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Guide to Examination of Higher Degrees by Research 9/92; Revised 9/93, 9/94, 9/95, 9/96, 6/99, 11/99, 07/01, 05/02, 12/05, 2/08, 01/09, 10/09, 08/11, 06/12, 09/12, 07/13, 01/14, 06/14, 07/14, 11/15, 06/16, 03/17

Approved by BGS (CA) 30 March 2017

This guide is intended for candidates and examiners, examination advisors, chairs of department, directors of graduate study and supervisors. It sets out the expectations of the University with regard to the examination of research degrees and the procedures to be followed in the conduct of research degree examinations.

The guide is divided into three parts. Although students, staff and examiners will find the most important information relating to their roles and responsibilities in the part addressed directly to them, cross-referencing has been used to help users of the guide find relevant information as easily as possible.

[Part I Guidance to Students on Submission and Examination of the Thesis](#)

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[Part III Guidance to Examiners and Examination Advisors on the Conduct of Research Degree Examinations](#)

Further advice on all aspects of the University's procedures and regulations relating to research degree examinations may be obtained from the Graduate School, Senate House. Enquiries should be directed to the Graduate School in the first instance (tel.: 024 765 75533), internal extension 75533, email graduateschool@warwick.ac.uk.

Note: Where a University officer is named in the Regulation, this refers to the member of staff concerned or his/her authorised nominee/deputy.

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1. Timing of Submission

1.1 When to Submit

You must submit your thesis during your period of fee-paying registration or during a period of extension authorised by the Graduate School. If you submit after the period of authorised extension expires, the University may refuse to examine your thesis. The timing of submission should be carefully discussed with your supervisor(s) but it is ultimately your decision.

You are required to submit two copies of your thesis to the Graduate School for examination and these should be soft bound. You should also submit two soft-copies of your thesis for the examiners, saved as a single file in pdf format on two CD ROMS. If you anticipate difficulties in submitting your thesis in this format, you should discuss this with your supervisor and you may make a request to the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies in advance of submission to waive this requirement if necessary. You will need to prepare at least one additional copy for your own use.

After the examination process, you are required to submit one final hard bound copy of the final version of your thesis which will be placed in the University Library. You will also be asked to submit an electronic copy of your thesis on a CD ROM as a single file in pdf format, with the exception of Master's degree by Research. This will be stored in the institutional repository ([see 5.2](#)).

1.2 Early Submission

The University's regulations permit candidates to submit their theses more than a month before the end of their fee-paying registration. If you believe you are ready to submit earlier than one month before the end of your fee-paying registration you should consult your supervisor(s). If, having done this, you wish to go ahead with the early submission; you and your supervisor(s) should complete the Early Submission Form for a Research Thesis, copies of which are available online at

<http://warwick.ac.uk/graduateschool/formslibrary> or from the Graduate School (ext 75533, email graduateschool@warwick.ac.uk). This form requires authorisation by your departmental Director of Graduate Studies, who should scrutinise your request and confirm that approval for early submission has been granted. Once approved the form should be sent to the Graduate School, where it will be held on file. This form will not be sent to the examiners of your thesis. You should be aware that early submission will not normally entitle you to any reduction or rebate in the fees normally payable for your degree. In contrast, you will normally be expected to pay any remaining fees to the University.

In addition, if you wish to submit earlier than the times specified below, you will also need to attach a statement to the Early Submission Form for a Research Thesis explaining the reasons for your request:

PhD, EdD or MD (full or part-time)	5 months
MPhil (full or part-time)	4 months
Master's degree by Research (full or part-time)	2 months

There is no formal provision for EngD students.

1.3 Late Submission

Any thesis not submitted to the Graduate School by the expected end date will be considered a late submission. Should you believe that you will submit late then you should discuss with your supervisor whether you need an extension to your registration, noting that extensions are only granted in extenuating circumstances. Failure to submit your thesis on time may result in you being permanently withdrawn from the University.

1.4 Leave to Submit

It may be possible to submit your completed thesis for examination at a later date by requesting leave to submit. The request for your thesis to be examined must be submitted with your completed thesis. Requests, supported by your academic department, will be considered by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies.

2. Appointment of Examiners

Examiners for your thesis will be appointed by the University in accordance with the procedure set out in Part II of this guide. Normally there will be one internal and one external examiner unless you are a part-time student and are, or have been within 12 months of the date of submission, a member of staff, as defined in University Ordinance 10 (1) on Departments (available in the University Calendar on the University website) or submitting for a PhD by Published Work, in which case there will be two external examiners. If an internal examiner with appropriate subject expertise and experience cannot be identified a second external examiner may be appointed even for a candidate who is not a member of staff. Your supervisor(s) should inform you of who your examiners are likely to be. You should keep your supervisor(s) informed of any individuals (inside or outside the University) with whom you have discussed your work in detail and from whom you have received significant advice since this may exclude them from being appointed as an examiner. You should also tell your supervisor(s) if you have a financial or personal connection with a possible examiner. Please refer to the non-exhaustive list of potential sources of conflict of interest which appears in [Part II, Section 2.13](#) of this Guide. You should not seek to contact your examiners once they have been appointed.

If there is no internal examiner, an examination advisor will also be appointed, and it is recommended to departments that consideration should be given to appointing an examination advisor in all cases where an oral examination will be held. The examination advisor will assist the examiners in following University procedures and chair and maintain a record of the oral examination but not otherwise act as an examiner of your thesis. You also have the opportunity to request that an examination advisor be appointed for your examination.

You should receive a copy of the Nomination of Examiners for Research Degrees form prior to the end of your period of fee-paying registration. Copies are available from the Graduate School and online at <http://warwick.ac.uk/graduateschool/formslibrary>. It is your responsibility to complete Part A of this form and forward it to your supervisor(s) to arrange the nomination of examiners (Part B) well in advance of the date expected for submission. Candidates should bear in mind that it may take several months for their supervisor(s) to identify suitable examiners and obtain their agreement to serve. Any delay in submission of the nomination form may lead to a delay in your examination.

NB: EngD degrees are examined by a panel of examiners which normally includes one internal and two external examiners.

3. University Requirements for the Award of Research Degrees

Under the University's Regulations, a thesis shall consist of one or more pieces of work as specified in the relevant course regulations or departmental guidance. The length should not exceed the word limit specified for that degree, unless prior permission is obtained from the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies.

The University's regulations define the requirements for the thesis for each research degree as follows:

3.1 Degree of Master by Research, Master of Medical Science; and Master of Surgery (MA, MSc, LLM by Research, MMedSci, MS)

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of a degree of Master shall be clearly and concisely written, show evidence of originality in knowledge and interpretation, and shall also be judged on its scholarly presentation. In addition, it shall contain a full bibliography.

The thesis shall not exceed 40,000 words, exclusive of appendices, footnotes, tables and bibliography.

3.2 Degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil)

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of MPhil shall constitute an original contribution to knowledge. The thesis shall be clearly and concisely written, well argued, and shall show a satisfactory knowledge of both primary and secondary sources. In addition, it shall contain a full bibliography and, where appropriate, a description of methods and techniques used in the research.

The thesis shall not exceed 60,000 words, exclusive of appendices, footnotes, tables and bibliography.

In the Faculty of Arts an appendix may contain material that functions as data to supplement the main argument of the thesis, and may not contain material that is an integral part of the thesis. An appendix

may not exceed 5,000 words in length unless permission to exceed this length is given by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies.

3.3 Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

To satisfy the requirements for the degree of PhD, a thesis shall constitute a substantial original contribution to knowledge which is, in principle, worthy of peer-reviewed publication. The thesis shall be clearly and concisely written, well argued, and shall show a satisfactory knowledge of both primary and secondary sources. In addition, it shall contain a full bibliography and, where appropriate, a description of methods and techniques used in the research.

The thesis shall not exceed 70,000 words in the Faculty of Science and 80,000 words in the Faculties of Arts, Medicine and Social Sciences. This limit shall be exclusive of appendices, footnotes, tables and bibliography. Any requests to exceed the word limits set out above are subject to approval by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies.

In the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences an appendix may contain material that functions as data to supplement the main argument of the thesis, and may not contain material that is an essential or integral part of the thesis. The total length of all appendices may not exceed 5,000 words in length unless permission to exceed this length is given by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies.

In addition, the Board of Graduate Studies has resolved that a thesis submitted for the degree of PhD should be an original investigation characterised by rigorous methodology and capable of making a significant contribution to knowledge commensurate with the normal period of registration for a full-time or part-time student.

3.4 Degree of Doctor of Medicine (MD)

To satisfy the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Medicine a thesis shall consist of a substantial original contribution to medical knowledge which is, in principle, worthy of publication. The thesis shall be clearly and concisely written and well argued and shall show a satisfactory knowledge of both primary and secondary sources. In addition, it shall contain a full bibliography and, where appropriate, a description of methods and techniques used in the research.

The maximum length for an MD thesis is 70,000 words, exclusive of appendices, footnotes, tables and bibliography.

3.5 Degree of Doctor of Education (EdD)

To satisfy the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Education the thesis shall consist of an original contribution to knowledge which is, in principle, worthy of publication in a peer-reviewed journal. The thesis shall be clearly and concisely written and well argued and shall show a satisfactory knowledge of both primary and secondary sources. In addition, it shall contain a full bibliography and, where appropriate, a description of methods and techniques used in the research.

In the Institute of Education the thesis may take the form of one study not exceeding 50,000 words in length or two studies each not exceeding 20,000 words in length inclusive of appendices, footnotes, tables and bibliography. In the Centre for Applied Linguistics this shall take the form of a research thesis not exceeding 50,000 words in length, exclusive of appendices, footnotes, tables and bibliography.

3.6 Degree of Doctor of Engineering (EngD)

Candidates are required to demonstrate innovation in the application of knowledge to the engineering business environment, together with a number of specific competences. Full details appear in the [Guidance on Requirements for the Award of Research Degrees](#).

No word limit is specified for the EngD portfolio.

3.7 Degree of Doctor of Clinical Psychology (DClinPsych)

In order for the candidate to be eligible for the award of the degree of Doctor of Clinical Psychology, the research thesis shall consist of an original contribution to knowledge which is, in principle, worthy of publication in a peer-reviewed journal.

The research thesis shall not exceed 20,000 words in length exclusive of appendices, footnotes, tables and bibliography.

3.8 Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA)

Candidates are required to submit a portfolio of work demonstrating innovation in the application of knowledge in business and management contexts. Full details appear in the [Guidance on Requirements for the Award of Research Degrees](#).

4. Presentation of the Thesis

You should receive advice from your supervisor(s) and your Department or Centre on the presentation of the thesis in a format appropriate to your academic discipline. In addition to this advice, you must ensure that your thesis conforms to the University's requirements for presentation which are set out below. If your thesis does not meet these requirements it may not be accepted for examination.

4.1 Typing of Theses

Theses should be word-processed or typed on good quality A4 paper (29.7 x 21 cm) with a margin of at least 4 cm on the left hand side. Adequate margins should also be left on the other three edges, so that the bound volume can be trimmed after binding. Page numbers should be typed at least 1.5 cm (~~0.5"~~) into the page. Pages should be single-sided and in 1.5 spacing. Double-sided printing is acceptable for the final hard bound version for the Library. All copies must be of good legible quality. Candidates are warned that they will be required to correct any typographical errors to the satisfaction of the internal examiner before the award of the degree is approved by the Senate. Candidates should therefore carefully proof read their thesis for typographical errors and correct them before submitting the thesis. Offprints submitted must be bound in with the thesis or as a separate volume, as appropriate.

4.2 Library Declaration and Deposit Agreement

The [Library Declaration and Deposit Agreement](#), which is available from the Graduate School website, should be completed and bound in with the thesis immediately prior to the title page.

4.3 Title and Title Page

The title should describe the content of the thesis accurately and concisely.

The title page of every volume shall give the following information in the order listed (see model title page, [Appendix A](#)):

- 4.3.1 The full title of the thesis and the subtitle, if any.
- 4.3.2 The total number of volumes if more than one and the number of the particular volume.
- 4.3.3 The full name of the author, followed, if desired, by any qualifications and distinctions.
- 4.3.4 The full name of the qualification for which the thesis is submitted.
- 4.3.5 The name of the University and of the department, school or centre in which the research was conducted.
- 4.3.6 The month and year of submission.

4.4 Table of Contents

The table of contents shall immediately follow the title page. It shall list in sequence, with page numbers, all relevant subdivisions of the thesis, including the titles of chapters, sections and subsections, as appropriate; the list of references; the bibliography; the list of abbreviations and other functional parts of the whole thesis together with any appendices. The table of contents should be followed by the list of illustrations and tables (see [Section 4.9](#)).

If a thesis comprises more than one volume, the contents of the whole thesis shall be shown in the first volume and the contents of each subsequent volume in a separate contents list within that volume.

4.5 Acknowledgements

Any acknowledgements shall be on the page following the table of contents and list of illustrations and tables.

4.6 Declaration and Inclusion of Material from a Prior Thesis

The acknowledgements should be followed under a separate heading by a declaration in which the author indicates any material contained in the thesis which s/he has used before or which the author has had published. The declaration shall state that the thesis is the candidate's own work except where it contains work based on collaborative research, in which case the nature and extent of the author's individual contribution shall be indicated.

The author shall also confirm in the declaration that the thesis has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

4.7 Additional requirement relating to theses submitted within the Faculties of Medicine and Science

Candidates should note that they may incorporate work already submitted for another degree (e.g. a Master's) into the current thesis as long as the material concerned is indicated clearly in the text and the declaration refers to the incorporation of this material. Such material may provide support for a thesis but it will not be taken into account in evaluating the achievement of the requirements for the degree for which the thesis is being examined.

Candidates should be aware of the following resolution of the Board of Graduate Studies relating to the submission of all theses within the Faculties of Medicine and Science. Any research results included within a thesis, which have derived from collaborative work, or elements of a thesis previously published by the candidate, must be acknowledged using the following wording:

'This thesis is submitted to the University of Warwick in support of my application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It has been composed by myself and has not been submitted in any previous application for any degree [(if parts previously used add:) apart from the background material in sections XXX which was previously submitted for YYY degree.]

'The work presented (including data generated and data analysis) was carried out by the author except in the cases outlined below:

'List of data provided and/or analysis carried out by collaborators.'

'Parts of this thesis have been published by the author:

'List of publications including submitted papers.'

4.8 Inclusion of Published Work (excluding PhD by Published Work)

Candidates should be aware of the following Senate resolution on the publication of research material, which does not apply to theses submitted for the award of PhD by Published Work. They may include in a thesis any material arising from work on the thesis which had appeared in print before the thesis was completed or examined. Work published or submitted for publication before the beginning of a candidate's period of study may be included within a thesis, provided that it is clearly acknowledged in the declaration and set apart from the main body of the thesis (e.g. in an appendix) but this work should not in itself form part of the material to be examined for the degree.

4.9 Summary or Abstract

There shall be a summary or abstract of the thesis, which should not exceed 300 words, bound in after the acknowledgements and declaration. The summary should not extend beyond a single A4 side, and to facilitate this, single spaced typing is permitted for the summary only. The summary shall provide a synopsis of the thesis and shall state clearly the nature and scope of the research undertaken and of the contribution made to the knowledge of the subject treated. There should be a brief statement of the method of investigation where appropriate, an outline of the major divisions or principal arguments of the work and a summary of any conclusions reached.

4.10 Abbreviations

Where abbreviations are used a list of definitions shall be provided at the beginning or end of the thesis and the location of the list should be clearly indicated in the table of contents. Abbreviations may be used at the discretion of the author. For an abbreviation not in common use, the terms shall be given in full when the abbreviation is first used followed by the abbreviation in brackets.

4.11 Tables and Illustrated Material

Any photocopies, photographs, diagrams, graphs and tables of data should be inserted where they appear in the text. Where you are unable to insert digital media directly into the thesis for printing, any additional materials should be mounted on good bond paper where they appear in the text; copy paper is unsuitable for this purpose. Additional costs may be charged for preparation work. If your thesis requires the inclusion of any maps or diagrams larger than A4, these must be folded well inside the front edge of the thesis.

The lists of tables and illustrations shall follow the table of contents but be placed before the acknowledgements and should include all tables, photographs, diagrams, etc., in the order in which they occur in the text.

4.12 Research Training

It is permissible for a thesis to include information on the research training undertaken by the student during her/his period of study if the candidate and supervisor feel this to be appropriate.

4.13 Length of Thesis

Theses should be written clearly and concisely. You should not feel that your thesis must necessarily be as long as the maximum word limit allowed within your Faculty for the degree concerned. You should discuss the appropriate length for your thesis with your supervisor(s) in view of the nature of the work you have undertaken. The word length permitted for each research degree is given in [Section 3](#) above. Theses which exceed the word limit may not be accepted for examination.

4.14 Bibliography

Theses submitted for any higher degree by research shall contain a full bibliography and references.

5. Binding and Submission to the Graduate School

5.1 Binding

The thesis must be submitted for examination in the first instance in a soft binding. Two copies of the thesis must be soft bound unless there is a third examiner, in which case three will be required. This work should be carried out to University specifications and will be thermo-plastic glued with red leatherette grained card sides. Maps or diagrams larger than A4 must be folded well inside the front and side margins of the thesis.

As noted in paragraph 4.1, for single sided theses a 4 cm margin must remain on the left hand edge (binding edge) and adequate margins on the other three edges to allow for trimming after binding. Final hard bound copies of the thesis may be double-sided, in which case a 4 cm margin must remain on both the left hand and right hand edges with adequate margins on the other two edges. Page numbers should be typed at least 1.5 cm into the page.

5.2 Submission to Graduate School

Candidates are required to submit the soft-bound copies of the thesis to the Graduate School, Senate House, in person whenever possible. You should take copies to the Student Reception on the ground floor. You should also submit two copies of your thesis for the examiners, both identical to the hard copy submission, saved as a single file in pdf format on two CD-ROMs. Delivery to a department does not constitute a formal submission. If being sent by post, copies should be adequately and safely packaged and sent by secure registered post. Please note that the copies submitted to the Graduate School cannot be returned to you before the examination so they should be checked thoroughly for typographical and binding errors.

The Graduate School reserves the right to ask for alternative electronic copies of your thesis, saved in pdf format on two CD ROMS, if the original version of your thesis is not compatible with Turnitin, the source-matching software used by the University.

Following a successful examination (i.e. once your examiners have recommended the award of a degree and you have completed any minor corrections to the satisfaction of your examiners), you should arrange for your thesis to be hard-bound according to University specifications, as set out in [Appendix B](#). Please note that the [Library Declaration and Deposit Agreement form](#) (available on the Graduate School website) must be bound in with the thesis, immediately prior to the Title Page. Candidates are required to submit the hard-bound copy of their thesis, together with one electronic copy saved in pdf format on one CD ROM (with the exception of a Master's degree by Research, to the Graduate School. Only once both the hard-bound and electronic copies have been received, will your name be included on a pass list for the award of a degree. The hard-bound copy will subsequently be deposited in the University Library and the electronic copy will be uploaded to the University's institutional repository. Theses stored in this way will be accessible through the British Library (BL) Electronic Theses Online Service (EThOS) service.

6. Conditions of Acceptance by the Library (including Restriction of Access)

As noted above, one copy of any thesis accepted for a higher degree is deposited in the University Library. The hard copy will be housed in the University Library. The electronic version will be deposited in the University's institutional repository (WRAP). Unless otherwise indicated on the Library Declaration and Deposit Agreement, this will be made openly accessible on the Internet and will be supplied to the British Library to be made available online via its EThOS service.

At present, theses submitted for a Master's degree by Research (MA, MSc, LL.M, MS or MMedSci) are not being deposited in WRAP and hence are being made available via EThOS. This may change in future.

6.1 Restriction of Access

On submission of the thesis candidates are required to complete the [Library Declaration and Deposit Agreement](#), indicating that the thesis will be deposited in the University Library in both hard and digital copy format following successful completion of the examination process.

Candidates can choose between four available options in respect of the availability of the thesis. The first three options can be selected without the requirement to seek the approval of the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies, as follows:

- (i) Both the hard and digital copy thesis can be made publicly available immediately;
- (ii) The hard copy thesis can be made publicly available immediately and the digital copy thesis can be made publicly available after a period of two years;
- (iii) Both the hard and digital copy thesis can be made publicly available after a period of two years.

Candidates wishing to restrict access because of their intention to publish would normally be expected to choose option (ii); where a thesis contains sensitive or confidential material, option (iii) would be recommended.

The fourth option, to embargo the thesis for a period exceeding two years, will require the prior approval of the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies and will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. Restrictions to access in excess of two years have been agreed in the past where the material, if made publicly available in that time, could jeopardise the application for a patent, is commercially very sensitive, could endanger the author or other parties, or could jeopardise the reputation of an individual or individuals. Requests should be made by the candidate and supported by the relevant department, in writing, to the Graduate School at the time of submission and in advance of the examination.

Section 2.5 of the [Library Declaration and Deposit Agreement](#) allows candidates to deposit an abridged hard and/or digital version of their thesis in the Library, should it contain material protected by third party copyright for which they have been unable to obtain permission for inclusion within the thesis. In such circumstances the sensitive material must be available to the examiners, but may be presented in a separate volume which does not then form part of the Library copy.

6.2 Permission to Copy

A declaration giving permission for reproduction may be made on the Library Declaration and Deposit Agreement to grant powers of discretion to the depository library to allow the thesis to be copied in whole or in part without further reference to the author. This permission covers only single copies made for study purposes, subject to normal conditions of acknowledgement. If the form is not signed and completed, it will be assumed that permission to reproduce single copies has been given.

7. What Happens after Submission?

(You may also wish to refer to [Part III](#) of this Guide for further details.)

- 7.1 Upon receipt of a thesis submitted in accordance with this Guide, the Graduate School will extend your period of registration to allow you access to the University's facilities during the examination period.
- 7.2 As long as your examiners have already been appointed your thesis will normally be sent for examination within a few days of submission. Examiners are asked to examine the thesis within a maximum of four months from the date on which they receive it (two months for Master's by Research). The Graduate School will do its best to inform you if it seems likely that there will be a delay in the examination beyond this period. Part III of this Guide provides guidance to research degree examiners and sets out the decisions available to them for each degree. The examiners' decision is subject to the approval of the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee of your faculty who will scrutinise the examiners' reports before recommending the award of your degree by the Senate.

Should the examiners suspect a candidate of plagiarism, the examination process shall be stopped and an investigation undertaken as outlined in Regulation 11 (see [Section III.4](#)).

- 7.3 All candidates for doctoral degrees and for the degree of MPhil are required to attend an oral examination which is normally held at the University. Candidates for other degrees may also be required to attend such an examination. Examinations are arranged by the internal examiner or examination advisor. It is only in very exceptional circumstances that the examiners will agree to an oral examination being held away from the University or by video conferencing, and such arrangements require the approval of the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies. Candidates should consult with their supervisors and/or the internal examiner/examination advisor concerning the likely timing of an oral examination. If you have any particular constraints with regard to the timing of the oral you should ensure that the internal examiner or examination advisor is aware of these. In such circumstances, efforts will be made to arrange the viva at a time which is as convenient as possible for you, but the day chosen will depend on the other commitments of the examiners.
- 7.4 A candidate will frequently be asked by the examiners to make minor corrections to his/her thesis before the examiners recommend the award of the degree and the thesis is in a satisfactory state to be lodged in the University Library. Such corrections will typically include removal of typographical errors and possibly re-writing of very limited sections of the thesis. If you are required to do minor corrections, the examiners should explain to you the changes required and you should complete them to the satisfaction of the internal examiner (or a nominated external examiner, where no internal examiner has been appointed) within the time period specified by the examiners, which will not exceed three months. Once you have completed any minor corrections to the satisfaction of your examiners, you should arrange for your thesis to be hard-bound according to University specifications, as set out in [Appendix B](#), and submit it to the Graduate School.
- 7.5 If you are asked to resubmit your thesis you will be informed by the Graduate School which will send you a single note of guidance prepared by the examiners on the revisions you are required to undertake. A time limit will be set for the resubmission and this must be strictly adhered to. There will be a fee payable when you resubmit and you will be informed of the current level of fee when you are notified formally by the Graduate School of the requirement to resubmit. When you resubmit your thesis to the Graduate School, you should submit two soft-bound copies and two electronic copies, each saved in pdf format on two CD ROMs. You should also attach a memo detailing how you have addressed the requirements for revision set out by your examiners in their single note of guidance to you. Under the University's regulations, the examiners may allow you to resubmit your thesis once only and they may choose to hold a second viva voce examination if they wish.
- 7.6 In the unlikely event that the examiners recommend that the thesis be failed or that you be awarded a lower degree than the one for which you were registered, you have the right of appeal to the University. Information about the appeals process can be found on the University website at:
<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/ourservices/examinations/postgraduate>
- If you decide to appeal you will be expected to complete a form explaining your case. This is available at <http://warwick.ac.uk/graduateschool/formslibrary> All correspondence related to Academic Appeals should be directed to pgappeals@warwick.ac.uk

8. Award of Your Degree

Once the Graduate School has received the hard bound copy of your thesis, together with one electronic copy saved in pdf format on a single CD ROM, and all of the internal paperwork in respect of your examination has been concluded, your name will be placed on a pass list for the conferral of your award by the Senate or Steering Committee acting on behalf of the Senate. The Graduate School will send formal notification of your award to your University email address and any other email address held on your student record shortly after your award has been conferred. You will not receive a conferral email nor be eligible to attend a Degree Congregation, should you have any study-related debts to the University.

You will also be invited to attend the next Degree Congregation. Congregations are held in mid-July and late January each year and you may receive your degree in person or in absentia. You cannot receive your degree certificate until the degree has been conferred formally at a Congregation whether you decide to be present in person or not.

A Study of the Life and Habits of the Aardvark

by

David Gordon Botterill

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Zoology

University of Warwick, Department of Zoology

September 2016

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

A Guide to Hard-Binding Your Thesis

1. The standard size for a printed thesis is A4: 297x210mm.
2. Double sided printing is acceptable for the hard bound copy.
3. The thesis should be bound in black cloth (Arbelave library Buckram shade 585 or the closest match).
4. The spine should contain the following information in gold lettering, with the text positioned reading vertically from top to bottom (see example). Distances are from the *top* of the thesis:

50mm	Author's Initial(s) and Surname in capital letters (e.g., S. FAROOQ)
150mm	Degree type (in the format: Ph.D.THESIS, Eng.D. THESIS, M.D. THESIS, Ed.D. Thesis, MPhil THESIS, M.Sc. THESIS or M.A. THESIS as applicable)
240mm	Year (e.g., 2013)

Where there are multiple volumes the volume number should be indicated on the spine above the Year in the format: 1

5. The font should be san serif, e.g., Arial or Helvetica, and the size 18 point. 16 point can be used if necessary in order to fit a longer Author Name on the spine.
6. A blank space of 30mm should be left at the foot of the spine.
7. The Library Declaration and Deposit Agreement form must be bound in with the thesis, immediately prior to the Title Page.

D.Clin.Psych Theses (joint degrees with Coventry University) Follow instructions

1 to 7 above EXCEPT:

3. The thesis should be bound in purple cloth (Arbelave library Buckram shade 551 or the closest match).
4. The degree type on the spine should read: D.Clin.Psych.THESIS



PART II Guidance to Academic Departments and Supervisors on Research Degree Examinations

1. [Responsibilities of Supervisors](#)
2. [Criteria for the Appointment of Research Degree Examiners](#)
3. [Appointment of Two External Examiners: The Examination Advisor](#)
4. [Responsibilities of Departments](#)
5. [Approval of Examiners and Dispatch of the Thesis](#)
6. [Approval of the Examiners' Recommendation](#)
7. [Resubmission](#)
8. [Correspondence between the Graduate School and the Department](#)

1. Responsibilities of Supervisors

Supervisors should consult the University's [Guidelines on the Supervision and Monitoring of Research Degree Students](#) and any relevant departmental documentation concerning their responsibilities with respect to the examination of their students.

[Section 4 of Part I](#) of this Guide sets out the University's expectations for the format of research theses and supervisors should provide guidance to students on any special presentational matters appropriate to the academic discipline. Supervisors are also referred to [section 1 of Part I](#) of this Guide concerning the University's requirements in relation to the timing of submission of the thesis. The procedure to be followed when a student wishes to restrict access to the final thesis will be found in [section 6 of Part I](#) of this Guide.

Examiners are nominated by the Department and appointed by the Graduate School. Candidates will normally be sent a form for the nomination of examiners before their period of full registration ends. After completing Part A of the form, the student should pass it to their supervisor(s) for the nomination of examiners. It is normal practice for the supervisor(s) to identify possible examiners in line with the guidance set out in section 2 below and to contact the examiners to check their willingness to act and their previous experience of examining. However, departments may have additional procedures for the identification and recording of research degree examiners and supervisors should check with appropriate staff in the department. Examiners should normally be nominated at least one month before the expected submission date and preferably earlier. Final responsibility for the nomination of examiners to the Graduate School lies with the department. All nomination forms must be signed by the Chair or a nominated Deputy such as the Director of Graduate Studies and forwarded to the Graduate School for approval by the Chair or Deputy Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies. The Graduate School will send the thesis together with the relevant report forms to the examiners.

Ideally, supervisors should be present in the Department before and after one of their students undergoes a viva voce examination to provide friendly support to the candidate. However, it is recognised that this may not always be possible. A supervisor will not usually be present at the examination itself unless the examiners have specially requested that s/he attends (see [Regulation 38.6\(7\)](#)).

2. Criteria for the Appointment of Research Degree Examiners

- 2.1 Normally two examiners should be nominated of whom one is a member of academic staff of the University and one who is external to Warwick, usually a member of academic staff at another institution of higher education or research institute.
- 2.2 A candidate's supervisor(s) should not serve as internal examiner. Any potential conflict of interest should be declared to the Graduate School at the time of nomination, as specified in [section 2.13 below](#). Where there is no suitable member of staff within the department to act as either internal examiner or examination advisor, every effort should be made to identify a suitable member of staff elsewhere in the University. If there is no other suitable internal examiner, a second external examiner should be appointed in place of an internal examiner.
- 2.3 Where the candidate is, or has been, within the 12 months prior to the submission of the thesis, a member of the academic staff, research staff, administrative or library staff of the University as defined by University Ordinance 10 (1) on membership of Departments (see [Part I Section 2 of the Guide to Examinations for Higher Degrees by Research](#)), the examination shall be conducted by two external examiners, unless the candidate is a full time student, in which case it will not be necessary to nominate two external examiners. However, any potential conflicts of interest should be declared to the Graduate School at the time of nomination, as described in [Section 2.12](#) below. Exceptionally, where the candidate is a Knowledge Transfer Partnership Associate who has not been based on the University campus whilst pursuing their research, a case may be made for the appointment of one internal and one external examiner.
- 2.4 Probationary staff shall normally not be appointed to examine higher degrees by research.
- 2.5 Examiners are normally expected to have previous experience of supervising and examining theses for the degree they are being nominated to examine.
- 2.6 Examiners for a higher degree by research must normally hold a qualification or a record of completed research comparable to that required for the higher degree in question.
- 2.7 Where a proposed examiner does not have a qualification equivalent to that of the higher degree being examined or equivalent record of research, has little or no previous experience of supervision and examination at research degree level and/or is a probationary member of staff, departments are required to make a special case for the appointment of the proposed examiner. This case should be attached to the form for nomination of examiners and address the examiner's particular suitability to examine the thesis concerned. A curriculum vitae setting out the nominee's research record should also be included. It is recognized that staff have to gain experience as examiners and the pairing of a relatively inexperienced internal examiner with an experienced external examiner will usually be acceptable as long as the internal examiner has relevant subject expertise, a case has been made as outlined above, and an examination advisor has been appointed. The appointment of inexperienced external examiners will only be considered in exceptional circumstances; for example, for very specialized projects for which it was difficult to identify an experienced external with the necessary subject expertise. In such cases a very experienced internal examiner would normally be regarded as essential.
- 2.8 In addition to the two examiners described in [Section 2.1](#) above, an industrial examiner should be appointed for the degree of Doctor of Engineering (EngD). It is not necessary for an industrial examiner to hold a qualification or record of completed research equivalent to the degree being examined, nor to have previous supervisory or examination experience to the level being

examined. However, the proposed industrial examiner should normally be working in a senior position in a commercial organization with relevance to the subject of the research, and generally have experience of working at this level with other organizations. A copy of their curriculum vitae should be provided with the nomination of examiners form, which demonstrates a sustained level of achievement, identifying them as an expert within the field.

- 2.9 An external examiner shall not normally be a former member of staff at the University unless at least three years have elapsed since their leaving date from the University.
- 2.10 Honorary staff of the University shall not be appointed as external examiners for higher degrees. Where an Honorary member of staff is appointed as internal examiner an Examination Advisor shall also normally be appointed.
- 2.11 Emeritus Professors and Readers may be considered for appointment as internal examiners if they have only recently retired from the University or remain research active, Emeritus staff from other universities may be considered as external examiners on the same basis (a maximum interval of three years may be taken as a guideline of appropriate recency).
- 2.12 Departments should disclose details of any situations which have the potential to impair the ability of the examiner(s) to make a fair and impartial assessment of the student's thesis. A non-exhaustive list of potential sources of conflict is provided below:
 - (a) Nominated examiner's substantial involvement in the student's research, for example direct and sustained input/advice into the work being examined. Membership of an annual review panel should not compromise the ability of an individual to act as internal examiner, unless they undertake a more active role in the student's research;
 - (b) Close personal relationship between the nominated examiner and the student, supervisor or other nominated examiner;
 - (c) Close professional relationship between the nominated examiner and the student, supervisor or other nominated examiner for example joint holding of grants, co-authorship of papers, working in the same Institution (in the case of two external examiners). This may be mitigated by the size and relative independence of the research team;
 - (d) Nominated examiner having acted as personal tutor to the student;
 - (e) The work of the nominated examiner is the focus of the student's research;
 - (f) In cases where the student's research has involved collaboration with or funding of research by an external party, the nominated examiner not being independent of that relationship;
 - (g) Nominated examiner having direct commercial interest in the outcomes of the research;
 - (h) Nominated examiner working in the same institution/department as another nominated examiner.

The existence of a potential conflict of interest should not necessarily be a bar to the appointment of a nominated examiner. However, departments, examiners and students are required to declare any potential conflicts which may affect the integrity of the examination process at the point of nomination, or in the case of situations that only become apparent after examiners have been appointed, as soon as reasonably possible.

3. Appointment of the Examination Advisor

- 3.1 It is recommended that consideration should be given to appointing an examination advisor in all cases. The examination advisor, who shall be a member of staff of the University other than

the candidate's supervisor, will advise and assist the examiners in following University procedures (hence should be experienced and/or knowledgeable in the procedures) and chair and maintain a record of the oral examination but not otherwise act as an examiner of the thesis. The use of video recording does not obviate the need for an examination advisor.

- 3.2 The examination advisor should be identified on the nomination form and should normally be a member of staff from the Department, School or Faculty with substantial experience of research degree examinations at Warwick. It is also possible, where the examiners are both very experienced, to appoint an inexperienced member of staff as an examination advisor in order to gain experience of the examination process. The role of the examination advisor is described in more detail in [Appendix C](#) of this Guide
- 3.3 In cases where there are two external examiners an examination advisor must be appointed.
- 3.4 In the event that experienced examiners are nominated, Departments can recommend to the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies that an examination advisor is not appointed. In order for an internal examiner to be considered experienced, and therefore able to conduct an examination without an advisor present, they must have experience of conducting an examination at the same or higher level on at least one previous occasion at Warwick.
- 3.5 In addition to the above, Departments should note that students have the opportunity to request that an examination advisor be appointed for their examination. If requested, Departments should nominate an examination advisor.

4. Responsibilities of Departments

4.1 Guidance to Supervisors and Candidates

Departments are expected to provide candidates with general guidance on any special presentational matters for research theses which are specific to the academic discipline. Any departmental procedures relating to the submission and examination of the thesis should be communicated clearly to supervisors and candidates. Departmental arrangements should support the implementation of the University's policies and procedures for the timely submission of research theses.

4.2 Appointment of Examiners

Chairs of department are responsible under [Regulation 38.6\(3\)](#) for the nomination of examiners and the examination advisor to the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies who considers nominations on behalf of the Senate. Departmental procedures should aim to assist supervisors to propose suitable examiners in good time and at least one month before the candidate plans to submit his/her thesis. As noted above, final responsibility for the nomination of examiners to the Graduate School, however, lies with the department and not with the supervisor and all nomination forms must be signed by the Chair or a nominated Deputy such as the Director of Graduate Studies. Chairs and Directors of Graduate Studies are asked to ensure that nomination forms are completed in full and that examiners meet the criteria set out in [section 2](#) and [3](#) above.

4.3 Payment of Examiners

The external examiner will receive an expenses claim form on appointment. This form is also available at <http://warwick.ac.uk/externalexaminer>. On presentation of original receipts, the Graduate School will

reimburse travel, subsistence and accommodation costs up to a total of £300. Departments will be responsible for the reimbursement of expenses above this £300 threshold.

4.4 Payment for alternative arrangements for the oral examination

In those exceptional circumstances where the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies has given approval for alternative arrangements to be made for the oral examination (e.g. for it to be held by video conference), the department is responsible for paying for the alternative arrangements. The Graduate School is only able to cover those costs it would normally cover (i.e. external examiners' travel, subsistence and accommodation expenses).

5. Approval of Examiners and Dispatch of the Thesis

- 5.1 On receipt in the Graduate School, the form nominating examiners and examination advisor is scrutinised by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies who is authorised to approve the nominations on behalf of Senate. Departments should be aware that if any of the required sections of the form are left blank the Office will return the form and ask for it to be completed in full.
- 5.2 When the nominated examiners are approved by the Chair or his/her deputy, the Graduate School will inform the department. If the nominations are turned down or if further clarification is required, the Graduate School will contact the department.
- 5.3 When the candidate submits his/her thesis, the Graduate School will forward it to the appointed examiners. A copy of Part III of this Guide and examiners' report and expenses claim forms will be enclosed with the thesis. The Graduate School will not contact the examiners prior to this, but the department may wish to do so. Please note that the Graduate School will not arrange the oral examination, this is entirely the responsibility of the internal examiner and examination advisor (where one is appointed).

6. Approval of the Examiners' Recommendation

- 6.1 The recommendation of the examiners is subject to the approval of the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee of the appropriate Faculty who will scrutinise the examiners' reports before approving the recommendation. There may therefore be a delay between the viva voce examination and the approval of the award of a degree by Steering Committee on behalf of Senate.
- 6.2 In the unlikely event that the examiners are unable to agree on the recommendation to be made, or if for any other reason a further opinion is required on the work submitted, an external adjudicator may be appointed. Please contact the Graduate School as soon as possible to discuss the nomination and approval of an external adjudicator.

7. Resubmission

- 7.1 Where the examiners recommend that the thesis be resubmitted, supervisor(s) are expected to provide detailed guidance to the candidate on the work to be done in light of the notes for guidance prepared by the examiners. Where necessary the supervisor(s) and the candidate may wish to discuss the changes required with the internal examiner but the latter must

normally avoid taking on a substantial supervisory role in relation to the candidate during the resubmission period.

- 7.2 Departments are responsible under the [Guidelines on Supervision and Monitoring of Research Degree Students](#) for ensuring that students whose theses are referred for resubmission are provided with appropriate advice by the supervisor and internal examiner, or examination advisor where two external examiners are appointed. A student who is required to resubmit is entitled to receive a level of supervision equivalent to a student at the writing up phase. Supervisors should normally read through the revisions prior to resubmission, noting that it remains the student's decision when to submit the thesis within the time allowed by the examiners.

8. Correspondence between the Graduate School and the Department

- 8.1 The departmental graduate secretary will be notified of the date of submission of each thesis. Information for each stage of the examination process can be located on SITS and departments are requested to contact the Graduate School should they have any problems identifying where this information can be found. Copies of the letters to the external examiner(s) will be sent to the internal examiner and examination advisor. In the case of resubmission, the letter informing the candidate of the decision together with the notes of guidance will be copied to the supervisor and graduate secretary.
- 8.2 Departments (graduate secretaries) are sent copies of individual conferral emails following approval of the award of a research degree by the Senate or the Steering Committee. During the summer vacation awards are approved by the Vice-Chancellor on behalf of the Senate if required but will usually await the first meeting of Steering Committee in the autumn term for formal approval. Any queries relating to this process should be addressed to the Graduate School at graduateschool@warwick.ac.uk.

PART III Guidance to Examiners and Examination Advisors on the Conduct of Research Degree Examinations

1. [Appointment of Examiners and Role of the Examination Advisor](#)
2. [General Procedure for the Examination](#)
3. [Requirements for Each Degree](#)
4. [The Individual Reports](#)
5. [Recommendations available to Examiners](#)
6. [The Oral Examination \(or Viva Voce Examination\)](#)
7. [The Joint Report and Submission of Examiners' Reports](#)
8. [Guidance for Revising the Thesis](#)
9. [Confidentiality of Reports](#)
10. [Examination of a Resubmitted Thesis](#)

[APPENDIX C: Role of Examination Advisor for Research Degree Examinations: Notes of Guidance](#)

1. Appointment of Examiners and Role of the Examination Advisor

At least two examiners (normally one internal and one external) are appointed for all candidates and their function is to make a recommendation on the thesis, in line with the University's regulations for research degrees, to the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee of the appropriate Faculty Board. Where the candidate for a research degree is a member of staff or is submitting for a PhD by Published Work, two external examiners will be appointed and the University will also appoint an examination advisor.

Examiners are required to declare any potential conflicts of interest which may affect the integrity of the examination process at the point of nomination, or in the case of situations that only become apparent after examiners have been appointed, as soon as reasonably possible. A non-exhaustive list of potential sources of conflict is available in [Part II, Section 2.13](#) of this Guide.

It is recommended that consideration should be given to appointing an examination advisor in all cases where an oral examination will be held. The examination advisor will assist the examiners in following University procedures (hence should be experienced and/or knowledgeable in the procedures) and chair and maintain a record of the oral examination but not otherwise act as an examiner of the thesis. In cases where there are two external examiners an examination advisor must be appointed (see [Part II, Section 3](#), for procedures for the appointment of an advisor, as well as [Appendix C](#) on the role of the advisor).

2. General Procedure for the Examination

For both new theses and resubmitted theses one soft bound copy of the work and a copy on CD ROM will be sent to each examiner as soon as possible after submission. Examiners are asked to prepare an independent report on the thesis before any oral examination or conferral with the other examiner has taken place. After the final decision on the thesis has been reached a joint report is required which sets out the examiners' final recommendation.

External examiners will receive a copy of the independent report form and an expenses claim form (which are also available at <http://warwick.ac.uk/externalexaminer>). Internal examiners will receive a copy of the form for both the independent and joint reports. An oral examination is required for the first submission of all theses except for Master's degrees by research where the holding of an oral is at the discretion of the examiners. If revisions to the thesis are required (either minor corrections or a resubmission) a separate set of notes for guidance jointly agreed by the examiners must be prepared for the candidate and returned as soon as possible together with the independent and joint reports to the Graduate School. Guidance notes should be presented as a single agreed set of notes which clearly set out the amendments required. In the case of minor corrections it is the responsibility of the examiners to inform the candidate of the revisions required and the deadline (see [Section 8.1](#)).

The University expects the examiners to act expeditiously in completing the examination process and has set the following deadlines by which the different stages of the process should normally be completed:

Viva	PhD/MPhil/MD/EdD/EngD first submission – within 4 months of examiners' receipt of thesis PhD/MPhil/MD/EdD/EngD resubmission or Master's by Research (if viva required) – within 2 months of examiners' receipt of thesis
Completion of examiners' independent reports	At least one week prior to the viva (where held) If no viva held, for example in the case of Master's by Research or if examiners do not require a second viva in the case of a resubmission, within 2 months of examiners' receipt of thesis
Completion of joint examiners' report	Within 2 weeks of viva (if held). If no viva held, within 1 month of completion of independent reports
Review of examiners' recommendations by Chair of relevant Faculty Graduate Studies Committee	Within 2 weeks Chair's receipt of examiners' reports

Whilst recognising that examiners will have many other commitments, examiners are asked to adhere to these time limits if at all possible as delays in the examination process can cause considerable distress to candidates, especially if they are required to resubmit the thesis. If it appears that the specified time period will be exceeded, the Graduate School should be informed immediately so that the situation can be explained to the candidate.

It is recognised that further delays may occur should it be necessary for the Chair of the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee to refer the examiners' recommendations to an external adjudicator.

3. Requirements for Each Degree

The standards expected for research degrees at the University of Warwick are specified in the formal regulation for each degree. They are also outlined on the examiners' report forms. These requirements should be read carefully before assessment of the thesis.

4. The Independent Reports

The examiners should prepare independent reports, without consultation, before any oral examination or conferral with the other examiner has taken place. The report should be sent to the Graduate School, prior to the oral examination taking place.

The independent report should be sufficiently detailed to enable the Chair of the appropriate Graduate Studies Committee to assess the scope and significance of the work and the examiner's considered view upon it. It should assess the work in relation to the requirements specified for each degree in [section 3 of Part I](#) of this Guide. Examiners should look for evidence of training in and application of research methods appropriate to the particular field of study and should take into account the evidence of originality, critical power and publishable quality as appropriate to the degree concerned. The literary form must be satisfactory and the thesis should not be of unnecessary length. Examiners may require a candidate to confirm the length of the thesis. For Doctorates and the MPhil, the candidate must satisfy the examiners that s/he is well acquainted with the general field of knowledge to which the subject relates. For a Master's degree by Research, the candidate should satisfy the examiners that s/he has a general acquaintance with the published work relating to the subject of the thesis.

The report should highlight any particular strengths and any areas of concern and should identify the major issues which the examiner wishes to explore in the oral examination, if one is to be held. This will not preclude the examiners raising additional issues during the course of the oral examination.

In the unlikely event that an examiner suspects a candidate of plagiarism, the examination process should be stopped. The internal examiner or examination advisor should make a report to the Chair of the candidate's Department. The case will then be dealt with in accordance with the procedures set out in University [Regulation 11](#).

Under Regulation 11 "cheating" is defined as "an attempt to benefit oneself or another, by deceit or fraud. This shall include reproducing one's own work or the work of another person or persons without proper acknowledgement."

An independent report is required both when a thesis is first examined and also when a resubmitted thesis is assessed by the same examiners, whether or not a second oral examination is to take place. The individual report should conclude with the examiner's independent recommendation on the thesis in line with the list of recommendations available to the examiners under Regulation 38 (see next section or online at <http://warwick.ac.uk/regulation38>).

5. Recommendations available to Examiners

5.1 The Recommendations Permitted for Each Degree

Regulation 38.8 sets out the recommendations open to examiners for research degrees. Further clarification of the use of each recommendation is set out below:

5.2 Award Degree in Question

(Recommendation (a) (Regulation 38))

“That the degree be awarded”

This recommendation should be chosen if the candidate has met all the requirements for the degree and the thesis is essentially free of typographical errors.

5.3 Pass with Minor Corrections

(Recommendation (b))

“That the degree be awarded, subject to minor amendments or corrections as defined below. In this instance, the examiners should advise the student of the required corrections and the deadline.”

Minor amendments or corrections must be completed by the candidate to the satisfaction of the internal examiner (or the nominated external examiner in the case that two external examiners are appointed). Minor corrections should not entail a significant amount of further research or analysis. The examiners must specify the time available for completion of the corrections, up to a maximum of three months. The internal examiner (or nominated external examiner) shall ensure that the one copy of the thesis has been amended. In the case of a PhD by published work, the examiners may require minor amendments to the covering document.

Examiners are asked to list the ‘Minor Corrections’ as a separate, jointly agreed accompaniment to their report. Examiners do not need to attach a list of typographical corrections to the reports, but may choose instead to annotate a copy of the thesis if this is more convenient. However, any other corrections should be included within the jointly agreed list attached to the examiners’ reports.

They may recommend the award of the degree without delay, so long as the thesis is corrected before deposition in the University Library. The internal examiner (or a nominated external examiner where there is no internal examiner) is requested to confirm that the corrections have been carried out to his or her satisfaction and the degree cannot be awarded until this has been confirmed in writing to the Graduate School.

Alterations of a more substantial nature will require resubmission of the thesis, which will need to be completed within 12 months or such shorter period as recommended by the examiners (see [recommendation \(f\)](#)).

5.4 Consider Master’s by Research Thesis for an MPhil

(Recommendation (c))

“(MA, MSc and LL.M by research) That the thesis (or exceptionally a revised thesis to be submitted within a prescribed period) be re-examined for the degree of MPhil”.

In such exceptional cases, the thesis as first submitted must in the view of the examiners be close to MPhil standard. Where a candidate is permitted to submit a revised thesis for the degree of MPhil, s/he should have the right, should the examiners deem the work as submitted to be of sufficient quality without revision, to be awarded the degree of MA, MSc or LLM (as appropriate) instead. Where a thesis is re-examined for the degree of MPhil, an additional external examiner will be appointed.

Under these circumstances, where a thesis is not subsequently approved for the award of an MPhil, it is expected that the candidate shall be awarded the degree of MA, MSc or LLM as appropriate.

5.5 Consider MPhil Thesis for a PhD

(Recommendation (d))

“(MPhil only) That the thesis (or exceptionally a revised thesis to be submitted within a prescribed period) be reexamined for the degree of PhD”.

In such exceptional cases, the thesis as first submitted must in the view of the examiners be close to PhD standard and the award of an MPhil would seriously undervalue the work. Where a candidate is permitted to submit a revised thesis for the degree of PhD, s/he should have the right, should the examiners deem the work as submitted to be of sufficient quality without revision, to be awarded the degree of MPhil instead. Where a thesis is re-examined for the degree of PhD an additional external examiner will be appointed.

Under these circumstances, where a thesis is not subsequently approved for the award of the PhD, it is expected that the candidate shall be awarded the degree of MPhil.

5.6 Award Master’s by Research with Distinction

(Recommendation (e))

“(MA, MSc, LLM only) That the degree be awarded with distinction”

This should be recommended only where the thesis is of highly exceptional quality.

5.7 Resubmission of Thesis

(Recommendation (f))

“That the degree be not awarded, but that the student be permitted to submit a revised thesis. The examiners must set a deadline for resubmission of the thesis, within a maximum of 12 months from official notification by the University. In the case of a PhD by published work, the examiners may permit the submission of a revised covering document and/or a different selection of published material”

A candidate should normally be allowed to resubmit a thesis if it contains work which is adequate in substance but which requires greater revision than permitted under recommendation (b) above ([section 5.3](#), “Minor Corrections”) but still can be completed within 12 months. Where, however, faults are found in the substance of the work, resubmission should be allowed only if the thesis is generally acceptable, faults notwithstanding, and where the amount of further research required is not such as

to constitute virtually a new thesis. On resubmission, the examiners will have available the same range of recommendations as in the original submission, except that a candidate will be permitted to resubmit on only one occasion (unless the resubmission is specifically for a higher degree than the one for which the thesis was originally submitted – see [paras 5.4](#) and [5.5](#) above).

If resubmission is recommended, examiners are required to supply the Graduate School with a jointly agreed note providing details on the points of which the candidate needs to take account when revising the thesis, and in a form suitable for giving to the candidate. It is important that the candidate is given clear and non-contradictory guidance on the revisions required and therefore that a single note is jointly agreed by the examiners. This note should be attached to the examiners' reports (but be separate from them) and will be forwarded to the candidate by the Graduate School once the examiners' recommendations have been approved (see [section 8](#) below for further details). Examiners should also specify in their recommendation the length of time which the candidate has for resubmission of their thesis. This is at the discretion of the examiners up to a maximum period of 12 months.

Examiners may advise but not require a candidate to resubmit a thesis for a lower degree. Candidates can be permitted to submit a revised thesis for a degree of lower status providing the thesis is generally acceptable for the lower degree, faults notwithstanding, and where the amount of further research required is not such as to constitute virtually a new thesis. A recommendation to resubmit for a lower degree will be advisory only and will not be binding on the examiners at the time of resubmission. A candidate will be permitted to resubmit on only one occasion for the degree in question. Notes of guidance should be provided as indicated above.

5.8 Award Lower Qualification

(Recommendation (g))

“That a degree of lower status be awarded. The degrees available are listed below. The award of a degree may be subject to minor amendments as defined below. In this instance, the examiners should advise the student of the required corrections.”

PhD and MPhil candidates whose theses clearly do not meet the requirements for the degree for which the thesis was submitted and who are considered unable to bring the thesis up to an acceptable standard within the 12 month period allowed for resubmission may be considered for the award of a lower degree:

PhD; the degrees of MPhil or the appropriate Masters degree by Research may be awarded.

MD; the degree of MMedSci may be awarded

EngD; the degrees of MPhil or MSc by Research in Engineering may be awarded

EdD; the degree of MA or MSc by Research in Education or in Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching

LLM; the Diploma in Legal Studies.

If award of the lower qualification is subject to minor amendments, these must be completed by the candidate to the satisfaction of the internal examiner (or a nominated external examiner where there is no internal examiner). Minor corrections should not entail a significant amount of further research or

analysis. The examiners must specify the time available for completion of the corrections, up to a maximum of three months. The internal examiner (or an external examiner where appropriate) shall ensure that the one copy of the thesis has been amended. In the case of a PhD by published work, the examiners may require minor amendments to the covering document.

5.9 Failing the Candidate

(Recommendation (i))

“That no degree be awarded”.

This recommendation will only be made exceptionally and where the examiners deem the thesis of such poor quality as to make it unlikely that the candidate will be able to improve it to an acceptable standard for the award of any degree within the 12 month period allowed for resubmission. Where the examiners wish to make this recommendation for a Master’s degree by Research, it is normal to hold an oral examination.

6. The Oral Examination (or Viva Voce Examination)

6.1 Requirement to hold an Oral Examination

All candidates for doctoral degrees and for the degree of MPhil are required to attend an oral examination after the first submission of the thesis. In the case of MA/MSc/LLM/MMedSci/MS degrees, an oral examination shall be held where one or both examiners considers this to be necessary to the examination process, at the discretion of the examiners.

There is no requirement for the examiners of a resubmitted thesis to hold a second oral examination, however, a second oral examination should be held where one or both of the examiners considers this to be necessary to the examination process and a second oral would be usual if the examiners are considering the award of a lower degree or failing the candidate.

6.2 Arrangements for the Oral Examination

The internal examiner is responsible for organising the oral examination. Where no internal examiner is appointed, the examination advisor is responsible for organising the oral examination. The Graduate School cannot undertake to assist with these arrangements. The date chosen should be as convenient as possible to all parties, including the student (see [Part I, paragraph 7.2](#)). The supervisor(s) should also be consulted and the oral should normally be held on a date on which the supervisor(s) is available in order to provide support to the student immediately before/after the viva.

At least two weeks before the date of the oral examination, the internal examiner or examination advisor should inform the external examiner, the candidate and the supervisor(s) in writing of the date and place of the oral examination. The internal examiner or examination advisor should also act as ‘host’ for the oral examination.

The oral should normally be held in the University and be attended by all examiners. In exceptional circumstances an oral examination may be held away from Warwick (for example at the external examiner’s institution) but it should be conducted in an appropriate academic environment. In exceptional circumstances, for example in cases where an examiner is overseas and is unable to travel to Warwick within a reasonable timeframe, the examination may be conducted by video conference but normally only where the examiners and candidate are agreeable to this and with

permission from the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies. Departments should seek advice from the Graduate School in such cases. Any video conferences held should be conducted on a secure platform as recommended and supported by the University's Audio Visual Services department. 'Domestic' Skype is not considered to be a sufficiently stable platform for the conduct of vivas.

6.3 Conduct of the Oral Examination

It is recommended that in all cases where an oral examination will be held departments should consider the appointment of an examination advisor, who will chair and maintain a summary record of the oral examination and be available to advise the examiners on university procedures and the recommendations available to them. Further guidance on the role and responsibilities of the examination advisor are set out in [Appendix C](#).

It is the responsibility of the examiners in their joint report to provide a summary of the issues covered and the candidate's performance in the oral examination. The purpose of the oral examination is to enable the examiners to clarify any ambiguities in the thesis, to satisfy themselves that the thesis is the candidate's own work, that the candidate is familiar with the relation of his/her work to the field of study and also that his/her knowledge and appreciation of adjoining fields in the subject are up to the standard expected for the award of the appropriate degree.

The examination advisor and/or the examiners should attempt to make the candidate feel at ease and to ensure that the strengths as well as the weaknesses of the thesis are covered in the oral examination. Examiners may request advice on University procedures from the examination advisor and information from a candidate's supervisor, and, if they wish, ask the supervisor to be present at the oral examination. A supervisor can only be present at an examination at the request of the examiners and should play no part in the oral examination.

6.4 Feedback to the Candidate and Supervisor(s)

Where both examiners have agreed upon a recommendation, they are normally expected (but not required) to make it known to the candidate during or at the end of the oral examination if one is held. The examination advisor (if one is appointed) should be present when such feedback is given to the candidate. Where no oral is held (for example following a Masters by Research examination or a resubmission) the internal examiner is expected to make the outcome known informally to the candidate (and supervisor(s)). In all cases, the examiners must make it clear that this is their recommendation and that the final decision rests with the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee and the Senate and that the candidate should expect to receive official notification of the approval of the decision in due course from the Graduate School, with the exception of minor corrections. In the case of minor corrections, the examiners should inform the candidate of the corrections required and the deadline for completion. The candidate should proceed to correct the thesis from the date of receipt of the minor corrections. The examiners might also wish to provide other feedback on the thesis at this stage, particularly if revisions or corrections are required. Please note, however, that although the examiners may provide the candidate with informal feedback and comments on any revisions required at the oral examination (and the internal examiner may undertake to do this when an oral is not conducted), the examiners should still submit a written note of guidance for revision with their reports, as this forms part of the formal record of examination (see [Section 8](#)).

It is the responsibility of the internal examiner to make the examiners' decision known and provide feedback to the supervisor(s) on any corrections required after the examination. Where two external examiners are appointed, the examination advisor should inform the supervisor(s) of the outcome of the examination and the external examiners should therefore ensure they let the examination advisor know their decision.

If the internal examiner anticipates any difficulty in making contact with a candidate where no viva has been held s/he should contact the Graduate School.

7. The Joint Report and Submission of Examiners' Reports

The joint report should normally be completed on the day of the oral examination or immediately the examiners have conferred as to the quality of the thesis where no oral is held. The joint report need not be as detailed as the individual reports but should briefly summarise the examiners' conclusions on the work and should summarise the issues covered and comment on the candidate's performance in the oral examination (if held) in sufficient detail to enable the Chair of the appropriate Graduate Studies Committee to judge how the joint recommendation relates to the recommendations made in the individual reports.

The Examination Advisor (if one is appointed) should complete the relevant section of the joint report of the examiners. If the examiners recommend that the degree for which the student has submitted be awarded, no more than a signature and a brief summary comment on the viva from the Examination Advisor may be necessary. If it was necessary for the Examination Advisor to intervene at any stage, this should be noted in the report and the circumstances explained.

If the decision is for resubmission, to award a lesser degree or no degree at all, a longer report is likely to be required, especially if the performance in the viva had a bearing on this decision. The Examination Advisor is not expected to provide a full transcript of discussions. It is up to the examiners to explain why the student's performance in the viva was unsatisfactory. The Examination Advisor should be able to say that the viva was conducted fairly and that the student was given adequate opportunity to answer the questions put by the examiners.

Examiners should ensure that there is no unnecessary delay between the examination of a thesis and the submission of the joint reports on the work. It is the responsibility of the internal examiner or examination advisor to ensure that all reports are submitted promptly, together with any list of minor corrections or notes of guidance for resubmission, to the Graduate School.

In accordance with Regulation 38.7(5), in the unlikely event that the examiners cannot agree on a joint recommendation on the thesis, an external adjudicator, who shall be external to the University will be appointed. The decision of this external adjudicator will normally be expected to prevail (see paragraph (7) of [Regulation 38.7](#)).

8. Guidance for Revising the Thesis

8.1 Minor Corrections

The definition of "Minor Corrections" in use at Warwick is given in [section 5.3](#) above. Where this decision is recommended, a jointly agreed list of the corrections concerned should normally be appended to the examiners' reports to enable the relevant Graduate Studies Committee Chair to evaluate the nature of the changes required to the thesis. Examiners do not need to attach a list of typographical corrections to the reports, but may choose instead to annotate a copy of the thesis if this is more convenient. However, any other corrections should be included within the jointly agreed list attached to the examiners' reports.

The Graduate School will normally expect the candidate (and supervisor(s)) to receive the list of corrections directly from the examiners, wherever possible on the day of the oral examination if one is held to enable the candidate to complete the amendments as quickly as possible. Where an oral examination is not required, the internal examiner should ensure that the candidate is notified of the corrections at the earliest opportunity. (If there are two external examiners, the Examination Advisor should ensure that the candidate is notified of the corrections at the earliest opportunity.) However, the Graduate School will send the list of minor corrections to candidates if requested to do so by the examiners. The internal examiner is then asked to inform the Graduate School as soon as the corrections have been satisfactorily completed within a period determined by the examiners and not greater than three months. In the event that two external examiners are appointed, the Examinations Advisor is responsible for allocating responsibility for checking minor corrections to one of the external examiners.

8.2 Guidance on Revising a Thesis when Resubmission is Required

The examiners should provide a jointly agreed note of guidance which lists the revisions which are required to the thesis. These should be listed in a clear and unambiguous way and in sufficient detail to enable the candidate to be sure of what is required of them. This statement should be separate from the examiners' reports but should be attached to the examiners' reports when they are returned to the Graduate School. Please note that this statement is required even though the examiners may have provided the candidate with feedback at the oral examination (see [section 6.4](#)). It will be the responsibility of the Chair of the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee, when approving the reports and recommendation, to ensure that the guidance on resubmission provided by the examiners is clear and unambiguous.

9. Confidentiality of Reports

Examiners' reports should remain confidential to the examiners, the examination advisor if one is appointed, the Chair of the appropriate Graduate Studies Committee, the Graduate School and the external adjudicator if one is appointed, until the reports have been formally approved by the Chair of the appropriate Graduate Studies Committee. After that, the Graduate School will release the joint examiners' report to the student via their department. Independent reports will not normally be released. Should a student request copies of the independent reports, providing that the examiners have indicated their willingness for these to be shared, these will also be provided by the Graduate School. Should a student request copies of their examiners' reports by submitting a Subject Access Request under the Data Protection Act, we would be legally obliged to release these. Further details of obligations under the Data Protection Act are available online: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/legalservices/freedomofinformation/sar>.

Examiners' reports may be released where deemed appropriate in the consideration of an appeal, complaint or investigation into suspected cheating, research misconduct or similar procedure.

Should the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee require further advice when considering examiners' reports for approval, s/he may consult with the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies, who in exceptional cases may ask for the matter to be referred to an external adjudicator.

10. Examination of a Resubmitted Thesis

When assessing a resubmitted thesis, examiners should pay particular attention to the way in which the candidate has revised the thesis according to the recommendations made by the examiners in their written statement to the candidate. The candidate is expected to provide the examiners with a

memo, together with the revised thesis, detailing how s/he has addressed the requirements for revision set out by the examiners in their single note of guidance. In the event that a new examiner has been appointed in the period between the first submission and the resubmission, the examiners will be expected to judge the quality of the thesis according to the stipulations for improvement made by the initial team of examiners.

The procedures for the examination of a resubmitted thesis are essentially the same as for the initial submission of the work and independent reports and a joint report are again required. However, there is no requirement for a second oral examination although one may be held at the discretion of the examiners. An oral examination would normally be held if the candidate is resubmitting for a higher degree and no oral examination has previously been held.

Unless the candidate is resubmitting the thesis for a higher degree than on the original submission (see paragraphs [5.4](#) and [5.5](#)), only one resubmission of a thesis is permitted and therefore the recommendation on a resubmitted thesis can only be:

- (a) To award the degree (See [Section 5.2](#))
- (b) To award the degree subject to completion of minor corrections ([Section 5.3](#))
- (c) To award a lower degree with or without minor corrections ([Section 5.8](#))
- (d) To fail the candidate ([Section 5.9](#)).

Again, unless the candidate is resubmitting the thesis for a higher degree than on the original submission (see paragraphs [5.4](#) and [5.5](#)), award of a higher degree is specifically excluded at this stage. If minor corrections are required they may be of greater extent than specified in section [5.3](#) but it should normally be possible for the candidate to complete them within three months.

Examiners and examination advisors should direct any enquiries on these guidelines to the Graduate School in the first instance (tel.: 02476 575533), internal extension 75533, email graduateschool@warwick.ac.uk.

Appendix C

Role of Examination Advisor for Research Degree Examinations Notes of Guidance

Please refer to the *Guide to Examinations for Higher Degrees by Research* which provides information on examination procedures for research students and the relevant University Regulations. This is available at: <http://warwick.ac.uk/graduateschool/formslibrary>

The viva

1. Where there are two External Examiners (and no Internal Examiner) appointed, the responsibility for fixing a time and place for the viva and informing the examiners and student rests with the Examination Advisor. Otherwise, the Examination Advisor should liaise with the Internal Examiner about these arrangements.
2. Prior to the viva the Examination Advisor may request the Graduate School to supply them with copies of the independent report of each examiner. The Graduate School will send these onto the Examination Advisor, subject to their receipt within the Graduate School in advance of the viva.
3. At the beginning of the viva, the Examination Advisor should introduce the examiners and explain to the student what is going to happen.
4. The Examination Advisor should be present throughout the viva, but is not expected to take an active role in questioning the student. However, the Advisor should have regard to how the student is reacting and, if the student is clearly distressed or misunderstands a question, to intervene either to put the student at ease or to ask the examiner to clarify the question. The Examination Advisor should also ensure that the student is given an opportunity at the end of the viva to make any additional comments.
5. The Examination Advisor should be present while the examiners reach their decision, so as to be able to advise them on the options open to them and University procedures (for example, where the examiners do not agree). If the student is to be told straight away of the outcome of the viva, again the Examination Advisor should be present to clarify any questions on subsequent procedures that the student might have.
6. In the case of recommendation (b) minor corrections and where there are two external examiners, the Examination Advisor is responsible for the nomination of one of the external examiners to check that the minor corrections have been completed satisfactorily. The Examination Advisor is also responsible for forwarding the corrected theses for checking to the nominated external examiner.

The Examination Advisor's report

The Examination Advisor should complete the relevant section of the joint report of the examiners. If the examiners recommend that the degree for which the student has submitted be awarded, no more than a signature and a brief summary comment on the viva from the Examination Advisor may be necessary. This should list the main issues covered in the viva and state that the student's performance was considered by the examiners to be satisfactory. If it was necessary for the Examination Advisor to intervene at any stage, this should be noted in the report and the circumstances explained.

If the decision is for resubmission, to award a lesser degree or no degree at all, a longer report is likely to be required, especially if the performance in the viva had a bearing on this decision. The Examination Advisor is not expected to provide a full transcript of discussions. It is up to the examiners to explain why the student's performance in the viva was unsatisfactory. The Examination Advisor should be able to say that the viva was conducted fairly and that the student was given adequate opportunity to answer the questions put by the examiners.