

Guidance regarding doctoral assessments and examinations affected by coronavirus

Friday 27 March 2020

This document outlines the College's current position on managing student and examiner attendance at postgraduate research assessment milestones and viva voce examinations, in light of the coronavirus outbreak.

This applies to students and examiners on the following research degree programmes:

- **Master of Philosophy (MPhil)**
- **Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)**
- **Doctor of Medicine (Research) (MD(Res))**
- **Doctor in Engineering (EngD)**

Imperial's doctoral assessment and examination requirements are outlined in the College [regulations](#), including the expectation that these activities will normally take place on a College campus.

While the use of telephone or video-conferencing is not normally permitted at doctoral assessments and examinations, appropriate adjustments can now be considered to support attendance of all required parties and to ensure the assessment is able to proceed as planned.

This applies to the following doctoral assessments:

- **Early stage assessment (ESA)***
- **Late stage review (LSR)***
- **Viva-voce examinations**

*It is acknowledged that the content of an ESA and LSR assessment may be adjusted slightly due to the disruption caused by covid-19, and departments should take this into account when conducting these assessments.

Approval conditions

Approval for the use of video-conference technology at doctoral assessments and viva-voce examinations is subject to the below:

- All parties (assessors/examiners and the candidate) must provide written confirmation that they agree to proceed in the manner requested
- Suitable facilities with the required equipment must be identified, and the connection to members attending remotely tested in advance
- Candidates must display their College ID card at the start of the examination, and conform to the usual examination conditions (i.e. no third-party support)
- Suitable support must be available from department staff, should there be any queries regarding College procedures and assessment/examination requirements
- Confirmation of DPS support for the request

Details of students directly affected through a suspected or confirmed case of the covid-19 virus (including self-isolation measures) or indirectly due to travel restrictions, must be recorded on the College's central student record system. This includes those unable to attend their viva examination in person, and departments should refer to *Reporting information to Student Records for students affected by coronavirus* guidance document.

Request procedure

Use of video-conference technology at early stage assessment and late stage must be reviewed and approved by the candidate's Director of Postgraduate Studies.

All requests for the use of video-conference technology at **viva voce examinations** should also be submitted to the Assessment Records Team (assessment.records@imperial.ac.uk) for processing.

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The request should be submitted by the Director of Postgraduate Studies for the department (or nominee). The Assessment Records Team will require written confirmation that the approval conditions outlined above have been met, along with the following details:

- Name and role of individual/s attending the viva via video-conference technology
- Date of viva examination
- Location of viva examination (except in cases where all individuals are attending remotely)