

## VIVA-VOCE

### Definition:

A viva-voce (Latin for "with the living voice") is an oral examination typically conducted at the end of a doctoral program, though it can also occur in some master's programs. It involves the candidate defending their thesis or dissertation before a panel of examiners.

## Purpose:

Assessment of Knowledge: To assess the candidate's knowledge and understanding of their research topic.

Clarification of Work: To allow examiners to ask questions and seek clarification on aspects of the research.

Evaluation of Contribution: To evaluate the originality, significance, and contribution of the research to the field.

## Format:

Oral Defense: The candidate presents their research and answers questions posed by the examiners.

Panel of Examiners: Usually consists of internal and external examiners who are experts in the field.

Duration: Typically lasts from one to three hours.

Master's Presentation

## Definition:

A master's presentation is usually a component of a master's program where the candidate presents their research findings to a committee or audience. This can be part of a thesis defense or a capstone project presentation.

## Purpose:

Demonstrate Understanding: To show the candidate's understanding of their research topic and methodology.

Communicate Findings: To effectively communicate the research findings and their implications.

Receive Feedback: To receive feedback and suggestions from the committee or audience.

## Format:

**Oral Presentation:** The candidate gives a structured presentation, often with visual aids like slides.

**Committee Review:** A committee of faculty members typically reviews the presentation and may ask questions.

**Duration:** Usually shorter than a viva-voce, often lasting 20 minutes to an hour.

## Key Differences

### Level of Study:

Viva-Voce: Typically conducted for PhD candidates.

Master's Presentation: Conducted for master's degree candidates.

Scope and Depth:

Viva-Voce: Involves a deep, comprehensive examination of a substantial body of original research. The questions are more rigorous and detailed.

Master's Presentation: Involves presenting research that is usually less extensive than a doctoral dissertation. The focus is more on demonstrating mastery of the topic and research methods.



## Formality and Intensity:

Viva-Voce: Generally more formal and intense, with a longer duration and a higher level of scrutiny.

Master's Presentation: Less formal and shorter, with a focus on clear and concise communication of research findings.

Outcome:

Viva-Voce: The outcome can lead to the awarding of a PhD or the requirement for revisions and a possible re-examination.

Master's Presentation: The outcome typically results in the awarding of the master's degree or the need for minor revisions to the thesis or project.

## Summary

While both viva-voce and master's presentations involve presenting and defending research, they differ significantly in terms of the level of study, depth and scope of research, formality, and intensity.

Viva-voce is associated with PhD programs and involves a comprehensive oral examination, while master's presentations are part of master's programs and are generally shorter and less formal.

## PREPARATION FOR VIVA-VOCE

Preparing for a viva-voce, or oral defense of your thesis or dissertation, is a crucial step in completing your doctoral journey. Here are some tips to help you prepare effectively:

## Before the Viva-Voce

### Know Your Thesis Inside Out

Comprehensive Understanding: Ensure you have a thorough understanding of every aspect of your research, including methodology, results, conclusions, and implications.

Anticipate Questions: Reflect on potential questions that your examiners might ask based on your thesis. Consider strengths, weaknesses, and areas that could be questioned.

## Practice with Colleagues and Mentors

Mock Viva Sessions: Conduct mock viva sessions with colleagues, mentors, or peers who are familiar with your research. This helps simulate the real viva experience and prepares you for challenging questions.

Feedback: Seek feedback on your responses and presentation style. Use this feedback to refine your answers and improve your communication.

## Review Relevant Literature

Contextual Understanding: Review key literature and theories relevant to your research. Be prepared to discuss how your work contributes to or challenges existing knowledge in your field.

## Prepare Presentation Materials

Visual Aids: Prepare clear and concise visual aids, such as slides or posters, to assist in presenting key findings and data points.

Structure: Organize your presentation to effectively communicate your research methodology, results, and conclusions within the allocated time.



## During the Viva-Voce

### Stay Calm and Confident

**Mindful Breathing:** Practice deep breathing techniques to stay calm and focused during the viva.

**Confident Posture:** Maintain good posture and eye contact with examiners. Project confidence in your responses.

## Listen Carefully

Clarify Questions: Listen carefully to each question before responding. If unsure, seek clarification to ensure you address the examiner's concerns accurately.

## Be Honest and Transparent

Acknowledge Limitations: Be prepared to discuss limitations or challenges encountered during your research. Demonstrate how you addressed these challenges and any implications for your findings.

## Engage with Examiners

Conversational Tone: Approach the viva as a professional discussion rather than a test. Engage with examiners respectfully and professionally.

Discuss Future Directions: Be prepared to discuss potential future research directions based on your findings.

## After the Viva-Voce

### Reflect on Feedback

Evaluate Feedback: Reflect on the feedback provided by examiners. Consider how you can incorporate suggestions for improvements into your final thesis or future research.

Next Steps: Clarify any revisions required and the timeline for submission of your final thesis or dissertation.

## Celebrate Your Achievement

**Acknowledgement:** Regardless of the outcome, acknowledge your hard work and dedication throughout the research process.

**Post-Viva Support:** Seek support from mentors, friends, or colleagues to celebrate the completion of this significant milestone in your academic journey.

By preparing thoroughly, maintaining composure during the viva, and engaging effectively with examiners, you can maximize your chances of a successful outcome.

Remember, the viva-voce is an opportunity to showcase your research skills, knowledge, and ability to contribute to your field of study.

## HELP ME !!!

Dealing with examiners who provoke or challenge extensively during a viva-voce can be daunting, but it's important to approach these situations calmly and strategically. Here are some tips to handle provoking examiners effectively:



## 1. Maintain Composure and Professionalism

**Stay Calm:** Take a deep breath and maintain a composed demeanor throughout the viva. Avoid reacting emotionally or defensively.

**Professional Demeanor:** Maintain respectful body language, such as maintaining eye contact and listening attentively to the examiner's questions and comments.

## 2. Clarify Questions and Seek Understanding

**Ask for Clarification:** If a question seems unclear or provocative, politely ask the examiner to clarify their question. This shows your commitment to understanding their concerns.

**Rephrase Questions:** Restate the question in your own words to ensure you fully understand what the examiner is asking.

### 3. Address the Substance of the Question

Focus on Content: Instead of reacting to the tone or manner of the question, focus on addressing the substance of what is being asked.

Stay focused on your research and the evidence you have gathered.

Provide Evidence: Support your responses with evidence from your research findings, literature review, or methodology.

## 4. Acknowledge Different Perspectives

Respect Differences: Recognize that examiners may have different perspectives or interpretations. Acknowledge these perspectives respectfully while presenting your own rationale and conclusions.

Engage in Discussion: View the viva as an opportunity for intellectual exchange rather than a confrontation. Engage in a constructive discussion about your research.

## 5. Defend Your Research Thoughtfully

Defend Your Work: Be prepared to defend your research decisions and conclusions thoughtfully. Demonstrate your critical thinking skills and ability to justify your methodology and findings.

Stay Confident: Trust in your preparation and knowledge. Confidence in your research and ability to articulate your ideas can help mitigate the impact of provocative questioning.

## 6. Redirect if Necessary

**Steer Back to Your Points:** If the examiner's line of questioning veers off-topic or becomes overly provocative, gently steer the conversation back to key points in your research that you are confident discussing.

**Stay On Track:** Focus on the key messages you want to convey about your research and its contribution to the field.

## 7. Seek Support and Guidance

Consult with Advisors: If you encounter particularly challenging questioning, discuss strategies with your advisors or mentors beforehand. They can provide guidance on handling difficult situations.

Post-Viva Reflection: After the viva, reflect on the experience with trusted colleagues or mentors. Discuss strategies for improving your responses or addressing similar challenges in the future.

## 8. Stay Open to Learning

Learn from Feedback: Even if the questioning is tough, view it as an opportunity to learn and grow. Consider how feedback and challenges can strengthen your research and future academic endeavors.

By approaching provocative questioning with a composed and strategic mindset, you can navigate challenging situations effectively during your viva-voce. Remember, the viva is designed to assess your ability to defend your research and engage in scholarly discourse, so staying focused on your research and maintaining professionalism is key.





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