

Examination of PhDs in School of English

Administrative Processes and Guidelines

The following guidelines are intended to clarify and summarise the administrative processes and procedures in the time leading up to, during, and following the examination of PhDs in the School.

For details about the academic side of this process, i.e. how the *Viva Voce* examination should be conducted, a description of possible examination outcomes, etc., see the relevant pages in the School of English *Postgraduate Student Handbook* and the School of English *Research Student Procedures* booklet (both circulated annually in August).

College guidelines on the examination of PhDs are also described in **Appendix 1** below, which is also available at: <https://www.tcd.ie/graduatestudies/assets/pdf/phd-guidelines-08-2016.pdf>. The guidelines given in Appendix 1 and in the *Calendar* take precedence over any points made in this document.

1. Before the Viva

It sometimes happens that a student decides to submit a dissertation for examination without a supervisor's knowledge or approval. This is very rare and should be discouraged if at all possible. In normal circumstances, when a supervisor is satisfied that a student is ready to submit their dissertation, they should discuss potential internal and external examiners with the student before nominating examiners to the DTLPG.

1.a Nomination Process: Internal Examiner

The internal examiner would normally be the colleague who served as the internal reader for the student's Confirmation, but this does not have to be the case. In rare situations it is necessary to ask a colleague from outside the School of English to serve as internal examiner, but in most cases it will be someone from within the School.

All nominations for internal examiner should be discussed with the DTLPG in the first instance. Once the internal examiner has been agreed, students should not discuss their work with them and they should also be strongly discouraged from communicating with external examiners before the examination of their work has been completed.

It is also of the utmost importance that the DTLPG be told as early as possible if the supervisor feels there may be a difficulty finding an examiner or with the examination of a dissertation. The internal examiner's contact details need to be given, together with the student's details (ID number, title of thesis, etc.) on the Examiner Nomination Form (see **Appendix 2** below).

1.b Nomination Process: External Examiner

As stated in the Dean's Memo (see Appendix 1 below), the external examiner should be a 'recognised independent expert in the candidate's field of study'. In the first instance, a supervisor should contact a potential external examiner informally to tell them a little about the project to be examined and asking if they would be willing to serve. At this point external examiners should also be told that dissertations are normally examined within two months (from the date a dissertation is received by the external examiner). Supervisors should also note that there are budgetary constraints on the appointment of external examiners from outside the UK and the EU. If in doubt, contact the DTLPG before any invitations are made.

Supervisors should note that external examiners cannot be invited to examine dissertations more than once every five years. Once a prospective external examiner has agreed to examine a thesis, they will need to send their CV and contact details to the supervisor, who will need to provide this information with the Examiner Nomination Form (see **Appendix 2**).

Once the Examiner Nomination form has been completed, it is sent to the DTLPG, who forwards it to the Dean of Graduate Studies for approval. It is important to note that the final decision regarding the appointment of examiners – Internal and External – rests with the Dean of Graduate Studies.

1.c Preparation for the Viva

As soon as the Dean of Graduate Studies has approved the nomination of internal and external examiners, the internal examiner is responsible for organising the date, time and location of the *Viva Voce* examination. Having first consulted with the external examiner, they should then write to the student, copying the supervisor and the DTLPG, to confirm that the suggested date/time will work for all concerned.

The DTLPG will normally make every effort to chair a *Viva* themselves, but if they are unable to do so then a colleague with appropriate experience in the School will be asked to chair on their behalf.

Once a date and time has been established for the *Viva*, the internal examiner should contact Diane Sadler who will look after the following details:

- Room booking
- External examiner's travel
- External examiner's accommodation
- Hospitality

Room booking: The preferred venue for *Viva Voce* examinations in the School of English is the School Library, 4019. If this room is not available then 6.009 in the Arts building is also suitable. Colleagues should not hold *Viva Voce* examinations in their offices, if possible.

External examiner's travel: Where possible, external examiners should be encouraged to travel to Dublin and back to their home destination in the same day. It is also preferable for the School to look after all travel bookings, where needed (i.e. flights, train travel etc.).

External examiner accommodation: the College can cover accommodation for **one** night only, if required. This must be booked by the School.

Hospitality: The School can cover the cost of **one** meal, lunch or dinner, for a maximum of four guests, i.e. the external examiner, the internal examiner, the supervisor and (at the examiners' discretion) the student. A list of restaurants and bars approved for this purpose by College is given in **Appendix 3** below.

Approximately one week before the *Viva*, the DTLPG will write to the student to confirm the date and time of the examination. The student should be asked to wait in the lobby of the School or in their supervisor's office before the *Viva*. The DTLPG should also arrange to meet with the examiners approximately 30 minutes before the *Viva* on the day it is scheduled to take place.

2. The day of the Viva

The DTLPG or a colleague acting on their behalf will meet with the examiners before the *Viva* is due to begin to discuss potential problems and agree the structure of the examination.

The DTLPG or a colleague acting on their behalf will prepare the room for the *Viva* and place signs on the door and hallways asking people outside to be silent while an examination is in progress. A jug for water and glasses should be used for the examination. These can be provided by Brenda Brooks.

3. After the Viva

Once the *Viva* has been concluded, the internal examiner should ensure that the external examiner is clear about what needs to be done in relation to the submission of their decision form. This should be submitted to the GSO in hard copy as soon as possible after the *Viva* has taken place, but it is advisable for an electronic copy to be sent to the Dean also, copied to the internal examiner.

A hard copy of the external examiner's expenses claim form, which includes a section for the examination fee, together with receipts, should be submitted to Brenda Brooks as soon as possible after the examination has been completed. External examiners can normally expect payment within one month of submitting the form and receipts to the School.

It is important the all receipts and claim forms are sent directly to the School, otherwise there may be long delays in processing payments.

Ruth Archbold
Brenda Brooks
Philip Coleman

26 August 2019

Appendix 1

From: Dean of Graduate Studies
To: Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate)
Supervisor

1. NOMINATION OF EXAMINERS: Two copies of the above thesis have been submitted to the Academic Registry. I would be grateful if, in consultation with the supervisor, you would nominate one external examiner and one internal examiner using the enclosed nomination form **within two weeks**. Please supply a brief CV of the external examiner.

2. THE EXTERNAL EXAMINER: The external examiner should be a recognised independent expert in the candidate's field of study. The external examiner should not be a collaborator in the research of either the candidate nor his or her supervisor, nor be a recent graduate of the College. If your nomination for External Examiner is NOT a member of staff of a Third Level Educational Institution I would advise you to consult with me, prior to you approaching him/her. I strongly recommend that the highest quality international experts be selected. The same external examiner should not serve repeatedly. In order to preserve independence, a period of five years should have elapsed before they are nominated again. Details in relation to the appointment and role of an external examiner can be found in the University's policy on external examiners available at <https://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/assets/pdf/ExtExaminersPolicyJune2015-Final.pdf>.

3. THE INTERNAL EXAMINER: The internal examiner must be a member of the academic staff, and cannot be the candidate's supervisor. If there are no staff members of the University other than the supervisor who have the academic competence to examine the thesis, please consult with me. It is possible to appoint a second external examiner in such circumstances. A second external examiner in place of the internal examiner is *required* where the candidate is a member of staff of the University. A suitable level of independence (from the candidate and the supervisor) is also expected of the internal examiner. The internal examiner should not be a collaborator in the student's research, related to the student/supervisor and should not be in a dependent position in relation to the supervisor (such as his or her junior postdoc).

4. A VIVA VOCE EXAMINATION: Although a *viva* is not mandatory in the examination of a Master's thesis, such a *viva* may be arranged if either of the examiners, or the School's Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), requires it after preliminary consideration of the thesis. A *viva voce* examination is mandatory in cases where one or both examiners contemplate failure of the Master's thesis or if it seems likely that the thesis will be sent back for revision and resubmission. It is the responsibility of the internal examiner to arrange the date, time and place for the *viva*. The format of the *viva*, as appropriate to the field of study, is determined by the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) in the School. The examination fee and expenses incurred by the external examiner in terms of travel and subsistence are processed by the School directly with the Treasurer's Office.

5. INFORMAL AGREEMENT: Both examiners you recommend to me should be asked informally (subject to the reservations in 3 and 4 above) before you reply to this memorandum, whether they are willing and able to examine the thesis.

6. FORMAL APPOINTMENT: On receipt of the approved nomination form, I, acting on behalf of the University Council, will formally invite the examiners to act, sending them at the same time a copy of the Instructions to Examiners and a copy of the thesis.

I urge that the examination (including the *viva voce* if held) be completed and the examiners' reports be returned to me in the Graduate Studies Office **within eight weeks** from the present date.

Professor Neville Cox
Dean of Graduate Studies

Appendix 2

NOMINATION FORM FOR EXTERNAL & INTERNAL EXAMINERS OF RESEARCH THESIS

Student Name:	Student Number:	Degree:
Title of PhD Programme, if appropriate:		
Title of Thesis:		
School:		
Supervisor Name:		
Date of <i>viva voce</i> (if scheduled):	Chair of <i>viva voce</i>:	
<i>Note: A viva voce must be held for all Ph.D. candidates. In the case of a Master's degree or an M.D. degree, either examiner may request a viva voce on academic grounds, having examined the thesis (Cal. Pt. II, Section 2).</i>		
Nominated External Examiner:		
Institution/Professional Address:		
Phone No.	Email:	
Has informal consent to act been received? <i>(Please seek such assent before submitting form)</i> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Can Examiner attend <i>viva voce</i>? <i>(Please seek such assent before submitting form)</i> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
Please attach a CV or description of the proposed examiner's academic credentials, detailing qualifications, present post and research interests.		
Nominated Internal Examiner:		
College Address:		
Phone No.	Email:	
Is the DTLPG satisfied that all taught elements of the PhD programme have been completed, if appropriate? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Signature: Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate)		
OR		
Approved Nominee:		
Date:		

Appendix 3

Restaurants and Bars approved by College (28th January 2019)

ELY BAR/ BRIGHTGLEN COMMERCIAL LTD/ AMB TRADING HOUSE LTD
ENOTECA ITALIANA LTD T/A DUNNE & CRESCENZI
FALLON & BYRNE LTD
FARM RESTAURANT
FITZERS RESTAURANT
GREEN GEMS TAVERNS/EAST SIDE TAVERN
MERRION ROW RESTAURANTS, T/A BANG
ONE PICO
PEARL BRASSERIE/PETITE PEARL LTD.
THE PIGS EAR/ANDHUS LTD
REGIONGLADE/PICHET
RESTAURANT FORTYONE/MOLANA
SANREX LTD, T/A THE KITCHEN RESTAURANT
SEQUANA MANAGEMENT LTD/CAFE EN SEINE
Seagrass Restaurant T/A LA Grass Ltd
Eden Restaurant
PRIME STEAK LTD/RUSTIC STONE RESTAURANT
LA CAVE WINE BAR AND RESTAURANT
AQUA RESTAURANT/BAILEY SEAFOODS
PAVILLION BAR/DUBLIN UNIVERSITY CENTRAL ATHLETIC CLUB
CAFFE PARIGI
POPPYSIDE DAC T/A MERCANTILE
ZOZIMUS ENTERTAINMENT LTD T/A EDEN BAR & GRILL
AMB TRADING HOUSE/ELY WINE BAR
ROCATIL LTD/KENNEDYS BAR
CRAWLEY LTD/CAPTAIN AMERICAS
SRM BOOK & COOK LTD/THE WINDING STAIR
BOXTY HOUSE LTD.
John Waddell T/A ODELLS BISTRO
CORNSTORE RESTAURANT/COAL QUAY RESTAURANTS
Good World
SLATTERY'S/THE OLIVER ST JOHN GOGARTYS
POPPYSIDE DAC T/A MERCANTILE
HOLTEND LTD
MHL EVENT MANAGEMENT LIMITED T/A THE MANSION HOUSE
WESTIN DUBLIN