Conduct of Research Degree Vivas by Video Link
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Conduct of Research Degree Vivas by Video Link

A. University Policy

Vivas may be conducted exceptionally by high quality video link where the attendance by the External Examiner at a viva on the University campus would be impracticable. Approval will not normally be given for the candidate to be at a remote site except in the case of distance learning students. Such cases will only be approved where the integrity of the examination can be guaranteed. In some cases approval will be granted for the viva to be conducted by video link where the attendance by the Internal Examiner is impracticable.

In all cases, agreement from all participants in the examination will be sought.

As per the Policy for the Appointment of Independent Chairs for Research Degree Vivas, an Independent Chair will be appointed by the Deputy Dean (Postgraduate Research Education) to facilitate the examination process and procedures for all vivas held via video link where the Internal Examiner is attending remotely.

B. Exceptional Circumstances

In very exceptional circumstances, it may be deemed that face-to-face vivas are not viable, and may require all viva participants to be located an individual locations. In such instances, an Independent Chair will not routinely be appointed.

C. Procedures

Because the viva examination is not being conducted in accordance with standard procedures, it is particularly important to ensure that the candidate understands how the examination will be conducted and is in full agreement. It is also essential to provide the best possible environment for both the candidate and the examiners, and to ensure that the video link used is of a high quality. These procedures have been drawn up with these points in mind.

The agreement of the candidate and the Deputy Dean (Postgraduate Research Education) must be obtained in advance. A request form is provided for this purpose.

D. Technical Preparation

The university recommends the use of Zoom as its preferred and supported video-conferencing software. The Graduate Administrator within each Department/School will be responsible for arranging the Zoom meeting, and wherever possible a University video-conferencing room should be used.

Technical assistance will be provided by Audio Visual Services as required. This will include practical advice on the protocols of communication by video link. Time should be allowed before the start of the viva to ensure the software and equipment is working correctly, and that all parties are satisfied with the arrangement.