

## Excerpt from the PGR Code of Practice 2021-22 p28

[https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media\\_549226\\_smxx.pdf](https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media_549226_smxx.pdf)

- It is the responsibility of the Convenor to make the arrangements for the examination and to ensure that this is normally held no later than three months after the submission of the thesis. The date should be convenient for the candidate, the Internal Examiner as well as the External Examiner and at least one of the supervisors who might be required to answer questions concerning the project. The Graduate School/School/Research Institute should be informed of the date of the examination.
- The Convenor is responsible for ensuring that the examination is conducted in a fair manner, and in view of this it is expected that they will be present for the duration of the examination. The Convenor does not have examiner responsibilities and does not participate in the detailed examination of the candidate, but it is appropriate for the Convenor to ask the candidate questions of a general nature.
- The Convenor is responsible for ensuring that the examination is of a reasonable duration. Where it is longer than two hours, it is recommended that the candidate be offered a short intermission.
- Where difficulties arise, the Convenor shall decide whether an adjournment is required. Where agreement has not been reached between the Examiners, the Convenor should be aware that normally the view of the External Examiner shall prevail. Exceptionally, the Convenor may refer to Senate if the External Examiner's view is in question and this may lead to a recommendation to the Higher Degrees Committee for the appointment of a third examiner who will normally be an External Examiner.
- The Convenor may inform the candidate verbally of the outcome of the examination, normally by inviting the candidate to return to the examination room once the Committee of Examiners has conferred. A key role for the Convenor is to ensure that any required corrections or a request for resubmission are clearly communicated to the student along with the relevant timescales.
- The Convenor will arrange for the Committee report stating the recommendation of the Examiners to be signed at the conclusion of the examination. After the examination, the Convenor will co-ordinate the completion of a joint report detailing the requirements for revision or resubmission which the Convenor will provide to the candidate.

## Right to Work Check for External Examiners

- External examiners who are UK citizens, have a work visa, have pre-settled / settled status from ROI, EU and EEA countries have to undergo a Right to Work check and can do so via ZOOM. This adjusted check has been pushed back until 5 April 2022. Please obtain a **colour copy of their passport or drivers licence, signed and dated that it is a true likeness of the person**.
- This is a UK government requirement to prevent illegal working. External Examiners cannot receive payment until this process is complete.

- All international external examiners, not working and residing in the UK, are subject to a zoom ID check and will be paid via bank transfer. Please obtain a **colour copy of their passport or drivers licence, signed and dated that it is a true likeness of the person.**
- Right to Work / ID check form is available on the [PGR Exam Committee Hub](#).

## Arranging the *viva*

- You are responsible for arranging the date, time and location of the oral examination (*viva*).
- **Zoom Vivas:** We have not yet been provided with any information to suggest that the University cannot continue with the vivas via Zoom regardless of whether the external examiner is UK based or international.
- Also, some of your students may be in country or not in Glasgow and are unable to travel depending on their home country's current covid restrictions.
- Inform the student of the date and time of the examination and the names of the examiners.
- The date should be convenient for the candidate, the Internal Examiner as well as the External Examiner and at least one of the supervisors who might be required to answer questions concerning the project. Inform your PGR administrator of the viva date.
- Inform the Graduate School of the *viva* date, so we know when to expect the immediate outcome Convenor Report form.
- A *viva* should normally be held within three months of the thesis being submitted. If this is unlikely to be achievable, please consult the Graduate School for advice.
- You do not have examiner responsibilities and do not participate in the detailed examination of the candidate, but it is appropriate for the Convenor to ask the candidate questions of a general nature.
- Please ensure that the Internal and External Examiners complete and send you their preliminary report forms **at least a week prior to the *viva***. In the event of these indicating serious concerns, this forewarns you about potential difficulties.
- Exceptionally it may be appropriate to write formally to the supervisor to ask if there were particular problems (e.g. illness or equipment failure) which compromised productivity, in case this information will be useful to the Examiners. The candidate's supervisor has no role in the examination process. However, the supervisor should be available to the committee on the day of the *viva* for consultation on matters of fact if required. Though this is rarely the case, the availability of the supervisor should be checked by the Convenor in advance. If the supervisor is not going to be in Glasgow on the day, availability for telephone consultation should be ascertained.
- If the candidate makes a request in writing to the Convenor that the supervisor be present at the *viva*, this is permitted provided the request is made at least a week in advance of the *viva*. The supervisor must play no active part in the *viva*.

## The *viva* and follow-up

- **Ensure the examination is of a reasonable duration.** Where it is longer than two hours, it is recommended that the candidate be offered a short intermission.
- Check the student's ID from their student ID card either in person (for on-campus viva) or check on Zoom (for Zoom viva).
- Where difficulties arise, the Convener shall decide whether an adjournment is required. Where agreement has not been reached between the Examiners, the Convener should be aware that normally the view of the External Examiner shall prevail. Exceptionally, the Convener may refer to Senate if the External Examiner's view is in question and this may lead to a recommendation to the Higher Degrees Committee for the appointment of a third examiner who will normally be an External Examiner.
- It is your responsibility to ensure the proper conduct of the examination, and to obtain the Examiners' individual reports.
- The committee is asked to maintain the standard of the PhD degree. University of Glasgow theses, once deposited, are available online.
- Please be meticulous with procedure: in the event of an unfavourable outcome a candidate may look for procedural irregularities as potential grounds for appeal.
- The Convener is obliged to chair and attend the *viva* throughout, and then oversee completion of the Joint Convener Report form.
- After the examination, the Convener will co-ordinate the completion of a joint report detailing the requirements for revision or resubmission which the Convener will provide to the candidate.

## The Convener Report Form – Joint Report

- Immediately after the viva has taken place, consult with the Internal and External Examiners and recommend a final joint decision which will be recorded on the Convener Report Form held by you, the Exam Convener. Available outcomes are:
  - A** - the degree be awarded unconditionally
  - B** - the degree be awarded subject to certain minor corrections of detail or of presentation specified by the examiners. These shall not involve changes of substance to the thesis. The corrections shall be carried out within one month of receipt of the specifications to the satisfaction of the Internal Examiner.
  - C** - the degree be awarded subject to certain changes of substance in a specific element or elements of the thesis specified by the examiners. These shall not involve a revision of the whole thesis or of a major proportion of it. They may however include a requirement to carry out a further period of research in order to strengthen the thesis. The revisions shall be carried out within a timescale determined by the examiners and shall be confirmed by both the Internal and the External Examiners.
  - D** - the thesis as a whole is unacceptable. The candidate is invited to resubmit the thesis taking account of the comments of the examiners. The resubmitted thesis will be examined on one occasion only. It will be resubmitted within a timescale to be determined by the examiners but normally no later than 12 months after the date of the joint report notifying the candidate of the requirements for revision. A resubmission fee will be charged to cover the examining costs.

normally no later than 12 months after the date of the joint report notifying the candidate of the requirements for revision. A resubmission fee will be charged to cover the examining costs.

E - That the thesis is substantially deficient to the extent that it cannot be revised for resubmission for the award of a PhD, but with revision may satisfy requirements for the award of the degree of MSc. The candidate should be invited to resubmit the thesis for a MSc within a further period, in a substantially revised form along the lines specified by the examiners. **It is recommended that the candidate resubmit the thesis within a period of .... months, including .... months of further study.** (Delete reference to further study if not required. A maximum of 6 months for an MSc resubmission or 12 months for a PhD is permissible.)

F - no degree be awarded.

#### In the event of outcome B & C only:

- The **Joint Convenor Report** should be completed on the day of the *viva* and returned to the Graduate School office within the next working day.
- **The Graduate School will issue an Outcome of Viva letter to the candidate** stipulating the time limit the committee has specified for the corrections. If advising the candidate immediately after the *viva*, please remember that the time limit you specify includes making the corrections, getting them approved, emailing one electronic copy of the thesis to the Graduate School and lodging the definitive electronic text with the Main Library. In a “pass subject to corrections” case it helps to refer in conversation with the candidate to ‘lodging’ the corrected thesis rather than ‘resubmitting’ it. This avoids any potential confusion with true resubmission which entails a complete second examination process and fee payment.
- Once corrections are complete to the committee’s satisfaction, the Internal Examiner and you countersign the **Approval of corrections** of the joint report and this should be given to the Graduate School Office, with the Examiners’ individual Reports if they have not been sent there already.
- It is normal for scrutiny of corrections to be left to the Internal Examiner but the External may request to see them too and this should be allowed for in specifying the corrections timescale.

#### All other outcomes immediately end this examination process.

- All complete reports should be delivered to the Graduate School without delay so that the candidate is sent a timely letter intimating the outcome.
- **In the event of resubmission** being the committee’s decision, please remember to specify in the Joint Convenor Report the appropriate resubmission timescale (up to 12 months for PhD; six months for MSc).
  - If the outcome of MSc is indicated, a full resubmission is now *required* under the regulations. The thesis would need to be redrafted as a master’s thesis and submitted for examination as a dissertation for a master’s degree.
  - Please note that a resubmission decision immediately ends this examination process.
  - There will be a fresh examination only when the candidate formally resubmits a thesis.
  - The preliminaries are as for the first examination.
  - It is custom and practice to reappoint the same committee for any re-examination but in some circumstances this will not be appropriate. It may be that a member of the original Committee is no longer available or has expressed the wish to be excused from examining the resubmission.
  - If you are advising the candidate in person of a resubmission decision after the *viva*, it is essential to be accurate in quoting the timescale, also mentioning that there is a resubmission fee (currently £540) to cover the cost of re-examination. Examiners should not feel under pressure to avoid a resubmission decision because of the potential financial cost to the candidate. The decision should

- be taken on the basis of some combination of the overall scientific level of the thesis as submitted and the candidate's defence. It does not even necessarily depend solely on the quantity of changes needed to the thesis.
- When returning the forms please ensure that all sections of the final report form are completed, except the Approval of Corrections section.
- Also return the Internal and External Examiner pre viva reports if not already done so.
- Finally, for theses of exceptionally high quality, the committee may choose to nominate the candidate for one of the prizes awarded annually within the College. Please visit the [PGR Exam Committee Hub](#) webpage for the Thesis Prize form and more information.
- The Graduate School will issue a NEW formal Outcome of Viva letter to the candidate stipulating the time limit specified by the Examining Committee for corrections. This time limit will include making the corrections, approval of corrections and emailing an electronic version of the thesis to the Graduate School office. The candidate will send the revised thesis to the Convener of the Examining Committee in the first instance. The Convener will then pass the thesis to the examiner(s) to confirm that the changes made are satisfactory. Unless specified by the Examining Committee, the revised thesis will normally be checked and approved by the Internal Examiner.
- Once corrections are complete to the committee's satisfaction, the Internal Examiner and you countersign the **Approval of corrections** of the joint report and this should be given to the Graduate School Office, with the Examiners' individual Reports if they have not been sent there already.

## Role of the Internal and External Examiner

- To respond to the Convener who will contact the examiners to make arrangements for a suitable viva date and location.
- Complete their own individual report form which will be on the [PGR Exam Committee Hub](#) and email it directly to you, the Convener of the Examining Committee, **at least one (1) week prior to the viva date**. Do not copy your report to the supervisor of the examination candidate.
- Immediately after the viva has taken place, both examiners consult with the Convener and recommend a final joint decision which will be recorded on the Convener Report Form held by the Convener.
- **If completion of corrections is recommended**, both examiners will provide the Convener with a list of their required revisions. The Graduate School will issue a formal Outcome of Viva letter to the candidate stipulating the time limit specified by the Examining Committee for corrections. This time limit will include making the corrections, approval of corrections and lodging a hardbound version of the thesis in the Graduate School office. The candidate will send the revised thesis to the Convener of the Examining Committee in the first instance. The Convener will then pass the thesis to the examiner(s) to confirm that the changes made are satisfactory. Unless specified by the Examining Committee, the revised thesis will normally be checked and approved by the Internal Examiner.
- If a resubmission is recommended, both examiners will receive a copy of the resubmitted thesis and the examination process will be repeated. A second viva will normally also be held, however the PhD regulations do allow the viva to be waived:

### *University Calendar*

*Where a candidate has been permitted to resubmit a thesis for examination, an oral shall also be held other than in exceptional circumstances, where the Convener, on the recommendation of the Committee of Examiners, may seek the agreement of the Dean of Graduate Studies to set aside the requirement for an oral examination after resubmission. In such circumstances the agreement of the candidate must be obtained, otherwise the candidate shall have the right to insist on an oral being held.*

*Guidance notes:*

*The regulations provide a procedure for agreeing an exception to the rule regarding the right to a second or subsequent oral. It is anticipated that exceptions will principally relate to personal or practical difficulties facing the candidate. The University would not normally expect to award a PhD/MD without a second oral examination in the case of a resubmission. Where a thesis has been resubmitted, and where the first Committee of Examiners found the oral examination to be satisfactory, the examiners may recommend to the Dean of Graduate Studies that exceptionally, the requirement for an oral after resubmission is waived but they are not bound to do so.*

## For External Examiners only:

- The University is subject to both the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and the Data Protection Act 1998. As an external examiner, you will be acting in an official capacity for the University of Glasgow. The University may therefore be required to release an external examiner's report, together with the identity and institutional affiliation of the external examiner, when requested.