**A Possible Structure for Completing Your Research Project**

This file contains a possible flowchart for the completion of your research project. Whilst it contains all the key elements you will need to consider when undertaking your research, we would be very surprised if the order of completion doesn’t vary. Specific requirements of the institution you work in or constraints on the time when you can gain access to your research participants and a myriad of other circumstances will influence its sequencing.

Equally the flowchart only provides minimal comments on elements, but you will note that each are linked to the chapters in the book by Opie and Brown (2019), which contains much more detail on them. For example, the importance of critical reflection of the literature you access; keeping well organised reference details; seeking your tutors’ advice when required; and obtaining participant consent.

You’ll also note that at one point in the flowchart you are asked to check whether your ethics application has been agreed but still encouraged to carry on if it has not been. The reason for this is that time is unlikely to be on your side when completing your research and on the assumption that your tutor will have prevented you from undertaking any research which is ethically unacceptable the view held is that any application will almost certainly be agreed, but that this still needs to be confirmed.

At the end of Chapter 1 we make the comment that what we are aiming to do is show that educational research is ‘doable’, by all interested in making, as Bassey notes: **“**

[…] a systematic, critical and self-critical enquiry which aims to contribute to the advancement of knowledge(1990: 36)

We hope this flowchart, along with our book and the additional support materials and articles available to you on its website, will assist you in your research journey and achieving this outcome.

Clive Opie and Desma Brown

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.

**A possible structure for completing your research project**

**START**

**Discuss your tentative ideas with peers and consider any changes or modifications in preparation for the meeting with your tutor**



**3**

**Prepare first draft proposal, including a tentative timeline.**



**NO**

**Address concerns**

**2**

**NO**

**YES**

**Tighten up research proposal. Consider your worldview and how this will influence your research questions and potential approach and procedures to your research. Contact those you are hoping will be participants in your research to secure access to them.**

**Discuss progress with tutor**

**Is proposal on track?**

**YES**

**Modify proposal or reconsider focus as required**

**Is proposal feasible, ethically sound?**

**Discussion with your tutor**



**Undertake further reading around your agreed area of research. As you are reading consider any revisions to your research questions; possible research approach/procedures**

**3, 4**



**Start to draft an introduction and complete any institutional requirements e.g. ethics application. Continue reading making sure you keep your reference list up to date.**



**5,7**

**4, 7**

**4, 5**

**Address concerns as required**

**NO**

**Check with your tutor on status of your application and any possible changes you might need to make**

**NO**

**Continue writing your critical reflection of the literature review and submit when completed for any assessment. Present the overall research approach and procedures you propose to use. Discuss these with your tutor before developing them any further.**

**8, 9**

**YES**

**Is proposal on track?**

**Has your ethics application been agreed?**

**YES**

**Complete first draft of introduction and start writing your literature review. Check you are keeping to your timeline and discuss with your tutor if modification is required.**



**2, 6**

**Begin to write up your methodology chapter to include: reflecting your positionality; presentation of any hypothesis you are working to and arguments for the research approach you intend to use to get evidence to support or reject it; arguments for the procedure(s) you will use to gather data to answer your research questions and achieve reader credibility; sample size; ethical considerations.**



**5, 8, 9**

Feasible/ethical



**Analyze the data you have using appropriate tools and write up your findings.**

**If everything is in place, undertake a pilot study and edit any data collection procedures as necessary from feedback e.g. questions, interview schedules. Carry out your research continually checking access to participants and reviewing ethical considerations as it proceeds.**

**12**

**14**

**13**

**You might also consider learning to use a program such as NVivo**

**You might also consider learning to use a program such as SPSS or Excel**

**11**

**NO**

**YES**

**Are you undertaking positivist research?**

**10**

**Consider the data presentation/analysis techniques you expect to use and how they might influence your data collection tools.**

**SUBMIT YOUR RESEARCH**

**(and take a well-earned rest!)**

**Re-read all your work, checking references, typographical errors, making minor edits where necessary.**

**If relevant, write up any conclusions or recommendations arising from your research, making sure they are supported by your data.**

**Discuss your findings reflecting on your literature review as appropriate, for example where it supports your research or perhaps contradicts it.**

**Confirm findings with participants e.g. accuracy of quotes/interpretation and that anonymity has been preserved; edit if required.**