

Guidelines to nomination of examiners for MRes

1. To ensure the standing of the University of London Degree and the robustness of its and the RVC's quality assurance mechanisms the aim of the appointment mechanism is to appoint examiners who are able and who are seen to be able to make a fair and independent assessment of the candidate and his/her thesis and that the standards are consistent with those of the rest of the University.
2. The Committee should have sufficient time to consider nominations, with sufficient information to make an informed decision but, if necessary, time to discuss any alternatives with the supervisor.
3. The process of nomination should take place 4 months before the likely submission. This will ensure the examiners have been formally appointed and have agreed to act before the candidate submits his/her thesis.
4. The supervisor is asked to nominate examiners of whom
 - one must be external to the RVC
 - one will internal to the RVC
5. Both examiners will be experts in the field of the thesis but not necessarily in all parts of the precise topic. Many theses are interdisciplinary and the aim should be to appoint a team of examiners who between them cover all aspects presented by the candidate.
6. The examiners should have had no direct involvement in the candidate's research or close connections with either the candidate or the supervisor which might inhibit objective examination. It is accepted that examiners will normally be acquainted with the supervisor and occasionally the candidate, and this in itself is not a bar to acting as an examiner.
7. At least one examiner should normally have had experience of examining MRes students or Masters Project students.
8. Nomination of the internal examiner from the RVC must be accompanied by demonstration that they are genuinely independent of student's course of study.
9. Supervisors are requested to avoid repeatedly nominating the same person as an examiner.
10. Former members of academic staff of the University of London who resigned or retired are not normally eligible to serve as External Examiners until the expiry of three years from their departure from the University.
11. Retired teachers who are still active in their fields who retain close links with their department may be appointed internal examiners.
12. A visiting Professor to the College but in a different research group to the candidate may be nominated as an internal examiner provided there is no connection between him/her and the candidate
13. As the MRes course director attends all MRes vivas, an additional Independent Chair will not be required if the viva is approved to take place online, using video conferencing facilities.

Completion of the Nomination Form

1. For each examiner the following is needed:
 - Title;
 - Expertise in relation to the thesis;
 - A short CV (maximum 2 pages). The CV should **only include** education background, employment, research interests, experience of supervising and examining PhD students and publications from the last 5 years;
 - Experience of research degree examination;
 - Any connections with the candidate/supervisor (professional, academic or personal);
 - If appropriate, a statement indicating the reasons for the nomination of an examiner from overseas and confirmation that the Department will pay travel and other expenses for them;
2. The supervisor would normally approach those being nominated as examiners ahead of submission of the nomination to the Research Degrees Committee. However, it should be made it clear in doing so that final approval is dependent on the Research Degrees Committee.
3. *Viva voce* examinations for research degrees will normally be held face-to-face. In circumstances where this may be logistically or otherwise practically challenging, permission may be given to conduct a viva using video conferencing facilities such as Zoom or Teams. This can be either in a hybrid format (meaning at least two participants are face-to-face in a room on campus, and one or more participants join the examination remotely) or fully online (all participants join the examination remotely, using the video conferencing technology).

As the College of registration is the RVC, it is the Research Degrees Committee (RDC) at the RVC that gives permission for an oral examination to take place via video conferencing. Permission for the viva to take place using video conferencing facilities will be sought when supervisors submit examiner nominations for consideration by the RDC. Explanation will need to be provided as to why it is preferable to use video conferencing facilities rather than conduct the viva face-to-face (this may for example include one of the examiners and/or the candidate being overseas) and it must be confirmed that all participants have agreed to the proposed format of the oral examination. The RDC has the right to disallow a hybrid or fully online viva if there does not seem to be good reason for doing so. Student preference alone, without logistical or other practical issues complicating a face-to-face examination, will not normally be a reason for approving a hybrid or fully online viva. Extenuating circumstances can be put forward (this can be in confidence, e.g. via the Advice Centre) for which holding a viva using video conferencing facilities is recommended as a 'reasonable adjustment' to the assessment process.