

Remote Examination Guidelines

Definitions

In this document:

- FGS/Faculty refers to the Faculty of Graduate Studies.
- Students refers to thesis-based graduate students registered in FGS.
- Examination refers to oral thesis defense or oral Candidacy examination including Field of Study (FoS) and Thesis Proposal (TP).

Purpose

Until further notice, students and committee members may participate remotely in the examination (<https://grad.ucalgary.ca/services/faculty-and-staff/gpdgpa-resources/policies-and-guidelines/distant-oral-exams>). This document outlines the steps to be taken in situations in which a student, supervisor and/or multiple examiners are expected to participate remotely in an FGS oral examination.

Scheduling oral exams

Programs should proceed with scheduling new exams and with already scheduled exams as usual. The **contingency form** will no longer be necessary for exams scheduled after August 30, 2021. Information about who will participate in the exam remotely is now required as part of the Notice of Thesis Oral Examination.

Information about remote exam participation for all oral candidacy examinations under the new rules should be submitted and approved at the program level as appropriate.

The Neutral Chair

If two or more individuals who are taking part in a given exam (e.g., a student and a supervisor, an internal examiner and a supervisory committee member) will be present in the same room, the neutral chair must also be present in that room. More information about the role of the neutral chair and their duties during distance examinations can be found on our website (<https://grad.ucalgary.ca/services/faculty-and-staff/gpdgpa-resources/policies-and-guidelines/distant-oral-exams>).

Process of running a remote examination

1. The programme must make all necessary arrangements for setting up the remote communications and send the appropriate links or login information to the student and examiners participating remotely.
2. Without prior approval from FGS, exams must be scheduled during normal business hours of the University of Calgary (8:30am-4:30pm MDT M-F).
3. All members of the examining committee, the Chair and student must be available at least 15 minutes before the scheduled time for the start of the exam to test the communication tool and trouble-shoot any possible issues.
4. All members of the examining committee, the Chair and student must be present continuously during the exam. Any short interruption if required, must be approved by the Chair and noted in the Chair report.

5. Communications are expected to be both audio and video. If not possible, audio communications may be acceptable only for persons other than the student.
6. If applicable, it is strongly advised to have a copy of the presentation distributed to all members ahead of the examination.
7. In the case of a thesis defense, all examiners' reports must be in the possession of the Neutral Chair at least one day before the examination (electronic copies emailed directly to the Neutral Chair are acceptable).
8. [FOR THESIS DEFENCES AND CANDIDACY EXAMS UNDER OLD RULES] Should communication with one or more persons break down and cannot be resolved within **30 minutes**, the Neutral Chair (or if the Neutral Chair is not available another member of the supervisory committee) must contact FGS directly [403 220 4938: option 3, option 5] The examination may still proceed conditional to FGS Associate Dean approval and documented student consent.
9. [FOR CANDIDACY EXAMS UNDER NEW RULES] Should communication with one or more persons break down and cannot be resolved within **30 minutes**, the Neutral Chair (or if the Neutral Chair is not available another member of the supervisory committee) must contact the GPD or Associate Dean Graduate Education (as appropriate). The examination may still proceed conditional to GPD/Associate Dean approval and documented student consent.
10. The post-examination in-camera deliberations are confidential, and the Neutral Chair must ensure that arrangements are made to protect the confidentiality of the deliberations.
11. At the end of the deliberation and once the outcome of the examination is reached, the Neutral Chair will inform the student that deliberations have ended.
12. The Neutral Chair will inform the student of the outcome of the examination.
13. In the case of an unsuccessful examination, the Neutral Chair must in their written report comment on the conditions of the exam including any unusual events such as interruption of communication or requested pauses.