

Examination of Australian Doctoral Theses

What are we assessing?

- ❖ The student as a trainee researcher?
- ❖ The dissertation as a contribution to knowledge?
- ❖ With the increase in courses in the Doctorate should we be formally assessing? Why? How? When? e.g. coursework (20%); research proposal (10%); research thesis (70%)?
- ❖ Should we assess students' general knowledge of the discipline as well as knowledge of the specific research topic?

Who assesses?

- ❖ What are the advantages and disadvantages for students and their learning of the University making the decision on the outcome of the thesis rather than the examiners?
- ❖ What is the value to the student, university, and/or supervisor of having internal as well as external examiners? Should views of one carry more weight than the other? Why?
- ❖ What are the advantages and disadvantages of bringing one or more external assessors to the University for a face-to-face oral, either during candidature or at the end?

How might we assess?

- ❖ Could an oral assessment be an integral part of the assessment process: e.g. "an internal approval to submit" or "public defence" as in Europe, or a relatively "private" discussion as in the UK?
- ❖ What advantages and disadvantages are there of having a presentation by the student as a prerequisite for submission? For the student? Supervisor? University? Examiner?
- ❖ If there is to be some form of 'oral' how public or private should it be?