



How to Survive Your Viva

Rowena Murray

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"The aims and objectives... are comprehensive, covering very urgent needs in a hitherto neglected aspect within the research training field. ...This book provides a thorough digest of all the important aspects of the viva process, recognizing diversity but noting common demands, expectations and concerns. It is also a valuable resource of relevant literature in the field. ...I wish that this book had not only been available for my many previous students but for myself when I underwent the process, surviving more by good fortune than informed guidance, and suffering unnecessary levels of anxiety in the process." *Studies in Higher Education*

"This is the first book of its type... to focus entirely on this one short but vital part of the PhD process. It's a vital stage in gaining your degree, yet most people make surprisingly little preparation for it. ...My own PhD viva had some bad moments because I invited an extra examiner who didn't really need to be there - and he decided to make waves (because he had no personal investment in the process). If I had read this book first, I wouldn't have made that mistake. It's a crucial moment in your academic career. The price of a book like this will repay itself a hundredfold in your first year of subsequent employment." Mantex

"The book...covers pretty much all that students might need to know about the viva, including aspects of it that they might never have considered. ...Throughout Rowena Murray is concerned to recognise that candidates may feel powerless but that they can learn to be more powerful by making themselves knowledgeable about local regulations, procedures and customs, practising appropriate skills and preparing themselves as they would for any other form of assessment." *Learning and Teaching in Higher Education*

The oral examination is a new type of communication event. It requires the highest standard of communication skills. Writing a thesis or dissertation requires students to pull their ideas together into a unified whole; oral examinations take it all apart again.

Typical questions, and strategies for answering them, are provided in order to help participants prepare and practise.

The book features:

- Real examples of questions and answers
- Narratives of experiences
- Planning tools
- Preparation framework
- Specific verbal strategies to use in the viva to do justice to the thesis
- User-friendly writing style
- Reading list

This is the first book to provide comprehensive coverage of the viva. It is an essential handbook for all involved in oral examinations: students, supervisors, tutors and examiners, including undergraduate, Masters and doctoral examinations.

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