

# 5 minutes Thesis-Viva<sup>1,2</sup>

*(no more than five minutes are to be spent on part I, as for part II, well you may need a lifetime – see guide notes in the bottom)*

## **Part I: Easy questions (What)**

### **a) Warm-up questions (*10 sec answers each*)**

- What is your name?
- What is your nationality?
- What is your field of research?
- What is your research group?
- What is your supervisor's name?
- What is your topic?

### **b) Serious business (*20 sec answers each*)**

- What is the title of your thesis?
- What is your problem?
- What is your main motivation? .....
- What is your approach?
- What is the closest approach to yours?
- What is the main difference between these two approaches? .....
- What are the two main contributions of your work?
- What are the two main limitations of your work?
- What will not be finished in time? .....
- What is your grade to the theoretic part of your work?
- What is your grade to the experimental part of your work?
- What is your grade to the presentation of your work?

## **Part II: Hard questions (Why)**

- Why this field?
- Why this place?
- Why this group?
- Why your supervisor?
- Why your topic?

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<sup>1</sup> Historical note: this check list was produced by *Prof. Fernando Buarque* (<http://www.fbln.pro.br>), at the time he was pursuing his PhD studies at Imperial College – University of London by late 1990's. The text was utilized by his PhD-peer-group to assess whether one was ready to take-up the *Viva*-examination. This text was used for real and, apparently, it helped many students (there) to find their weaknesses & strengths;

<sup>2</sup> How to use it: the part I set of questions is to be clearly answered in no more than five minutes to a sharp-witty and inquisitive friend of the candidate, who should be willing to genuinely check whether the 'candidate' (ex-friend :D) is 'ready'. Any sign of doubts automatically implies that at least a couple of weeks of work are still needed. This check-list is only believed to help the ones who truly want to succeed. In case of failure, we recommend for the test to taken again in a fortnight until success is obtained.