

Categories of Thesis Acceptance/Rejection:

(a) **Accepted with Distinction:** When all or most of the research findings have either been published or accepted for publication in citation-indexed journals, and requires minimal improvement in spelling, grammar and syntax.

* A student whose thesis is accepted with distinction is given fifteen (15) days after receiving the final report of the examination to submit a soft-bound copy of the amended version and a Text Similarity Search Report to the School for endorsement by the Senate.

(b) **Accepted with Minor Modifications:** If it requires any of the following:

- Reformatting of chapters,
- Revision of literature,
- Improvement in declaration of research objectives or statements,
- Insertion of missing references, amendment of inaccurately cited references,
- Other minor improvements including improvements in spelling, grammar and syntax.

* A student whose thesis is accepted with minor modifications is given thirty (30) days after receiving the final report of the examination to submit a soft-bound copy of the amended version and a Text Similarity Search Report to the School for endorsement by the Senate.

(c) **Accepted with Major Modifications:** If it requires any of the following but not additional experimental work or data collection:

- Extensive revision of the entire thesis to improve quality such as major improvement in description of methodology,
- Statistical re-analysis of research data,
- Removal of research chapter(s),
- And re-discussion of results, and including improvements in spelling, grammar and syntax.

* A student whose thesis is accepted with major modifications is given sixty (60) days after receiving the final report of the examination to submit a soft-bound copy of the amended version and a Text Similarity Search Report to the School for endorsement by the Senate.

(d) **Oral Re-examination (Re-viva voce):** If the candidate fails his viva voce, a second and final oral re-examination is to be conducted within 60 days after the date of the first viva voce.

(e) **Re-submission of Thesis:** If it does not meet the following:

- The scope of the degree for which it is intended,
- The objectives of the research are not met and / or when there are obvious flaws in the experimental design and / or methodology,
- And therefore, requires additional experimental work or data collection.

*Note: Re-submission of the corrected thesis must be made within a period of not more than two (2) semesters / one (1) year. The candidate must continue to be a registered student of the University.

(f) **Resubmission of a PhD Thesis as a Masters Thesis:**

If the thesis does not meet the scope of a doctoral thesis but is adequate for a Masters degree. All amendments recommended must be made and the thesis resubmitted to the School for examination as Masters thesis within 60 days of the viva voce.

*Note: Thesis will be re-examined as a Masters thesis.

(g) **Rejection of Thesis (Fail):** If the thesis fails to meet the requirements of PhD or Masters academic level or found to have been plagiarised.



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TIPS

on

Viva Voce

-  for Supervisor
-  for Chairperson
-  for Examiners

Tips on How to Prepare Your Students for Viva Voce

For Supervisors

Oral presentations should be a common practice throughout the candidature, for example, during meetings with the supervisory committee. This will assist the student to be ready for the viva voce.

Please provide guidance before your student attends the viva. Preparation can be made as soon as the thesis has been submitted for examination. Advice to the students include:

1. Be equipped with effective presentation skills.
 - Focus only on key points during the presentation.
 - Do not clutter the power point slides.
 - Ensure that the slides are effectively designed.
2. Practise the presentation.
3. Formulate possible questions
4. Show enthusiasm for his/her work during the viva.
5. Be reflective.
6. Make eye-contact with the examiners.
7. Answer questions professionally in the following manner:
 - Be non-confrontational
 - Justify ideas and conclusion
 - Present ideas firmly but courteously
 - Do not become argumentative
 - Students can agree to differ in a viva but it should be substantiated
 - Be able to handle and accept criticism.
 - Demonstrate ability to participate in the intellectual discourse

Ensure that the student is familiar with the relevant sections in the thesis by referring directly to the text.

Place a tag on various sections of the thesis. This will help the student to find the relevant sections quickly and prevent fumbling through the pages when questions are asked by the examiners.

Conduct mock viva(s) with the supervisory committee or peers (if relevant).

Tips on How to Conduct Viva Voce

For Examiners

Do's:

- Adopt a friendly "developmental" approach to questioning.
- Restate questions if a candidate misunderstood the meaning.
- Rephrase questions to ensure that the candidate understands.
- Start with questions that the candidate can answer.
- Questioning could include praise on achievements eg. This is a current topic of enormous interest to the scientific world. However, this section appears complex. Can you explain this part?
- Allow student to take a break if necessary.
- Be willing to listen and consider new views.
- Provide advice to enhance the thesis content.
- Consider that the viva constitutes both assessment and feedback.
- Do not just pass judgement but also provide clear guidance to assist the candidate to achieve the standards you are expecting.

Don'ts:

- Do not belittle or criticise the supervisors.
- Do not engage in an argument with other examiners in front of the candidate.

5 Key Areas to Focus On in a Thesis:

1. Conceptualization of the thesis (conceptual framework, theoretical framework).
2. Doctorateness (filling the gap in knowledge).
3. Professional relevance (link between professional knowledge and thesis).
4. Content (relationship between previous and current study).
5. Methodology (choice of methodology).

Tips on How to Conduct Viva Voce

For Chairperson of Viva Voce

The main roles of the Chairperson are to moderate the viva voce and submit a report of the examination to the School of Graduate Studies within 7 working days from date of the viva voce.

Do's:

- Do commit to the appointment as Chairperson and avoid relinquishing this role at the last minute.
- When the viva date is confirmed, please adhere to the date as a change in the date will increase the level of anxiety, stress and apprehension to the student.
- Review the examiners' reports.
- Read and understand the categories of the outcome of the examination.
- During the viva session:
 - Call the meeting to order once there is a quorum.
 - Draw the attention of the examiners to the Guidelines for Viva Voce (PU/S/GP02) (including the various categories of examination results) which should be used when concluding the examination.
 - Request members of the Committee to present their reports of the thesis.
 - Invite the candidate to present the main findings of his/her thesis. The presentation should be about 20 minutes.
 - Invite members of the Examination Committee to examine the academic knowledge and research competency (in the field of his research) of the candidate.
 - Ensure that all substantive queries raised by the examiners in their reports, and in particular those by the external examiners, are put forth to the candidate for answers.
 - Request the candidate and the Supervisory Committee members (if present) to leave once the examination has been completed.

- Conclude and record the final recommendations of the Examination Committee on the status of the thesis with reference to the Guidelines for Viva Voce (PU/S/GP02). This should be based on the examiners' reports, oral presentation by the candidate, responses by the candidate to questions posed by the examiners and other relevant matters.

- Ensure that the field of research as stated is suitable for the thesis. Otherwise, suggest a more suitable field.
- Discuss appropriateness and accuracy of the thesis title with the examiners and suggest modifications, if necessary.
- Invite the candidate back to the examination room and announce the result of the examination.
- Prepare a report on behalf of the Examination Committee indicating the outcome of the examination including any recommendations and corrections to improve the thesis in order to facilitate subsequent verification by the Internal Examiners.

Don'ts:

- Do not act as one of the examiners.
- Do not overturn the recommendations of the examiners without their agreement.

Criteria of Examination:

1. Quality of the study conducted and written thesis presented for evaluation and
2. Oral defence of thesis.
3. The student must pass both the written thesis and the oral defence.

Viva Voce