

Recognising Research Excellence in Doctoral Research Submissions

The University has considered arrangements by which research excellence in doctoral research degree submissions can be recognised. Research excellence would be expected to principally reflect outstanding achievement in the thesis and oral examination at a level significantly above what would be expected for the award of a doctoral degree (highly original, high level of critical thought, outstanding presentation of the work), where the candidate has fulfilled all requirements for the degree either without corrections (straight pass) or with minor editorial corrections. Evidence might also be identified from associated research outputs which might include: major theoretical contribution; acceptance for publication of sections in major journals; patents; prizes for completed work; marketable software; original equipment; new therapies; major exhibitions or performances arising from the practical part of a practice-based degree.

Examiners are invited to comment on any research excellence which is identified in the submission in the Examiners' Report Form and provide further information in support of this recommendation. If the recommendation is approved by the Examinations Group the text provided by the examiners in this section will be included in a letter of congratulations sent to the candidate from the Dean of PGR Studies.

Comments from previous reports have been reproduced here to illustrate the types of examples examiners may wish to cite.

The writing is excellent: the style is readable and engaging, and the proof-reading is fantastic. The overall presentation is almost flawless – indeed, the examiners have rarely seen a thesis as expertly presented as this one. The candidate performed excellently. She was articulate, thoughtful, able to discuss complex issues at length and with control, capable of defending her ideas under intensive questioning. Her professional demeanour and confidence were exemplary. (Faculty of Arts)

The thesis is immaculately presented with virtually no grammatical or typographical errors. The scholarship is formidable, with a notable range of critical material handled in a prose that is complex, but never convoluted or problematically dense. In terms of presentation, it is one of the best theses that either examiner has ever seen. It is scholarship of the highest order. The is an excellent example of a student who has produced work that is meaningful in more than one discipline and both examiners would like to commend him for all the work he has put in to producing an outstanding piece of scholarship. (Faculty of Arts)

It is the judgement of both of the examiners that this is one of the most striking and original pieces of work that they have ever read. It is highly ambitious, using the theory in a very challenging way so that the initial review is not simply a statement of others' ideas but is combined in order to show clearly linkages between approaches in terms of power, order and change. (...) This allows for a critical/imaginative take on a number of existing accounts of IR and the possibility for the author to make a genuine contribution to scholarship. It is the judgement of the examiners that there is extensive material within the thesis which has the potential for publication. Overall the piece is highly coherent and clearly conforms to the expectations of academic scholarship. (Faculty of ESSL)

The candidate showed outstanding critical ability throughout the thesis and during the viva. Much of the thesis (chapters 3 and 4) have already been published in international, peer-reviewed journals of the highest quality. The remaining data chapter will be submitted for publication shortly, and both examiners agree that this is sensible. Written style and overall presentation of the thesis – outstanding. Performance in the oral examination - outstanding. (Faculty of Biological Sciences)

There is a series of literature review, conceptual and empirical pieces that can be generated from the thesis. We anticipate 4 to 6 papers which are likely to be 3* rated and above. The written style is incisive, measured and thorough. The presentation is outstanding and was a pleasure to read. The candidate's doctoral studies and training has been exemplary. This has been reflected in a thesis of a high standard which has been produced by a young scholar who is worthy of a doctoral award. The recommendation was a straight-forward decision and both examiners concurred wholeheartedly. The student's performance is a tribute to the supervisory panel that has seen this candidate progress from student to doctoral scholar. (Faculty of Business)