

GUIDELINES FOR EXAMINERS THESIS ASSESSMENT REPORT

**Doctor of Philosophy
Doctor of Clinical Psychology
Doctor of Education
Doctor of Social Work**

DEGREES

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is a research degree which comprises a thesis to the value of 360 credits.

The Named Doctorates (DClinPsych, EdD and DSW) are degrees which are comprise of one third course work to the value of 120 credits, and a research thesis to the value of 240 credits. Examiners are required to examine the thesis only.

EXAMINATION PROCESS

Three examiners are normally involved in the examination process – an internal and two externals. A convenor, not associated with the thesis discipline, is appointed by the Doctoral Research Committee (DRC) to oversee and facilitate the thesis examination. It is a two-step process: the assessment of the thesis in the form of report and recommendation from all three examiners and then the oral examination which is usually only attended by the internal and New Zealand examiner, although on occasions the overseas may attend by video conference. The overseas examiner will be kept informed of the outcome of the oral exam by the convenor.

Examiners are required to submit their recommendation and report (below) within 6-8 weeks to ensure the oral examination can take place in a reasonable timeframe and to allow the student 10 working days to review the reports and prepare for the oral exam. Please advise us if you have difficulties meeting this deadline. Specifically, examiners are asked to provide the following:

- An overall recommendation (pass, major emendations, minor emendations, re-exam, fail) which is kept confidential to the Examination Committee
- A written report which addresses the examination criteria, summarises strengths and weaknesses, and lists possible emendations (if required). This is made available to the candidate and supervisor prior to the oral examination.
- Any confidential comments that you wish to accompany your report but which you do NOT wish made available to the candidate or supervisor.

You may be asked to consider whether the thesis reaches the standard of 'Dean's List of Exceptional Thesis'. If this is the case you will be sent the appropriate form with the criteria noted on it.

Over the coming weeks the Graduate Research School (GRS) will be in contact to schedule the date for the oral examination.

Please note:

- It is important that the first stage of the examination process is strictly confidential. We ask you not to discuss the thesis or the report with anyone prior to the oral examination. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Graduate Research School.
- We ask examiners to keep the thesis until the examination process has been completed. You will receive a letter from the Graduate Research School to notify you of the final result following the oral examination and also when it is appropriate to dispose of the thesis.

THESIS ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATION

Please complete the attached Thesis Assessment Recommendation form (DRC 6.2) and email it with your written report to Doctoral.Exams@massey.ac.nz.

EXAMINER'S WRITTEN REPORT

The following criteria is to be used for the evaluation of the thesis, and should be used as the basis for the written report. This report will be shared with the supervision panel and student in advance of the oral exam.

In the cases where examiners consider changes are necessary, as part of the report they should clearly specify the mandatory or recommended changes that should be made to the thesis before it is regarded as of an acceptable standard for the award of the degree. The reports vary in length but we would normally expect a document of 3-5 pages addressing the following:

- The candidate's familiarity with, and understanding of relevant literature
- Whether the thesis provides a sufficiently comprehensive study of the topic
- The appropriateness of the methods adopted to the subject matter and whether they are properly applied
- Whether the research findings are suitably set out and accompanied by adequate exposition
- The quality of English and general presentation is satisfactory
- Whether the thesis as a whole makes an original contribution to the knowledge of the subject with which it deals, and the candidate understands the relationship of the thesis to the wider context of knowledge in which it belongs

Examiners may also wish to list the questions they intend to ask the candidate at the oral examination in their written report. The internal or New Zealand examiner will address the questions on behalf of the overseas examiner who normally does not attend the examination in person. This is entirely the examiners' choice, but in doing so, the candidate and supervisor will have access to those questions when receiving the written reports before the oral examination.

THESIS WITH PUBLICATIONS

Please see attached guidelines (where applicable).

Examiners will be instructed to examine all parts of the thesis with equal rigour, and may request major or minor changes to any part of the thesis regardless of whether it has been published or not.

Whether a candidate submits their thesis by monograph form or with publications, examiners will still be asked to examine the thesis following the same guidelines:

- That the candidate shows familiarity with, and understanding of the relevant literature
- The thesis provides a sufficiently comprehensive study of the topic
- The research questions have been identified
- The methods adopted are appropriate to the subject matter and properly applied
- The research findings are documented and explained coherently
- The thesis as a whole makes an original contribution to the knowledge of the subject with which it deals, and the candidate understands the relationship of the thesis to the wider context of the knowledge in which it belongs.