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**PGR student training:**

# **Post-progression PGR Briefing (what happens after submission?)**

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***Submit your  
thesis***

***Viva voce  
examination***



***Change title to  
Dr. on  
everything!***

***Graduation  
celebration***



**CONGRATULATIONS!**





**Submit your thesis**

**Examiners read and report on thesis**

**Examiners meet and discuss the exam**



**Reports considered by Research Degrees Committee**

**Examiners provide a post examination report**

**Viva voce examination**

**Corrections or resubmission of thesis**

**Deposit in the library**

**Senate confirms the award**

**Graduation celebration**

**Fees check**



**CONGRATULATIONS!**





# Let's break it down: what happens after submission?



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## To the thesis:

- These are sent to the examiners (internal/external or two externals). They often need 6-10 weeks to read, report and agree a schedule for the viva  
[You should know who your examiners are, you should be part of the discussion with the supervisory team over their selection.](#)
- Their reports are called pre-viva reports (previously called Part I). They are asked to make judgements against the criteria for a PhD  
[You will be able to see these after RDC have confirmed the exam outcome](#)
- The examiners meet with the chair of the examination before the exam to plan how they will do the viva examination

- The ***creation and interpretation of new knowledge***, through original research or other advanced scholarship and/or creative practice, of a quality to satisfy peer review, ***extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication***; ✓
- ***A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge*** which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional or creative practice; ✓
- The general ability to ***conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge***, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems; ✓
- ***A detailed understanding of the applicable techniques*** for research and advanced academic enquiry. ✓

- It is the student's own work ✓





# Let's break it down: what happens after submission?



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## What can you do?:

- Plan for your viva – using the lessons learnt when you attend the “viva survivor” workshop  
[www.keele.ac.uk/academicdevelopment/bookaworkshop/vivasurvivor/](http://www.keele.ac.uk/academicdevelopment/bookaworkshop/vivasurvivor/)
- Remember – you have spent months *preparing a written document* about your research – ***but this is an oral examination***
- You need to take a fresh look at your thesis through a different lens



# Let's break it down: what happens after submission?



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## What can you do?:

### Look at the “big picture”

- Can you describe what your original contribution is?
- Did you answer the research question, if not, why not?
- How should this project now be taken forward?
- How does your research tie into new work published since you did your literature review?
- With hindsight, what would you do differently and why?

### For the thesis as well as each chapter...think...

- Why are you doing this?
- What did you do?
- What did you find?
- Why is this important?



# Let's break it down: what happens after submission?



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## What can you do?:

Look at the detail

- What were the key data in each chapter – why are they important?
- What are the relative strengths and weaknesses of the approach taken/findings produced and be ready to talk about them.
- Don't "knock" your own research, but be prepared to discuss their limitations.
- Can you identify and be ready to highlight the key original findings?
- Can you explain the implications of your research to a specialist audience?
- Why have you cited evidence A, but not evidence B, in your study?





## Let's break it down: what happens at the viva?



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- Give yourself time to arrive. Food, drink and toilet!
- Bring your thesis (organised – use post it notes), pad and paper for notes
- These *typically* take 2-3 hours
- It will be you, the two examiners (internal/external or two externals) and a chairperson. The chairperson is there to ensure the process is followed appropriately and not there to examine you. ***Supervisors do not normally attend. You must agree for them to attend (as well as the examiners) and should not feel pressured to do so – this is your exam.***
- Do not worry about silent parts (they are likely working out where to go next) – and do expect at some point that you cannot answer the questions



Let's break it down: what happens at the viva?



***Try to enjoy it!***

It is a seminal moment in your career – you, as an expert, talking about your research with other experts in the field.



## Let's break it down: what happens after the viva?



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- After the examination you will likely be asked to leave the room whilst the examiners confer
- On your return they will inform you of their **recommendation**
- Before you leave the exam, make sure you know where you are getting your feedback from – can you take the annotated theses now?
- The examiners write a joint-post viva report (previously called the Part II). The pre and post viva reports are considered by the Research Degree Committee. If the outcome is straight forward, this is often done as a Chair's action by email – more complex outcomes will need to await the next meeting of the committee.
- You must not confer with the examiners during this period – it may appear that you are trying to alter the examination outcome
- You are “officially” informed of the outcome after the RDC meeting – the pre and post viva reports can be shared with you at this time.



# Let's break it down: what happens after the viva? The possible OUTCOMES



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- **Recommendation One: Pass**

**This is somewhat uncommon**

You can bind and deposit your thesis with the library. You will receive advice on the date of the next Senate meeting (goes on thesis) – don't change the thesis title! Any corrections provided are discretionary.

- **Recommendation Two: Minor corrections**

**This is common**

You have between 3-6 months to make corrections and have them checked by a designated examiner(s). Requests for 4-6 months need to explain the circumstances (eg. employment, care responsibilities etc) and cannot be because there are lots of corrections required. After the examiner(s) are satisfied, Student records will inform you that you can deposit your thesis in the library. You can submit corrections before the 3-6 months deadline you have been provided.

*You are advised not to correspond with the examiner beyond providing the corrected materials. If you are unsure of what is required, discuss this with your supervisor.*



## Let's break it down: what happens after the viva? The possible OUTCOMES



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- **Recommendation Three: Major corrections** **This is less common**  
You have up to 12 months to make substantial corrections. You must re-register with the University, and pay fees. On resubmission, the examiners review the corrections and make a recommendation – this may include a second viva (although not common). The examiners for a resubmission have fewer outcomes available to them – for example, major corrections are not allowed at this time.
- **Recommendation Four: Award an MPhil or MRes** **This is uncommon**  
You can bind and then deposit your thesis with the library
- **Recommendation Five: Award an MPhil or MRes after major corrections.** **This is uncommon, but more common than Recommendation four.** Dealt with in the same way as recommendation three.



## Let's break it down: what happens after the viva? The possible OUTCOMES



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- **Recommendation Six: Fail** **Very uncommon**
- **Recommendation Seven (joint only): Adjudicator required** **I have only seen this once in 5 years of working in the area.**

Students can lodge an Academic Complaint based on the RDC decision. The grounds for this complaint are provided to you at the time of the notification.



## The final steps



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- ***Follow the guidance on lodging your thesis. If you do not deposit your thesis, you do not have the award.***
- After you deposit your thesis, a check is made on unpaid fees.
- At the next Senate meeting, the library list of submitted theses are approved – ***this is the official date of the award of your Doctorate.***
- This list is also used to invite you for your graduation.



**Thank you for your attention**  
**Any questions?**

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