Guidance on Oral Examination Conducted via Video Link

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# Introduction

PhD vivas can be conducted either online or in person. This is to be discussed with the student at the Submission Review and any preference noted within the Notice of Submission of Thesis form.

# Agreeing on the conduct of the oral examination

Agreement from the external examiner as to the method to be used must be obtained during the appointment process. Factors such as the location of the external examiner (eg if overseas) should be considered when deciding on the preference for online or in person, as this could have practical and cost implications. If there is any difference in preferences, the final decision rests with the Supervisory Chair.

In the case of an examination via video link, all parties are required to acknowledge that (despite advance confidence) there is the possibility that the technology will fail and the examination be declared void. The candidate, in particular, must be advised of this risk.

# Requirements

When an oral examination for a research degree is to be conducted by video link, the following points must be observed:

a. The technology used must accommodate the anticipated needs of the examination and be tested in advance by the Video Conferencing Officer in IS User Support Services, email:Vconf@kent.ac.uk. The bandwidth availability and quality of the equipment intended for use (and particularly that to be used by the remote party) must be taken into account when agreeing and arranging the oral examination by video link. The Video Conferencing Officer should be provided with at least two weeks’ notice of the oral examination.

b. The video conferencing facilities should be available for sufficient time for the examination to take place. The video conferencing suite should be booked for at least three hours. If there is doubt about the length of time required, every effort should be made to ensure that possible overrunning can be accommodated.

c. Time should be allowed in advance of the examination for all parties to undertake a short training session and become familiar with the use of the technology.

d. When the candidate is in the external location, the examination must be chaired by an approved independent person (e.g. a British Council representative or academic staff member) who can assure the integrity of the examination and will be authorised to terminate the examination should they feel that the proceedings are disadvantaging the candidate (in comparison to an oral examination conducted under the standard procedures).

e. There should be an appropriate number of breaks during the examination for both the candidate and examiners.

# Appeals

Appeals will be conducted under the [Academic Appeals Policy.](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/regulatory-framework/policies-and-procedures-examinations-guidance/policies#academic-appeals)