

**Steps to Completion in the Doctor of Education
in
Educational Leadership and Policy Program**

(Revised May 2008)

Abbreviations used:

- EDST — Department of Educational Studies
- FoGS — Faculty of Graduate Studies
- CAC — Cohort Advisory Committee
- POS — Program of Studies
- RSC — Research Supervisory Committee

Note—The sequence of some of these events may vary depending on the circumstances and some events may occur simultaneously.

Completing and Submitting Annual Academic Progress Reports

Each student in the Department of Educational Studies is expected to complete an annual progress report. These reports are a means of tracking student progress through the program and identifying problems that may be impeding timely completion of requirements. Reminders to complete these reports are sent annually on EDST-net, but it is the student's responsibility to download and complete Part A of this form by July 15 each year they are enrolled in the program. The Annual Progress Report form for the EDD program can be found on the EDST website (www.edst.educ.ubc.ca) under "Policies and Forms." Completed forms should be submitted electronically to the department's student records clerk (edst.records@ubc.ca), who will log them in and forward them to the student's advisor or supervisor who will complete Part B. Students who find they cannot make any progress on their programs for four or more months due to unexpected work, family or health changes should request a leave of absence through their Pro Tem advisor, supervisor or the EDST Graduate Coordinator. Students can request up to 12 months of leave during their program.

1. **Admission**

Applicant submits required materials to the Department. Transcripts are evaluated and it is determined if the applicant meets minimum admission requirements. Once this determination is made, the Department reviews the application and makes an admission recommendation to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FoGS) based on all available evidence. FoGS then sends a formal offer of admission to the applicant and the applicant must accept or decline the offer in writing. An offer of admission is good only for the academic year in which it is made. Please note that under current policies of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, doctoral students have six years from initial registration to complete all program requirements.

2. **Meeting the Cohort/Beginning the Program**

The EdD program involves joining a cohort of students who begin the program and complete required coursework together. There will be an initial meeting of the cohort to introduce students to one another, to introduce faculty who will be involved in the program and to answer questions. This meeting is normally held on the opening day of classes in the first summer of the program (July-August).

During this first summer session, each student will meet with the Cohort Advisory Committee (CAC) to discuss his or her initial ideas about the thesis project, possible elective courses that might be suitable and to clarify any matters related to the program. Students may request additional meetings with the CAC—or their Pro Tem Advisor—at any time.

An EdD Program of Study (POS) worksheet will be completed and filed for each student by the Pro Tem Advisor or chair of the Cohort Advisory Committee. The purpose of this one-page document is to confirm the required courses in the program and to record other courses that the student may wish to take as electives. It is not essential that electives be recorded at this early stage in the program, but when electives are selected, they will be recorded on the POS.

3. **Completing Required and Elective Courses**

The program is designed so students can complete all required and elective courses by the end of the second year, although some students take a bit longer to complete electives. Required courses must be completed before the student takes the EdD comprehensive examination at the end of the second year of the program. Elective courses may be regularly-scheduled on-campus courses, approved online courses, courses taken at other universities that have formal agreements for credit transfer with UBC, or as Directed Studies (EDST 580). Plans for elective courses should be discussed with your Pro Tem Advisor or the Cohort Advisory Committee.

4. **Formation of Research Supervisory Committee**

The Research Supervisory Committee (RSC) consists of the student's Research Supervisor (who usually chairs the committee and usually holds the rank of Associate Professor or Professor) and at least two other members. One of these members may be a senior practitioner with expertise in the student's field of interest. The composition of the committee must be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies if any non-UBC persons are involved. As the title suggests, the role of this committee is to supervise the student's research and preparation of the thesis. In most instances, the student approaches a qualified faculty member and requests that that person serve as Research Supervisor. If agreement is reached, then the Research Supervisor and student jointly identify other members who may have interests and skills compatible with the proposed research. Normally the student is expected to initiate discussions with prospective Research Supervisors and to extend invitations to other faculty who might serve on the committee. The specific approach used to constitute the committee is worked out between the student and Research Supervisor.

5. **Comprehensive Examination**

All doctoral students are required to take a comprehensive examination. The EdD comprehensive examination is taken once students have completed the six core courses in the program. EdD students receive the examination questions at the end of their first year in the program and are expected to respond to them by the end of the second year. Written procedures for the examination will be distributed to all students in the program and can be found on the department's website.

6. **Development and Approval of Research Proposal**

In consultation with the Research Supervisor and other members of the RSC, the student drafts and revises the research proposal until the committee is ready to approve the project. The Committee determines the requirements of the proposal, but most often it includes a clear and complete presentation and justification of the research problem; a critical review of relevant literature and a presentation of the study's conceptual or theoretical framework; and a complete presentation of the research method. The Research Supervisor is responsible for placing a copy of the approved research proposal—with the signatures of all committee members on an approved cover page—in the student's file and for notifying the Graduate Secretary that the proposal has been approved.

7. **Admission to Doctoral Candidacy**

Once the student completes required coursework (24 credits including electives), passes the comprehensive examination, and produces an approved research proposal, the chairperson of the Research Supervisory Committee (most often the Research Supervisor) completes an "Advancement to Candidacy" form. Once this form is filed with FoGS, the student is considered admitted to candidacy. Candidates are eligible for certain teaching assignments that are not otherwise available to graduate students. Current policy of the Faculty of Graduate Studies states: "A student who is not admitted to candidacy within 36 months of initial registration must withdraw from the program. Extension of this period may be permitted by the Dean of Graduate Studies in exceptional circumstances."

8. **Approval of Research Protocol by Behavioural Research Ethics Board**

If the student's research involves collecting data from humans (via interviews, questionnaires, observations, etc.), the research protocol must be approved by the UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BREB). The student is responsible for completing the necessary forms and attachments in the web-based RISE (Research Information Services) system. This web application can be accessed from the website of the Office of Research Services (www.ors.ubc.ca). The student prepares drafts of the application and attachments, then these are reviewed by the student's research supervisor. Once the supervisor has approved the materials, the department head is notified that they are ready for review and approval. Once the application is signed by the department head and submitted to the BREB, the review process normally takes 4-6 weeks (longer during the summer). Detailed information on the process, deadlines and turnaround times is available on the Research Services website. No data are to be collected until the approval certificate is received from the committee. It is necessary for students carrying out

research projects to complete an online research ethics tutorial before their application can be submitted to the BREB. Information on how to access the tutorial can also be found on the Office of Research Services website (www.ors.ubc.ca).

9. **Complete Research**

It is the student's responsibility to carry out the research as planned, consulting with the RSC as needed. Any deviations from the research proposal should be approved by the members of the RSC. The student is expected to keep all members of the committee informed of progress or problems in completing the research. It is the responsibility of the RSC to actively follow the student's progress with his/her thesis and to provide advice and support.

10. **Write and Revise Thesis**

Agreement should be reached between the student and RSC members regarding the way drafts are written and reviewed. In some cases the research supervisor will want to see some or all of these drafts before they are circulated to committee members. The student consults with and receives feedback from members of the committee as drafts are produced. Generally, faculty members expect to have two weeks (10 working days) to read material submitted by students. Students can reasonably expect faculty to provide written and/or oral feedback shortly after the two weeks has passed, unless the faculty member indicates—when the draft is received—that more time will be needed.

Students are encouraged to read the guidelines for "*Masters and Doctoral Thesis Submission*" which can be found on the FoGS website at www.grad.ubc.ca. These guidelines cover many technical aspects of thesis preparation that are important to know about early in the process.

11. **Nomination of Two External Examiners**

When the RSC members believe the thesis is nearing completion, they discuss who is best qualified to serve as External Examiner. The External Examiner may be a senior practitioner in the field of the candidate's research. The names, addresses, and qualifications of two nominees for External Examiner are submitted by the Research Supervisor on the proper forms to the Faculty of Graduate Studies. External Examiners must be nominated at least three months prior to the Final Oral Examination. The Dean of Graduate Studies (or designate) contacts the nominees and determines if one of them is willing to serve. Once confirmed, the Research Supervisor is notified who the External Examiner will be.

The policies of the Faculty of Graduate Studies regarding selection of External Examiners and communication with nominees are strictly enforced. See the online FoGS Policy Manual (www.grad.ubc.ca) for specific regulations. Students are not to know the name of the External Examiner until the thesis has been submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

12. **Thesis Approved by Research Supervisory Committee**

When the committee believes that the thesis is ready to go to the External Examiner, the Research Supervisor notifies the Head of EDST that the committee has approved the thesis. Two copies of the thesis must be delivered to the Faculty of Graduate Studies a minimum of six weeks before the proposed date of the Final Oral Examination along with a memo of transmittal from the Head.

13. **Date Set for Final Oral Examination**

The Research Supervisor, in consultation with the student and all members of the Examination Committee, proposes a date and time for the examination. Some negotiation with FoGS may occur, but eventually the date, time, and location of the examination are confirmed.

14. **Nomination of University Examiners**

The Research Supervisory Committee, with or without consulting the student, will identify two faculty members (one from within the Department and another from outside the Department) who are qualified and willing to serve as University Examiners. These faculty members are nominated by the Research Supervisor who sends their names and qualifications to FoGS. The Research Supervisor is responsible for contacting the University Examiners to determine if they are willing to serve, supplying them with copies of the thesis, and ensuring that they have all details about the Final Oral Examination.

15. **Examination Program Information Submitted to FoGS**

At least four weeks prior to the examination, the student submits program information to FoGS in the required format. Program information includes an abstract of the thesis, names of RSC members, biographical information, courses completed, and publications authored. A template for the program can be downloaded from the FoGS website.

16. **Departmental Seminar or “Dry Run”**

Doctoral students are encouraged but not required to schedule a departmental seminar in advance of the Final Oral Examination. This seminar provides a good opportunity to practice the presentation that will be made at the Oral Examination and to answer questions similar to those that will be asked during the Final Oral. If a seminar is not scheduled, an alternative is to arrange a “dry run” at which the student performs and receives feedback from one or more members of the RSC on the 20-30 minute presentation that will be made at the beginning of the Oral Examination.

17. **Chairperson of Examination Committee Appointed by FoGS**

The Dean of FoGS appoints the Chairperson of the Examination Committee. The duties of the Chairperson include introducing the candidate, monitoring the time, calling on

committee members for comments and questions, leading a discussion of the candidate's performance, and preparing a report of the examination for the Dean.

18. **Report of External Examiner Received by FoGS and Distributed to the Examination Committee**

The written report of the External Examiner is distributed by FoGS to members of the Examination Committee a few days prior to the exam. The report is considered confidential at this point and is not to be shown to the student.

19. **Final Oral Examination**

The protocol followed in the examination is spelled out in great detail in "*Oral Examination Guide*" available on the Faculty of Graduate Studies website (www.grad.ubc.ca). All examinations are public and students are encouraged to attend several—in advance of their own—in order to become familiar with the process. At the conclusion of the examination the student is notified of the outcome by the Chair of the Examination Committee. Often, editorial or more substantive changes to the thesis are required by the Examination Committee before the thesis is submitted to FoGS.

20. **Approved Thesis Deposited with FoGS**

The student is responsible for depositing the approved thesis with FoGS before the published deadline for completing all program requirements (see the University Calendar). Guidelines provided by FoGS regarding format and paper quality must be observed. Students are advised to carefully review these requirements well before the date of submission to FoGS. As of November 2007, students can submit their final dissertation to FoGS electronically. The student must also complete a series of forms which are downloadable from the FoGS website. FoGS will provide a receipt which the student must give to the graduate secretary in EDST who will make a copy for the student and place the original in the student's file.

Please note, as of November 30, 2007, students are no longer required to submit a copy of their thesis to EDST for binding. Instead, students should submit to the Graduate Secretary a copy of the front page and abstract of the final version of the thesis plus a copy of the approval form (signed by the members of the examining committee).

21. **Graduation Checklist and Attachments Submitted to FoGS**

The Chairperson of the Research Supervisory Committee asks the Graduate Secretary to prepare a graduation checklist. The purpose of this checklist is to provide a summary of information about the student's program and to confirm that all program requirements have been completed. Attached to this checklist is a printout of courses completed and marks received.

22. **Graduation**

The student is responsible for completing by the published deadline an Application for Graduation which can be done online at <http://students.ubc.ca/current/> (click on “Student Service Centre” then “New and Current Students,” then “Graduation”). This application, along with the information contained in the graduation checklist, confirms your eligibility for graduation. Please note that it is not necessary to complete all program requirements before applying for graduation. Students who believe they will complete program requirements by the published deadline should apply for graduation. A final check is made for all students who apply to graduate to confirm they have satisfied all program requirements.

It is important to maintain a current email and mailing address on the SIS in order to receive information regarding graduation.