

Best Practice Tips for Arranging the Viva

These tips have been collated from feedback received from supervisors. If you have any additional suggestions to make, please contact researchdegrees@rhul.ac.uk so that we can update this document accordingly.

- Please do not book the viva until the thesis has been dispatched to the examiners. If any unforeseen circumstances delay the thesis dispatch, examiners may be put under a lot of pressure to assimilate the candidate's work before the viva. If you do arrange the viva before dispatch, for whatever reason, please advise Student Administration of this fact and we will do our best to accommodate this. Please be aware that there may be situations outside of our control which mean that the examiners do not receive the thesis in time. If this happens, you may need to reschedule the viva.
- Please plan ahead and try to book the viva as soon as possible after the thesis has been sent to the examiners; this gives the candidate and examiners a clear deadline to work towards and also means that examiners can book their transport in advance and save a considerable amount on tickets. Although we are aware this will not always be possible, Student Administration would be very grateful if you would advise examiners to book their tickets well in advance and to select the cheaper fares where feasible.
- The [Research Degree Regulations](#) state that the viva should take place either at the Royal Holloway Egham campus or at Bedford Square or Senate House in central London. If a different location is required for whatever reason, a [Waiver of Regulations request](#) will need to be submitted to Academic Development.
- It is important that you inform Student Administration of the date and location of the viva in good time as we need to ensure that the examiners submit their Preliminary Reports on the thesis prior to the date of the viva. Student Administration sends reminders to the examiners about this. If the reports have not been received by the morning of the viva, the supervisor will be contacted and asked to ensure that the examiners hand in their Preliminary Reports before the viva starts. Please note that the viva should not take place until the Preliminary Reports have been submitted by both examiners. Otherwise, the viva will be in breach of the College Regulations and open to appeal by the candidate.
- For those candidates who applied to enter the examination after 01 November 2012, it is a regulatory requirement that an audio recording be made of the viva or an Independent Chair be present. For the 'Guidance on the Audio Recording of Vivas' and the 'Guidance on the Appointment and Role of the Independent Chair', please refer to the Viva tab at [PhD supervisor webpage](#).
- If you have any queries regarding this process, please:
 - refer to the [PhD supervisor webpage](#)
 - consult the [Research Degree Regulations](#)
 - contact researchdegrees@rhul.ac.uk.