Doctor of Juridical Science
Notes for Examiners

1. All matters pertaining to the SJD degree are the responsibility of the Graduate Research Committee under the general direction of the University’s Academic Board.

2. The SJD is a professional doctorate that enables candidates to combine advanced coursework with independent research aimed at enhancing the contribution of law to society.

3. Final assessment of a candidate’s SJD program comprises two components:
   - A coursework component, comprising coursework subjects and a compulsory seminar, in which the candidate must achieve a minimum average level of distinction (70%), representing 25% of the total assessment for the degree.
   - A thesis of 50,000 – 55,000 words, representing 75% of the total assessment for the degree.

4. The thesis provides the main opportunity for candidates to plan and carry out independent research resulting in a thesis that provides a significant contribution to knowledge, or to understanding of the subject with which it deals. The research need not be as extensive as for a PhD thesis.

5. Monash University permits SJD candidates to submit a thesis by publication. The thesis may consist either wholly or in part of papers that have been submitted for publication or are in press. The thesis by publication should demonstrate a sustained theme. A summary of specifications is available at the URL below.

6. The examination of the thesis is undertaken by two independent and external examiners.

7. It is the practice at Monash to release the names of examiners who have agreed to act to the candidate.

8. The thesis is forwarded to an examiner in confidence. An examiner is under an obligation to maintain confidentiality and in no circumstance should the thesis or any part of the examination process be discussed with a third party without the prior approval of the Monash University Institute of Graduate Research. Normally neither the candidate nor the supervisor are allowed to contact examiners directly during the examination process.
9. The Committee wishes to receive clear advice on specific aspects of the thesis and, to this end, the examiner is asked to place a tick by each statement as deemed appropriate in the enclosed report form. If an examiner reports negatively on any aspects referred to in Section 1 of the form then comments should be made in the written section.

10. Recommendation 2(ii) should be made only when the examiner can specify amendments so precisely that the Convenor’s decision is essentially a simple matter of fact.

11. An examiner may request that the University obtains from the candidate clarification of specific points in the thesis. Such requests should be made only through the Monash University Institute of Graduate Research.

12. Oral examinations are not normally a part of the examination process.

13. In cases where examiners deem it necessary to annotate a thesis, it should be done lightly in pencil or by the use of temporary adhesive labels.

14. Unedited copies of the examiners’ reports are forwarded to the candidate in due course.

15. In the event that the two examiners disagree substantially in their assessment of the thesis, the Faculty of Law is required to convene an advisory panel to determine a course of action. Most commonly an advisory panel will recommend either that:

   - the thesis be revised and resubmitted to the original dissenting examiner(s) or

   - an adjudicator be appointed to review the two examiners’ reports, the candidate’s response to the reports and the thesis. The names of the examiners are not revealed to the adjudicator.

16. The degree is awarded by the Graduate Research Committee following the successful completion of the two components of the SJD program mentioned above, namely, coursework units (including seminar) and the thesis.


   - Chapter 7 outlines the procedures for examination of doctoral theses

   - Chapter 12 presents the Monash University Doctorate Regulations.