Dear Graduate Supervisors and Directors of Graduate Studies,

I am writing to let you know that we have had some problems recently where the procedures for the Appointment of Examiners have not been followed, which has caused some students’ examinations to be inconvenienced or delayed. I thought it might be useful for graduate research supervisors and Directors of Graduate Studies to have the following reminder of the procedures to help us to facilitate your students’ examinations.

1. The thesis must be with the examiners for **at least four weeks before the date of any planned viva** – therefore candidates should be reminded to submit their form GSO3 (Application for the Appointment of Examiners) and their thesis in plenty of time for this to happen.

2. If you are in contact with the examiners in any way, please emphasise to them the absolute importance of responding to the email invitation sent by the Research Degrees Team – **we cannot send out copies of the thesis until both examiners have agreed to act and confirmed the address to which they would like the thesis to be sent.** Having made a verbal or unofficial agreement to examine is all too often the reason why examiners feel that they don’t need to respond to our email, causing delays.

3. If a viva is being arranged informally before the Research Degrees Team has completed the process of formal invitation to the examiners (and this may only begin once the approved GSO3 is received in this office), then please let us know - we can then offer support to help ensure that things go to plan. In addition, **if a viva date is urgent or requires special arrangements, such as being held sooner than 4 weeks after the thesis is sent to the examiners, then please inform the Research Degrees Team as soon as possible so we can speed the process and ensure appropriate permissions for an early viva are in place.**

4. **No copies of the thesis, either digital (.pdf or MS Word files) or printed, may be sent to the examiners except through the Research Degrees Team.** On those occasions when the Proctors give permission for digital copies of the thesis to be used, we will contact the candidate to ensure that the copies we have are approved by the candidate for release to the examiners through this office. By sending unofficial copies of
the thesis to the examiners, you may put the entire process of examination in jeopardy and significantly delay the process of examination for your student.

If you have any queries at all, then please contact us. We are here to help and advise and this is always done better in advance than retrospectively! We can be contacted either by telephone on Oxford (2)86384, or via our group email address, researchdegrees@admin.ox.ac.uk

Research Degrees Team

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