Dissertation/Thesis Oral Examination Recommendations

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2">DISSERTATION/THESIS ACCEPTABLE</td><td>Recommendation 1

• Dissertation/Thesis acceptable, with or without minor revisions
• Oral defence acceptable

All members of the examining committee sign the certification pages EXCEPT THE SUPERVISOR, who will sign only after ensuring the necessary revisions have
been made.

As a general guide, if the committee does not feel that dissertation/thesis revisions can be completed within a two-week time frame by a student working full-time on the dissertation/thesis, it should consider Recommendation 2.</td><td rowspan="2">ORAL DEFENCE ACCEPTABLE</td></tr>
<tr><td>DISSERTATION/THESIS REQUIRES RE-SUBMISSION</td><td>Recommendation 2

• Underlying research adjudged to be sound, but dissertation/thesis in need of recasting, addition of illustrative material or limited additional data
• Oral defence acceptable

Recommendation 2 is often used in a situation where different members of the committee take on specific responsibilities for ensuring that a particular part of the dissertation/thesis is revised as required. In these circumstances, the normal practice is for those with such responsibilities not to sign the approval page until the revisions have been made, while other members not so involved may sign immediately after the examination. Otherwise, none of the committee members sign approval pages until the revisions have been returned for the committee's final approval (no additional oral defence).

As a general guide, if the committee does not feel that the dissertation/thesis revisions can be completed within a six-week time frame by a student working largely full-time on the dissertation/thesis, it should consider Recommendation 4.</td></tr>
<tr><td>DISSERTATION/THESIS ACCEPTABLE</td><td>Recommendation 3

• Dissertation/Thesis acceptable
• Oral defence unacceptable
• Only available to students taking the oral exam for the first time.

Second attempt at oral defence should be completed within three months of the date of the initial examination.</td><td>ORAL DEFENCE UNACCEPTABLE</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">DISSERTATION/THESIS UNACCEPTABLE</td><td>Recommendation 4

• Dissertation/Thesis does not meet minimum standards, but committee believes that further research and/or revision may bring it to an acceptable standard or oral defence is unacceptable but the committee agrees that the student has the potential, with additional preparation, to be able to successfully defend work.
• Only available to students taking the oral exam for the first time.

Re-submission of dissertation/thesis and second attempt of oral defence no sooner than six months and no later than twelve months after the original defence.</td><td>ORAL EXAMINATION RE-TAKE</td></tr>
<tr><td>Recommendation 5

• Dissertation/Thesis does not meet minimum standards and committee considers that no reasonable amount of additional research or revision is likely to bring it to an acceptable standard or oral defence of dissertation/thesis is completely unacceptable and committee agrees that the student does not have potential to be able to successfully defend the work.

Committee recommends student be required to discontinue from the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.</td><td>CLEAR FAIL</td></tr>
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Role of the Examining Committee and External Examiner for a Ph.D. Dissertation Examination at the University of Saskatchewan

1. The External Examiner is appointed by the Dean, or designate, of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and is present at the examination by invitation of the Dean. In accepting the invitation to serve, the External Examiner is also indicating that they have not been involved with the research project or the preparation of the dissertation.

2. The External Examiner must provide the Dean of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies with a written report evaluating the quality of the dissertation and indicating that the oral examination should take place as scheduled (GPS 403.1). This report must be in the hands of the Dean one week (7 days) before the examination takes place. The Pre-Defence Report of the External Examiner will be distributed to all members of the examining committee just prior to the beginning of the defence.

3. The chair of the examining committee is the Graduate Chair, Head, Dean/Executive Director (non-departmentalized colleges/schools) or designate, and is a non-voting member of the committee. The Supervisor(s) and other members of the advisory or examining committee may not serve as the chair at the defence.

4. According to the practice of the academic unit in which the student is registered, other individuals who are not members of the examining committee may or may not attend the Candidate's presentation and question period.

5. The person chairing will invite the Candidate to make a brief (about 10 to 20 minutes) oral presentation, highlighting the components and contributions of the dissertation and its conclusions. If the presentation takes significantly longer than 20 minutes, the person chairing should ask the Candidate to conclude the presentation. At the conclusion of the Candidate's presentation, the External Examiner, who has a major responsibility for examining the Candidate, is given the first opportunity to pose questions. The University Examiner will be the second person to pose questions to the Candidate, followed by the Cognate member, Additional member(s) and the Supervisor(s). The External Examiner, University Examiner and other members of the Examining Committee will be given a second opportunity to ask questions.

6. The purpose of the examination is to permit the Examining Committee to be satisfied that the standards of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and the University have been met. The questions should reflect this purpose. Inadequate questioning denies the Candidate the right to demonstrate mastery of the subject, but extensive questioning is unnecessary once the Committee feels it has enough evidence to make a decision.

7. Questions should be based mainly on the content of the dissertation, but the Committee should be satisfied that the Candidate has the appropriate knowledge for a specialist in the area defined by the dissertation. The External Examiner will comment on this background in their oral defence report to the Dean.

8. At the end of the two rounds of questions, the members of the Examining Committee convene in the absence of the Candidate and other individuals who may have been present for the presentation and question period. If the Committee cannot reach a consensus on the acceptability of the dissertation and/or the defence, a vote must be taken. A simple majority in favour of "Pass" or "Fail" will serve as the Committee's decision, except in cases where the External Examiner does not share the majority view (regardless of whether it is a yes or a no vote). If the External Examiner does not share the majority view the examination will be adjourned by the (non-voting) Chair and the Dean of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies will review the situation and establish appropriate procedures to resolve the matter. Abstentions by voting members of the Examining Committee are not permitted and will be interpreted as negative votes.

9. Should further work by the Candidate be required, the Chair of the Examining Committee must see that the Committee states clearly, in the presence of one another and the Candidate while still assembled at the defence, what work is to be done and whether the Supervisor, other members, or the Examining Committee as a whole will review the work again before the dissertation can be accepted.

10. In addition to their evaluation of the dissertation and defence, the External Examiner is invited to comment on any matter which deserves the Dean's attention.

11. When satisfied with a positive report of the Examining Committee, the Dean will recommend the Candidate to the Faculty of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for the award of the degree.