



Graduate Research Final Examination Procedures

2020

Contents

1.	Related documents.....	3
2.	General principles for finalising examination recommendations.....	3
3.	Roles and responsibilities for final examination outcomes	3
4.	Procedures for compiling and considering thesis examination reports.....	4
5.	Preparation of Thesis Examination Resolutions.....	4
6.	All examiner recommendations are 1, 2 or 3.....	5
7.	If any of the examiner recommendations are 4, 5 or 6.....	6
8.	Appointing an additional examiner	7
8.1	Process for appointing an additional examiner.....	7
9.	Procedures for re-examination.....	7
9.1	Period of re-examination.....	7
9.2	When original examiners are available	7
9.3	When original examiners are not available.....	7
10.	Procedures for finalising re-examination outcomes	8
	Appendix A: Examiner recommendations – initial and re-examination	9
1.	Initial examination – recommendations.....	9
2.	Re-examination – recommendations	9
	Appendix B: Thesis Examination Resolution Template*	11
	Appendix C: Thesis Revision Response template*	15
	Appendix D: Preparing Thesis Examination Resolutions.....	16
1.	Overarching considerations.....	16
2.	Examiner Recommendations are 1, 2 or 3	17
3.	If any of the examiner recommendations are 4, 5 or 6.....	19

Introduction

The graduate research final examination procedures are intended to assist supervisors, Faculty staff, Faculty Research Degrees Committee, the Graduate Research School and the Thesis Examination Committee in administering and making decisions associated with the thesis examination process.

The procedures provide advice and outline responsibilities and expectations for managing the range of options of examiner reports, reconciling disparate reports, moderation and re-examination.

1. Related documents

- [UTS Student Rules, Section 11 Graduate Research](#)
- [UTS Graduate Research and Supervision Policy](#)
- [UTS Graduate Research Candidature Management, Thesis Preparation and Submission Procedures](#)
- [Australian Council of Graduate Research conflict of interest guidelines](#)

2. General principles for finalising examination recommendations

Finalising examination recommendations is based on academic judgment. The procedures outlined in this section are designed to ensure fairness to the candidate and recognition of the examiners' expertise and assessment of the thesis.

Each examiner has been nominated by the faculty and appointed by the University on the basis of their expertise and standing and as such, their opinions must be respected and treated seriously. All suggestions made by examiners should be considered and acted on by the candidate where appropriate.

The candidate has the right to be protected from the effect of a careless or unfair report, regardless of the reputation and standing of an examiner.

The recommendation rating selected by examiners are useful summary statements, however, the content of reports as a whole should be taken into account.

3. Roles and responsibilities for final examination outcomes

Graduate research student:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Responding to examiners' recommendations in revised thesis, completing a thesis response document, submitting all necessary documentation to the faculty to complete final examination requirements within the time allocated.
Supervisory panel:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Providing advice to the RAO and/or FRDC regarding examiners' recommendation, providing guidance and feedback to the student on response to examiners' recommendation, advising RAO/FRDC on appropriateness of student's revised thesis and response document.
Responsible Academic Officer (RAO):	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Defining the examination outcome resolution for the FRDC or TEC, in consultation with supervisory panel;- Review revised thesis and confirm amendments (where relevant).
Faculty Research Degrees Committee (FRDC):	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Responsible for considering / approving the recommendation of the RAO for examination outcomes- Large faculties may establish school-level examination committees, which report to the FRDC, with responsibilities for considering / approving the recommendation of the RAO for examination outcomes and communicating the outcome to Supervisory Panel and Graduate Research Student.

Faculty/School research office:	- Administer all processes associated with faculty/school level responsibilities of thesis examination outcomes
Graduate Research School (GRS):	- Administer all processes associated with university level responsibilities of thesis examination outcomes
Thesis Examination Committee (TEC):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students may request a review of an examination decision by the Thesis Examination Committee - Responsible for providing advice on developing, overseeing, monitoring, reviewing policies and processes in relation to graduate research thesis examination including determining responsibilities related to university-level and faculty-level thesis examination governance, administration and quality assurance. - Responsible for receiving and reviewing any disputes or irregularities arising from the thesis preparation, submission and examination process and make appropriate recommendations to the Dean GRS for resolution. - Responsible for considering faculties' recommendations for, the conferral of doctoral and masters by research awards. - Responsible for considering Faculty nominations to make recommendations on selection of the UTS doctoral graduates for the Chancellor's Award and the Chancellor's Award List and external programs that recognise higher degree thesis excellence as appropriate. - Responsible for assessing and approving variation to thesis examination procedures and arrangements.
Dean, Graduate Research School:	- Recommendation of course completion/conferral of award on advice from relevant committee (FRDC or TEC).

4. Procedures for compiling and considering thesis examination reports

The Graduate Research School (GRS) receives and compiles examination reports ensuring the confidentiality request of the examiner(s) is observed. When all reports are received, they are sent to the Responsible Academic Officer (RAO) and Faculty (or School) Research Office. At this stage examiner reports are not to be shared with the graduate research student. The student is provided with the examiner reports and an action plan once endorsed by the relevant committee.

5. Preparation of Thesis Examination Resolutions

The faculty RAO is responsible for preparing the Thesis Examination resolutions in consultation with the supervisory panel.

After consultation with the supervisory panel, the RAO will draft a thesis examination resolution to go before the relevant committee.

The thesis examination resolution and any required thesis revisions and a timeframe by which the revisions must be completed must be documented per template (Appendix B).

The delegated committees for approval of the resolution is:

- Faculty RAO: when all examiner recommendations are 1
- Faculty Research Degrees Committee (FRDC): when all examiner recommendations are a combination of 1, 2 or 3.
- Graduate Research School Board – Thesis Examination Committee (TEC): when any examiner recommendation includes a 4, 5 or 6 or if all examiner recommendations are 4, 5 or 6.

Examiner recommendations for each of masters by research and doctoral theses are listed in Appendix A.

6. All examiner recommendations are 1, 2 or 3

For cases in which all examiners have recommended either 1, 2 or 3, the thesis examination resolution and any required thesis revisions will be recommended by the RAO, in consultation with the supervisors, to the FRDC.

Resolutions should be based on the recommendations provided by examiners.

Possible examination outcome resolutions for masters by research and doctoral degrees are:

1. That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of typographic errors without any amendments; or
2. That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of any nominated minor clarifications and textual amendments, to the satisfaction of the RAO; or
3. That the candidate be admitted to the degree subject to criticisms as specified by the examiners and the supervisory panel being addressed to the satisfaction of the RAO, and any rewriting not changing the substantive conclusions of the thesis.

Where ALL examiners have recommended 1, the RAO has the **delegation** to give a Resolution 1 and does not need to go to the FRDC.

Where the recommendations include 2 or 3, the FRDC is responsible for considering / approving the resolution of the RAO. Deliberations of the FRDC must be recorded in minutes and outcomes communicated to the student and supervisory panel. In their communication to the student and supervisory panel of the resolution, the Faculty RAO and/or the FRDC must provide the following documents:

1. Copy of the examiner reports
2. Copy of the final resolution approved by the committee and required revisions using the Thesis Examination Resolution template (Appendix B)
3. Timeline for student to complete the revisions for supervisor and Faculty approval
4. Timeline for submission for Graduation

The graduate research student is responsible for completing the revisions to the thesis under the guidance of their supervisory panel. When responding to resolutions 1, 2 or 3, the student must also produce a thesis revision response document using the template (Appendix C).

To complete the examination outcome if resolution 2 or 3, the graduate research student submits the following to the faculty for RAO approval:

- Digital version of the revised thesis
- Thesis revision response document
- Supervisory panel endorsement for thesis revisions

Once the RAO approves the revised thesis based on resolution 2 or 3, the student moves to submit the thesis to complete the examination process.

To complete the examination process if Resolution 1, or once the RAO has approved the thesis revisions based for Resolutions 2 or 3, the student submits the following to the faculty/school:

- Final thesis in digital form
- Thesis revision response document (if resolutions 2 or 3)
- Supervisory panel endorsement for thesis revisions (if resolutions 2 or 3)
- Certificate of Authorship, including Research Training Program statement
- Digital Thesis Submission receipt from UTS library
- Thesis Information for Graduation template for 100-200 words summary and 25 words summary
- Embargo request form (if appropriate)

To complete the examination process, the faculty/school sends the Graduate Research School:

- All documents submitted by the student (as above)
- A memorandum of recommendation from the RAO that the candidate be admitted to the degree. [Please refer to the [checklist](#) provided in the Graduate Research website].

Any revisions to the thesis that do not require resubmission for re-examination, must be completed to the satisfaction of the RAO and submitted for graduation within six months of date of examination outcome notification (Rule 11.20 (5) – Examination of Thesis).

The Dean of the Graduate Research School/Chair of the Thesis Examination Committee, acting on behalf of the Thesis Examination Committee considers/endorsees the recommendation.

The Graduate Research School will then proceed to complete the requirements for degree completion and conferral in partnership with Student Administration Unit.

7. If any of the examiner recommendations are 4, 5 or 6

For a thesis where any examiner has recommended a 4, 5 or 6 the FRDC must review the examiner reports and suggest a resolution to the TEC.

Resolutions should be based on the recommendations provided by examiners.

Possible resolutions for masters by research degrees are:

1. That the candidate be admitted to the degree subject to criticisms as specified by the examiners being addressed to the satisfaction of the RAO, and any rewriting not changing the substantive conclusions of the thesis.
 - This resolution must be accompanied by a list of required revisions and a timeframe by which the revisions must be completed.
2. That the candidate be not admitted to the degree but be permitted to re-submit the thesis in a revised form for re-examination following a period of further study.
 - This resolution must be accompanied by a suggested period of further study and clear guidance for the focus of the further study.
3. That the candidate not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to resubmit the thesis for examination.
 - A candidate who is not recommended for admission to any research degree will have his/her candidature terminated ([Rule 11.23 - Discontinuation of Candidature](#)).
4. That an additional examiner be appointed.

Possible resolutions for doctoral degrees are:

1. That the candidate be admitted to the degree subject to criticisms as specified by the examiners being addressed to the satisfaction of the RAO, and any rewriting not changing the substantive conclusions of the thesis.
 - This resolution must be accompanied by a list of required revisions and a timeframe by which the revisions must be completed.
2. That the candidate not be admitted to the degree but be permitted to re-submit the thesis in a revised form for re-examination following a period of further study.
 - This resolution must be accompanied by a suggested period of further study and clear guidance for the focus of the further study.
3. That the candidate be invited to revise and resubmit the thesis for a Masters by Degree.
4. That the candidate not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to resubmit the thesis for examination.

- A candidate who is not recommended for admission to any research degree will have his/her candidature terminated ([Rule 11.23 - Discontinuation of Candidature](#)).

5. That an additional examiner be appointed.

The proposed resolution must be documented per the template Appendix B.

The TEC is responsible for considering approving the resolution of the FRDC. Deliberations of the TEC must be recorded in minutes and outcomes communicated to the Chair of the FRDC who will be responsible to communicate the outcome to the student and supervisory panel following FRDC process.

8. Appointing an additional examiner

The faculty may nominate a third examiner in cases where the two examiner reports do not point to a clear outcome or strategy for bringing the examination process to a conclusion.

8.1 Process for appointing an additional examiner

In cases where the faculty is unable to reconcile recommendations of the original examiners, the FRDC may recommend to the TEC that an additional examiner be appointed to examine the thesis.

The additional examiner is appointed to examine the thesis as a full examiner, i.e. complete the usual examiner's report and make a recommendation on the thesis.

The faculty will nominate an additional examiner in the usual way by completing the [Nomination of Thesis Examiners Form](#) and submitting it to the Dean, GRS for approval.

Upon receiving the examiner report from the additional examiner, the process for reaching resolution must follow the abovementioned process based on examiner recommendation.

9. Procedures for re-examination

A thesis may be sent out for re-examination if the outcome of the original examination was that the thesis be revised and resubmitted for re-examination (Rule 11.20.6). A thesis submitted for re-examination shall not be submitted for a further re-examination (Rule 11.20.7). The list of re-examination recommendations is provided in Appendix A.

9.1 Period of re-examination

The recommendation to the TEC from the FRDC for re-examination must specify how long the candidate will need to make the required revisions to the thesis.

A candidate who is required to resubmit for examination will revert to 'enrolled' status instead of 'under examination'.

9.2 When original examiners are available

The original examiners will be used in cases where they have indicated that they are available and are willing to re-examine.

In such cases, the examiners will be advised that the thesis is a re-examination and asked to write a report and make a recommendation (as outlined in Appendix A). The examiners will be provided with the list of corrections completed by the student.

9.3 When original examiners are not available

New examiners are appointed in cases when they are not available to examine.

In such cases, the examiners will be advised that the thesis is a re-examination and asked to write a report and make a recommendation (as outlined in Appendix A). The examiners will be provided with the list of corrections completed by the student.

10. Procedures for finalising re-examination outcomes

The Faculty RAO must review the re-examination reports as well as the original set of examiner reports. The Faculty RAO will consider whether the candidate can be admitted to the degree and provides a draft resolution to the Thesis Examination Committee for approval.

Possible resolutions for all degrees are:

1. That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of typographic errors without any amendments; or
2. That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of any nominated minor clarifications and textual amendments, to the satisfaction of the RAO; or
 - This resolution must be accompanied by a list of required revisions and a timeframe by which the revisions must be completed.
3. That the candidate be admitted to the degree subject to criticisms as specified by the examiners being addressed to the satisfaction of the RAO, and any rewriting not changing the substantive conclusions of the thesis; or
 - This resolution must be accompanied by a list of required revisions and a timeframe by which the revisions must be completed.
4. That the candidate not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to resubmit the thesis for examination.
 - A candidate who is not recommended for admission to any research degree will have his/her candidature terminated ([Rule 11.23 - Discontinuation of Candidature](#)).

Appendix A: Examiner recommendations – initial and re-examination

1. Initial examination – recommendations

For masters by research theses, examiners are asked to choose one of the following five recommendations:

1. That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of typographic errors without any amendments; or
2. That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of any nominated minor clarifications and textual amendments, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Academic Officer; or
3. That the candidate be admitted to the degree subject to criticisms as specified by the examiners being addressed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Academic Officer, and any rewriting not changing the substantive conclusions of the thesis; or
4. That the candidate be not admitted to the degree but be permitted to re- submit the thesis in a revised form for re-examination following a period of further study; or
5. That the candidate not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to resubmit the thesis for examination.

For doctoral theses, examiners are asked to choose one of the following six recommendations:

1. That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of typographic errors without any amendments; or
2. That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of any nominated minor clarifications and textual amendments, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Academic Officer; or
3. That the candidate be admitted to the degree subject to criticisms as specified by the examiners being addressed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Academic Officer, and any rewriting not changing the substantive conclusions of the thesis; or
4. That the candidate be not admitted to the degree but be permitted to re-submit the thesis in a revised form for re-examination following a period of further study; or
5. That the candidate be invited to revise and resubmit the thesis for a Masters by Degree; or
6. That the candidate not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to resubmit the thesis for examination.

2. Re-examination – recommendations

If a re-examination is required for a masters by research theses, examiners are asked to choose one of the following four recommendations:

1. That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of typographic errors without any amendments; or
2. That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of any nominated minor clarifications and textual amendments, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Academic Officer; or
3. That the candidate be admitted to the degree subject to criticisms as specified by the examiners being addressed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Academic Officer, and any rewriting not changing the substantive conclusions of the thesis; or

4. That the candidate not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to resubmit the thesis for examination.

If a re-examination is required for a doctoral thesis, examiners are asked to choose one of the following four recommendations:

1. That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of typographic errors without any amendments; or
2. That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of any nominated minor clarifications and textual amendments, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Academic Officer; or
3. That the candidate be admitted to the degree subject to criticisms as specified by the examiners being addressed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Academic Officer, and any rewriting not changing the substantive conclusions of the thesis; or
4. That the candidate not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to resubmit the thesis for examination.

Appendix B: Thesis Examination Resolution Template*

(approved by Graduate Research School Board Thesis Examination Committee)

UTS Thesis Examination Resolution For Higher Degree by Research Examinations

Part A: Student information

Student surname	<input type="text"/>	First name	<input type="text"/>
Student ID	<input type="text"/>	Course name	<input type="text"/>
		School/Faculty	<input type="text"/>
Principal Supervisor	<input type="text"/>		
Co-Supervisor	<input type="text"/>		
Thesis title	<input type="text"/>		
	<input type="text"/>		

Part B: Overview of examination reports and action plan for candidate

Please ensure that all examiners' reports are addressed and provide clear advice for the candidate regarding revisions to be completed. If seeking exemptions to an examiner's recommended changes, please outline the request and justification under PART D.

Part C: Draft Resolution

Please select committee for consideration of resolution:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Faculty Responsible Academic Officer <i>(to be used when all examiner recommendations are 1)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Faculty Research Degrees Committee <i>(to be used when all examiner recommendations included only 1, 2 or 3s).</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	GRSB Thesis Examination Committee <i>(to be used when any examiner recommendation includes a 4, 5 or 6 or for re-examinations).</i>

Where examiner recommendations included only 1, 2 or 3s, that the candidate:

<input type="checkbox"/>	That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of typographic errors without any amendments
<input type="checkbox"/>	That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of any nominated minor clarifications and textual amendments, to the satisfaction of the RAO
<input type="checkbox"/>	That the candidate be admitted to the degree subject to criticisms as specified by the examiners being addressed to the satisfaction of the RAO, and any rewriting not changing the substantive conclusions of the thesis. All examiner recommendations are to be addressed in the revision unless identified in Part D.

[All revisions must be made and approved by the Faculty RAO and final thesis must be submitted for graduation within 6 months from date of notification [refer Student Rules 11.20.5].

Where examiner recommendations included 4, 5 or 6, that the candidate (Master's candidate only):

<input type="checkbox"/>	That the candidate be admitted to the degree subject to criticisms as specified by the examiners being addressed to the satisfaction of the RAO, and any rewriting not changing the substantive conclusions of the thesis. All examiner recommendations are to be addressed in the revision unless identified in Part D. All revisions must be made and approved by the RAO and final thesis must be submitted for graduation within 6 months from date of notification [refer Student Rules 11.20.5].
<input type="checkbox"/>	That the candidate be not admitted to the degree but be permitted to re-submit the thesis in a revised form for re-examination following a period of further study of [appropriate time period taking into consideration student's candidature period (refer Student Rule 11.20.6)] months. The focus of further study is outlined in the attachment. (<i>for initial examination resolutions only</i>).
<input type="checkbox"/>	That the candidate not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to resubmit the thesis for examination. A candidate who is not recommended for admission to any research degree will have his/her candidature terminated (Rule 11.23 - Discontinuation of Candidature).
<input type="checkbox"/>	That an additional examiner be appointed.

Where examiner recommendations included 4, 5 or 6, that the candidate (PhD candidate only):

<input type="checkbox"/>	That the candidate be admitted to the degree subject to criticisms as specified by the examiners being addressed to the satisfaction of the RAO, and any rewriting not changing the substantive conclusions of the thesis. All examiner recommendations are to be addressed in the revision unless identified in Part D. All revisions must be made and approved by the RAO and final thesis must be submitted for graduation within 6 months from date of notification [refer Student Rules 11.20.5].
<input type="checkbox"/>	That the candidate be not admitted to the degree but be permitted to re-submit the thesis in a revised form for re-examination following a period of further study of [appropriate time period taking into consideration student's candidature period (refer Student Rule 11.20.6)] months. The focus of further study is outlined in the attachment. (<i>for initial examination resolutions only</i>).
<input type="checkbox"/>	That the candidate be invited to revise and resubmit the thesis for a Masters by Degree (<i>doctoral examinations only</i>).
<input type="checkbox"/>	That the candidate not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to resubmit the thesis for examination. A candidate who is not recommended for admission to any research degree will have his/her candidature terminated (Rule 11.23 - Discontinuation of Candidature).
<input type="checkbox"/>	That an additional examiner be appointed.

Where examiner recommendation follow re-examination, that the candidate:

<input type="checkbox"/>	That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of typographic errors without any amendments
<input type="checkbox"/>	That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of any nominated minor clarifications and textual amendments, to the satisfaction of the RAO

<input type="checkbox"/>	That the candidate be admitted to the degree subject to criticisms as specified by the examiners being addressed to the satisfaction of the RAO, and any rewriting not changing the substantive conclusions of the thesis. All examiner recommendations are to be addressed in the revision unless identified in Part D. All revisions must be made and approved by the RAO and final thesis must be submitted for graduation within 6 months from date of notification [refer Student Rules 11.20.5].
<input type="checkbox"/>	That the candidate not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to resubmit the thesis for examination. A candidate who is not recommended for admission to any research degree will have his/her candidature terminated (Rule 11.23 - Discontinuation of Candidature).

If the draft resolution differs from that provided by the examiners, justify the variation below:

Part D: Identification and justification of exemptions to examiner recommendations.

All revisions suggested by all examiners are required to be made unless contrary arguments are put forward by the RAO, in consultation with the supervisory panel, with clearly stated justification below:

I believe that the following revisions suggested by the examiner(s) should not be made:

Examiner Name	Recommendation not to be addressed	Justification

Add a row for each recommendation that should not be addressed.

Part E: Certification by Responsible Academic Officer

I have liaised with the supervisory panel in the preparation of this report.

Responsible Academic Officer			
	Name	Signature	Date

Part F: Endorsement by Faculty Research Degrees Committee

The committee reached its decision at the meeting held on / / and is endorsing resolution

Chair, Faculty Research Degree Committee			
	Name	Signature	Date

Part G: Endorsement by Thesis Examination Committee

The committee reached its decision at the meeting held on / / and is endorsing resolution

**Chair, Thesis
Examination
Committee**

Name	Signature	Date

Appendix C: Thesis Revision Response template*

Student Name:
Student Number:

In consultation with my supervisors, I have revised my thesis in response to each of the examiners' recommendations as indicated below:

Examiner	Recommendation summary	How recommendation addressed in revised thesis	Page number(s) in revised thesis

Note: add rows to the table for each recommendation from each examiner.

- All templates can be downloaded from the GRS [webpage](#).

Appendix D: Preparing Thesis Examination Resolutions

These procedures are intended to assist the Faculty Responsible Academic Officer (RAO), Faculty Research Degrees Committee (FRDC) and Thesis Examination Committee (TEC) in making decisions associated with the thesis examination outcome. The procedures provide advice and expectations for managing the range of options of examiner recommendations, reconciling disparate reports, moderation and re-examination.

The delegated committees for approval of the resolution is:

- Faculty RAO: where all examiner recommendations are 1
- FRDC: when all examiner recommendations are 1, 2 or 3
- TEC: when any examiner recommendation is a 4, 5 or 6.

Examiner recommendations for each of Masters by Research and Doctoral theses are listed in Appendix A.

1. Overarching considerations

It is advised that the supervisory panel, RAO, FRDC, and TEC consider:

- all examiner reports have equal weighting
- the resolution reached should not compromise the academic integrity of the thesis nor should it devalue the examiner comments.
- the following must be considered to the level required to be admitted to the degree

Masters by Research degrees	Doctoral degrees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates that the candidate has made significant contribution to the knowledge of the subject concerned • demonstrates that the candidate can critically reflect on, synthesise and evaluate a substantial and complex body of knowledge in the discipline(s) • demonstrates that the candidate can communicate research findings, and explain and critique theoretical propositions, methodologies and discipline; • contains material suitable for publication, and • is of satisfactory literary standard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides evidence that the candidate conducted original research • demonstrates that the candidate has made significant contribution to the knowledge of the subject concerned • demonstrates that the candidate can critically reflect on, synthesise and evaluate a substantial and complex body of knowledge in the discipline(s) • shows that the candidate has a thorough grasp of the appropriate methodological techniques and an awareness of their limitations • demonstrates that the candidate can communicate research findings, and explain and critique theoretical propositions, methodologies and discipline; • contains material suitable for publication, and • is of satisfactory literary standard.

2. Examiner Recommendations are 1, 2 or 3

The Faculty Responsible Academic Officer (RAO) is responsible for preparing the Thesis Examination resolutions in consultation with the supervisory panel once examiner reports are received from the Graduate Research School.

After consultation with the supervisory panel, the RAO will draft a thesis examination resolution to be submitted for approval by the FRDC.

Resolutions should be based on the recommendations provided by examiners.

Possible examination outcome resolutions for masters by research and doctoral degrees are:

1. That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of typographic errors without any amendments; or
2. That the candidate be admitted to the degree, subject to the correction of any nominated minor clarifications and textual amendments, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Academic Officer; or
3. That the candidate be admitted to the degree subject to criticisms as specified by the examiners and the supervisory panel being addressed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Academic Officer, and any rewriting not changing the substantive conclusions of the thesis.

Where **ALL** examiners have recommended 1, the RAO has the delegation to give a Resolution 1 and release the reports to the student directly to complete the examination process. All comments by RAO to student and Supervisor Panel must be made using template Appendix B. The recommendation does not need to go to the FRDC.

To complete the examination outcome if resolution 1, the graduate research student submits the following to the faculty/RAO for recommendation to be admitted to the degree:

- Final thesis in digital form
- Thesis revision response document (see template provided Appendix C)
- Supervisory panel endorsement of final thesis and any thesis revisions
- Certificate of Authorship, including Research Training Program statement
- Digital Thesis Submission receipt from UTS library
- Thesis Information for Graduation template for 100-200 words summary and 25 words summary
- Embargo request form (if appropriate)

All revisions must be made and approved by the Faculty RAO and final thesis must be submitted for graduation within 6 months from date of notification [refer Student Rules 11.20.5].

To complete the examination process, the faculty/school sends the Graduate Research School:

- All documents submitted by the graduate research student (as above)
- A memorandum of recommendation from the RAO that the candidate be admitted to the degree.

The FRDC is responsible for considering / approving the recommendation of the RAO for resolution 2 and 3. The FRDC must meet on a monthly basis or as required in order to deliberate on examination resolution for an HDR candidate. Deliberations of the FRDC must be recorded in minutes and outcomes communicated to the student and supervisory panel. If the meeting was done via electronic means, communication must be held on record. In their communication to the graduate research student and supervisory panel, the FRDC must provide the following documents:

- Copy of the examiner reports
- Copy of the final resolution approved by the committee including revisions that need to be addressed by the student (see template provided Appendix B)
- Timeline for student to complete the revisions for supervisor and Faculty approval

The graduate research student is responsible for completing the revisions to the thesis under the guidance of their supervisory panel. When responding to resolutions 2 or 3, the graduate research student must also produce a thesis revision response document using the Thesis Revision Response template (Appendix C) available on the Graduate Research website.

To complete the examination outcome if resolution 2 or 3, the graduate research student submits the following to the faculty for RAO approval:

- Digital version of the revised thesis
- Thesis revision response document (see template provided Appendix C)
- Supervisory panel endorsement for thesis revisions

Once the RAO approves the revised thesis based on resolution 2 or 3, the graduate research student moves to submit the thesis to complete the examination process.

Once the RAO has approved the thesis revisions based for Resolutions 2 or 3, the graduate research student submits the following to the faculty/school:

- Final thesis in digital form
- Thesis revision response document (if resolutions 2 or 3)
- Supervisory panel endorsement for thesis revisions (if resolutions 2 or 3)
- Certificate of Authorship, including Research Training Program statement
- Digital Thesis Submission receipt from UTS library
- Thesis Information for Graduation template for 100-200 words summary and 25 words summary
- Embargo request form (if appropriate)

To complete the examination process, the faculty/school sends the Graduate Research School:

- All documents submitted by the graduate research student (as above)
- A memorandum of recommendation from the RAO that the candidate be admitted to the degree.

The Dean of the Graduate Research School/Chair of the TEC, acting on behalf of the TEC considers/endorsees the recommendation.

The Graduate Research School will then proceed to complete the requirements for degree completion and conferral in partnership with Student Administration Unit.

Workflow and Timeline

Steps	Responsibility	Action	Recommended Timeline
1	GRS	Forward reports to Faculty upon receipt of all examiner reports meeting UTS guidelines	1 working day
2	Faculty RAO	Reviews examiner reports and forward reports to Supervisory Panel. If ALL examiner recommendations are a 1 then proceed to step 7.	Within 2 working days
3	Supervisory Panel and RAO	Consult on examiner recommendations	Within 5 working days
4	Faculty RAO	Commence drafting resolution for FRDC	Within 5 working days
5	Faculty RO	Organise FRDC meeting	As per RAO timeline
6	FRDC	Review RAO resolution and approve or recommend alternate resolution	Within 1 working day
7	Faculty RO	On behalf of FRDC, Inform supervisory panel and student of outcome	Within 1 working day
8	Supervisory Panel	Advise student on addressing the Resolution	Within 1 working day
9	Graduate Research Student	Address the requirements of the Resolution	Within 6 months from date of

10	Student/Supervisor Panel	Resolution 1 – submit thesis to complete examination process	FRDC advice (Student Rules 11.20.5)
11	Graduate Research Student	Resolution 2 or 3 – submit thesis to Supervisor Panel for approval	
12	Supervisory Panel	Review thesis and provide feedback to student	
13	Graduate Research Student	Finalise thesis	
14	Supervisory Panel	Approve thesis	
15	Graduate Research Student	Submit thesis to RAO for approval	
16	RAO	Approve/not approve thesis to complete examination process	
17	Graduate Research Student	If approved, complete submission to Supervisor Panel	
18	Supervisor Panel	Forward final submission to Faculty	
19	RAO	Sign off on final submission	
20	Faculty RO	Forward final submission to GRS	

3. If any of the examiner recommendations are 4, 5 or 6

For a thesis where any examiner has recommended a 4, 5 or 6 the FRDC must review the examiner reports and in consultation with the supervisory panel suggest a resolution to the TEC. Resolutions should be based on the recommendations provided by examiners.

The TEC is responsible for considering / approving the resolution of the FRDC. The TEC must meet on a monthly basis or as required in order to deliberate on examination resolution for HDR candidates. Deliberations of the TEC must be recorded in minutes and outcomes communicated to the Faculty who then communicates the outcome to the student and supervisor panel. If meeting was done via electronic means, communication must be held on record.

Possible resolutions for **masters by research degrees** are:

1. That the candidate be admitted to the degree subject to criticisms as specified by the examiners being addressed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Academic Officer, and any rewriting not changing the substantive conclusions of the thesis.
 - This resolution must be accompanied by a list of required revisions and a timeframe by which the revisions must be completed.
2. That the candidate be not admitted to the degree but be permitted to re-submit the thesis in a revised form for re-examination following a period of further study.
 - This resolution must be accompanied by a suggested period of further study and clear guidance for the focus of the further study.
3. That the candidate not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to resubmit the thesis for examination.
 - A candidate who is not recommended for admission to any research degree will have his/her candidature terminated ([Rule 11.23 - Discontinuation of Candidature](#)).
4. That an additional examiner be appointed.

The proposed resolution must be documented using the Thesis Examination Resolution Template (Appendix B) available at Graduate Research webpages.

Workflow and Timeline

Steps	Responsibility	Action	Recommended Timeline
1	GRS	Forward reports to Faculty RAO upon receipt of all examiner reports meeting UTS guidelines	1 working day
2	Faculty RAO	Review reports and organise for FRDC meeting	Within 2 working days
3	FRDC	Review examiner reports, consult with supervisory panel and form a resolution	Within 5 working days
4	FRDC	Forward resolution recommendation to Thesis Examination Committee (via GRS)	Within 2 working days
5	TEC	Review resolution and approve or propose alternate resolution	At TEC meeting
6	GRS	Forward TEC outcome to Faculty RAO	Within 1 working day
7	RAO	Review resolution and advise supervisory panel	Within 2 working days
8	Supervisory panel	Review resolution and advise student on addressing the Resolution	Within 2 working days
9	Student	Address the requirements of the Resolution and finalise thesis	As per TEC advice
If Resolution 1			
1	Student	Submit thesis to RAO for approval	Within 6 months from date of TEC advice (refer Student Rules 11.20.5)
2	RAO	Approve/not approve thesis to complete examination process	
3	Student	If approved, complete submission to Supervisor Panel for endorsement	
4	Supervisor Panel	Forward final submission to Faculty	
5	RAO	Sign off on final submission	
6	Faculty RO	Forward final submission to GRS	
If Resolution 2			
1	GRS	Amend student status from 'under examination' to 'enrolled'	Within approved candidature period (refer Student Rules 11.20.6)
2	Supervisory panel	Supervise student through a period of further study and revise thesis for re-examination	
3	Student	Undertake a period of further study and revise thesis for re-submission	
4	Student/Supervisor Panel	Prepare for thesis re-examination; if previous examiners are not available for re-examination nominate new examiners as per nomination of examiner process and forward to Faculty for approval	
5	RAO	If new examiners are required, forward nomination of examiners to GRS as per nomination of examiner process	
6	GRS	Finalise nomination of examiners	
7	Supervisory Panel	Review thesis and provide feedback to student	
8	Student	Finalise thesis	
9	Supervisory Panel	Approve thesis	
10	Student	Submit thesis to RAO for approval	
11	RAO	Approve/not approve thesis to complete examination process	
12	Student	If approved, complete submission to Supervisor Panel	

13	Supervisor Panel	Forward thesis submission to Faculty for re-examination	
14	RAO	Sign off on thesis submission for re-examination	
15	Faculty RO	Forward thesis submission to GRS	
16	GRS	Follow Thesis Re-examination Process	
If Resolution 3			
1	GRS	Commence Discontinuation Process as per Student Rule 11.23.2 (b)	Discontinuation Process Timeline
If Resolution 4			
1	Supervisor Panel/Student/RAO	Nominate additional examiner as per nomination of examiner process and submit to GRS	Within approved candidature period (refer Student Rules 11.20.6)
2	GRS	Finalise nomination of examiner	
3	GRS	Forward thesis to additional examiner	
4	GRS	Upon receipt of examiner report follow examination outcome process based on the examiner recommendation.	

Possible resolutions for **doctoral degrees** are:

1. That the candidate be admitted to the degree subject to criticisms as specified by the examiners being addressed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Academic Officer, and any rewriting not changing the substantive conclusions of the thesis.
 - This resolution must be accompanied by a list of required revisions and a timeframe by which the revisions must be completed.
2. That the candidate be not admitted to the degree but be permitted to re-submit the thesis in a revised form for re-examination following a period of further study.
 - This resolution must be accompanied by a suggested period of further study and clear guidance for the focus of the further study.
3. That the candidate be invited to revise and resubmit the thesis for a Masters by Degree.
4. That the candidate not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to resubmit the thesis for examination.
 - A candidate who is not recommended for admission to any research degree will have his/her candidature terminated ([Rule 11.23 - Discontinuation of Candidature](#)).
5. That an additional examiner be appointed.

The proposed resolution must be documented using the Thesis Examination Resolution Template (Appendix B) available at Graduate Research webpages.

Workflow and Timeline

Steps	Responsibility	Action	Timeline
1	GRS	Forward reports to Faculty RAO upon receipt of all examiner reports meeting UTS guidelines	1 working day
2	Faculty RAO	Review reports and organise for FRDC meeting	Within 2 working days
3	FRDC	Review examiner reports, consult with supervisory panel and form a resolution	Within 5 working days
4	FRDC	Forward resolution recommendation to Thesis Examination Committee (via GRS)	Within 2 working days

5	TEC	Review resolution and approve or propose alternate resolution	At TEC meeting
6	GRS	Forward TEC outcome to Faculty RAO	Within 1 working day
7	RAO	Review resolution and advise supervisory panel	Within 2 working days
8	Supervisory panel	Review resolution and advise student on addressing the Resolution	Within 2 working days
9	Graduate Research Student	Address the requirements of the Resolution and finalise thesis.	As per TEC advice
If Resolution 1			
1	Graduate Research Student	Submit thesis for Supervisor Panel for approval	Within 6 months from date of TEC advice (refer Student Rules 11.20.5)
2	Supervisor Panel	Approve/not approve thesis to be forwarded to Faculty RAO	
3	Faculty RAO	Review and approve/not approve thesis submission	
4	Graduate Research Student	Finalise and forward final thesis submission to Faculty with Supervisor Panel sign off	
5	RAO	Sign off on final submission	
6	Faculty RO	Forward final submission to GRS	
If Resolution 2			
1	GRS	Amend student status from 'under examination' to 'enrolled'	Within approved candidature period (refer Student Rules 11.20.6)
2	Supervisory panel	Supervise student through a period of further study and revise thesis for re-examination	
3	Graduate Research Student	Undertake a period of further study and revise thesis for re-submission	
4	Graduate Research Student/Supervisory Panel	Prepare for thesis re-examination; if previous examiners are not available for re-examination nominate new examiners as per nomination of examiner process and forward to Faculty for approval	
5	RAO	If new examiners are required, forward nomination of examiners to GRS as per nomination of examiner process	
6	GRS	Finalise nomination of examiners	
7	Supervisory Panel	Review thesis and provide feedback to Graduate Research Student	
8	Graduate Research Student	Finalise thesis	
9	Supervisory Panel	Approve thesis	
10	Graduate Research Student	Submit thesis to RAO for approval	
11	RAO	Approve/not approve thesis to complete examination process	
12	Graduate Research Student	If approved, complete submission to Supervisor Panel	
13	Supervisor Panel	Forward thesis submission to Faculty for re-examination	
14	RAO	Sign off on thesis submission for re-examination	
15	Faculty RO	Forward thesis submission to GRS	
16	GRS	Follow Thesis Re-examination Process	
If Resolution 3			

1	GRS	Amend student status from 'under examination' to 'enrolled'	
2	GRS	Downgrade student from PhD course to Master's by Research course	
3	Supervisory panel	Supervise student through a period of further study and revise thesis for submission as Master's level thesis	
4	Graduate Research Student	Undertake a period of further study and revise thesis for submission as Master's level thesis	
5	Student/Supervisor Panel	Prepare for thesis for examination and consult on potential examiners	
6	Graduate Research Student	Submit notification of intent to submit and sign off nomination of examiners	
7	Supervisory Panel	Finalise nomination of examiners and forward to Faculty RAO	
8	RAO	review nomination of examiners and if approved forward to GRS for Dean approval	
9	GRS	Finalise nomination of examiners and obtain Dean approval	
10	Supervisory Panel	Review thesis and provide feedback to student	
11	Graduate Research Student	Final thesis for Supervisory Panel approval	
12	Supervisor Panel	Forward thesis submission to Faculty for examination	
13	RAO	Sign off on thesis submission for examination	
14	Faculty RO	Forward thesis submission to GRS	
15	GRS	Submit thesis for examination and follow post examination outcome process	
If Resolution 4			
	GRS	Commence Discontinuation Process as per Student Rule 11.23.2 (b)	Discontinuation Process Timeline
If Resolution 5			
1	Supervisor Panel/Student/RAO	Nominate additional examiner as per nomination of examiner process and submit to GRS	
2	GRS	Finalise nomination of examiner	
3	GRS	Forward thesis to additional examiner	
4	GRS	Upon receipt of examiner report follow examination outcome process based on the examiner recommendation.	

To complete the examination outcomes, the graduate research student submits the following to the faculty for RAO approval:

- Digital version of the revised thesis
- Thesis revision response document (see template provided Appendix C)
- Supervisory panel endorsement for thesis revisions

Once the RAO approves the revised thesis, the graduate research student moves to submit the thesis to complete the examination process. The graduate research student submits the following to the faculty/school:

- Final thesis in digital form
- Thesis revision response document (if resolutions 2 or 3)

- Supervisory panel endorsement for thesis revisions (if resolutions 2 or 3)
- Certificate of Authorship, including Research Training Program statement
- Digital Thesis Submission receipt from UTS library
- Thesis Information for Graduation template for 100-200 words summary and 25 words summary
- Embargo request form (if appropriate)

To complete the examination process, the faculty/school sends the Graduate Research School:

- All documents submitted by the graduate research student (as above)
- A memorandum of recommendation from the RAO that the candidate be admitted to the degree.

The Dean of the Graduate Research School/Chair of the TEC, acting on behalf of the TEC considers/endorsees the recommendation.

The Graduate Research School will then proceed to complete the requirements for degree completion and conferral in partnership with Student Administration Unit.

Policy contact	Dean, Graduate Research School
Approval authority	Graduate Research School Board
Review year	3
Version	1
File number	TBA
Superseded documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher Degrees by Research Examination Guidelines for Faculties

Version history

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Sections modified
1.0	Graduate Research School Board (03/20-8.3)	2 June 2020	2 June 2020	New Instrument