

Information for Examiners of Resubmitted PhD and Doctoral Theses



The University of Melbourne expects theses to be of international standard and demonstrate the candidate has undertaken a substantial piece of original research which could reasonably be expected to be achievable in 3 years.

What we ask of you

We ask you to consider the candidate's revised and resubmitted thesis on its merits and re-examine it in its entirety. Once you have reviewed the thesis, please provide a report which addresses the criteria for examination and recommend a result chosen from the options below. Examination reports generally set out a brief account of the examiner's understanding of the research undertaken and are at least one page long.

Criteria for examination

According to the University's rules, a PhD or Doctoral thesis must:

- a) demonstrate authority in the candidate's field and show evidence of command of knowledge in relevant fields;
- b) demonstrate a thorough grasp of the methodological techniques appropriate to the research question, and an awareness of their limitations;
- c) make a contribution to knowledge that rests on originality of approach and/or interpretation of the findings and, in some cases, the discovery of new facts;
- d) demonstrate the candidate's ability to communicate research findings effectively;
- e) demonstrate an understanding of, and commitment to, research ethics and integrity; and
- f) be a careful, rigorous and sustained piece of work demonstrating that a research apprenticeship is complete and the holder may be admitted to the community of scholars in the discipline.

Possible Outcomes

You will be asked to recommend a result for the thesis from the following alternatives:

1	Pass No changes required; or only minor edits required, such as typographical errors, formatting issues or other corrections that have no bearing on the quality of the overall argument. The Chair of Examiners verifies the edits have been addressed.
2	Pass with revision (Chair of Examiners) Minor revisions to content are required. In this case, Examiners must provide an enumerated list and explanation of each required revision. These revisions will be reviewed and verified by the Chair of Examiners who may consult the Examiner to verify the changes.
3	Fail The thesis has serious irredeemable flaws and is not of a standard to be awarded the degree. In some circumstances, the Examiners may recommend the award of an M.Phil degree instead.

Thesis formats and lengths

The thesis must be presented as a unified whole and address a significant research question. Published work based on research conducted during candidature may be included within the thesis, provided the candidate is the primary author. The status of any publication will be set out in the preface.

The maximum allowed thesis length is 100,000 words. Typical expectations for the length of theses (including references) are as follows:

- PhD: 80,000 words
- PhD including publications: 50,000-80,000 words
- Named research doctorates: 50,000-80,000 words

Confidentiality and research integrity

You will be provided with an electronic copy of the resubmitted thesis, the examiner reports on the original thesis and the candidate's list of changes (if provided). These are confidential documents which should not be shared with any third party or submitted through similarity checking software. If you have any concerns about authorship integrity, please contact the Examinations Office (gr-exams@unimelb.edu.au).

To maintain confidentiality of the examination, please submit your report to the Examinations Office via the online form only, and not to any other person.

Your report should not reveal your identity. You should submit any material you don't want released to the candidate in a clearly marked separate document. We will release as much of your report to the candidate as possible, but your name will not be released unless you agree, and then only when the examination process is complete. Most examiners agree to their name being provided to the candidate.

All contact in relation to the examination must be through the Examinations Office. Do not contact supervisors or the candidate. If they contact you, please advise the Examinations Office.

Timing

Please complete your examination within six weeks of receiving the thesis. We will send you a reminder one week before your report is due. If you find yourself unable to complete the examination within this period, please let the Graduate Research Examinations Office know as soon as you can and provide an estimate of when you will be able to complete the examination. In the absence of prior agreement, the University may choose to appoint an alternative examiner if you are unable to complete your examination within eight weeks of receiving the thesis.

Honoraria

Once we've received your recommendation and detailed report, the University of Melbourne will pay you an honorarium. To receive it, you need to provide your payment details via the Thesis Examination System External Examiner Payment form or your completed Western Union online form.

Resources

- Thesis Examination System [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- Graduate Research Training Policy (MPF1321) <https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1321>
- Preparation of Graduate Research Theses Rules <http://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/preparing-my-thesis/writing-the-thesis>
- Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy (MPF1318) <https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1318>
- Authorship Policy (MPF1181) <https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1181>
- Degree requirements can be found in the University Handbook <https://handbook.unimelb.edu.au>