**MATHEMATICAL, PHYSICAL AND LIFE SCIENCES DIVISION**

**Confirmation of DPhil status - Assessors report form**

The purpose of confirmation of status is to enable research students to receive an assessment of their work by two assessors, other than their supervisor(s). It is intended to provide an important indication that if work on the thesis continues to develop satisfactorily, then consideration of submission of the thesis within the student’s funded period/

four years (for DPhil) would appear to be reasonable. It therefore provides a second stage of formal progress review in the four years of the student’s overall research programme**. It should be noted that successful completion of confirmation of status provides an indicator only for readiness for submission, not for the final outcome of the examination of the thesis.**

The University’s guidelines state that:

“The purpose of confirmation is to confirm that you are continuing to work at the appropriate doctoral level and to provide assurance that if the work on the thesis continues to develop satisfactorily, then consideration of submission within the course of three further terms would appear to be reasonable.”

**The assessment panel should complete this report form immediately following the assessment, and return it to the department administrator within three weeks of the date of the assessment interview.**

**Confirmation of DPhil Status (1st Attempt)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Student name: |  | Start Date: |  |
| Research Title: |  |
| Date report received: |  | Date Assessed: |  |
| Planned Sub. Date: |  | Max submission: |  |

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| Please tick to confirm (i) that you, the assessors, have received and reviewed the candidates signed GSO.14MPLS Application for Confirmation of Status form and any associated documents required by the department, and (ii) that the DGS has signed this form to approve the candidate is ready to be assessed 🞎 \***\* Unless the DGS or a deputy has granted exceptional permission to proceed without a fully completed GSO.14MPLS form, normally the confirmation interview must not take place until the Assessors have received a GSO.14MPLS form that has been signed by the DGS.** |

**Assessors are reminded that this is a formal assessment of the University of Oxford**. In order for confirmation of status to be conferred, assessors must be satisfied that:

1. The student’s DPhil project is following a trajectory that will lead to completion and submission within the remaining timeframe (and not exceeding 12 terms).

2. The work undertaken to date provides a sufficient background and a platform for completion/submission.

3. The student’s work/research has the potential to make a ‘significant and substantial contribution’ to their field of study

4. The student has developed critical knowledge and understanding of the relevant literature.

5. The student understands, can justify and defend their research project, its objectives and rationale.

6. The student has a clear plan for the future direction of the project.

7. The student has taken intellectual ownership of the project.

In making your assessments (and in judging the level of the presentation/interview) it is important that your expectations of the student are moderated by the nature of the project on which the student is engaged, for example if the work is interdisciplinary. The primary focus should be on the quality of the work completed, that it is at the right level, and that a sufficient volume has been completed to be confident in your confirmation that the student is following the correct trajectory.

On the basis of the student’s confirmation report/supporting evidence and the confirmation interview/presentation, please indicate your evaluation of the following, ticking as appropriate:

Exceeds Expectations = progress in the development of the thesis is outstanding, and definitely on track to submit within funded period/four years.

Meets Expectations = making appropriate amount of progress in the development of the thesis, and on track to submit within funded period/four years.

Needs Improvement = not making satisfactory progress in the development of the thesis, and submission within funded period/four years unlikely.

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| **Assessment of verbal and written work** | **Exceeds Expectations** | **Meets Expectations** | **Needs Improvement** |
| Sufficient familiarity with and in depth knowledge of the relevant background literature |  |  |  |
| Amount of work completed |  |  |  |
| Quality of work completed |  |  |  |
| Potential to make a ‘Significant and substantial contribution’ to field of work/study  |  |  |  |
| Coherence and organization of work (proposed structure of the final thesis) |  |  |  |
| Content of presentation/interview |  |  |  |
| Delivery of presentation/interview |  |  |  |
| Ability to defend work, and its significance |  |  |  |
| Ideas and plans for future work including a timescale for writing up |  |  |  |
| Ability to work independently |  |  |  |
| Student’s research competency  |  |  |  |
| Student’s competence in written and spoken English |  |  |  |
|  |
| **Likelihood of timely submission** | **Very likely** | **Probably** | **Possible** | **Unlikely** | **None** |
| Prospect of the student submitting a satisfactory thesis by their current maximum submission date |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |
| **Training and professional development \*** | Yes – very well | Yes – but some areas requiring attention | Yes – but inadequately | No |
| Has the student appropriately engaged with academic skills training? |  |  |  |  |
| Has the student considered their career post DPhil, and undertaken any activities in support of them e.g. professional development? |  |  |  |  |
| \* Departments to amend wording accordingly for this section to make it relevant to their own departmentsDepartments to add/explain their own requirements for training and professional development here: |
| Has the student undertaken or do they have well-developed plans to undertake an internship or placement, if this is required by their funder or training programme? |
| Would the student benefit from additional supervision to facilitate their studies? Yes / No |
| Has the student applied to submit their thesis as an integrated thesis (if permitted)? Yes / No / N/AIf Yes, please provide any comments on the suitability of submitting an integrated thesis: |

**Assessors are required to provide further comments in the box below on the student’s work and assessment**. If confirmation is being recommended and everything is satisfactory only a brief report is required, but sufficient verbal feedback must have been provided to the candidate during the confirmation interview. If confirmation is not recommended, then it is critical that detailed reasons for this are given along with instructions for any specific work that must be done prior to reassessment. A timescale for a subsequent meeting with the assessment panel (usually 3 months later) should also be given. Assessors should also include a comment on the student’s acquisition of career skills (and plans to develop such skills) as outlined in the GSO.14 / departmental template form. This information will be reviewed by the DGS and students and their supervisor(s) will receive a copy of the report once agreed. (Please continue on a separate page if required)

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| **Overall Recommendation:****Pass:**** Confirmation to DPhil status without reservations** |
| ** Confirmation to DPhil status if a satisfactory written response to this report is obtained, signed by both****the student and supervisor (to be returned within 2 weeks) \***** Confirmation to DPhil status but follow-up action required (Please state clearly in your report above what** **follow-up action is being requested. The requested action should be completed normally within the next 2**  **months and submitted to the DGS for review) \*\*****Fail:**** Student should make a 2nd and final attempt to confirm DPhil status in 1 term** |

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| --- | --- |
| **Signed:**(Assessor 1) | **Signed:**(Assessor 2) |
| **Print Name:** | **Print Name:** |
| **Date:** | **Date:** |
|  |
| **DGS Signature:** | **Date:** |
| **DGS Comments (if applicable):** |

\* Department to obtain written response and a copy should be attached to the report before it is returned to the MPLS Graduate Office.

\*\* If some additional work is required e.g. further results, but the evaluation of statements is satisfactory, confirmation can be recommended with follow-up action being required, which will allow the department to review with the student. **Note:** Any follow-up action being requested will not prevent the confirmation from being processed.