**Research Degree Examiners’ Joint Final Report**

The examiners must complete this report jointly after the oral examination. Examiners may make their joint recommendation known to the student at the end of the oral examination but they must make clear that the final decision rests with the Research Degrees Examination Board, which may accept or revise the examiners’ recommendation. If, exceptionally, the examiners are unable to agree on a joint report, separate final reports should be submitted.

The examiners are responsible for the completion of the form. When completed, the joint final report together with the preliminary reports (and, if relevant, the independent chair report) must be sent to the School PGR Director (this may be via the School PGR team). The School PGR Director must complete the declaration at the end of the joint report and to send all reports to the Academic Quality and Policy Office to arrive no later than **two weeks** after the date of the oral examination. Hand-written reports will not be accepted.

Reports will be considered at the next scheduled Research Degrees Examination Board. Deadlines for the receipt of reports are available at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/directory/exams/research-degree/research-exam-board/>.

Examiners’ reports are sent to the student and their supervisors after the Research Degrees Examination Board has reached a decision. All reports remain confidential and must not be shared with the student or their supervisors until after the Board’s decision.

| **Full name of student** |  |
| --- | --- |
| Student ID Number |  |

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| --- | --- |
| Degree examined |  |
| Student’s school |  |
| Supervisors |  |
| Title of dissertation |  |

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| --- | --- |
| Examiners’ names  (please specify whether internal or external examiner in each case) |  |
| Independent chair’s name, if appointed |  |

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| **Insert the date of the oral examination** |
|  |

Reports must be informative and specific to the student and their dissertation. Generic reports will not be accepted.

You should make a joint recommendation in Section 1 and provide a supporting rationale for the recommendation in Section 2. When deciding on your recommendation, you should consider the criteria for the award of a research degree (as presented in Annex A of this report). Your guidance for any corrections or a resubmission must be set out in Section 3.

You may, if you consider it appropriate, make a prize nomination for outstanding excellence in a doctoral dissertation in Section 4. A reason for the nomination must be included.

| **Section 1: Examiners’ recommendation to the Research Degrees Examination Board** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | We recommend: | **Please tick one box only** | |
| **A** | **Award unconditionally.**  The student has met the criteria for the award of the relevant degree | |  |
| **B** | **Award with minor errors.**  The student has met the criteria for the award of the relevant degree, but minor errors must be corrected.  The correction of the minor errors must be to the satisfaction of the internal examiner. If there is no internal examiner, an external examiner, the independent chair, or another University of Bristol academic nominated by the school must assess the corrections. | |  |
| **C** | **Require the correction of errors or omissions of substance.**  The student has not met the criteria for the award of the relevant degree, as errors or omissions of substance must be corrected.  The correction of errors or omissions of substance must be to the satisfaction of all examiners. | |  |
| **D** | **Permit the student to resubmit in a revised form.**  The student has not met the criteria for the award of the relevant degree, as the work requires significant revision and a resubmission.  A resubmission requires a re-examination. | |  |
| **E** | **(Doctoral students only) Award the relevant research master’s degree unconditionally.**  The student has not met the criteria for the doctoral award and has no prospect of reaching doctoral standard in any permitted timeframe, but they have met the criteria for the relevant research master’s degree. | |  |
| **F** | **(Doctoral students only) Award the relevant research master’s degree with minor errors.**  The student has not met the criteria for the doctoral award and has no prospect of reaching doctoral standard in any permitted timeframe. They have instead met the criteria for the relevant research master’s degree, but minor errors must be corrected.  The correction of the minor errors must be to the satisfaction of the internal examiner. If there is no internal examiner, an external examiner, the independent chair, or another University of Bristol academic nominated by the school must assess the corrections. | |  |
| **G** | **(Doctoral students only). Permit the student to resubmit in a revised form for the relevant research master’s degree.**  The student has not met the criteria for the doctoral award and has no prospect of reaching doctoral standard in any permitted timeframe. They do however have the potential to meet the criteria for the relevant research master’s degree following a resubmission.  A resubmission requires a re-examination. | |  |
| **H** | **Fail**  The student has not met the criteria for the award of the relevant degree and has no prospect of reaching the relevant standard in any permitted timeframe. For doctoral students, there is also no prospect of the student reaching the standard for a research master’s degree. | |  |
| Note:  Resubmission is only permitted once. For second examinations, examiners cannot recommend a further resubmission (D or G). | | |  |

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| **Section 2: Supporting rationale for the examiners’ recommendation** Explain the reasons for your joint recommendation:   * give specific justification of why the degree should, or should not, be awarded; * consider the criteria for a research degree (as set out in Annex A of this report), * confirm which criteria have been satisfied, and * provide feedback on any of the criteria that have not been satisfied; * include appropriate reference to the written submission and to the performance in the oral examination; and * if relevant, include the reason why your final recommendation differs from any recommendations in the preliminary reports.   If a [Covid-19 statement](https://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/pg/code-of-practice/assessment/covid-impact-policy/) is present in the dissertation, this report must include a consideration of the statement and the examiners’ deliberation of the impact on the scope and volume of the dissertation within the context of maintaining the academic standards for the award. |
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| **Section 3: Guidance from examiners on corrections or a resubmission**  Examiners must provide combined guidance to the student on any required corrections or for a resubmission. The guidance must set out the specific improvements needed and must give appropriate direction so that the student is able to make the necessary changes to fulfil the award criteria.  Guidance on corrections or for a resubmission must be supplied separately to the student as soon as possible after the oral examination so that the student may begin their revisions. This is on the understanding that the Research Degrees Examination Board may require enhanced guidance, or the outcome changed, when it considers the examiners’ reports.  Please cut and paste the guidance provided to the student into the box below. Some minor errors, such as typographical errors, can be returned to the student as annotation on the dissertation and do not need to be listed below. Examiners must however include a short statement confirming if any minor errors have been annotated on the dissertation.  Please make sure that you give clear guidance on what must be changed. Changes that are only suggestions for improvement and are not required to meet the award criteria must not be listed. |
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**Section 4: Prize nomination for outstanding excellence in a doctoral dissertation**

The Research Degrees Examination Board awards an annual prize to one student from each faculty for outstanding excellence in a doctoral dissertation. If the dissertation you have examined is of an exceptionally high quality, you are invited to nominate it for a prize.

*If you are examining a Master of Science by Research (MScR) degree in the Faculty of Life Sciences, you may use this section to nominate for a Faculty prize for best MScR dissertation. For an MScR nomination, the criteria set out below relate to masters-level achievement.*

A doctoral prize nomination should be made where the examiners agree that the student has met these criteria:

1. The student’s achievement is exceptional as demonstrated in the substance and presentation of the dissertation.
2. The dissertation contains a high level of originality and makes an important contribution to the research area or discipline/s.
3. The student has excelled in the use of research methods and/or techniques.

A doctoral degree by published work is not eligible for a prize nomination.

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|  | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Do you wish to nominate the student for the annual prize for outstanding excellence in a doctoral dissertation\*? Please click on the relevant box. |  |  |  |

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| If **yes**, please set out the reasons for your nomination including in relation to the three criteria set out above. Providing detail on the nomination will enable the Board to make an informed judgement of the academic worth of the dissertation. |
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**Declaration**

Examiners should print their names in the boxes below.

We individually declare that we do not have any connection with the student, the supervisors, the research project or (external examiners only) with the University, which might impair our ability to make a fair and impartial assessment of the student's work.

**External examiner**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Print name | Date |
|  |  |

**Internal examiner**

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| In addition to the declaration above, the internal examiner also declares the following:  Subject to any comments or observations below, I am satisfied that the examination was conducted in accordance with the University of Bristol’s regulations and procedures.  (Where an Independent Chair has been appointed, a separate report from the Independent Chair is required.) |
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|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Print name | Date |
|  |  |

**Second internal/external examiner, if appointed** *(please delete as appropriate)*

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| --- | --- |
| Print name | Date |
|  |  |

Once completed by the examiners, the internal examiner (or independent chair if there is no internal examiner) must send the joint report, the he examiners’ individual preliminary reports, and, if relevant, the independent chair report to the student’s School PGR Director (this may be via the School PGR team).

The School PGR Director must complete the declaration below and to send the set of reports to the Academic Quality and Policy Office to arrive no later than two weeks after the date of the oral examination. The School PGR Director can require the examiners to make changes to the joint report before signing the declaration.

If the School PGR Director is the student’s supervisor, the internal examiner or the independent chair, an alternative senior member of the School’s academic staff must sign the report.

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| **School PGR Director declaration:**  I confirm that I have reviewed the examiners’ reports and completed this declaration as evidence of that review. | | |
| **Signature of School PGR Director** | | |
| Signature | Print name | Date |
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AQPO April 2024

**Annex A: Criteria for the award of research degrees**

There are general criteria covering all research degrees and additional criteria for doctorates and for research master’s degrees.

***General criteria for research degrees***

1. A PGR dissertation (or submission for a doctoral degree by published work) must:
   1. Embody the results of research carried out by the student with the work produced being reasonably expected from a capable and diligent student in the period of study specified in regulation.
   2. Consist of the student’s own account of their investigations.
   3. Make clear where information has been derived, the extent to which the work of others has been used, and the areas that the student claims to be original.
   4. Demonstrate critical judgement in relation to the student’s own work and to the work of other researchers in the field.
   5. Present an integrated structure and a coherent argument.
2. Through a combination of the dissertation (or submission for a doctoral degree by published work) and the oral examination, a PGR student must:
   1. Demonstrate an adequate knowledge and understanding of the discipline, the context in which the research is grounded, and the literature relevant to the research.
   2. Demonstrate verbally and in writing an ability to put forward arguments in an appropriate form.

***Additional criteria for doctoral degrees***

1. In addition to the general criteria for all research degrees, doctoral degrees by dissertation are awarded when the doctoral student fulfils the following criteria:
   1. The dissertation represents a significant and original contribution to knowledge that is worthy of publication or dissemination in whole or in part.
   2. The dissertation and the performance in the oral examination demonstrate the student’s capacity to pursue original research based on a good understanding of the relevant techniques and concepts.
2. In addition to the general criteria for all research degrees, doctoral degrees by published works are awarded when the following criteria are fulfilled:
   1. The published works are coherent and represent a significant and original contribution to knowledge.
   2. The commentary demonstrates the coherence, significance, and originality of the published works.
   3. The commentary and published works, together with the performance in the oral examination, demonstrate the student’s capacity to pursue original research based on a good understanding of the relevant techniques and concepts.

***Additional criterion for a research master’s degree***

1. In addition to the general criteria for all research degrees, research master's degrees should represent a contribution to knowledge.