Viva Voce (oral examination)

You will be required to defend your thesis at an oral examination, often known as a Viva or Viva Voce. You will have an opportunity to undergo a mock oral examination with your supervisory team and there are sessions within the University of Suffolk Researcher Development Programme and at the partner universities to prepare you for this aspect of your assessment. There will be a period of time between the submission of your thesis and the oral examination and you should use it to prepare. Your supervisory team will be the main source of support and guidance.

The expectation is that the oral (viva) examination will take place at UEA with all appointed examiners and a Chair of Examiners present in the room with the candidate. In exceptional circumstances and with the approval of UEA, we will consider the conduct of oral examinations via video conference of Skype (or other appropriate technology). It is important that appropriate arrangements should be made to maintain the integrity, confidentiality and validity of the examination process. Recent changes to the viva at UEA have necessitated the publication of the following which explains the regulatory changes. https://portal.uea.ac.uk/documents/6207125/6881115/2014+Viva+Changes+FAQs/5ecf8575-27e4-482d-be68-be42b3c8a417

The expectation is that the oral (viva) examination will take place at Essex with all appointed examiners and a Chair of Examiners present in the room with the candidate. In exceptional circumstances, and with approval, Essex supports the conduct of oral examinations via video Link, Skype or an equivalent audio-visual service. http://www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/documents/regulations/cop-vivas-via-video.pdf It is important that appropriate arrangements should be made to maintain the integrity, confidentiality and validity of the examination process.

The Researcher Development programme also includes a workshop on preparing for viva examination which you are strongly recommended to attend during the year before submission of your thesis.

Outcome

You will be notified of the outcome of your examination formally after your oral examination.

Master of Philosophy (MPhil)

(1) If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are of sufficient merit they shall recommend that the candidate be approved for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy.

(2) If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are of sufficient merit, but minor corrections are required, they shall recommend that the candidate be approved for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, subject to completion of minor corrections within three months.

(3) If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are not of sufficient merit for the degree of Master of Philosophy they shall recommend: either (a) that the candidate be permitted to submit a revised thesis. Such a candidate shall submit a revised thesis within one year and may be required to undergo further oral examination. A candidate shall not be
allowed to submit a revised thesis on more than one occasion; or (b) that no degree be awarded.

**Doctor of Philosophy**

(1) If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are of sufficient merit they shall recommend that the candidate be approved for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

(2) If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are of sufficient merit, but minor corrections are required, they shall recommend that the candidate be approved for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, subject to completion of minor corrections within six months.

(3) If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are not of sufficient merit for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy but there is reasonable expectation that the thesis, if revised, could reach the standard required for the degree, the Head of School (or nominee) shall recommend either that the candidate be asked to submit a revised thesis or that the candidate be given the option either of submitting a revised thesis or of being approved for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy. A candidate who is given this option shall be allowed a period of not more than fourteen days from receipt of formal notification of the outcome of the examination to decide which of these alternatives to accept. A candidate who submits a revised thesis shall do so within one year and may be required to undergo further oral examination. A candidate shall not be allowed to submit a revised thesis on more than one occasion.

(4) If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are not of sufficient merit for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and the Head of School (or nominee) is not of the opinion that the candidate should be permitted to submit a revised thesis, they shall, if the thesis and performance in the oral examination are of sufficient merit for the degree of Master of Philosophy, recommend that the candidate be approved for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy (with or without corrections).

(5) If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are not of sufficient merit to entitle the candidate to the degree of Master of Philosophy it shall recommend that no degree be awarded.

**Final Award**

Your final award (degree) will be conferred by the University at which you have been registered.

If the result is ‘fail’, the University of Essex’s Executive Dean (or his/her deputy) or Dean of Academic Partnerships (or his/her deputy) may on the recommendation of the examiners either permit the candidate to resubmit the thesis and be re-examined for a lower award within three terms or determine that the candidate be immediately eligible for the conferment of a lower award. If a revised thesis is required, as a result of the examiners’ decision to refer the thesis or allow a failed thesis to be resubmitted for a lower award, there shall be a further oral examination, except when the University of Essex’s Executive Dean (or his/her deputy) or Dean of Academic Partnerships (or his/her deputy), on sufficient grounds submitted by agreement of both examiners, excuses a candidate from a further oral examination. Students who are referred will be required to register and pay the relevant fee and the re-examination fee even if working away from the University.