

Statement about Conducting Master's and Doctoral Oral Thesis Examinations: Fall 2021

Queen's University School of Graduate Studies July 2021

This statement about conducting Master's and Doctoral Oral Thesis Examinations is based on the Queen's Campus Reopening Framework released in July 2021 (<https://www.queensu.ca/safereturn/>), describing a gradual return to normal campus operations, and the Stage 3 reopening guidelines for Ontario.

For Fall 2021 term, the guiding principle of planning for Master's and Doctoral Oral Thesis Examinations is that there should be flexibility in allowing the candidate and any or all members of the examination committee to attend in person or virtually, such that:

(a) Oral Thesis Examinations may be held in person as long as they adhere to current Public Health Guidelines and best practices (for up to date information, see <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/public-health-measures>; or <https://www.queensu.ca/safereturn/>), which may include wearing masks, maintaining hand hygiene protocols, and appropriate physical distancing. However,

(b) Candidates or members of the examination committee may participate remotely if for any legitimate reason they cannot participate in an in person oral thesis examination.

Should Public Health Guidelines change so that indoor gatherings are precluded, then all oral thesis examinations will be held remotely. Given the possibility that reopening status could change and that some travel restrictions may still be in place, SGS suggests that departments/programs consider planning for external examiners to participate remotely in the oral thesis examinations for all examinations held during the Fall 2021 term, thereby avoiding a situation where travel plans are made and then have to be cancelled.

For the Fall 2021 term, we will continue the practice initiated in Winter 2020, wherein departments/ programs have the option of finding their own Chair OR can choose to have the Departmental Head or Head's Delegate to act as Chair, OR they may contact the SGS Thesis Coordinator to find a Chair.

Programs do not need SGS permission to conduct Oral Thesis Examinations remotely. However, we are here to support you. Please reach out to sgsadstem@queensu.ca if you have questions.