

# What happens after you have submitted your Master's Thesis: The examination process explained

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## 1. After Thesis Submission:

- You will receive an acknowledgement from Te Kura Tāura | UC Graduate School to say that your thesis has been received (usually to your pg email account). You should hear within two working days. If you have not then please contact the office by email at [graduateschool@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:graduateschool@canterbury.ac.nz)
- Te Kura Tāura will contact your senior supervisor to request submission of the Examiner Nomination Form and the Supervisor's Certificate. Your thesis cannot be sent out for examination until these forms have been received. Te Kura Tāura will send reminders to the department until these have been received.
- You will be asked to complete a "Notification of Nominated Examiners" Form either by your Department/School or by Te Kura Tāura once examiners are determined. This form lists your nominated examiners and provides you with the opportunity to indicate that you agree to have these examiners or to raise any concerns that you may have about the examiners with the Dean of Postgraduate Research. If you do raise concerns about your examiners the Dean will contact you to discuss these further. Your thesis **cannot** be sent out for examination until this form has been completed and returned.

## 2. Thesis Examination:

- A PDF of the thesis will be sent to both examiners for examination along with the Supervisors Certificate and any submitted appendices.
- The examiners are then given eight weeks to examine thesis and are asked to acknowledge receipt of the thesis and to inform Te Kura Tāura if there will be any expected difficulties in completing the examination in the given timeframe.
- Once both examiners have acknowledged receipt you will be notified by Te Kura Tāura that the examination is underway. Please note that this notification could take a couple of weeks.
- You will *not* hear from Te Kura Tāura during the examination process except in the unlikely event that a problem has occurred with your examination process. If you have not heard from Te Kura Tāura within eight weeks of the date in which your examiners received your thesis for examination, then please contact us.

- Your examiners receive an email reminder from Te Kura Tāura a week before the report is due and examiners are then sent overdue reminders if the report has not been received by then.
- You *must not* contact your examiners while they are examining your thesis. If you have any questions during this period please direct them to Te Kura Tāura in the first instance.

### 3. Final Master's Grade Determined:

Once received, your examiners' reports are reviewed by the Dean of Postgraduate Research and the departmental Postgraduate Coordinator for final grade determination:

- Where there is a discrepancy of one grade in the independent recommendations made by the two examiners, the higher grade be awarded. For example, if one examiner recommends the award of a B and one the award of a B+, the student will be awarded a B+
- Where there is a discrepancy of two grades in the recommendation of the two independent examiners, the mid-point will be awarded. For example, if the recommended grades are an A and a B+, then the mid-point of A- will be automatically awarded
- Where there is a discrepancy of two grades or more between the independent recommendations of the two examiners an attempt will first be made to determine whether consensus on a recommended final grade can be reached between the two examiners. If consensus cannot be reached, an adjudicator will be appointed.
- Once an adjudicator has been appointed (which, follows the same process for appointing the original examiners) the adjudicator will be sent both of the original examiner's reports and asked to recommend a final grade, which is binding. The adjudicator will also be given 8 weeks to examine the thesis.

### 4. Master's Thesis Grade Awarded:

- Te Kura Tāura will submit your thesis to the library and once any requested embargo period has ended your thesis will become available in the UC Research Repository.
- Te Kura Tāura will then send you a confirmation email which will include your final grade and your examiner's reports.
- There are graduation ceremonies twice a year. If you wish to graduate at these ceremonies you need to apply in advance (dates for application deadlines are available on the Graduation website <http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/graduation/>). Please note that you can apply in advance of the completion of your examination process.
- If you do not wish to graduate in person you are able to graduate *in absentia*. This occurs at the monthly meetings of the University Council. Again further information is available at <http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/graduation/>

Throughout the period of the examination and grade determination you should regularly check your University of Canterbury pg email. Notification of any problems or changes of process will normally be sent to you at this email address. If you will not be able to check this email address during the examination process please discuss an alternative means of communication with Te Kura Tāura.

## **Distribution of examiner reports and recommendations**

Please be aware that the reports and recommendations from your examiners may be shared with several people during the examination process in order to determine your final grade.

Documents relating to your examination and final grade may be made available to the following people:

- Administrative staff at Te Kura Tāura.
- The Dean, Associate Dean, and/or Manager of Postgraduate Research.
- The examiners (including any adjudicator or third examiner).
- Once a final grade has been determined, we will let you know of the result and provide you with copies of your reports. Your Senior Supervisor, department/school Graduate Research Coordinator, and department/school postgraduate administrator(s) will also be copied into this correspondence so they will be able to view your reports. The Faculty of Arts have requested that Te Kura Tāura also copy in the Executive Dean of Arts to result notifications.
- Your Faculty will be advised of your final grade so that they can confirm you have fulfilled all requirements of the degree and are eligible to graduate, as well as to determine the Level of Honours to be awarded (if applicable).
- The Graduation team, to confirm that you are eligible to graduate.