

# Disagreement between Research Degree Examiners

In the exceptional situation when the team examining a research degree cannot reach agreement on the outcome, a procedure has been agreed for resolving the issue.

Arrangements will be considered by the Chair of the Examinations Group on a case by case basis in line with the following:

1. In the exceptional circumstances of a failure to reach agreement on the recommendation (within the 24 hour period available) the internal examiner is asked to contact the LTU Director of Postgraduate Research immediately.
2. In the event that agreement cannot be reached, the examiners must submit separate, independent final reports along with their preliminary report, to the Research Office [research@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:research@leedstrinity.ac.uk) within 5 working days of the viva. The Research Office will liaise with the UoL PGR&O.
3. The internal examiner must advise the candidate in writing, within 24 hours of the viva, that the examiners are unable to reach an agreement on the recommendation and that they will be submitting separate final report forms to the University.
4. On receipt of the reports, the UoL PGR&O will write to the candidate, Supervisor(s), DoPGR and the original team of examiners to outline the next steps in the process. PGR&O will also send both reports to the DoPGR for information.

Both examiners' final reports, along with the preliminary reports, will be considered by the Examinations Group at its next meeting. All members will consider the reports.

6. After consideration by the Examinations Group, the LTU DoPGR shall be asked to recommend to the UoL Examinations Group, within a period of 1 month, the appointment of an additional external examiner to adjudicate. They may consult with the DoPGR and/or the Supervisors as appropriate.

Examiners are reminded that although the process of notifying the candidate and supervisor of the outcome of the examination will normally take place after the viva it must take place within 24 hours of the viva. This period can be used by the examiners to discuss the recommendation and to endeavour to reach an agreement.

7. It is expected that the individual nominated as the adjudicator will be a senior member of staff of another UK University and a very experienced PGR examiner in the UK. The other eligibility criteria for the appointment of external examiners will apply. A CV must be provided.

Published date: September 2021

Version number: 1

8. Once approved by the Examinations Group, PGR&O shall send the adjudicator:

- A clean copy of the thesis as submitted for examination.
- The separate preliminary and final reports of the original examiners.
- The Instructions to Examiners for the relevant degree concerned.

A blank report form template for the degree concerned.

9. The adjudicator will be asked to submit a final report and recommendation to the Examinations Group within a period of 2 months. This will include:

- the usual report form for award for the degree concerned; and
- a covering letter outlining the reasons for the recommendation reached.

10. The adjudicator may interview the student if they deem it necessary. In such cases a Leeds independent chair might be appointed to attend the meeting and advise on procedures. Such arrangements will be considered by the Chair of the Examinations Group on a case by case basis.

11. A fee of 2 x the standard external examiner's fee will be paid to the adjudicator by PGR&O. Any expenses will be paid by the School/Faculty.

12. All members of the Examinations Group will consider the report from the adjudicator at its next meeting, alongside the separate reports of the original examiners.

13. The Examinations Group will normally approve the recommendation of the adjudicator (subject to any minor points of clarification under its normal procedures).

14. PGR&O will inform the student, supervisor and PGRT of the outcome. A copy of the adjudicator's final report will be provided, along with copies of the original team of examiners' reports.

- a. If a recommendation for award of the degree, the candidate will be advised of the next steps to be taken;
- b. If an adverse academic decision is reached, the candidate will have the right to appeal under the University's appeals procedures.

15. PGR&O will write to the original team of examiners to inform them of the recommendation made by the adjudicator and the decision approved by the Examinations Group.