The following FAQs are for University of Melbourne graduate research supervisors and staff who are involved in the nomination of examiners and the approval of a thesis for examination. FAQs are in the following categories:

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**All Staff**

**Thesis Examination System (TES)**

**What is TES?**
TES, the Thesis Examination System, allows graduate research students to submit their thesis electronically and for the examination to be managed online by the Graduate Research Examinations Office. Supervisors, Heads of Department and Chairs of Examiners receive emails with links to the Dashboard and to online forms requesting the nomination or approval of examiners, the approval of a submitted thesis, and the approval of examiner reports and the submission of the 50-word citation. Examiners are able to download the thesis to examine and submit their report and recommendation online.
The Dashboard

What is the Dashboard and how do I access it?
The Dashboard consolidates all tasks in one place with overdue tasks displayed at the top. It includes a link to the student’s details where the examiner’s names and reports, and other useful information can be found. Email notifications that are sent will include a link to the online form and to the Dashboard. The Dashboard link is: https://tes-staff.app.unimelb.edu.au. The history page displays what tasks have been completed.

The Student List page on the Dashboard can be used to access students’ details by staff that are associated with a thesis either as supervisor, Chair of Examiners or superuser role. This includes after completion, for example, obtaining reports for the nomination of the annual Chancellor’s Prize for Excellence in the PhD Thesis.

How do I find the student’s details on the Dashboard?
If you have a pending task on the homepage, you can access the student’s detail page by clicking on the Student ID & Name link, otherwise you can access the student’s details from the Student List link.

What can I see on the Student Details page?
This page displays details about a student’s thesis and their examination progress. As the examination continues you will find additional information displayed, for instance, when the reports are received these will become available to download.

There are several statuses displayed throughout the Dashboard, what do these mean?
As the examination progresses the statuses reflect the current status of the student’s examination. There are two status categories: the thesis status and the status of the examiner nominations. Within these status categories there are various status types. For example, when examiners are nominated the status category will display ‘Nominated’ and when the examiner is approved and has confirmed their acceptance, ‘Accepted Offer’ will be displayed. The history page will always display the current thesis status.

Superuser role

Some academic divisions want the ability to nominate some professional or academic staff to have access to TES. The super user access allows staff to view pending tasks and the Students Details page for their department/school and to perform any role on behalf of academic staff within a department/school. If a super user exists you will find their name listed in the Dashboard’s Students Details page. Superusers can only be nominated by heads of departments/schools.

Troubleshooting

I did not receive an email relating to my student’s examination. They appear to have gone to my junk mailbox. How do I stop this happening?
Please add gr-exams@unimelb.edu.au to your safe senders list in Outlook. The IT help desk can help you with this setting.
I can’t login after I click the link in the email sent to me.
Use the University login that you use to access your University of Melbourne email. You can reset your password if you have forgotten it. If you are still unable to login contact the Examinations Office.

What browser should I use to access TES?
TES will work with any browser supported by the University and a list of browsers can be viewed at the following link: http://www.unimelb.edu.au/accessibility/guides-for-students/browser-support.

There seems to be a problem with TES. There is an error after I click submit or there is no acknowledgement that the form has been submitted. What do I do?
After you click submit on the web forms you will see a final page acknowledging that it has been received. It is always best to use a computer with a stable internet connection to perform tasks in TES. While you could use your smartphone it is not recommended. If you do get an error it could be because you have not completed one of the required questions. Errors in red text will indicate this at the top or bottom of the page and if you then answer those questions and click submit the form should be accepted. If you think the error is more serious please take a screenshot if you can and email the Examinations Office and include the student’s name and their student number if you know it.

Nominating a task to the head of department/school

The online form asks ‘Please indicate the head of department responsible for this thesis’. How do I know who has this responsibility?
Please check the head of department nominees list to answer this question.

I am the head of department and I would normally also act as Chair of Examiners but I am also one of the student’s supervisors. Can I complete the online form as the head of department and Chair of Examiners?
You can complete the online form as the head of department but you cannot act as Chair of Examiners and will need to nominate another senior academic from within your department to act as the Chair of Examiners. Further information is available on the role of the chair of examiners.

I have typed in the name of my Head of Department / the academic I want to nominate as Chair of Examiners but the box is still blank. What do I do?
It takes a few seconds for TES to retrieve names from the University directory. If the name you are looking for does not appear consider whether they are listed with their full name in the University directory, e.g. Anthony rather than Tony, and try again. In cases where there are multiple people with the same name you should be able to identify the person you are looking for by their department/school which appears next to their name.

Thesis hard copy requests

Why would examiners need a hard copy rather than an electronic copy of a thesis?
Some theses may need to be displayed in a certain way so that examiners can examine it, e.g. a large scale (A3 sized paper) music composition may need to be in a printed format so it can be played by the examiner.
**Supervisors**

Nomination of Examiners

**What is the link for nominating examiners?**
You will be able to access the online form once the student has registered their intention to submit through the Dashboard. You will receive an email from the Examinations Office to alert you when the online form is available to you to nominate examiners.

**I only have one examiner to nominate. I will be able to nominate a second one soon. What do I do?**
If the student has submitted their thesis for examination, please email the Examinations Office for a form, as currently only a minimum of two examiners can be nominated online using TES.

**How do I enter the details of the examiners I want to nominate?**
After following the link you will be presented with four links with space to nominate the examiners. Start by clicking on ‘Examiner 1’ and the page will expand to allow the information to be entered. Once you have finished with ‘Examiner 1’ click on ‘Examiner 2’ and repeat. Normally two examiners should be nominated. Once you have entered the examiner details click on next to move to the next part of the nomination process.

**I note that I can nominate more than two examiners. Why doesn’t the TES system require me to provide all of the information for any additional examiners that I need to provide for the first two, i.e. items like the email address are not starred as required fields?**
As an additional examiner does not need to have been contacted and to have agreed to examine (unless the examination is for a creative work where three examiners must attend an exhibition or performance) we understand that you may not have all of the contact and experience information for this examiner. Ideally these details should all be completed, where possible, as in the event that a third or replacement examiner is needed during the examination, having an extra examiner already approved will avoid delays in the examination.

**How do I know who the Head of Department is when I am asked when nominating the examiners?**
Please check the [head of department nominees list](#) to answer this question.

**I am a principal supervisor and want to delegate the responsibility of nominating examiners to my co-supervisor. Is this possible?**
Yes. You can forward the email that you received from the Examinations Office to your co-supervisor and they can complete the Nomination of Examiners. They will also have access to the online form through the Dashboard. If you are not performing the duties of the principal supervisor you may like to consider requesting the student to submit a Change of Supervisor form through my.unimelb.

**The examiner nomination form requires me to indicate that the examiner has agreed to examine. I have not contacted them or they have not yet replied. What do I do?**
It is expected that supervisors contact all examiners and confirm that they are willing to examine the thesis before they are nominated — see the [Instructions for nominating examiners](#). Ensuring the examiner is prepared to examine the thesis before they are nominated means that the examination process is as efficient as possible. Contacting a potential examiner to enquire if they are interested in examining a thesis does not create a conflict of interest. A [draft template](#) that can be used for contacting a potential examiner is available to assist supervisors and to help ensure examiners get all the required information.
I have nominated examiners but have changed my mind. How do I go about changing one of the examiners?
Currently replacement or additional examiners cannot be nominated online using TES. Please contact the Examinations Office to advise which examiner is no longer suitable and you will be sent a form to nominate a replacement examiner.

I have been contacted by one of the examiners that is no longer available. How do I nominate a replacement examiner?
Replacement or additional examiners cannot be nominated online using TES. Please contact the Examinations Office to advise which examiner is no longer available and you will be sent a form to nominate a replacement examiner.

Approval of a submitted thesis

My student has indicated when submitting their thesis that thesis with publication is not applicable to their thesis. I am then asked to confirm that the necessary documents have been provided. How should I respond?
If indeed there are no publications in their published form included within the thesis you can indicate that ‘yes’ the necessary documents have been provided as none were needed as per the screenshot below. If however, there are actually publications in their published form within the thesis, then you should answer ‘no’ to indicate that forms approving the inclusion of the publication/s should be provided and the Examinations Office will follow up with the student regarding the required forms.
Why is it important to provide a decision at this stage to the open access of the final thesis?
The University is committed to the open communication of its research findings. Academic Board has therefore decided that, from February 1st, 2017, the Library will no longer require a print copy of the thesis and that public access to RHD theses will be to the digital copy via Minerva Access, the University’s publications repository.
While this will broaden public access and dissemination and introduce a range of business efficiencies, it is recognized that immediate open access is not appropriate in all cases. An embargo on open access can therefore be requested as part of the process of submitting the thesis for examination in TES. The embargo can be either for a limited external embargo [accessible by University staff and students only] or a full embargo, which prevents any access to the thesis.
Embargo periods will, by default, be 2 years and it will be possible to extend the embargo for another 2 years if required. Criteria for seeking embargo include the need to publish from the thesis; contractual restrictions placed on public access to the thesis; patent application or other IP protection concerns, or if the thesis contains material which must remain confidential because of legal, cultural, ethical or national security concerns.
It is expected that you will have already discussed access options and any reasons for embargo with the student and co-supervisors prior to the submission of the thesis for examination. However, if one party requests the thesis be made open immediately and the other requests an embargo, then an embargo of two years will be applied.
More detailed information on how the new processes for submitting theses and the new public access policy are available at My thesis in the Library.

Before I confirm that the thesis is ready for examination I would like to be able to read the submitted version. As it has been submitted electronically is this possible?
Yes. Login using the link emailed to you by the Examinations Office or go directly to the Dashboard. You are able to download a copy of the thesis and review it before you confirm that the thesis is ready for examination. If you have any concerns about the thesis please contact the student directly as they are able to upload a corrected version through TES at any time prior to when their supervisor approves the submission.
What happens if I don’t think that the thesis is ready for examination?
As part of the process of the thesis submission you will be asked the following question – see screenshot:

By selecting b or c you will be asked to supply further information relating to the issues that you have with the thesis. A copy of this document should also be supplied to the student. If b is selected the Examinations Office will contact the student and ask them to consider whether they want to continue with the examination or whether they would like to withdraw the thesis and make changes. If c is selected the Examinations Office will request that members of the Research Higher Degrees Committee review the case to determine how to proceed.

When reviewing my student’s submitted thesis it is indicated that examiners have not been nominated. When I click on the link to nominate examiners the page indicates “Not Available for Nomination - Sorry, the thesis you are trying to access is currently not available for nominating new/additional examiners”. I have previously nominated examiners. What should I do?
TES is only used for the nomination of the initial examiners, if you have not received a separate email requesting you to nominate a replacement or additional examiner, please email the Examinations Office and include the student’s name and their student number if you know it. You can then continue with reviewing the thesis that has been submitted for examination.

Accessing the examiner reports

When can I access the reports?
When the reports are sent to the Chair of Examiners you will receive an email indicating that the reports have been received. If you go to the Dashboard and click on the Student Details page, either from a pending task on the homepage or via the Student List page, you will be able to download the reports and will see the examiner recommendations listed.

Submitting a citation

I have received a request to submit a citation. What do I need to do?
Citations must meet specific format and style guidelines and be limited to 50 words. Click in the link in the email you received and complete the online form to submit a citation. Alternatively you can access the online form via the Dashboard. It is important that the citation is submitted as soon as possible to ensure that it does not delay the student’s completion. After you click submit the citation will be reviewed.
I have been advised that the citation that I submitted needs to be revised. What do I do? Citations are reviewed to ensure they meet the format the style guidelines. Our reviewer will sometimes make minor changes before approving the citation but if they are concerned the changes may affect the meaning, if the citation does not meet the guidelines, is too technical or hard to understand they will ask for it to be revised and resubmitted. If you click on the link you will see the citation, which may have been edited by the reviewer, and their comments. If you have been asked to make revisions please edit the citation, if you have been asked to review the changes and they are acceptable just click submit, if they are not acceptable please make changes to the citation text and click submit.

Head of Department / Chair of Examiners

Nomination of Examiners
I am a Head of Department/Chair of Examiners and I have been asked to approve examiners. How do I check who has been nominated and indicate whether I approve the nominations. The Examinations Office will send you an email. Click on the link and use your University username and password. You will be provided with information about the student and the course they are enrolled in, their thesis title and a summary of their thesis argument, and a list of their supervisors. Normally the principal supervisor will have nominated the examiners. After indicating whether you will also be the Chair of Examiners or nominating the Chair of Examiners, click next and you will be able to review information provided by the supervisor and the examiners nominated. Click on Examiner 1, as per the screenshot below, and the page will expand so you can view their details.

Examiner Details

Examiner 1
Examiner 2

At the bottom of the examiner details indicate your approval as per the screenshot below:

Head of Department: I authorise the University to engage this examiner to act for this thesis, subject to the Chair of Examiners' approval.

* Yes  No

Repeat for each nominated examiner. Once you have reviewed all nominated examiners click ‘Submit’

I have been sent a link asking me to approve nominated examiners but when I click the link the page advises ‘Not available for Nomination Approval’. What should I do? Reply to the email that you received and include the text on the website as this information will be used to investigate the problem you have experienced.

The supervisor has nominated two Australian Examiners for a PhD thesis. The reason for nominating two Australians is not very compelling and I think that they could find someone from overseas. What should I do? If you indicate that you did not approve one of the examiners the supervisor will be asked to nominate a replacement examiner and advised of your reasons for rejecting the examiner. You should ensure that the examiner that you approve is the best of the ones nominated therefore you may end up approving Examiner 2 and not approving Examiner 1. It is your prerogative as Head of Department or Chair of Examiners to make this decision.

If you do reject an examiner, the Examinations Office will email the supervisor with a request for a replacement examiner and the reasons for this request will be included. You will receive a copy of this email. If there is a reserve examiner nominated that may be suitable, the request will include considering this examiner as the replacement.
The supervisor has nominated an examiner that I don’t think is appropriate to examine the thesis. What should I do?
If you indicate that you did not approve one of the examiners the supervisor will be asked to nominate a replacement examiner and advised of your reasons for rejecting the examiner. You will receive a copy of this email. If there is a reserve examiner nominated that may be suitable, the request will include considering this examiner as the replacement. It is your prerogative as Head of Department or Chair of Examiners to make this decision.

Approval of a submitted thesis
Before I confirm that the thesis is ready for examination I would like to be able to read the submitted version. As it has been submitted electronically is this possible?
Yes. Login using the link emailed to you by the Examinations Office. You are able to download a copy of the thesis and review it before you confirm that the thesis is ready for examination. If you have any concerns about the thesis please contact the supervisor and student.

Reviewing examiner reports
I have received an email advising that the examiner reports have been received. What do I need to do?
The email outlines the specific steps but basically you need to click on the link in the email and login to TES. You should discuss the content of the reports and whether the timeframe indicated will be acceptable for the student to make any changes with the supervisor/s. The supervisor is able to access the reports through the Dashboard.
Once you have discussed the reports with the supervisor please endorse the result. The Examinations Office will be notified and will then proceed to release the result and reports to the student along with instructions for what they need to do next. After the reports have endorsed you can login to the Dashboard to view the reports by going to the Student List page.
If there is a discrepancy in the examiner recommendations and a result has not yet been achieved the Examinations Office will commence the process of engaging a third examiner and the result will be determined by the majority verdict. For a Masters Research Degree, a third examiner may need to be engaged where there is a wide disparity in the marks awarded by the first two examiners. The Examinations Office will only contact a third examiner after consulting the Chair of Examiners.

Where a third examiner is appointed for a Masters Research Degree the final mark will be the rounded three-way average of all three examiners.

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