



Viva Major and Main Questions

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Major questions...

What is the area in which you wish to be examined?

In one sentence, what is your thesis?

What have you done that merits a Phd?

Summarise your key findings?

What are you most proud of, and why?

What's original about your work? Where is the novelty?

What are the contributions of your thesis?

Which topics overlap with your area?

How does your work relate to your topic?

What do you know about the history of your topic?

What is the current state of the knowledge in your topic?



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What techniques are commonly used?

Where do current approaches fail such that you make a contribution?

How does/could your work enhance the state of your topic?

Who are the main researchers in your topic?

Who are your closest competitors?

what do you do better than them?

What do you do worse?

Which are the three /five most important papers in your topic?

What are the recent major developments in your topic?



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How do you expect your topic to progress over the next five years?

What are the strongest /weakest parts of your work?

Where did you go wrong?

Why have you done it this way?

What are the alternative to your approach?

What do you gain by your approach?

Why didn't you do it this way (the way everyone else does it)?

Looking back, what might you have done differently?

How do scientists/philosophers carry out experiment?



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How have you evaluate your work?

What do your result mean?

What are the motivations for your research?

What are the relevance of your contributions to other researchers?

What is the implication of your work in your area?

Is your field going in the right direction?

How could you improve your work?

Have you solved the problem that you claim to have solved?

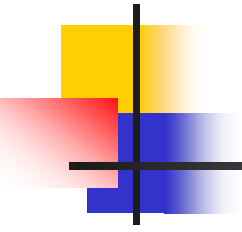
Where did you publish your work?

Which aspects of your thesis have published?



Strategies may help you on that day....

- Listen to all questions carefully and check that you fully understand what is expected of you.
- If you are not sure, do not hesitate to seek clarification.
- Answer questions clearly and concisely. If you don't know the answer, say so.
- Stay connected to your written text, using arguments and evidence from within the thesis to strengthen the points that you make.
- Be prepared to take the initiative. If you think key points are being missed, point them out.
- Respond to criticisms robustly if you think that they are unjustified, but have the confidence to agree if an examiner identifies a known weak area in your research.
- Your honesty in this respect will be much appreciated.



*"There is no way to get
experience except
through experience."*



References

- Andrew Board , Manchester University, UK
- Nick Filer, Calgary university, Canada
- SOAS, University of London
- David Twigg, University of Warwick