

## Doctoral Thesis External Appraisal Requirements

Information for External Examiners

### SUMMARY:

- Your appraisal **must** include an explicit and unequivocal recommendation that the thesis be accepted, or not accepted, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the appropriate degree (PhD or EdD).
- Some constructively critical analytical comments should be made.
- The importance of the work in relation to its field should be stated.
- The structure and length of the appraisal are at your discretion (2 to 4 single-spaced pages is typical).
- A synopsis of the thesis is not necessary; if any is included, it should be brief.
- The appraisal **must** be on institutional letterhead or sent from your institutional email address (or both).
- The appraisal must be received at least **two weeks** before the examination. Please email it to the Registrar's office at [oise.doctorate@utoronto.ca](mailto:oise.doctorate@utoronto.ca).

At the University of Toronto, the decision to either accept, or not accept, a thesis in partial fulfillment of the PhD or EdD degree requirements is made during a doctoral final oral examination (FOE) by the FOE committee. The decision is made on the basis of the quality of both the thesis itself, and the candidate's defense of it at the FOE. All members of the committee normally receive the thesis at least six weeks in advance of the FOE.

There is one written appraisal, prepared by the external examiner. The Registrar's office distributes it to the rest of the FOE Committee, the candidate, and the School of Graduate Studies (SGS). Candidates have the right to receive the appraisal at least two weeks before the FOE; otherwise, they may have the FOE rescheduled (however, when this occurs, almost all candidates choose to waive the right and keep the FOE as scheduled).

During the confidential voting procedure, committee members can vote to accept the thesis "as it stands" (no revisions), "with minor corrections" (normally for typographical, grammatical, or stylistic revisions, to be completed within approximately one month), or "with minor modifications" (to be completed within approximately three months). Members can also vote to not accept the thesis; if the voting results in the thesis not being accepted, the FOE is adjourned and must be reconvened within one year to make a final decision.

The external examiner's appraisal contributes to the FOE committee's deliberations on whether the thesis is acceptable, and if so what revisions, if any, will be required. Consequently, the external appraisal must explicitly state whether or not the thesis is acceptable in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the appropriate degree. It should also include a discussion of the importance of the work within the field, and some constructively critical analysis. The structure and length of the appraisal are at the external examiner's discretion, but brevity and clarity are appreciated (2 to 4 single-spaced pages is typical; a synopsis of the thesis is not required). It must be written on institutional letterhead or emailed from the external examiner's institutional email address.

Please note the following description of the PhD or EdD thesis, as appropriate, provided in the SGS Calendar:

- PhD: "The thesis, which is a piece of scholarly writing, shall constitute a significant contribution to the knowledge of the field and must be based on research conducted while registered for the PhD program."
- EdD: "The thesis (dissertation in practice) shall include an identification and investigation of a problem of practice, the application of theory and research to the problem of practice, and a design for action to address the problem of practice. It must be the result of original research undertaken while the candidate is a registered student."

The Chair of the FOE is responsible for advising participants about appropriate procedures and ensuring they are followed. A copy of the procedures for the FOE will be provided to all participants in advance, for reference.