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| Deputy Vice-Chancellor’s Office  Postgraduate Office |



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| Guidelines for PhD Thesis Examiners |

**Date Last Modified:** July 2013

**The PhD Examination Process**

The PhD examination at the University of Canterbury has two stages:

1. Two independent examiners each complete a report on the written thesis and make a recommendation regarding the award of the degree.
2. The candidate undergoes an oral examination with one of the examiners present (full details of the oral examination are provided in the attached Information Sheet). Oral examinations of PhDs are standard practice at UC and only waived in exceptional circumstances.

The Dean of Postgraduate Research appoints two independent examiners, who are external to the University of Canterbury, after considering recommendations from the relevant Department/School. One of the examiners (normally from New Zealand or east-coast Australia) is designated the oral examiner. This examiner provides a written report on the thesis and attends (either in person or via video-link) the oral examination. The other examiner provides a written report on the thesis but is not required to attend the oral examination. This examiner is asked to identify specific issues, or questions, for discussion in the oral examination. The chair of the oral examination will ensure that the issues raised by this examiner are considered in the oral examination.

Prior to the formal nomination of examiners, the candidate is informed of their names and has the right to make a case to the Dean of Postgraduate Research that one or both of them not be appointed.

A copy of the UC PhD Regulations and Guidelines is attached.

***Written examiners reports***

Examiners are each asked to complete an Examiner’s Report Form and may, if necessary, also submit a separate report. Examiners are requested in the Report Form to identify amendments (minor and major) necessary before the degree can be conferred and to list key questions that should be addressed in the oral examination. Reports should be sent electronically to the Postgraduate Office ([postgraduate-office@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:postgraduate-office@canterbury.ac.nz)) by the specified date. The reports will be released to the student and supervisors 5-10 days before the oral examination.

Examiners are asked to make a recommendation regarding the award of the degree as specified below:

1. the candidate be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy subject to satisfactory completion

of specified amendments and/or satisfactory performance in the oral examination

*Requested amendments may be minor (e.g., typographical/grammatical corrections) or more substantive. Amendments should be limited to changes necessary to ensure that the thesis meets the required standard for the award of the PhD. A list of required amendments will be determined at the end of the oral examination as well as designation of who will check that the amendments have been satisfactorily completed – this is usually the senior supervisor and/or oral examiner.*

1. the candidate be invited to revise and resubmit the thesis for re-examination prior to proceeding

to an oral examination.

*Note that this option can be offered on only one occasion. It should be selected if the submitted thesis does not meet the standard required for the award of the PhD but it is thought that a revised thesis could meet that standard. The original examiners will be asked to also examine the revised thesis prior to proceeding to an oral examination.*

1. the candidate not be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy but be offered instead an

appropriate Master’s degree

*This option should be selected if the submitted thesis does not meet the standard required for the award of the PhD but it is thought that it does meet the standard required for the award of a Master’s degree.*

1. no degree be awarded to the candidate

*This option should be selected if the submitted thesis does not meet the standard required for the award of either the PhD or a Master’s degree.*

On receiving the examiners’ reports, the Dean of Postgraduate Research determines whether or not the candidate should proceed to an oral examination.

* If both examiners select recommendation (a) above the candidate will proceed to oral examination.
* If both examiners select recommendation (b), the candidate will be invited to revise and resubmit the thesis for re-examination prior to proceeding to an oral examination. After discussion with the candidate and supervisors, a timeframe for the submission of the revised thesis will be determined. The same examiners will be invited to examine the revised thesis, but alternatives may be appointed if either or both of the original examiners is/are unable to examine the revised thesis.
* If one examiner selects option (a) and one option (b), the chair of the oral examination will contact the examiners to broker a consensus as to whether the candidate should proceed to oral examination at this time or be invited to revise and resubmit the thesis for re-examination.
* If either examiner selects options (c) or (d) the Dean of Postgraduate Research will determine the final outcome

At the end of the oral examination the examiners make a recommendation to the Dean of Postgraduate Research, who then determines whether the degree is to be awarded and under what conditions (usually the completion of amendments specified by the examiners); full details can be found in the attached Information Sheet on the oral examination.

The Dean’s decision is final, unless the candidate can demonstrate the examination process has been violated by procedural errors, bias or inappropriate practice. A student who believes that there has been a violation can make an informal academic appeal to the Dean of Postgraduate Research. A student who is not satisfied with the response from the Deane can formally appeal to the University Grievance Advisor.

**Communication with examiners**

Examiners should address any questions regarding the thesis or the examination process to the Dean of Postgraduate Research via the Postgraduate Office: [postgraduate-office@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:postgraduate-office@canterbury.ac.nz). Examiners should not communicate directly with either the candidate or members of the supervisory team regarding the examination process until that process has been completed. The chair of the oral examination will contact the oral examiner (and, if necessary, the other examiner) to discuss details of the oral examination.

**Confidentiality and embargoes**

All theses are considered to be confidential during the examination process. Unless there are special reasons, such as highly sensitive/confidential material in the thesis, the examiners are welcome to keep the thesis. After examination, application can be made to embargo a thesis for up to two years if it contains confidential and/or commercially sensitive material, or the candidate requires time to publish research reported in the thesis. Examiners should not distribute the thesis following the examination without prior permission from the candidate. More information on the University’s policies on these matters in can be found in the University’s Intellectual Property Guide <http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/ucpolicy/index.aspx>

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| The PhD Oral Examination |

Date last modified: August 2013

**What is the PhD oral examination?**

The oral examination is an integral part and culmination of the PhD process at the University of Canterbury. The oral examination has two main purposes:

* It is a formal examination at the end of which a recommendation is made to the Dean of Postgraduate Research (DPGR) as to whether the PhD should be awarded or not. This recommendation includes details of any amendments that are required to be made before the final version of the thesis can be submitted and the degree conferred. The oral examination comes after the examination of the written thesis and allows the examiners to probe further the research reported in the written thesis.
* It is an opportunity for discussion of the candidate’s research, its applications and further directions in a constructive and supportive manner.

**What is the mode of the oral examination?**

The oral examination can either take place in a face-to-face setting or via a video link. The mode for each examination is specified on the Nomination of Examiners Form and should be discussed with the candidate, supervisors, oral chair and oral examiner and decided upon at the time of submission of a thesis for examination. A video link will typically be used if some participants are unable to be in Christchurch for the oral examination or if it enables the oral to be held sooner.

Some departments/schools require candidates to give a public presentation of their research; however this is not required under the University examination process.

**When is the oral examination held?**

The oral examination is held after the written reports have been received from each of the independent thesis examiners. The date for the oral examination is set at the time of the submission of the thesis for examination and is specified on the Nomination of Examiners Form and should be discussed with the candidate, supervisors, oral chair and examiners. The Postgraduate Office will notify the candidate and supervisor by email when the examiners have acknowledged receipt of the thesis and will confirm in that email the date of the oral. Very occasionally, the oral has to be rescheduled due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g., examiner illness); all parties will be notified as soon as possible if it becomes necessary to reschedule an oral examination.

Once the examiners’ reports and recommendations have been received, the Dean of Postgraduate Research reviews them and notifies the chair of the oral examination if the oral can proceed. The examiners may recommend major amendment of the thesis and re-submission prior to an oral examination being held. If this occurs then the candidate and supervisor will be contacted by the oral chair and the Dean of Postgraduate Research to discuss this process.

**Who is present at the oral examination?**

The following people are to be present at the oral examination (either in person or via video link):

* The Chair: the chair is an experienced member of the UC academic staff who is responsible for organizing the oral examination, maintaining the integrity of the oral examination process and acting as a neutral chair at the examination. The chair is not an examiner and does not have voting rights though s/he may ask questions of the candidate.
* The candidate.
* The Senior Supervisor: if the senior supervisor is unavailable then another member of the supervisory team may attend in his/her place. The supervisor can participate in the examination only to the extent permitted by the oral chair – s/he is not to act as an advocate for the candidate or to answer questions on behalf of the candidate.
* Oral Examiner: one of the two examiners of is nominated as the oral examiner. The second examiner will not normally attend the oral examination.

Observers:

* All members of the candidate’s supervisory team are invited to attend as observers.
* The candidate is permitted to invite up to two persons to attend the oral examination as observers. These support persons cannot participate in the examination in any form.
* An academic who has not acted as an oral chair may be present as an observer of the oral chair as part of their academic development. This person would not normally be expected to participate in the examination.

**What is the structure of the examination?**

There is no set format for the oral examination and there may be different norms in different academic disciplines. Supervisor(s) and/or the oral chair should offer the candidate some guidance in advance as to the structure of the oral. The following stages are fairly typical:

* + - the candidate is invited to present a brief overview of the research reported in the thesis. This provides an opportunity for the candidate to highlight the main points and contributions of the thesis research and to address some of the issues raised in the examiners’ reports
    - the oral examiner is invited to ask questions of the candidate – some of these questions will have been signalled in the examiner’s written report
    - either the oral examiner or the supervisor present will be asked to put the questions submitted by the absent examiner
    - at the end of the questioning the candidate is invited to make any final comments
    - at the end of the questioning the candidate and any observers will be asked to absent themselves while whilst the oral chair and examiner discuss the recommendation to be made.
* The senior supervisor, or replacement, shall be present during the decision making at the conclusion of the oral examination but should ***not*** take part in the decision making, except to answer any questions from the oral chair or the oral examiner. At the request of either the oral chair or oral examiner the supervisor may be required to absent him/herself during the decision making.
* If there is a less experienced academic observing the oral examination process, mentored by the oral chair, then s/he may remain present for these discussions.
  + - the oral chair will make notes throughout the examination to enable him/her to provide the Dean of Postgraduate Research with a report on the examination and to compile a list of any required amendments to be made by the candidate.

**How should a candidate prepare for the oral examination?**

The chair of the oral examination will release the examiners’ reports to the candidate and his/her senior supervisor 5-10 days before the oral examination. Each examiner will have completed an examiner’s report form: see <http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/examiners/phd_examiners.shtml> and may also have submitted a separate report on the thesis. On the report form each examiner will detail any necessary amendments to the thesis (often minor typographical or grammatical errors), will list questions/topics for discussion at the oral examination as well as make any additional comments (e.g., advice for publication, future research, application of the reported findings). These comments will provide the candidate with a good idea about the issues that will be considered in the oral examination, although the examiners can also ask questions not listed in the written reports. The oral chair will ensure that the questions listed by the external examiner who is not present at the oral examination are put to the candidate during the oral examination. A candidate should discuss the examiners’ comments (and his/her responses) with his/her supervisors prior to the oral examination.

**What are the possible outcomes of the examination?**

At the end of the oral chair is required, on behalf of the examiners, to make a recommendation to the Dean of Postgraduate Research. The recommendation options are detailed below.

1. the candidate be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
2. the candidate be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy subject to satisfactory completion of amendments specified below.

*It is recommended that completion of the amendments occur by* *and that they be approved by*

1. the candidate be invited to revise and resubmit the thesis for re-examination
2. the candidate not be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy but be awarded instead an appropriate Master’s degree
3. no degree be awarded to the candidate

Once the oral chair and oral examiner have decided on their recommendation they will invite the others back in to the room, or will reconnect by video link, and notify the candidate of the recommendation to be made. The most common outcome is recommendation (b) – that the candidate be awarded the degree subject to the satisfactory completion of a number of amendments. The nature of these amendments will be discussed with the candidate at the end of the oral examination and will also be sent to the candidate by the Postgraduate Office, as detailed below.

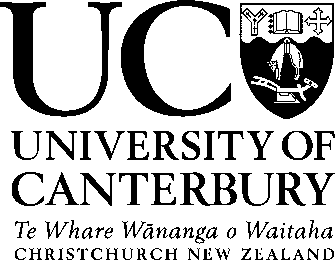
Very occasionally the oral examiner and oral chair are unable to decide on a recommendation and may require further time, and may wish to consult with the non-present examiner. In such cases the oral chair will advise the candidate and give an indicative timeframe for reaching a decision.

**What happens after the oral examination?**

The Oral Chair submits the final Examiners Report Form to the Postgraduate Office which then contacts the candidate as soon as possible to formally advise of the outcome of the PhD examination process. If a candidate has to make amendments to the thesis, the PG Office will forward the list of amendments provided by the Oral Chair and provide the candidate with information as to the process for submitting the amended thesis for sign-off and the date by which the amendments are to be submitted.

Before becoming eligible to graduate the candidate must deposit the final revised version of his/her thesis in the University Library – the PG Office will advise the candidate as to how to do this – and ensure that all other University requirements have been met (e.g., payment of all fees). Once a candidate is eligible to graduate s/he will be advised of the process to apply to graduate, either in person at one of the UC graduation ceremonies in April or December or *in absentia.*

**If you have any questions regarding the examination process please contact your Department/School Postgraduate Coordinator or the Postgraduate Office (postgraduate-office@canterbury.ac.nz).**



PhD Regulations and Guidelines

From 1 December 2007

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| **Category** | Academic |
| **Last Modified** | October 2013 |
| **Review Date** | November 2014 |
| **Approval Authority** | Chair, Academic Board |
| **Contact Person** | Dean of Postgraduate Research, Ext. 7285 |

# Introduction

These regulations apply to all PhD candidates enrolled from 1 December 2007. Candidates first enrolled at an earlier date continue under the regulations in force at that time - see Appendix One - (refer Clause 13 for transition provisions).

The guidelines, which are printed in *italics* to distinguish them from the regulations, have been developed to assist students and staff with obligations and best practice for doctoral study.

# Definitions

**Ad eundem statum** - means ‘with equivalent standing’.

**Extra-mural study** – means completing study or conducting research outside of Christchurch.

# Regulations and Guidelines

## Nature of the degree

1. Study for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy involves a sustained, rigorous and systematic approach to the relevant body of knowledge, undertaken through experimentation, archival work, or other appropriate means. It includes an original research project that makes a significant contribution to knowledge and understanding or application of knowledge. It requires the preparation of a substantial thesis that presents the outcome of the research and places it in the broader framework of the discipline or field of study. Undertaken under qualified

supervision, it promotes intellectual independence and the capacity to undertake further research at an advanced level.

1. The thesis must meet recognised international standards for such work.
2. The thesis must be submitted in English or Te Reo Māori and should not exceed 100,000 words in total, excluding appendices. Candidates wishing to submit and defend a thesis in Te Reo Māori must seek approval at the time of registration. A recommendation will be made by the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori) or nominee as to the candidate’s fluency and literacy in Te Reo Māori in the thesis subject-area and the likelihood of being able to find appropriately qualified examiners for the thesis.

The subject areas for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy are: Accounting (ACCT); Accounting and Information Systems (ACIS); American Studies (AMST)\*\*\*; Antarctic Studies (ANTA); Anthropology (ANTH); Applied Psychology (APSY); Art History (ARTH); Art Theory (ARTT); Astronomy (ASTR); Audiology (CMDS); Biochemistry (BCHM); Bioengineering (ENBI); Biological Sciences (BIOL)\*\*; Biotechnology (BIOT); Cellular and Molecular Biology (CEMB); Chemical and Process Engineering (ENCH); Chemistry (CHEM); Chinese (CHIN); Civil Engineering (ENCI); Classics (CLAS); Computational and Applied Mathematics (CAMS); Computer Science (COSC); Cultural Studies (CULT)\*; Earthquake Engineering (ENEQ); Ecology (ECOL); Economics (ECON); Education (EDUC); Electrical and Electronic Engineering (ENEL); Engineering Geology (ENGE); Engineering Management (ENMG); English (ENGL); Environmental Science (ENVR); European Studies (EURO); Evolutionary Biology (EVOL); Finance (FINC); Fire Engineering (ENFE); Forestry (FORE); Forestry Engineering (ENFO); French (FREN); Gender Studies (GEND)\*\*\*; Geography (GEOG); Geology (GEOL); German (GRMN); Hazard and Disaster Management (HAZM); Health Sciences (HLTH); Higher Education (HEDN); History (HIST); History and Philosophy of Science (HAPS); Human Interface Technology (HITL); Human Services (HSRV); Information Systems (INFO); Japanese (JAPA); Journalism (JOUR); Law (LAWS); Linguistics (LING); Management (MGMT); Management Science (MSCI)\*; Māori (MAOR); Marketing (MKTG); Mathematical Physics (MAPH); Mathematics (MATH); Mathematics and Philosophy (MPHI); Mechanical Engineering (ENME); Medical Physics (MDPH); Media and Communication (COMS); Medical Physics (Clinical) (MPHC); Microbiology (MBIO); Music (MUSI); Pacific Studies (PACS); Philosophy (PHIL); Physics (PHYS); Plant Biology (PBIO); Political Science (POLS); Psychology (PSYC); Religious Studies (RELS)\*; Russian (RUSS); Science Education (SCED); Social Work (SOWK); Sociology (SOCI); Spanish (SPAN); Speech and Language Sciences (CMDS); Statistics (STAT); Taxation (TAXA); Theatre and Film Studies (TAFS)\*; Transportation Engineering (ENTR); Water Resource Management (WATR); Zoology (ZOOL).

\*This subject is not open to new enrolments.

\*\*Subject to UNZ CUAP approval due December 2013.

\*\*\*This subject is not open to new enrolments. Students may complete their qualification provided they do so by 31 December 2016.

## Conditions of enrolment

1. Every candidate, before enrolling for the degree, must be approved as a candidate by the Dean of Postgraduate Research.
2. Every candidate for the degree must either:
   1. have qualified in New Zealand for a Bachelor’s degree with first or second class honours, or a Master’s degree at the standard of first or second class honours, or the equivalent; or
   2. have been admitted with *ad eundem statum* to the status of a graduate equivalent to (i) above.
3. The Dean of Postgraduate Research must be satisfied that the candidate has adequate training and ability to pursue the proposed course.
4. In special circumstances, the Dean of Postgraduate Research may approve the enrolment of a graduate who does not hold one of the qualifications under Regulation 2(b), but who has produced satisfactory evidence of adequate training and ability to pursue the proposed course.

## Enrolment and registration

1. A candidate shall apply for enrolment on the PhD Application form. The form, which must be signed by the Head of Department/School or nominee, must nominate a potential Senior Supervisor, who will normally be a member of the continuing academic staff of the University of Canterbury, indicate the general field of study, and recommend a date of enrolment. If the enrolment is approved by the Dean of Postgraduate Research, he or she shall confirm the date of enrolment.

*The prescribed form is obtainable from the* [*Admissions*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/admissions/forms/) *website.*

*When enrolment is approved, candidates will receive information from the Postgraduate Office directing them to the* [*Postgraduate*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/) [*Students*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/) *website where all guidelines and forms related to PhD study at UC are available.*

1. Once enrolled, the candidate shall work to develop a research proposal under the guidance of the nominated Senior Supervisor. Within six months of enrolment for the degree, the candidate must submit a PhD Proposal and Supervisory Agreement Form to the Head of Department/School or nominee for approval and forwarding to the Dean of Postgraduate Research for approval. Details of the members of the candidate’s supervisory team must be provided at this stage.
2. The candidate must undergo a formal PhD confirmation procedure that includes submission of a written report and an oral presentation followed by questions. The exact procedures and timing for the confirmation process differ between Departments/Schools, but candidates be provided with clear and detailed information about this process. On completion of the confirmation process, a PhD Confirmation Report Form must be submitted to the Dean of Postgraduate Research recommending that: the candidate’s full enrolment be confirmed; or the candidate’s provisional enrolment can be extended for a specified period of up to 6 months; or the candidate’s enrolment can be terminated.

*During this provisional enrolment period, the candidate should be considered as a full PhD student and afforded the appropriate facilities and resources. During this provisional enrolment period it is expected that the candidate will meet frequently (at least monthly) with their proposed Senior Supervisor and with other members of the supervisory team as the research is developed.*

1. The Confirmation Report Form must be accompanied by a signed agreement between student and supervisors in regard to IP and publications. Research proposals involving a contract (other than the “Supervision Agreement” which is part of the Standard Registration form) must have the additional contract signed by Research & Innovation.
2. Where the research is dependent on the approval of the University’s Human Ethics Committees or Animal Ethics Committee, or any other committee or organisation, such approval should be obtained prior to submission of the PhD Confirmation Report Form and full documentation of approval(s) should be submitted with the proposal. Where it is not possible to provide these approvals at the time of submitting the Confirmation Report Form, the Postgraduate Office must be informed as soon as the approvals are received.
3. With the approval of the Dean of Postgraduate Research, and on the recommendations of the Head of Department/School or nominee and the appropriate Faculty Dean, a candidate for a Master’s degree may transfer to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy provided:
   * + The candidate has satisfactorily completed any course work normally required by a candidate enrolling for a PhD, and
     + The candidate has undertaken research towards a Master’s thesis or project for a period not normally less than the equivalent of six months full-time enrolment, and
     + The candidate has satisfactorily completed the PhD Confirmation process as appropriate in his/her department/school.

If the candidate is enrolled for a PhD under this regulation, the date of enrolment will be backdated as is considered appropriate, normally to the date at which the Master’s thesis or project work was commenced.

## Full-time and part-time study

1. i. A candidate shall normally be enrolled as a full-time candidate.

*A full-time candidate is one who throughout the calendar year regards study and research for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy as a full-time occupation.*

1. The minimum period of enrolment for a full-time candidate is two years.
2. The maximum period of enrolment for a full-time candidate is normally four years, although if extenuating circumstances related to the candidate’s research can be demonstrated, the Dean of Postgraduate Research may extend this period up to five years.
3. i. With the approval of the Dean of Postgraduate Studies, a candidate may be enrolled as a part-time candidate.

*A part-time candidate is one who, because of employment or other reasons, is unable to devote himself or herself full-time, to study and research. The candidate and the Head of Department/School should discuss, before enrolment, the possibility and appropriateness of one or more continuous periods of full-time study. Included in the period of enrolment for part-time candidates should, ideally, be a period of continuous full-time study of at least six months.*

Candidate*s who require a Student Visa to reside and study in New Zealand must be enrolled on a full-time basis to satisfy the requirements of the Student Visa and to be eligible for domestic tuition fees. If a* candidate *resides outside New Zealand while studying and is not a New Zealand citizen, he or she will have the option of either enrolling on a full or part-time basis. While resident overseas, an international* candidate *will be liable for international rate tuition fees. A period of overseas study (e.g. fieldwork), up to a cumulative total of 12 months, is permissible for a* candidate *who is not a New Zealand citizen during his/her PhD tenure whilst retaining the right to pay domestic fees. Such a period of overseas studies must be approved by the Dean of Postgraduate Research prior to departure.* Candidate *who are New Zealand citizens may be enrolled on a full- or part-time basis and will pay domestic fees regardless of whether they reside in New Zealand or not.*

* 1. An applicant for part-time enrolment must produce evidence, including a statement from any employer, stating that he or she is not able to enrol full-time for a PhD but will be able to pursue satisfactorily, the necessary study and research.
  2. For a part-time candidate the minimum period of enrolment shall be not less than three years.
  3. The maximum period of enrolment for a part-time candidate is normally seven years, and the Dean of Postgraduate Research will not approve part-time enrolment unless satisfied that the candidate can devote sufficient time to study and research to be able to present a thesis within this time. If extenuating circumstances related to the candidate’s research can be demonstrated, the Dean of Postgraduate Research may extend this period further by up to a year.

1. After the commencement of study and research for the degree, a candidate may, with the permission of the Dean of Postgraduate Research, transfer from part-time to full-time status, or vice-versa.

## Supervision

* 1. Upon approval of the research proposal, the Dean of Postgraduate Research shall appoint a senior supervisor of the research, normally a member of the University continuing academic staff, who shall supervise the work of the candidate and be responsible for ensuring that all administrative and regulatory requirements are met. The Dean may appoint a non-continuing academic staff member as senior supervisor if satisfied that the candidate will receive continuity of supervision for the whole term of the PhD. In addition to the senior supervisor, there shall be a co- supervisor and/or one or more associate supervisors and/or a Supervisory Committee to support the supervisor and candidate. Members of the supervisory team, other than the senior supervisor, may be from outside the department/school in which the candidate is registered, and may be from another university or from outside the university system. Members of the supervisory team will be appointed by the Head of department/school in consultation with the candidate and senior supervisor, and their names recorded by the Postgraduate Office.

*When the appointment of supervisors is considered, the time that they are able to devote to supervision should be taken into account, including the number of* candidate*s already being supervised. The supervisory team must include members with a research interest and methodological expertise relevant to the proposed research of the candidate. The senior supervisor must have an appropriate doctoral qualification or equivalent research experience. The senior supervisor will take into*

*account the expressed views of any other members of the supervisory team in the application of these regulations.*

*If associate supervisors are being appointed from another university or from outside the university system, an agreement should be signed which details the role of the external supervisor. Any payment to the external supervisor is a matter for the department/school.*

* 1. For good reason, which may include the existence of a dispute between the candidate and a member of the supervisory team, the Dean of Postgraduate Research may replace a senior supervisor, and the Head of Department/School may replace any other member of the supervisory team. If a supervisor leaves the employment of the University, consideration must be given to whether, and in what capacity, they will remain involved in a candidate’s supervision and an appropriate agreement drawn up. Any changes (additions, removals, replacements) to the supervisory team must be recorded on the [*Change of Supervisor*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/Forms/Forms_for_PhD.shtml) form which can be found on the [*Postgraduate Students*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/) website and forwarded to the Postgraduate Office.

## Place of research and study

Unless approval has been granted at the time of enrolment for extra-mural study:

* 1. A candidate must spend at least 18 months undertaking study and research at the University of Canterbury. With support from the senior supervisor, a candidate may apply to the Dean of Postgraduate Research for this period to be reduced. Approval will not be granted unless the department/school can show that adequate supervision can be provided, and that the necessary resources are available, or can be made available, to the candidate.

b). For the remainder of the duration of study and research, a candidate may study away from the University of Canterbury. A candidate wishing to undertake study away from Christchurch must complete the [*Application to study outside Christchurch* form](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/Forms/Forms_for_PhD.shtml) which is available on the [*Postgraduate Students*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/) website. This form must be submitted to the Postgraduate Office in advance of the planned period of study away from Christchurch.

Before being granted approval by the Dean of Postgraduate Research for study away from Christchurch, the candidate must demonstrate:

* + 1. that he or she has adequate financial means to meet the costs of travel and/or the research,
    2. that if required, there are adequate research facilities and supervision at the proposed location,
    3. that there is a satisfactory means of communication with the senior supervisor at the University of Canterbury,
    4. that consideration has been given to risks associated with research being conducted at the proposed location.

## Reports and progress

* 1. Six months after the date of registration of the research proposal, and at intervals of six months thereafter, the Supervisors and the candidate shall complete the [*PhD Progress*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/phd/proposal.shtml) [*Report Form*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/phd/proposal.shtml) for the Head of Department/School to submit to the Dean of Postgraduate Research. The candidate must see the form completed by the supervisors and sign it.
  2. The report should be submitted to the Head of Department/School who should consult with the departmental/school Postgraduate Research Committee or coordinator of postgraduate research and comment on whether progress is, or is not, satisfactory before forwarding the report to the Postgraduate Office for the Dean’s approval. It is the Head of Department/School’s responsibility to ensure that reports are submitted in accord with 7(a) above.

*It is important that both candidate and supervisors are candid in their comments made on the progress report forms. It is the responsibility of the HoD/S or nominee to emphasize this point within their department/school.*

* 1. Before approving a progress report, the Dean of Postgraduate Research may require further explanation from the Head of Department/School, senior supervisor or candidate, and may, if he or she thinks appropriate, place the candidate on probation for a period not exceeding one year. During this period the Dean will require reports from both the candidate and the senior supervisor at least every three months.
  2. At the end of the probationary period, the Dean of Postgraduate Research may terminate a candidate’s registration on the recommendation of the Head of Department/School if satisfactory progress has not been made, or make any changes to the supervisory regime considered necessary.
  3. In exceptional cases not covered by Regulation 7(c), the Dean of Postgraduate Research may at any time, upon the recommendation of the senior supervisor and Head of Department/School, terminate or alter the terms of the candidate’s registration either unconditionally or upon such terms as the Dean may think fit.

*The candidate has a right of appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee against a decision to terminate enrolment. A copy of the Academic Appeals and Grievance Procedures can be found in the* [*UC Policy Library*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/ucpolicy)

* 1. If at any time the candidate is dissatisfied with the supervision provided or the resources available, or with any other matter affecting his or her progress, the candidate should report the matter to the Head of Department/School or directly to the Dean of Postgraduate Research.

*Candidates should first attempt to resolve difficulties within the Department/School. Department/Schools are expected to have, and to publish, their own procedures for dispute resolution. These procedures would normally involve the Head of Department/School or the departmental/school Postgraduate Research Committee or coordinator of postgraduate research. If resolution cannot be reached in this way, the candidate should contact the Dean of Postgraduate Research directly. The candidate may seek the advice of the* [*UC Students’ Association Welfare*](http://www.ucsa.org.nz/support/education/) [*and Advocacy Team*](http://www.ucsa.org.nz/support/education/) *before contacting the Dean.*

## Submission of thesis

* 1. Subject to fulfillment of the requirements of these regulations, a candidate may apply through the Postgraduate Office to have his or her thesis examined. Except with the approval of the Dean of Postgraduate Research, submission must occur after the minimum period of enrolment and within the maximum enrolment period. In order for a thesis to be sent out for examination the candidate must be enrolled at the time of submission and must not have any outstanding tuition fees or other charges.
  2. The candidate shall submit PDF[[1]](#footnote-1) of a thesis embodying the results of the research and the [*Use*](http://library.canterbury.ac.nz/thesis/restrictions.shtml)[*of Thesis Form,*](http://library.canterbury.ac.nz/thesis/restrictions.shtml)which can be found on the [*Postgraduate Students*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/)website.
  3. A candidate may include in the thesis or attach as an appendix to it any of his or her relevant published work. Where the published work has more than one author, it shall be accompanied by a completed [*Co-Authorship Form*,](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/documents/Co-authorship%20Form.docx) which is available from the Postgraduate Students website, identifying the candidate’s own contribution. While published work can be included in the thesis, the thesis must be a single coherent document. Further information regarding the inclusion of published work is included in the document [*Including Publications in a PhD Thesis*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/information_sheets/phd_dma_infosheets.shtml) which can be found on the [*Postgraduate Students*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/) website.
  4. A candidate must indicate in the thesis any part which he or she has previously used for another degree. (See Regulation 1 concerning the requirements for original work.)
  5. Once examiners have been appointed, as below, the thesis shall normally be sent to the examiners within 10 working days. Prior to being sent out for examination the [*P h D Examiner’s Request Form*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/phd/formsstaff.shtml) and the Supervisor’s Certificate must be submitted by the Head of Department/School to the Postgraduate Office.

At its initial submission for examination the thesis should normally be submitted as a PDF.

*Candidates should make themselves familiar with the University’s* [*Thesis Availability*](http://library.canterbury.ac.nz/thesis/restrictions.shtml) [*Policy*](http://library.canterbury.ac.nz/thesis/restrictions.shtml) *and the* [*Intellectual Property Policy*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/ucpolicy/GetPolicy.aspx?file=intellectualproperty.pdf) *which cover such issues as the borrowing and consultation of theses, and the possibility of imposing an embargo on the use of a thesis.*

## Examination

* 1. The senior supervisor must submit the completed Supervisor’s Certificate, available from the [*Postgraduate Students*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/) website, within seven days of notification by the Postgraduate Office of the thesis having been submitted for examination. The Supervisor’s Certificate is sent to examiners along with the thesis.
  2. Two examiners shall be recommended by the senior supervisor and nominated, on the [*PhD Examiners’ Request Form*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/phd/formsstaff.shtml) available from the [*Postgraduate Students*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/) website, by the Head of Department/School or nominee for approval by the Dean of Postgraduate Research.

*Examiners should be nominated on the basis of their expertise in the research domain and/or methodologies used in the thesis. The guidelines for the selection of examiners can be downloaded from the* [*Postgraduate Students*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/) *website. Nominations must be received b y the Postgraduate Office no later than seven days after the senior supervisor has been notified by the Postgraduate Office that the thesis has been submitted for examination. Normally, one of the examiners will be from New Zealand, or east-coast Australia. In choosing the overseas examiner, familiarity with the New Zealand system for PhD theses should be taken into account.*

*At the same time an oral examination chair is nominated by the Head of Department/School or nominee. The Chair of the oral examination will be an experienced member of the University staff, who has had no involvement with the thesis work and will be appointed by the Dean of Postgraduate Research following consultation with the Head of Department/School or nominee. The Chair will be responsible for maintaining the integrity of the oral examination process and will act as a neutral Chair at the examination. Guidelines for the oral Chair can be downloaded from the* [*Postgraduate Students*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/) *website.*

*The senior supervisor should approach proposed examiners informally before submission of the thesis to ascertain their willingness to examine. Potential examiners should be informed of the likely submission date and told that it is expected that examiners’ reports be returned within six weeks. The date for the oral examination is to be agreed between the chair of the oral examination, candidate, senior supervisor and oral examiner, at the time of appointment of the examiners. The date of the oral examination will normally be eight-ten weeks after submission of the thesis for examination. The Postgraduate Office will oversee the travel arrangements for the oral examiner, in collaboration with the Chair of the oral examination.*

* 1. Prior to the nomination of examiners, the senior supervisor should discuss and agree on the most appropriate examiners with the candidate. The candidate must indicate to the Postgraduate Office that he or she accepts the nominated examiners or, can make a case to the Dean of Postgraduate Research that a particular nominated person not be an examiner. If the Dean upholds the candidate’s request that a nominated examiner not be appointed, a replacement nomination will be sought from the department/school. Candidates are not permitted to nominate examiners but may discuss the question of the choice of examiners with their senior supervisor.
  2. The examination process must be independent of supervisors. Once examiners have been nominated, all communications must be through the Postgraduate Office or, where indicated, through the Chair of the oral examination.

*Neither supervisors of the thesis, nor the candidate, should contact examiners about matters relating to the thesis once they have been appointed.*

* 1. If the Head of Department/School or nominee is a supervisor, he or she shall appoint a nominee for the purposes of administering the examination, including the nomination

of examiners and the Chair of the oral examination.

* 1. The two examiners shall each submit an independent report on the thesis to the Postgraduate Office, using an [*Examiner’s Report Form*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/Forms/Forms_for_ExaminersOralChairs.shtml).
  2. When the examiners’ reports have been received, the Dean of Postgraduate Research shall determine whether the oral examination should proceed. In making this decision, the Dean may correspond with the examiners, in which case the nature and substance of any correspondence must be recorded. The Dean may also discuss the matter with the Chair of the oral examination and the senior supervisor, and will do so if any issues of serious concern are raised in any examiner’s report. As necessary, the Dean may invite formal written comment from the supervisor/s before the oral examination. The Dean may also seek new examiners’ reports, replace one or more examiners, or appoint an additional examiner. The Chair of the oral examination will be informed when he or she can confirm the details of the oral examination.
  3. On receiving the examiners’ reports, a supervisor may, if they have concerns about the nature or content of the reports, contact the Dean of Postgraduate Research to raise those concerns. If contacted, the Dean will respond and, if necessary, consult the examiners (refer to Clause 9 (g) above).
  4. i. There shall be an oral examination of the candidate on the subject of the thesis and on the general field to which the subject belongs.

*Based on the recommendations from the examiners, the Dean of Postgraduate Research may require that the thesis be revised and resubmitted after initial submission, prior to an oral examination taking place.*

*Any public presentation sought by the department/school is not part of the formal University examination process, and should be clearly distinct from the formal oral examination to ensure that there is no confusion posed by the two activities.*

1. The Chair of the oral examination shall act as a neutral Chair and should not act as an additional examiner. He or she does not have voting rights, but may ask questions of the candidate. He or she shall ensure that questions posed by the absent examiner are put to the candidate.
2. The examiners’ reports and the recommendations shall be released to th e candidate by the Chair of the oral examination no more than ten and no less than five days prior to the oral examination. An examiner’s name may not be withheld, though specific sections of a report may be, at the examiner’s request.

*With the agreement of the Dean of Postgraduate Research, reports may be released more than ten days, or fewer than five days, prior to the oral examination. A case for such, must be put to the Dean of Postgraduate Research by the Chair of the oral examination, candidate or supervisor.*

1. The oral examination shall be attended by one of the examiners. The other examiner may take part in the examination with the approval of the Dean of Postgraduate Research.

*Normally the international examiner will not be required to participate in the oral examination, but may provide advice on questions to be asked. It is common practice in the oral examination for the oral examiner to lead the discussions.*

*It is suggested that the senior supervisor be invited by the oral Chair to put to the candidate the questions submitted by the absent examiner.*

1. All members of the candidate’s supervisory team shall be invited to attend the oral examination as observers. At least one member of the supervisory team – normally the senior supervisor – must be in attendance. The senior supervisor (or nominee) shall participate to the extent requested by the Chair of the oral examination, with the prior agreement of the candidate. Members of the supervisory team, except the senior supervisor or nominee, will leave the room (or go offline if the examination is being conducted by video link), along with the candidate and his or her support person/s, at the conclusion of the oral examination while the examiners discuss their recommendation. The senior supervisor shall be present during the decision making at the conclusion of the oral examination but should ***not*** take part in the decision making, except to answer any questions from the chair of the oral examination or the oral examiner.

*At the request of either the Chair of the oral examination or the oral examiner the senior supervisor may be required to absent him/herself during the decision making at the conclusion of the oral examination.*

1. The candidate shall have the right to have a maximum of two persons present at the oral examination as observers. With the prior agreement of the candidate, the Chair may also invite other persons to be present as observers. The Chair shall inform the attendees of the purpose of these observers. All observers must remain silent unless the Chair allows otherwise, and the observers must not disrupt the examination in any way, whether audibly or otherwise.

*Observers invited by the chair to attend may include junior colleagues who are being mentored in the role of thesis examiner and senior colleagues who are invited to provide feedback to the Chair for professional development purposes.*

1. At the request of the examiners, the candidate may be required to sit a written examination following the oral examination.
2. In exceptional circumstances, an oral examination may be waived by the Vice- Chancellor on the advice of the Dean of Postgraduate Research.
   1. After the oral examination and any written examination, the examiners shall, after consultation, submit to the Postgraduate Office the [*PhD Final Joint Examiners’ Report*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/Forms/Forms_for_ExaminersOralChairs.shtml) [*Form*](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/Forms/Forms_for_ExaminersOralChairs.shtml)*.* They shall recommend one of the following:
      1. the candidate be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy;
      2. the candidate be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy subject to the satisfactory completion of specified amendments;
      3. the candidate be invited to revise and resubmit the thesis for re-examination;
      4. the candidate not be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy but be awarded instead, an appropriate Master’s degree; or
      5. no degree be awarded to the candidate.
   2. At the conclusion of the oral examination, the Chair may, with the agreement of all the examiners, inform the candidate of the intended recommendation. It must be made clear to the candidate that a recommendation is being made to the Dean of Postgraduate Research who will formally inform the candidate of the outcome.

*The Chair of the oral examination is responsible for ensuring that the joint report form is forwarded to the Postgraduate Office. This form should be signed by all the examiners present. If the oral examiner is not present physically but via video or audio link then a separate signature must be obtained prior to the awarding of the degree.*

*An electronic signature is acceptable.*

* 1. After the oral examination and receipt of reports, the Dean of Postgraduate Research shall consider all reports and recommendations, and shall determine the outcome of the examination.
  2. In the event of a disagreement between the examiners, and after the Chair of the oral examination has taken all reasonable steps to achieve consensus, the Dean of Postgraduate Research may appoint an adjudicator to determine the outcome of the examination.

## Resubmission

Where revision and resubmission are recommended and approved by the Dean of Postgraduate Research, the process for the submission of the thesis, appointment of examiners and conduct of the oral examination shall be as in clauses 8 and 9 above. Normally, the original examiners will undertake the re-examination of the thesis. The revision and resubmission option can be exercised once only. The examiners will recommend an appropriate period for the revisions to be completed and the thesis resubmitted.

A candidate must be enrolled for the period of time in which he or she is undertaking revisions prior to a resubmission of the thesis for re-examination. Once an appropriate period for the revisions has been determined (usually in discussion between the supervisors, candidate, oral Chair and Dean of Postgraduate Research) Student Services will be informed and the candidate will be sent a new enrolment offer for that period.

## Deposit of Thesis

After a candidate has been approved for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, he or she shall deliver to the University Library Collections, an electronic copy (as a PDF file) of the final version of the thesis, to be uploaded to the [library website.](http://library.canterbury.ac.nz/thesis/deposit.shtml) A candidate may also deposit a hard-bound copy of their thesis if he or she so chooses.

## Variation

The Dean of Postgraduate Research shall have power to vary these regulations in respect to a particular candidate where special or unusual circumstances warrant it. In such circumstances the Dean will consult, as appropriate, with the candidate, supervisors, Head of Department/School, oral examination Chair and examiners.

## Transitional Regulations

Candidates enrolled under the 2003 PhD Regulations continue under those regulations, but may elect to transfer to this set of regulations on each anniversary of enrolment.

## Appeals

A candidate may appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee against any decisions of the Dean of Postgraduate Research made under clauses 3 to 9 of these regulations, normally within three months of the decision, on the grounds that:

1. relevant information which was not available to the Dean of Postgraduate Research at the time when a decision was made has since become available; *and/or*
2. the procedure adopted in arriving at the decision breached a University Regulation or the laws of natural justice.

The appeal must state clearly all grounds relied upon by the candidate and attach all relevant documentation.

# Related Documents and Information

* [Instructions for Organising PhD Oral Examinations](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/acad/documents/FAQSforresearchstudentsforwebsite.pdf)
* [Intellectual Property, Copyright, Embargoes, Joint Publications, Sponsorship](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/ucpolicy/GetPolicy.aspx?file=intellectualproperty.pdf)  [Contracts and Agreements – a Guide for Research Students and their Supervisors](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/ucpolicy/GetPolicy.aspx?file=intellectualproperty.pdf)
* [Notes for Thesis Examiners on the Canterbury Process](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/phd/formsstaff.shtml)
* [Research Work for a Master’s or PhD Thesis: Code of Practice for Heads of](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/ucpolicy/GetPolicy.aspx?file=researchworkcop.pdf)  [Department/School, Supervisors and Students](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/ucpolicy/GetPolicy.aspx?file=researchworkcop.pdf)
* [Thesis Availability Policy](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/ucpolicy/GetPolicy.aspx?file=thesisavailabilitypolicy.pdf)

## Forms

* [Co-Authorship Form](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/documents/Co-authorship%20Form.docx)
* [PhD Examiner’s Report Form](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/Forms/Forms_for_ExaminersOralChairs.shtml)
* [PhD Oral Examination Recommendation Form](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/Forms/Forms_for_ExaminersOralChairs.shtml)
* [Including Publications in a PhD Thesis](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/documents/publicationsinathesis.docx) – Guidelines for Students
* [PhD Application Form](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/Forms/Forms_for_PhD.shtml)
* [PhD Examiner Request Form](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/Forms/Forms_for_Supervisors.shtml)
* [PhD Progress Report Form](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/Forms/Forms_for_PhD.shtml)
* [PhD Registration Form (Research Proposal)](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/Forms/Forms_for_PhD.shtml)
* [Supervisors Certificate (PhD)](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/Forms/Forms_for_Supervisors.shtml)
* [Use of Thesis Form](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/postgrad/Forms/Forms_for_PhD.shtml)

# Appendices

* Appendix One: PhD Regulations and Guidelines: Pre 1 December 2007

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Document History and Version Control Table** | | | |
| **Version** | **Action** | **Approval Authority** | **Action Date** |
| *For document history and versioning prior to 2013 contact* [*ucpolicy@canterbury.ac.nz*](mailto:ucpolicy@canterbury.ac.nz) | | | |
| 1.00 | Major review of document and conversion into new format. Removal of document from UCPL and moved to PhD webpages. | Academic Board | Sep 2013 |

1. The candidate may decide to submit a hard-copy of his or her thesis if preferred [↑](#footnote-ref-1)