

## Appendix C

### Role of Examination Advisor for Research Degree Examinations Notes of Guidance

Please refer to the Graduate School website for the *Guide to Examinations for Higher Degrees by Research* which provides information on examination procedures for research students and the relevant University Regulations.

#### The viva

1. Where there are two External Examiners (and no Internal Examiner) appointed, the responsibility for fixing a time and place for the viva and informing the examiners and student rests with the Examination Advisor. Otherwise, the Examination Advisor should liaise with the Internal Examiner about these arrangements.
2. Prior to the viva the Examination Advisor may request the Graduate School to supply them with copies of the independent report of each examiner. The Graduate School will send these onto the Examination Advisor, subject to their receipt within the Graduate School in advance of the viva.
3. At the beginning of the viva, the Examination Advisor should introduce the examiners and explain to the student what is going to happen.
4. The Examination Advisor should be present throughout the viva, but is not expected to take an active role in questioning the student. However, the Advisor should have regard to how the student is reacting and, if the student is clearly distressed or misunderstands a question, to intervene either to put the student at ease or to ask the examiner to clarify the question. The Examination Advisor should also ensure that the student is given an opportunity at the end of the viva to make any additional comments.
5. The Examination Advisor should be present while the examiners reach their decision, so as to be able to advise them on the options open to them and University procedures (for example, where the examiners do not agree). If the student is to be told straight away of the outcome of the viva, again the Examination Advisor should be present to clarify any questions on subsequent procedures that the student might have.
6. In the case of recommendation (b) minor corrections or (c) major corrections and where there are two external examiners, the Examination Advisor is responsible for the nomination of one of the external examiners to check that the corrections have been completed satisfactorily. The Examination Advisor is also responsible for forwarding the corrected theses for checking to the nominated external examiner.

#### The Examination Advisor's report

The Examination Advisor should complete the relevant section of the joint report of the examiners. If the examiners recommend that the degree for which the student has submitted be awarded, no more than a signature and a brief summary comment on the viva from the Examination Advisor may be necessary. This should list the main issues covered in the viva and state that the student's performance was considered by the examiners to be satisfactory. If it was necessary for the Examination Advisor to intervene at any stage, this should be noted in the report and the circumstances explained.

If the decision is for resubmission, to award a lesser degree or no degree at all, a longer report is likely to be required, especially if the performance in the viva had a bearing on this decision. The Examination Advisor is not expected to provide a full transcript of discussions. It is up to the examiners to explain why the student's performance in the viva was unsatisfactory. The Examination Advisor should be able to say that the viva was conducted fairly and that the student was given adequate opportunity to answer the questions put by the examiners.