

EG3 - Research Degrees Examination

Outcomes

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General notes

The following is a summary of the outcomes open to Examiners in determining the result of Research Degree examinations.

In the present document, **'First Examination'** refers to the process following a Candidate's initial submission of their thesis. In the event of one of the 'pass' outcomes, the First Examination concludes once the degree of MPhil or PhD is awarded. In the event of one of the 'Not Pass' outcomes, the Candidate is subject to a **'Second Examination.'** As outlined below, not all Second Examinations require a second oral examination. For the avoidance of doubt the electronic submission of an amended thesis following an outcome of 'Pass subject to minor amendments' is not considered to comprise a Second Examination, but rather the second stage of a First Examination.

A viva voce (hereafter 'viva') must be held for any **First Examination**, irrespective of the expected outcome. A number of outcomes are **not available** in the case of a Second Examination – please refer to our table [below](#). For the avoidance of doubt, no Candidate can be subject to a Third examination.

Following a viva, Examiners are required to record the agreed outcome on the relevant Examination Outcome Form: EF3a for an examination for the PhD degree, and EF3b for an examination for the MPhil degree. In the event that the Examiners are unable to reach agreement, their reports shall be referred to the Dean of the Graduate School, who shall determine the action to be taken.

Examinations for the award of PhD

(a) PhD Pass

The Examiners consider that the thesis and the candidate's performance in the examination satisfy the criteria for the award of the PhD degree. At the discretion of the Examiners, any minor typographical errors detected by the Examiners may be corrected before the Candidate proceeds with the final thesis deposition.

(b) PhD Pass subject to minor amendments

The Examiners consider that the thesis and the candidate's performance in the examination satisfy the criteria for the award of the PhD degree, but the Candidate is required to make specified minor amendments to the thesis to the Examiners' satisfaction within 3 months. The amendments required will make no difference to the arguments or conclusions of the thesis. The amendments will usually be typographical or grammatical in nature, but may also include minor substantive changes to the text to improve explanations or descriptions. The Examiners are required to outline the requested amendments in their Final Joint Report. The amended thesis shall be submitted to one or both of the Examiners at their determination for confirmation that the amendments are satisfactory.

(c) Not Pass, present for PhD re-examination within 12 months

This outcome is not available at a Second Examination.

The Examiners consider that the thesis requires significant corrections in order to meet the criteria for the award of PhD. This typically includes the re-writing or re-structuring of significant parts of the thesis and the clarification of arguments. The Candidate is required to complete the amendments within 12 months, but may re-submit their thesis for examination before the end of this period. The Examiners are required to outline the requested changes in their Final Joint Report.

It is at the discretion of the Examiners to determine whether or not a second viva should be held as part of the Second Examination. Typically, a second viva will **not** be required, but Examiners are nonetheless permitted to request this on receipt of the re-submitted thesis. For more information refer to the 'Not Pass Outcomes' section of EG2 - Guidelines for Research Degree Examiners.

(d) Not Pass, present for PhD re-examination within 18 months

This outcome is not available at a Second Examination.

The Examiners consider that the thesis, though judged not to meet the PhD standard required, is of sufficient merit for the Candidate to be permitted to re-submit their thesis in a revised form for PhD re-examination within 18 months. The Examiners are required to outline the requested changes in their Final Joint Report.

It is at the discretion of the Examiners to determine whether or not a second viva should be held as part of the Second Examination. Typically, a second viva will **be required**, but Examiners are nonetheless permitted to request this on receipt of the re-submitted thesis. For more information refer to the 'Not Pass Outcomes' section of EG2 - Guidelines for Research Degree Examiners.

(e) MPhil Pass

The Examiners consider that the thesis and the candidate's performance in the examination satisfy the criteria for the award of the MPhil degree. The Examiners are required to demonstrate how the criteria for the MPhil degree are satisfied in their Final Joint Report. At the discretion of the Examiners, any minor typographical errors detected by the Examiners may be corrected before the Candidate proceeds with the final thesis deposit.

(f) MPhil Pass subject to minor amendments

The Examiners consider that the thesis satisfies the criteria for the award of the MPhil degree, but the Candidate is required to make specified minor amendments to the Examiners' satisfaction within 3 months. The amendments required will make no difference to the arguments or conclusions of the thesis. The amendments will usually be typographical in nature, but may also include minor changes to the text to improve explanations or descriptions. The Examiners are required to outline the requested amendments in their Final Joint Report. In reporting, the Examiners shall have regard to the different maximum word lengths of the thesis for the PhD and MPhil degrees but shall have discretion to waive the thesis length for the MPhil degree if appropriate. The amended thesis shall be submitted to one or both of the Examiners at their determination for confirmation that the amendments are satisfactory.

(g) Not Pass, present for MPhil re-examination within 12 months

This outcome is not available at a Second Examination.

The Examiners consider that the thesis does not meet the criteria for a PhD degree, but with significant corrections, such as the re-writing or re-structuring of significant parts of the thesis and the clarification of arguments, may satisfy the criteria for the MPhil degree. The Candidate is required to complete the amendments within 12 months, but may re-submit before the end of this period. The Examiners are required to outline the requested changes in their Final Joint Report. In reporting Examiners shall have regard to the different normal maximum lengths of the thesis for the PhD and MPhil degrees but shall have discretion to waive the thesis length for the MPhil degree if appropriate.

It is at the discretion of the Examiners to determine whether or not a second viva should be held as part of the Second Examination. Typically, a second viva will **not** be required, but Examiners are nonetheless permitted to request this on receipt of the re-submitted thesis. For more information refer to the 'Not Pass Outcomes' section of EG2 - Guidelines for Research Degree Examiners.

(h) Fail

The Examiners determine that the Candidate has not satisfied them in the examination. A Candidate who fails to satisfy the Examiners in this way will not be permitted to re-submit for a second examination.

(i) Viva void, new viva required

The viva is terminated without an outcome, and the Examiner(s) are required to submit a report to Research Degrees outlining the grounds for termination (see EG2 – Guidelines for Research Degree Examiners for grounds upon which a viva may be terminated).

Depending on the grounds reported by the Examiner(s), the Candidate will be permitted to re-present the same thesis, and submit to a fresh viva examination within 12 months. For the avoidance of doubt, the contents of the original viva are considered void and should not be taken into account by the Examiners when formulating their outcome on the new subsequent viva.

Examinations for the award of MPhil

(a) MPhil Pass

The Examiners consider that the thesis and the Candidate's performance in the examination satisfy the criteria for the award of the MPhil. At the discretion of the examiners, any minor typographical errors detected by the Examiners may be corrected before the Candidate proceeds with the final thesis deposition.

(b) MPhil Pass subject to minor amendments

The Examiners consider that the thesis and the candidate's performance in the examination satisfy the criteria for the award of the MPhil degree, but the Candidate is required to make specified minor amendments to the thesis to the Examiners' satisfaction within 3 months. The amendments required will make no difference to the arguments or conclusions of the thesis. The amendments will usually be typographical or grammatical in nature, but may also include minor substantive changes to the text to improve explanations or descriptions. The Examiners are required to outline the requested amendments in their Final Joint Report. The amended thesis shall be submitted to one or both of the Examiners at their determination for confirmation that the amendments are satisfactory.

(c) Not Pass, present for MPhil re-examination within 12 months

This outcome is not available at a Second Examination.

The Examiners consider that the thesis requires significant corrections in order to meet the criteria for the award of MPhil. This typically includes the re-writing or re-structuring of significant parts of the thesis and the clarification of arguments. The Candidate is required to complete the amendments within 12 months, but may re-submit their thesis for examination before the end of this period. The Examiners are required to outline the requested changes in their Final Joint Report.

It is at the discretion of the Examiners to determine whether or not a second viva should be held as part of the Second Examination. Typically, a second viva will **not** be required, but Examiners are nonetheless permitted to request this on receipt of the re-submitted thesis. For more information refer to the 'Not Pass Outcomes' section of EG2 - Guidelines for Research Degree Examiners.

(d) Fail

The Examiners determine that the Candidate has not satisfied them in the examination. A Candidate who fails to satisfy the Examiners in this way will not be permitted to re-submit for a second examination.

(e) Viva void, new viva required

The viva is terminated without an outcome, and the Examiner(s) are required to submit a report to Research Degrees outlining the grounds for termination (see EG2 – Guidelines for Research Degree Examiners for grounds upon which a viva may be terminated).

Depending on the grounds reported by the Examiner(s), the Candidate will be permitted to re-present the same thesis, and submit to a fresh viva examination within 12 months. For the avoidance of doubt, the contents of the original viva are considered void and should not be taken into account by the Examiners when formulating their outcome on the new subsequent viva.

Summary of outcomes available in First and Second Examinations

Table 1: PhD examinations

Outcome type	First Examination	Second Examination
(a) PhD Pass	Available	Available
(b) PhD Pass subject to minor amendments within 3 months	Available	Available
(c) Not Pass, present for PhD re-examination within 12 months	Available	Not available
(d) Not Pass, present for PhD re-examination within 18 months	Available	Not available
(e) MPhil Pass	Available	Available
(f) MPhil Pass subject to minor amendments within 3 months	Available	Available
(g) Not Pass, present for MPhil re-examination within 12 months	Available	Not available
(h) Fail	Available	Available
(i) Viva void, new viva required	Available	Available

Table 2: MPhil examinations

Outcome type	First examination	Second examination
(a) MPhil Pass	Available	Available
(b) MPhil Pass subject to minor amendments within 3 months	Available	Available
(c) Not Pass, present for MPhil re-examination within 12 months	Available	Not available
(d) Fail	Available	Available
(e) Viva void, new viva required	Available	Available

Document history

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