



LEEDS
BECKETT
UNIVERSITY

SAM Examination Guide for Research Students

August 2025

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Introduction

At the end of your programme of study you will have written an extensive thesis which you will submit for examination.

Once you have submitted your thesis, you will be invited to defend your doctorate at a 'viva voce' (Latin for "by live voice") - an oral examination. Your viva voce is a chance for you to:

- Demonstrate that your thesis is your own work
- Defend what you have written
- Show your understanding of the originality of the work and where it fits within the wider research field
- Respond to examiners' questions and provide any clarification requested
- Establish whether your work is of a sufficiently high standard for the level of your award.

The examination team and independent chair

Your supervisors will put together an examination team based on the subject of your research and they will make a formal application to the Research Degrees Sub-Committee via SAM to approve the team.

- One external examiner – this will normally be an academic member of staff from another institution or a professional who has expertise in your area of work. University staff members who are also students will require two external examiners.
- One internal examiner – a member of academic staff at the university who is not one of your supervisors.
- An independent chair (not needed for MRes) – the independent chair is not an examiner and will not take part in the examination process. Their role is to make sure that the examination abides by our university guidelines and that you are not under any undue pressure.

Your supervisory team should let you know who is in the examination team so you can familiarise yourself with their work, but you must not have any contact with them.

The viva voce itself

Your school's Research Student Administration team is responsible for arranging your viva voce examination and will co-ordinate this with all parties.

It can take up to three months to confirm a date. If you know of any dates that you will be unavailable, you can make us aware of them when you submit your thesis in SAM.

The viva voce examination will be held at either Headingley Campus or City Campus. When you receive your room confirmation, we recommend you make sure you know where it is and familiarise yourself with the surroundings.

On the day, the examination team will meet beforehand to discuss the nature and type of questions they will ask you. While all examinations are different, the key to the viva voce is to establish whether your work is at the standard expected for the level of award and that your thesis demonstrates an original contribution to knowledge in its field of study.

You will hear the outcome of your viva immediately after your viva voce, and you will receive a formal confirmation via SAM.

Masters by Research exams

If you are a Masters by Research (or MRes) student, you will not have a viva voce exam. Instead, your examination team is put together as above, and they then examine your work. You will receive the outcome of the examination via SAM.

SAM

You will submit your thesis within SAM, and all your exam arrangements will be updated in SAM as they are finalised. The outcome of your exam will also be put into SAM. This guide will give you details of what you need to do for each stage. Please note that the screenshots used throughout contain fictional data.

The exam process in SAM can either be started by you or your supervisory team.

Stage 1a – Examination arrangements (supervisory team)

Approximately 6 months before you are due to submit, your Director of Studies will identify an examination team and send their details via SAM to the RDSC Decision Panel for approval.

There will be at least two examiners on each examination panel. One examiner will be internal and one will be an external.

If you are a member of LBU staff who is also undertaking a research award you will have three examiners, and two will be external.

For all awards apart from MRes, an independent Chair is also needed. The Independent Chair will not participate in any decision on the academic merit of the thesis. Their primary responsibilities are:

- to make sure all viva-voce examinations are conducted in accordance with our University Academic Regulations
- to ensure all requirements for amendments or re-submission are agreed by the examiners and clearly conveyed to students before the conclusion of the examination.
- to address any concerns about the conduct of a viva voce examination

Once the exam team has been approved by the RDSC, you will be able to see their details in SAM.

IMPORTANT: You should not make direct contact with any of your examiners at any point.

Stage 1b – Intention to Submit (student)

Before you submit your thesis you need to complete the Intention to Submit form in SAM. This acts as an alert to your Research Support team and your supervisory team that your submission is imminent.

The Intention to Submit is due a month before you intend to submit, and you will start to receive reminders from SAM a couple of months before.

To complete your Intention to submit, from your project page, click on the examinations tab

The screenshot shows the SAM project page for 'Water information child night and health'. The page includes a 'Doctoral Research Project' logo and a list of project details: Title (Water information child night and health), Researcher (Ms Briana Clayton), Supervisory Team (Director of Studies: Dr Cassandra Ross), Doctoral Research Project Status (Active), Project mode (Full Time), Doctoral Research Project Type (Professional Doctorate), Doctoral Research Project Stage (Registered), and Current Year of Study (8). On the right side, there are several buttons: Project history, Project dates (with a red dot), Supervision meetings, Confirmation of registration, Annual progression, Interim progression, and Professional Doctorate assignments. At the bottom, there is a table with columns for Date completed, Deadline, and Reminder sent. The table shows 'Project start' on 01 Nov 2019 and 'Annual progression' with a deadline of 01 Jan 2021 and a reminder sent on 01 Jun 2020. The 'Examinations' button is highlighted in yellow.

	Date completed	Deadline	Reminder sent
Project start	01 Nov 2019		
Annual progression		01 Jan 2021	01 Jun 2020

If your Director of Studies has started the process to set up your examination team, you will already have an examination record in place. Click on the header to access it.

The screenshot shows the 'Examinations: Water information child night and health' page. It includes the project title, researcher name (Ms Briana Clayton), and a table with columns for Examination and Status. The table shows 'Examination - Ms Briana Clayton' with a status of 'In progress'. Below the table, there is a note: 'The examinations record is used to administer the examination process from thesis submission to final award.'

Examination	Status
Examination - Ms Briana Clayton	In progress

If this is not available, you will need to start your examination record. Click on 'create new' to do this, then click the start button.

Examinations: Water information child night and health

Water information child night and health

Ms Briana Clayton

Examination	Status
Examination record	Create new...

The examinations record is used to administer the examination process from thesis submission to final award.

Examination

The examinations record is used to administer the examination process from thesis submission to final award.

Would you like to create an examination record?

Cancel [Start](#)

You will see an Intention to submit task in your task list on the right hand side. Click 'start now' to access the form, then click on the start button in the next page.

Examination - Ms Briana Clayton

Examination

Title	Examination - Ms Briana Clayton	STATUS	Pre-examination
Researcher	Ms Briana Clayton		
Supervisory Team	Director of Studies Dr Cassandra Ross	Intention to submit	
Project	Water information child night and health	Not started	Start now...
Date	27 Feb 2024		
Academic year	2023 - 2024		

Tasks

Examination record	
Briana Clayton started the workflow	27 Feb 2024, 09:09

Click on the 'edit intention to submit form' button, then complete the form. Once you are happy that it is correct, click 'save and continue' and then the 'confirm:submit' button on the next page. The form will then go to your Director of Studies to review.

Intention to submit: Examination - Ms Briana Clayton

Title	Examination - Ms Briana Clayton	STATUS	Waiting for submission
Researcher	Ms Briana Clayton	CURRENTLY WITH	Briana Clayton
Supervisory Team	Director of Studies Dr Cassandra Ross	Edit intention to submit form	
Project	Water information child night and health		
Date	27 Feb 2024		
Academic year	2023 - 2024		

Tasks

Examination record	
Briana Clayton started the workflow	27 Feb 2024, 09:11

[Add note](#)

When you return to your examination page you will be able to see the status of the task. Your thesis submission task will appear in the task list once your Director of Studies has done their part.

Examination - Ms Briana Clayton


Examination

Title	Examination - Ms Briana Clayton	STATUS Pre-examination
Researcher	Ms Briana Clayton	
Supervisory Team	<i>Director of Studies</i> Dr Cassandra Ross	Intention to submit <i>In progress</i> Waiting for supervisor to review the form With: Cassandra Ross
Project	Water information child night and health	
Date	27 Feb 2024	
Academic year	2023 - 2024	

Tasks

	Examination record
<hr/>	
<i>Briana Clayton</i>	started the workflow 27 Feb 2024, 09:09
Intention to submit	
<hr/>	
<i>Briana Clayton</i>	started the workflow 27 Feb 2024, 09:11
<i>Briana Clayton</i>	submitted the form 27 Feb 2024, 09:12

Stage 2 – Thesis Submission

Once your supervisory team has reviewed the Intention to Submit task, the Thesis Submission task will be available in SAM and you can submit your thesis.

Your thesis is due on or before your submission date (visible in your project dates in SAM) and you will receive automated reminders from SAM a couple of months before.

To submit your thesis, from your project page, click on the examinations tab

The screenshot shows the project page for 'Water information child night and health'. The page includes a 'Doctoral Research Project' logo, the project title, researcher name (Ms Briana Clayton), supervisory team (Dr Cassandra Ross), and various project details like status (Active), mode (Full Time), and type (Professional Doctorate). A table at the bottom shows project start (01 Nov 2019), deadline (01 Jan 2021), and reminder sent (01 Jun 2020). On the right side, there are several navigation buttons: Project history, Project dates, Supervision meetings, Confirmation of registration, Annual progression, Interim progression, Professional Doctorate assignments, and Examinations. The 'Examinations' button is highlighted with a yellow circle.

Click on the header to access your examination tasks.

The screenshot shows the 'Examinations: Water information child night and health' page. It includes the project title, researcher name (Ms Briana Clayton), and a table with the following data:

Examination	Status
Examination - Ms Briana Clayton	In progress

Below the table, there is a note: 'The examinations record is used to administer the examination process from thesis submission to final award.'

You will see a Thesis Submission task in your task list on the right hand side. Click 'start now' to access the form, then click on the start button in the next page.

Examination - Ms Briana Clayton

examination

Title	Examination - Ms Briana Clayton	STATUS Pre-examination
Researcher	Ms Briana Clayton	
Supervisory Team	<i>Director of Studies</i> Dr Cassandra Ross	Thesis submission Not started Start now...
Project	Water information child night and health	
Date	27 Feb 2024	Intention to submit Completed
Academic year	2023 - 2024	Appointment of examiners In progress Waiting for supervisor to nominate the examiners With: Cassandra Ross

Tasks

- Examination record**
Briana Clayton started the workflow 27 Feb 2024, 09:09

Intention to submit

Click on the 'edit form' button:

Thesis submission: Examination - Ms Briana Clayton

Title	Examination - Ms Briana Clayton	STATUS Waiting for application to be submitted
Researcher	Ms Briana Clayton	
Supervisory Team	<i>Director of Studies</i> Dr Cassandra Ross	CURRENTLY WITH Briana Clayton Edit form
Project	Water information child night and health	
Date	27 Feb 2024	Add note
Academic year	2023 - 2024	

Briana Clayton started the workflow 20 Mar 2024, 09:44

You will then reach the page where you can upload (or add a link to) your thesis. Once you have done this, click save and continue to move to the next page, or save for later if you are not yet ready.

Edit PGR Student form: Thesis submission: Examination - Ms Briana Clayton

Thesis Assignments Training and development Declarations Viva Graduation Enrolment RAP

Upload a copy of your thesis

↑ Drag files here or [choose file...](#)

Alternatively please provide a link to your thesis here:

Thesis Assignments Training and development Declarations Viva Graduation Enrolment RAP

Work through the rest of the pages of the form. SAM will alert you when you press 'save and continue' if you have missed anything on a page. Once you have completed everything, you will reach the confirmation page. Click 'Confirm:submit application' to send the task to your Director of Studies for review.

When you return to your examination page you will be able to see the status of the task (and others) in your task list. Other parts of the examination process will populate as they are completed.

Examination - Ms Briana Clayton

 Examination

Title	Examination - Ms Briana Clayton	STATUS	Pre-examination
Researcher	Ms Briana Clayton	Intention to submit	Completed
Supervisory Team	<i>Director of Studies</i> Dr Cassandra Ross	Appointment of examiners	<i>In progress</i> Waiting for supervisor to nominate the examiners With: Cassandra Ross
Project	Water information child night and health	Thesis submission	<i>In progress</i> Waiting for Supervisory Team to review submission With: Cassandra Ross
Date	27 Feb 2024		
Academic year	2023 - 2024		

Tasks

Examination record	
<i>Briana Clayton</i> started the workflow	27 Feb 2024, 09:09
Intention to submit	
<i>Briana Clayton</i> started the workflow	27 Feb 2024, 09:11

Stage 4 – setting the date (for all awards except MRES)

Once your Research Student Support team have done all their internal checks, they will work to set a date for your viva. This can take up to 6 weeks to arrange due to the number of individuals involved.

When the date has been set you will receive an email from your Research Student Support team as well as a notification from SAM.

An example schedule for a viva exam is below. This can be adapted eg if you have a RAP and need extra time, or if there is a performance taking place as part of the exam:

Pre-Viva Voce Meeting for the Examining Team (approx. 1 hour)
Examining team to hold a private meeting where the Examiners' Preliminary Reports are discussed and exchanged, Outline agenda is drawn up, areas of questioning to be agreed and noted by the Independent Chair
Viva Voce (approx. 2 hours)
Candidate joins examining team. Supervisor(s) may be present at the viva with the agreement of the candidate and may participate in the viva discussion at the discretion of the examination team. Chair welcomes the candidate, makes the introductions and outlines the process to the candidate. Examination of the thesis takes place by the examiners. Candidate and supervisor(s) leave the room at the end of the examination
Post Viva Voce – Examination Outcome & Recommendation (approx. 1 hour)
Examiners meet to decide the outcome, then call the candidate and the supervisor back in to inform them of the decision.

Stage 5 – Preliminary Reports

Your examiners will read your thesis and submit a preliminary report which is then shared with others on the examination team. If you are having a viva, this will happen before your viva takes place.

Stage 6 – Examination outcome

The Independent Chair of your exam will write up their notes from the viva and put the outcome into SAM as soon as possible after it has taken place.

For MRes students, your Internal examiner will do this.

Your Research student Support team will then release the outcome to you via SAM.

If you have amendments to do or need to resubmit, clear information from the exam team will be provided at that point too. The date your amendments or resubmission is due will be populated within your project dates in SAM.

Project dates: Money work room of study

 Money work room of study

 Mr Foster Allen

[View history](#)

	Date completed	Deadline	Reminder sent
Project start	Add previous 17 Jan 2019 Edit	Set	
Confirmation of registration	Add previous Set	17 Jan 2021 Edit	17 Jun 2020
Annual progression	Add previous 08 Mar 2021 Edit	01 Jan 2021 Edit	01 Jun 2020
Writing up deadline	Add previous Set	18 Jul 2025 Edit	18 Apr 2025
Examination, intention to submit	Add previous 08 Feb 2022 Edit	Set	
... submission	Add previous 07 Feb 2022 Edit	17 Jul 2024 Edit	24 Jan 2022
... arrangements	Add previous 08 Feb 2022 Edit	17 Jul 2023 Edit	08 Aug 2021
... viva	Add previous 07 Feb 2022 Edit	Set	
... minor amendments	Add previous Set	Set	
... substantive amendments	Add previous Set	07 Jun 2025 Edit	
... further amendments	Add previous Set	Set	
... resubmission	Add previous Set	Set	
... awarded	Add previous Set	Set	
Project end	Add previous Set	Set	

Stage 7 – Amendments or Resubmission

When you have completed any changes required, you need to submit them in SAM, along with a table of changes.

Amendments

You will have a task in the exam section of SAM which you click into:

STATUS Post-examination, amendments
Intention to submit Completed
Appointment of examiners Approved
Thesis submission Completed
Viva arrangements Completed
Examination outcome Substantive amendments
Thesis amendments <i>In progress</i> Waiting for PGR Student to submit amendments With: Foster Allen

Then you need to click 'Submit Thesis' in the next screen, and work through the steps to submit your thesis and table of amendments. It is a very similar process to your original Thesis Submission task above.

Thesis amendments: Examination - Mr Foster Allen	
Title	Examination - Mr Foster Allen
Researcher	Mr Foster Allen
Supervisory Team	<i>Director of Studies</i> Dr Stacy Fitzgerald
Project	Money work room of study
Chair	Prof Agna Abbott
Examiner	<i>Internal</i> Dr Aubine Ahmed <i>External</i> Dr Test Test
Date	08 Feb 2022
Viva date	07 Feb 2022, 13:00
Viva location	dfgds
Academic year	2021 - 2022

STATUS Waiting for PGR Student to submit amendments
CURRENTLY WITH Foster Allen
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Submit thesis
<input type="radio"/> Add note

Resubmission

A new Examination record is started for a resubmission, and your Director of Studies will need to review the Examination team and make any required changes.

Examinations: Government job change the office company number party game

 **Government job change the office company number party game**

 **Mr Prentice Ashton**

Examination	Status
Examination - Mr Prentice Ashton (resubmission)	Create new...
Examination - Mr Prentice Ashton	Not awarded, resubmission recommended

The examinations record is used to administer the examination process from thesis submission to final award.

When you are ready to resubmit your thesis, click into the Thesis Submission task. The steps are the same as for your original Thesis Submission above, but you will have space to upload a table of changes as well.

If you are having a second viva, the process will be the same as your original one.

Outcome

The outcome of your amendments or resubmission will be given via SAM.