SOME FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER IN PREPARING TO WRITE UP A PHD THESIS

This seminar attempts to explore some of the fundamental questions that should be considered when preparing to write up a PhD thesis. The questions listed below will form the basis of discussion and it is hoped that through the discussion there will be a greater understanding and consensus of what constitutes a good PhD thesis. It would undoubtedly benefit the ensuing discussion if you could give some consideration to these questions before coming to the seminar and also think about raising additional questions.

1. What is research and what are the three most important words in research?
2. Which of these three words is the most important?
3. What are the next two important words in research?
4. What is the most important sentence in a PhD thesis?
5. What is the most important chapter in a PhD thesis?
6. Why is this chapter the most important chapter?
7. What is the second most important chapter in a PhD thesis?
8. What are the essential components of the second most important chapter?
9. What is the first and last sub-heading within each chapter from Chapter 3 onwards up to the conclusion chapter?
10. Should the PhD thesis be written in the past or present tense?
11. Why is it important to publish alongside your PhD research?
12. What is a reasonable number of publications and where should you be publishing?
13. When should you start writing up your PhD thesis?
14. In writing up what part of the PhD thesis should you concentrate on writing first?
15. How many specific objectives should a PhD thesis contain?
16. Should your PhD thesis contain a separate methodology chapter?
17. What are the key components of your methodology?
18 How many chapters should your literature review contain and how should it be structured?
19 What should be the starting point of your literature review?
20 What should be the focus of the latter part of the literature review?
21 Why is it important to know the identities of the leading scholars within your field of study?
22 Why is it important to identify the published work which is closest to your research objectives?
23 What level of analysis should be contained in a PhD thesis?
24 Should you write a separate chapter in which the results of your analysis are discussed?
25 How many chapters should your PhD thesis contain in total?
26 How many words should your PhD thesis contain?
27 What are the most important sources of your literature review?
28 How long should the title of your PhD thesis be?