An example time plan for completing a research project linked to Chapter 3 of the text by Opie and Brown (2019)

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| **Planning and Preparation** | **Goal** | **Activity** | **Progress** |
| **Stage 1:** Visit your library to read around ideas.  Arrange a meeting with your supervisor. | Decide on a topic and context of research.  Conduct an initial literature review and make some notes.  Make notes on your rationale to include in the Introduction to your dissertation/independent study. | * Preliminary reading * Thought diagrams * Determine place of research and ethical considerations – read BERA (2018) guidelines. * Discuss with supervisor | *Where have you got up to – what do you need to do next?* |
| **Stage 2:** Arrange visit to your proposed place of research to speak to relevant person(s).  Read texts on research procedures (methods) chosen topic area.  Arrange meeting with supervisor. | Frame research questions and possible research procedures (methods).  Decide on how you are going to research each question. Make notes and justify why you have chosen the research procedures you have.  Continue to read literature and make notes around your chosen topic. Check referencing guidelines. | * Draft potential research questions * Decide on possible methods of data collection * Discuss with supervisor * Have initial conversations with relevant people at proposed place of research to seek informal permissions * Agree in outline when the research is to take place. | *Have you made a note of the meetings you have arranged?* |
| **Stage 3:** Check that you understand how to apply for ethical clearance from your university.  Re-visit lecture notes on writing your research proposal.  Arrange meeting with supervisor. | To get research approval.  Save copies of any approvals for your appendices.  Draft interview questions/questionnaires/observation schedules. | * Write research proposal * Complete any ethical clearance forms for your university * Discuss research proposal including ethical clearance and draft interview/ questionnaire or observation schedule with supervisor. | *Remember to send copies of documents that you want your supervisor to comment on before your meeting with them. This gives them the option to have a look before the meeting.* |
| **Stage 4:** Ensure that you understand what to include in any letter seeking research approval.    Check your understanding of data protection.  Arrange meeting with supervisor | Seek formal approval for research from place of research and participants. | * Consider BERA (2018) guidelines & apply to any formal requests for approval from place of research and participants * Write letters of information * Discuss with supervisor |  |

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| **Planning and Preparation** | **Goal** | **Activity** | **Progress** |
| **Stage 5:** Have you confirmed when you will be collecting data and where?  Have relevant resources ready to conduct your research.  Do you have participants to take part in a pilot study, who will not be part of the formal data collection?  Do you need a quiet area in which to record /interview and have you arranged this?  Are you going to use observation schedules?  Do you have a note-book/tablet for jotting down observations/ notes for yourself? | Conduct a pilot study. | * Ensure that you have consent from your university and proposed place of research and participants before beginning your research. * Pilot study: Trial your research procedures/ methods * Reflect on your pilot study and consider whether any changes need to be made in how you collect data. | *Have you made dates in your diary for the pilot study and main data collection?*  *Have you given yourself enough time to analyse your pilot study? What have you found out from this?* |
| **Stages 6/7:** Consider any changes needed because of the outcomes of the pilot study. | Ensure the data collection process goes smoothly.  Make relevant notes on the process to use as part of your Methodology chapter. | * Collect data * Store data securely * Reflect on the process and make relevant notes | *Do you have a central place for your notes?* |

Opie, C. and Brown, D. (eds) (2019**)** *Getting Started in Your Educational Research: A Student’s Guide to Design, Data Production and Analysis*. London: Sage.