



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

PhD Mock Viva

Dr Caroline Lohmann-Hancock

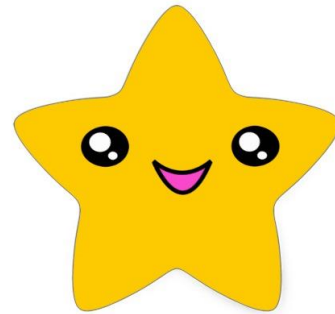
Trawsnewid Addysg; Trawsnewid Bywydau
Transforming Education; Transforming Lives



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CONGRATULATIONS!

You are just a few months away from your viva



PG8: Intention to Submit Form

- To be eligible to submit a thesis, research degree candidates must be enrolled on the degree for which submission is intended, have paid all fees due (including any re-examination fee required) and satisfied all other financial obligations.
- Approximately three months before the expected completion of the thesis the candidate and supervisors will be notified by the Postgraduate Research Office of the upcoming deadline.
- The student is then requested to submit
 - The Intention to Submit form
 - https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/aqh-appendices/pg/PG8-Intention-to-Submit_08-2019.docx

Submitting the Thesis

- Two copies of your temporary bound thesis together with the required
 - declaration, statements, signatures and abstract
 - https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/aqh-appendices/pg/PG8-Intention-to-Submit_08-2019.docx
 - https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/misc-forms/Declaration-for-thesis-submission_Oct-2017.doc
 - https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/misc-forms/Declaration-for-thesis-submission-WITH-BAR_Oct-2017.doc
 - One copy of your thesis on a DVD/CD in PDF format
- PG10: Notice of candidature form to be completed and sent in with thesis
 - The “Notice of Candidature” form is available from the Academic Office (Postgraduate Research)
 - <https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/aqh-appendices/pg/PG10-Notice-of-Candidature-02-2020.docx>

Formatting:

Appendix 1 CoP Research Degrees 2018/19 Format Printing and Binding of Thesis 11-2018

- There are specific regulations as to the formatting of the thesis – including fonts, word-count, margins, illustrations, etc.

Code of Practice for Research Degrees 2019/20	https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/misc-forms/Code-of-Practice-for-Research-Degrees-2019-20-updated-01-2020.pdf
Appendix 1 Code of Practice Research Degrees 2019/20 Format Printing and Binding of Thesis 08-2019	https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/aqh-appendices/Appendix-1-CoP-Research-Degrees-Format-Printing-and-Binding-of-Thesis-20....docx
Appendix 2 Code of Practice for Research Degrees 2019-20	https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/aqh-appendices/Appendix-2-CoP-Research-Degrees-Guidelines-for-Chairs-2019-20.docx

Changes? NO!

- The thesis **MUST** be submitted on or before your end date
 - But candidates . . .
 - may not amend
 - add to
 - or delete from the thesis
 - after it has been submitted and prior to examination

*If a candidate finds that material has been left out of the copies of the thesis sent to the examiners
it is the decision of the Chair of the Examining Board
on whether to permit the missing material to be sent to the Examiners*

The Examining Board

- The examining board is normally made up of:
 - Independent Chair;
 - Internal Examiner;
 - External Examiner.
 - [(Lead)Supervisor?]

The Chair

- The Chair and Convenor must be
 - a Head of School
 - or Dean of Faculty
 - or a senior member of staff nominated by them at the University
- Chair does not engage with the academic argument of the thesis

External Examiner

- The External Examiner(s) must be aware of . . .
 - the nature and purpose of the degree
 - must possess specialist knowledge and expertise in the area of the research project
 - as well as experience in examining research degrees

Internal Examiner

- An Internal Examiner must evidence . . .
 - the nature and purpose of the degree
 - must possess specialist knowledge and expertise in the area of the research project

Supervisor:

“Should I Stay or Should I Go?”

- A member of a supervisory team can not be appointed as the candidate’s examiner
- Although they may,
 - with the prior consent of the candidate,
 - be invited to attend the oral examination
- The supervisor cannot engage in the process of the viva,
 - except if directly requested by the external examiner

Preparing for the VIVA

- All candidates should have a Mock Viva prior to the examination so that they know what to expect
 - including **the format and type of questions** that may be asked and
 - should be organised by the **Director of Studies (and/or Lead Supervisor)**
- The Candidate and the Panel are expected to read and re-read the thesis
 - Making notes as appropriate
- The Panel will
 - ensure that you are conversant with the work of others in the relevant and related fields of study
 - and that you have kept up-to-date with research

The Process

- The Examiners will ask Candidates probing questions about the thesis;
 - this is an important aspect of the examination process.
- These questions may be very:
 - specific,
 - minor
 - or indeed very complex.
- Candidates should take the time to answer the questions fully and to the best of their ability

Your Job in the VIVA

- In answering the examiners' questions, candidates should aim to do the following:
 - Try to remain **calm**,
 - Answering **questions calmly** and as **fully** as possible
 - They may wish to **take notes** of a particular question, or jot down points.
- Demonstrate their **understanding of research** in the relevant field
- Demonstrate their **understanding of appropriate research methods**
- **Justifying the methods** adopted
- Seek **clarification of the question** if they are unclear

Your Job in the VIVA

- Candidates should:
 - **defend** their views or challenge those of the examiner if they have a different interpretation,
 - but should ensure that their views can be **substantiated** by referencing appropriate **evidence or literature**
- But Candidates . . .
 - should **avoid being confrontational**
 - may **raise any questions or concerns** they may have directed to **the chair**

MOCK VIVA (Viva)

Do Not ...

- Be late!
 - I can't find the room?
- Fail to read the Thesis before the Viva
- Forget your thesis!
- Mumble and ramble on about being late
- Avoid eye contact
- Argue with the examiner
- Flick back and forwards in your thesis and become confused!
- 'Cry'!!!
- Answer a different question
- Talking about irrelevant things
- Tell the examiners 'they are wrong'!
- Say that your supervisor 'told me to do that and its their fault'!
- Say I don't think that is important
- Say that your friend wrote your thesis!!!!
- Demonstrate a don't care attitude

Mock Viva Plus++

What Does Defence Mean?

- You are presenting yourself as
 - A scholar in the discipline
 - An authority on the subject
 - Clearly explain your work
 - How does your work fit with other research and scholarship in the field?
- You can ask questions too!
 - Disagree and challenge if you need to but . . .
 - **WITH** evidence
 - and respectfully

Mock Viva Plus++

Know Your Thesis

- Break it up
 - Thesis topic
 - Research Questions
 - Problems that led to your research
- Thesis
 - Main idea
 - Main findings
 - Know where each bit is in your Thesis
 - Significance of Your work!!!
 - Applications
 - Implications

Mock Viva Plus++

- Practice
 - Prepare answers to questions you anticipate
 - Practice answering them out loud
- LISTEN!
 - Examiners will ask questions
 - Make sure you listen
 - Ask for the question to be restated if required

Mock Viva Plus++

Know What You Don't Know!

- You asked me **xxxxxx** could you please repeat the question
- If I knew **xxxxxx** I would say **xxxxxx**
- I haven't considered this in detail but the question is interesting implications for **xxxxxx**.
 - For example, if I knew that I could do **xxxxxxx**

Mock Viva Plus++

When You Need Time . . .

- I just need a minute to gather my thoughts
- When you said **xxx** did you mean **xxxxxx** . . .
- Could you repeat the question?
- Many Students bring in a note pad and pen
 - Ask the chair if it is appropriate to write ‘brief notes’ to help you answer the questions

Outcomes of the VIVA

- There are a number of possible outcomes following the examination of a thesis which can be found in the **AQH chapter 8.15 (4) and** which are summarised below:
 - Approved for the degree of PhD by Research;
 - Minor corrections (up to 12 weeks);
 - Resubmission (up to 2 years PhD or up to 1 year MPhil);
 - Submit as an MPhil (only in the case of a PhD submission);
 - Resubmit as an MPhil (up to 1 year) (only in the case of a PhD submission);
 - Fail
 - https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/aqh-appendices/pg/PG11-Exam-Board-Report-Form---PhD-by-Research_Oct-17.docx

OUTCOMES:		Confirmed Outcome (tick ✓)
A	That the student be approved for the degree of PhD by Research;	☐
B	That the student be approved for the degree of PhD by Research subject to the satisfactory completion of such corrections and amendments as may be required by the Examining Board. The Examining Board may stipulate that the corrections made shall be scrutinised by either or both examiners prior to the award process being initiated. Normally, corrections shall be completed within 6 months from the date of official notification to the student of the outcome of the examination;	☐
C	That the student be not approved for the degree of PhD by Research at this stage but that the student is allowed to modify the thesis and re-submit it for examination for the degree of PhD by Research on one further occasion. The re-submission is to take place within a period not exceeding 1 year from the date of the official notification to the student of the outcome of the examination (this option is not available in the case of a student who has re-submitted a thesis for examination);	
D	That the student be not approved for the degree of PhD by Research but be approved instead for the degree of MPhil by Research subject where appropriate to the satisfactory completion of such corrections and amendments as may be required by the Examining Board. The Examining Board may stipulate that the corrections made must be scrutinised by either or both examiner(s) prior to the award process being initiated; corrections and amendments must be completed within a period of 6 months from the date of the official notification to the student of the outcome of the examination;	☐
E	That the student be not approved for the degree of PhD by Research but be allowed to modify the thesis and re-submit it for examination for the degree of MPhil by Research on one further occasion. The re-submission is to take place within a period not exceeding 1 year from the date of the official notification to the student of the outcome of the examination (this option is not available in the case of a student who has re-submitted a thesis for examination);	☐
F	That the student be not approved for the award of a degree.	☐

How Do You Know the Outcome?

- The Examiners will usually notify candidates of
 - the recommended outcome at the end of the examination process
- However, this outcome will not become official until it has been approved by
 - the Research Degrees Committee
 - and the Research Degrees Board
- This process can take some time and it may be several weeks before the candidate is officially notified of the result.
- Candidates will receive a letter and a copy of the examination reports from the University of Wales confirming the outcome of the examination
- Where corrections are required,
 - these will be detailed together with the deadline for receipt of thesis.

Corrections?

- If the official outcome of the examination was Minor Corrections,
 - the candidate must complete and submit the corrections to
 - the Postgraduate Research Office within the specified timeframe
- The Corrections will then be sent to
 - the examiner who has agreed to mark the corrections (usually the internal examiner)
- If the examiner(s) is(are) content that the Corrections have been completed satisfactorily,
 - The exam board are required to sign a form to confirm they are content with the corrections . . .
 - and **ONLY THEN** is the degree to be awarded
- Please note,
 - that it can take up to 8 weeks for the certificate to arrive

GOOD LUCK

- Don't forget to ask for help from your supervisory team
- Lastly...
 - Enjoy the viva
 - This is your chance to discuss your research in depth

And remember

The Examiners are 'PAID' to listen!!