



University of
Sheffield

Research,
Partnerships &
Innovation

Guidance notes for examiners of research degree examinations

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document provides essential information and guidance to examiners on the University's regulations and requirements for examining research degree programmes. It also describes the recommendations open to examiners, with advice on when it is appropriate to use them and the roles and responsibilities of all concerned in the examination process.

Nothing in the content of this guidance takes precedence over University Regulations, which may be subject to amendment.

1.1 Contact details

1.1.1 The PGR Support Team in Research, Partnerships and Innovation (RPI) is responsible for research student progression and assessment, including the following aspects of the examination process:

- Faculty approval of appointment of examiners.
- Thesis submission and despatch of theses to examiners.
- Faculty approval of examiners' report forms and processing of recommendations.
- Award of degrees.
- Processing of examiners' expenses and external examiners' fees.

1.1.2 General enquiries regarding any aspect of the examination process, including payment of fees and expenses, should be sent to pgr-enquiries@sheffield.ac.uk. Faculty-specific enquiries should be directed to the following:

- Arts & Humanities: pgrarts@sheffield.ac.uk
- Engineering: pgreng@sheffield.ac.uk
- Health: pgrhealth@sheffield.ac.uk
- Science: pgrsci@sheffield.ac.uk
- Social Sciences: pgrsocsci@sheffield.ac.uk

1.2 Requirements for research degree programmes

1.2.1 Before the award of a higher degree by research can be made each candidate is required to complete a prescribed period of training and research, and:

- present a thesis containing the results of the candidate's research and showing the sources from which the information it contains is derived and the extent to which the candidate has made use of the work of others; and
- pass an oral examination (viva) in matters relevant to the subject of the thesis.

1.2.2 For research degrees which incorporate taught elements and/or coursework, candidates are also required to have satisfactorily completed the taught Master's units/relevant coursework as specified in the University Regulations for each programme (full details of these requirements can be obtained from www.sheffield.ac.uk/calendar).

1.2.3 The oral examination is an integral part of the examination for research degrees and must be held. The purpose of the oral examination is:

- To enable the examiners to assure themselves that the thesis and the research it reports are the candidate's own work.
- To give the candidate an opportunity to demonstrate that they can defend the thesis verbally, clarify any issues that the examiners have identified and discuss the subject of the thesis in its wider disciplinary context.
- To enable the candidate to demonstrate a firm understanding of the field of research and thus give the examiners an opportunity to assess the candidate's broader knowledge of the field or discipline within which the thesis falls.
- To ensure that the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the subject are of the standard expected for the award of the degree.

1.2.4 The thesis should normally be written in English. Exceptionally, and with the permission of the faculty, a candidate may present a thesis that is written in another language where this is of demonstrable significance to the impact and dissemination of the research.

1.3 Criteria for the award of a research degree

1.3.1 The examiners are required to review the thesis in the light of the University's criteria for the award of its research degrees.

1.3.2 A candidate for a doctoral degree is required to satisfy the examiners that their thesis:

- Is original work that forms an addition to knowledge.
- Shows evidence of systematic study and of the ability to relate the results of such study to the general body of knowledge in the subject.
- Is worthy of publication either in full or in an abridged form.

1.3.3 A candidate should be able to demonstrate, via the thesis and oral examination, that they can:

- Critically appraise what is and what is not known in their subject area.
- Formulate appropriate questions to probe what is not known.
- Choose and, as necessary, devise appropriate techniques to address such questions.
- Explain to others why these questions are worth asking and why these techniques are the right ones to use to answer them in a realistic and timely manner.
- Employ such techniques rigorously and viably, to produce robust and reliable answers to the questions posed, while remaining open-minded to unexpected or unintended outcomes.
- Accept critical analysis of their work, defending it with rigour but adjusting its interpretation or analysis where required.
- Communicate their findings to the wider research community in a timely, transparent, and accessible manner, acknowledging the contribution of others as appropriate.

1.3.4 In addition, the format of the thesis should be such that it is demonstrably a coherent body of work, i.e. it includes a summary, an introduction, a description of the aims of the research, an analytical discussion of the related findings to date, the main results and conclusions, and sets the total work in context.

- 1.3.5 The examiners' judgement of the thesis should be based on what may reasonably be expected of a diligent and capable candidate after completion of the prescribed period of research and with due regard to the University's criteria for the award of the degree.
- 1.3.6 The limitations brought by the Covid-19 global pandemic have exacerbated the need to focus on quality not quantity. As such, UKRI has issued [guidance](#) advising students to adjust their projects to complete a doctoral-level qualification within the funded period. The Quality Assurance Agency has also published [guidance](#) for students and supervisors on doctoral standards in the light of Covid-19
- 1.3.7 A thesis for the award of an MPhil degree must demonstrate that it represents a contribution to the subject, either through a record of the candidate's original work or a critical and ordered exposition of existing knowledge; takes due account of previously published work on the subject; is an integrated whole and presents a coherent argument. For a full list of MPhil criteria see:
<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/rpi/pgr/examination/degree-criteria#MPhil%20criteria>.

1.4 Publication format thesis

- 1.4.1 Candidates may submit a publication format thesis, which comprises a collection of papers that are in a format suitable for submission for publication in a peer-reviewed journal or other appropriate outlet for academic research. Those sections may comprise scientific papers, book chapters or other appropriate published formats. The papers may appear alongside traditional thesis chapters, or they may comprise the majority of the thesis as a collection of published works that forms a substantial and coherent whole, supported by a commentary that links the submitted works and outlines their coherence and significance.
- 1.4.2 Materials included in the publication format thesis may include those that are solely and/or partly authored by the candidate. The papers or chapters may have already been published, be accepted for publication, or planned for submission for publication where a specific format is expected. Equally, there may be no intention of submitting them for publication because of the nature of the results, but the purpose is to familiarise the candidate with the conventions of academic publishing. The benefit to candidates in incorporating any such publications into their thesis is that there is no requirement for them to be re-written into a more traditional, monograph-style format thesis, thus saving candidates from undertaking unnecessary additional work.
- 1.4.3 The thesis must remain an original contribution to the field of research. Within the introductory section to the thesis, the candidate should clearly explain the nature and extent of their contribution to each of the publications presented, as well as the contribution of any co-authors and other collaborators. The materials contained within the thesis must normally be derived from original research undertaken by the candidate while supervised by a University of Sheffield supervisor. There may be exceptional cases where this is not the case, e.g. where a candidate has transferred to Sheffield, having already commenced their research at another university.

- 1.4.4 The normal expectation is that the candidate should be the primary contributor to the writing of each of the papers, including the design and conduct of the reported research. It is relatively commonplace in some disciplines for candidates to co-author publications with their supervisory team or wider research group. In many disciplines, 'primary contributor' would be denoted by the candidate being the first or last author.
- 1.4.5 This is not, however, the case in all disciplines. Where a candidate has made a substantial contribution to a paper that they wish to include, but is not the first or last author, they should include a statement clarifying the nature and extent of their contribution, and that of any collaborators, within the thesis, to justify its inclusion.
- 1.4.6 If there is any doubt as to the specific contribution of the candidate to material with multiple authors, the University retains the right to contact other authors to seek assurance about the candidate's contribution.
- 1.4.7 More detailed information on the requirements for publication format thesis are available in the Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes:
<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/rpi/pgr/examination/formats>.

1.5 Practice-based thesis

- 1.5.1 Candidates in a faculty-approved school undertaking a PhD by Practice may either produce a slightly reduced thesis that is supplemented by a practical component, which illustrates aspects of the thesis (for example research methodology or an element of the research findings); *or*, submit a thesis and practical outcome of equal weight, where the thesis is approximately half the length of a full thesis.
- 1.5.2 The thesis and practical component must show coherence and originality, as required for all research submissions.
- 1.5.3 The practical component must demonstrate a high level of skill, involve a research inquiry, and be submitted such that it forms a permanent record of the research process, as defined in the [Programme Regulations](#).
- 1.5.4 The thesis will contextualise the project, offering a retrospective analysis of the process and outcomes, and reflecting on the chosen research methodologies and/or production processes and the relation between them, where applicable.

1.6 PhD and MD by Publication

- 1.6.1 The University offers the degrees of PhD and MD by Publication. The 'by publication' route is offered only to members of staff, as an alternative to the standard PhD or MD route. It is designed to enable recognition of the research activities of those members of staff who have published work but have not completed a PhD or MD.
- 1.6.2 Candidates for the degrees of PhD or MD by Publication will submit their published work (which will normally include only work published in scholarly books and journals within the

last eight years) and a substantial commentary not exceeding 15,000 words (PhD) or 10,000 words (MD), linking the published work and outlining its coherence and significance. Candidates must also submit a signed statement regarding the candidate's own contribution, particularly for publications that were produced in collaboration with, or with the assistance of, others, and a CV focusing on the candidate's research career and the circumstances under which the research work leading to the publications was carried out.

1.6.3 The recommendations available to examiners of PhD and MD by Publication differ from those of standard PhD and MD degrees and are specified on the examiners' report forms. The following outcomes are available:

- Pass
- Undertake minor or major corrections to the commentary only
- Undertake a further oral examination
- Undertake minor or major corrections to the commentary as well as undertaking a further oral examination
- Fail

1.6.4 In the event of a fail, there is no option to resubmit with the same set of papers and candidates may not resubmit within two years of their first candidature.

Please also see: <https://staff.sheffield.ac.uk/rpi/pgr/publication>.

1.7 Yellow sticker scheme

1.7.1 If a student has a documented disability that affects their written communication, they can attach yellow stickers to their submitted thesis to make examiners aware of this. As the thesis is electronic, the 'yellow sticker' indicator is to make the examiners aware of this, rather than a physical sticker on the work.

Examples of impairments include (but aren't limited to):

- a specific learning difficulty, such as dyslexia
- an autism spectrum condition
- pre-lingual deafness

1.7.2 Eligibility for the scheme is determined by the Disability and Dyslexia Support Service (DDSS), and students are generally provided with a set of stickers following an appointment with a DDSS disability adviser.

1.7.3 The purpose of attaching a yellow sticker to a piece of work (or indicating that a student uses yellow stickers when submitting work electronically) is to:

- to indicate to the examiner that the student has a documented disability which can affect aspects of their written communication;
- to encourage the examiner to give clear, targeted and constructive feedback which is based on the assignment's marking criteria;
- to encourage colleagues to disregard lapses in a student's spelling, grammar, and punctuation that do not affect the intelligibility of their writing.

1.8 Use of GenAI

- 1.8.1 In common with many other universities, the University is mindful of the potential benefits that GenAI can bring to research, but also aware of the need for its ethical and responsible use. The following guidance document has been developed specifically for use by PGRs: [Guidance for PGRs on the use of GenAI](#). If examiners have any concerns about whether a candidate may have used GenAI inappropriately, or without full acknowledgement, this should be raised with the University at the earliest opportunity, and preferably in advance of the viva.

2. BEFORE THE ORAL EXAMINATION

2.1 Appointment of examiners

- 2.1.1 Supervisors are responsible for nominating suitable examiners with appropriate subject expertise and experience well in advance of the candidate submitting their thesis. The supervisor should informally approach the external examiner in advance to ask whether they are willing to act as examiner. Following this informal approach, the supervisor must ensure that the Appointment of Examiners form is fully completed and sent to Research, Partnerships and Innovation for faculty consideration.
- 2.1.2 Faculty Officers will consider all nominations of examiners and may request further information on an examiner's suitability or experience prior to approving the nomination.
- 2.1.3 To avoid any potential conflict of interest, examiners should have no previous association with the candidate or direct involvement with their research project and must declare any past or planned future connections with the candidate. This includes, but is not limited to, current or former academic supervision or other forms of academic collaboration, pastoral relationships, family relationships, friendship, employment, or professional connections. The examiners should also advise RPI if they have a connection to the supervisor that might constitute a conflict of interest (such as those listed above). In cases of uncertainty, the PGR Support Team in RPI should be consulted.
- 2.1.4 Candidates should be advised of the names of their examiners at the earliest opportunity, in case there are any potential conflict of interest that the supervisor might not know about.

2.2 The examiners

- 2.2.1 At least two examiners must be appointed for every examination, at least one of whom must be an external examiner. The external examiner is a senior academic or professional/practitioner with expertise in the relevant subject area of the thesis and is appointed from outside the University. The internal examiner is a member of the University's academic staff.
- 2.2.2 For student candidates it is normal practice to appoint one internal and one external examiner. If it is not possible to appoint an internal examiner for any reason, it may be necessary to appoint two external examiners and an internal co-ordinator. University staff

candidates are normally required to have two external examiners and an internal co-ordinator.

- 2.2.3 An internal coordinator must always be appointed where there is no internal examiner. An internal coordinator may also be appointed if the internal examiner has not yet accrued much examination experience, to maintain the integrity of the examination process or in other circumstances where it is deemed desirable or appropriate. The coordinator must be an academic member of staff of the University who has knowledge and experience of University regulations and procedures governing the examination process. It is not appropriate for the candidate's supervisor to act as internal coordinator. The internal coordinator must hold the status of Senior Lecturer or above.
- 2.2.4 The role of the internal coordinator will vary slightly depending on whether there is also an internal examiner. Where two external examiners have been appointed, the internal coordinator will be responsible for arranging the oral examination and ensuring that University procedures and regulations are correctly followed. Where the internal co-ordinator has been appointed because the internal examiner has had limited examination experience, the role of the internal coordinator will be to oversee the arrangements made by the internal examiner and to provide advice and guidance on procedural and/or regulatory matters. In these circumstances, the internal examiner is responsible for including the internal coordinator in arrangements.
- 2.2.5 The internal coordinator must always attend the viva but will play no part in the actual examination process and will not receive a copy of the thesis. The internal coordinator may be called upon for advice or guidance on viva procedures, including the most appropriate recommendation the examiners should make in the light of their discussions. The internal coordinator is also responsible for ensuring that the examiners complete and return the appropriate forms to Research, Partnerships and Innovation following the examination.
- 2.2.6 Where a candidate is required to resubmit their thesis for re-examination the original examiners will normally be expected to undertake the re-examination. However, there may be rare occasions when this is no longer possible, e.g. if an examiner has retired or is no longer willing or able to participate in the re-examination.
- 2.2.7 The contents of the thesis should be treated as strictly confidential throughout the assessment process and afterwards. Under no circumstances should the examiners share the contents of the thesis with anyone who is not authorised to read it or put the thesis into any form of Generative AI programme. This is essential for preserving the student's copyright. In some instances, there may be an additional requirement for a confidentiality agreement to be put in place to cover the examination of the thesis, for example where specified in sponsorship agreements or when there are commercial considerations. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that arrangements are made for a confidentiality agreement at an early stage, e.g. when the examiners are nominated. Confidentiality agreements can be drawn up by RPI and initial enquiries should be directed to the PGR Support Team.

- 2.2.8 Research, Partnerships and Innovation will write to the examiners, following approval of their nomination by the faculty, giving the details of their appointment, and providing the necessary forms and these Guidance Notes. RPI will provide advice and information to candidates, supervisors, and examiners alike on matters relating to the University's procedures for examining theses.
- 2.2.9 Please note that if a student's project is considered to be [OFFICIAL](#), examiners will be required to have undergone a [Baseline Personnel Security Standard \(BPSS\) check](#). OFFICIAL projects are generally UK government-funded projects that share classified information and are most likely to be within the Faculties of Engineering and Science.

2.3 Examiners' dos and don'ts

Please do:

- Declare any known conflict of interest, such as a previous association with the candidate or direct involvement with their research project.
- Follow the University's procedures in relation to the examination of its degrees, which are set out in this guidance.
- Examine the thesis according to the University's criteria for research degrees and within the specified timescale.
- Read the thesis and each complete an independent preliminary report prior to the oral examination.
- Produce a joint report following the oral examination and jointly agree a recommendation on the award of the degree.
- Informally notify the candidate of the recommended outcome of the examination, ensuring that they are aware that it is not a final approved outcome at this stage.
- Provide the candidate with clear, written details of any required corrections to the thesis as soon as possible following the oral examination.
- Promptly return all examiners' report forms to RPI as soon as possible after the oral examination.
- Contact pgr-enquiries@sheffield.ac.uk if you have any questions about the examination process.

Please don't:

- Accept and examine a copy of the thesis sent to you directly by the candidate. For both first submissions and resubmissions, the thesis will be sent to you by RPI, along with the examiners' report forms. The only exception to this rule is if a candidate has been given minor or major corrections, in which case it is expected that they will send the revised thesis directly to the examiner to check.
- Set the date for the oral examination before you have been sent a copy of the thesis by RPI, and especially not before the candidate has even formally submitted their thesis.
- Discuss the likely outcome of a viva with the other examiner prior to writing the preliminary report and the examination taking place.
- Provide any informal feedback to the candidate on their thesis or give any indication of the likely recommendation prior to completion of the oral examination.

- Run the thesis through any form of Generative AI programme or share the contents of the thesis with anyone who is not authorised to read it.

2.4 Thesis submission and despatch

- 2.4.1 Candidates are required to submit their thesis to Research, Partnerships and Innovation, whether it is their first submission or a resubmission. All theses are submitted and despatched in electronic format.
- 2.4.2 It is the responsibility of RPI alone to receive the thesis from the candidate and arrange onward despatch to the examiners. This relates to both the first submission and the resubmission, where relevant.
- 2.4.3 Candidates must also upload their thesis to Turnitin for a similarity check, where it will first be checked for academic misconduct. This should be done at the same time as submitting the thesis to Research, Partnerships and Innovation and the version uploaded to Turnitin must be identical to the submitted thesis. This check must take place before the thesis can be formally sent out to both examiners and before the viva can be arranged. If for good reason the internal examiner is unable to undertake this check in a reasonable timeframe, this check may be delegated to another appropriate member of staff in order not to delay the thesis being sent out.
- 2.4.4 It is normally the responsibility of the internal examiner (or internal coordinator if applicable) to check the originality report which is produced when the candidate uploads their thesis to Turnitin and to notify RPI as soon as the thesis has been cleared for examination, so that the thesis can be formally sent out to both examiners.
- 2.4.5 Once confirmation has been received that the thesis originality report is acceptable, RPI will normally despatch the thesis to the examiners within three working days, along with these Guidance Notes and the examiners' report forms.
- 2.4.6 Theses are normally despatched electronically to the examiners' email addresses, along with the relevant forms. If a hard copy of the thesis is required, examiners may request one and RPI will arrange for it to be printed and sent.
- 2.4.7 Under no circumstances should an examiner examine a copy of the thesis sent to them directly from the candidate or the candidate's supervisor or any other third party. Only the thesis sent directly from RPI should be examined.

2.5 Academic misconduct

- 2.5.1 The University requires all theses for higher degrees by research to be uploaded to Turnitin, where they will be checked for academic misconduct, e.g. plagiarism. This applies to both first submissions and resubmissions. It is normally the responsibility of the internal examiner to check the Turnitin 'originality report' and to advise RPI as soon as possible if the thesis has passed this check, so that the thesis can be despatched to the examiners as soon as possible.

- 2.5.2 If academic misconduct is detected in a thesis following submission, it is essential that the viva examination is immediately postponed pending a disciplinary investigation by the school and/or Student Support Services. Schools/examiners should initially seek advice before proceeding further with the examination process. Further information for candidates and schools on use of academic misconduct, including details of actions that schools may take, is available at: <https://sheffield.ac.uk/study-skills/assessment/academic-integrity/academic-integrity>.

2.6 Preliminary reports

- 2.6.1 Prior to the oral examination, the thesis should be read by both examiners who are each required to prepare an independent preliminary report, using a designated form, which will be provided by RPI when the thesis is sent out. The preliminary reports should be prepared in advance of the oral examination.
- 2.6.2 The preliminary report should be used to outline the examiner's initial thoughts on the thesis, and can include details of potential areas for further exploration or clarification at the viva examination, areas where corrections are felt to be required, etc. The preliminary report must not contain any specific indications or recommendations regarding the likely outcome of the examination, as it is essential that examiners do not pre-judge a viva examination.
- 2.6.3 As the preliminary report is independent, it is important that examiners do not exchange preliminary reports too far in advance of the viva or discuss with each other the likely outcome before the viva has taken place. However, it is expected that the contents of the examiners' preliminary reports will be shared and discussed shortly before the viva, e.g. at a pre-meeting.
- 2.6.4 The examiners should not discuss their preliminary findings with the candidate, or their supervisor, at any point before the oral examination, or give any indication of the likely recommendation prior to the completion of the oral examination.
- 2.6.5 Preliminary reports are required for both first submissions and resubmissions and must be submitted with the final joint examiners' report.
- 2.6.6 Please note that the candidate will eventually receive a copy of all the report forms. Examiners' reports are sent to candidates who are required to resubmit their thesis, and all candidates automatically receive the report forms when they are awarded their degree, or when they receive formal notification of failure.

3. THE ORAL EXAMINATION (VIVA)

3.1 Arranging the oral examination

- 3.1.1 Examiners are jointly required to test, by oral examination (viva), the candidate's knowledge of matters relevant to the subject of the thesis.

- 3.1.2 Arrangements for the viva are made by the internal examiner or, where the appointment of two external examiners has been approved, by the internal coordinator. Please note that RPI cannot make arrangements for scheduling the viva.
- 3.1.3 The date for the viva should not be agreed until the thesis has been formally sent out by RPI, and the internal examiner/coordinator should make sure that the external examiner has received the thesis.
- 3.1.4 The arrangements, including the date, venue and format of the viva, and the details of all those participating in it, must be provided to all participants at least two weeks prior to the date of the examination.
- 3.1.5 Prior to the viva, the examiners should not contact the candidate directly or through the supervisor or a third party on matters relating to the content of a thesis. The only contact between the candidate and examiners should be concerning the arrangements for the viva.
- 3.1.6 Examiners should contact the PGR Support Team in RPI if they have any queries relating to the viva. It is expected that any queries will be raised within an appropriate timescale, i.e. no later than one week prior to the date of the viva. It is therefore particularly important that the examiners make early contact with each other about the thesis and the procedures for the viva.
- 3.1.7 The examination should normally take place within 10 weeks of the examiners being sent the thesis. Research, Partnerships and Innovation should be notified if, for any reason, this timetable cannot be met. Although this is a guideline, rather than a regulation, it is important to note that delays in scheduling the viva can cause considerable inconvenience and stress to the candidate. Delays to the examination process can be particularly problematic and expensive for overseas students studying in the UK on a Student or Tier 4 visa and may result in a candidate having to apply for a new visa.
- 3.1.8 Viva examinations can be held in a variety of formats, depending on the preference of the candidate and needs of all participants. Although face-to-face vivas will be the expectation in most cases, remote and hybrid vivas (where one participant is remote and the others are face-to-face) are also acceptable. Where an examiner is appointed from outside the UK, a remote viva is the preferred option. If a remote or hybrid viva is taking place, the University's preferred video conferencing tool is Google Meet. Further guidance on the viva examination is available at <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/rpi/pgr/examination/viva>.
- 3.1.9 Viva examinations will normally take place in Sheffield. If a venue outside of Sheffield is proposed, agreement must first be reached with the candidate, the supervisor and both examiners, prior to approval being sought via the PGR Support Team in RPI.
- 3.1.10 Where the viva is taking place face-to-face, the internal examiner/coordinator should ensure that the venue chosen for the examination is suitable for the purpose. The room should be sufficiently quiet and private so as to minimise distractions to the student and should be available for sufficient time for the viva to be conducted.

- 3.1.11 In the case of candidates with additional support requirements such as a Learning Support Plan (LSP), the candidate can obtain advice and guidance from the University's Disability and Dyslexia Support Service who will advise if any reasonable adjustments to the examination process are required. Where applicable, these will be outlined in the LSP and schools are responsible for ensuring that examiners are notified if this is the case, provided the student consents to this information being shared.
- 3.1.12 Where examiners have been notified about reasonable adjustments to the viva recommended as part of a student's Learning Support Plan, they must ensure that they are implemented.
- 3.1.13 It is expected that the examiners will liaise or meet prior to the viva to discuss such matters as the main points to be raised with the candidate and the structure of the questioning.
- 3.1.14 Examiners should not pre-judge the outcome of the viva and must not advise the candidate of their expectation of the outcome before the examination has been completed. This is particularly important where examiners feel the thesis is poor, as the candidate must be given the opportunity to defend the thesis and answer any of the examiners' queries before a final recommendation is made.
- 3.1.15 Where appointed, the internal coordinator will attend the viva to ensure that the University's Regulations and procedures are adhered to at all stages of the examination process. The coordinator will play no part in the actual examination and will not be sent a copy of the thesis.
- 3.1.16 The internal examiner/coordinator should ensure that the candidate's supervisor, or other appropriate member of staff, will be available for consultation by the candidate immediately following the viva to offer advice and support.

3.2 The oral examination (viva)

- 3.2.1 The purposes of the oral examination (viva) are as follows:
- To enable the examiners to assure themselves that the thesis and the research it reports are the candidate's own work.
 - To give the candidate an opportunity to demonstrate that they can defend the thesis verbally, clarify any issues that the examiners have identified and discuss the subject of the thesis in its wider disciplinary context.
 - To enable the candidate to demonstrate a firm understanding of the field of research and thus give the examiners an opportunity to assess the candidate's broader knowledge of the field or discipline within which the thesis falls.
 - To ensure that the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the subject are of the standard expected for the award of the degree.
- 3.2.2 There are no University regulations regarding the length of the viva. However, the Faculties of Arts & Humanities and Social Sciences have guidance on the minimum and maximum lengths for viva examinations.

- 3.2.3 It is recognised that the viva is a stressful and often lengthy assessment process. Therefore, the normal expectation is for a break to be scheduled at an appropriate point during the viva. If none of the parties want to take a break during the viva then that is acceptable; however, examiners should plan for a break to occur, and students should feel empowered to ask for one if this is not the case.
- 3.2.4 The viva should normally be conducted in English, except in cases where there are pedagogic reasons for it to be held in another language, or where there is a formal agreement that requires the viva to be conducted in another language.
- 3.2.5 The external examiner will normally lead the viva and oversee the direction and nature of the questioning. Where two external examiners have been appointed, there should be agreement on who will liaise with the coordinator, chair the examination and be responsible for approving any minor or major corrections to the thesis.
- 3.2.6 The internal examiner (or internal coordinator) remains responsible for ensuring that the University's procedures are correctly followed. This procedure may be varied following agreement between the examiners when they liaise or meet prior to the examination to discuss the format of the examination, assignment of questions etc.
- 3.2.7 At the request of the candidate, the primary supervisor may exceptionally attend the viva, subject to the prior agreement of the candidate and examiners. If the primary supervisor does attend the examination, they must enter and leave the viva with the candidate and should not be present during any deliberations over the outcome of the examination.
- 3.2.8 The candidate should promptly advise the internal examiner, the supervisor and the PGR Support Team in RPI if they are unable to attend the oral examination. Candidates must provide a valid reason for non-attendance, supported by documentary evidence (e.g. a medical note in the case of illness). Unauthorised absence from the examination, or absence without a valid reason or evidence, is likely to result in the candidate failing the examination and being withdrawn from the University.

3.3 After the oral examination

- 3.3.1 Examiners are responsible for informing the candidate of their recommendation as soon as possible once the examination has finished.
- 3.3.2 The examiners should be clear with the candidate that this is a recommendation only at this stage and is therefore subject to change. The recommendation should not be considered final until it has been approved by the appropriate faculty. Full details of the available recommendations are outlined in the next section. The recommendation communicated verbally to the candidate after the viva should clearly reflect the definitions in table 4.2 and the extent of the corrections required to be undertaken. Key revisions communicated verbally to the candidate should be consistent with those set out in the examiner report and recommendations.

- 3.3.3 The examiners will produce a joint report and make an agreed recommendation on the award of the degree (see section 4.2). The internal examiner, or internal coordinator where one is appointed, is responsible for ensuring that the preliminary and joint report forms are completed, signed, and returned to RPI by email as soon as possible following the viva.
- 3.3.4 The examiners are also responsible for ensuring that they provide the candidate with clear written information about the required corrections, in addition to the joint report provided to RPI. They should ensure that the candidate has fully understood their comments and is aware of the nature of the corrections and the timeframe for their completion. Where the candidate must undertake minor or major corrections, the examiners are responsible for sending the list of corrections directly to the candidate (see section 4.6).
- 3.3.5 Examiners must ensure that the written corrections they request clearly match the appropriate definition for the recommendation they are making in terms of the nature of the corrections and the time required to undertake them (see section 4.2). If the examiners choose to specify additional recommended corrections or suggestions, these should be clearly differentiated from the list of required corrections.
- 3.3.6 Where applicable, fees and expenses should be claimed from RPI within three months of completion of examination duties. The examiners' expenses form, together with guidance notes on its completion, is issued with the thesis, and should be completed and returned with the joint report form. Please note that failure to provide the required bank details will delay the payment of fees and expenses.

4. REPORTING ON THE EXAMINATION

4.1 Joint report of the examiners

- 4.1.1 After the viva, the examiners should complete their joint report. A report form is sent to the examiners when the thesis is despatched. The report form must clearly indicate the examiners' joint recommendation regarding the outcome of the examination.
- 4.1.2 All sections of the joint report form must be completed by the examiners. Once completed, the joint report form should be signed and dated by both examiners and, together with the examiners' independent preliminary reports, returned to the PGR Support Team in RPI within two weeks of the oral examination.
- 4.1.3 Research, Partnerships and Innovation will arrange for the examiners' reports to be approved by faculty. If the candidate is required to resubmit their thesis, they will be sent the full set of reports along with formal notification of the requirement to resubmit. In all other cases, the candidate will be sent a copy of the final report after their award (or non-award) has been processed.
- 4.1.4 In the exceptional circumstance that the examiners are unable to agree on the recommendation, separate reports may be submitted. Should this situation arise, examiners are advised to consult first with RPI, who will advise on the correct procedure to be followed.

- 4.1.5 In such circumstances, another independent external examiner will be appointed. They will examine the thesis and, if required, they may also request a further oral examination. Following this, a recommendation will be made to the faculty. This process applies equally to first submissions and resubmissions.

4.2 Section A: recommendations available to the examiners

- 4.2.1 Section A requires the examiners to indicate their overall recommendation on the outcome of the examination, based on the outcomes open to them under the University's Regulations for Higher Degrees by Research. When completing Section A, the recommendations below are open to the examiners. Not all recommendations apply to each higher degree, as indicated. The final choice of recommendation is entirely at the discretion of the examiners, based on their academic judgement of the work presented. In all cases, examiners are expected to provide full reasoning for the choice of their recommendation within the joint report. This is particularly important where the recommendation is that a degree be not awarded.
- 4.2.2 Examiners cannot amend their initial recommendation once it has been approved by the faculty, unless a compelling case is subsequently presented to the faculty outlining why the original outcome was incorrect and requires amendment.

	RECOMMENDATION	APPLIES TO
1.	That the degree be awarded without the need for any corrections to the thesis This option may be chosen where the examiners are fully satisfied that the written thesis and the performance of the candidate at the oral examination are worthy of an immediate recommendation for the award of degree, without any further corrections or examination.	All higher degrees by research
2.	That the degree be awarded once specified minor corrections have been completed to the satisfaction of the examiner(s) This option may be chosen where the examiners are satisfied that the thesis meets the requirements for the award of the degree, but where there are minor weaknesses or editorial errors that must be rectified before they can recommend the award of the degree. The thesis is generally acceptable, and the candidate should not be expected to undertake any further research or substantive analysis. The nature and extent of the required corrections must be genuinely minor in nature, e.g. omissions and improvements to the argument that do not alter the results/conclusions of the thesis. The candidate should be able to reasonably complete the corrections within a period of three calendar months from the date they receive notification of the corrections from the examiners, regardless of whether they are registered as full-time or part-time. The candidate cannot fail the degree if this outcome is	All higher degrees by research

	selected, but they will be withdrawn if they fail to complete the corrections to the examiners' satisfaction within the time limit. The examiners are responsible for providing the candidate with the details of the required corrections within two weeks of the examination and must stipulate which of the examiners will be responsible for approving the corrections prior to formal recommendation of the degree. Details of the corrections should also be included with the examiners' report forms, which should be returned to Research, Partnerships and Innovation within two weeks of the examination.	
3.	That the degree be awarded once specified major corrections have been completed to the satisfaction of the examiner(s) This option may be chosen where the examiners are satisfied that the thesis will merit the award of the degree for which it has been submitted but does not yet satisfy the requirements for the award and contains deficiencies that are more significant than editorial or presentational corrections and that will take more than three months to address, but are not enough to require resubmission of the thesis. The candidate should not be required to undertake any further original/substantive research, but may undertake further analysis of existing data. The candidate should be able to reasonably complete the corrections within a period of six months from the date they receive notification of the corrections from the examiners, regardless of whether they are registered as full-time or part-time. The candidate cannot fail the degree if this outcome is selected, but they will be withdrawn if they fail to complete the corrections to the examiners' satisfaction within the time limit. The examiners are responsible for providing the candidate with the details of the required corrections within two weeks of the examination and must stipulate which of the examiners will be responsible for approving the corrections prior to formal recommendation of the degree. Details of the corrections should also be included with the examiners' report forms, which should be returned to Research, Partnerships and Innovation within two weeks of the examination.	All higher degrees by research
4.	That the degree be not now awarded, but that the candidate be allowed to undergo a further oral examination without modification of the form or content of the thesis This option may be chosen where the examiners are fully satisfied with the written thesis, but less satisfied with the candidate's performance at the oral examination and would like the chance to examine the candidate in person again before making a final recommendation. A second oral examination should be held within 10 weeks of formal notification by RPI.	All higher degrees by research, except DClinPsy

5.	That the degree be not now awarded, but that the candidate be allowed to submit a revised thesis after such modification of form or content as the examiners may prescribe, WITH/WITHOUT oral re-examination This option may be chosen where the examiners do not feel able to recommend the award of the degree for which the thesis has been submitted at this time. The thesis requires substantial revisions to its content and/or presentation and may also require further research (primary research or analysis) to be undertaken in order to meet the criteria for the degree. For example, sections may need to be rewritten, new material such as further research, data or calculations may need to be introduced, or corrections to arguments may need to be made. These revisions may affect the results/conclusions of the thesis. The candidate is granted a year to resubmit their thesis and the potential outcomes from a resubmission are - pass, pass with corrections (minor or major), award of a lower qualification, or fail, regardless of whether they are registered as full-time or part-time. The candidate can be withdrawn if they fail to complete the corrections to the examiners' satisfaction within the one-year time limit. Resubmission entails a full re-examination of the revised thesis by both examiners and may also require the candidate to attend another viva if the examiners require it. As such, the candidate is charged a resubmission fee. A further viva is essential if the candidate's performance in their first viva was poor, or if there are wider concerns about whether the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the subject are of the standard expected for the award of the degree. Examiners should also consider whether an oral re-examination would help the candidate to justify the additions or alterations that are to be made to the thesis. Where the examiners' original recommendation specifies that a further oral examination is required, this should take place, regardless of the outcome of the examiners' preliminary assessment of the resubmitted thesis. The examiners should provide the candidate with full written details of the required revisions to the thesis, normally within two weeks of the oral examination. Details of the corrections should also be included with the examiners' report forms, which should be returned to Research, Partnerships and Innovation within two weeks of the examination. The same examiners will normally re-examine the candidate.	All higher degrees by research, except PhD/MD by Publication
6.	That the degree be not awarded, but that the degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) be awarded (subject only to the necessary changes to the cover and title page of the thesis or very minor changes to content, as specified by the examiners)	All higher degrees by research, except PhD/MD by

	Examiners must be in agreement that the thesis would not meet the required standard for the award of the degree for which it has been submitted, even with time allowed for substantial revisions to be made. The examiners must be completely satisfied that the thesis meets the criteria for the award of an MPhil immediately, or with just minor content changes, including those to the cover and title page. Examiners must provide a detailed justification for making this decision.	Publication, DEdCPsy, DClinPsy, MPhil
7.	That the degree be not awarded, but that the candidate be allowed to submit a revised thesis for the degree of MPhil after such modification of form or content as the examiners may prescribe, WITH/WITHOUT oral re-examination This option may be chosen where the examiners are in agreement that the thesis would not meet the required standard for the award of the degree for which it has been submitted, even with time allowed for substantial revisions to be made. Nor could the examiners recommend the degree of MPhil until substantial changes have been made to the thesis. Examiners must provide a detailed justification for making this decision. The candidate is required formally to submit a revised thesis for the degree of MPhil within one year and the examiners must indicate whether they wish the candidate to undergo a further oral examination. Examiners are asked to consider whether an oral re-examination would help the candidate to justify the additions or alterations that are to be made to the thesis. Where the examiners' original recommendation specifies that a further oral examination is required, this should take place, regardless of the outcome of the examiners' preliminary assessment of the resubmitted thesis. The examiners should provide the candidate with full written details of the required revisions to the thesis, normally within two weeks of the oral examination. Details of the corrections should also be included with the examiners' report forms, which should be returned to Research, Partnerships and Innovation within two weeks of the examination. The same examiners will normally re-examine the candidate.	All higher degrees by research, except PhD/MD by Publication, DEdCPsy, DClinPsy, MPhil
8.	That the degree be not awarded This option may be chosen where the examiners are in agreement that the thesis does not meet the required standards for the award of the degree for which it has been submitted, or for the degree of MPhil, nor will it meet those standards even given time for substantial revisions to be made. This recommendation is therefore an outright fail and no further submissions will be accepted. The examiners must provide detailed justification for why they are unable to recommend major revision and re-submission of the thesis.	All higher degrees by research, except DClinPsy

	This option is also open to the examiners in cases of unauthorised absence from the oral examination. In this case, the faculty reserves the right to overrule the recommendation and request that a second oral examination be arranged if extenuating circumstances are subsequently revealed that could not reasonably have been presented at the time of the oral examination.	
9.	That the degree be not awarded, but that the candidate be allowed/required to submit an entirely new and unrelated research thesis for the degree of DCLinPsy, with oral re-examination This option may be chosen where the examiners are in agreement that the thesis is fundamentally unsound and unsuitable for resubmission. Further guidance on this option is available in the DCLinPsy Assessment Regulations and Coursework Guidelines publication. The candidate has one year in which to present the new thesis from the date of feedback following the oral examination.	DCLinPsy only
10.	That the degree be not awarded, but that the candidate be awarded the taught Master's degree incorporated with the programme, as specified in the University Regulations as an exit qualification This option may be chosen where the examiners are in agreement that the thesis does not meet the required standards for the award of the degree for which it has been submitted, or for the degree of MPhil, nor will it meet those standards even given time for substantial revisions to be made. This recommendation is therefore an outright fail and no further submissions will be accepted. The examiners must provide a detailed justification for why they are unable to recommend major revision and re-submission of the thesis. This option is also open to the examiners in cases of unauthorised absence from the oral examination. In this case, the faculty reserves the right to overrule the recommendation and request that a second oral examination be arranged if extenuating circumstances are subsequently revealed.	EdD, PhD/EngD with Integrated Masters qualification only

4.3 Section B: joint report on the thesis

Section B requires the examiners to provide a joint report on the thesis, including detailed information on:

1.	The subject matter of the thesis and the examiners' assessment of it. The statement made here should be sufficiently detailed to justify the recommendation made in Section A. It should also address any points raised in the preliminary reports and explain/justify how any differences have been resolved.
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2.	Whether the examiners are satisfied that the thesis is the candidate's own work, or where it was completed in collaboration, whether the candidate's share of the research is adequate.
3.	The presentation of the thesis.
4.	Whether the thesis is deemed to be a distinct addition to knowledge and worthy of publication, either in full or in abridged form - this option is only available to the examiners where a candidate submits a thesis for examination for a doctoral level degree.
5.	Whether the examiners are satisfied that the thesis is a coherent piece of work as defined in this booklet - this option is only available to the examiners where a candidate submits a thesis for examination for a doctoral level degree.
6.	Any comments the examiners might wish to make about the quality of the research training, supervision or monitoring of the candidate's progress.

4.4 Section C: report on the oral examination

In Section C the examiners are required to provide the following information:

1.	The date of the oral examination
2.	Their considered opinion on whether the candidate was adequately acquainted with the field of knowledge within which the subject matter of the thesis falls.
3.	General comments on the oral examination, e.g. the candidate's overall performance and ability to defend the thesis.

4.5 Guidance from the examiners on required corrections

- 4.5.1 Examiners are provided with a separate document with which to specify the list of corrections they require the student to make and should complete this and send it directly to the student as soon as possible after the viva. If the examiners choose to specify additional recommended corrections or suggestions, these should be clearly differentiated from the list of required corrections.
- 4.5.2 Some minor corrections, e.g. typographical errors, can be returned to the student as annotations to the thesis, in which case they do not need to be listed below.
- 4.5.3 Examiners must ensure that the written corrections they request clearly match the appropriate definition for the recommendation they are making in terms of the nature of the corrections and the time required to undertake them (see section 4.2).

4.6 Minor corrections

- 4.6.1 Candidates required to make minor corrections to their thesis have three months to complete the required amendments, regardless of whether they are registered as full-time or part-time. This period starts from the date on which they receive details from the examiners of the required corrections. The examiners are responsible for sending the candidate a comprehensive list of the required corrections to the thesis as soon as possible after the viva

examination and should notify Research, Partnerships and Innovation when they have done so. This is normally the internal examiner's responsibility. Please note that RPI does not formally inform the candidate of the outcome of their examination at this point or send them the required corrections.

- 4.6.2 The examiners' report forms (preliminary and joint) should be fully completed, signed, and dated and returned to RPI, minus the separate minor/major corrections sheet, which should be retained until the candidate has completed the required corrections to the examiners' satisfaction.
- 4.6.3 One, or both, of the examiners should be designated to approve the corrections once they have been completed; this is normally undertaken by the internal examiner. The candidate will normally send a copy of the revised thesis directly to the designated examiner via email for the examiner to confirm that they are happy that all required corrections have been satisfactorily completed. Please note that this is the only circumstance under which it is considered acceptable for an examiner to receive a copy of the thesis directly from the candidate.
- 4.6.4 Examiners must confirm that they are satisfied with the corrections undertaken by the candidate before the degree can be awarded. If not, they may ask the candidate to undertake further work to bring the thesis up to the required standard, which may require an extension to the time limit. If a candidate is still unable to complete the required corrections to the examiners' satisfaction, and their time limit has passed, then they may be withdrawn.
- 4.6.5 Once the corrections have been checked and the designated examiner is assured that they have been undertaken, they must sign and date the separate minor/major corrections form and return it immediately to RPI. As a general guideline, examiners should aim to complete their checking of the corrections within approximately four weeks of receiving the revised thesis. The examiner may informally tell the candidate that they are satisfied with the amended thesis; however, the minor/major corrections form must be submitted to RPI for the award to be processed. Once the examiner has confirmed that all corrections have been satisfactorily completed, the candidate must submit an electronic version of their final approved thesis to the White Rose eTheses Online server.

4.7 Major corrections

- 4.7.1 Candidates required to make major corrections to their thesis have six months to complete the required amendments, regardless of whether they are registered as full-time or part-time. This period starts from the date on which they receive details from the examiners of the required corrections. The examiners are responsible for sending the candidate a comprehensive list of the required corrections to the thesis as soon as possible after the viva examination and should notify Research, Partnerships and Innovation when they have done so. This is normally the internal examiner's responsibility. Please note that RPI does not formally inform the candidate of the outcome of their examination at this point or send them the required corrections.

- 4.7.2 The examiners' report forms (preliminary and joint) should be fully completed, signed, and dated and returned to RPI, minus the separate minor/major corrections sheet, which should be retained until the candidate has completed the required corrections to the examiners' satisfaction.
- 4.7.3 One, or both, of the examiners should be designated to approve the corrections once they have been completed; this is normally undertaken by the internal examiner. The candidate will normally send a copy of the revised thesis directly to the designated examiner via email for the examiner to confirm that they are happy that all required corrections have been satisfactorily completed. Please note that this is the only circumstance under which it is considered acceptable for an examiner to receive a copy of the thesis directly from the candidate.
- 4.7.4 Examiners must confirm that they are satisfied with the corrections undertaken by the candidate before the degree can be awarded. If not, they may ask the candidate to undertake further work to bring the thesis up to the required standard, which may require an extension to the time limit. If a candidate is still unable to complete the required corrections to the examiners' satisfaction, and their time limit has passed, then they may be withdrawn.
- 4.7.5 Once the corrections have been checked and the designated examiner is assured that they have been undertaken, they must sign and date the separate minor/major corrections form and return it immediately to RPI. As a general guideline, examiners should aim to complete their checking of the corrections within approximately four weeks of receiving the revised thesis. The examiner may informally tell the candidate that they are satisfied with the amended thesis; however, the minor/major corrections form must be submitted to RPI for the award to be processed. Once the examiner has confirmed that all corrections have been satisfactorily completed, the candidate must submit an electronic version of their final approved thesis to the White Rose eTheses Online server.

4.8 Resubmission

- 4.8.1 Where more substantial changes to the thesis are required, either with or without another viva, the examiners should ensure that they return their reports forms (along with the detailed comments on the required corrections) to RPI within two weeks of the date of the viva. The corrections list should also be provided separately to the candidate within two weeks of the viva.
- 4.8.2 Once the recommendation for resubmission has been approved by the faculty, RPI will write to the candidate to inform them of the outcome and will send them a copy of the examiners' report, including the required corrections.
- 4.8.3 The candidate will be granted one year in which to resubmit their thesis, regardless of whether they are registered as full-time or part-time. This year commences from the date the candidate is formally notified of this outcome by RPI.
- 4.8.4 Please note that a candidate may request that the examiners' copies of the thesis be returned to them following the oral examination.

5. RESUBMISSION AND RE-EXAMINATION

5.1 Resubmission of the thesis

- 5.1.1 If, following the first examination of the thesis, the examiners' recommendation is that the thesis be resubmitted, the candidate should be provided with full details of the required corrections. This may include marked up copies of the original thesis.
- 5.1.2 Where a candidate is required to resubmit their thesis this should be treated as a formal re-examination. As such, there should be no unauthorised contact between the candidate and the examiners prior to the re-examination, either directly or via a third party. If the candidate requires any clarification of the examiners' recommendations this should be sought via the candidate's supervisor.
- 5.1.3 RPI will advise the examiners of any approved extension to the time limit in which the candidate must resubmit the thesis.
- 5.1.4 The candidate must not send a copy of the thesis direct to the examiners, either informally or for comment, prior to the formal resubmission. The candidate must resubmit their thesis to RPI following the same procedures that apply to first submissions, including uploading the thesis to Turnitin.
- 5.1.5 The examiners should only accept a copy of the resubmitted thesis sent by RPI. Unlike the process for minor or major corrections, under no circumstances should an examiner accept or examine a copy of a resubmitted thesis sent by the candidate, as there is no way to verify that its content is identical to the copy submitted to RPI.
- 5.1.6 Once a candidate's thesis has been resubmitted and the Turnitin originality report has been approved, RPI will despatch it to the examiners, along with the relevant re-examination report forms and Guidance Notes.

5.2 Re-examination of the thesis

- 5.2.1 Following receipt of the resubmitted thesis, the examiners should review it in the same way as they did the original thesis. Each examiner should prepare an independent preliminary report on the revised thesis.
- 5.2.2 If a further viva was recommended after the first examination, this should take place within 10 weeks of receipt of the thesis by the examiners.
- 5.2.3 Where the examiners' original recommendation specifies that a further viva is required, this should take place regardless of the examiners' preliminary assessment of the resubmitted thesis. This is to allow the candidate the opportunity to defend the thesis before a final judgement is made.

- 5.2.4 After the viva, the joint report form should be completed, signed, and returned to RPI, along with the preliminary reports, within two weeks of the viva date. It is essential that examiners do not advise the candidate of the outcome of the examination until the full examination procedure has taken place.
- 5.2.5 If a further viva is not required, the examiners should aim to complete the re-examination of the revised thesis within approximately six to eight weeks of their receipt of the revised thesis. Once the examiners have reached their decision, the joint report form should be completed, signed, dated, and returned to RPI as soon as possible, along with the preliminary reports.
- 5.2.6 Following a resubmission, if further minor or major corrections are required, please refer to sections 4.6 and 4.7.

5.3 Section A: recommendations available to the examiners

In the event of a re-examination following Recommendation 5 on the original report form – **that the candidate submits a revised thesis for the degree with or without oral examination** – only the following recommendations are available to the examiners. Final choice of recommendation is entirely at the discretion of the examiners.

	RECOMMENDATION	APPLIES TO
1.	That the degree be awarded without the need for any corrections to the thesis This option may be chosen where the examiners are now satisfied with the thesis and feel able to recommend the award of the degree without any further corrections being required.	All higher degrees by research
2.	That the degree be awarded once specified minor corrections have been completed to the satisfaction of the examiner(s) This option may be chosen where the examiners are satisfied that the thesis meets the requirements for the award of the degree, but where there are minor weaknesses or editorial errors that must be rectified before they can recommend the award of the degree. The thesis is generally acceptable, and the candidate should not be expected to undertake any further research or substantive analysis. The nature and extent of the required corrections must be genuinely minor in nature, e.g. omissions and improvements to the argument that do not alter the results/conclusions of the thesis. The candidate should be able to reasonably complete the corrections within a period of three calendar months from the date they receive notification of the corrections from the examiners, regardless of whether they are registered as full-time or part-time. The candidate cannot fail the degree if this outcome is selected, but they will be withdrawn if they fail to complete the corrections to the examiners' satisfaction within the time limit.	All higher degrees by research

	The examiners are responsible for providing the candidate with the details of the required corrections within two weeks of the examination and must stipulate which of the examiners will be responsible for approving the corrections prior to formal recommendation of the degree. Details of the corrections should also be included with the examiners' report forms, which should be returned to Research, Partnerships and Innovation within two weeks of the examination.	
3.	That the degree be awarded once specified major corrections have been completed to the satisfaction of the examiner(s) This option may be chosen where the examiners are satisfied that the thesis will merit the award of the degree for which it has been submitted but does not yet satisfy the requirements for the award and contains deficiencies that are more significant than editorial or presentational corrections and that will take more than three months to address, but are not enough to require resubmission of the thesis. The candidate should not be required to undertake any further original/substantive research, but may undertake further analysis of existing data. The candidate should be able to reasonably complete the corrections within a period of six months from the date they receive notification of the corrections from the examiners, regardless of whether they are registered as full-time or part-time. The candidate cannot fail the degree if this outcome is selected, but they will be withdrawn if they fail to complete the corrections to the examiners' satisfaction within the time limit. The examiners are responsible for providing the candidate with the details of the required corrections within two weeks of the examination and must stipulate which of the examiners will be responsible for approving the corrections prior to formal recommendation of the degree. Details of the corrections should also be included with the examiners' report forms, which should be returned to Research, Partnerships and Innovation within two weeks of the examination.	All higher degrees by research
4.	That the degree be not awarded, but that the degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) be awarded (subject only to the necessary changes to the cover and title page of the thesis or very minor changes to content, as specified by the examiners) Examiners must be in agreement that the thesis would not meet the required standard for the award of the degree for which it has been submitted. The examiners must be completely satisfied that the thesis meets the criteria for the award of an MPhil immediately, or with just minor content changes, including those to the cover and title page. Examiners should note that there is no option for major corrections or a	All higher degrees by research, except PhD/MD by Publication, DEdCPsy, DClinPsy, MPhil

	second resubmission at this stage. Examiners must provide a detailed justification for making this decision.	
5.	That the degree be not awarded This option may be chosen where the examiners are in agreement that the thesis does not meet the required standards for the award of the degree for which it has been submitted, or for the degree of MPhil. This recommendation is therefore an outright fail and no further submissions will be accepted. The examiners must provide a detailed justification for their decision. This option is also open to the examiners in cases of unauthorised absence from the oral examination. In this case, the faculty reserves the right to overrule the recommendation and request that a second oral examination be arranged if extenuating circumstances are subsequently revealed that could not reasonably have been presented at the time of the oral examination.	All higher degrees by research
6.	That the degree be not awarded, but that the candidate be awarded the taught Master's degree incorporated with the programme, as specified in the University Regulations as an exit qualification This option may be chosen where the examiners are in agreement that the thesis does not meet the required standards for the award of the degree for which it has been submitted, or for the degree of MPhil. This recommendation is therefore an outright fail and no further submissions will be accepted. The examiners must provide a detailed justification for their decision. This option is also open to the examiners in cases of unauthorised absence from the oral examination. In this case, the faculty reserves the right to overrule the recommendation and request that a second oral examination be arranged if extenuating circumstances are subsequently revealed.	EdD, PhD/EngD with Integrated Masters qualification only

In the event of a re-examination following Recommendation 7 on the original report form – **that the candidate submits a revised thesis for the degree of MPhil only, with/without oral re-examination** – only the following recommendations are available to the examiners.

	RECOMMENDATION	APPLIES TO
1.	That the degree of Master of Philosophy be awarded without the need for any corrections to the thesis This option should be chosen if the examiners are satisfied that the thesis has now reached the required standard for the degree of MPhil and feel able to recommend the award of the degree without further correction	MPhil

2.	That the degree of Master of Philosophy be awarded once specified minor corrections have been completed to the satisfaction of the examiners This option may be chosen where the examiners are satisfied that the thesis meets the requirements for the award of the degree, but where there are minor weaknesses or editorial errors that must be rectified before they can recommend the award of the degree. The thesis is generally acceptable, and the candidate should not be expected to undertake any further research or substantive analysis. The nature and extent of the required corrections must be genuinely minor in nature, e.g. omissions and improvements to the argument that do not alter the results/conclusions of the thesis. The candidate should be able to reasonably complete the corrections within a period of three calendar months from the date they receive notification of the corrections from the examiners. The candidate cannot fail the degree if this outcome is selected, but they will be withdrawn if they fail to complete the corrections to the examiners' satisfaction within the time limit. The examiners are responsible for providing the candidate with the details of the required corrections within two weeks of the examination and must stipulate which of the examiners will be responsible for approving the corrections prior to formal recommendation of the degree. Details of the corrections should also be included with the examiners' report forms, which should be returned to Research, Partnerships and Innovation within two weeks of the examination.	MPhil
3.	That the degree be awarded once specified major corrections have been completed to the satisfaction of the examiner(s) This option may be chosen where the examiners are satisfied that the thesis will merit the award of the degree for which it has been submitted but does not yet satisfy the requirements for the award and contains deficiencies that are more significant than editorial or presentational corrections and that will take more than three months to address, but are not enough to require resubmission of the thesis. The candidate should not be required to undertake any further original/substantive research, but may undertake further analysis of existing data. The candidate should be able to reasonably complete the corrections within a period of six months from the date they receive notification of the corrections from the examiners. The candidate cannot fail the degree if this outcome is selected, but they will be withdrawn if they fail to complete the corrections to the examiners' satisfaction within the time limit. The examiners are responsible for providing the candidate with the details of the required corrections within two weeks of the examination	MPhil

	and must stipulate which of the examiners will be responsible for approving the corrections prior to formal recommendation of the degree. Details of the corrections should also be included with the examiners' report forms, which should be returned to Research, Partnerships and Innovation within two weeks of the examination.	
4.	That the degree of Master of Philosophy be not awarded This recommendation is an outright fail and no further submissions will be accepted. The examiners must provide a detailed justification for their decision. This option is also open to the examiners in cases of unauthorised absence from the oral examination. In this case, the faculty reserves the right to overrule the recommendation and request that a second oral examination be arranged if extenuating circumstances are subsequently revealed that could not reasonably have been presented at the time of the viva.	MPhil
5.	That the degree be not awarded, but that the candidate be awarded the taught Master's degree incorporated with the programme, as specified in the University Regulations as an exit qualification This recommendation is an outright fail and no further submissions will be accepted. The examiners must provide a detailed justification for their decision. The examiners must provide a detailed justification for their decision. This option is also open to the examiners in cases of unauthorised absence from the oral examination. In this case, the faculty reserves the right to overrule the recommendation and request that a second oral examination be arranged if extenuating circumstances are subsequently revealed.	MPhil with Integrated Masters qualification only