



Doctoral Qualifying Exam

The comprehensive qualifying exam (QE) for the Educational Leadership Ed.D. is an extensive literature review centered on a problem of practice. The qualifying exam is assessed by the chair and content expert member of the doctoral candidates' scholarly delivery committees. Upon notification of passing the QE and approval of research topic(s), candidates are permitted to begin constructing research proposals for engagement in their own empirical research. Composing highly organized, expertly-constructed, thorough, and appropriately supported and cited QEs is the doctoral candidates' way of demonstrating, to their scholarly delivery committees, their command of the knowledge base in their selected areas of study, at a level that demonstrates expertise in that area and readiness to conduct their own empirical research in the field to reveal and create new knowledge.

General Guidelines

In introducing their literature reviews, doctoral candidates should communicate the central topics of interest as applicable to their identified problems of practice, guiding questions, and goals for the review. Furthermore, they should dedicate ample time and effort in crafting and explaining theoretical or conceptual frameworks that guide and explicitly highlight interconnections among ideas presented throughout their reviews.

The employment of deliberate search criteria by the candidates to identify and select appropriate, delimited sources, resulting in a comprehensive review of literature, relevant to the review's goals and/or research questions should be readily ascertained by the candidates' scholarly delivery committees. A literature review of exceptional quality will integrate information from individual studies to describe thematic trends, where the candidates compare and contrast differing viewpoints in the literature from varying methodological approaches, in a logically flowing, comprehensive narrative guided by the research goals/questions and the theoretical or conceptual framework.

In concluding the literature review, the doctoral candidates are expected to summarize findings and draw actionable conclusions that are inextricably linked to the nature of the literature reviewed. Limitations of the studies included in the reviews should be identified and their impact on conclusions and implications should be addressed. Lastly, implications should be identified for relevant audiences, clarifying future directions for theory, research, policy, and/or practice.

Literature reviews of exceptional quality are well-organized, soundly grounded in the literature, typically 30 to 60 pages in length, and supported with 75 to 100 sources, coming mostly from peer-review, empirical articles published in reputable journals. Literature reviews constructed for QEs should be written and cited/referenced in strict compliance with APA 7th edition guidelines.

Policies and Procedures

The QE is a high-stakes exam. As such, the QE must be the result of doctoral candidates' own efforts. Candidates will enroll in a designated section of EDLD 6000 in the summer and fall semesters of their second year in the program, where the QE is addressed and explained in detail, and where candidates collect literature, organize it, and compose their QEs. Since the QE is an exam,

committee chairs, committee members, and faculty are prohibited from assisting candidates in their writing.

Candidates are required compose and pass a QE to continue their doctoral programs and conduct research required to fulfill scholarly delivery requirements of the degree. Candidates are limited to two opportunities to pass their QEs. Candidates who do not pass on their second attempt will be subject to automatic dismissal from the program.

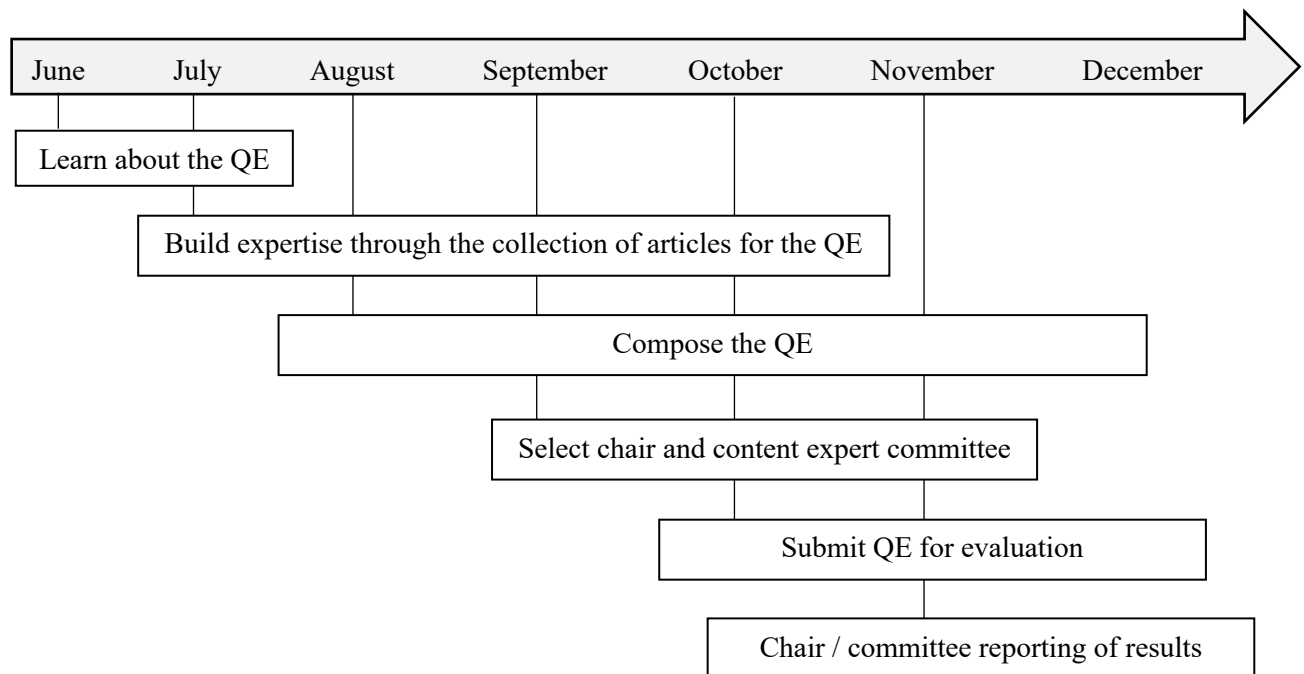
Plagiarism on the QE will not be tolerated. Candidates may be dismissed from the program for any form of academic dishonesty and/or ethics violations, including, but not limited to plagiarism.

Evaluation

Once the completed QE has been submitted to the committee chair, it will be shared with the content expert committee member (not the methodologist committee member) for evaluation. The QE will be scored via a program-approved rubric. The QE is a pass/fail exam, but an overall score ≥ 70 on the rubric is required to pass. Both the chair and committee member will independently score candidates' QEs and collectively determine final scores in accordance with the QE scoring procedures flowchart. At the chairs' discretion candidates may meet with the committee or only the chair for results, comments, and next steps. Regardless of the final rubric score as determined by the committee, candidates will only be notified of their pass/fail status.

Timelines

Doctoral candidates are expected to begin their QEs in the summer of their second year in the program and end during the successive fall semester as diagrammatically depicted below:



Qualifying Exam Scoring Procedures

