

GRADUATE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS IN ADVANCE OF THE FINAL ORAL EXAMINATION (FOE)

Note: in all emails regarding the FOE sent or cc'd to Marguerite, please include the student's surname in capital letters at the end of the subject.

From beginning to end, the process can take **ten weeks or more**, and please see below for an explanation of the timing.

Make sure to use the SGS [dissertation template](#) every step of the way.

Please follow this procedure, in this order:

1. **Student** sends **draft abstract and CV as two separate files in MS Word** to DGS, who will workshop these documents with the student before approving them. For the abstract, please extract the abstract page from the SGS [dissertation template](#) and use it, *preserving all formatting, including fonts, paragraph spacing, and justification*; for the CV, use the template at the end of the departmental [Guidelines](#). Once the DGS has approved the two files, convert each to PDF and send the two PDF files attached to a single email to both Marguerite and the DGS.
2. **Supervisor** (with agreement of committee, ideally) determines that the dissertation is ready to be examined.
3. **Supervisor** sends a single email to the DGS, cc'd to Marguerite, confirming that the **dissertation is ready to be examined** and providing a **ranked list of 4-5 prospective external examiners and 2-3 prospective internal examiners**.

For external examiners, please provide **email addresses**.

Please note that SGS rules require a so-called **arm's-length relationship** with external examiners, who cannot have served as Master's or PhD Supervisor / Supervisee of the Candidate or the Supervisor; have, in the past six years, been a departmental colleague of the Candidate or the Supervisor at either U of T or another institution; or have collaborated on a research project, scholarly work, or publication with either the Candidate or the Supervisor.

4. **Student** submits the **properly formatted dissertation in PDF** to Marguerite.

Approximately Ten-Week Timeline Thereafter

Once Marguerite has confirmed that the dissertation is properly formatted, she “clears the student’s record on ROSI,” making sure that all requirements have been satisfied.

At that point, the DGS uses the abstract and CV to start trying to secure the external and internal examiners. The appointment of the internal examiner is usually straightforward, but the appointment of the external examiner can be a challenge and take some time. Occasionally the DGS will get a “yes” right away, but often the examiner takes a week or more to reply, and if the answer is “no” (as it often is), the DGS needs to move on to the next on the list, and then we’re back where we started but it’s a week or two down the road.

Once the DGS has secured the external, SGS mandates that we give them a minimum of 6 weeks between receipt of the dissertation and the exam, but “Best practice is to allow eight weeks.” So we let the examiner know that we are “aiming” for an examination roughly 8 weeks following receipt of the dissertation, but the scheduling depends entirely on their availability, which might be more than 8 weeks after they receive the dissertation.

Once the external has agreed, Marguerite sends the dissertation to the external and tries to schedule the exam for approximately 8 weeks thereafter, depending on the external’s availability.