

Role and duties of the external examiner

The deadline for return of all parts of the examiners' report form is stated in your appointment email.

Oral Examination

An oral examination must be held for a doctoral degree.

For a masters by research, an oral examination is held at the discretion of the examiners but must be held in all cases where the examiners are proposing a recommendation of revise and resubmit, award lower qualification or reject the thesis.

It is the external examiner's responsibility:

- To attend if an oral examination is held. It is the responsibility of the internal examiner to contact you about the arrangements for any oral examination;
- to notify Research Student Administration of any delays to the examination process via pgrstudentrecords@contacts.bham.ac.uk

The internal examiner or supervisor will refer requests to hold oral examinations outside the University of Birmingham/or by video conferencing to Research Student Administration to seek approval from the University's Senate or Delegated Authority.

If any of those who should be attending are unable to be present, the internal examiner will rearrange the oral examination.

The chairperson, internal examiner and external examiner and the candidate must be present at the oral examination. No other person may attend except with the unanimous approval of the chairperson and examiners. Supervisor(s) should not be present at the oral examination but should be available on the day.

At the end of the oral examination, the examiners, through the chairperson, may invite the candidate and supervisor(s), to hear the provisional recommendation. The official notification of the outcome to the candidate will be by letter from Research Student Administration.

Report Forms

It is the external examiner's responsibility:

- to ensure that Part One (independent report) is returned to the Research Student Administration Team **before** the oral examination takes place;
- where an oral examination is held and a final recommendation agreed, to jointly sign the post oral report forms:
 - Part Two – report on the oral examination,
 - Part Three – final recommendation
 - Part Four – for minor/major corrections or revise and resubmit a list of required corrections/revisions)and return them to Research Student Administration;
- where an oral examination is not held and in instances where a final recommendation cannot be agreed, to sign and return an individual:
 - Part Three – final recommendation
 - Part Four –for minor/major corrections or revise and resubmit a list of required corrections/revisions)and return them to Research Student Administration.

Corrections

To remove any ambiguity, guidance given to the candidate on required corrections should be explicit and in the form of a detailed list in Part Four of the report form, or in the case of minor corrections clearly marked in the body of the thesis.

The list of required corrections can either be an individual list or a joint report with the internal examiner.

Examiners are not permitted to provide feedback on draft corrections prior to the formal submission of the corrected thesis. The candidate is advised to consult the supervisor for guidance on completion of the required corrections and the supervisor should liaise with the examiners on behalf of the candidate.

It is the external examiner's responsibility:

- to ensure that where corrections have been indicated on the body of theses, reference is made to this on Part Four of the report form;
- to check major corrections (a joint responsibility with the external examiner), and complete a Correction Certificate by the required date (normally within 6 weeks). The corrected thesis will be emailed to you with details on how the candidate has made the corrections to the thesis.

Further corrections

If **major** corrections have not been undertaken to the examiners' satisfaction, the examiners can request **further minor** corrections. A comprehensive list of the required further corrections should be returned to Research Student Administration and requests will then be referred to the Senate or Delegated Authority for their consideration before the candidate is notified of this requirement. You should not request the candidate to carry out any further minor corrections until approval has been granted by the Senate or Delegated Authority.

Further corrections following minor corrections and further major corrections following major corrections are not permitted within regulations.

Revise and resubmit

To remove any ambiguity, guidance given to the candidate on required revisions should be explicit and reported in Part Four of the report form. The list of required revisions can be either an individual list or a joint report with the internal examiner.

The candidate is advised to consult the supervisor for guidance on completion of the required revisions and the supervisor should liaise with the examiners on behalf of the candidate.

A full examination will take place on the resubmitted thesis, however the recommendation of revise and resubmit will no longer be available.

It is expected that the original examiners will re-examine the thesis. Where the original examiners are not able to examine the resubmitted thesis, their original reports will be made available to the new examiners on request

An oral examination must be held for a resubmitted doctoral degree.

For a resubmitted masters degree thesis, an oral examination must be held in all cases where the examiners are proposing a recommendation of *revise and resubmit* or *reject*.

For further information on the examination process, please refer to the Guidance Notes for Examiners of Research Degree Theses. The Code of Practice for the Assessment of Research Degree Theses is available on the [University Legislation webpages](#).