**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO – DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS**

**Report of the PhD Qualifying Exam**

Meeting Date: .

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
| Student | Convener | Enrolment date (PhD program) |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
| Supervisor | Committee member | Committee member |

After meeting with the candidate and thoroughly assessing candidate’s competence in the field of specialization, including background preparation and potential for independent research, the committee recommends

that the candidate be confirmed in the PhD program and proceed with their present program of research; that the research plan presented by the candidate can lead to a PhD thesis in approximately 3 years. ***Thesis topic:***

Any additional recommendations - e.g. for additional study or coursework

The first meeting of the PhD supervisory committee will be held on  *(date)* . *Note: Annual PhD Committee meetings should normally occur in the Fall, so this first meeting typically occurs about six months after a normal Spring PhD Qualifying Exam.*

that the candidate proceed with their present program, but that confirmation in the program be contingent upon the following conditions,

which should be met by  *(date)* , at which time another Qualifying Examination will be convened.

that the candidate not proceed in their present program.   
Reasons:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
| Supervisor signature | Committee member signature | Committee member signature |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
| Convener signature | Student signature |  |

**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS**

**Instructions for Conveners of PhD Qualifying Examinations**

The PhD Qualifying Examination, normally held within two terms of the student's enrolment in the PhD program (five terms for direct entry students), is intended to assess the candidate's ability and readiness to promptly carry forward and successfully complete independent PhD-level research. The Qualifying Examination is not intended to be a Comprehensive examination.

One of the Convener's important duties is to ensure that departmental standards are maintained across the wide spectrum of disciplines in the Department. In this regard, if this examination is to be more than a rubber stamp it is to be expected that some students will fail to reach the required standards at their first attempt. A denial of unconditional confirmation at this stage is reversible, does not appear on a student's record, and is much preferable to a poor showing in subsequent PhD-level examinations.

As a full member of the examining committee, the Convener will:

 lead a discussion to establish the candidate's academic and research performance to date, as determined by (i) the grades obtained in three graduate lecture courses, the 6000 series Research course (if taken), and the MSc `Report' course (if taken), and (ii) oral reports by the members of the supervisory committee on their perception of the quality of the research carried out to date by the candidate.

 invite the candidate to present, in approximately 20 minutes, a brief report on research performed, and a research plan which will lead to a PhD thesis in approximately 3 years.

 direct the oral examination of the candidate by the examining committee. The candidate will be expected to field questions on issues relating to the research, and to explain and defend the research plan, and to show the foundational knowledge needed in their research field.

 lead a discussion to obtain a consensus on whether or not the candidate has presented a sufficiently realistic and well conceived program of research and has sufficiently demonstrated the academic ability, the required background preparation, the potential for independent research, and the scientific judgement to be permitted to continue in the PhD program.

The examination committee may: 1) confirm the candidate's continuation in the program; 2) give conditional approval for continuation; or, 3) deny confirmation of the candidate in the PhD program.

1) In the event of confirmation, the committee must approve the proposed thesis topic and title and may make some recommendations or impose one or more conditions (e.g. additional course requirements) which the candidate must fulfill.

2) In the event of a conditional approval the committee may impose one or more conditions which must be met before confirmation is re-considered and must suggest a date for a second PhD Qualifying Examination.

3) In the event of a denial, the candidate may apply for re-examination within four months of the date of the first examination. PhD enrolment will be terminated after a second unsuccessful examination.

Finally, the Convener must inform the candidate of the committee's decision, and have the attached form signed by the committee and the candidate; a copy will be sent to the candidate by the Graduate Office.