

Thesis examination and outcomes

The big day has arrived, and you receive the outcome of your thesis examination. Hopefully it's a time of celebration. However, there are a wide range of possible outcomes, all of which have been carefully considered by the chair of examination and the relevant faculty committee. Below is an explanation of the examination process, and each possible outcome.

Examination process

Research Education Candidature System (RECS)

The administration of the examination process has been moved to a digital system – Research Education Candidature System (RECS) – and the number of examiners for a PhD has been reduced from 3 to 2. RECS should allow you to track the progress of the examination process, but if you have concerns with delays, [contact HDRAC for an update](#).

When the examiners' reports are returned, they will be reviewed by your lead supervisor and the chair of examination. If required, your head of school or postgraduate coordinator may be consulted on the recommendation of an outcome.

The chair of examination will provide a recommendation of outcome to the relevant committee. The committee will then review all the relevant information to confirm the recommended outcome, or to make a different decision. **HDRAC will then notify you of the outcome in writing.**

Possible outcomes

Award without conditions or corrections

It's time to celebrate, your thesis has been awarded. You will be notified in writing of the latest date your thesis must be lodged with the University – this is usually around 3 months after the outcome.

Awarded subject to corrections

The relevant committee will inform you in writing of the corrections that need to be made and the latest date by which the final version of the thesis, including corrections, must be lodged with the University. Usually this will be 1 research period. The chair of examination will review your corrections. If the submitted corrections fail to meet the standard required, you will be given notice in writing to submit further corrections and a given new deadline. It is important that you submit by this deadline. If you require extra time, we recommend you [contact HDRAC](#) to request an extension in advance.

Non-award with revision and re-examination

You will be notified in writing as to why your degree was not awarded and given a new date to revise and submit your thesis for re-examination. Usually you will be allowed 2 to 4 research periods for revisions and you will be required to re-enrol to complete your revisions. In most situations your original examiners will be used again, and your thesis will be completely re-examined, by either oral or thesis-only mode. A thesis can have only 1 opportunity for revision and re-examination.

Non-award with option to award another degree

If the relevant committee determines that your degree will not be awarded, they can instead determine that you may be awarded a different degree. You may need to submit corrections by a specified due date to receive the other degree, usually within 3 months.

Non-award

This outcome is uncommon and certainly the most unexpected. You will be notified in writing as to why the relevant committee has determined you will not be awarded your degree.

What if I disagree with an outcome?

In all outcomes of non-award, revision and re-examination, award another degree and non-award of degree, you will be provided with the examiners' reports, the chair of examination's recommendation, and any reports by your supervisor. **If you disagree with the decision you have 2 weeks from the date of notification to state your intention to respond, and 6 weeks from the date of notification to provide a written response** to the relevant committee. If you

respond, the relevant committee must consider all relevant documents, including your comments, and either confirm or revise its decision. We strongly recommend that you [contact us for advice before responding](#).

Can I appeal an outcome?

After you respond to an outcome with comment, the committee will reconsider and determine a final outcome. If you are still not satisfied, you may appeal to either your faculty or to the [Student Appeals Body](#). We strongly recommend that you [contact us for advice and assistance with your appeal](#).

Policies

[Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Policy 2015](#)

[Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Procedures 2020](#)

[University of Sydney \(Student Appeals Against Academic Decisions\) Rule 2006 \(as amended\)](#)