



Instructions for Preparing the External Examiner's Report

Thank you for the time and effort you will invest in reviewing this dissertation. At the University of British Columbia, expert assessment by an External Examiner is an essential and valued component of our final doctoral examination process. Your analysis and recommendation will inform the Dean's decision on whether or not the dissertation's author proceeds to final oral defence. If so, copies of your report will be given to the other members of the examining committee at UBC before the defence and to the candidate afterwards.

At the final doctoral oral defence the candidate will present the work and respond to questions from examining committee members—including the questions posed in your report.

The members of the examining committee present at the defence will evaluate the candidate's presentation and response to questions. Where necessary, the candidate may be required to revise the dissertation on the basis of your report and the findings of the other members of the examination committee.

The integrity of the process requires that a strict arms-length relationship between the External Examiner, the candidate, and the other members of the Examining Committee be maintained throughout the pre-exam period. Please refrain from discussing the content or quality of the work with any of these people until the oral examination itself is underway.

We request that you address the following four elements in your report.

I. Scholarly Merit

A successful dissertation

- i. presents a contribution to knowledge,
- ii. is likely to have an impact on the discipline and/or in an applied domain, and
- iii. describes a coherent body of work whose depth and scope justify the granting of a doctoral degree.

While meeting these general criteria, a dissertation's content and presentation should also comply with the more detailed expectations below.

- iv. The research undertaken is contextualized clearly, and accurately references the larger field of knowledge on the topic.
- v. The methods used are suitably described, relevant to the research question(s), and employed appropriately.
- vi. The research results are reported fully and clearly. For creative or other non-traditional scholarly products, the work demonstrates a sufficiently high standard of quality and comprehensive investigation of the research question.
- vii. The analyses and conclusions drawn from the research are well-justified and integrated into the larger field of knowledge.
- viii. The implications and limitations of the research are fully discussed.
- ix. The writing of the document is of a professional standard.

Please consider all of these criteria while assessing the work, but feel free to structure your written response as you think best. Explicit references to the nine points above would be welcome, but are not required.

On non-traditional work and products: UBC values all forms of rigorous scholarship, including those oriented to discovery, to application, to teaching and learning, and to integration. All should be assessed as described above, with the understanding that the forms of knowledge contributed by the work will vary by the scholarly approach used. Doctoral students may include diverse scholarly products such as film or other recordings,



policy papers, professional reports, websites, curricula, etc. as integral components of their dissertations. Such components are expected to be properly contextualized and analyzed within the overall scholarly arc of the dissertation. As much as you are able, please evaluate these components using the above criteria for rigor and integrity, with a focus also on potential implications and limitations for the intended applications.

On material published elsewhere: Students may include articles published or submitted for publication in their dissertations. The introduction, literature review, and conclusion must address the significance of each publication in the broad context of the overall program of scholarship described by the entire body of work, and the dissertation's Preface must describe the student's contribution to the research and creation—including, where applicable, the student's role in publications with several authors. Please evaluate all parts of the work with equal rigour, including any that may have been published elsewhere. When applying criterion ix, please focus on writing contributed by the candidate.

UBC's expectations for students: The nine criteria above are available to students, who can reasonably be expected to present a document that addresses them. Further details on the requirements for formatting and presentation are online at links reachable from

<http://www.grad.ubc.ca/current-students/dissertation-thesis-preparation/>

(Select the sub-topic, "Structure of UBC Theses and Dissertations," to continue.)

II. Recommended revisions.

In a separate section of your report, please make specific recommendations for revision (as appropriate).

III. Overall Recommendation.

Please select one of the following statements (1 or 2) and modifiers (a or b).

1. I recommend that the candidate proceed to oral defence.
 - a) Only minor revisions are needed. ... OR ...
 - b) Substantive revisions are needed, but they can be resolved in the context of an oral defence and subsequent final revisions.
2. I recommend that the candidate not proceed to oral defence.
 - a) Major revisions are needed before the examination can continue. [*Normally, the examination is postponed to allow the candidate to revise the dissertation, which is then submitted to the original external examiner and to one new external examiner for review.*] ... OR ...
 - b) The dissertation is unacceptable; it is fundamentally flawed and therefore beyond revision.

IV. Questions for Oral Defence

If you recommend proceeding to oral defence, please provide a short list of questions to be answered by the candidate.

Thesis prizes: In the event that the dissertation is nominated for an award your comments may be included as part of the nomination package.

If you seek any further guidance or information, please do not hesitate to contact the Doctoral Exams unit at graduate.doctoral@ubc.ca



We thank you for the time and wisdom you are contributing to this candidate's examination.