



**SKHS PhD Comprehensive Examination
Timeline Form and General Instructions
Socio-Cultural Stream**



Candidate Name _____ ID Number _____ Email: _____

Committee Chair Name _____ Email: _____

Question 1

Examiner name _____ Email _____ Topic area _____

Question 2

Examiner name _____ Email _____ Topic area _____

Question 3

Examiner name _____ Email _____ Topic area _____

Deadline for submission of questions to Chair (must be within 15 working days of initial meeting): _____

Signature of Chair (questions approved; candidate has permission to proceed): _____

Dates (to be completed as the written portion of the exam proceeds)

Question 1 Start Date _____ Finish Date _____ (Grad Assist initial answer rec'd ___ / sent to Examiner ___)

Question 2 Start Date _____ Finish Date _____ (Grad Assist initial answer rec'd ___ / sent to Examiner ___)

Question 3 Start Date _____ Finish Date _____ (Grad Assist initial answer rec'd ___ / sent to Examiner ___)

All questions and answers sent to Examination Committee by Grad Assist prior to oral examination: _____

Oral Examination Date _____ Time _____ Location: _____

Signatures

1. Candidate has received a copy of the procedures governing comprehensive examinations in the School.
2. Timing of the examination falls within the timeframe set out in the Doctoral Student Handbook.
3. Graduate Assistant has sent reminder to Examiners one week prior to the deadline for submitting their questions.

Candidate (signature) _____ Date _____

Comprehensive Exam Chair (signature) _____ Date _____

Graduate Assistant (signature) _____ Date _____

Upon approval of the questions, the Chair should return completed form (page 1 only) to the Graduate Assistant in KHS 206 who will forward copies to the entire committee. The original will be placed in the Candidate's file.

School of Kinesiology and Health Studies
PhD Comprehensive Examination Form and Instructions
Socio-Cultural Stream

PURPOSE

To ensure that the Candidate has developed the necessary background, knowledge and academic competencies required to successfully continue their studies in pursuit of their doctoral degree.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Chair

- Submit Timeline form to Graduate Assistant *immediately following initial conferral/signing of form*
- Ensure Examiners' questions are submitted on time and that they follow stipulated criteria
- Adjudicate written answers to ensure they meet stipulated criteria prior to distribution to Examiners
- Moderate the question period during the exam
- Secure required signatures at the end of the oral examination
- Arrange a subsequent meeting of the Committee, in whole or in part, to adjudicate remedial work
- Ensure the exam follows the stipulated process
- Attend all meetings of the Committee

Supervisor

- Invite Examiners and a Chair to sit on the Committee
- Arrange the time and location of initial conferral (see A3 below)
- Ensure the student has adequate time to write comprehensive answers to their exam questions
- Adhere to the responsibilities of Examiners laid out below

Examiners

- Create questions (in consultation with Candidate where applicable) and submit them on time
- Assess answers and submit a written report to the Chair by the agreed deadline
- Participate in the oral examination of the Candidate
- Assess any follow up work
- Attend all meetings of the Committee

Candidates

- Consult with Examiners about questions where applicable
- Submit all answers on time and in accordance with criteria laid out in Section B
- Answer questions in the oral examination
- Complete remedial work or redo a question where applicable
- Attend all meetings of the Committee

Graduate Assistant

- Assist Chair in overseeing examination timeframe
- Send reminder email to Examiners three working days before their questions are due
- Distribute questions to Candidate on scheduled dates and answers to Examiners on scheduled dates
- Distribute all answers to all Examiners five working days prior to the oral exam
- Oversee paperwork and signatures

Graduate Coordinator

- Support and advise Chair, Supervisor, Candidate and Graduate Assistant when necessary
- Adjudicate appeals where applicable

A. Prior to the Commencement of Written Answers

1. The comprehensive examination process normally begins during the PhD candidate's third term, with a suggested duration of 9 months. The expectation is that the PhD comprehensive examination will be completed within one year of beginning the examination
2. The Supervisor must invite members of the committee, which consists of three Examiners (including the Supervisor) and a Chair, to participate in the examination at least **one week** before the initial organizing meeting. At the initial organizing meeting, the Examination Committee and the Candidate, must confer prior:
 - a) Confirm membership;
 - b) Review the examination process;
 - c) Identify the three topic areas from the following list: i) General background (mandatory); ii) Current developments; iii) Current controversies; iv) Methodological issues; v) Theoretical issues;
 - d) Complete the Timeline Form and return to the Graduate Assistant.
3. In instances where Candidates are co-supervised, only one Supervisor will be responsible for establishing the Committee and arranging the initial conferral. For the examination itself, co-supervisors may either a) create a joint question and reading list for the Candidate and share the question period in the oral examination; or b) decide that only one supervisor will participate in the committee. In instances where option b is chosen, the non-active supervisor may attend the oral examination as an observer but may not participate in the proceedings.
4. The Candidate, in consultation with the Examiner, will develop a reading list over which the Examiner has final approval. Each examiner will submit **one question and an initial reading list** in electronic form to the Chair for approval **no longer than 15 working days after the initial meeting**. The Graduate Assistant will send a reminder email to the Examiners no less than three working days before their questions are due.
5. If revisions to any of the questions and/or reading lists are required, the chair must notify the Examiner within five working days of receiving the questions and a revised version must be submitted to the Chair and copied to the Graduate Assistant within another five working days.
6. The initial reading list consists of approximately four books and twenty articles. The Candidate should expect to spend approximately one month of full time work on each reading list.
7. Each written exam begins at the Candidate's request, when they have completed their reading for that particular question. To begin the exam, the candidate will email the Graduate Assistant at aam2@queensu.ca who will provide the question to the Candidate via email as a pdf file. If the Graduate Assistant is unavailable, the Chair will supply the question.
8. Candidates will have five working days to answer each question. Their answer is due at 9:00 am on the 6th working day of each question period.

B. The Written Examination and Time Line

1. Once the written examination has begun the Candidate will direct any queries regarding an examination question to the Chair or to one of the Examiners. If the Candidate does communicate directly with an Examiner, a copy of this communication must also be provided to the Chair.
2. The Candidate submits their completed response in pdf format via email.
3. During the course of the examination the Candidate is **allowed to engage with their peers in conversation about their comprehensive question**. However, they are NOT permitted to have anyone read any part of their answer (e.g. proof read or receive feedback on written answer content).
4. The written answer for a question **may not exceed twenty pages** excluding figures, tables and references. Pages in excess of this limit will not be forwarded to the Examiner for marking. 1.5 line spacing, 12-point font, 2.54 cm/1 inch margin formatting is required. The Candidate will **submit their written answers electronically to the Graduate Assistant** upon completion.
5. **Within one week of receipt of the answer**, the Chair will verify that the answer meets formatting criteria and instruct the Graduate Assistant to forward the question electronically for marking to the appropriate Examiner.
6. **Since depth of answer is emphasized**, in cases where the Candidate feels they cannot answer the full scope of the question in 20 pages, they simply need to provide a solid rationale for their choice of focus at the oral examination.
7. Evaluation **will not include judgment of whether a particular reference or references are used**, but will be based on the quality and depth of the answer.
8. Candidates will always proceed to the oral examination following evaluation of their three written answers, regardless of the quality of those answers.

C. The Oral Examination

1. **The oral examination takes place by no later than the second week following submission of the final question**. Candidates may request that the oral examination take place in the third week but no later following submission of their final question.
2. **No less than one week prior to the oral examination** each Examiner must send a brief e-mail report similar in format to a thesis examination report which indicates whether the answer is satisfactory or unsatisfactory and which briefly summarizes its strengths and weaknesses.
3. The Graduate Assistant will distribute copies of all questions and the Candidate's answers to all members of the **Examination Committee no less than five working days prior to the oral examination**. Examiners are responsible for reading the answer to their question only, but upon the request of any Examiner may be asked to read all the Candidate's answers.
4. The Candidate should bring copies of their written answers to the oral examination.
5. Before questioning commences, the Chair will excuse the Candidate and the Committee will discuss any questions or problems related to the answers. This is especially important if one Examiner has rated a question unsatisfactory.

6. The oral examination consists **of two rounds of twenty minutes per Examiner** and will **usually take no more than two hours**. If any written answer is considered unsatisfactory the Examiner responsible may need more time to clarify the Candidate's answer. The Chair will not examine Candidates directly, but will moderate the questioning and record the nature of the questions asked by the Examiners.
7. Normally, the order of questioning **will begin with the background question** unless the Candidate chooses to start with a different question.
8. **Examiner's questions must concern the Candidate's written answer**. Any ideas expressed in the written answer may be explored during questioning.
9. Following the two rounds of questions, the Chair will excuse the Candidate in order that the Examination Committee may confer on the results.

D. Decision

1. Following the oral examination, a verdict of "Pass", "Remedial Work Required", or "Redo Question" is provided for each question. The decision must be unanimous. All Examiners and the Chair must sign the PhD Comprehensive Examination Report of the Examining Committee.
2. If a Candidate obtains a "Pass" verdict for all three questions, they have successfully completed the Comprehensive Examination process. The Chair and the Examiners then sign the PhD Comprehensive Examination Decision Sheet and submit it to the SKHS Graduate Assistant for recording and filing.
3. For questions where the verdict is "Remedial Work Required" the Examination Committee will identify supplemental work designed to improve weaknesses of the Candidate to a "Pass" level. These requirements will be listed on pages 1 and 2 of the PhD Comprehensive Examination Report of the Examining Committee. The Chair will review and provide final authorization on the remedial work and the accompanying submission date.

The Candidate has three months from the time of the oral examination to complete this supplemental work.

The Examination Committee provides their verdict for that question after this process. The verdict is either "Pass" or "Fail". The Chair and the Examiners then sign the PhD Comprehensive Examination Decision Sheet and submit it to the SKHS Graduate Assistant for recording and filing.

Where an Examiner has participated via telephone or other electronic method, they may confer their signing authority to the Chair via email to the Graduate Assistant.

4. For questions where the verdict is "Redo Question" the Examination Committee will identify supplemental work designed to improve weaknesses of the answer so that it reaches "Pass" level. The Candidate has three months from the time of the oral examination to complete this supplemental work. The work is evaluated by the appropriate Examiner, and, if required, the oral defense for that question is held with the Committee. After this process, the Committee provides a verdict for that question of either "Pass" or "Fail". The Chair and the Examiners then sign the PhD Comprehensive Examination Decision Sheet and submit it to the SKHS Graduate Assistant for recording and filing.
5. Where a final decision on a "Redo Question" cannot be agreed upon, an External Expert may be engaged to review the material and assist the Committee in rendering a final decision on that question. To identify an External Expert, the committee must submit the names of three arms-length researchers to the Graduate Coordinator who will pick one and arrange for them to join the Committee deliberations.

6. A Candidate must receive a "Pass" verdict on all three questions in order to continue in the program. If all three questions do not have a "Pass" verdict after Steps 1-5 above, the Candidate will be required to withdraw from the program immediately.
7. The Chair will execute the Decision Sheet after it has been signed by all Examiners (and the External Expert where required).
8. The Graduate Assistant will ensure that a copy of the PhD Comprehensive Examination Decision Sheet is filed in the Candidate's file and that a copy is forwarded to the School of Graduate Studies and Research for recording.

E. Appeals

1. If the Candidate wishes to appeal the outcome of the examination on procedural and/or academic grounds, the appeal must be lodged formally with the Graduate Coordinator. In instances where the Graduate Coordinator served on the Committee, the Director of the School shall hear the first appeal. In instances where both the Director and Graduate Coordinator served on the Committee, a member of the Graduate Subcommittee will hear the first appeal.
2. The Candidate will set forth in writing the reasons why he or she believes the academic decision was unjust and/or procedures were not followed. This should be done as early as possible after the decision is announced and, normally not more than ten working days thereafter.
3. If the matter is not resolved by the Graduate Coordinator or their substitute, and the Candidate continues to believe that the decision was unjust, a formal request may be lodged for a review of the appeal by the faculty members of the Graduate Subcommittee, less any faculty members who were among the three examiners on the Examination Committee. Substitutions may be made in this instance in order to ensure that the committee includes three faculty members.
4. After reviewing the appeal, including interviewing the student and the members of the Examination Committee and the External Expert when applicable, the Graduate Committee may find that:
 - (i) The decision is academically and procedurally sound (a procedural review should be conducted even in cases where the appeal is on academic grounds).
 - (ii) An error in procedure or academic judgment has been made. In this case the Graduate Committee will proceed to find a solution.
5. If the Director and Graduate Subcommittee find that the decision of the Examination Committee was academically and procedurally sound, and recommend to the appropriate Arts and Science Graduate Council that the Candidate be required to withdraw, the Candidate may appeal the recommendation for withdrawal by following the procedures outlined in Section 8.9(c) of the Graduate School Calendar.
6. The appeal may be based not on academic or procedural matters, but rather be based on a Grievance. In this case, the Director will recommend to the student that he or she directly address the Senate Statement on Grievance, Discipline and Related Matters and the University's Grievance and Appeal Procedures. “

This form to be read in conjunction with the SKHS PhD Comprehensive Examination Decision Sheet and the SKHS PhD Comprehensive Examination Report of the Examining Committee.