Please note:

All defense documentation for the SGS Final Oral Exam (FOE) must be submitted to the IMS a minimum of 9 working weeks prior to the examination date.

For a Departmental Oral Exam, all defense documentation must be submitted to the IMS a minimum of 6 working weeks prior to the examination date.
# Table of Contents

Eligibility to Defend ........................................................................................................................... 3
Timeline for Completion ........................................................................................................................... 3
Fees and Bursaries in the Final Year ....................................................................................................... 3
Confidentiality and Intellectual Property ............................................................................................... 4
PhD Candidacy ......................................................................................................................................... 4
The Thesis ................................................................................................................................................ 4
Thesis Preparation Guidelines .................................................................................................................. 5
Thesis FAQs ............................................................................................................................................... 9
Final Program Advisory Committee (PAC) Approval for Defense ...................................................... 10
Waiver of the IMS Departmental Oral Examination ............................................................................... 11
Scheduling the Examination(s) ............................................................................................................... 12
Departmental Oral Examination ............................................................................................................. 12
Members of the Departmental Oral Exam Committee ........................................................................... 13
Departmental Oral Examination Rules of Procedure ............................................................................ 14
The SGS Final Oral Exam ........................................................................................................................ 16
Members of the Final Oral Examination Committee ............................................................................. 17
External Examiner Criteria ...................................................................................................................... 18
Final Oral Exam Rules of Procedure ...................................................................................................... 19
Examination Day Tips ............................................................................................................................ 20
Submission of the Final Thesis ................................................................................................................ 21
General FAQs ......................................................................................................................................... 21
Staff Contacts ......................................................................................................................................... 23
PhD Thesis Defense and Program Completion Checklist ...................................................................... 24
PhD Departmental Oral Waiver Request Form ....................................................................................... 25
Final Oral Examination External Examiner Nomination Form ............................................................... 27
PhD Thesis Defense Nomination Form .................................................................................................... 28
Electronic Thesis & Dissertation Submission Checklist ........................................................................ 29
FOE Committee Membership Requirements ......................................................................................... 30
Eligibility to Defend:

The successful PhD Candidate is expected to:

- Have completed all required coursework.
- **Achieved PhD Candidacy**.
- Be an expert in their specific area of knowledge and well-versed in general knowledge of the field.
- Produce a thesis that is roughly the equivalent of three full research manuscripts in a peer-reviewed scientific journal. Prior publication is encouraged.

The PhD Final Oral Defense procedures include a final Program Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting, and two oral examinations: the PhD Departmental Oral Examination (IMS) and the Final Oral Examination (SGS). Both examinations include a student presentation, questioning and vote. Some students benefit from two examinations. For others it is redundant. The Departmental Oral Exam can be waived upon request, although final approval of the waiver is at the discretion of the Graduate Coordinators.

Timeline for Completion

A timeline for degree completion is available on the IMS [website here](#).

Writing up and defending your PhD thesis takes 7-12 months (3-4 months for writing, 1-3 months for thesis proofing/review, and 3-5 months for the examination process). To ensure timely completion, you should:

- Review these PhD defense guidelines prior to starting to write the thesis.
- Discuss the process with your Supervisor and PAC members as early as possible.
- Complete course requirements early in the program.
- Send regular thesis drafts to your Supervisor and PAC committee to review and set deadlines for return of comments. Allow at least one month for review of the final draft by the PAC members.
- Book all meetings well in advance.
- Review the [Completion Checklist](#) in these guidelines.
- Meet with a Graduate Coordinator if there are any concerns about the defense.

Fees and Bursaries in the Final Year

Fees in the final year of your degree are levied on a monthly basis. You have until the 15th of each month before fees are charged for that month. For example, if you electronically submit your final thesis to SGS by April 15th, you will only pay fees for March. If you submit the final thesis after April 15th, you will pay fees for April.

For comprehensive information on fees in your final year, visit [Final Year Fees](#) on the SGS website or contact the [Student Accounts Office](#).

Students are required to pay outstanding University fees before their Final Oral Examination.

**Apply for a Doctoral Completion Award (DCA):** PhD students who are in the first year outside the funded cohort may apply for a DCA.
Confidentiality and Intellectual Property

Make an appointment with a Graduate Coordinator early in your degree if your student stipend is derived from a contract or your research project is associated with an industrial contract. Industrial support of research may limit the communication of research findings. This may affect your thesis and defense. Guidelines for Faculty of Medicine Graduate Students and Supervisors in the Context of Commercialization of Inventions based on Thesis-Related Research is available here.

PhD Candidacy

By the end of year 3 of the program, all PhD students are expected to have completed specific degree requirements, exclusive of thesis writing and defense. These are:

Courses:
- MSC1011Y: indicated on the transcript or academic history with a CR upon completion. For questions related to this course please get in touch with Michelle Rosen.
- For students with a MSc degree: One full graduate course equivalent.
- For PhD Direct Entry students or MSc students who transferred to the PhD program: Two full graduate course equivalents.
- Additional degree requirements for a collaborative program, if applicable. Check with your collaborative program administrator for specific requirements.

These are minimum course requirements. Your Supervisor and PAC may request that you take additional courses towards your degree. Check on ROSI/ACORN to make sure you have been correctly enrolled and credited for your courses.

- Regular PAC meetings: at least four PAC meetings must have been held and reports filed in the IMS office by the end of year 3 of the PhD. For students who have transferred to the PhD from the Masters, your transfer exam does not count as a PAC meeting. Similarly, the qualifying exam for PhD students does not count as a PAC meeting.

For candidacy related questions please get in touch with Hazel Pollard.

The Thesis

Your Supervisor and PAC are responsible for guiding you about thesis content and research completion. The Supervisor and PAC should ensure that they are prompt in reviewing, correcting, and editing thesis drafts. Make sure that your Supervisor and PAC review each part of your thesis as you write. This process will help you to make corrections and changes early and help you to maintain continuity throughout the writing process. Peer-reviewed publication is recommended.

The research content of a PhD thesis is roughly the equivalent of three full research manuscripts in peer-reviewed scientific journals. This varies by discipline. Some research consists of one large study (i.e. a clinical trial) that may result in one major publication; other research programs may generate the equivalent of several publications. You are expected to be an expert in your specific area of knowledge. Thesis work will reflect an original contribution to new knowledge, and you should have demonstrated an appropriate level of scholarship in your chosen field.
Before writing your thesis:

- Book a meeting with a Graduate Coordinator and bring in your proposed table of contents.
- Review the SGS guidelines for the preparation and formatting of the thesis. Pay particular attention to the formatting and copyright instructions.
- Consult the format of previously completed theses in the IMS thesis reference library. Contact the IMS Office first to make sure the thesis reference library is available.
- You can also view theses online at Theses Canada or T-Space.

Contributions of Others To Your Project:

Discuss this with your Supervisor. Acknowledge others properly in the Contributions section of your thesis and be ready to defend work by others used in your thesis. Clearly state your own contribution in the thesis.

Research Included in your PhD thesis:

Your PhD thesis should only be composed of work done while enrolled in the PhD program. It should not include work completed during previous degrees or employment.

Multiple Publications Generated During Your Research:

If they are related to your main hypothesis, you may present them as separate chapters in the thesis. If they are not directly related to your main research, you may add it as an appendix in the thesis. However, be ready to answer questions raised from such work. Two commonly used formats are:

- If the methods are similar, put them together, then present results as separate chapters.
- If different methods are used, eliminate the Methods chapter and present methods in separate chapters.

Which comes first? Publication of the research or defense of the thesis?

Talk to your Supervisor about this and come to an agreement early on in your program. Your Supervisor has a vested interest in prompt publication. You have an interest in a quick degree completion. Book an appointment with a Graduate Coordinator if there is disagreement over this.

Thesis Preparation Guidelines

Detailed guidelines on the technical aspects of thesis preparation and formatting can be found on the SGS website under Producing Your Thesis.

Electronic Thesis Preparation and Submission:

Doctoral students must submit the final version of their thesis to SGS in electronic form. Although only the final approved thesis (after the Final Oral Examination) is submitted electronically, you must prepare your thesis according to SGS guidelines for ultimate electronic submission.

Electronic theses and dissertation (ETD) instructions and templates are available through the SGS website here.
The digital copy of the thesis will be considered the “official” version of the thesis. Each ETD will be assigned a permanent URL - a URL that will not change - thus ensuring reliable access to the digital version.

Final theses are housed in “T-Space”, the institutional research repository for the University of Toronto community. ETDs will normally be released online 2-5 weeks after your convocation; release may be delayed by completing a restrict thesis release date form.

A website, style templates (Word and Latex) and workshops have been developed to assist students with the production and submission of ETDs. Adobe Acrobat will be required to complete the PDF conversion (available inexpensively through the U of T site licensing). A computer in the Information Commons equipped with this software has been designated as an ETD workstation and the Help Desk at Information Commons is available to respond to technical enquiries.

For questions related to electronic submission, please get in touch with sgs.doctoral@utoronto.ca

Format:

Your thesis may be prepared in a continuous “traditional format”, which includes the following:
- Abstract
- Acknowledgements
- Contributions
- In depth Literature Review
- Aims/Hypotheses
- Detailed Methods section
- Data presented in a central Results section
- A Discussion that describes the plausible range of interpretations for your work
- Conclusions and Future Directions

Alternatively, you may choose a “paper format”. In this case, your thesis work is organized as follows:
- Abstract
- Acknowledgements
- Contributions
- Literature Review
- Aims/Hypotheses

Followed by a series of self-contained chapters, each containing a focused:
- Introduction
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion/Conclusion

Followed by:
- General Discussion
- Conclusions
- Future Directions

The decision as to which format to use is best made early in the writing process, in consultation with your Supervisor. In general, the choice depends upon the stage you are at in the preparation of publications and whether your thesis is most readily viewed as one continuous work or a set of related studies that together tell your story.
Abstract:
The central hypothesis, rationale and research aims should be clearly and explicitly laid out, along with interpretation of the results for each component of your experimental work. State what you have found rather than "results will be discussed." Keep technical jargon and discussion of background to a minimum. Endeavour to explain the findings and their significance at a level that is understandable to someone working outside your field of interest. A doctoral thesis abstract cannot exceed 350 words.

Acknowledgments:
This is where you may include personal thanks to mentors, friends and family.

Contributions:
Explicitly acknowledge the contributions of technicians, trainees, collaborators, faculty mentors and funding sources to the experimental work, analyses and writing of the thesis. Be precise, inclusive and accurate. Images, data and text taken, or adapted from material on the web, papers, or books, require attribution and cannot be used without permission from the copyright owner. Be sure to include formal letters of permission to incorporate any published materials in your thesis. More information on copyright issues and a template for preparing copyright letters of permission are available online from the SGS website under the Copyright section.

List of Abbreviations:
All but universally accepted abbreviations, such as units of measure, should be listed and should be explained in the thesis text on the page where they are first used. For guidance on what abbreviations need not be listed, consult the Council of Science Editors Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers (available through the UofT Gerstein Library, or for purchase here), for the instructions to authors provided by respected journals in your discipline.

List of Figures and List of Tables:
Include the page numbers for the figures and tables. Figure titles should be short and self-explanatory. Leave details to the legends. All figures require a legend. Remember to include error bars. By skimming the figures and legends, a reviewer should get a clear sense of the results in your thesis. It is recommended that the figures be embedded within the text, instead of being collected at the end of the chapter.

Literature Review:
The Literature Review is a scholarly review of the background to your research question. It frames your work with reference to the history of your research question, relevant theories and the clinical picture, if appropriate. Concepts and terminology that are used in your research should be explained and you should provide a review of technologies, approaches and analytical methods that you use. Where there are gaps in the literature that your thesis addresses, point these out and mention how your thesis work will resolve them. The relevant literature should all be covered in this first section so that the Discussion need not introduce new literature (unless it is extremely recent).

Research Aims and Hypotheses:
Strive for clarity. Research aims frame the general over-riding purpose of the project. Hypotheses are testable postulates about the nature of relationships in your field of study. State hypotheses explicitly and summarize the arguments behind them. For most theses, specific research questions are a series of experimental steps you take to test the hypotheses. Make sure that research aims, hypotheses and specific research questions are clearly aligned. In qualitative research theses, aims, hypotheses and key issues of research design typically emerge only through engagement in the field of study. Differences between hypothesis-driven investigation and qualitative research can give rise to confusion, and particularly so
when mixed method approaches are used. If in doubt, students should consult with the PAC for guidance on appropriate framing of the thesis research aims and structure, early in the writing process.

**Methods:**
These should be described in sufficient detail as to allow someone else to reproduce your work. If a novel technique is described, this section should be quite extensive. If the thesis is prepared in a paper format, a consolidated General Methods section can be used to provide the necessary detail. Very fine detail (e.g. chemical recipes) can be placed in an Appendix.

**Results:**
If you are preparing a paper format thesis, simply follow instructions to authors and norms common to respected journals in your field for each chapter of your experimental work. If you are using the traditional format, you may find that it useful to provide more interpretation of the results than you would in a shorter manuscript. This will help lead the reader through this extended section. Subheadings that indicate the “bottom line” for each set of related experiments are useful in the paper format and essential in a traditional Results section.

**General Discussion:**
A General Discussion is required in both traditional and paper format theses. In the paper format, discussion sections within individual chapters deal with results germane to experiments described in each chapter. In contrast, the General Discussion addresses the thesis as a whole. A bit of repetition is inevitable. However, the depth of analysis in this section goes beyond your specific experiments and findings. This section should address the broader issues raised by your work. In the General Discussion, you need to discuss how the discrete parts of your work fit together. Explicitly discuss the hypotheses, how your work has supported them and in what ways it has not. Were your aims realistic? If not, why not? What were the limitations of your approach? What has your work revealed that is novel? How is it novel? Does it conform or not to the literature in your field (the literature you have covered in your literature review)? In a traditional thesis, the single Discussion section covers both the interpretation of particular experimental results and these larger, contextual issues.

**Conclusions:**
This section should clearly state the “bottom line” of your findings, including a reappraisal of your hypotheses in light of your findings - i.e., whether your work supported or refuted your original hypotheses. This section can also speculate on the implication of your findings.

**Future Directions:**
This is the fun part of your thesis! Where would you take this research program, were you to continue in the field over the next 6 months, 2 years, or 10 years? What are the most important questions that emerge from your work and review of the field? How would you address them?

**References:**
All references cited in the thesis and all published sources identified in the Contributions section must be listed. In general, cite primary sources whenever possible. If using a secondary source, make this clear (e.g. “reviewed in...”). When submitting your thesis to the IMS it is preferred that you use the (Author, Year) style of referencing throughout your thesis. This allows examiners to better keep track of your references when reviewing your thesis. You can change this to numbered referencing post defense when submitting your final thesis online to SGS. Double-check to ensure that references in the list are cited in the text and, conversely, that all citations in the text are listed in the References section. Missing citations or references are a red flag to reviewers.
Thesis FAQs

1. How long should my thesis be?

A PhD thesis is 150 - 300 pages plus references. It includes:

- A Literature Review (50+ pages)
- Statement of Hypotheses and Research Aims, (2-5 pages) experimental work equivalent in depth to what would typically be contained in 3-4 peer-reviewed papers in substantive journals
- General Discussion (20-50 pages) and Future Directions (4-5 pages)

Consult with your Supervisor and PAC to ensure that you have adequately covered the background to your question, your results and their significance to the field. You may also find it helpful to discuss your outline and thesis plans with one of the Graduate Coordinators.

2. What font size and spacing should I use?

According to SGS guidelines font size must be a minimum of 10 points. You may use a smaller font size for graphs, formulas, footnotes, and appendices; avoid italics. You must use at least one-and-a-half spacing, except for the thesis abstract, which should be double-spaced. Single spacing may be used for long quoted passages and figure legends.

3. English is not my native language. Does my thesis have to be written in perfect English?

The grammar and spelling in your thesis must be of high standard, just as they would need to be in articles submitted for publication. Please ask your Supervisor and your PAC to advise you on language adequacy. Do not fall into the trap of taking verbatim passages from published papers or textbooks because you think they are written in "better English" than you can produce.

The Office of English Language and Writing Support (ELWS) is available to students to help them improve their academic writing and speaking skills.

4. When does borrowing from the work of others become plagiarism?

Under The Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters, to plagiarize is to “... knowingly represent as one’s own any idea or expression of an idea or work of another” in an academic work. It is critical that the ideas and arguments of others be correctly attributed and simply paraphrasing these as your own does not suffice. A more extensive discussion of the subject is provided in the guide “How Not to Plagiarize”, an excellent online resource prepared by Dr. Margaret Procter, U of T Coordinator, Writing Support.

5. Can I actually plagiarize my own work!?

It may seem surprising, but reproducing your own published work without proper acknowledgement can be considered “self-plagiarism”. If you include such materials in your thesis, cite the published work and submit a letter of permission from the copyright holder, or a statement from the publisher (often available on journal websites) authorizing use of the material, when you deposit your thesis.

If chapters in your thesis are based on your published work, on the bottom of the title page of that chapter you should include the below statement:
“This chapter is modified from the following:


6. Where else can I find guidance on what to include, organization and formatting?

Take a minute to peruse the PhD theses of previous IMS students in the IMS thesis reference library. If available, look at the theses of students from your laboratory. The Table of Contents will give you an idea of thesis structure. Skimming through several theses will give you a sense of what content and arguments should be covered in each section of your own text.

7. Who is responsible for distributing the thesis to the exam committee?

Once the IMS has approved the thesis, we will send out a notification of exam e-mail, instructing you to distribute the thesis to all exam committee members. You are expected to distribute the thesis as soon as you receive notice. Please deliver your thesis to your examiners first by PDF copy and, if requested, also by hard-copy. If the examiners would like a hard-copy of the thesis, the Supervisor is expected to cover courier costs.

Final Program Advisory Committee (PAC) Approval for Defense:

When the Supervisor and PAC have approved the written thesis, a final committee meeting is held with a full practice oral examination to prepare you for the defense. The final PAC meeting will include a 20-minute slide presentation, and a question period where committee members pose questions that would be typical of those asked during a final defense.

If you intend on applying for a waiver of the IMS Departmental Oral Examination it is mandatory to have an additional faculty member at the final PAC meeting. The additional faculty member must be a member of SGS, with supervisory experience, and be able to provide an objective perspective and feedback to the PAC and student regarding the content of the thesis and presentation.

At the end of the meeting, the committee votes on the student’s readiness for defense, and signs and completes the waiver request form (if applicable) and the final page of the PAC report form indicating:

Readiness to Defend:
- The committee has reviewed the thesis. The student’s final thesis draft has been read and proofed by all committee members. It is acceptable, in terms of content, quality of writing, and presentation. The thesis is ready for presentation at a formal oral examination.

- The committee has tested the student’s presentation and oral defense of work. The student’s presentation of the thesis was well-organized, comprehensive and focused. The student’s ability to field questions related to the background and significance of research, general knowledge, and specific issues related to the thesis has been appropriately tested.
• The committee has tested the student’s general and specific knowledge related to research. The student has completed appropriate graduate courses for degree completion. The minimum degree requirements have been met. The student’s basic scientific knowledge has been appropriately tested and is acceptable for thesis defense.

Waiver of the IMS Departmental Oral Examination:

IMS PhD Oral Defense procedures include two oral examinations: the PhD Departmental Oral Examination (IMS) and the Final Oral Examination (SGS). Both examinations include a student presentation, questioning, and final vote. A review of past examination outcomes has shown that while some students benefit from our two-examination process, for others it is redundant. Many students will successfully waive the Departmental Oral Exam and proceed directly to the Final Oral Exam.

You have the option of requesting a waiver of the IMS PhD Departmental Oral Examination. To request a waiver, an additional SGS faculty member who has read the thesis and is competent to comment on the scientific content, must be present at the final PAC meeting. In addition, any chapters in your thesis with results/data must have undergone peer review. If you have results/data chapters that have not undergone peer review, you must get in contact with the IMS Thesis and Examination Officer.

If a PhD Oral Examination Waiver is requested, the following documentation needs to be submitted to the IMS:

• PhD Oral Examination Waiver Request Form - completed by the Supervisor and signed by the PAC and additional SGS faculty member.
• A list of the publication status of your data/results chapters.
• Student’s complete CV.
• Hard, unbound copy of your thesis. Double sided is fine.
• Final PAC report.

Approval of the request will be made by the Graduate Coordinators, and will be dependent on a review of the waiver request, final PAC report, participation of an external faculty member at your final PAC meeting, as well as grades, publications arising from graduate work, and public presentations. Students who are uncertain of the potential eligibility to waive a Departmental Oral Exam are encouraged to meet with a Graduate Coordinator prior to arranging the final PAC meeting.

Decision on the request will be one of the following:

• Approval of the departmental oral examination waiver. Usually requires prior publication of a significant proportion of the thesis work and peer review of the bulk of experimental work.
• Waiver of departmental oral examination denied. Student must complete two-tier examination process. Waivers are generally not approved by the Graduate Coordinators if research involves issues of conflict of interest, confidentiality, or intellectual property or if the student has lapsed for a significant period of time.

You have the option to drop off all exam documentation at once for the SGS Final Oral Exam (FOE), including the committee nomination form and external examiner nomination form, or to submit the documentation for the waiver of the departmental oral exam before setting up your FOE. Waiver requests may require 1-2 weeks for processing, depending on the availability of the Graduate Coordinators. The IMS Thesis and Examination Officer will notify you via email regarding the decision.
Scheduling the examination(s)

When settling on a defense date and time with your committee, please note the following scheduling limitations:

- The defense may start no earlier than 9am and no later than 3pm, Monday through Friday.
- The defense may only take place on days that the University is open. Please visit the SGS sessional dates calendar for holidays and University closures.
- In order to be eligible for the next round of convocation, students must defend a minimum of one week prior to the final date for receipt of degree recommendations for their desired convocation cycle as listed in the SGS sessional dates calendar. For example: If a student wishes to convocate in November, they must defend no later than Sept. 28th (1 week prior to the degree recommendation deadline of Oct. 5th for that particular year).
- Please note that SGS sessional dates vary from year to year. The University is closed for approximately 2 weeks during the winter holidays. These 2 weeks do not count toward the minimum 6 working weeks’ notice needed to schedule a departmental defense and the 9 working weeks’ notice needed to schedule the SGS final defense.
- SGS does not allow PhD FOEs typically one full week prior to the official University closure date for the winter holidays or in the first 3 business days after the University officially opens in January. Students and faculty will receive an e-mail memo at the end of September, notifying them of these dates. Dates vary by year.

We know it can be challenging to get your examiners around a table for your defense. The following tips can help you schedule your defense date with greater ease:

- Not all PAC members need to be present at the defense. Check voting quorum instructions.
- Up to 2 examiners can participate and vote via teleconference provided that they are on the line for the entire duration of the defense.
- Use Doodle (a free online scheduling tool) to facilitate easy scheduling. Don’t forget to include any clinician Administrative Assistants in your e-mail trails.
- Approach potential examiners well in advance, before their schedules book up. Your Supervisor is responsible for contacting examiners and confirming their willingness and availability to participate.

Departmental Oral Examination

*If you have successfully waived the departmental oral exam, proceed to the SGS Final Oral Exam section of these guidelines*

Submitting all exam documentation:

The purpose of the Departmental Oral Examination is to closely review the thesis, recommend revisions to be made prior to the PhD Final Oral Exam, and test knowledge of the field of study. The exam provides an objective analysis of your thesis and background knowledge by faculty members of good standing, who are familiar with the standards of scholarship required by the School of Graduate Studies. We have set strict deadlines to ensure that your examination runs smoothly. The IMS Office requires all of the following documentation at least 6 working weeks prior to the proposed date of a PhD Departmental Oral Examination:
Unbound paper copy of the thesis. Double sided is fine.
• Up-to-date student CV – including detailed list of publications.
• Final PAC report.
• Completed PhD Thesis Defense Nomination Form. All committee members must have agreed to be available on the listed potential examination date(s)

Upon receipt of all required documentation, the following will occur:

• A Graduate Coordinator will review and approve the thesis. Revisions may be required prior to final approval. This process can take upwards of two weeks. The IMS Thesis and Examination Officer will inform you via email once the thesis has been approved for the defense.
• The IMS office will approve the committee composition.
• The IMS office will appoint the examination Chair
• The IMS office will organize the room (in the MSB) and the A/V equipment. You must provide your own laptop. If you plan to hold your defense off campus, make sure to include all location details with your exam documentation.
• The IMS office will officially inform all examiners via email of the confirmed date, time, location and committee composition of the examination.
• The IMS office will formally provide instructions to the Internal Appraiser for the written appraisal.
• The IMS Office will collect the appraisal, send an exam reminder email to the exam committee and prepare the exam file for the Chair.
• It is your responsibility to send the thesis to the examiners once approved by the IMS.

Members of the Departmental Oral Exam Committee:

You and your Supervisor discuss and agree on who should be on the examination committee. The Supervisor is ultimately responsible for contacting the examiners and confirming their willingness and availability to participate.

The Departmental Oral Examination committee generally consists of 6 voting members, plus the Examination Chair. Minimum quorum is four voting members; two from the PAC and two from outside the PAC.

The committee is composed of:

• Supervisor

• 1-2 Program Advisory Committee members (you can invite them all if you have more).

• 1-2 Examiners:
  • Members of the UofT graduate faculty with expertise in the field.
  • Cannot be affiliated with the student’s research project nor have collaborated with the Supervisor and/or student in the past 6 years.
  • Full Members of the Graduate Faculty are preferred.

• 1 Internal Examiner/Appraiser:
  • A member of the UofT graduate faculty with expertise in the field.
  • Cannot be affiliated with the student’s research project nor have collaborated with the Supervisor in the past 6 years.
• The Internal Appraiser cannot be a member of the Supervisor's primary academic department. In the case of larger departments such as the Dept. of Medicine, Psychiatry or Surgery s/he cannot be from the same division as the Supervisor.
• Full Members of the Graduate Faculty are preferred.
• This examiner submits a written appraisal of the proposal at least 5 working days prior to the Exam, and attends the defense. The written appraisal is not distributed to the student or exam committee before the examination.
• When selecting an Internal Examiner/Appraiser, the student and Supervisor should only ascertain his/her willingness and availability to attend the examination at the specified times. Do not discuss thesis content, aside from providing the thesis title and sending the thesis.

Please do a PubMed search to check for collaborations between your Supervisor and examiners external to your PAC prior to submitting your documentation to the IMS.

• The Examination Chair (appointed by the IMS Office):
  • Runs the examination proceedings, “keeping the peace” and representing the IMS and SGS administration and conducting the examination according to the rules of procedure.
  • S/he protects the student’s interests, ensures that all examiners needed to achieve quorum are present (otherwise the examination will be cancelled), instructs those present as to their duties, instructs the Supervisor to carefully document items for revision and modification, discusses and finalizes the results, and reports the outcome to the IMS Thesis and Examination Officer.
  • The Exam Chair does not need to review the thesis in advance and does not vote.

All examiners must be members of the University of Toronto Graduate Faculty, as an Associate Member, Full Member, or Member Emeritus. You can determine the graduate faculty status of a proposed examiner by checking with:

(a) the Examiner
(b) the SGS Faculty Listing
(c) the IMS Faculty Search Tool

If in doubt, consult the IMS Thesis and Examination Officer.

Departmental Oral Examination Rules of Procedure:

Before the presentation:
• The Exam Chair collects the Examination File from the IMS Office or by arrangement with the IMS Thesis and Examination Officer.
• The Chair introduces the members and the candidate and ensures that all examiners are present. If members are missing, the Chair advises the IMS Office and discusses action to be taken. The examination will be cancelled if quorum is not met.
• The Chair instructs the Supervisor of his/her responsibility to carefully document items for revision and modification (if necessary) during the examination.
• The Chair asks the student to leave the room.
• The Chair advises the examiners whether the student has completed degree course requirements and inquires whether there are any major concerns about the upcoming examination.
• The Internal Examiner/Appraiser presents his/her appraisal. Discussion may follow reading of the appraisal.
• The Supervisor is provided with a copy of the appraisal.

Presentation by Candidate:
• The student is invited back into the room to give a 20-minute (uninterrupted) presentation. This is a strict time limit. A PowerPoint presentation usually accompanies the presentation. Make sure you bring a backup in case of technical difficulties.
Question Period:

- Following the presentation, questions are posed to the student. These are presented in two rounds, with 10 minutes allotted to each examiner per round.
- The Chair allows only one examiner at a time to ask questions (discussion by examiners among themselves will only detract from the 10 minute time period) and should intervene if another examiner, or the Supervisor, starts to join in the discussion.
- Order of questions is usually: Internal Examiner/Appraiser, Examiners, Committee Members, and Supervisor.
- The Chair should keep informal notes about the content of questions that may lead to proposal revisions for reference during the analysis of defense.
- Following questioning, the student is again asked to leave the room.

Committee Discusses the Examination and Votes:

The Chair asks the following specific questions of the examiners. All the examiners must address the below questions.

Is the written thesis acceptable:

a) With no modifications
b) With minor or organizational corrections (typos, errors in punctuation, change in format). The student has 1 month to complete this.
c) With minor modifications (rewrite part of the proposal, clarification of textual material, qualification of research findings). The student has 3 months to complete this.
d) Not acceptable

Was the Oral Defense:

a) Excellent
b) Very good
c) Acceptable
d) Not acceptable

In the case that a consensus about the recommendations is not reached, the Chair must ask for a vote on each question. More than one negative vote (or abstention) causes the examination to be adjourned. The Chair does not vote. If minor modifications are required, the Chair appoints a Modifications Subcommittee.

The student is invited into the room and the Chair advises the student about the outcome of the examination. A clear statement about who will review the revised thesis is given to student and Supervisor and the defense is adjourned.

After the Departmental Oral Examination:

The Exam Chair returns the file to the IMS Office.

If minor or organizational corrections are recommended:

- Student consults with the Supervisor and PAC members about changes.
- Supervisor writes to the IMS Thesis and Examination Officer via email to confirm completion of revisions within 1 month of the examination and before a Final Oral Examination can be booked.

If minor modifications are recommended:

- Examination Chair will appoint a subcommittee.
- The subcommittee must include the Internal Examiner/Appraiser and 2 Examiners.
• The subcommittee Chair cannot be the Supervisor.
• Student consults with subcommittee members about changes, revises thesis and submits it to the subcommittee.
• Subcommittee Chair writes to the IMS Thesis and Examination Officer to confirm completion of revisions within 3 months of the examination and before a Final Oral Examination can be booked

A repeat departmental oral exam is absolutely required if:
• The student does not pass the oral defense/exam. This may occur when a vote is required (i.e., examiners disagree about the recommendations) and there is a negative outcome.
• The thesis requires very major modifications that must be defended.
• The student is allowed only one repeat Departmental Oral Examination.

The SGS Final Oral Exam

The purpose of the Final Oral Examination (FOE) is to ensure a consistent level of academic excellence across the University and the country. The FOE, in addition to reviewing and approving the thesis, and testing your knowledge of your field of study, should discuss new questions that arise from the work and future projects that could be developed. The examination usually lasts about 2.5 - 3 hours. Make sure to review the SGS Guidelines for the Doctoral FOE.

Submitting all exam documentation:

Scheduling a PhD FOE is a complex process. We have set strict deadlines to ensure that your examination runs smoothly. The IMS Office requires all of the following documentation at least 9 working weeks prior to the proposed date of a PhD FOE. Extra notification time will be required over the winter holidays in December (2 extra weeks).

• Unbound paper copy of the final thesis. Double sided is fine.
• 1-page thesis abstract, double-spaced.
• Up-to-date Student CV.
• PhD Thesis Defense Nomination Form. All proposed committee members must have agreed to be available on the listed potential examination date(s).
• FOE External Examiner Nomination Form.

Upon receipt of all required documentation, the following will occur:

• The IMS office will organize the room (within the MSB or SGS) and book the A/V equipment. You must provide your own laptop. While it is preferred that exams take place on campus, you may hold your defense off campus. If you plan to do so, please ensure that all location details are included with your exam documentation.
• The IMS will ensure that all degree requirements are met, including courses, sufficient PAC meetings, candidacy and registration.
• The IMS Office will obtain SGS approval of the exam committee composition.
• The IMS Office will officially inform all examiners via email of the date, time, location, and committee composition of the PhD FOE and send a reminder to all examiners prior to the defense.
• The IMS Office will liaise with SGS to arrange for an Examination Chair and provide him/her with the examination file.
• Two weeks before the exam the IMS Office will distribute a copy of the External Examiner’s thesis appraisal to all committee members and student with the proviso that the committee and student shall not discuss the appraisal prior to the FOE. You are entitled to this time to reflect on the appraiser’s comments and address these comments at the examination.
• If the External Examiner’s appraisal is not available 2 weeks before the FOE, the examination can be cancelled (at the Supervisor’s and your discretion), or you will be required to complete a form, waiving your to see the written appraisal prior to the examination.

• You are responsible for distributing a copy of the thesis to all committee members, including the external examiner, upon instruction from the IMS office approximately 6 weeks before the FOE.

**Members of the Final Oral Examination Committee:**

You and your Supervisor discuss and agree on who should be on the FOE committee. The Supervisor is ultimately responsible for contacting the examiners and confirming their willingness and availability to participate.

All UofT examiners must be members of the UofT Graduate Faculty, as an Associate Member, Full Member, or Member Emeritus. You can determine the graduate faculty status of a proposed examiner by checking with:

• the Examiner
• the [SGS Faculty Listing](#)
• the [IMS Faculty Search Tool](#)

If in doubt, consult the [IMS Thesis and Examination Officer](#).

**The FOE committee is composed of:**

• Supervisor

• 1-2 Program Advisory Committee members

• 1-2 examiners:
  • Must be members of the UofT graduate faculty with expertise in the field.
  • Cannot be affiliated with the student’s research project nor have collaborated with the Supervisor and/or student in the past 6 years.
  • Full Members of the Graduate Faculty are preferred.

• 1 External Examiner. See [external examiner criteria](#).

Please do a [PubMed](#) search to check for collaborations between your Supervisor and examiners external to your PAC prior to submitting your documentation to the IMS. Up to two examiners can attend via teleconference. **To achieve quorum you must have at least 4 examiners present and a minimum of 2 examiners must be non-PAC members.** If quorum is not achieved, the FOE will be cancelled. Please see the FOE committee rubric at the end of these guidelines for details.

• The Examination Chair (appointed by SGS):
  • Runs the examination proceedings, represents the School of Graduate Studies, and conducts the examination according to the rules of procedure.
  • S/he protects the student’s interests, ensures that all examiners are present, instructs those present as to their duties, instructs the Supervisor to carefully document items for revision and modification, discusses and finalizes the results, and reports the outcome to SGS.
  • The Exam Chair does not need to review the thesis in advance and does not vote.
The FOE is a closed examination. Only approved members of the examination committee may attend the examination. If you wish to include non-voting members at the defense, you must request this in writing to the IMS Office at the time of booking the examination. The Vice-Dean of SGS must approve the attendance of any non-voting members.

External Examiner Criteria:

The Vice-Dean of Graduate Studies personally reviews and approves the External Examiner for the Final Oral Examination.

SGS mandates that an arm's length relationship be maintained among candidate, Supervisor, and External Examiner. You may not contact the examiner. Supervisors may contact External Examiners only to ascertain willingness to provide a written appraisal, availability to attend the examination at the specified time. Supervisor and External Examiner do not discuss thesis content, aside from providing the thesis title and sending the thesis.

At the Final PAC meeting, the committee, student, and Supervisor should recommend three potential External Examiners for the Final Oral Examination.

The External Examiner must:

- Be a non-UofT expert in the student’s field of research.
- Be affiliated with another University and cannot have been affiliated with UoT within the last 6 years.
- Hold professorial rank equivalent to a Full Member of SGS. They must be eligible to supervise graduate students as a Professor or Associate Professor. Assistant Professors are not eligible.
- Be an objective reviewer - neither affiliated with the student’s research project nor collaborating with the Supervisor or student in the previous six years.

For complete details on External Examiner eligibility, please see the Guidelines for the Doctoral FOE.

- The External Examiner will be required to submit a written appraisal of the thesis at least two weeks before the FOE.
- The External Examiner may attend the defense in person, participate via teleconference (voting member), or not attend at all (non-voting member). We encourage External Examiners to attend via teleconference.
- The IMS Office provides a $100 honorarium to External Examiners, and up to $500 for traveling expenses (upon submission of all original receipts to the IMS office). The External Examiner is not to book travel arrangements until s/he is formally approved by the IMS office and SGS.
- If the Supervisor or Supervisor’s academic department pays all traveling expenses, the Supervisor is responsible for contacting the IMS Office for reimbursement of the IMS $500 portion of expenses.

The IMS office will review the proposed examiners, obtain a copy of the External Examiner’s CV and forward it to the School of Graduate Studies for formal approval. Failure to provide more than 1 option on the External Examination Nomination Form could result in delays to your FOE.
Final Oral Exam Rules of Procedure

The official SGS Principles and Practices of the PhD FOE are available [online here](#). A synopsis of the FOE follows below.

**Before the student enters, the Chair:**

- Confirms that quorum is achieved. If members are missing, the Chair advises the SGS Doctoral Exams Officer and discusses action to be taken.
- Ensures that all committee members have sufficient knowledge of the thesis to judge its acceptability.
- Reminds the committee that the examination covers both thesis and oral defense.
- Confirms that all members have received the external appraisal. If any member has not reviewed the appraisal in advance, it will be read aloud by one of the examiners.
- Consults with the committee to determine order of questioning. Order of questions is usually: External Examiner, Examiners, Committee Members, and Supervisor.
- Determines who will be responsible for carefully documenting items for revision and modification during the exam (usually the Supervisor).

**Student’s Presentation:**

- The Chair invites the student (and any approved non-voting members) into the room and introduces the members.
- The student gives a 20-minute (uninterrupted) presentation. This is a strict time limit. A PowerPoint presentation usually accompanies the presentation. Make sure you bring backup in case of technical difficulties.

**Question Period:**

- Following the presentation, questions are posed to the student. These are presented in two rounds, with 10 minutes allotted to each examiner per round.
- The Chair allows only one Examiner at a time to ask questions (discussion by Examiners among themselves will only detract from the 10 minute time period) and should intervene if another Examiner, or the Supervisor, starts to join in the discussion.
- The Chair should keep informal notes about the content of questions that may lead to proposal revisions for reference during the analysis of defense.
- Following questioning, the student is again asked to leave the room. Non-voting members (if any) also leave at this time.

**Committee Discusses the Examination and Voting Options:**

- After a discussion of the thesis and the defense, the Chair distributes the voting ballots and explains the options in detail. Voting then takes place.
- Members must vote yes or no as to whether or not the thesis and its defense are acceptable. More than one negative vote or abstention causes the examination to be adjourned.
- Committee members who found the thesis acceptable must also indicate whether it is acceptable:
  a) as is, in its present form
  b) with minor corrections (typographical errors, errors in punctuation or problems in style)
  c) with minor modifications (i.e. clarification of textual material, qualification of research findings or conclusions)
- The Chair collects the ballots and the votes are read out loud and recorded. The Chair does not vote.

**Student is Informed of the Decision:**

- The student is invited into the room and the Chair advises the student about the outcome of the examination.
- A clear statement about who will review the revised thesis is given to student and Supervisor and the defense is adjourned.
In the Event of an Adjournment:

- A student is allowed one reconvened examination within one year. Examinations may be adjourned for failure to reach a quorum, more than one negative vote or abstention.
- The Examination Chair will provide a written report for the candidate, within two weeks of the adjourned examination, setting out the reasons for the adjournment and the requirements for a reconvened examination.
- Students are allowed only one reconvened FOE. If your FOE is adjourned, please contact the IMS Office immediately after the examination.

After the Final Oral Examination:

- Student and Chair report to the PhD Doctoral Exams Office to submit the completed examination file. The student will be informed at this time of any additional paperwork that must be completed.
- Convocation is held annually in November and June and in absentia in March. SGS will inform the student of their convocation cycle.
- Minor corrections must be corrected within one month of the examination. The Supervisor will inform the student of the corrections and must certify in writing to the SGS Doctoral Exams Office and the IMS Thesis and Examinations Officer that all corrections have been made.
- Minor modifications must be corrected within three months of the examination. A Subcommittee will have been appointed at the FOE to supervise the modifications. The designated Chair of the subcommittee provides a written report of required modifications to the student, supervisor and SGS Doctoral Exams Office as soon as possible after the exam, preferably before the committee disperses.
- The subcommittee Chair reports in writing to the SGS Doctoral Exams Office and the IMS Thesis and Examinations Officer within three months that corrections have been made, or the state of the corrections to be made (if in dispute). If minor modifications are not made to the satisfaction of all subcommittee members within the 3-month time limit, a reconvened examination must be held.
- The student must submit an electronic thesis to the School of Graduate Studies by the deadlines listed in the SGS sessional dates calendar.
- See information on graduation procedures on the SGS website here. Make sure to check your email address as it is listed on ROSI/ACORN as this will be the one used for mailings about convocation.

Examination Day Tips

One day before the exam:

- Briefly review your thesis, get familiar with your figures.
- Get familiar with several key references, including authors’ names, research groups and major points that may support your defense

On the day of the exam:

- It is recommended to dress in a professional manner.
- Come early to check all audio/visual presentation equipment: computer, projector, overhead.
- Bring water and/or refreshments for your committee.
- Bring a hard copy of your thesis.

Presentation:

- 20 minutes maximum (about 20 slides).
- Remember: everyone has read your thesis. You don't need to teach your examiners.
- Background: provide the rationale and significance of your research.
- Hypothesis: this is the most important part of your research.
- Methods: concentrate on the experimental design.
- Results: only present the main results.
- Conclusion: be clear and accurate.

Examination Questions:

There are several types of examination questions, which fall into 4 categories:
• Related to your research: background, significance.
• Questions from your thesis: statement, presentation of figures, additional information, your mistakes.
• Background knowledge: statistics, etc.
• Unpredictable questions:
  
  * If the Globe and Mail wants to release your research, what would be the title of the article?
  * What are the top 3 secrets of your success?
  * If you were allowed to re-do your project, what kind of new approaches would you like to use?

How to answer your questions:

• Make sure you understand the question properly. Repeating the question back can give you time to think it over.
• Provide a clear, brief answer.
• Use references to demonstrate your knowledge and support your point.
• Don’t be defensive.
• Be honest. Sometimes “I don’t know” could be the best answer.
• If the question is not related to your research directly, point it out first, then speculate.
• After the first round, if you feel necessary, you may ask for a short break.
• The Chair has the obligation to protect the student. If you feel “harassed” you may bring this to the attention of the Exam Chair.

**Submission of the Final Thesis:**

Your thesis is permanent evidence of your degree training. It is the culmination of your degree. Your degree is not an occupation, but a lifetime honor. Make sure that this enduring document is impeccable!

Please follow the instructions for electronic thesis submission on the [SGS website here](https://www.utoronto.ca/sgs).

Your thesis does not become public on T-Space until after your convocation cycle. If you wish to restrict the release date of your thesis, please submit the [Restrict Thesis Release Date Form](https://www.utoronto.ca/ims/thesis) to the IMS Thesis and Examination Officer. The IMS requires at least 1 week to obtain the necessary signatures. The form must be accompanied by the rationale for why you are requesting that the thesis release be restricted. Please note that these requests do not get approved for future publication reasons alone, as this is the case for the majority of IMS students. Generally requests are granted for patent/intellectual property related reasons.

Electronic upload of the thesis is a mandatory requirement to graduate. If you do not follow the necessary procedures for electronic submission you will be removed from the convocation list.

Please contact SGS at [sgs.doctoral@utoronto.ca](mailto:sgs.doctoral@utoronto.ca) for questions related to electronic submission or if you experience difficulty uploading your thesis,

**General FAQs**

1. **Why does the IMS require a 9 week lead time?**

The examiners have to be vetted, a Chair needs to be appointed, and the External Examiner needs enough time to thoroughly read the thesis and prepare a report. The most important reason is that the thesis has to be screened by the Graduate Coordinators and the External Examiner’s CV needs to be reviewed by the School of Graduate Studies.

2. **Can I invite members outside my approved defense committee to my exam?**
3. Who is responsible for distributing the thesis to the exam committee?

Once the IMS has approved the thesis, we will send out a notification of exam by e-mail, instructing you to distribute the thesis to all committee members. You are expected to distribute the thesis as soon as you receive notice. If an examiner requests a hard-copy of the thesis mailed to them, we ask that the Supervisor cover courier costs.

4. Do I need to request convocation?

No, SGS will process your convocation request depending on when your Supervisor/subcommittee Chair confirms your thesis corrections are done (if applicable) and when you upload your thesis. If you would like to convocate in March (in absentia) you must let the SGS Doctoral Exams Office and the IMS Thesis and Examination Officer know this.

5. I have a question about convocation. Who should I contact?

Please get in touch with the Office of Convocation for any questions related to convocation.

6. I am planning on starting medical school immediately after my PhD. What should I keep in mind to transition from my PhD to Medical School?

We recommend that you complete your PhD and then enter medical school. Most universities require degree completion before starting medical school. Offers of admission are issued up to the start of medical school classes. If you plan to start in the Fall you must defend by mid-June.

- Discuss the issue with your Supervisor and PAC when you apply to medical school.
- Meet with your PAC often to ensure you all agree on a timeline for completion and work expectations.
- Confirm with your medical school(s):
  - Does admission require degree completion prior to entry?
  - If yes, what is their final deadline for confirmation of degree completion?
  - What is the final date when you’ll hear about your acceptance?
- Get all research for your degree completed well in advance.
- We cannot shorten the 9 week required notice period to schedule a FOE due to medical school acceptance.

7. When will my transcript reflect that I have been awarded the PhD degree?

Your transcript will show that your PhD degree has been conferred on the first business day following convocation. This is when your thesis credit on your transcript will also be changed from IPR (in progress) to CR (credit).

8. Where can I get a confirmation of degree completion letter?

An official confirmation of degree completion letter can be issued once your Supervisor or modifications subcommittee chair has confirmed your thesis corrections (if applicable) and you have uploaded your thesis to SGS. This letter needs to come from SGS and can be requested using the form found on their website here.
Staff Contacts

For clarification on these guidelines or for any other thesis and exam related questions, please get in touch with:

Sarah Topa
Thesis and Examination Officer
Institute of Medical Science | University of Toronto
1 King’s College Circle, Room 2369 | Toronto, ON | M5S 1A8
phone: 416.978.6696 | e-mail: pa.medscience@utoronto.ca

To book an appointment with a Graduate Coordinator, please get in touch with:

Elena Gessas
Departmental Assistant
Institute of Medical Science | University of Toronto
1 King’s College Circle, Room 2374 | Toronto, ON | M5S 1A8
phone: 416.946.8286 | email: dir.medscience@utoronto.ca
PhD Thesis Defense and Program Completion Checklist:

In order to use this checklist, you will need to select a target defense date and work backwards from there. Your timeline to completion may require modification to accommodate delays and/or holidays.

PhD Candidacy Achieved:

By the end of Year 3 of the PhD program, you are expected to have completed all course requirements and submitted at least 4 completed PAC reports to the IMS Office in order to achieve official PhD candidacy status.

Approximately one year prior to final defense date:

- Start writing your thesis.
- Read the defense guidelines thoroughly.
- Apply for a Degree Completion Award (if applicable).
- Ensure that all degree requirements are met by checking the PhD Program Requirements section of our website.
- Meet with a Graduate Coordinator if any complications arise.

Approximately 3-4 months prior to final defense date:

- Complete thesis writing and revisions.
- Hold final PAC meeting for PAC approval to proceed to defense.
- Apply for the PhD Departmental Oral Examination Waiver (if applicable).
- Select FOE examination committee membership and determine potential examination date/time.

At least 9 working weeks prior to the FOE date:

- Submit defense documentation package to the IMS Thesis and Examination Officer.
- All forms must be complete, legible and accurate. Please ensure examiner e-mail addresses and contact phone numbers are correct. Incomplete forms will not be processed. Please also ensure that all examiners are eligible to serve on your exam committee.

PhD Final Oral Examination

After final defense date:

- Complete post-examination corrections or modifications (if applicable).
- Supervisor or modifications sub-committee Chair (whichever applies) must send a confirmation of completed corrections email to the SGS Doctoral Exam Office and to the IMS Thesis and Examination Officer.
- You must ensure that conditions for graduation (i.e. payment of fees) are met.
- Upload thesis electronically to SGS via the ProQuest Digital Library Repository.
- Optional: Provide a faux-leather hard-bound thesis to the IMS office for display in the IMS thesis library.

Convocation takes place in November, June or March (in absentia, if requested).
PhD Departmental Oral Waiver Request Form

**PLEASE NOTE:** ALL documentation must be submitted to the IMS office a minimum of nine (9) working weeks prior to the examination date.

Objectives: to ensure that PhD candidates are ready for a final oral examination and:
- **The committee has reviewed the thesis** and it is acceptable, in terms of content, quality of writing, and presentation. The thesis is ready for presentation at a formal oral examination.
- **The committee has tested the student’s presentation and oral defense of work and the student is ready to defend the thesis at a formal oral examination.**
- **The committee has tested the student’s general and specific knowledge related to research, the student has completed appropriate graduate courses for degree completion, and minimum degree requirements have been met. The student’s basic scientific knowledge has been appropriately tested and is acceptable for thesis defense.**

Name of Student: ____________________________________________________________

Thesis Title: ________________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAC Recommendation</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Committee is unanimous in recommending waiver of Departmental Oral Examination</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis has been reviewed and approved by PAC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PAC Reports**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAC Reports</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAC reports show consistently good progress</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAC meetings have been held regularly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General principles, fundamentals or basic science component of research program (i.e. cell biology, molecular biology, clinical trial design, critical appraisal of the literature etc.) have been reviewed and highly rated</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge relevant to the specific area of research, as well as general knowledge relating to the clinical and research aspects of the chosen field of study have been highly rated</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student’s overall competence in the techniques specific to the research project (in a laboratory, or in experimental design or data analysis and population studies) have been highly rated</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Publications and Abstracts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publications and Abstracts</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-3 peer-reviewed publications have arisen from this work, or are under review</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publications arising from work are in prominent journals in the field</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student displays a high level of productivity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**PhD Departmental Oral Waiver Request and Checklist (cont’d)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation Skills</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The student has presented at local meetings and conferences</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student has presented at national/international meetings and conferences</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations are of overall excellent quality</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions are answered in an appropriate, concise and articulate manner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses were appropriate to research program</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Advisory Committee does not recommend additional courses</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades were consistently excellent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research involves issues of conflict of interest, confidentiality, or intellectual property:

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Final PAC included an external member:

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Additional comments? Please attach a separate sheet.

---

Supervisor Signature ___________________________ Printed Name ___________________________ Date ______________

PAC Member signature ___________________________ Printed Name ___________________________ Date ______________

PAC Member signature ___________________________ Printed Name ___________________________ Date ______________

PAC Member signature ___________________________ Printed Name ___________________________ Date ______________

Member External to PAC signature ___________________________ Printed Name ___________________________ Date ______________

Return completed form + publication status of manuscripts arising from thesis to:

Thesis and Examination Officer
Institute of Medical Science
Medical Sciences Building, room 2369
1 King’s College Circle
University of Toronto
Toronto, ON  M5S 1A8

- [ ] Waiver request approved
- [ ] Waiver request NOT approved

For Office use only:

Graduate Coordinator Signature ___________________________ Date ______________

---
Please be reminded:
- Students may not contact the examiner.
- Supervisors may contact external examiners only to ascertain willingness to provide a written appraisal, availability to attend the examination at the specified time and preference for thesis submission.
- Supervisor and examiner do not discuss thesis content.

The external examiners listed below must fit the eligibility criteria. External examiners who do not meet this criteria will not be considered by SGS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Choice (please print clearly)</th>
<th>Position and Rank:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name:____________________________</td>
<td>Institution:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address__________________________</td>
<td>Phone:_____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax:_____________________________</td>
<td>Email:______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of Specialization:___________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Does this External Examiner plan to attend the defense?**
- □ No    □ Yes, in person    □ Yes, via teleconference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Position and Rank:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name:____________________________</td>
<td>Institution:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address__________________________</td>
<td>Phone:_____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax:_____________________________</td>
<td>Email:______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of Specialization:___________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Does this External Examiner plan to attend the defense?**
- □ No    □ Yes, in person    □ Yes, via teleconference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Position and Rank:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name:____________________________</td>
<td>Institution:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address__________________________</td>
<td>Phone:_____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax:_____________________________</td>
<td>Email:______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of Specialization:___________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Does this External Examiner plan to attend the defense?**
- □ No    □ Yes, in person    □ Yes, via teleconference
PhD Thesis Defense Nomination Form

PLEASE NOTE: All documentation must be submitted to the IMS office a minimum of nine (9) working weeks prior to the defense date.

For a Departmental Oral Exam, all documentation must be submitted to the IMS office a minimum of six (6) working weeks prior to the examination date.

This is a (choose one):  □ Departmental Oral Exam  □ Final Oral Examination

Student Name:______________________________________ UofT Student #:_________________________________

Examination Date:___________________________________ Start Time (min. 3 hours):__________________________

Thesis Title:________________________________________

Student Phone #:___________________________________ Valid UTORONTO Email:__________________________

Committee Composition (All members listed on this form must be verified for eligibility)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examiner</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>SGS Appointment (Department)</th>
<th>Communications:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>Name:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Email:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAC Member # 1</td>
<td>Name:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Email:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAC Member # 2</td>
<td>Name:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Email:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAC Member # 3 (non-voting)</td>
<td>Name:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Email:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examiner #1</td>
<td>Name:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Email:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examiner #2</td>
<td>Name:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Email:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Member for DEPARTMENTAL EXAMINATION ONLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Examiner/ Appraiser</th>
<th>Name:</th>
<th></th>
<th>Phone:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fax:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Email:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examination Chairs are provided by the SGS and do not need to be listed on this form.
**Electronic Thesis & Dissertation Submission Checklist**

**For PhD Students**

**Before you submit your ETD, please read and complete the steps outlined below.** This checklist is designed to walk you through all the necessary steps for completing and submitting your ETD.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>If you had corrections to make, ensure that your Supervisor has notified the SGS Doctoral Exams Office (<a href="mailto:sgs.doctoral@utoronto.ca">sgs.doctoral@utoronto.ca</a>) and your Graduate Unit that the corrections have been made and that the thesis is ready to submit (email notification is fine).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>If you had minor modifications to make, ensure that the chair of your minor modifications subcommittee has notified the SGS Doctoral Exams Office (<a href="mailto:sgs.doctoral@utoronto.ca">sgs.doctoral@utoronto.ca</a>) and your Graduate Unit that the modifications have been made and that your thesis is ready to submit (email notification is fine).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Follow the SGS formatting guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Name your file with the proper file naming convention, e.g. Doe_John_201511_PhD_thesis.pdf (201511 is for November convocation. March grads should use 201603; June grads should use 201406)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Convert your thesis to PDF and embed the fonts. Help in doing this will be provided in the course of the submission process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>If you have copyrighted material in your thesis, check to see if any permissions are required, and obtain them if necessary: <a href="http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/Copyright.aspx">http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/Copyright.aspx</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Submit a completed “Restrict Thesis Release Date” form to the SGS, if applicable. Must be signed by the Chair of your Graduate Unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Optional:</strong></td>
<td>Submit a bound paper copy to your Graduate Unit. The U of T binding service is recommended: <a href="http://bookpod.uoftbookstore.com/thesis-binding.php">http://bookpod.uoftbookstore.com/thesis-binding.php</a> You will be invited to order bound copies through the Proquest thesis submission interface, but the U of T service is faster and less expensive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Keep your contact information up-to-date in ACORN/ROSI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>About four or five weeks after convocation (unless you placed an embargo on your thesis with a completed “Restrict Thesis Release Date” form) look for your thesis in T-Space and on the web! If you restricted the thesis release, you will receive an email from T-Space once the release has occurred.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**FOE Committee Membership Requirements in effect July 1, 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOE Committee</th>
<th>Supervisory Committee Member?</th>
<th>Quorum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Maximum 3 allowed</strong></td>
<td>A minimum of two non-supervisory members must be present (in person or by phone) to achieve quorum of four members in total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quorum not achieved = FOE cancelled</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Appraiser</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-committee member</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>At least TWO of FOUR must be non-supervisory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-committee member</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>At least ONE of FOUR must be supervisory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisory committee member</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisory committee member</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is perfectly fine to have an FOE committee with only one supervisory member and four or five non-supervisory members.

If a student has more than three supervisory committee members, the extra member or members may participate as non-voting members.