



## 2021 Exams Panel Dates

<b>Cases due to Graduate Research</b>	<b>Exams Panel Meeting Date</b>
22 January	4 February
19 February	4 March
26 March	8 April
23 April	6 May
21 May	3 June
18 June	1 July
23 July	5 August
20 August	2 September
24 September	7 October
22 October	4 November
19 November	2 December

### **Research Degree Examinations and Quality Panel: A resource to support students prepare for the appeals process**

The first step when considering an appeal to the Research Degree Examinations and Quality Panel (the Panel) is to talk to your supervision panel, in particular your Principal Supervisor, your Research Degree Coordinator and your Dean of Research (or delegate)/Professorial Lead (Research Education). They have experience in dealing with examination outcomes and will be able to provide guidance and support as you consider your options.

Your Principal Supervisor and Dean of Research (or delegate)/Professorial Lead should also prepare submissions in support of your case. Ensure they are clear about your grounds and you are collectively working towards the same goal.

#### **PREPARING AN APPEAL**

An appeal should be explicit and address the grounds for which you are making an appeal. Clearly state on what grounds you are making your appeal. The grounds for appeal are found in AB-58 P6 [Research Degrees Thesis Preparation and Examination](#), section 16.

The appeal needs to be clear and straightforward and easy to read/follow. Make it easy for the Panel to understand your arguments and ensure jargon and acronyms are minimised.

Write positively and constructively and avoid being dismissive of the examiner(s). The tone and language used in your appeal should be measured and professional. If an Adjudicator is appointed your appeal statement will be sent to that person.

The examiners should be referred to as Examiner 1 and Examiner 2 throughout the appeal rather than by their actual names. Anonymisation is important, especially if you are asking for an Adjudicator to be appointed, as the names of the examiners are not disclosed.

You need to address the major areas of misunderstanding/issue that you have with the examiner comments. Consider grouping similar misunderstandings into common themes with individual points under each one to develop your case.

Use a rebuttal table to show clearly where you agree and disagree with comments. Ensure rebuttals are evidence based and supported by your research. In the case of divergent results from examiners, use statements from the examiner who has given a more positive examination result to support your argument.

Ensure the appeal has a clear structure:

1. State the grounds on which you are making the appeal e.g. I am appealing the examination report of Examiner 1 on the basis that they misinterpreted the thesis in the following areas [then provide a single sentence for each key area]
  - a. X
  - b. X
  - c. X
2. Provide a brief summary of the structure of the appeal to follow
3. Provide a summary of your research in easy to understand language that provides context of the material to come.
4. Address each of the key misunderstandings/issues. This is where a rebuttal table can be used for each of the key areas being addressed. Using a table provides a clear structure that is easy to follow. Suggested columns are:
  - a. The specific misunderstanding/issue by the examiner
  - b. Your case as to why it is an incorrect view of the thesis
  - c. Examples from the thesis that support your argument (provide page numbers/section headings for easy reference). Use quotes if appropriate but they shouldn't be too lengthy.
  - d. Statements from the other examiner to support your view (if appropriate)
5. This section can be documented without the use of a table if this suits your style of writing better. Just make sure you cover off the points in a consistent and logical manner that will be easy to follow for the Panel.
6. Provide a statement to indicate what you are seeking through the appeal e.g. Request for consideration for an adjudicator to be appointed.
7. Ensure your full name and date of submission of the appeal are included.

Please be aware that information provided to the Panel will be provided to members of the Student Appeals Committee in the event that a decision of the Panel is appealed (section 18.d of AB-58 P6 [Research Degrees Thesis Preparation and Examination](#)).

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

There are a number of services available to you throughout this process:

- The University Counselling Service offers free and confidential appointments to students to help manage personal issues that are affecting your studies. For further information, or to make an appointment, please visit [Student Support Services](#).
- The Student Ombud Office provides University-wide advice to students who are encountering difficulties in the interpretation and management of policies, guidelines and procedures governing student-related activities. For more information visit <https://i.unisa.edu.au/students/ombud/>.
- USASA Advocates are experts in the University's academic policies and procedures, and offer free, confidential support to students. For more information, or to organise an appointment, visit <https://usasa.sa.edu.au/advocacy>.

## **QUESTIONS & CONTACTS**

Questions on the process, documentation or timelines may be directed to the Exams & Results Team: Student and Academic Services at [research.examinations@unisa.edu.au](mailto:research.examinations@unisa.edu.au).