

FACULTY OF LAW

Master's Oral Exam Procedures



Procedures Regarding the Convening and Composition of the Master's Oral Thesis Examining Committee

The supervisor, in consultation with the Head of the Department, shall nominate members for the Master's Oral Thesis Examining Committee and propose a date, time and place for the examination. The supervisor must obtain commitments to serve as examiners from those he/ she nominates for the committee. The applicable departmental form is completed and signed by the supervisor and the Head of the Department.

The Master's Thesis Examination Committee for Master's students in Division V shall comprise at least the following members:

- **Chair of Committee: Head of the Department (or Head's Delegate) (may be from outside Department)**
- **Supervisor(s)**
- **At least one other faculty member, who may be:**
 - a. From the department OR
 - b. External to the department, OR
 - c. In exceptional circumstances, external to Queen's

NOTES:

1. *In the exceptional case, where a faculty member of another Department, with sufficient expertise, cannot be found within Queen's University, a suitable member from another nearby institution may be recommended for the approval of the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies.*
2. *The Chair of the Master's Thesis examination committee is not a voting member of the committee.*
3. *In cases where ALL members of the Master's Thesis Examination Committee are internal to the department, approval of both the Departmental Graduate Coordinator and the Department Head shall be required.*

Revised Divisional Procedures Regarding Processing Master's Oral Thesis Examinations

1. The completed signed departmental form to schedule a Master's Oral Thesis Examination shall be delivered to the designated departmental person no later than 10 working days prior to the scheduled date of the examination. The designated departmental person shall indicate on the departmental form whether the student has met the course requirements for graduation.
2. The candidate shall deliver a copy of the thesis to each member of the examining committee no later than 10 working days prior to the scheduled date of the examination.
3. The designated departmental person shall confirm the date, time and place of the examination to all committee members and the candidate no later than 10 working days prior to the scheduled date of the examination, and shall send a copy of the departmental form to the SGS Thesis Coordinator.

4. The examiners do not submit reports on the thesis prior to the oral thesis examination, unless they wish to submit a “negative report”; that is, if it is their opinion that the oral thesis examination should NOT proceed (see #5 below). If no negative report is submitted, it is presumed that the examiner agrees that the oral thesis examination should be held as scheduled and that they will attend the oral thesis examination.
5. If, on the basis of the thesis submitted for oral examination, any committee member feels the examination should NOT proceed, he or she must submit a report which lists some substantive reasons why the thesis should not proceed to examination, no later than 3 working days prior to the scheduled date of the examination. The “negative report” shall be submitted to a designated departmental person who could be either the Chair of the committee, or the Graduate Coordinator in the candidate’s home department. If only one such negative report is submitted, the oral thesis examination shall proceed as scheduled.
6. If two or more negative reports are submitted, the candidate and the supervisor shall be consulted by the Chair of the Examining Committee or the Graduate Coordinator to see if they wish to proceed with the oral thesis examination. The School of Graduate Studies shall be notified whenever two or more examiners recommend that the thesis oral examination not proceed. The onus is on the candidate to make the decision to proceed or not. If the candidate agrees that the oral thesis examination be postponed, the Chair must convey to the candidate, through the supervisor, the nature of the revisions to the thesis that are advised, and the candidate has the right to present the revised thesis at a later date. At the subsequent submission of the thesis, the oral thesis examination must be held. The School of Graduate Studies shall be informed when an oral thesis examination has been postponed due to negative reports.
7. After the oral thesis examination, the Chair will ask for comments from the Examining Committee on the conduct of the examination (a standard form shall be provided) and will provide a report to the Head of the Department or Graduate Coordinator and to The School of Graduate Studies. The result of the defense, copyright forms, and reports, are forwarded by the Chair to the SGS Thesis Coordinator.