the chapters, each one also includes one or more case studies. The case studies are based on real-life scenarios from researchers’ experiences. We would like to take this opportunity to thank those researchers who have contributed case studies to this book. We feel that the case studies bring the material to life and demonstrate that research in the social sciences, such as education, is often not straightforward or problem free. We don’t want to deter you but rather encourage you; we hope that when you read the case studies you will appreciate that no researcher is immune to the difficulties that doing research poses, but that these difficulties can be dealt with and overcome.

Although doctoral research can be challenging and sometimes fraught with problems, it can also be an immensely rewarding experience. If you are reading this introduction because you are thinking of embarking, or about to embark on your EdD, we say ‘go for it!’, you won’t regret it. Doing an EdD is an amazing and incredibly fulfilling experience. We hope that you will find this book the ideal accompaniment to your journey, and we wish you every success.

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THE STRUCTURE OF A PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE IN EDUCATION; WHY CHOOSE IT?

Jane Creaton

INTRODUCTION

All doctoral-level qualifications in the United Kingdom

require the main focus of the candidate's work to demonstrate an original contribution to knowledge in their subject, field or profession, through original research or the original application of existing knowledge or understanding. (Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), 2015, p. 3)

However, doctorates are delivered through a range of different models. The three main categories are subject specialist doctorates (PhD/DPhil), doctorates by publication and professional and/or practitioner doctorates. The latter category is distinguished by its application to professional practice and so tends to be structured differently from the other forms of doctorate. The aim of this chapter is to review and analyse the structure of professional doctorate in education (EdD) programmes. There are three key purposes: to enable you to understand the distinctive nature of a professional doctorate, to compare the professional doctorate with

other options for doctoral-level study, and to assist you in choosing an EdD programme which best meets your requirements.

This chapter begins with a general overview of the structure of professional doctorate programmes, including level, credits, modules, delivery and assessment. It will then identify the key features of a professional doctorate and how these differ from other doctoral pathways. The final section will review some of the different ways that EdD programmes are structured and delivered and consider the advantages and disadvantages of the various approaches. The rationale is to enable you to choose a programme which is best suited to your aims and objectives, your style of working and your personal and professional circumstances.

At the end of this chapter, you should be able to:

- Identify the key characteristics of a professional doctorate.
- Understand the potential advantages and disadvantages of different EdD structures.
- Make an informed choice about which programme would best suit your needs.

WHAT IS A PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE?

The UK Council for Graduate Education (UKCGE) defines a professional doctorate as:

A programme of advanced study and research which ... is designed to meet the specific needs of a professional group external to the university, and which develops the capability of individuals to work within a professional context.
(UKCGE, 2002, p. 62)

The origins of professional doctorates can be traced back to the thirteenth century to the subject-based doctorates such as Doctor of Law and Doctor of Theology that were offered by European universities (UKCGE, 2002). The earliest modern professional doctorates in the United Kingdom were launched in 1992: an EdD at the University of Bristol and a Doctorate in Engineering (EngD) at the University of Warwick, the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST)/University of Manchester and