

*The University of British Columbia*  
*Faculty of Dentistry*

**Recommended Guidelines for Graduate Programs' Comprehensive Examination  
Statement in Faculty of Dentistry**

All doctoral students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies are required to successfully complete a comprehensive examination before being admitted to candidacy.

**Purpose:**

The comprehensive examination assess whether the student has developed;

- strong analytical, problem-solving and critical thinking abilities
- required breadth and in-depth knowledge of the discipline
- required academic background for the specific doctoral research to follow
- potential ability to conduct independent and original research
- ability to communicate knowledge of the discipline

**Timing:**

- comprehensive examination is to be completed within 24 months, but not earlier than 18 months, after entering the doctoral program.
- student should be informed about the date of examination a minimum of 4 months before their comprehensive examination
- minimum of 12 credits of course work must be completed prior to the examination

**Examination format:**

- student prepares a research grant proposal using CIHR format (excluding CV module and budget module), which forms the basis of an oral examination. Students are free to contact his/her supervisor and other members of the Committee and the faculty at large during preparation of the grant proposal. Students should not, however, receive detailed feedback (such as written revisions) on the proposal.

**Oral Examination format:**

- chair reviews exam purpose and exam format
- student provides a 20 minute oral introduction to the CIHR grant proposal
- chair establishes order in which examiners ask questions
- each examiner has 10-15 minutes time for questioning
- typically two rounds of questioning

**Examination Committee:**

- Graduate advisor chairs all comprehensive examinations. The Chair will vote together with the committee members. Chair files the exam report.
- Members of the supervisory committee serve as examination committee members. Minimum of chair and three committee members are required.
- Supervisor should be present, but does not assist in answering of questions, does not ask questions, and does not vote on the outcome.

**Scope:**

- grant proposal should be focused to the area of student's research project
- students are to be encouraged to meet with the examiners well before the examination and discuss the examiners' expectations

**Criteria for evaluation:**

- oral introduction compose 20% of the final mark of 100%
- quality of written grant proposal compose 30% of the final mark of 100%
- oral examination compose 50% of the final mark of 100%

**Oral Examination will Assess Students' Ability to:**

- formulate novel research aims and hypotheses
- master relevant research literature
- design experimental approaches
- contemplate future research questions

Minimum score of 60% must be obtained for a passing grade. All parts of the assessment will be evaluated globally.

**Adjudication:**

- the committee's decision is made on the basis of a simple majority vote (based on individual examiner's scores)

The examining committee evaluates the student's performance in all aspects of the exam and renders one of the following decisions;

*Unconditional pass*

*Conditional pass*

- the student is required to successfully write a paper in an areas in which the committee finds the student needs additional knowledge. Student is given one month to complete this requirement. Examination committee will assess the paper and perform one examination in the topic based in above criteria. Minimum average score of 60% is

required for pass. Student who fails this part will be asked to retake the entire comprehensive exam (see below)

*Failure*

- student who scores below 60% by majority of examiners will fail the examination
- the student will be informed in writing by the examination committee of the failure
- the student is informed immediately after the examination
- student is required to re-take the examination within 4 months. A new grant proposal must be written that should be sufficiently different from the first proposal but still in the area of student's research project
- examination committee membership remains unchanged for the re-take examination
- if desired by the student he or she may select a faculty member to act as a neutral observer
- if the student fails the re-take examination, student will be asked to leave the doctoral program

**Feedback:**

The assessment and reasons for all decisions, reached by the examination committee, will be provided to the student to allow the student to understand the decision, including identifying strengths and weaknesses.