

Doctoral College Staff guide note on the timings and organisation of final vivas:

For the Supervision team, Directors of Studies, Examiners and Doctoral College Staff

The Doctoral College Programmes team has introduced a standardised process for the management of final vivas following thesis/portfolio submission from August 2018. This aims to help ensure a timely and efficient approach within the College to the viva process across all disciplines. Locally-agreed arrangements for final vivas will not be affected by the introduction of this process, and the Doctoral College Programmes team will continue to provide support, where necessary, in organising vivas. However, the Doctoral College Programmes team will now be actively monitoring the arrangements for all vivas, including those arranged locally by the internal examiner. Appendix 1 provides further details on the organisation of the final viva post submission.

Where possible, adherence to the following timescales for the arrangements of final vivas is encouraged:

Appointment of the Board of Examiners

- It is expected that the identification and appointment of the Board of Examiners is carried out in a timely manner by the lead supervisor and Director of Studies using [PGR13](#), in advance of the deadline for submission, where possible. The **thesis / portfolio will not be sent to the examiners until they have been formally approved** through Board of Studies (Doctoral) and therefore early appointment is essential.

Viva dates

- **Anticipated viva dates** will be entered onto SAMIS by the Doctoral College as soon as the thesis / portfolio submission is received (this will automatically be three months from the date of submission) unless the viva date has already been confirmed to the Doctoral Programmes Administrator
- **Actual viva dates** will need to be set as soon as possible and will **normally be within three months from the date of thesis / portfolio submission** (see section below for specific guidance for students on a Tier 4 visa)
- **Actual viva dates** need to be **communicated** not only to all those involved in the viva (doctoral student, external examiner, internal examiner, independent chair and supervisor), but also to the **Doctoral Programmes Administrator** for monitoring purposes.

Outcome of the viva

- The examiners' recommendations and corrections, where required, are **communicated to the student in writing as soon as possible after the viva** and in any case, **no more than two weeks** after the viva takes place.

Doctoral Students on a Tier 4 visa

- It is particularly important for those students on a Tier 4 visa that the setting of viva dates as well as the subsequent setting of timeframes for corrections is timely. It is therefore **strongly recommended** that efforts are made, where possible, to minimise the amount of time the Tier 4 student has to wait for a viva. Any delay in the time taken to conduct a viva could be questioned by UK Visas and Immigration.

If you have any questions about how the Doctoral College will support the arrangements of vivas, please contact your [Programme Administrator](#).

APPENDIX 1 – Organisation of final viva post submission

Pre-viva

Activity	Student	Supervisor	Director of Studies	Examiners	Doctoral College
Intention to submit form submitted	✓				
Supervisor identifies Examiners and seeks approval for appointment via Board of Studies (Doctoral) or Chair's Action		✓			✓
Student submits via Moodle and brings in soft-bound thesis to Doctoral College along with completed HD2 form	✓				
Notify supervisor if student wishes them to attend the viva					✓
Send Moodle link to internal to review the Turnitin score and request confirmation of viva date					✓
Submission recorded on SAMIS and add expected Viva date into SAMIS (submission plus three months)					✓
Check examiners appointed and Intention to Submit completed					✓
Turnitin report reviewed			✓	✓	
Discuss date of viva with examiners and confirm attendees (e.g. supervisor if requested by student) – normally <u>within two weeks of submission</u>					✓
Internal examiner to check viva date with student and supervisor				✓	
Send out paperwork to examiners (pre-populated forms and guidance) – cc supervisor, Director of Studies (DoS), student					✓
Post thesis to examiners with a coverslip confirming the viva arrangements and due date for pre-viva report. Include expenses form for external.					✓
Make arrangements for room and catering where necessary (HSS & SoM). Catering should not normally be needed.				✓	✓
Make arrangements for hotel for external where necessary (this may be done by Dept Coordinators in some areas)					✓
Confirm viva date and room to all parties (examiners, supervisors, DoS, student)				✓	✓
Examiners return individual pre-viva reports (normally no less than <u>one week</u> prior to viva)				✓	
Exchange pre-viva reports between examiners					✓

Post-viva

Activity	Student	Supervisor	DoS	Examiners	Doctoral College
Examiners return signed EX1 and completed EX3, with proposed timescale for corrections/revised thesis, to Doctoral College				✓	
Forms received and recorded on SAMIS					✓
External Examiner returns completed Expenses form				✓	
Examiners complete EX3 report and return it to Doctoral College as soon as possible (normally within <u>two weeks</u>)				✓	
Completed reports received and outcome/dates recorded on SAMIS (VIVA01)					✓
Completed EX1, EX2 and EX3 form sent to BoS(D) secretary					✓
BoS(D) approval of outcome					✓
Student informed of outcome and deadline for corrections/revised thesis (cc supervisor, DoS, examiners)					✓
Outcome recorded on SAMIS ("Y" in box)					✓
Student completes corrections within agreed timescale (clock starts ticking from date of BOS(D) where examiners' recommendation is approved).	✓				
Corrected thesis submitted via Moodle (including those with trivial/typographical corrections)	✓				
Corrected thesis sent to examiner(s) with advice that they will normally have a <u>four week deadline</u> to return EX1 (if minor corrections) or EX4 (if revised thesis).					✓
Second submission and date sent out recorded on SAMIS (all types of corrections). Use SUBM02 event to record.					✓
Corrections signed off by examiners (normally <u>within 4 weeks</u> of sending date)				✓	
Receipt of completed paperwork (including examiner sign off of corrections on EX1) recorded in SAMIS					
Student brings in hardbound copy to Doctoral College with HD3 form	✓				
Final paperwork to BoS(D) secretary					✓
BoS(D) approve final outcome					✓
Approval recorded on SAMIS					✓

Congratulations email to student with instructions on what to do next					✓
Send hardbound copy to Library					✓
Add all relevant paperwork to student file					✓