

**University of New Brunswick  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**THESIS SUBMISSION  
AND ASSESSMENT GUIDE**



**A guide for Students, Supervisors, Directors of Graduate Studies,  
Members of Examining Boards, Graduate Secretaries, and  
Staff of the School of Graduate Studies**

Revised December 2021

**STEPS TO BE FOLLOWED IN SUBMITTING AND ASSESSING  
DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS**

Once a candidate has satisfied the residence requirements and any additional requirements of their Graduate Academic Unit relating to language examinations, qualifying examinations, area and comprehensive examinations, etc., and acceptable grades have been obtained in

courses prescribed by the Graduate Academic Unit (GAU), the granting of the doctoral degree then depends upon the acceptance of the candidate's doctoral dissertation and an oral defence of that dissertation.

**Acceptance of the doctoral dissertation involves the following stages, each of which is outlined in detail in the following pages:**

- (1) Acceptance by the Graduate Academic Unit
- (2) Submission of the dissertation to the School of Graduate Studies
- (3) Constitution of an Examining Board
- (4) Distribution of the dissertation to the Examining Board
- (5) Assessment of the dissertation by the Examining Board
- (6) Oral Defense of the dissertation
- (7) Acceptance of the dissertation and oral defence by the Examining Board (8) Final Acceptance by the School of Graduate Studies

### **(1) ACCEPTANCE BY THE GRADUATE ACADEMIC UNIT (GAU)**

The GAU makes the preliminary assessment of whether a doctoral dissertation is acceptable for submission to the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) and subsequently to an Examining Board. GAUs typically require that the dissertation be read by faculty members of the GAU. Some GAUs also conduct an internal oral examination of the candidate's thesis. These steps have proven effective and all GAUs are encouraged to adopt the approach. Ultimately, submission of the dissertation to the Graduate School implicitly carries with it the stamp of approval of the GAU.

**NOTE: Page Limits on PhD Dissertations - The length of the final dissertation submitted to the School of Graduate Studies (the SGS) should not exceed 400 pages (or approximately 100,000 words) without prior consultation and approval from the SGS.**

### **(2) SUBMISSION OF THE DISSERTATION TO THE SGS**

Once approved by the GAU, the dissertation is submitted to the SGS<sup>1</sup>, accompanied by a memo from the Director of Graduate Studies recommending the Members of the Examining Board and detailing the "Completion of GAU Requirements for the PhD Degree".

**The Graduate Academic Unit is required to:**

- 1) **Submit an electronic copy of the dissertation to the SGS** for subsequent distribution to the Examining Board.
- 2) **Submit a memo from the Director of Graduate Studies to the Dean of Graduate Studies** identifying the names of all proposed members of the Examining Board, including the name and contact information for three potential External Examiners, from which one will be selected. This notification should include whether or not the GAU, or Supervisor, is inviting the External Examiner to attend the oral defence in

person, affirming their ability to cover related travel expenses. 3) **Submit a “Conflict of Interest” form** signed by the supervisor(s).

4) **Submit a “Completion of GAU requirements for PhD Degree”** signed by the Director

*1. Note that PhD dissertations can be submitted to the SGS at any time throughout the year, and every effort will be made to facilitate expeditious degree completion. Unfortunately, because the thesis examination process is involved and can result in the requirement for additional thesis work or revisions, it is simply not possible for the SGS to guarantee in advance when a final examination date will be nor when a particular thesis will receive final approval for graduation – much of that depends on factors that are beyond the control of the SGS.*

### **(3) CONSTITUTION OF AN EXAMINING BOARD**

Appointed by the Dean of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the GAU concerned, the Examining Board acts on behalf of the SGS and consists of **the candidate’s supervisor(s)** and **three other members of the School of Graduate Studies**, at least one of whom must be from the candidate’s GAU and at least one of whom must be from another GAU. In addition, **there will be an external examiner from outside the University of New Brunswick.**

**The constitution of the Examining Board should be as follows:**

- 1) Internal Examiner(s) - Supervisor(s)
- 2) Internal Examiner from the student’s GAU
- 3) Internal Examiner from the student’s GAU, or from another GAU at UNB
- 4) Internal Examiner from another GAU at UNB
- 5) External Examiner (outside of UNB)

An Indigenous elder may be appointed to an Examining Board, as an additional voting member, when their expertise is appropriate to evaluating the content of the dissertation.

Examiners 2-4 may (but need not) be members of the Supervisory Committee; and Examiner 4 may also be external to UNB.

**The process of constituting the Examining Board is initiated by the Director of Graduate Studies of the GAU.** After appropriate consultation with the GAU, the Director will contact potential Members of the Examining Board, including making a preliminary inquiry of nominated potential External Examiners (see below), to canvas their willingness and availability to serve on the Examining Board. The Director of Graduate Studies then forwards nominations for membership on the Examining Board to the Dean, who then reviews and approves the nominations, or suggests modifications. See template memorandum on subsequent pages.

**Selection of External Examiner:** The Director of Graduate Studies will provide names and contact information for three nominees for the position of External Examiner (on the memorandum for membership on the Examining Board). The Director (but NOT the

Supervisor) may make an informal approach to nominees to canvas their willingness and availability to serve. Where the Director also has some involvement with the dissertation, the Chair of the Department, or Dean of Faculty, or designate in the decanal structure, should make this informal contact with nominees for External Examiner. **Every precaution must be taken to avoid potential conflicts of interest; hence, the Conflict of Interest form must be signed and submitted to the SGS verifying that there are no conflicts.**

#### **(4) DISTRIBUTION OF DISSERTATION TO THE EXAMINING BOARD**

**The School of Graduate Studies will:**

- 1) Handle all subsequent communications with members of the Examining Board, including the External Examiner** (see note below).
- 2) Preschedule a date for the oral defence** agreeable to all members of the Examining Board, including the External Examiner.
- 3) Distribute an electronic copy of the thesis to all members of the Examining Board**, including instructions to examiners on how to complete their reviews and submit their evaluations within 4 weeks of receipt of the dissertation.

**NOTE: To preserve the integrity of the Examination process and avoid any perception of bias, members of the Examining Board are prohibited from being in communications with one another, or with the student, concerning the thesis during the review process. The only exception is that the Supervisor can continue to be in communications with the student in their ongoing supervisory role.**

#### **(5) ASSESSMENT OF THE DISSERTATION BY THE EXAMINING BOARD**

- **Examiners must return their reviews to the Administrative Coordinator in the SGS within 4 weeks of receipt of the dissertation** (and at least 1-week prior to the defence date) to prevent cancellation of the prescheduled oral defence.
- **If the reviews of all examiners include a recommendation of only option 1 (minor revisions) or option 2 (moderate revisions), the process will proceed to the prescheduled oral defence** and the Supervisor can share Examiners' reports with the student prior to the defence.
- **If the reviews of any examiner include a recommendation of option 3 (major revisions), then the oral defence will be postponed pending a meeting of the Examining Board to consider feedback to the student and next steps.** The student will **NOT** be notified of this outcome until the Examining Board meets and provides further direction to the student concerning next steps.
- **In such cases, the Examining Board will provide direction to the student in the form of a Report**, developed collectively, that gives clear instruction concerning the revisions required prior to proceeding to oral defence. In this instance, Examiner's individual reports will not be shared with the student.

- The student will have a maximum of one year to make the required revisions and to return the dissertation to the Examining Board for their further review and assessment.

## (6) ORAL DEFENCE OF THE DISSERTATION

- **The responsibility for coordinating and scheduling the oral defence, and for preparing announcements of it to the University community, rests with the SGS.**
- **Students must be present at the oral defence and are advised not to make arrangements to leave the University immediately following the defence to allow sufficient time to complete revisions, and paperwork, and to submit the final approved dissertation to the School of Graduate Studies.**
- **Oral defence proceedings will be chaired by a member of the Decanal group in the SGS, or by a nominee of the Dean.** The examination will be open to all members of the University community and the public.
- **The purpose of the oral examination is to examine both the content of the dissertation and the candidate's ability to defend it.**
- **The oral defence will be limited to 3 hours duration**, including a 30-minute presentation by the candidate. The Chair will introduce the candidate, outline the proceedings, and preside over the question period. Following this, the period of formal questioning by the Examining Board will commence. During this question period, there will be rounds of questions by members of the Examining Board. Examiners are asked to pose clear and specific questions of the candidate that do not require protracted elaboration in order to optimize the use of time, and to be respectful of fellow examiner's opportunity to pose questions. The Chair will ensure that questioning remains professional and respectful and will quell any inappropriate questioning or behaviour.

## (7) ACCEPTANCE OF THE DISSERTATION AND ORAL DEFENCE BY THE EXAMINING BOARD

- **At the conclusion of the oral examination, the Chair will request the candidate and general members of the audience to withdraw** while the Examining Board deliberates.
- **The Chair will coordinate the Examining Board deliberations and their review and recommendations of both the dissertation and the candidate's performance in presenting and defending the dissertation.** Note that, in cases where there are Co-supervisors, they have together only one vote.
- **The Chair will record and report the Examining Board's assessment of the dissertation to the SGS, using the "Assessment of Ph.D. Dissertation & Oral Examination"** form. The options for assessment of the dissertation are as follows and are outlined on the "Assessment of PhD Dissertation & Oral Examination" form.

(1)**Minor revisions:** The dissertation is accepted with few (or no) modifications.

(This option is appropriate where the dissertation is acceptable in its current form, or where only minor editing changes may be needed to correct typographical errors or minor infelicities of grammar, style or presentation.)

(2) **Moderate revisions:** The dissertation is acceptable subject to moderate revisions.

(This option is appropriate where revisions are needed to improve the presentation of material but do not materially alter the substance of the thesis and the conclusions that can be drawn from it. This could include more extensive editing to correct typographical errors; to address other problems with the writing style; to clarify elements of methods, analyses, or data presentation (e.g., tables, figures); or to clarify or expand upon particular arguments or interpretations.)

(3) **Major revisions:** The dissertation requires major revisions and is returned to the student for revision and resubmission to the Examining Board within one-year.

(This option is appropriate where extensive revisions are required that could materially affect the content and/or the inferences or conclusions that can be drawn from the work. This could include problems with the core scholarship, data analysis and interpretation, or major gaps or errors in the information or arguments presented.)

(4) The dissertation is not acceptable and the Examining Board recommends that the degree not be awarded.

**NOTE: When any of options 1-3 are used, the Examining Board must discuss and decide who will be responsible for reviewing and approving thesis revisions and this is to be noted by the Chair.** Generally, the Supervisor would have this responsibility for options 1 & 2, and the entire Examining Board would be involved for option 3. However, alternatives can be considered. Whatever the decision, it must be clearly communicated to the student.

**The Examining Board will also make an assessment of the ability of the candidate to defend the dissertation using the following options indicated on the “Assessment of PhD Dissertation & Oral Defence” form.**

- (1) The oral defence is acceptable.
- (2) The oral defence is not wholly acceptable and the Examining Board therefore requests that a further oral presentation and defence be held before a final decision is made.
- (3) The oral defence is not acceptable and the Examining Board recommends that the degree not be awarded.

- Following the consultation of the Examining Board (which may take 30 minutes), the candidate will be invited to return to the examination room to meet with the Examining Board.

## **(8) FINAL ACCEPTANCE BY THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

Following the oral defence and any required revisions to the thesis, the supervisor(s) will sign and submit the appropriate form indicating that the requirements for revision have been satisfied. This form must be received prior to submission of the final dissertation to the SGS for electronic deposit and archiving. The final dissertation submitted to the SGS must conform to standard formatting guidelines which are detailed in the [Thesis Formatting Guide](#) available on the SGS website. To assist in this, formatting templates and 'how to' guides are provided on the [Electronic Thesis Deposit](#) website.

The supervisor(s) must also ensure that both they and the student sign and then submit to the SGS the "Dissertation Deposit" form authorizing deposit of the thesis in the UNB institutional repository, *UNB Scholar*. Students may then request bound copies of their thesis directly from the Library.

Following receipt and acceptance of the final dissertation, the candidate will be placed on the tentative list of graduates for the following Encaenia or Convocation. To complete this process, students are required to complete the on-line application to graduate (<http://www.unb.ca/graduation>) even if they do not plan to attend the ceremony.

Approved by the Executive Committee of the School of Graduate Studies, March 18, 2004; Approved by Fredericton & Saint John Senates, March 30/31, 2004. Revisions approved by SGS Executive February 9, 2017 and approved by Fredericton & Saint John Senates, May 15, 2017.



**SAMPLE LETTERS AND FORMS**

The University of New Brunswick  
**SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**Completion of GAU Requirements for Ph.D. Degree**

Note: Please submit this form to the Graduate School as soon as the candidate has satisfied all GAU requirements and the dissertation is ready for submission to the Examining Board.

**Name of Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**GAU:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

This is to certify that the above candidate has satisfactorily completed all the GAU requirements for the Ph.D. degree, as follows:

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Course Number	Short Title	Value	Taken	*Campus	Grade Obtained
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The course requirements for this degree/diploma and the manner in which these requirements have been satisfied are as follows:

**REQUIREMENT:**

**ACCOMPLISHMENT:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| a) A minimum of ____ year courses or equivalent, or | a) A total of ____ year courses or equivalent passed |
| b) A minimum of ____ units of courses               | b) A total of ____ units of courses completed        |
| c) A cumulative GPA of 3.0                          | c) A cumulative GPA of ____ was obtained             |

- *Indicate whether course(s) taken at Fredericton (F) or Saint John (SJ) campus*

**Completion of GAU Requirements for Ph.D. Degree** (cont'd)

**LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS**

\_\_\_ The language requirement for this degree was satisfied as follows:

\_\_\_ There is no compulsory language requirement for this degree.

**DISSERTATION REQUIREMENT** DATE

APPROVED BY GAU:

SUPERVISOR(S):

CAMPUS OF SUPERVISOR(S): \_\_\_ UNBSJ \_\_\_ UNBF

TITLE: *(please ensure that the title is as concise as possible but also provides a clear indication of the dissertation topic)*

*This dissertation has been approved by the GAU and is now submitted for examination by the University Examining Board. I certify that this dissertation has been prepared in accordance with the current regulations governing the preparation and format of graduate dissertations.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Graduate Studies

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**EXAMPLE OF MEMO FROM TO SGS NOMINATING EXAMINING BOARD**

**PhD Candidate Information**

<b>Student name:</b>	<b>Student ID#:</b>
<b>Email:</b>	<b>Is the Student at UNB? _____ Y/N</b>
<b>GAU:</b>	<b>If no, indicate location:</b>
<b>Thesis title:</b>	

<b>Committee Membership (Full Names)</b>	<b>Dept/Faculty</b>	<b>Email &amp; Phone</b>
1) Supervisor:		
1) Co-Supervisor:		
2) Internal Examiner from student's GAU:		
3) Internal Examiner from student's GAU, or another GAU:		
4) Internal/External Examiner from another GAU:		

**Note: Examiners 2-4 may (but need not) be members of the Supervisory Committee. All internal members of the Examining Board must have Membership in the School of Graduate Studies. If you are not certain, please contact the Administrative Coordinator at SGS.**

**Nominations for External Examiner**

Provide names and contact information for three nominees for the position of External Examiner. The Director (but NOT the Supervisor) may make an informal approach to nominees to canvas their ability to serve. Where the Director has some involvement in the dissertation, the Department Chair, or Dean of Faculty (or designate), should make this informal contact. **Every precaution must be taken to avoid potential conflicts of interest, and the Conflict of Interest form must be completed and submitted to the SGS verifying that there are no conflicts.**

<b>Full Name</b>	<b>Institution &amp; website</b>	<b>Email &amp; Phone</b>
1)		
2)		
3)		

The GAU would like to invite the External to attend the oral exam and will cover all travel expenses. The GAU would like the External to participate remotely.

**Pre-Scheduling Defence** – The Administrative Coordinator in the SGS will coordinate the defence date. An effort is made to pre-schedule a tentative date for the oral defence 6-7 weeks following receipt of the dissertation to allow adequate time for the Examining Board to complete its initial review. Please indicate dates when the Examining Board CANNOT be available based on this timeline.

**Dates NOT available:**

Director's Signature:

Date:

Attachments: \_\_\_\_\_ Green Completion Form  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Conflict of Interest form signed by supervisor(s)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Student has sent a PDF copy of thesis by email to the Administrative Coordinator at SGS

**EXAMPLE OF LETTER/MEMO FROM GAU  
 TO THE DEAN OF  
 THE SCHOOL GRADUATE STUDIES**

(To accompany completion form and electronic copy of dissertation)

MEMO TO: Dean of Graduate Studies

SUBJECT: **Ph.D. Dissertation -- (name of candidate)**

**For the UNB Examining Board, we suggest the following:**

- Internal Examiner(s) - Supervisor(s)
- Internal Examiner from the student's GAU
- Internal Examiner from the student's GAU or from another GAU at UNB
- Internal Examiner from another GAU at UNB

**We suggest the following three individuals as qualified External Examiners.**

<u>Candidate Examiner 1</u>	<u>Candidate Examiner 2</u>	<u>Candidate Examiner 3</u>
Full Name	Full Name	Full Name
Institutional Address	Institutional Address	Institutional Address
Phone number & email	Phone number & email	Phone number & email

The GAU or Supervisor [**will support the External Examiner's participation at the defence in person**] or [**invites the External Examiner to participate remotely**].

(signature)  
 Director of Graduate Studies  
 Department/Faculty  
 UNBF or UNBSJ

**Please note:** Once an External Examiner from the above candidates is approved, an informal approach to them should be made by the Director of Graduate Studies and NOT by the supervisor. Where the Director has some involvement with the dissertation, the Chair of the Department or Dean of Faculty should make the informal contact with the external examiner. Every precaution should be taken to avoid a potential conflict of interest situation in the selection of an external examiner. Please see the form on page 21 and submit the signed form to the School of Graduate Studies.

Attached: \_\_\_\_\_ Completion of Degree Requirements Form  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Conflict of Interest Form signed by Supervisor  
 \_\_\_\_\_ PDF copy of thesis has been submitted to SGS for distribution

**EXAMPLE OF MEMO SENT TO SUPERVISOR OF CANDIDATE**

MEMO TO: (Name and Field of Supervisor)

SUBJECT: Ph.D. Dissertation-- (Name and GAU of Candidate)

This is to advise you that the Examining Board has been established to read and assess the Ph.D. dissertation for [student's name].

The membership of the Examining Board is as follows:

- Name of Supervisor
- Name of Internal Examiner
- Name of Internal Examiner
- Name of Internal Examiner from another GAU
- Name of External Examiner

Your duties as Supervisor are described in the enclosed document entitled "Procedures for the Submission and Assessment of Doctoral Dissertations." If you have any questions concerning your duties as supervisor(s) of the candidate, I shall be pleased to discuss them with you.

Please find enclosed the Internal Examiner's Assessment forms for use in making your independent assessment.

(Signature of Dean)

Enclosures

**EXAMPLE OF MEMO SENT TO OTHER MEMBERS OF EXAMINING BOARD**

MEMO TO: (Name and Field of Reader)

SUBJECT: Ph.D. Dissertation -- (Name and GAU of Candidate)

I wish to thank you for agreeing to act as a member of the Examining Board for the Ph.D. dissertation of [student's name].

The membership of the Examining Board is as follows:

- Name of Supervisor
- Name of Internal Examiner
- Name of Internal Examiner
- Name of Internal Examiner from another GAU
- Name of External Examiner

Your duties are described in the enclosed document entitled "Procedures for the Submission and Assessment of Doctoral Dissertations." If you have any questions concerning your duties, I shall be pleased to discuss them with you.

Please find enclosed the Internal Examiner's Assessment form for use in making your independent assessment.

I am most grateful to you for undertaking this important task.

(Signature of Dean)

Enclosures

### **EXAMPLE OF STANDARD LETTER SENT TO EXTERNAL EXAMINER**

[Name of External Examiner]:

I wish to thank you for agreeing to act as external examiner for the Ph.D. dissertation of [name of candidate] entitled ["title of dissertation"].

The following are the criteria for satisfying the dissertation requirements of our Ph.D. programme: first, the dissertation must demonstrate the candidate's competence to undertake and complete independent research or creative work; second, the dissertation must be original and/or unique in nature; and third, the completed work must contribute significantly to knowledge in the candidate's field of study. In addition, the candidate's contribution must be competent enough to merit consideration for publication in an appropriate scholarly journal or other scholarly format; it must demonstrate that the candidate is fully aware of the pertinent published material; and it must be written in a satisfactory literary style and be free of typographical and other mechanical errors.

Given the above criteria, I request that you complete your review by using the assessment forms sent to you by email attachment. **Your report is to include one of the following recommendations with respect to the dissertation as well as a summary paragraph outlining the reasons for that recommendation and specific suggested and required revisions:**

- (1)**Minor revisions:** The dissertation is acceptable with few (or no) modifications and can proceed to oral defence.  
(This option is appropriate where the dissertation is acceptable in its current form, or where only minor editing changes may be needed to correct typographical errors or minor infelicities of grammar, style or presentation. Such changes can reasonably be made following oral defence.)
- (2)**Moderate revisions:** The dissertation is acceptable subject to moderate revisions and can proceed to oral defence.  
(This option is appropriate where revisions are needed to improve the presentation of material but do not materially alter the substance of the thesis and the conclusions that can be drawn from it. This could include more extensive editing to correct typographical errors; to address other problems with the writing style; to clarify elements of methods, analyses, or data presentation (e.g., tables, figures); or to clarify or expand upon particular arguments or interpretations. Such changes may form the basis for questioning at the oral defence with revisions made following defence in light of other items arising at that time.)
- (3)**Major revisions:** The dissertation requires major revisions that must be made prior to proceeding to oral defence.  
(This option is appropriate where extensive revisions are required that could materially affect the content and/or the inferences or conclusions that can be drawn from the work. This could include problems with the core scholarship, data analysis and interpretation, or major gaps or errors in the information or arguments presented. Such changes are of such a fundamental nature that they must be made prior to the oral defence.)

While the University is unable to provide funds to enable External Examiners to attend PhD oral examinations in person, we nevertheless request participation remotely (via video- or teleconference). In the event that you are unable to participate remotely, we request that you provide a few questions (typically 3-5) on the enclosed sheet. The Chair will pose these questions on your behalf at the oral examination.

**Your report should be returned directly to the School of Graduate Studies within 4 weeks of receipt of the dissertation (and at least 1-week prior to the defence date) to ensure that the prescheduled oral defence does not have to be cancelled and rescheduled.** It would be helpful to the candidate if all major comments for

suggested and/or required modifications are made on a separate document. However, external examiners should also feel free to mark up the electronic copy of the thesis if that is the most convenient way of identifying typographical errors, minor textual problems, et cetera.

Your willingness to assist the University of New Brunswick in this matter is greatly appreciated. As a small token of the University's appreciation you will receive an honorarium of \$150.00.

(Signed by Dean)

xc:

Supervisor

Director of Graduate Studies



**The University of New Brunswick  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES INTERNAL EXAMINER'S ASSESSMENT OF  
Ph.D. DISSERTATION**

Name of Candidate: GAU:

Title of Dissertation:

The following are the criteria for satisfying the dissertation requirements of the PhD: first, the dissertation must demonstrate the candidate's competence to undertake and complete independent research or creative work; second, the dissertation must be original and/or unique in nature; and third, the completed work must contribute significantly to knowledge in the candidate's field of study. In addition, the candidate's contribution must be competent enough to merit consideration for publication in an appropriate scholarly journal or other scholarly format; it must demonstrate that the candidate is fully aware of the pertinent published material; and it must be written in a satisfactory literary style and be free of typographical and other mechanical errors.

Given the above criteria, I request that you complete your review by using the assessment forms sent to you by e-mail attachment. **Your report should be returned to the School of Graduate Studies within 4 weeks of receipt of the dissertation (and at least 1-week prior to the defence date) to ensure that the prescheduled oral defence does not have to be cancelled and rescheduled. Your report is to include one of the following recommendations with respect to the dissertation as well as a summary paragraph outlining the reasons for that recommendation:**

(1)**Minor revisions:** The dissertation is acceptable with few (or no) modifications and can proceed to oral defence.

(This option is appropriate where the dissertation is acceptable in its current form, or where only minor editing changes may be needed to correct typographical errors or minor infelicities of grammar, style or presentation. Such changes can reasonably be made following oral defence.)

(2)**Moderate revisions:** The dissertation is acceptable subject to moderate revisions and can proceed to oral defence.

(This option is appropriate where revisions are needed to improve the presentation of material but do not materially alter the substance of the thesis and the conclusions that can be drawn from it. This could include more extensive editing to correct typographical errors; to address other problems with the writing style; to clarify elements of methods, analyses, or data presentation (e.g., tables, figures); or to clarify or expand upon particular arguments or interpretations. Such changes may form the basis for questioning at the oral defence with revisions made following defence in light of other items arising at that time.)

(3)**Major revisions:** The dissertation requires major revisions that must be made prior to proceeding to oral defence.

(This option is appropriate where extensive revisions are required that could materially affect the content and/or the inferences or conclusions that can be drawn from the work. This could include problems with the core scholarship, data analysis and interpretation, or major gaps or errors in the information or arguments presented. Such changes are of such a fundamental nature that they must be made prior to the oral defence.)

MY COMMENTS AND REPORT APPEAR ON THE ATTACHED FORMS:

Signature of the Internal Examiner: \_\_\_\_\_

## ***SAMPLE OF LETTER OR E-MAIL TO CANDIDATE NOTIFYING OF ORAL EXAMINATION***

Name of Candidate  
Graduate Student

This is to inform you that the final oral examination for your Ph.D. dissertation will be held at the time and place indicated on the enclosed notice of examination.

At that time, you will be required to present a 30-minute public summary of your research clearly indicating the scope and significance of your work. The length of your presentation should be timed carefully for 30 minutes (your ability to present your work within a time limit is one of the criteria being evaluated). If you are using power point or audio-visual materials, you should set up in the room well ahead of time and practice your timing. You may also want to bring water to the exam with you given the fact that you will be speaking and answering questions for up to three hours.

Following your 30-minute presentation, the period of formal questioning by the Examining Board will commence. During this question period, there will be rounds of questions by members of the Examining Board. The Chair will ensure that questioning remains professional and respectful and will quell any inappropriate questioning or behavior. Once the questions and discussion period have ended, members of the general audience will be asked to leave the room while the Examining Board confers. You will also be asked to leave but not to go too far away. Because the Examining Board will be discussing both your dissertation and your oral (including any changes that might still have to be made to the dissertation), the post-oral discussion of the Examining Board may last 30 minutes. Therefore, be prepared to wait for that length of time following the oral exam.

I wish you success in your dissertation defense. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

The Dean or Administrative Coordinator

The University of New Brunswick  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
**ASSESSMENT OF Ph.D. DISSERTATION & ORAL EXAMINATION**

Name of Candidate:

GAU:

Title of Dissertation:

The members of the Examining Board for the above candidate have examined his/her dissertation, have today conducted an oral examination, and have reached the following decisions:

**DISSERTATION**

1. \_\_\_ The dissertation is acceptable with few (or no) modifications. (To be used where the dissertation is acceptable in its current form or where only minor editing changes remain to be made to correct typographical errors or minor infelicities of grammar, style or presentation.)

2. \_\_\_ The dissertation is acceptable subject to moderate revisions. (To be used where further revisions remain to be made to improve the presentation of material but do not materially alter the substance of the thesis and the conclusions that can be drawn from it. This could include more extensive editing to correct typographical errors; to address other problems with the writing style; to clarify elements of methods, analyses or data presentation (e.g., tables, figures); or to clarify or expand upon particular arguments or interpretations.

3. \_\_\_ The dissertation requires major revisions. (To be used in cases where extensive revisions remain to be made that could materially affect the content and/or the inferences or conclusions that can be drawn from the work. This could include

problems with the core scholarship, data analysis and interpretation, or major gaps in the information presented. Such changes must be made within 1-year of the oral defence.)

4. \_\_\_ The dissertation is not acceptable and the Examining Board recommends that the degree not be awarded.

**ORAL EXAMINATION**

1. \_\_\_ The oral defence is acceptable.

2. \_\_\_ The oral defence is not wholly acceptable and the Examining Board therefore requests that a further oral presentation and defence be held before a final decision is made.

3. \_\_\_ The oral defence is not acceptable and the Examining Board recommends that the degree not be awarded.

**\*Note: Where revisions are required, the Examining Board must discuss and decide who will be responsible for reviewing and approving thesis revisions and this is to be noted by the Chair. Generally, the Supervisor would have this responsibility for options 1 & 2, and the entire**

**Examining Board would be involved for option 3. However, alternatives can be entertained. Whatever the decision, it must be clearly communicated to the student.**

Examining Board Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Examining Board Member: \_\_\_\_\_

External Examiner: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of Examining Board: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS:**

**Signatures of the Members of the Examining Board:**

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Examining Board Member: \_\_\_\_\_

**Conflict of Interest Guidelines concerning selection of an external examiner for a PhD dissertation (adapted from Canadian Tri-Council guidelines concerning Ethical Conduct of Research, amended September 2018)**

In general, there is a conflict of interest when a proposed external examiner has a personal or professional relationship with the degree candidate, the Supervisor, other members of their Department or Faculty, or other members of the Examining Board. Examples would include:

- Being a relative or close friend, or former student or supervisor
- Being connected to the same university, or affiliated organizations or research units in the last six years.
- Being involved in collaborative activities, including but not limited to publishing or participating together on grants or contracts in the last six years.
- Having long-standing scientific or personal differences.
- Being uncomfortable due to past personal or professional relationships (beyond the last six years) or for any reason feeling unable to provide an impartial review.
- Having other substantive connections that risk the perception of a conflict.

None of the proposed external examiners on the attached list are in conflict of interest with the supervisor(s), or with the PhD candidate \_\_\_\_\_ in the GAU of \_\_\_\_\_.

Student's name

Department/Faculty

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The University of New Brunswick  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**Name of Candidate:**

**GAU:**

**Title of Dissertation:**

This is to certify that any required modifications to the dissertation recommended by the members of the Examining Board, including the External Examiner, have been made to the satisfaction of the Examining Board or its surrogate.

I verify that the modifications required by the Examining Board have been made by the candidate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

OR (if requested by the Examining Board Committee)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of the Examining Board Committee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date