



UK **Council** *for* **Graduate Education**

Meeting the Needs of  
Doctoral Examiners  
20<sup>th</sup> January 2010  
*The University of Reading*

Section 1

Conflict of interest?

1. Interaction – informal

Expectation of official invite

2. Yes – informal approaches helpful.
3. Yes – professional

(GP1/1)

## Section 2

What would we do?

Nothing

- Preparation of questions for viva

Recommend action

- Refer to graduate office or supervisor (person responsible)

(GP1/2)

### Section 3

Hold pre-viva meeting – identify issues on viva agenda

Seek resolution of disagreement

Write independent reports

(GP1/3)

## Section 4

### Comments

Much information irrelevant

- Questionable to invite prof lapping

What should happen

- make decision
- allow process to run course
- expect appeal

(GP1/4)



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Section 1

What would you do.....

Stall, seek advice.

Is it typical.....

Not uncommon, but uncomfortable.

Is it professional/un-professional

Potentially unprofessional.

(GP2/1)

## Section 2

What would you do.....

Check regs.

Make notes of concerns

(viva questions)

Check with senior colleagues

What would recommend.....

Check regs.

Internal re-take control of process.

Speak to Div. of Research

Independent Chair.

(GP2/2)

### Section 3

What are your comments.....

Intolerable situation

How would you manage this situation?

Call in senior colleague

Submit independent reports not agreeing to 'pass', Or, reschedule viva

(GP2/3)

## Section 4

What are your comments.....

Unsupported internal examiner.

Lack of regs and procedures.

What should happen.....

Stop the viva?

Systems in place to support internal examiner role.

Systems in place to prevent premature submission.

(GP2/4)

## Section 5

Key advice

Know regs,

Stick to guns.

Document everything.

(GP2/5)



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Section 1

What would you do? - open minded

- need to dev. Skills,
- motive not clear but
- go for it but ask for training!

Typical?

'yes!

Prof/unprof

- could be best candidate.
- what constitutes 'unprof' if normal practice?

(GP3/1)

## Section 2

Do what?

Pub - probably fine

- feel nervous over gaps
- make notes and prepare viva questions
- ask Supervisor – should it be submitted - (upset Lapping)?
- have an indep. Chair – time to present
- consult .. – Ext and Int contact pre viva

Confident similarity???????

(GP1/2)

### Section 3

Comments - Politics

How to manage?

- lazy or fishy?
- presumptions of ext. v – a - ????? supervisor/s students.
- Put across pts with confidence but diplomatically
- need tact!
- what expectations of student for viva – easy pass?

(GP3/3)

## Section 4

### Comments

- is student in need of protection?
- poor supervision/admin annual review

### What next?

- possible re-viva
- presence of Lapping? 'regs!
- being coerced?
- indep. Report
- resubmit

### Advice

- indep. Chair
- need training
- regs on student spec. circum.

(GP3/4)



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Section 1

1. Request more information – e.g. abstract.
2. Who is other examiner
3. Timescales
4. Support ill receive
5. Stall – seek further advice (? Teaching commitments)
6. Not professional but fairly typical.
7. Politics.
8. Who else can do it - ? Use 2 externals.
9. Potential conflict of interest.

(GP4/1)

## Section 2

(10. On papers in thesis, what is student's contribution.

Too involved in thesis? Try to withdraw from team.

### V's

From same department

Make notes ready for viva

Seek guidance from line manager/colleague

Read rules & regs and seek advice if necessary

Agree to date as long as enough time.

(GP4/2)

### Section 3

1. Check with colleague not being over-zealous.
2. Should have been preliminary report.
3. Provisional judgement subject to discussion in viva.
4. No final decision until read thesis and conducted viva.
5. Stick to decision if unchanged after questioning.
6. Chair would help – internal vulnerable.
7. Separate reports if can not agree.

(GP4/3)

## Section 4

Helpful to have supervisor when decision announced.

Chair would play vital role

Complete separate reports if can't agree

(GP4/4)



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"Good Viva"

Environment – Comfort, neutral seating.

Good 'hospitality'; resources.

Ensure pre-viva examiners' meeting.

Consider presentation.

Celebrate the positive.

Professional questioning rather than adversarial.

Agreed max time limit and minimum time.

Agreed structure and questions.

Questions in useful order.

Chairperson to ask for brief explanation.