

HKU-KING'S Joint PhD Examination Arrangements

Home Institution for HKU students means HKU and for King's students means King's.

Host Institution for HKU students means King's and for King's students means HKU.

The student will be examined in accordance with the regulations of the Home institution (i.e. the institution at which the student commenced the joint degree).

Candidates will normally spend the last six months before submission of their thesis at the Home institution.

1 Nomination and Appointment of Examiners

1.1 The nomination of examiners should normally be made at least four months (for King's) and three months (for HKU) prior to the expected submission of a thesis for examination. This is to ensure that there is sufficient time for the examiner nomination process to be completed and agreed by both institutions before thesis submission. The process is as follows:

- a) HKU and King's supervisors should identify and agree on the examiners to be nominated in accordance with Home institution processes and acquire approval for these from their respective Departments. Students should not, under any circumstances, communicate with any examiner on matters related to his/her thesis examination. Inappropriate communication by a student towards an examiner would make that student liable for disciplinary action according to Regulations in place at the Home institution.
- b) Usually a period of three academic years should have elapsed before a former member of King's staff could act as external examiner. Any exception has to be approved by the Research Degrees Examination Board at King's. At HKU, there is no such rule governing the length of period that a HKU academic staff must have left the University before he/she is eligible to be an external examiner, on the understanding that the external examiner should not have any involvement in the student's thesis supervision.
- c) Once confirmed by the supervisors' respective Departments, proposals for examiners are then agreed by the Host institution and, if agreement is given, approved in accordance with the usual procedure of the Home institution. The Home institution can nevertheless reject nominations in accordance with their examiner appointment procedures

For King's, the examination entry and nomination of examiners procedure can be found here: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/campuslife/services/examinations/researchdegrees/candidates/index.aspx>

For HKU, the thesis submission and nomination of examiners procedure can be found here: <http://www.gradsch.hku.hk/gradsch/web/student/thesis/index.htm>

- d) There will be three examiners in total:
 - o One examiner from HKU
 - o One examiner from King's
 - o One examiner external to both institutions
- e) Although it is unlikely that either institution will object to the nomination of a particular examiner on account of the quality of the examiner, an institution may be aware of a potential conflict of interest which the other institution is not and, therefore, each partner has the right to veto the examiners and request new nominations.
- f) Once both institutions have approved the appointment of the examiners, and informed each other of their agreement, the Home institution will write to the examiners to confirm appointment and will explain the examination procedure for the joint degree.

2 Submission of thesis for examination

- 2.1 Candidates should submit their thesis to the Home institution following the thesis submission requirements of the Home institution. At King's College London the thesis should be submitted electronically with a hard copy provided for Home examiners, if required. The Home institution is responsible for organising the examination and for sending the thesis to the examiners, keeping the Host institution informed at all stages of the examination process.

For King's, the examination entry procedure can be found here:

<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/campuslife/services/examinations/researchdegrees/candidates/index.aspx>

For HKU, the procedure can be found here:

<http://www.gradsch.hku.hk/gradsch/web/student/thesis/index.htm>

3 PhD Oral Examination

- 3.1 The educational needs provisions of the UK Disability Discrimination Act require institutions to make reasonable adjustments for candidates with physical and special learning difficulties in their assessment. Examiners will be advised of any special arrangements for a candidate within their appointment letters.
- 3.2 Candidates must be physically present during the oral examination which will normally be held at the Home institution and conducted according to the Home institution's Regulations.
- 3.3 Normally, all three examiners should be physically present during the oral examination. Only the examiner from the Host institution is allowed to be present via videoconference, while the candidate and other examiners must be present in the same place and the examination must take place according to procedures outlining the conduct of oral examinations, using technology that is in place at the Home institution. Exceptions to this may be considered, on a case by case basis, and must have the agreement of both Parties. See appendix 1 for further information regarding examiner approval and expenses.
- 3.4 For oral examinations taking place at HKU, there will be a Thesis Examining Committee (TEC), comprising the three examiners, the primary supervisor at HKU and a Chairperson. The role of the Chairperson is to ensure that the oral examination is conducted in a proper manner. The supervisor is there as an ex-officio member in order to be able to assist the student with potential revisions to the thesis. The Chairperson and supervisor take no part in the decision making on the award of the degree.
- 3.5 At King's, one of the examiners will act as Chair of the panel and the supervisor will not be present unless specifically invited by the student. The supervisor does not have the right to participate in the oral examination but may contribute if invited to do so by the examiners. The examiners should note the presence of the supervisor in their joint final report.
- 3.6 In exceptional cases, HKU and King's may choose to appoint an independent Chair to attend the oral examination. An independent Chair is not an examiner and has no (casting) vote. Their function is to ensure fair play.
- 3.7 At both institutions the oral examination will be held in private.

For King's, guidelines for the conduct of oral examinations can be found here:

<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/campuslife/services/examinations/researchdegrees/examiners/index.aspx>

For HKU, the Guidelines for Setting Up and Conducting Oral Examination for MPhil and PhD Candidates can be found at: <http://www.gradsch.hku.hk/gradsch/web/tec>

- 3.8 HKU provides reference materials on preparing and submitting a thesis which can be found here: <http://www.gradsch.hku.hk/gradsch/web/student/thesis/index.htm>

King's guidance on thesis presentation and submission can be found here:
<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/campuslife/services/examinations/researchdegrees/candidates/binding.aspx>

- 3.9 The role of the examiners is to establish whether the thesis is genuinely the work of the candidate and whether the requirements of a PhD thesis have been met. The oral examination should allow:
- The candidate to defend his/her dissertation and clarify any matters raised by the examiners;
 - The examiners to probe the candidate's knowledge in the field;
 - The examiners to assure themselves that the work presented is the candidate's own and to clarify matters of any collaboration; and
 - The examiners to come to a definite conclusion about the outcome of the examination.
- 3.10 At the end of the oral examination, the examiners will prepare a joint final report which indicates their findings and confirms the outcome of the assessment. The outcome will then be communicated to the Host institution who must be provided with a copy of this final report and each individual preliminary report.
- 3.11 At King's, when the three examiners appointed are unable to reach agreement they shall report this to the Board, which shall appoint a fourth examiner who is external to the College. The examiners may also recommend the appointment of an additional examiner at any time, if they consider it desirable. Whenever possible the additional examiner shall be of Professorial status and shall have considerable experience of examining for a research degree of the University of London. For HKU, any contention will be referred to the Chair of the TEC panel to determine if a recommendation should be made to appoint a fourth examiner. Such a recommendation would require approval from both institutions.
- 3.12 Where the examiners determine that minor amendments or further examination is required, this should be completed within a period specified by them and in compliance with the procedures of the Home institution.
- 3.13 Recommendation for the award of a degree cannot be granted until the corrections have been made to the satisfaction of the examiners. If the candidate is required to make substantial changes to the thesis, then the entire examination process starts again, though the assumption is that the same examiners will be appointed.
- 3.14 It should be noted that the maximum time period allowed for re-submission of the thesis will be 12 months where HKU is the Home institution, unless prior approval is given by HKU. The maximum period allowed for re-submission of the thesis will be 18 months where King's is the Home institution.

4 Submission of final copy of thesis

- 4.1 Once the examiner(s) have agreed that they are satisfied with the revision(s) and the outcome of the examination has been ratified by the Home institution's examination board (at King's College London this is the Research Degrees Examination Board) candidates may proceed to submit the final thesis to each institution in accordance with their respective requirements. The format of the final thesis (in terms of layout, binding, etc) will be in accordance with Home institution regulations.
- 4.2 The requirements for HKU can be found here:
<http://www.gradsch.hku.hk/gradsch/web/student/thesis/index.htm>

The requirements for King's can be found here:
<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/campuslife/services/examinations/researchdegrees/candidates/binding.aspx>

- 4.3 Where HKU is the Home institution, HKU Graduate School should send a copy of the following to the Research Degrees Examination Office at King's College:
- A letter from HKU to confirm that the candidate has completed the requirements in HKU; and
 - A copy of all reports submitted by the Examiners (Preliminary Reports and Joint Final Report).
- 4.4 Where King's is the Home institution, King's should similarly send a copy of the following to HKU Graduate School:
- A letter from King's to confirm that the candidate has completed the requirements in King's; and
 - A copy of all reports submitted by the Examiners (Preliminary Reports and Joint Final Report).

5 Conferment

- 5.1 The award date will be that of the Home institution. Where HKU is the Home institution, when both institutions have given endorsement, candidates will then be put up for conferment following HKU procedures. A copy of the HKU conferment should be sent to the Research Degrees Examination Office at King's College.
- 5.2 Where King's is the Home institution, when both institutions have given endorsement, the degree will be awarded in accordance with the College's normal procedure for the award of a research degree and awarded on the first of the month. A copy of the King's conferment should be sent to the Graduate School at HKU.
- 5.3 Successful candidates would normally attend the appropriate degree ceremony at their Home institution, but may also attend the ceremony of the Host university by agreement.

6 Degree Scroll

The Home institution will print the degree scroll. HKU Registry will also produce a transcript for any students whose Home institution is HKU.

7. Complaints, Appeals and Student Disciplinary Procedures

Complaints

- 7.1 Candidates will follow the Complaints procedure of the Home institution. The Host institution will be kept informed at all stages of the procedure and of the outcome.

For King's, the procedure for dealing with complaints by students can be found here: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/college/policyzone/index.php?id=178>

For HKU, complaints related to the student's PhD study may be submitted to the Board of Graduate Studies.

Appeals

- 7.2 Candidates will follow the Appeals procedure of the Home institution for appealing against the result of their examination. The Host institution will be kept informed at all stages of the procedure and of the outcome.

For King's, the appeals procedures can be found here: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/college/policyzone/index.php?id=178>

For HKU, appeals concerning perceived irregularities of the examination procedures should be submitted to the Board of Graduate Studies.

It should be noted that any candidate registered for the joint degree will also be entitled to appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) if they are not satisfied with the outcome of their appeal, but only where the appeal has been dealt with by King's.

Student Disciplinary Procedures

- 7.3 Candidates will be subject to student disciplinary procedures of the institution at which they are based when an incident arises. Each institution will inform the other of the proceedings and of the final outcome.

For King's, the relevant procedures can be found here:

<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/aboutkings/orgstructure/ps/acservices/conduct/exam.aspx>

For HKU, the relevant procedures can be found in the University Statutes XXX and XXXI which are available here: <http://www4.hku.hk/pubunit/calendar>

8. IP and Copyright

- 8.1 Candidates own their copyright which is governed by the Home institution's Intellectual Property policies.

For King's, the Intellectual Property policies can be found here:

<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/library/help/copyright/index.aspx>

For HKU, the Intellectual Property policies can be found here:

<http://www.rss.hku.hk/contracts/ipr>

Appendix 1

Re: Clause 3.3 of HKU-King's Joint PhD Examination Arrangement

1. Both HKU and King's allow the examiner from the Host institution to be present via videoconference. All other examiners and the student must be physically present. Examiners should review exam documentation and have preliminary discussions beforehand in order to utilize their time during the actual examination. Where King's is the Home institution, a supervisor should be present at (though not participate in) the exam, in order to ensure that the video / teleconferencing equipment is working as planned. Where HKU is the Home institution, the supervisor is an ex-officio non-voting member of the Thesis Examining Committee and should participate at the oral examination. The table below summarizes the means of participation of student and examiners at the oral examination:

	HKU as Home Institution	King's as Home Institution
Student	In person	In person
Examiner from HKU	In person	In person or Video-conference
Examiner from King's	In person or Video-conference	In person
Examiner external to both institutions	In person	In person

2. Institution which will be responsible for the travel costs of examiner(s), where necessary, if the examiner(s) attend the oral examination in person:

	HKU as Home Institution	King's as Home Institution
Examiner from HKU	Not applicable	Paid by King's ¹
Examiner from King's	Paid by HKU ¹	Not applicable
Examiner external to both institutions ²	Paid by HKU ¹	Paid by King's

Notes:

- (1) At HKU, costs will be covered by the respective Faculty. At King's, costs of up to £350 (at time of writing) will be covered by the Quality & Academic Support office. Any costs exceeding this must be covered by the respective Department.
- (2) Where HKU is the Home institution, an honorarium will be paid by the HKU Registry to examiners who are not a Teacher of the University (i.e. the external examiner and the examiner from King's). Similarly, where King's is the Home institution, King's will pay an honorarium to any examiners external to King's.