

Extract from the Policy and guidance on research degrees applicable from Michaelmas term 2025

Introduction

Following consultation in 2019 and subsequent discussion in Research Degrees Panel, it was agreed that changes to PGR examination outcomes were needed. The changes are intended:

- to support students and staff better,
- to bring Oxford's processes in line with other universities, and
- more generally to improve the examination outcome process.

These changes will take effect from Michaelmas term 2025 for all students submitting a thesis for a DPhil, DM, MLitt, MSc(Res) for the first time in MT25 or later (on or after 12 October 2025). In order to give departments, faculties and students sufficient notice of the changes, information on them is being published in MT24.

Students who submit their PGR thesis before 12 October 2025 will continue to be subject to the regulations that were in place when they first submitted their thesis.

In summary the changes to postgraduate research outcomes and processes for students submitting a thesis for a DPhil, DM, MLitt, MSc(Res) for the first time in MT25 or later (on or after 12 October 2025) are:

1. Increasing the length of time available for minor corrections to two months from one month;
2. Retention of major corrections as an examination outcome, but providing clearer options for major corrections with re-examination and major corrections without further examination;
3. Reduction in the length of time available for reference back decisions from two years to one year;
4. Improved guidance including the addition of indicative criteria to each decision to aid examiners in determining when a particular outcome should be selected;
5. The removal of extensions from minor and major corrections outcomes;
6. The provision for a period of suspension of up to 12 months (with a minimum suspension of 4 weeks) for those with major corrections and reference back decisions;
7. Improved clarity on the expectations for supervision of students post-viva, with students receiving major corrections and reference back decisions entitled to the same level of supervision as expected before submission;
8. Provision for students to apply for exceptional suspensions and extensions from Education Committee.

The relevant regulations covering all students who have recently submitted or are currently on course are:

- [General Regulations Governing Research Degrees](#)
- [General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters](#)
- [General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Science by Research](#)
- [General Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy](#)

Section 7: Examination – provisions applicable to all students submitting their thesis for the first time from Michaelmas term 2025.

[Text highlighted in green shows provisions that are substantively different from the current provisions as given in section 7.]

7.3 Examination of Research Degrees

Rules relating to the examination of research degrees are set out in the relevant general regulations in the [Examination Regulations](#), along with information contained on the relevant application forms (see form [GSO.20a](#)).

Regulations governing the content and length of theses may be found in the [General Regulations Governing Research Degrees](#) and in the relevant [Special Regulations](#). Guidance notes for divisional boards to assist in the development of Special Regulations for integrated format theses may be found at Annex B [of the main P&G document].

7.3.1 Preparation for submission

Students must allow adequate time for writing up the thesis, taking the advice of the supervisor. Particular attention should be paid to final proof-reading. Students should also be made aware that they must ensure that the standard of their English is sufficient for the presentation of a thesis.

Students and supervisors should be aware that it is the student's responsibility to decide whether to submit the thesis for examination, after taking due account of the supervisor's opinion. It is in the student's interests to ensure that the final version has been made available to the supervisor for final comment in good time before the intended date of submission.

Students and supervisors should also be aware that no changes to a research degree thesis can be made once leave to supplicate has been granted. It is a student's responsibility to ensure that they have checked their thesis and are fully satisfied with its contents before submitting it for examination, including having proof-read it carefully and checked sections such as the abstract and acknowledgements. They should not assume that there will be any further opportunity to make changes, as it is possible to be granted leave to supplicate without the examiners requesting any corrections.

All research degree theses must be submitted online via the Research Thesis Digital Submission (RTDS) application, and not in hard copy. Examiners may request hard copies of the thesis via the Submissions and Research Degrees team. Further information is available from the [Research Examinations website](#).

Students should be made aware that the examination process at Oxford is strictly separate from the supervision of research, and that while a supervisor may offer advice on the student's chance of success, the outcome will depend on the recommendation of the examiners and on the final judgement of the board, and this may reflect a different evaluation of the merits of the thesis.

7.3.2 Approval and appointment of examiners

Applications for the appointment of examiners are made by a student using the standard form ([GSO.3](#)), and may not be made earlier than the term before that in which the thesis is to be submitted. A document setting out the procedure to be followed and the examination process ([GSO.20a](#)) is also available.

In completing the relevant section of the form, a supervisor is required to consult with the student concerning possible examiners, and to forward to the department, divisional or faculty board the names of suggested examiners together with any details of any special considerations from the student about potential examiners. Students are advised that this does not give them a veto over the appointment of examiners since the final choice lies with the responsible board or committee.

A board or committee that decides against all the examiners proposed by the supervisor, in consultation with the student, should consult the supervisor and student before approving alternative names.

7.3.3 Examiners

External examiners

It is an absolute requirement that one examiner should be external to the University for research examinations. The absence of specific reference to external and internal examiners in the [Examination Regulations](#) allows the responsible board to appoint two external examiners where particular circumstances suggest that this would be prudent. It is not possible to appoint more than two examiners in total.

Where two external examiners are appointed, it is best practice to appoint a member of the department/faculty to act as a point of liaison and information for the examination (the internal coordinator). The internal coordinator should be an academic, so they can guide the external examiners through university research examination processes, as well as undertake some of the routine tasks (posting notices of the examination, booking a room, finding hospitality), which would normally be undertaken by the internal examiner. However, the internal coordinator should not be the student's supervisor.

Overseas examiners

The University's policy in relation to examiners from overseas is intended to ensure that students should, as far as possible, be examined by those well qualified to do so. The University has not therefore put a formal restriction on invitations to examiners from overseas. Boards are asked to consider examiners from within the UK and Europe as a first choice, and only to look further afield if there is no one appropriately qualified from within this group, and if the quality of the student's examination would be reduced without an examiner from elsewhere. Boards or committees are asked in these circumstances to try to fit the viva around a pre-arranged visit to the UK by the proposed external examiner or to consider granting permission for the examiner to attend remotely via video call (see section 7.3.4 below and Annexes D and E).

Other requirements

Examiners act on behalf of the body which appoints them, and there is no restriction on who may act as an examiner if they are considered suitable by a board/committee, bearing in mind conflicts of interest (see below). It is not necessary to hold a permanent post to act as an internal examiner, but it is important that the internal examiner should have expertise in the subject of the student's thesis, should understand the procedures which operate in Oxford, and have a clear sense of the expectations and standards associated with a successful Oxford doctoral thesis. To support those new to Oxford and/or new to PGR examining the internal coordinator role may also be used to support the internal examiner by acting as mentor and adviser on process.

Conflicts of interest

External examiners

No one in the following categories or circumstances should be appointed as an external examiner:

1. a member of a governing body or committee of the University or a current employee of the University;
2. *anyone with a contractual or personal relationship with either the student or their supervisor(s) or who has a financial interest in the research of the student: personal is taken here to mean a social and/or family connection;
3. anyone who is already, or knows they will be, in a position to significantly influence the future of a student, e.g. a person who is on the appointment panel for a post for which the student has applied;
4. anyone significantly involved in recent or current substantive collaborative research activities with the student; and
5. former staff members or students of the University unless a period of three years has elapsed.

*Relationships in this category will be on a spectrum, such that appointing bodies may exercise an element of discretion and consider carefully whether the relationship presents a potential risk of perceived or actual bias.

Departments and faculties should also carefully consider whether the same external examiner should be appointed for successive students of the same supervisor.

Internal examiners

An internal examiner should be sufficiently distant from the candidate and supervisor, both academically and personally, to ensure an impartial and objective opinion of the thesis. It is accepted, however, that in small departments/faculties there will inevitably have been some prior academic interaction between the examiner and candidate. The following should be considered:

- the supervisor should not be appointed as an internal examiner. However, it is permissible for a transfer or confirmation assessor to be appointed as an internal examiner,
- anyone who has had substantial co-authoring or collaborative involvement in the candidate's thesis should not be appointed as an internal examiner; and
- anyone having a close personal relationship with the candidate or supervisor should not be appointed as an internal examiner.

7.3.4 Remote vivas

Adjustments to the viva can be granted for disabled students. Applications for adjustments are made via the [GSO.19 form](#). Form [GSO.19c](#) gives information on the application process for students and staff. Further guidance on adjustments is available in section 7.4 and Annex C.

In exceptional circumstances, the relevant board has the power to grant permission for any or all, of the candidate and examiners to attend the viva remotely via video call. External examiners are most likely to request remote attendance, but it is also possible for internal examiners and the student to attend remotely. All examiners and the student must agree in writing to remote attendance by any party at the viva. Further guidance is available in Annexes D and E.

7.3.5 Timeframe for the appointment process

While the University places considerable importance on avoiding unnecessary delays in the examination of research degrees, it must follow procedures that are designed to preserve the consistency and fairness of the examination process. In particular, the procedures are designed to:

- minimise any direct contact between the student and the proposed examiners prior to the viva i.e. by passing the thesis and associated paperwork through the Submissions and Research Degrees team within Student Assessments;
- ensure that the names of proposed examiners are scrutinised and approved by or on behalf of the relevant responsible body; and
- recognise that examiners enter into a contract to act on behalf of the University in the examination process and must therefore be invited formally to act and must also formally accept the invitation.

Graduate Studies Committees (GSC) and/or Directors of Graduate Studies (DGS) are likely to be involved in the approval of examiners for research degrees. This is a stage at which delays can occur, and, if the approved examiners decline to act, where these can be lengthy. It is important that GSC and/or DGS are aware of the procedures and can intercede on the question of the timescale for the examination with the new appointees. Such examiners may not understand the importance of working to progress matters as quickly as possible.

If, for any reason, examiners wish to hold a viva fewer than four weeks after the thesis has been made available to them via the Research Thesis Digital Submission (RTDS) application or the Submissions and Research Degrees team, the relevant board has the

power to grant permission for this. All examiners and the student will need to agree in writing to the proposed date. Further guidance is available in Annex D.

7.3.6 Information about the examination process

The Submissions and Research Degrees team will provide examiners with a copy of the Memorandum of Guidance for Examiners ([GSO.5](#)). Information about the examination process is given to students in the document which accompanies the appointment of examiners form ([GSO.20a](#)). In addition, the relevant GSC and/or the DGS should ensure that the examination procedure in a subject includes guidance on the criteria against which the thesis will be examined (qualification descriptors are available from the [QAA website](#)).

7.3.7 Examination outcomes

Master of Letters and Master of Science by Research

Examiners for the MLitt or MSc (Res) must choose one of the following outcome recommendations:

- A. Award of the MLitt/MSc (Res) (without corrections)
- B. Award of the MLitt/MSc (Res) (with minor corrections)
- C. Potentially award the MLitt/MSc (Res) (following resubmission after major corrections)
- D. Potentially award the MLitt/MSc (Res) (following resubmission after major corrections and a mandatory viva)
- E. Reference back for further work on thesis and re-examination for MLitt/MSc (Res)
- F. No award (fail)

For a first MLitt/ MSc (Res) examination, examiners may only select from recommendations **A, B, C, D or E**; for a subsequent examination, examiners may select any one of **A-F**. Full explanation of these recommendations is available in the relevant Memorandum of Guidance for Examiners ([GSO.7 and GSO.7a](#)). Detailed criteria can be found in Appendix 2.

Doctor of Philosophy

Examiners for the DPhil must choose one of the following outcome recommendations:

- A. Award the DPhil (without corrections)
- B. Award the DPhil (with minor corrections)
- C. Potentially award the DPhil (following resubmission after major corrections)
- D. Potentially award the DPhil (following resubmission after major corrections and a mandatory viva)
- E. Student choice: to reference back for further work on the thesis and re-examination for the DPhil, or supplicate for MLitt/MSc (Res)
- F. Student choice: to reference back for further work on the thesis and either re-examination for the DPhil, or re-examination for MLitt/MSc (Res)
- G. Reference back for further work on the thesis and re-examination for MLitt/MSc (Res) (only)

H. [Award the MLitt/MSc \(Res\)](#)

I. [Award the MLitt/MSc \(Res\) \(with minor corrections\)](#)

J. [No award \(fail\)](#)

For a first DPhil examination, examiners can only select from recommendations A-F.

For a second examination, examiners can select from recommendations A-J.

For a third examination, examiners can select A, B, H, I, J. A full explanation of these recommendations is available in Section 6 of the Memorandum of Guidance for Examiners ([GSO.5](#)).

All examiners must agree on the merits of the thesis when awarding the DPhil and be satisfied that the student has:

- demonstrated a good general knowledge of the thesis subject;
- made a significant contribution to that particular field of learning;
- presented in a coherent and scholarly manner; and
- provided a satisfactory abstract of the thesis.

More detailed criteria for making the above recommendations can be found in Appendix 1.

The examiners should return their joint report to the relevant [Graduate Studies Assistant](#) no later than one month after the date of receipt of the corrected thesis by the designated examiner in cases where minor corrections have been requested, and ideally within two weeks of the date of the viva if no corrections are required.

The University's procedures are designed to ensure that the formal outcome of the examination is not made known until the recommendation from the examiners has been considered and accepted by or on behalf of the responsible body, while recognising that by asking for minor or major corrections to be completed, examiners will inevitably provide the student with an informal indication of their likely recommendation.

7.3.8 Enquiries before and after the viva

Where examiners have enquiries about a proposed examination (beyond those of a routine nature that can be dealt with by the Submissions and Research Degrees team, who can be contacted at researchdegrees@admin.ox.ac.uk), these should be directed to the DGS (and not to the supervisor).

A student who wishes to enquire about the outcome of an examination before the examiners' report has been considered by or on behalf of the responsible body should be directed to the DGS (with the explicit proviso that the DGS may decide to divulge nothing until the report has been formally considered by that body).

Where clarification is required from the examiners of any aspect of their report or recommendations, this may be sought on behalf of the relevant body by its chair or vice-chair or by the DGS.

The University attaches importance to supervisors (and students) not being involved in discussions about the validity of the examiners' recommendations before these have been

discussed by or on behalf of the responsible body, and officially released. Once officially released, a copy of the report will be sent to the student.

7.4 Adjustments for disability

In accordance with the provisions of the [Examination Regulations](#), students with disabilities may apply for adjustments to be made to their transfer and confirmation and final viva examinations using form [GSO.19](#). Adjustments can be requested at any point from offer of a place to submission; at the point of applying for transfer, at the point of applying for confirmation or at the point of applying for final viva/appointment of examiners. The relevant Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), using guidance issued by the Proctors, will determine whether the requested adjustment is one that they can approve, or one that must be approved by the Proctors. The relevant department is then responsible for making the necessary arrangements once approved. The Proctors' guidance to DGSs may be found at Annex C.

7.5 Complaints and appeals

If a student wishes to contest the outcome of a transfer or confirmation examination, either on procedural or academic grounds, they should first discuss the matter with their DGS, following the department or faculty's complaints and appeals procedure. If the student feels that a concern has not been satisfactorily settled by that means, then the student, the supervisor, or the college authority may put the appeal directly to the Proctors. The Proctors can only consider whether the procedures for reaching an academic decision were properly followed and cannot challenge the academic judgement of the assessors.

All complaints relating to the outcome of an examination for a research degree should normally be directed to the Proctors, according to the [University Academic Appeals Procedure](#).

7.6 Dispensation from consultation

As set out in the [General Regulations Governing Research Degrees](#) (§7, 2, (vi)), students may apply to the relevant board for dispensation from consultation for all or part(s) of their thesis, if there is good reason for this. Applications are made via the GSO.3c [form](#). Typical reasons would be that consultation or reproduction would put at risk confidential material or invalidate an application for a patent on a product or process described in a thesis.

[Further guidance](#) is available.

Section 8: Post-examination

8.1 Supervision following examination

Students whose outcome is minor corrections (Outcome B for DPhil and MLitt/MSc(Res)) should expect to receive supervisory guidance on the changes required to facilitate a successful resubmission of their thesis.

Students who receive a major corrections outcome either with or without a mandatory viva, or a reference back decision (Outcomes C-G for DPhil students and outcomes C-E for MLitt/MSc (Res) students) should expect a similar level of supervision as they had prior to the examination (see [section 4 – Supervision](#)). This should be with the explicit purpose of supporting the student to complete the necessary work as detailed in the examination report. This supervisory guidance will usually include regular meetings between the supervisor and the student until the time of resubmission. At this point the examiners will receive the updated thesis and then report their recommendation to the board. See Appendix 1: Indicative criteria for examination outcomes for DPhil and Appendix 2: Indicative criteria for examination outcomes for MLitt/MSc(Res).

Students should not expect to receive supervision while suspended (see below).

8.2 Suspension

Students whose outcome is minor corrections cannot request a period of suspension.

Students whose outcome is major corrections (with or without re-examination), or reference back, can request a period of suspension from the board of up to 12 months (with a minimum period of suspension of 4 weeks). Periods of suspension which were granted to the student prior to examination for the DPhil or MSc(Res) or MLitt are **NOT** included in this calculation. In exceptional circumstances, students can request further periods of suspension; such requests will be considered on their merits on behalf of the Council's Education Committee.

Approval of a post-outcome suspension follows the same process as pre-examination, i.e. it must be approved by the supervisor, department and college. However, conditions may not be placed on the student's return to study.

At the end of the period of suspension, the student will be considered to have returned to study, i.e. there is no return to study approval process. It is important that students are aware of this, as the time allowances for the completion of work start again immediately (once the agreed suspension period ends).

The period of suspension is intended to give the student time away from their studies for a fixed period and they are not expected to be working on their thesis nor to be receiving supervision. However, if a student does use the period of suspension to work on their thesis and decides to submit their thesis before the end of the period of suspension, their suspension will automatically end and the submission of the corrected thesis will be considered valid.

8.3 Withdrawal

[This and section 8.4 taken from existing 7.3.7]

If a student is unable to complete their minor or major corrections, or to revise the thesis following reference back, within the time allowed (including allowances for a period of suspension, as set out in the relevant [Examination Regulations](#) for the DPhil, MLitt and MSc (Res)), then their enrolment will be withdrawn.

8.4 Reinstatement

Candidates who have been withdrawn may subsequently apply for reinstatement to the graduate register. The application should have the support of their supervisor and college; the thesis should have been submitted incorporating the required corrections/revisions (along with a separate report indicating the changes, in the case of major corrections or reference back); and any reinstatement fee should have been paid.

The relevant body may grant permission for reinstatement provide that:

- in the case of **minor corrections**, no more than **six months** have passed since the candidate was notified of the outcome of their examination;
- in the case of **major corrections**, no more than **twelve months** have passed since the candidate was notified of the outcome of their examination; and
- in the case of **reference back**, no more than **twenty-four months** have passed since the candidate was notified of the outcome of their examination.

If a candidate is unable to apply within the above timeframes, an application for exceptional reinstatement must be made to Education Committee. Applications should only be passed on to Education Committee after scrutiny by and with the endorsement of the relevant body. Candidates must meet the requirements for reinstatement set by the relevant body, and in addition provide a statement explaining why it is reasonable for Education Committee to permit their reinstatement and outline the circumstances that have prevented earlier submission. Education Committee will consider the length of time since the student's enrolment was withdrawn; the reasons for the delay; and the views of the relevant body, supervisor and college.

Education Committee will not normally consider such applications for reinstatement if **sixty months** or more have passed since the candidate was notified of the outcome of their examination.

8.5 Submission of finalised thesis and degree conferral requirements

[Previously section 7.6]

All successful DPhil, MSc(Res), and MLitt students are required, on the granting of leave to supplicate, to submit an electronic version of their finalised thesis to the [Oxford Research Archive](#).

Students are no longer required to submit a hardbound copy of their thesis to the Bodleian Libraries, with the exception of students who have been granted permanent dispensation from consultation of their entire thesis, who should, in addition to the finalised copy of the

thesis submitted to the Oxford Research Archive, submit a finalised hardbound copy of their thesis for deposit in the relevant university library. Students whose thesis (or part of the thesis) is in a non-standard format which cannot be submitted electronically (e.g. a 3D artwork, or artefact) should also submit a physical copy for deposit.

Students who do not fulfil these requirements will not be permitted to have their degree conferred.

Once a student has graduated it is not possible for that student to go back and alter any choices made regarding their qualification. For example, after attending a graduation there is no longer any possibility of being re-instated to work towards a different award or to appeal the outcome of the examination.

Appendix 1: Indicative criteria for examination outcomes - DPhil

This guidance is designed to support examiners when deciding on the appropriate outcome for a DPhil examination. With regards to making the required changes to the thesis, if one or more of the supporting criteria is applicable then it is advised to select that outcome.

Examiners are asked to consider the substantial significance of the student's work in line with what can reasonably be expected of a capable and diligent student after three or at most four years of full-time study (eight years for part-time study).

Outcome	Supporting criteria	Deadline	Communication
A. Award DPhil (without corrections)	<p>Examiners satisfied student fulfils all outlined criteria, and thesis merits the award. Examiners can confirm in their report that student has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good general knowledge of thesis subject • Made significant contribution to that particular field of learning • Presented in a coherent and scholarly manner • Provided a satisfactory abstract 	N/A	Examiners must report their recommendation to the board for ratification.
B. Award DPhil (with minor corrections)	<p>Examiners satisfied thesis is of sufficient merit, however minor corrections are needed before thesis deposited. Examiners must be satisfied with corrections made before they submit their report.</p> <p>Changes required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited formatting, typographical, stylistic, or grammatical errors, layout changes • Limited corrections to references • Limited alterations to arguments or logic for the purposes of clarity (where further research by student is not required) 	A period of two months (from date student notified of outcome of their examination) is available for the student to resubmit with the necessary corrections.	<p>Examiners should provide list of minor corrections to student within two weeks of viva.</p> <p>Examiners must ensure student corrects thesis to their satisfaction before they submit their report.</p> <p>Examiners should agree between themselves which of them will consider & sign-off corrected thesis.</p>

<p>C. Potentially award DPhil (resubmit after major corrections)</p>	<p>Examiners satisfied thesis has sufficient potential merit, however major corrections needed, which do not affect originality of thesis or require further research.</p> <p>Changes required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant formatting, typographical, stylistic, or grammatical errors, layout changes • Widespread corrections to references • Significant alterations to arguments or logic for clarity • Limited further analysis to help with articulation of arguments • Other extensive corrections (see relevant divisional guidance) <p>Student to provide the corrected thesis with a summary list of responses to the examiners' points.</p>	<p>A period of six months (from date student notified of outcome of their examination) is available for student to provide corrected thesis.</p>	<p>Examiners must report preliminary recommendation to board with description of major corrections needed.</p> <p>Board must consider the examiners' recommendation & confirm the outcome. When student has submitted revised thesis both examiners must be satisfied with the student's corrections before they make recommendation to the board.</p> <p>If examiners' recommendation is not to award following consideration of corrected thesis, a viva should be held.</p>
<p>D. Potentially award DPhil (resubmit after major corrections & mandatory viva)</p>	<p>Examiners satisfied thesis has sufficient potential merit, however major corrections needed, which do not affect the originality of thesis or require further research. Re-examination also needed.</p> <p>Changes required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further analysis in some aspects of thesis which requires limited additional research • When failure to articulate arguments fully in thesis & it is not demonstrated in examination that research/analysis has been fully undertaken • Widespread typographical, stylistic or grammatical errors, which may affect comprehension • Formatting errors, and/or presentational or layout changes, which alter meaning of data, or arguments presented 	<p>A period of six months (from date student notified of outcome of their examination) is available for the student to provide the corrected thesis.</p>	<p>Examiners must report this preliminary recommendation to the board with a description of major corrections needed.</p> <p>Board must confirm its recommendation.</p> <p>Both examiners must be satisfied with the student's corrections before recommendations of award are made to the board.</p> <p>If the outcome is 'not award', or 'award with minor corrections', then outcomes E-G should be recommended.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other extensive corrections, which require limited reworking or reinterpretation of the intellectual content of thesis <p>Student to provide the corrected thesis with summary list of responses to the examiners' points.</p>		
E. Student choice: reference back & re-examine for DPhil or supplicate for MLitt/MSc(Res)	<p>Student choice.</p> <p>Referencing back for re-examination for DPhil - changes required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional research and analysis needed, but still potential to meet DPhil standard • Arguments not articulated adequately, and examination did not demonstrate sufficient research/analysis has been done • Widespread typographical, stylistic, or grammatical errors, preventing comprehension • In the meaning of data or arguments presented • Substantial presentational errors, needing extensive work (needed for comprehension) <p>If student choice is to revise the thesis for DPhil, a separate, concise report of specific changes made should be presented along with the resubmitted thesis. (MSD, Humanities, OUDCE - word limit 1,000, MPLS - word limit 2,000).</p> <p>MLitt/MSc(Res), if student chooses this route, and thesis has reached standard required, examiners should state which should be offered to student.</p> <p>If the student's thesis does not meet standard & needs further work (more than minor corrections) to reach MLitt/MSc(Res), outcome F or G should be selected.</p>	<p>If student choice is to revise thesis for DPhil, then it must be resubmitted no later than 12 months after the board's agreement of the student's choice. The student can then apply again for appointment of examiners.</p> <p>If student choice is MLitt/MSc(Res) & examiners state minor corrections necessary, a period of two months will be available for the student to make corrections & resubmit thesis.</p>	<p>Examiners must report recommendation to the board.</p> <p>Board confirms its recommendation and notifies the student.</p> <p>Student then notifies the department of their 'choice' via the Graduate Studies Assistant.</p> <p>Student then either resubmits or attends graduation.</p>

F. Student choice: reference back & re-examine for DPhil or re-examine for MLitt/MSc(Res)	Student choice. Criteria as above (see information in outcome E)	As above (see information in outcome E) for the deadline details & requirements for resubmitting.	As above (see information for communication in outcome E)
G. Reference back & re-examine for MLitt/MSc(Res) (only)	Changes required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional research and further analysis for potential to reach standard of MLitt/MSc (Res) • Significant amendments to articulate arguments adequately to meet required standard • See also changes required in outcome E 	The revised thesis must be submitted no later than 12 months after the student was informed about the outcome of the examination.	If examiners recommend reference back of the thesis, the examiners must include a statement setting out where the thesis falls below standard required (to be shared with the student) in their report to the board. If examiners cannot state how, within the time allowed, the thesis can be sufficiently altered, they should make that statement and inform the relevant board.
H. Award MLitt/MSc(Res)	Student meets requirements for MLitt/MSc(Res)		Examiners must report their recommendation to the board for ratification.
I. Award MLitt/MSc(Res) (with minor corrections)	Examiners are satisfied that the thesis merits the award with minor corrections, & that the student fulfils the below criteria. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good general knowledge of thesis subject • Made significant contribution to that particular field of learning • Presented in a coherent and scholarly manner • Provided a satisfactory abstract 	A period of two months is available for the student to resubmit with the necessary corrections.	Examiners should provide list of minor corrections to student within two weeks of viva. Examiners must ensure student corrects thesis to their satisfaction before they submit their report.

<p>J No award (fail)</p>	<p>Examiners think it is unlikely the student will reach the standard required for MLitt/MSc(Res) within the time allowed.</p> <p>Examiners must include their reasons for this option in their report & this may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundamental flaws in collection of data, &/or analysis, &/or the standard of argument used within the thesis. • Student has not acknowledged these flaws or been able to set out how they would rectify these issues during examination 		<p>The board must confirm the examiners' decision.</p>
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From MT25

Appendix 2: Indicative criteria for examination outcomes - MLitt/MSc(Res)

This guidance is designed to support examiners when deciding on the appropriate outcome for an MLitt/MSc(Res) examination. With regards to making any required changes to the thesis, if one or more of the supporting criteria is applicable then it is advised to select that outcome.

Examiners are asked to consider a student's contribution to knowledge or understanding of their field in line with what can reasonably be expected of a capable and diligent student after a minimum of one or two years of full-time study.

Outcome	Supporting criteria	Deadline	Communication
A. Award the MLitt/MSc(Res) (without corrections)	<p>Examiners satisfied student fulfils all outlined criteria & thesis merits the award.</p> <p>Examiners can confirm in their report that the student has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good general knowledge of thesis subject • Student demonstrated competence in investigating chosen topic • Made worthwhile contribution to knowledge and understanding in chosen field of learning • Presented in a coherent & scholarly manner 	N/A	Examiners jointly report satisfactory examination outcome to the board, who can then confirm their recommendation. The GSA will communicate this to the student
B. Award the MLitt/MSc(Res) (with minor corrections)	<p>Examiners satisfied thesis is of sufficient merit, however, minor corrections needed.</p> <p>Changes required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typographical, spelling, or grammatical errors • Mistakes or inconsistencies in references or equations • Inaccuracies in transcription (whether in English or foreign language citations) <p>Errors should not affect substance of an argument or indicate student's lack of regular procedures for presenting research in subject area.</p>	Students must complete minor corrections within two months of receipt of list of corrections.	<p>Complete Minor Corrections Notice Form & include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date minor corrections list given to student (must be within two weeks of oral examination) • Which examiner will be checking corrections • Return to relevant Graduate Studies Assistant (GSA) <p>Examiners are satisfied with revisions in thesis & recommend the award without reservation within their joint report to the board.</p>

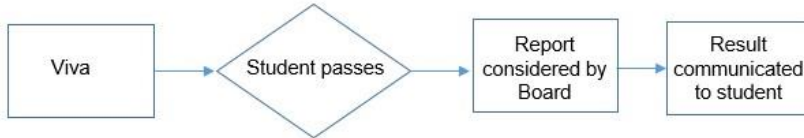
	In the case of minor corrections examiners can provide relevant guidance to the student during the oral examination.		Examiners think the thesis requires correction – then both examiners must agree & recommend the thesis is referred back for re-examination. A clear statement of what is wrong with the thesis must accompany the recommendation.
C. Potentially award MLitt/MSc(Res) (resubmit after major corrections)	<p>Examiners satisfied thesis has sufficient potential merit, however major corrections needed, which do not require further research.</p> <p>Changes required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant formatting, typographical, stylistic, or grammatical errors, layout changes • Widespread corrections to references • Significant alterations to arguments, or logic for clarity • Limited further analysis to help with articulation of arguments • Other extensive corrections (see relevant divisional guidance) <p>Student to provide the corrected thesis with a summary list of responses to the examiners' points.</p>	A period of six months (from date student notified of outcome of their examination) is available for the student to provide the corrected thesis.	<p>Examiners must report this preliminary recommendation to the board with a description of major corrections needed.</p> <p>Board must consider the examiners' recommendation and confirm the outcome.</p> <p>When the student has submitted revised thesis both examiners must be satisfied with the student's corrections before they make a recommendation to the board.</p> <p>If examiners' recommendation is not to award following consideration of the corrected thesis, a viva should be held.</p>
D. Potentially award MLitt/MSc(Res) (resubmit after major corrections & mandatory viva)	<p>Examiners satisfied thesis has sufficient potential merit, & does not require further research, however major corrections & re-examination needed.</p> <p>Changes required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further analysis in some aspects of thesis which require limited additional research • When failure to articulate arguments fully in thesis & it is not demonstrated in examination 	A period of six months (from date student notified of outcome of their examination) is available for the student to provide the corrected thesis.	<p>Examiners must report this preliminary recommendation to the board with a description of major corrections needed.</p> <p>Board must confirm its recommendation.</p>

	<p>that research/analysis has been fully undertaken</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widespread typographical, stylistic or grammatical errors, which may affect comprehension • Formatting errors, &/or presentational or layout changes, which alter meaning of data, or arguments presented • Other extensive corrections, which require limited reworking or reinterpretation of the intellectual content of thesis (see also relevant divisional guidance) <p>Student to provide the corrected thesis with a summary list of responses to the examiners' points.</p>		<p>Both examiners must be satisfied with the student's corrections before recommendations of award are made to the board.</p> <p>If the outcome is 'not award', or 'award with minor corrections', then outcomes E-F should be recommended.</p>
<p>E. Reference back for further work on the thesis & re-examination for MLitt/MSc(Res)</p>	<p>Examiners see a clear prospect of the thesis being brought up to the standard required (though not yet there).</p> <p>Changes required could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arguments not articulated adequately, & examination did not demonstrate sufficient research/analysis has been done • Widespread typographical, stylistic, or grammatical errors, preventing comprehension • In the meaning of data or arguments presented • Substantial presentational errors, needing extensive work (needed for comprehension) <p>Examiners should provide a clear statement of what is wrong with the thesis & how the student should revise it (no additional guidance/instructions should be given to student). Student can discuss this</p>	<p>12 months allowed for revision & to resubmit thesis.</p>	<p>Examiners must take responsibility for all communication with each other, for arranging oral examination & for notifying student of arrangements made.</p>

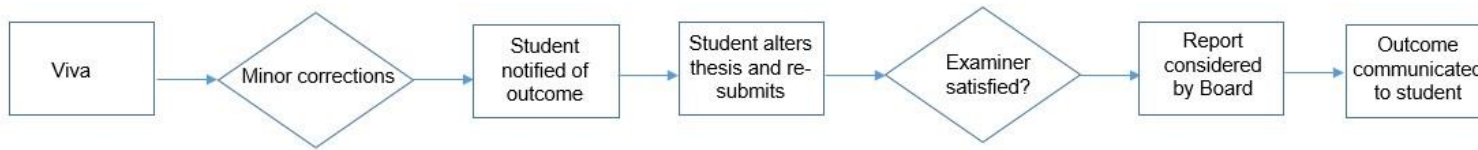
	<p>statement with their supervisor, but not directly with examiners.</p> <p>Student must include separate report of specific changes made to thesis when resubmitting (MSD, Humanities, OUDCE - word limit 1,000, MPLS - word limit 2,000).</p> <p>Student must be orally examined if a further reference back is recommended.</p>		
F. No award (fail)	<p>This outcome is not available on first examination.</p> <p>On second, or after subsequent unsuccessful examinations, the examiners must state the reasons for not recommending a further reference back.</p> <p>Potential reasons for this option may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundamental flaws in analysis, &/or the standard of argument used within the thesis • Student has not acknowledged these flaws, or been able to set out how they would rectify these issues during examination 		Examiners communicate that thesis is not of sufficient merit to qualify student for the award & make that recommendation to the board.

Appendix 3: Flowcharts to support understanding of the outcomes for the DPhil examination from A - J

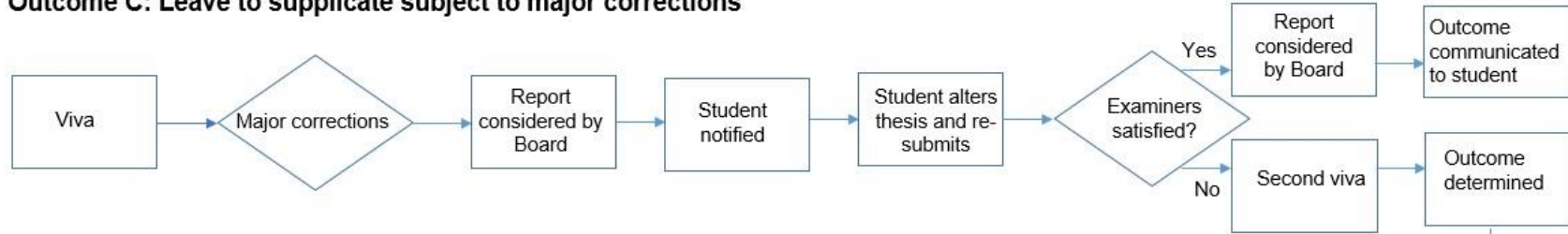
Outcome A: Leave to supplicate for DPhil



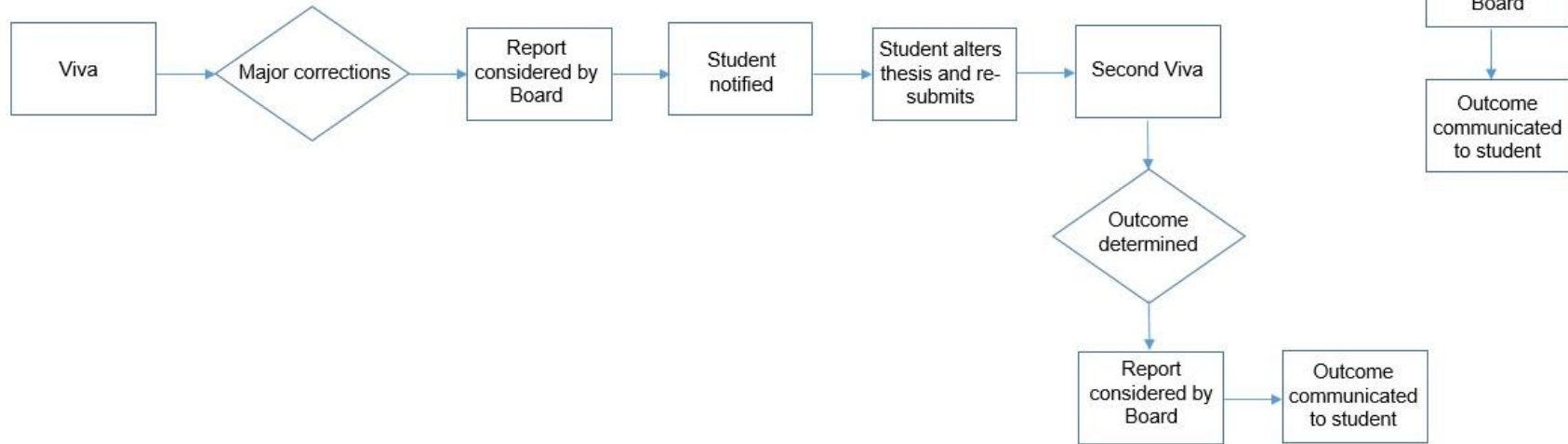
Outcome B: Leave to supplicate subject to minor corrections



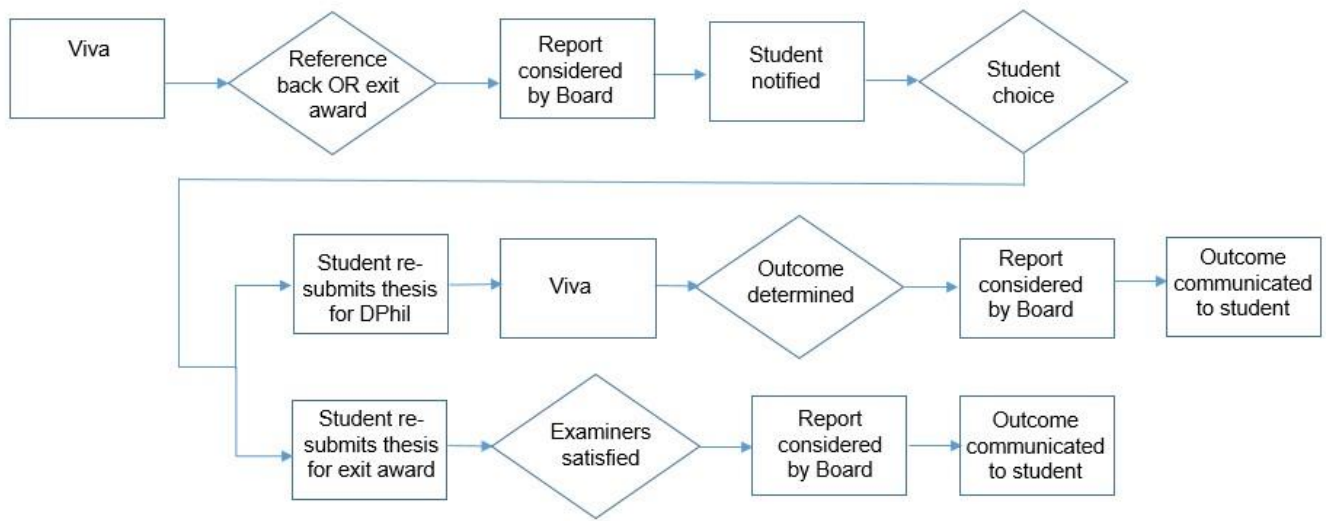
Outcome C: Leave to supplicate subject to major corrections



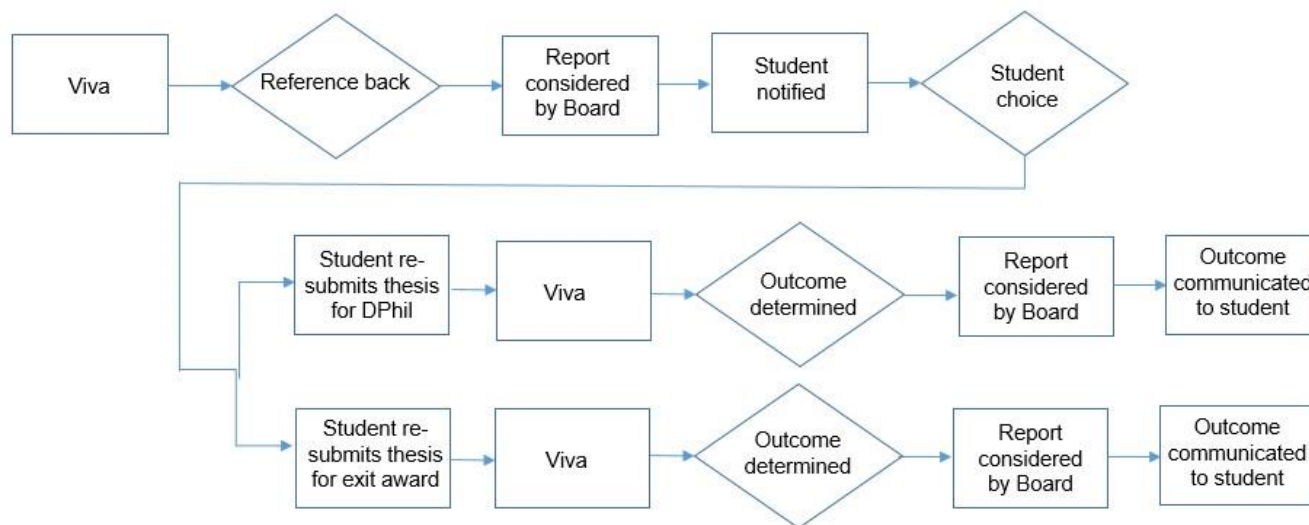
Outcome D: Re-examination following major corrections to the thesis



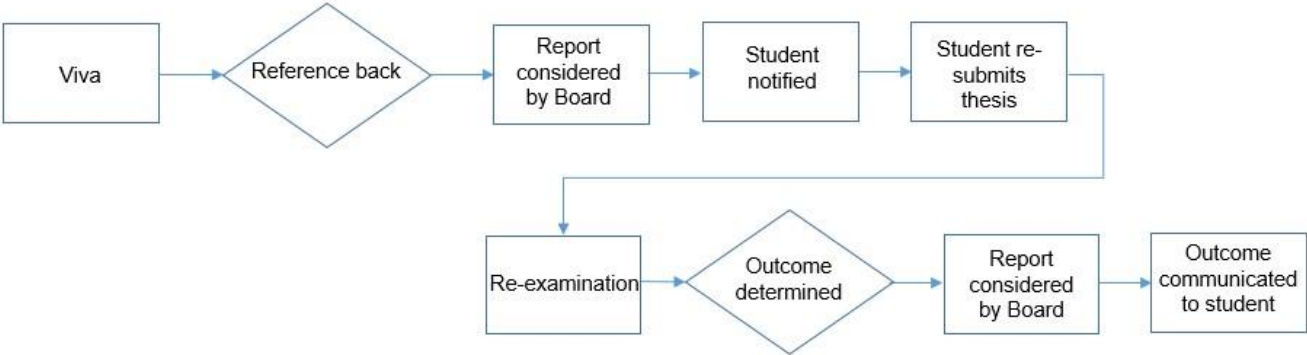
Outcome E: Reference back of the thesis OR leave to supplicate for Master of Letters or Master of Science by Research following minor corrections



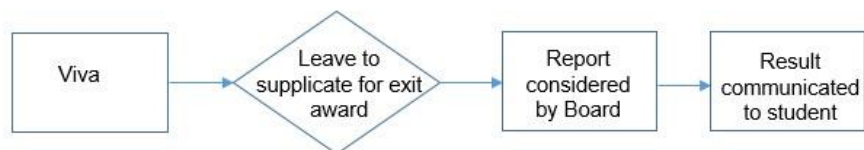
Outcome F: Reference back of the thesis followed by re-examination for the award of DPhil OR the award of Master of Letters or Master of Science by Research



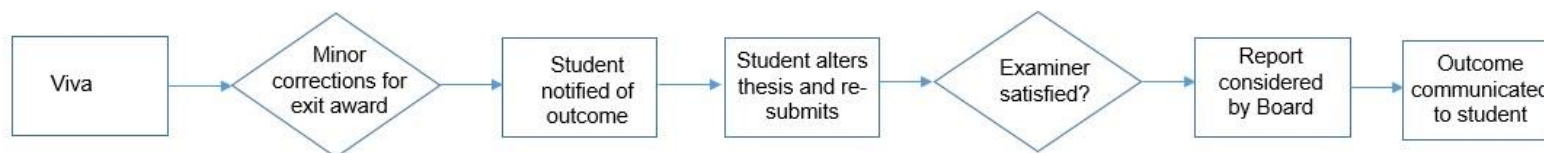
Outcome G: Reference back of the thesis followed by re-examination for the award of Master of Letters or Master of Science by Research



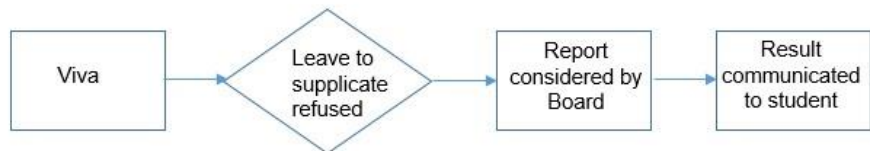
Outcome H: Leave to supplicate for the award of Master of Letters or Master of Science by Research



Outcome I: Leave to supplicate for the award of Master of Letters of Master of Science by Research subject to minor corrections



Outcome J: Leave to supplicate refused



Appendix 4: Tabular summary of available viva outcomes

Viva outcomes for DPhil

Outcome	Available at first examination	Always available at second examination	Only available at second examination if similar outcome not previously given	Available at third examination
A. Award DPhil (without corrections)	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes
B. Award DPhil (with minor corrections)	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes
C. Potentially award DPhil (resubmit after major corrections)	Yes	No	Yes	No
D. Potentially award DPhil (resubmit after major corrections & mandatory viva)	Yes	No	Yes	No
E. Student choice: reference back & re-examine for DPhil or apply for MLitt/MSc(Res)	Yes	No	Yes	No
F. Student choice: reference back & re-examine for DPhil or for MLitt/MSc(Res)	Yes	No	Yes	No
G. Reference back & re-examine for MLitt/MSc(Res) (only)	No	No	Yes	No
H. Award MLitt/MSc(Res)	No	Yes	N/A	Yes
I. Award MLitt/MSc(Res) (with minor corrections)	No	Yes	N/A	Yes
J. No award (fail)	No	Yes	N/A	Yes

Viva outcomes for MLitt/MSc(Res)

Outcome	Available at first examination	Always available at second examination	Only available at second examination if similar outcome not previously given	Available at third examination
A. Award MLitt/MSc(Res) (without corrections)	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes
B. Award MLitt/MSc(Res) (with minor corrections)	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes
C. Potentially award MLitt/MSc(Res) (resubmit after major corrections)	Yes	No	Yes	No
D. Potentially award MLitt/MSc(Res) (resubmit after major corrections & mandatory viva)	Yes	No	Yes	No
E. Reference back & re-examine for MLitt/MSc(Res)	Yes	No	Yes	No
F. No award (fail)	No	Yes	N/A	Yes

From MT25