UCC Policy for the Conduct of Virtual Viva Voce Examinations during the COVID-19 closure, March 2020

This policy makes provision for a virtual viva voce as an exceptional response to COVID 19.

Principles:

- Approval for conducting a virtual viva voce is through the Chair of Academic Council Graduate Studies Committee patricia.leahy@ucc.ie
- Written agreement must be obtained by all parties. If all parties do not agree the viva voce must be postponed.

  In this regard the internal examiner will send one email to the Chair of Academic Council Graduate Studies Committee, Dr Patricia Leahy-Warren, patricia.leahy@ucc.ie with the following information:
  - student number, student name
  - names of all members of the examination board and their identified role (e.g. external examiner, internal examiner, independent chair etc.)
  - written evidence (email attachment will suffice) of agreement to hold the viva voce virtually from all members of the examination board and candidate

- Approval to proceed will issue from the Chair of ACGSC to the internal examiner.
- Use of a virtual viva voce cannot be used as grounds for appeal.
- Only platforms as advised by UCC IT Services should be used https://www.ucc.ie/en/it/
- In each location measures should be taken such that appropriate conditions are in place ensuring minimal disruption, security and integrity of the examination.
- All parties should be able to see one another at all times during the viva voce examination.
- No viva voce is to be conducted by audio or phone.
- A virtual private network (VPN) may be required where the intellectual property of the thesis needs to be protected.
- If a presentation is required this may be facilitated through screen sharing or distributing the presentation to members of the examining committee via the internal examiner.
- The viva voce must not be recorded.
- Time differences must be considered to ensure that the candidate is not disadvantaged.
- A test must be conducted prior to the commencement of the viva voce.
• Normally, if communication is broken during the viva voce and a connection cannot be re-established, the examination must be terminated and re-scheduled.

• Any re-scheduled examination should normally take place within one month of the original viva voce.

• The conduct of the virtual viva voce must be aligned with the relevant UCC examination regulations.

• The examiners must comment on the conduct of the virtual viva voce on the final report.

• The internal examiner is responsible for ensuring the arrangements for conducting the viva voce are in place.

• Following the viva voce the candidate must leave the virtual meeting to allow the examiners to discuss a recommendation.

• Once a recommendation is agreed the candidate is invited to re-join the meeting to be advised of the outcome of the examination.
Virtual Viva Voce Examination Checklist

NB: The internal examiner must ensure that all of the following are in place before, during and after a virtual viva voce examination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chair of Academic Council Graduate Studies Committee approval</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written agreement by all parties</td>
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<tr>
<td>Only platforms as advised by UCC IT Services should be used</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appropriate conditions in each location</td>
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<tr>
<td>Video in use to ensure all parties can see one another</td>
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<tr>
<td>VPN in use where IP needs to be protected</td>
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<td>Presentation, if required, circulated through the internal examiner or through screen sharing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Viva voce not be recorded</td>
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<td>Test has been conducted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Candidate is asked to leave the virtual meeting to allow the examiners to discuss the recommendation and is invite back to the virtual meeting once a recommendation has been made</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examiners’ report includes comment on the conduct of the virtual viva voce on the final report.</td>
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23-03-20