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University of Westminster Graduate School Virtual Research Environment Examination Process Guide

June 2022

Graduate School Registry

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Contents

This guidance has been produced by the Graduate School at the University of Westminster. It is intended to help examiners of Research Degree Programmes navigate using the University's Virtual Research Environment (VRE), which is used to facilitate the Examination Process.

Please note, nothing in the content of this guidance takes precedence over Research Degree Academic Regulations, which may be subject to amendment.

For the Regulations concerning **Examinations for a Research Degree Award** please consult Section B8.

Section 1. Exam Arrangements

This section of the guide takes you through how to put the examination arrangements in place. It follows the workflow through what is required of each user.

For full guidance on appointing the Board of Examiners please see the [Research Degree Academic Regulations Section B8](#).

Director of Studies

The Director of Studies must begin the exam arrangements. These should be in place at least 3 months before the submission of the thesis (see [Regulation B8.21](#)). Reminders will be sent at regular intervals ahead of submission to prompt action in this matter.

A candidate shall be examined by at least two and normally not more than three examiners of whom at least one shall be an external examiner. For all research degree programmes the examination team must have experience of at least three previous examinations at the relevant academic level between them. An external examiner will normally have a minimum of two previous examinations at the relevant academic level (see [Regulations B8.1 and B8.6](#))

To begin the examination arrangements the Director of Studies should log into the VRE and navigate to 'My Doctoral Researchers'.
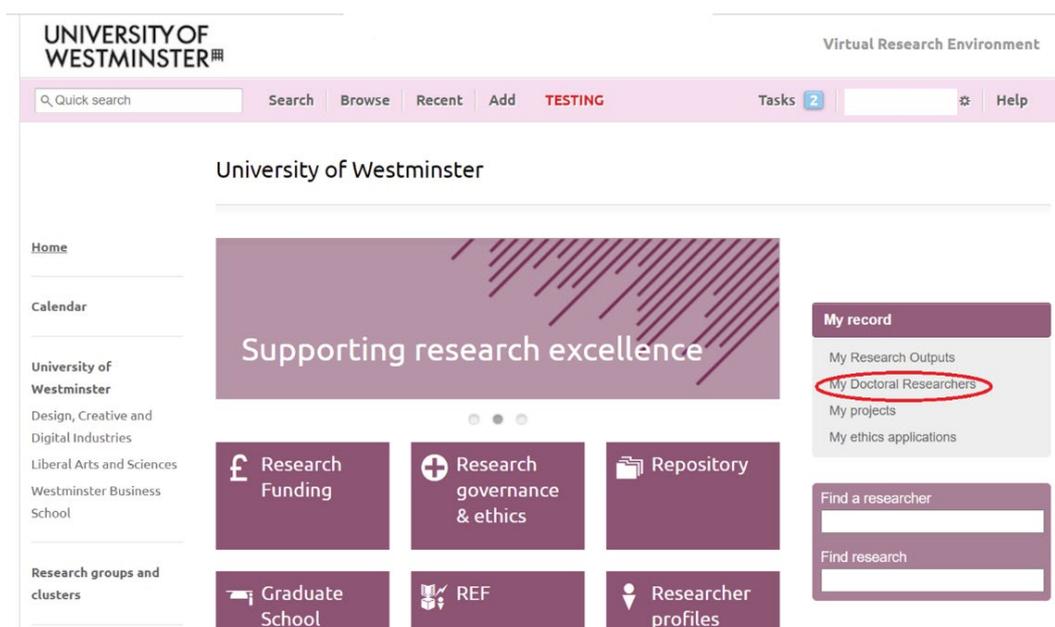
Please select from the list the researcher who requires exam arrangements. You will then be taken to the researcher's 'Doctoral Research Project' page.
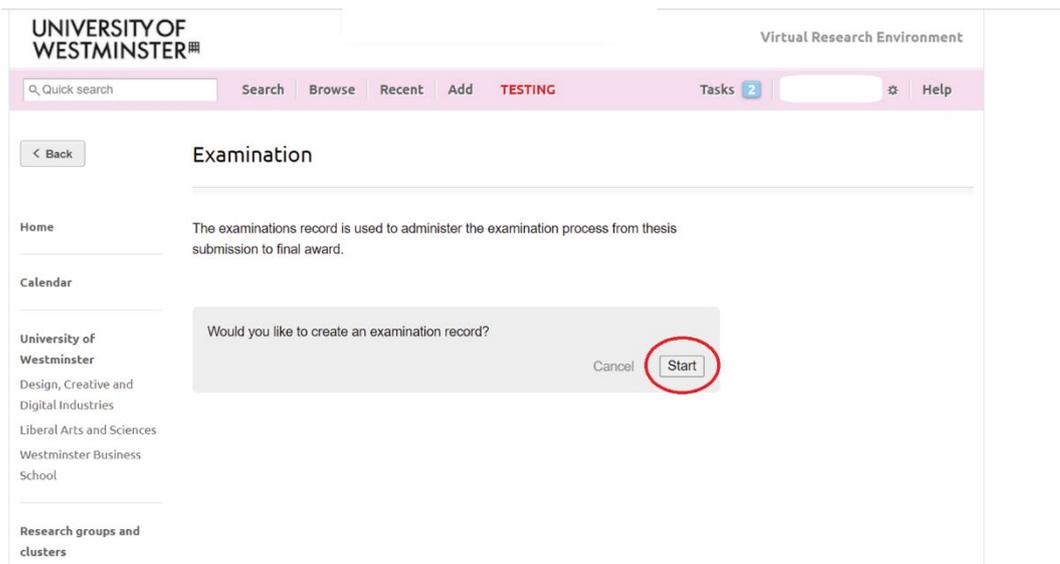
Select the 'Examinations' tab from right hand menu.

You will be presented with the following screen:
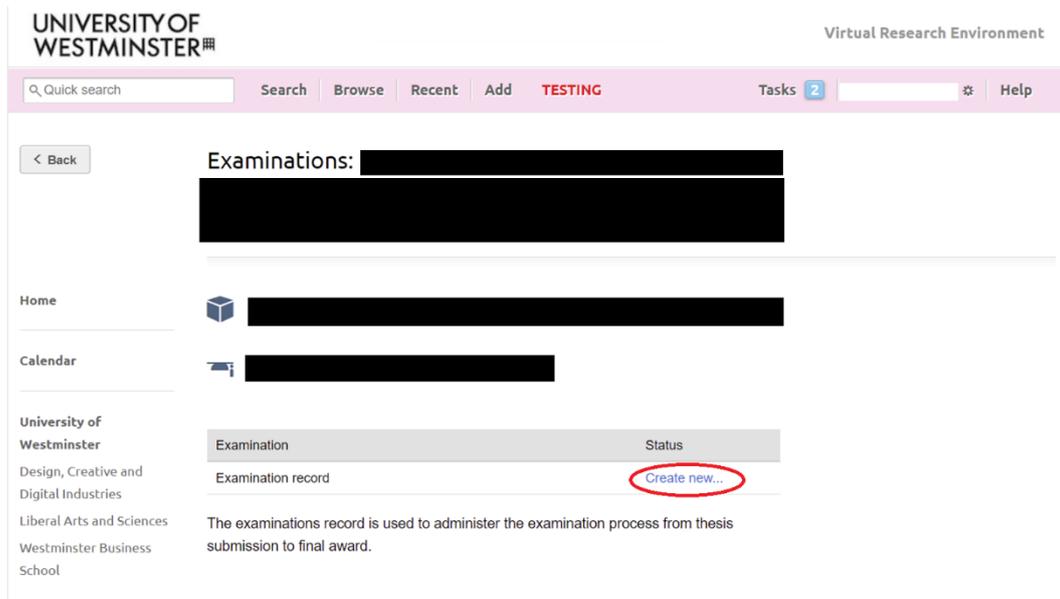
Select 'Create New'.

You will be then presented with the following:

Click 'Start'. You will then be taken to the following screen:

This starts the main examination record.

To begin the exam arrangements, select 'Start Now' under 'Examination Arrangements' on right hand side:

Then select 'Start':

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This will open the exam arrangements task:

To propose the exam panel, select 'Edit Examination Arrangements Form' which will open the first of a series of four screens.

1. 'Candidate Summary' - read the text and select 'Save and continue'.

2. Examiners – this is where you add the details of both the internal and external examiners:

Firstly, add the Internal. Select 'Add'. This will present you with a search box. Type in the name of the internal examiner you would like to propose and select them from the drop-down list. They will then be added underneath the 'Internal' heading.

Next, you need to appoint the external examiner. Select 'Add'.
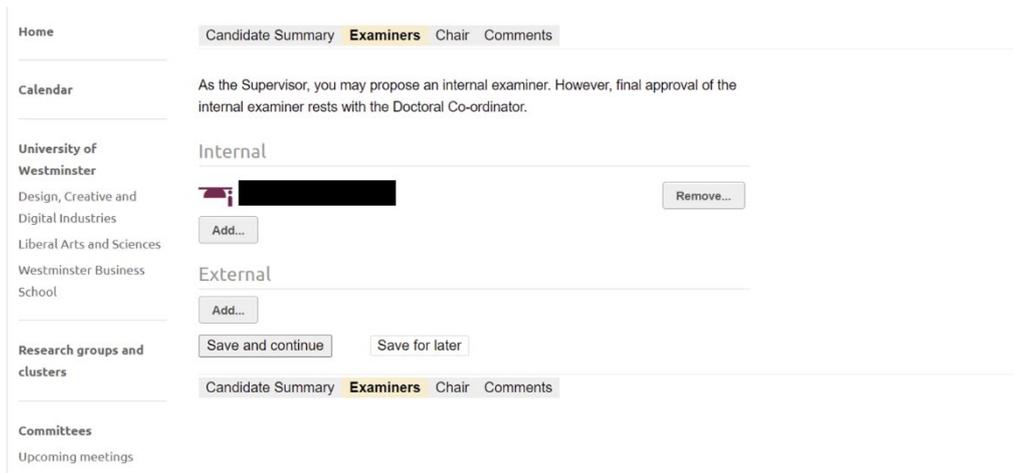
Again, the search bar is given:
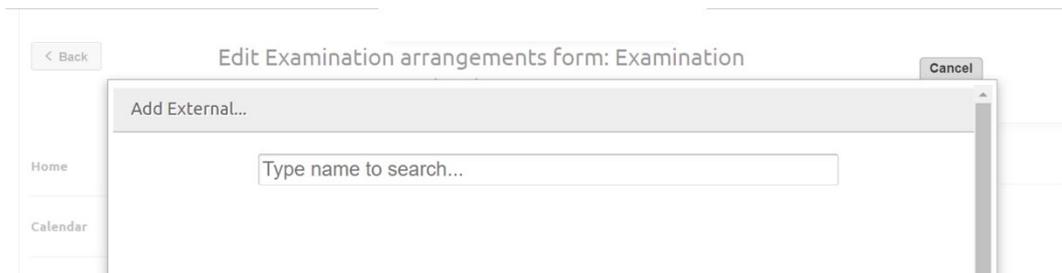
An external examiner will not usually be listed in the drop down (where they are it would suggest they have recently been an examiner and may therefore be eligible from this exam. You should make some enquiries before proceeding with the proposal).

In this example we are looking for an external called 'Harry External'.
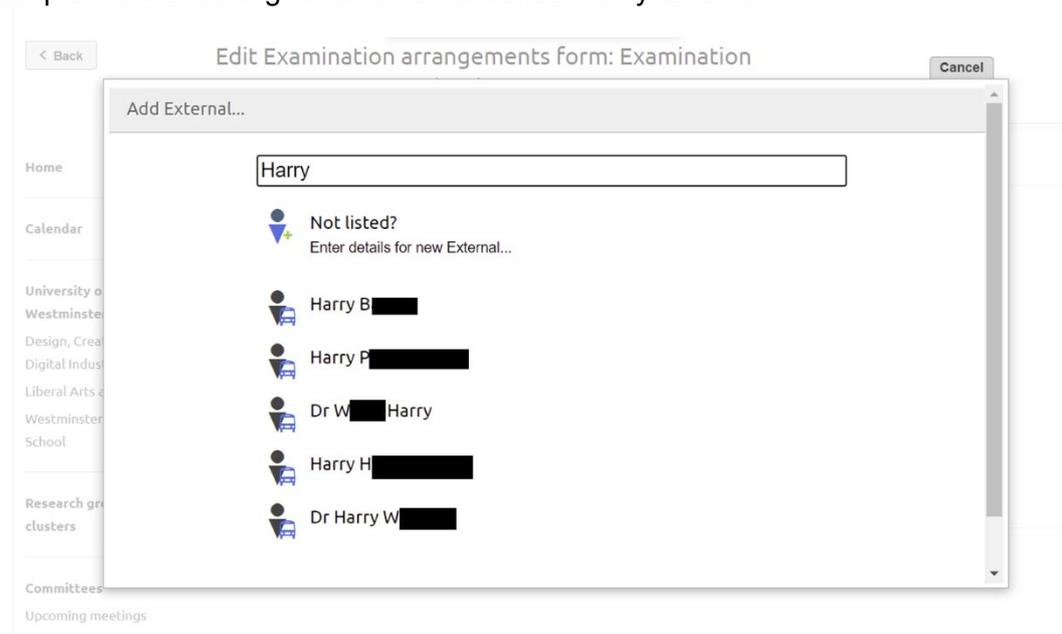
That individual is not listed. Where this is the case, you would select 'Not Listed? Enter details for new External'.

This will present you with the following form:

Complete the fields and select 'Save details'.

You will then be asked to enter the following information (please note, anything with a red Asterix is a compulsory field):

External: Dr Harry External

Current institution *

[   ]

Current post *

[   ]

Address where the thesis will be sent *

This should be a professional work address

[   ]

Telephone number

[   ]

Is the proposed external examiner based outside of the UK? *

Prior to appointment being confirmed and any work undertaken, all external examiners (whether UK or overseas) must provide evidence of their Right to Work in the UK.

○ Yes

○ No

Please upload the External Examiner's CV:

Drag files here or choose file...

Additional comments on external examiner's experience:

[   ]

Number of research degree candidates previously examined:

MPhil

	Chair	Examiner
At this institution	[ ] *	[ ] *
At other UK institutions	[ ] *	[ ] *
Outside the UK	[ ] *	[ ] *

Doctoral level (PhD, Professional Doctorate)

	Chair	Examiner
At this institution	[ ] *	[ ] *
At other UK institutions	[ ] *	[ ] *
Outside the UK	[ ] *	[ ] *

Notes on selection of proposed external examiner

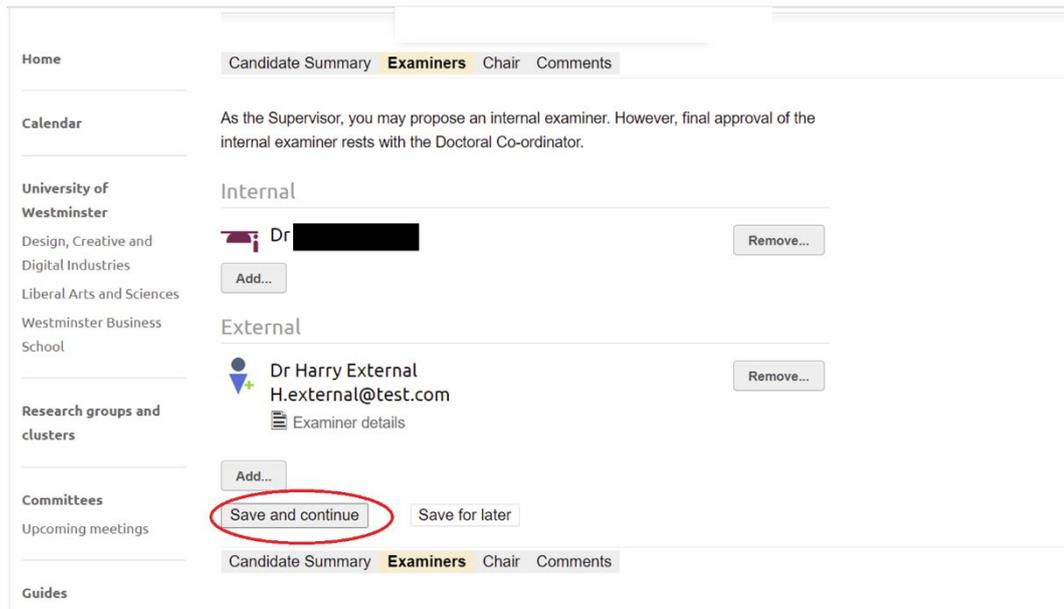You can then either 'Add External' or 'Save for Later'.

If you 'Save for Later', when you return to the exam record you will see the following:
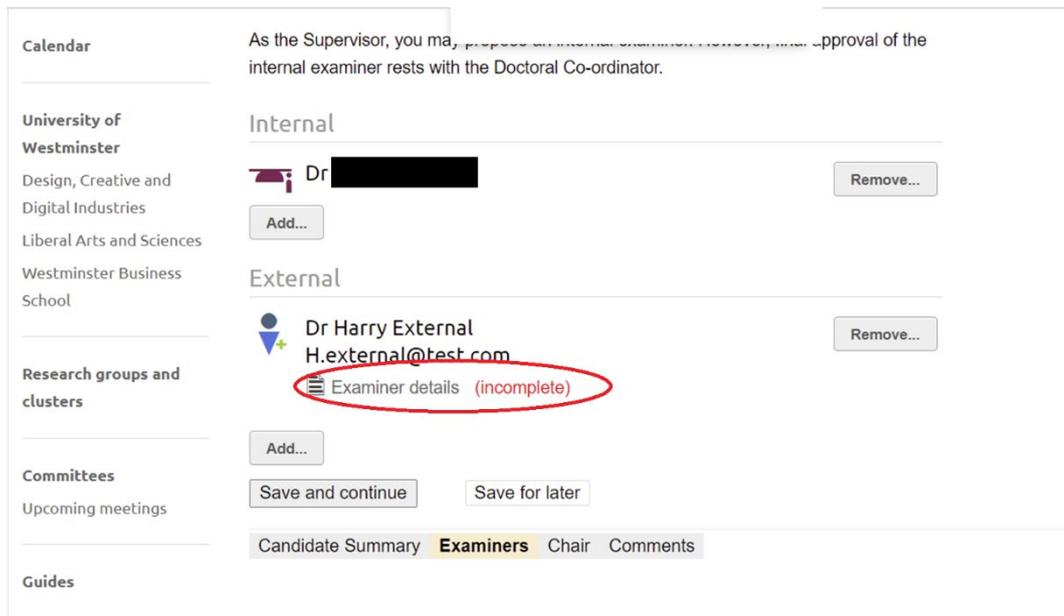
To re-open the form, select 'Examiner details (incomplete)' and then 'Edit' and continue filling out the form.

Once you've completed all the fields select 'Add' or 'Update examiner'.

The details of both examiners will then be listed on the exam arrangements record:

Select 'Save and continue'.

3. Chair – this is where the chair of examiners is proposed.

The Chair will default to the School's PhD Co-ordinator and cannot be amended by the Director of Studies. The Doctoral Co-ordinator can appoint an alternative chair at the next stage if required.

Select 'Save and continue'.

4. Comments - add any further relevant information or rationale for nominating the proposed examiners here.

Select 'Save and continue'.

This is the final stage and then you will be asked to 'Confirm: Submit application':

This is the final chance to add any notes. When you ready select 'Confirm: submit application'.

The exam arrangements will then be submitted and referred to the PhD Co-ordinator for review. Where the PhD Co-ordinator is on the supervisor team, as in the example below, it will be referred to the College Research Director for review.


PhD Co-ordinator/College Research Director

Once the Director of Studies has proposed an examination panel the PhD Co-ordinator (or College Research Director where the PhD Co-Ordinator is a member of the supervisory team) will receive a notification alerting them to a new task.

The PhD Co-ordinator or College Research Director should log into VRE and navigate to their 'Tasks' list:
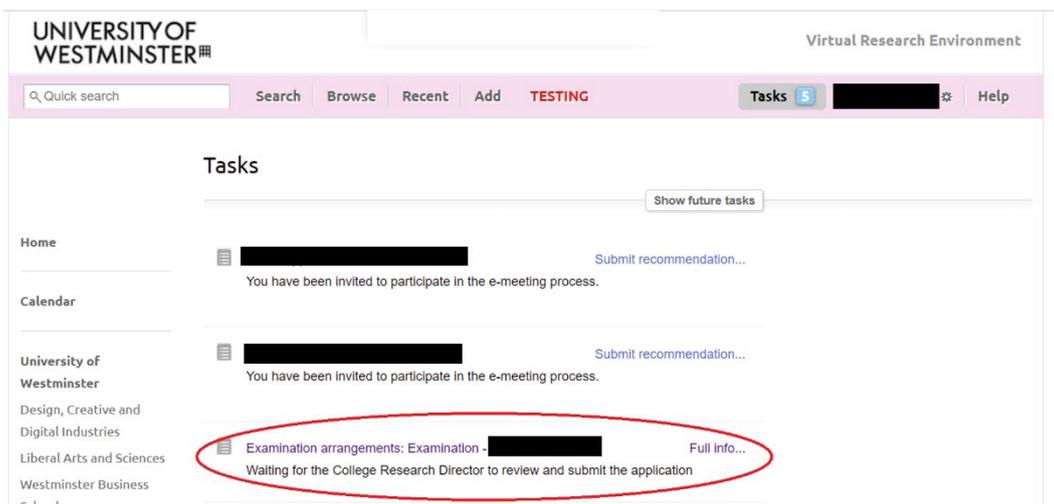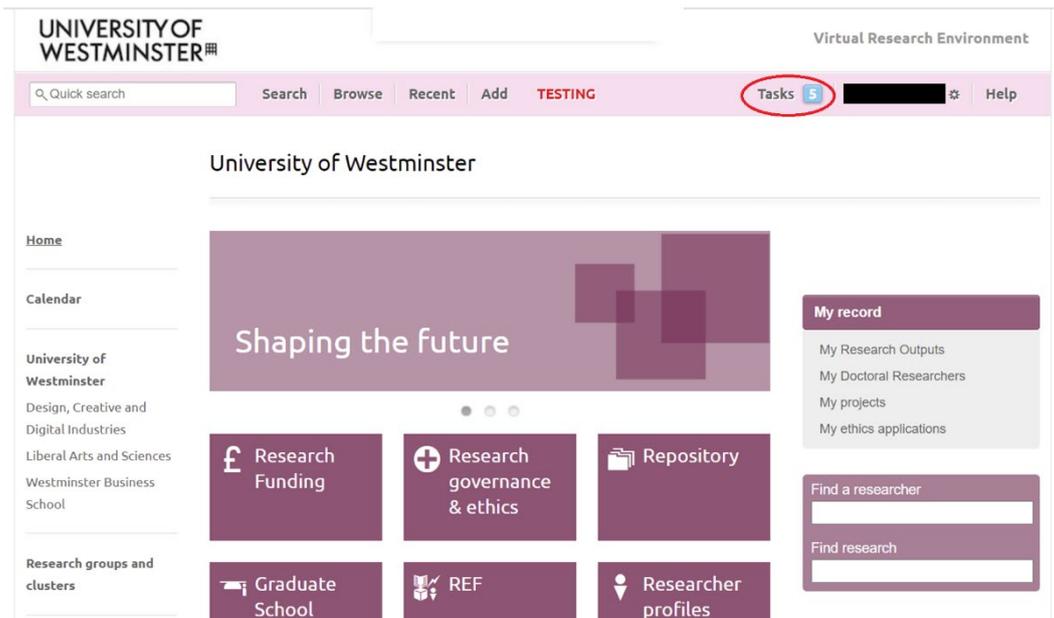
Click on the task to be taken to the 'Examination Arrangements' tab on the researcher's Examination Record:

From here the PhD Co-ordinator can do one of two things:

- 'Return application' to the Director of Studies or,
- 'Edit the Examination arrangements form' which will progress the task.

Click 'Edit the examination arrangements form' to open the proposal form. Here the information inputted by the Director of Studies can be reviewed.

You should progress through each screen by clicking 'Save and continue' until the 'Chair tab'.

Via the 'Chair' tab, you can select an alternative chair.

In this example this is a compulsory field (red Asterix) as the default chair is on the supervisory team:

Select an alternative Chair by typing the name into the yellow box:

Select 'Save and continue' and then 'Save and continue' again on the Comments tab.

You will then get to a summary screen of the proposed examiners. Review the information to check everything has been inputted correctly.

Once you are satisfied select 'Continue' on the right-hand side:

Then select 'Confirm: Progress application':
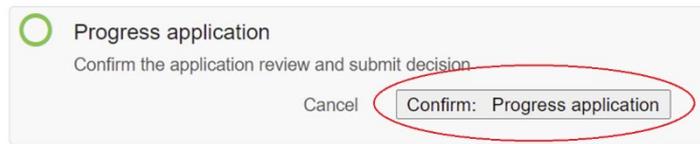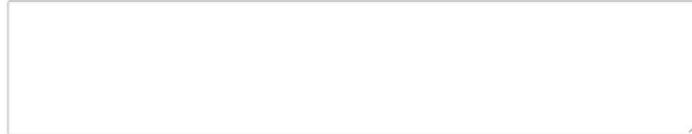
The application will then be submitted, and the application status updated to: 'Waiting for Graduate School Board to submit decision'

Graduate School Registry

The Secretary of Graduate School Board (a member of GSR) will then receive the examination arrangements task:
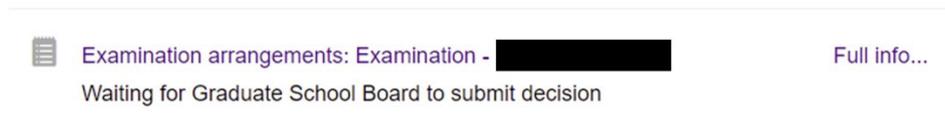
GSR will have various options:

Select 'progress'. GSR will be shown a summary of the proposed arrangements:

GSR should check that the proposed examiners meet the requirements (i.e., total exam experiences). If all looks in order the external examiner should be contacted to undertake the RTW check. This will need to be done outside of the VRE.

Once the RTW check is in place select 'Continue':

Various options are then given.

The standard route will be for the application to be 'Forward application to Chair' or 'Deputy Chair' for final approval.

Where the proposed panel fails to meet the minimum number of exam experiences (see Regulation B8.6) the application should be returned to the School Doctoral Co-ordinator by selecting 'Not approve'.

In this example the application has been forwarded to the Chair:

Select 'Confirm: Forward application to Chair':

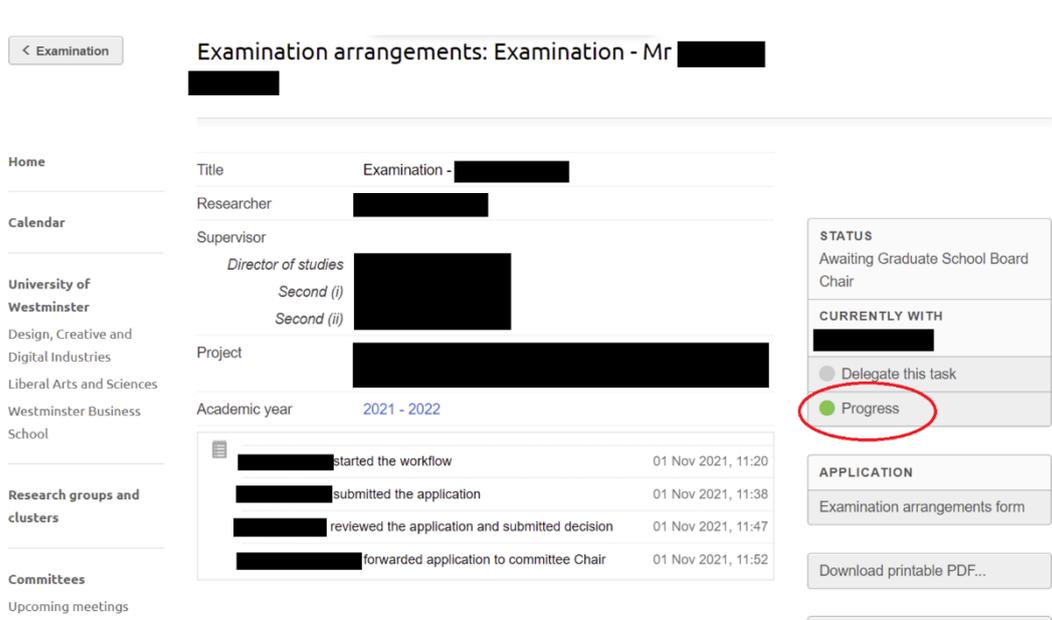The status of the examination arrangements then changes to 'Awaiting Graduate School Board Chair'.

Chair/Deputy Chair of Graduate School Board (GSB)

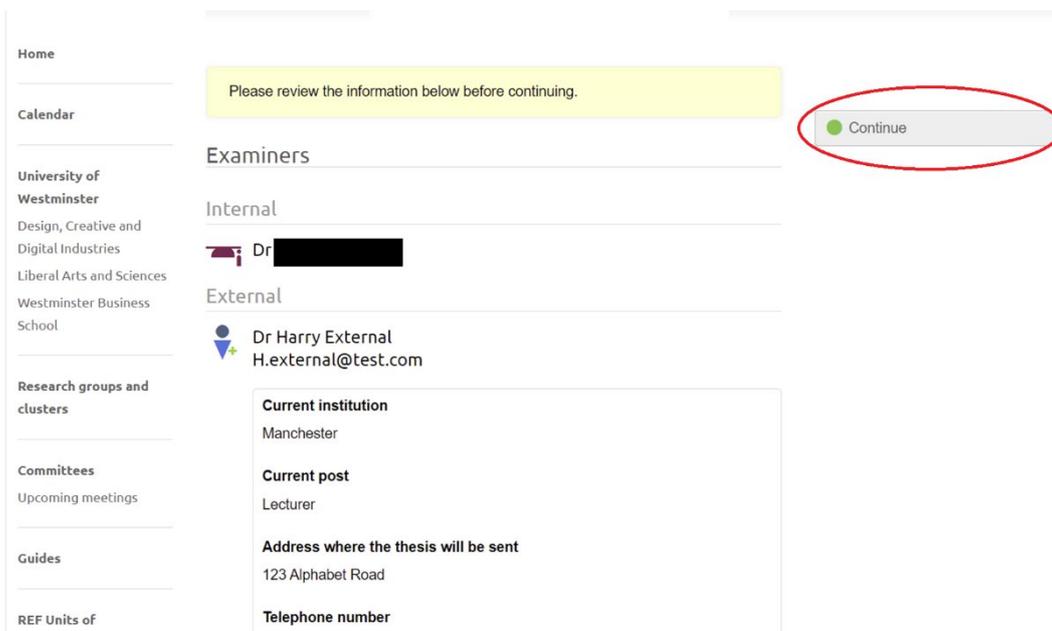The task then appears in Graduate School Board Chair/Deputy Chair's task list:

Click through to the task:

Select 'Progress' which will take you through to a summary screen:

Review the information and then select 'Continue'. You will then have two options to choose from:

Review · ● Confirm

● Approve
Approve the application

● Not approve
Mark this application as not approved and return to School Doctoral Co-ordinator for amendments

In this example we will progress the arrangements by selecting 'Approve' and then 'Confirm: Approve':

Progress: Examination arrangements: Examination -

< Cancel

○ Approve
Approve the application
                                    Cancel   Confirm: Approve

Notes (Notes can be seen by the applicant and all staff reviewing this application. Notes added here do not automatically trigger any notifications.)

Private notes (Seen only by staff reviewing this application, not seen by the applicant. Notes added here do not automatically trigger any notifications.)

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Once GSB approve the examination arrangements all parties will receive an email confirming the Exam Arrangements (Director of Studies, Researcher, Examiners, Chair of Examiners, and all members of the supervisory team).

The examination arrangements status changes to 'Waiting for user account creation':

STATUS
Waiting for user account creation

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Section 2. User Account Creation

Once the examination arrangements are approved by GSB, Graduate School Registry receive the task to set up the External Examiner's Account:

The task looks like this:

Before the External Examiner's Account can be linked to the Examination Record it first needs to be created.

Creating a user account (GSR)

To create an External Examiner's VRE account select 'Add' from the top tool bar:

From the list of options select 'Person':
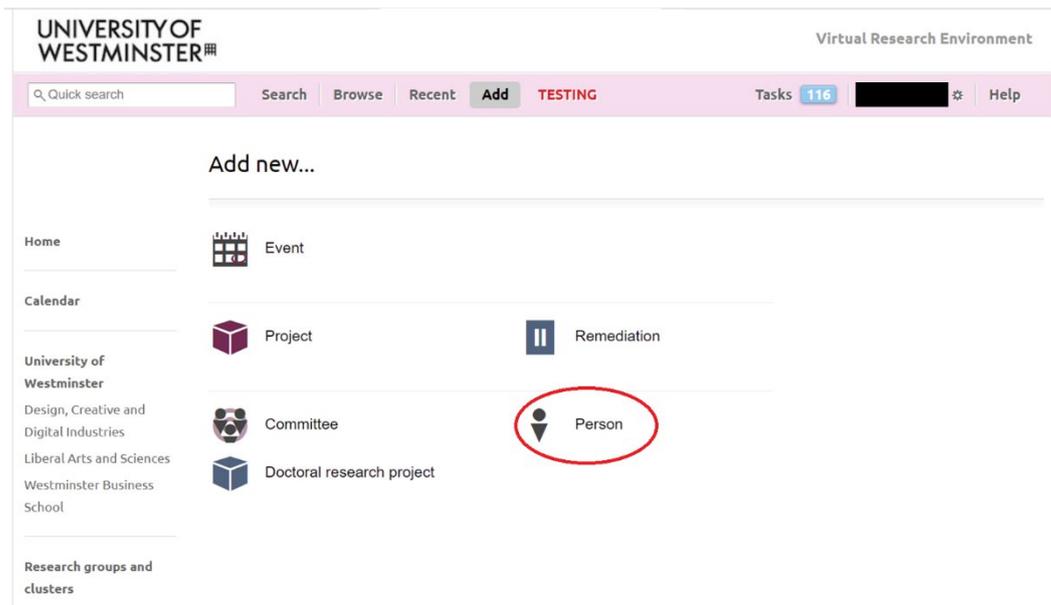
You will then need to populate several fields on the form using details from the examiners CV. This includes:

- Title
- First
- Last
- Contact Category - 'external researcher'
- Works for
- Job Title
- Email
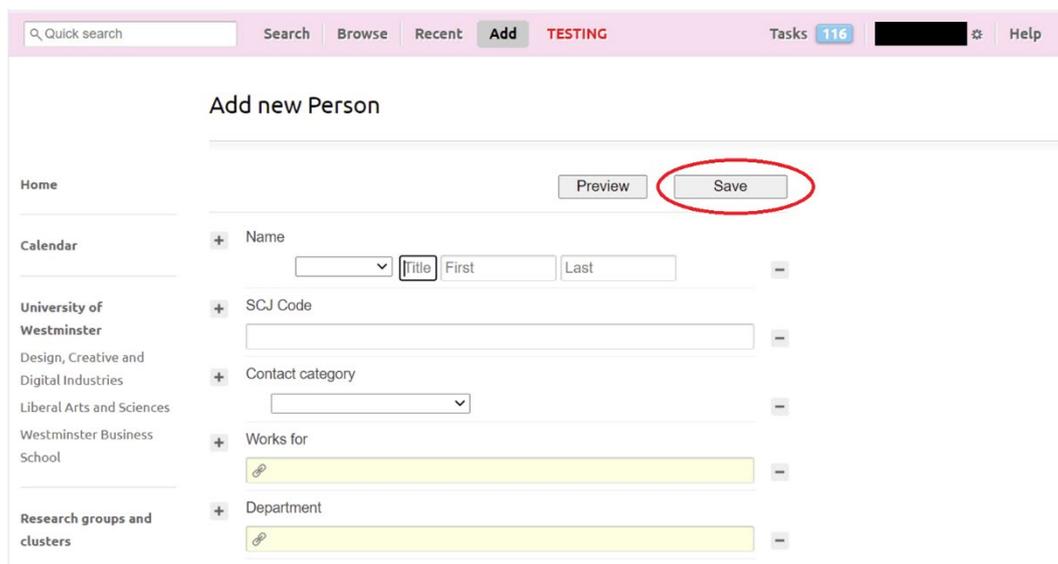
Once you've populated the main details, select 'Save'.

You will then arrive at the following screen:

The final step in setting up the account requires you to select 'Request external access' from the right-hand menu.

Select 'Confirm'.

The external account will now look like this:

The external examiner will then receive an email to set up a password for their new account. It will look something like this:

Graduate School Registry will then need to link the External Examiner's account to exam record. To do so a member of Graduate School Registry should return to the task:

Select 'Select User':

A recently created account matching the details will appear in the list. If it does not appear, return to the user profile, and check the set up.

Select the correct individual and 'Submit'.

The status of the examination record changes to pre-examination and GSR should now upload the RTW information to complete that part of the Examination Record.

Right to Work (GSR)
GSR will then receive a task to confirm the Right to Work check (RTW).

Under the current payment process for external examiners, RTW check's are no longer required.

Instead we use this task as a reminder to send the payment paperwork to the examiners.

Open task:

Select 'Edit confirmation form'.

Here you will need to tick the box to close the task. Do so and just add a note to the record to say the examiner has been sent the payment forms.

Select 'Save and continue' and then 'Confirm: confirm'.

The RTW task is then complete:

The Examination Record will be updated to show both RTW 'Approved' and Examination arrangements 'Completed':

Accessing the VRE for External Examiners

Once you have set your password you will be able to log into the VRE and access of the relevant examination tasks.

You will receive email notifications to complete these tasks, however if you wish to navigate to the VRE independently you can do so using this link:
https://research.westminster.ac.uk/do/authentication/login?auth=oneis

This will take you to the following log in screen:

Once you've entered your details and logged in you will see the tasks awaiting your attention in the top right hand of the screen.

Section 3. Thesis Submission

Thesis submission is all done via the VRE. There is no requirement for researchers to submit hard copies of the thesis.

The submission of the thesis for examination shall be at the sole discretion of the candidate and should take into account the University's Fit to Sit policy (See Regulation B8.28).

Researcher

To submit the thesis the researcher should navigate to the 'My project' page in the VRE and select the 'Examinations' tab from the righthand menu:

Next, select 'Examination – [First Name] [Surname]' which will take you to the Examination Record:

And then select 'Start now…' under 'Thesis submission':

Again, select 'Start' which will finally open the 'Thesis Submission' workflow:

You will then see the following screen:

From here select 'Submit thesis'. This will take you to the first of four screens.

1) **Statement** – required to confirm the statement and select one of two options

'Save and continue'.

2) **Declaration** - required to confirm the following:

'Save and continue'.

3) **Viva** – required to indicate which, if any supervisors, are to be present at the viva:

'Save and continue'.

4) Upload thesis:

Statement Declaration Viva **Upload Thesis**

Thesis Title: *

Please upload your thesis file

⬆ Drag files here or <u>choose file...</u>

Save and continue   Save for later

Statement Declaration Viva **Upload Thesis**

Check the thesis title is correct. It will auto-populate with the one on your 'Doctoral Research Project' page. Amend if necessary.

Upload your thesis file. This should ideally be a PDF to ensure there are no formatting issues.

Once you're happy the file has uploaded select 'Save and continue'.

You are then asked to confirm your submission:

◯ Submit application
Submit the completed application

Cancel   Confirm: Submit application

Notes (Notes can be seen by the applicant and all staff reviewing this application. Notes added here do not automatically trigger any notifications.)

This confirms the thesis submission. The task then goes to the Director of Studies:

Director of Studies

Once the submission is made by the researcher the Director of Studies will receive an email notification and a task asking them to review the thesis submission application:

The Thesis Submission Record looks like following:

To view the submission, select 'Doctoral Researcher Form'.

If there appears to have been a technical issue with the upload (i.e., a missing or corrupt file) you may want to 'Return to Doctoral Researcher' but otherwise you should select 'Submit Review'.

You will then be asked to confirm some details:

You will be asked to confirm that you have submitted the thesis via Turnitin for plagiarism checking and that you believe it to be the candidate's own work.

You can also add any additional notes at this stage.

Once satisfied select 'Confirm: Submit Review'. The Task then goes to GSR to confirm receipt and circulate the thesis.

Graduate School Registry

Once the Researcher has made the submission and the Director of Studies has completed their declaration GSR receive a task to 'confirm the thesis receipt':

The Thesis submission record will look as follows:

You should 'sense check' that the thesis is downloadable by looking at 'Doctoral Researcher Form' and that the Director of Studies has confirmed a plagiarism check has been carried out via the 'Declaration' tab (both located on the bottom righthand side). If there are any issues, please return it to relevant party using the options highlighted by orange buttons.

If everything looks ok 'Confirm Receipt'. This will open the following screen:
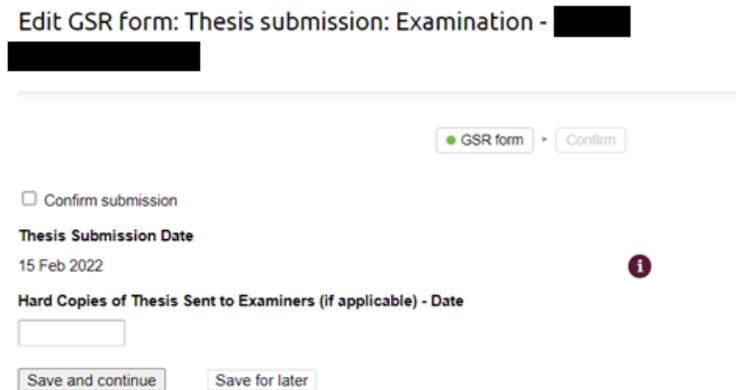
Tick the box to confirm submission and populate 'hard copies of thesis sent to examiners' if applicable.

Select 'Save and Continue' and then 'Confirm: Progress':

The Thesis Submission record status will then change to 'Completed'.

Next Steps

Once the thesis submission is confirmed several email notifications are generated:

- The candidate is notified that the thesis has been submitted and they will be advised of the viva in due course (the entire supervisor team are cc'd).
- The Examiners and Chair are advised that the thesis is available and that the Chair will be in touch soon to arrange the viva
- The Examiners receive emails asking them to complete the 'Preliminary Reports' (the Chair is cc'd).
- The Chair receives an email asking them to confirm the viva arrangements.

The next stages of the exam workflow are also unlocked:

Section 4. Viva Arrangements

Arrangements for the Viva will need to be confirmed via the VRE once the thesis has been submitted. The Examination outcome report will only become available once this stage has been completed and so this task should always be completed in advance of the viva.

Chair of Examiners

The Chair of Examiners will receive the task asking them to confirm the viva arrangements.

Select 'Edit viva arrangements':

And populate the following fields:

'Save and continue' and then confirm.

The Viva Arrangements task status will then change to 'Completed':

If at a later date the arrangements need changing/updating the Chair should select 'Edit viva arrangements' and update the applicable field/s.

The viva information is then added to the main examination record:

Section 5. Preliminary Reports

A preliminary report needs to be completed by both the internal and external examiner and submitted via the VRE at least five working days before the viva. Once both reports are submitted the Examiners (and Chair of Examiners) will be able to review each of the reports ahead of the viva examination.

Navigating to the thesis

To view the thesis, you must be logged into the VRE. From here navigate to the main examination record as below:

From here select 'Thesis Submission' and then select 'Doctoral Researcher Form' from the right-hand menu. If you then scroll to the bottom of the page you will find the thesis file to download.

Internal Examiner

The Internal Examiner will receive a VRE task and email notification asking them to submit the Preliminary Report:

Clicking on the task or on the link in the email will take you straight to the Preliminary Report form:

You should work through each of the four tabs and when complete select 'Save and Finish'.

You will then be asked to confirm that your report is ready and to submit:

The Preliminary Reports record will then be updated. In this example the record is 'Waiting for preliminary reports' and is 'on hold' as it's waiting for the external examiner to submit the report:

The Chair of Examiners will then receive a notification confirming receipt of the report:

Dear ██████████,

Candidate: ██████████

Award: Ph.D.

Thesis title: ████████████████████████████████
████████████████

The preliminary report from ██████████ is now available to view.

Preliminary reports - ██████████

Kind regards,

Graduate School Registry

University of Westminster

Selecting the 'Preliminary reports' tab on the righthand side will reveal both each of the reports:

For example:

On this record only one report is showing as only one report has currently been submitted. Once the second report is completed a second tab will be added for the external examiners report (or vice versa depending on the order the examiners submit their reports).

External Examiner

The External Examiner will receive a VRE task and email notification asking them to submit the Preliminary Report:

Clicking on the task or on the link in the email will take you straight to the Preliminary Report form:

You should work through each of the four tabs and when complete select 'Save and Finish'.

You will then be asked to confirm that your report is ready and to submit:

Once confirmed the Preliminary Reports record will have updated. In this example, the external's completion of the preliminary report has completed the workflow:

Chair of Examiners

In circumstances where an examiner is unable to submit their own preliminary report the Chair of Examiners can do this on their behalf.

From the main Examination Record the Chair will need to select 'Preliminary Reports':

Then, depending on which examiner has requested assistance with completing the report, you will need to select the appropriate tab:

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This example uses the External.

The Chair will then have the option to either complete the online form by following the workflow through the various screens or submitting a separate document:

If you submit the document, this will negate the need to do the following four screens.

Otherwise, you will be asked to follow the workflow through the screens – Candidate Summary, Report on Thesis, Collaborative Projects, and Provisional Recommendation.

Select 'Finish and Continue'.

The Chair will then be presented with the following screen:

The Preliminary Report preview will either show the text of the form you've completed or the document upload. In this instance it's showing the first part of the completed online form.

Select 'Confirm Report is ready'.

Confirm again.

The report will have been submitted.

Both Examiners

Once both examiners have completed their preliminary reports the Preliminary reports record completes:

The Examiners and Chair of Examiners will receive a notification informing them that:

Dear Dr External,

Candidate: ███████████

Award: Ph.D.

Thesis title: ████████████████████████████
████████████

The preliminary reports from all examiners are now available to view.

Preliminary reports - ███████████

Kind regards,

Graduate School Registry

University of Westminster

All parties will be able to see both reports by clicking on the email link or the 'Preliminary Reports' tab on the right-hand side of the exam record:

There will be a tab for each examiners report. These should be read in advance of the viva.

Section 6. Examination Outcome

Once the preliminary reports are submitted the 'Examination outcome' task will become available:

And the Chair of Examiners will receive an email confirming this:

This report should be completed by the Chair of Examiners and Examiners immediately following the viva.

Chair of Examiners – Outcome Report

The Chair of Examiners can access the report either via the link in the email notification or by the task in their task list:
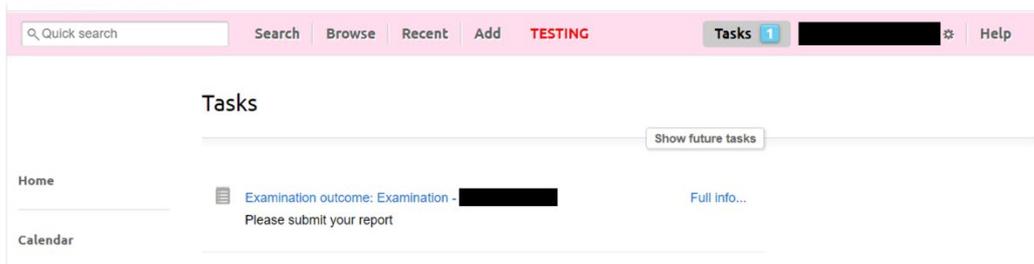
Clicking on the task will open an 'Examination outcome' sub-record as below. To complete report select 'Edit outcome report':
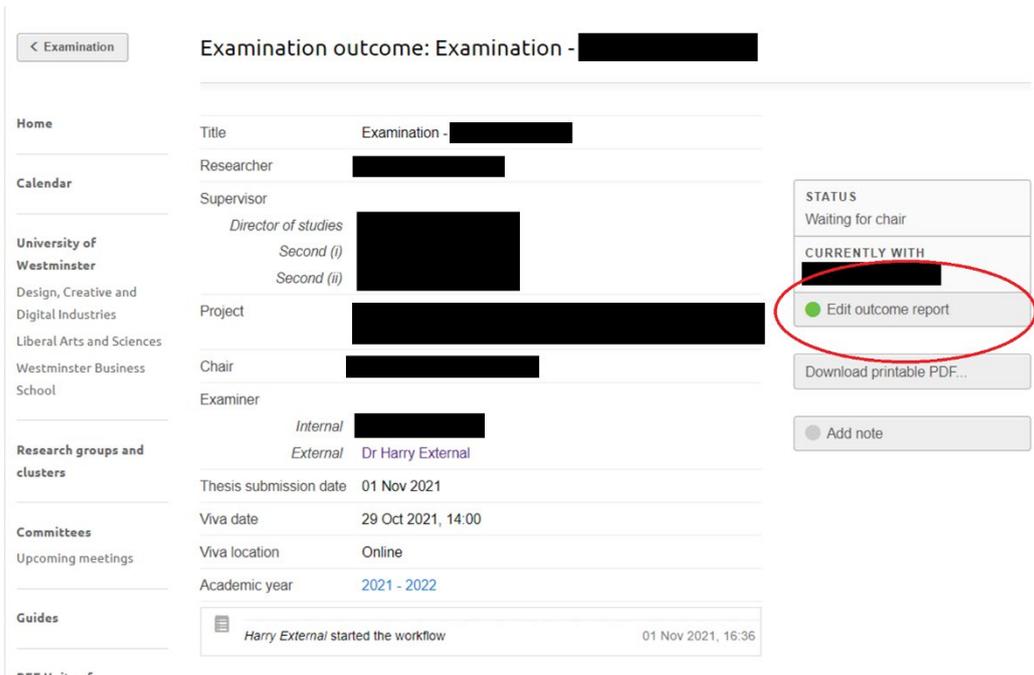
This will open the 'Outcome Report' form:
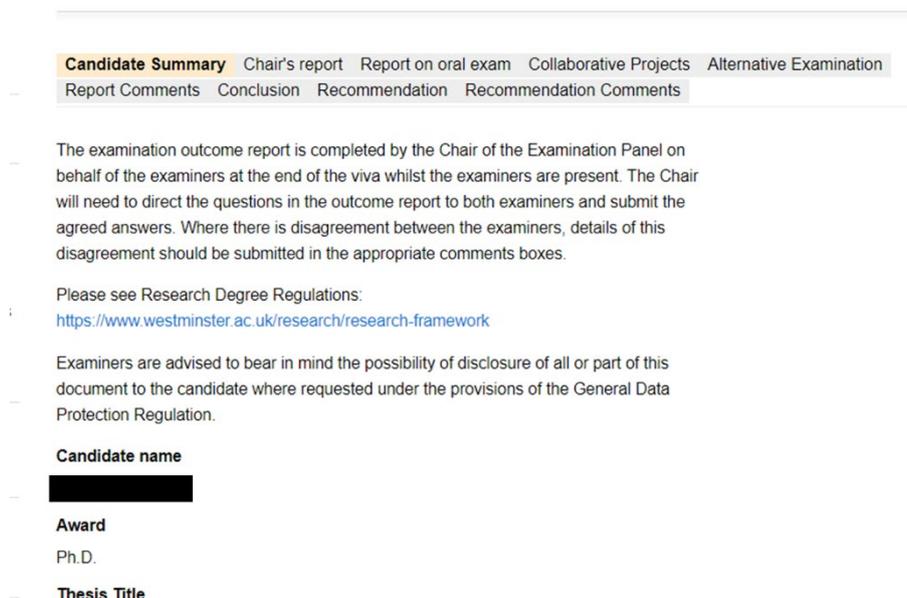
And presents the first of nine screens.

The Chair of Examiners should act as the scribe for the Examiners and guide them through completing the report.

- Candidate Summary – Offers some guidance and asks the Chair of Examiners to confirm some details:

- Chair's Report – completed by the Chair of Examiners:

- Report on oral exam:

Candidate Summary | **Chair's report** | **Report on oral exam** | **Collaborative Projects** | **Alternative Examination**
Report Comments | **Conclusion** | **Recommendation** | **Recommendation Comments**

The Examiners are requested to report below on the oral examination of the candidate giving a reasoned assessment of the candidate's performance.

Examination for the award of
Ph.D.

Are you satisfied that the thesis presented is the candidate's own work? *

○ Yes
○ No

Comments

Did the candidate show a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of matters relating to the thesis? *

○ Yes
○ No

Comments

Did the candidate show a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of background studies to the subject of the thesis? *

○ Yes
○ No

Comments

Comments on the oral examination

| Save and continue | Save for later |

- Collaborative projects (in most cases 'not applicable' will apply):

Candidate Summary | **Chair's report** | **Report on oral exam** | **Collaborative Projects** | **Alternative Examination**
Report Comments | **Conclusion** | **Recommendation** | **Recommendation Comments**

In the case of a candidate whose research programme was part of a collaborative group project, did the oral examination demonstrate that the candidate's own contribution was worthy of the award? *

○ Yes   ○ No   ● Not applicable

Comment on your decision
A comment is required for a yes or no response. If your response is 'Not applicable' then no comment is necessary

| Save and continue | Save for later |

- Alterative examination:

Candidate Summary   Chair's report   Report on oral exam   Collaborative Projects   **Alternative Examination**
Report Comments   Conclusion   Recommendation   Recommendation Comments

Was an alternative form of examination held? *

Where an alternative form of examination has been approved by the University's Graduate School Board, a report on the form of the examination and the candidate's performance should be given below.

○ Yes

○ No

Comments

Alternatively please upload a document with any comments relating to approved alternative examination.

⬆ Drag files here or _choose file..._

Save and continue   Save for later

- Report Comments:

Candidate Summary   Chair's report   Report on oral exam   Collaborative Projects   Alternative Examination
Report Comments   Conclusion   Recommendation   Recommendation Comments

Were the provisional recommendations of the examiners in their independent preliminary reports in agreement? *

○ Yes

○ No

If they were not in agreement an explanatory statement of the final joint recommendation must be provided

Details of the disagreement should be stated, and where appropriate related to the preliminary report. Alternatively please upload a document with any comments

⬆ Drag files here or _choose file..._

Save and continue   Save for later

- Conclusions:

Report Comments **Conclusion** Recommendation Recommendation Comments

Award

Ph.D.

Has the candidate satisfied the Examiners as a candidate for the degree in the respects of the thesis? *

○ Yes

○ No

Comments

Has the candidate satisfied the Examiners as a candidate for the degree in the respects of the viva? *

○ Yes

○ No

Comments

The candidate has not satisfied the Examiners as a candidate for the degree in the following respects

Save and continue   Save for later

- Recommendation:

Candidate Summary   Chair's report   Report on oral exam   Collaborative Projects   Alternative Examination
Report Comments   Conclusion   **Recommendation**   Recommendation Comments

Please select your recommendation *

○ That the candidate be awarded the degree of Ph.D.

○ That the candidate be awarded the degree of Ph.D. subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis, to be completed within a period of three months from the official notification of the outcome.

○ That the candidate be awarded the degree of Ph.D. subject to revision of the thesis, to be completed within a period of six months from the official notification of the outcome.

○ That the candidate not be awarded the degree but is permitted to re-submit for the degree and be re-examined - resubmission of the thesis within 12 months and a viva

○ That the candidate not be awarded the degree but is permitted to re-submit for the degree and be re-examined - resubmission of the thesis within 12 months (no viva)

○ That the candidate not be awarded the degree but is permitted to be re-examined for the degree - viva only

○ That the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil subject to the satisfactory completion of minor amendments, to be completed within a period of three months from the official notification of the outcome.

○ That the thesis potentially meets the criteria for the award of MPhil, and that the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil subject to revision of the thesis, to be completed within a period of six months from the official notification of the outcome.

○ That the candidate not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to be re-examined

Save and continue   Save for later

Candidate Summary   Chair's report   Report on oral exam   Collaborative Projects   Alternative Examination
Report Comments   Conclusion   **Recommendation**   Recommendation Comments

- Recommendation comments:

Candidate Summary   Chair's report   Report on oral exam   Collaborative Projects   Alternative Examination
Report Comments   Conclusion   Recommendation   **Recommendation Comments**   Amendments

Reason for decision

```

```

Please make any comments relating to your recommendation other than those made in the required reports

```

```

[Save and continue]   [Save for later]

Once all nine screens have been completed and the examiners are content that everything has been accurately recorded select 'Save and continue'.

In cases where the outcome is amendments or revisions a new tab titled 'Amendments' will become visible, and the Chair will be asked to specify which examiner/s will review the amendments:

Candidate Summary   Chair's report   Report on oral exam   Collaborative Projects   Alternative Examination
Report Comments   Conclusion   Recommendation   Recommendation Comments   **Amendments**

Amendments will be made to the satisfaction of: *
Select a minimum of one examiner
☐ Dr ██████████
☐ Dr Harry External

[Save and continue]   [Save for later]

Once the examiner reviewing the amendments has been specified select 'Save and Continue'. You will then be asked to 'Confirm: Submit application':

○   Submit application
    Submit the completed application
                              Cancel   [Confirm: Submit application]

Notes (Notes can be seen by the applicant and all staff reviewing this application. Notes added here do not automatically trigger any notifications.)

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Private notes (Seen only by staff reviewing this application, not seen by the applicant. Notes added here do not automatically trigger any notifications.)

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The outcome report will then be sent to the Internal Examiner to review and confirm. The internal examiner will be able to add comments, send it back for amendment or ideally, progress it to the external for them to then review and progress:

Internal Examiner – Outcome Report

Once the Outcome Report is submitted following the viva the internal examiner will receive an email notification and VRE task asking them to review and confirm the report:

The examiner will be presented with two options:

- Confirm Outcome
- Return to chair

Select 'Confirm Outcome'.

The next screen will offer a review of the form completed after the viva:
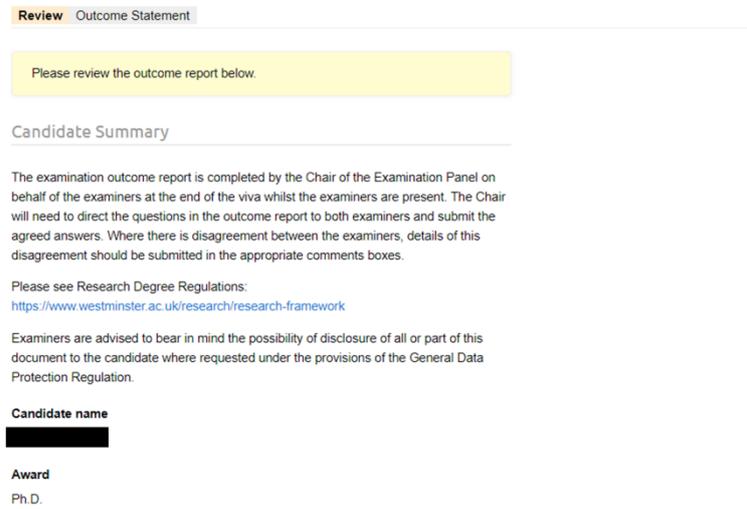
Review Outcome Statement

Please review the outcome report below.

Candidate Summary

The examination outcome report is completed by the Chair of the Examination Panel on behalf of the examiners at the end of the viva whilst the examiners are present. The Chair will need to direct the questions in the outcome report to both examiners and submit the agreed answers. Where there is disagreement between the examiners, details of this disagreement should be submitted in the appropriate comments boxes.

Please see Research Degree Regulations:
https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/research-framework

Examiners are advised to bear in mind the possibility of disclosure of all or part of this document to the candidate where requested under the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation.

Candidate name

Award
Ph.D.

The examiner should scroll through and check that everything has been recorded as agreed before selecting 'Save and Continue' at the bottom:
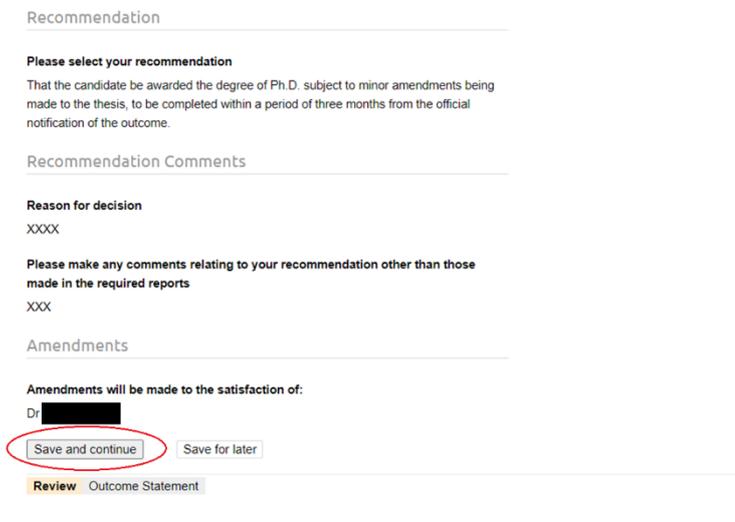
Recommendation

Please select your recommendation
That the candidate be awarded the degree of Ph.D. subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis, to be completed within a period of three months from the official notification of the outcome.

Recommendation Comments

Reason for decision
XXXX

Please make any comments relating to your recommendation other than those made in the required reports
XXX

Amendments

Amendments will be made to the satisfaction of:
Dr

[Save and continue] [Save for later]

Review Outcome Statement

If there are any discrepancies the examiner should return the form to the Chair of Examiners by selecting 'Back' and then 'Return to Chair', making sure to add a note of what needs amending.

Having selected 'Save and continue' the examiner will then be asked to confirm the report and given a final opportunity to make any comments:

Review **Outcome Statement**

☐ I agree with the outcome report ⓘ

Any comments (Optional)

[ ]

(Save and continue)   Save for later

Review **Outcome Statement**

And then to confirm final confirmation:

○ Confirm outcome
Confirm the examination outcome

Cancel   (Confirm: Confirm outcome)

Notes (Notes can be seen by the applicant and all staff reviewing this application. Notes added here do not automatically trigger any notifications.)

[ ]

Private notes (Seen only by staff reviewing this application, not seen by the applicant. Notes added here do not automatically trigger any notifications.)

[ ]

This concludes the Internal Examiner's role in the Outcome Report, and it is then progressed to the External Examiner:

< Examination

Examination outcome: Examination - ▇▇▇▇▇

Home	Title	Examination - ▇▇▇▇
	Researcher	▇▇▇▇
Calendar	Supervisor	
	Director of studies	▇▇▇▇
University of Westminster	*Second (i)*	▇▇▇▇
Design, Creative and Digital Industries	*Second (ii)*	
Liberal Arts and Sciences	Project	▇▇▇▇
Westminster Business School	Chair	▇▇▇▇
	Examiner	
	Internal	▇▇▇▇
Research groups and clusters	*External*	Dr Harry External
	Thesis submission date	01 Nov 2021
	Viva date	29 Oct 2021, 14:00
Committees	Viva location	Online
Upcoming meetings	Academic year	2021 - 2022

STATUS
Waiting for external examiner
CURRENTLY WITH
Harry External

EXAMINATION
Outcome report
Internal examiner statement

Download printable PDF...

● Add note

External Examiner – Outcome Report

Once the Outcome Report is submitted by the internal examiner, the external examiner will receive an email notification and VRE task asking them to review and confirm the report:

The Examiner has three options:

- Confirm Outcome
- Return to internal examiner
- Return to chair

The Examiner also has the option to view both the Outcome report and Internal Examiner Statement by selecting options on the Righthand side.

Select 'Confirm Outcome' which will reveal the 'Review' of the report:

Scroll through and review the report before selecting 'Save and continue' at the bottom:

Amendments

Amendments will be made to the satisfaction of:

Dr ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

[Save and continue]   [Save for later]

Review Outcome Statement

If there are any issues with the report, please return to previous page using 'Back' button and select either 'Return to internal examiner' or 'Return to chair' as applicable, making sure to add a comment explaining why it has been returned. The report will then be sent back to that individual where it will need to be amended before progressing through the workflow again.

After clicking 'Save and continue' the examiner is asked to tick:

< Back

Home

Calendar

University of Westminster

Design, Creative and Digital Industries

Liberal Arts and Sciences

Westminster Business School

Edit External examiner statement: Examination outcome: Examination - ▮▮▮▮▮▮

Review **Outcome Statement**

☐ I agree with the outcome report   ⓘ

Any comments (Optional)

[   ]

[Save and continue]   [Save for later]

Review **Outcome Statement**

And then 'Confirm: Confirm outcome':

○ Confirm outcome
Confirm the examination outcome
                                    Cancel   [Confirm: Confirm outcome]

Notes (Notes can be seen by the applicant and all staff reviewing this application. Notes added here do not automatically trigger any notifications.)

[   ]

Private notes (Seen only by staff reviewing this application, not seen by the applicant. Notes added here do not automatically trigger any notifications.)

[   ]

The Outcome Report then goes back to the first examiner to complete the Amendments Report (where applicable):

Internal Examiner – Amendments Report

Following the External's confirmation of the Outcome Report the Internal Examiner receives a task to 'Review Amendments':

To add a list of required amendments, click 'Review Amendments':

Amendments will be made to the satisfaction of:

Dr ████████

Examination outcome:

That the candidate be awarded the degree of Ph.D. subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis, to be completed within a period of three months from the official notification of the outcome.

Please provide details of the amendments required

[text box]

⬆ Drag files here or *choose file...*

(Save and continue)   Save for later

The Examiner is then either able to upload the amendments as a document (word or pdf) or enter them into the text box as free text.

For ease the Examiners should collaborate on preparing a list outside of the VRE following the viva which can then be uploaded. This will save the task being returned and going in a loop at the approval stage.

Once the amendments have been entered/uploaded, select 'Save and Continue' and then 'Confirm: Submit requirements':

○ **Submit requirements**
Submit amendments requirements

Cancel   [Confirm: Submit requirements]

Notes (Notes can be seen by the applicant and all staff reviewing this application. Notes added here do not automatically trigger any notifications.)

[text box]

Private notes (Seen only by staff reviewing this application, not seen by the applicant. Notes added here do not automatically trigger any notifications.)

[text box]

The task will then progress to the External examiner for final confirmation:

External Examiner – Amendments Report

Once the Internal Examiner has submitted the Amendments report it will be passed to the external examiner to review. The external examiner will receive both an email notification and VRE task alerting them to the fact the report is ready:

The External examiner has two options:

- Confirm requirements
- Return to first examiner

Select 'Confirm requirements':

The External Examiner will then be able to see either a list of amendments or the uploaded document (if it's the document this will be available to preview).

The External Examiner should review the amendments requested and make sure everything is covered. If anything is missing the form will need to be returned to the internal with the request that those amendments be added to the list. To do this select 'Back' and then 'Return to first examiner'.

If the external examiner is satisfied with the requested amendments, they should select 'Save and Continue'. They will then be asked to:

And to confirm:

The task then progress to Graduate School Registry.

Graduate School Board – Outcome Report

The Secretary of Graduate School Board receives the Examination Outcome task once both examiners have signed off the Outcome Report and Amendments:

The option selected will always need to be 'Forward Application to Chair' or 'Forward application to Deputy Chair'. This should be selected from the righthand menu once a check that the forms have been completed correctly is done.

This can be done by looking at the reports under the 'Examination' section on the righthand side. There will be Outcome Report, Internal examiner statement, External examiner statement, Amendments report and Amendments report approval.

Once satisfied return and select 'Forward application to chair' (or 'Forward application to Deputy Chair'):

Please review the information below before continuing.

● Continue

Candidate Summary

The examination outcome report is completed by the Chair of the Examination Panel on behalf of the examiners at the end of the viva whilst the examiners are present. The Chair will need to direct the questions in the outcome report to both examiners and submit the agreed answers. Where there is disagreement between the examiners, details of this disagreement should be submitted in the appropriate comments boxes.

Please see Research Degree Regulations:
https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/research-framework

Examiners are advised to bear in mind the possibility of disclosure of all or part of this document to the candidate where requested under the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation.

Candidate name

████████████

Award

Ph.D.

Thesis Title

Review the summary and then select 'Continue' and finally 'Confirm: Forward application to chair':

○ Forward application to Chair
Forward application to the committee Chair

Cancel   Confirm: Forward application to Chair

Notes (Notes can be seen by the applicant and all staff reviewing this application. Notes added here do not automatically trigger any notifications.)

Private notes (Seen only by staff reviewing this application, not seen by the applicant. Notes added here do not automatically trigger any notifications.)

The task then progresses to the Chair/Deputy Chair of Graduate School Board.

Graduate School Board Chair – Outcome Report

Once the Exam Outcome Report and Amendments have been submitted and confirmed by both the internal and External examiner, and Graduate School Registry have reviewed the reports, the Chair/Deputy Chair of Graduate School Board receives the task:

Title	Examination - ████████████
Researcher	████████████
Supervisor	
Director of studies	████████████
Second (i)	████████████
Project	Doctoral Research Project
Chair	████████████
Examiner	
Internal	████████████
External	Dr Harry Test
Thesis submission date	15 Feb 2022
Viva date	14 Feb 2022, 14:00
Viva location	Online
Academic year	2021 - 2022

STATUS
Awaiting Graduate School Board Chair

CURRENTLY WITH
████████████

⚪ Delegate this task

🟢 Review

🟠 Return to committee representative

EXAMINATION
Outcome report

Multiple options are available, including the option to delegate the task and return to committee representative. In most instances the Chair/Deputy Chair of GSB will select to 'Review':

Please review the information below before continuing.

🟢 Continue

Candidate Summary

The examination outcome report is completed by the Chair of the Examination Panel on behalf of the examiners at the end of the viva whilst the examiners are present. The Chair will need to direct the questions in the outcome report to both examiners and submit the agreed answers. Where there is disagreement between the examiners, details of this disagreement should be submitted in the appropriate comments boxes.

Please see Research Degree Regulations:
https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/research-framework

Examiners are advised to bear in mind the possibility of disclosure of all or part of this document to the candidate where requested under the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation.

Candidate name

████████████

Award

Ph.D.

The Chair/Deputy Chair of GSB is asked to Review the reports. When happy they should select 'Continue' and then 'Approve'.

If the Chair/Deputy Chair is not satisfied with the reports or wishes to query something they can send the report back to anyone previously involved in the workflow.

If approved, the status of the report will then change to reflect the exam outcome:

The Researcher will then receive an email confirming the outcome of their examination and advising them on next steps. This is cc'd to the entire supervisory team.

If they are awarded, they will be provided with information about how to complete final thesis submission and conferment.

If they receive minor amendments or revisions, they will be asked to ensure to submit the revised thesis by the deadline.

If they are asked to resubmit, they are advised about the deadline for the resubmission.

Section 7. Minor Amendments/Revisions

Researcher

Where the examination outcome is Minor Amendments or Revisions a new part of the exam record will unlock for the researcher:

Once the researcher has revised the thesis and is ready to submit, they should select 'Start Now' under 'Thesis amendments' and then 'Start':

Followed by 'Submit thesis':

The Researcher should check the thesis title and then upload two files – the revised thesis and the required accompanying commentary:

Once the files have been uploaded, select 'Save and Continue' and then 'Submit'.

The revised thesis and commentary will then progress to the examiner/s who have been designated to review the amendments.

Examiner/s

Once the researcher has submitted their revised thesis and commentary, the Examiner/s nominated to review the thesis will receive an email confirmation and a task to 'Review Amendments':

Note: Once the revised thesis and commentary have been submitted the Chair of Examiners will also receive an email notification to this affect.

Before completing the report, the examiner/s should access the 'Amended thesis and commentary' by selecting the tab 'Amended thesis and commentary' on the right-hand side. The screen will look like this:

The Examiner/s can then download the thesis and commentary for review (click on the hyperlinked file name and the download should start automatically).

Once the thesis has been reviewed and the examiner/s is ready to complete report, they should return to the 'Thesis amendments' record and select 'Review amendments':

The Examiner/s are then asked to complete the report and give a recommendation:

The recommendations include:

Once an outcome has been selected, click 'Save and continue'.

There is then an opportunity to add any final comments:

Select 'Save and continue' and then 'Confirm: Submit review':

Where the outcome is to award the degree, the record will be updated to show:

Note: Where the outcome is 'a further one month for the thesis to be brought up to the require standard' Section 7 of this guide involving the researcher and examiners will be repeated.

Once awarded, the researcher will receive an email notification which is copied to the entire supervisory team.

The researcher is then invited to submit their final thesis.

Section 8. Resubmission

Researcher

Where the outcome is a resubmission the Researcher will receive a new exam record as below:

When ready to submit will need to click 'Create new' and 'Start'. This will create an Examination (resubmission) record:

Select 'Start now' and 'Start'.

Then select 'Submit thesis'. This is the same as the initial submission (See Section 3). The Researcher will need to complete the Statement, Declaration and Upload thesis screens. Then 'Submit: submit application'.

The task then goes to the Director of Studies

Director of Studies
Once the thesis is resubmitted the Director of Studies will receive two tasks asking them:

1. To confirm the thesis submission
2. To confirm the examination arrangements

Thesis submission
The Director of Studies receives the task:

Select 'Submit review':

This task is the same as the initial submission (See Section 3). The Director of Studies will need to confirm the plagiarism check has been done and then 'Confirm: Submit Review'.

The task then goes to Graduate School Registry.

Examination Arrangements

Following the resubmission of the thesis the Director of Studies receives a task to confirm the examination arrangements for the resubmission:

Select 'Edit exam arrangements form'. There will be two choices:

Select the applicable option.

If 'The examination panel remains the same for resubmission' is selected, select 'save and continue' and then 'Submit Application' and then 'Confirm' which will submit the exam arrangements as previous.

If 'I wish to submit changes to the nominated examination panel for resubmission' is selected, select 'Save and continue' and then work through the workflow and provide the details of the new exam panel (see Section 1).

In both cases, once submitted, the application is referred to the Doctoral Co-ordinator.

Chair of Examiners

Once the Director of Studies has confirmed the examination arrangements for the resubmission, the Chair of Examiners will receive the task:

The Chair of Examiners should review each application as there may be changes to the Examination panel proposed.

Select 'edit exam arrangements form', then just click through the screens confirming the arrangements by selecting 'Save and Continue'. At the 'Review' screen do one final check before selecting 'Continue' and finally 'Confirm: Progress application'.

The application is then referred to Secretary of Graduate School Board.

Graduate School Registry

Thesis Submission

Once the Researcher has submitted the thesis resubmission, GSR will receive a task to 'Confirm Receipt':

Tick the box and 'Save and continue' and 'Confirm: Progress'.

The Researcher and Supervisory Team will then receive confirmation that the thesis has been successfully resubmitted.

Examination Arrangements

Once the Chair of Examiners confirms the exam arrangements Graduate School Registry will receive a task:

Select 'Progress':

Review the proposed exam arrangements, 'Continue' and then 'Forward application to Chair' and 'Confirm'.

The application will then progress to Chair of Graduate School Board.

Chair of Graduate School Board

Chair of Graduate School Board receives the task to review the Exam Arrangements:

Select 'Progress', 'Continue' and 'Approve' and 'Confirm: Approve'.

At the point the Chair of Graduate School Board confirms the exam arrangements the Examiners will receive an email notifying them the thesis is available for review.

A task is also generated for the Chair of Examiners to complete the Outcome Report.

Section 8a. Resubmission – No viva

Where the outcome of the examination was: 'That the candidate not be awarded the degree but is permitted to re-submit for the degree and be re-examined - resubmission of the thesis within 12 months (no viva)' the following process applies.

Chair of Examiners

Once the thesis resubmission has been confirmed by Graduate School Registry and the Examination Arrangements are confirmed (see Section 8) the Chair of Examiners will receive an email notification and task to confirm the 'Examination outcome – X (resubmission) report'.

Select 'Edit outcome report' and complete the Examination outcome (resubmission) report, just as following the initial examination (see Section 6):

The outcomes available will be slightly different to those following the initial examination as the outcome cannot be a second resubmission:

Select the appropriate outcome and the 'Confirm: Submit application'.

Internal/External Examiners

At this stage the process follows the same workflow as following an initial examination so please refer to Section 6 of this guide.

Section 8b. Resubmission – Viva

Where the outcome of the examination was: 'That the candidate not be awarded the degree but is permitted to re-submit for the degree and be re-examined - resubmission of the thesis within 12 months (with viva)' the following process applies.

Examiners – Preliminary Reports

Once the Chair of Graduate School Board has confirmed the examination arrangements (see Section 8) the examiners will receive a notification that the resubmitted thesis is available for review.

The Examiners will also receive an email notification and task asking them to submit their preliminary reports at least 5 working days ahead of the 2nd viva. This is the same as during the initial examination phase (see Section 5).

Chair of Examiners – Viva arrangements

Once the Chair of Graduate School Board has confirmed the examination arrangements the examiners will receive a notification that the resubmitted thesis is available for review and a request to begin to make the viva arrangements. This process is the same as during the initial examination phase (See Section 4).

Chair of Examiners – Examination Outcome Report

Immediately following the viva, the Chair of Examiners together with the Examiners should complete the Examination Outcome Report (See Section 6).

The outcomes available will be slightly different to those following the initial examination as the outcome cannot be a second resubmission:

Select the appropriate outcome and the 'Confirm: Submit application'

Internal/External Examiners

At this stage the process follows the same workflow as following an initial examination so please refer to Section 6 of this guide.

Section 9. Final Thesis Submission and Conferment

Researcher

Once the examination outcome is confirmed the researcher will be asked to upload their final thesis document and complete conferment:

The Researcher will need to select 'Edit Form':

Examination Process VRE Guide
EL Version 3

Graduate School Registry June 2022

The researcher then needs to complete the submission information. This involves a series of four screens:

1 – EthOS Agreement One:

EThOS Agreement One EThOS Agreement Two Thesis Upload Conferment

British Library Electronic Thesis Online Service (EThOS)

The University's Electronic-Thesis Online Service (EThoS) is an online project run by the British Library. As a member, the University of Westminster provides digital copies of completed PhD and MPhil theses to be made available through the British Library's electronic service. Copies are also available in our research repository WestminsterResearch which you can visit at https://westminsterresearch.westminster.ac.uk

Deposit Agreement Covered Work I, "the Depositor" agree to deposit my material in the Electronic Thesis Online Service (EThoS) and WestminsterResearch. Research referred to below as "Work" is covered by this agreement. Please select as appropriate: *

○ I confirm that this work does not contain any potential third party copyright issues or any sensitive or confidential material which would need to be addressed prior to digital publication

Please select one of the following statements: *

○ I confirm that this is an exact copy of the final accepted version

○ I confirm that this is a redacted version due to third party copyright material being removed to allow for online archival

Save and continue   Save for later

EThOS Agreement One EThOS Agreement Two Thesis Upload Conferment

2 – EThoS Agreement Two:

Home

Calendar

University of Westminster

Design, Creative and Digital Industries

Liberal Arts and Sciences

Westminster Business School

Research groups and clusters

Committees

Upcoming meetings

Guides

REF Units of Assessment

Past events

EThOS Agreement One **EThOS Agreement Two** Thesis Upload Conferment

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☑ I confirm that I am the author of the Work and hereby give EThoS and WestminsterResearch administrators the right to make available the Work in the way described above.

☑ I confirm that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the Work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge break any UK law or infringe any third party's copyright or other Intellectual Property Right or confidentiality.

☑ I agree that the administrators of EThoS and WestminsterResearch do not hold any obligation to take legal action on behalf of the Depositor, or other rights holders, in the event of breach of intellectual property rights, or any other right, in the material deposited.

Save and continue   Save for later

3 – Thesis upload:

EThOS Agreement One EThOS Agreement Two **Thesis Upload** Conferment

Thesis title *

Final copy of thesis as approved by the examiners

⬆ Drag files here or choose file...

Save and continue   Save for later

4 – Conferment:

Once all the boxes have been ticked select 'Save and continue' and then 'Confirm: Submit thesis':

The task then progresses to Graduate School Registry.

Graduate School Registry

Once the researcher has submitted the final thesis and completed the conferment task it progresses to Graduate School Registry:

Graduate School Registry should check the submission via the 'Doctoral Researcher final thesis submission' button.

If all looks good select 'Confirm submission'.

Then Graduate School Registry need to confirm two additional tasks have been completed:

If necessary, action the closure of the external examiner account (see Section 10) and then return to the task.

Confirm both tasks have been done and select 'Save and continue' and 'Confirm: confirm submission'.

The task then progresses to the Library Outputs Editor.

Section 10. Close External Examiner Account
Graduate School Registry
Once the researcher submits the final thesis (or upon conclusion of the exam) the Graduate School Registry will need to close the External Examiner's VRE account.

To do this search the examiner's name and bring up their profile:

Select 'Revoke access' and then 'confirm':

The profile will then be deactivated: