

5. The Examiner's Recommendation

5.1 Regulation 18 provides for examiners to make one of the following principal recommendations:

- a) the student should be awarded the degree sought; or
- b) the student should be awarded the degree sought, provided that minor factual amendments and corrections in the submitted work are made to the satisfaction of the nominated examiner(s) within a specified period not exceeding six months from the notification of the result to the student;
- c) the student be permitted to re-submit for the degree sought and be re-examined as follows:
 - i) the thesis to be revised and if deemed satisfactory by the Examiners, the student will be exempt from further examination, oral or otherwise; or
 - ii) the thesis to be revised and the candidate must undergo a further oral or alternative examination; or
 - iii) the thesis is satisfactory, but the candidate must undergo a further oral examination or other such examination as the examiners shall specify.

In this case the examiners shall specify the maximum period open to the candidate to re-submit, this period is not to exceed 12 months. The maximum period shall date from the notification of the result to the student.

Examiners shall not make recommendations 18.2 c) if they are examining a student who is already re-presenting *unless* the re-presentation is the outcome of an appeal.

- d) if a student for PhD, the student should be awarded the MPhil, if appropriate, subject to corrections on the basis stated in 18.2 b) above. Examiners must only make this recommendation for positive achievement by the student in accordance with 4.1 above;
- e) the student should not be awarded any degree and should be given no further opportunity of examination;
- f) the examiners may also offer a PhD student a choice between accepting an MPhil as in 18.2d) or requiring major revisions over a period of time as in 18.2c) to achieve PhD. The student shall be given no more than one month to select the route that they wish to follow.

Before forwarding a recommendation for the award of a degree to The Graduate School Office the examiners must be satisfied that the format of thesis is in accordance with the University's regulations (see Regulation 15).

Before reaching a recommendation, the examiners may require a further examination additional to the oral examination.

Where examiners recommend in the terms set out in Regulations 18.2 b), c) or d) they shall provide the student and the Graduate School Office with a written statement, on form 'Statement of Thesis Deficiencies', concerning the deficiencies of the submission or examination and a date by which these amendments are to be completed and returned to the First Supervisor.

Where the examination team are recommending the student should be awarded the degree sought 'subject to minor amendments and corrections' we would ask they consider an appropriate length of time. In some circumstances six months might be too long, and examiners are encouraged to specify a shorter time in these instances.

5.2 Distinction Between 'Minor Factual Errors' and 'Revise and Re-Present'

There is a substantive difference between 5.1 b) which is a conditional pass and 5.1c) which is essentially a 'fail'.

The award of a conditional pass would normally be appropriate if all that is required is editing, or the correction of presentational shortcomings not seriously impairing the argument of the thesis. On the other hand, revise and re-present would be appropriate where technical content was deficient or where errors of presentation had fundamentally and comprehensively impaired the argument and substantial re-writing was required.

A practical test of the distinction between is whether the external examiner wishes to see the thesis again. If he or she does so wish then the recommendation should be not to award the degree but to permit the student to resubmit the thesis and be re-examined as outlined in 5.1c) above. If the examiners believe that the thesis can readily be brought to an acceptable standard and does not need his or her further inspection then the student can be passed subject to minor amendments.

5.3 Distinction Between 'Revise and Re-Present' and 'Fail'

Where the thesis is the sole or major element for examination, it should normally only be 'failed' on first submission if the examiners consider that the work could not form the basis of an acceptable thesis at a second attempt. Otherwise, the decision should be 'revise and re-present'.