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**SCENARIOS THAT COULD OCCUR DURING THE EXAMINATION OF PhD THESES:**  
**Approved by the SGS Associate Deans**

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- 1. Defence is about to start and External doesn't appear either remotely or in person:**
  - a. External report received with questions but insufficient basis for a vote
    - i. Wait 30 minutes to see if External can connect/appear.
    - ii. Proceed without External.
    - iii. Chair will ensure and determine that Externals questions are assigned, asked, and reasonably considered.
  - b. External report received but no questions submitted and insufficient basis for a vote
    - i. Wait 30 minutes to see if External can connect/appear.
    - ii. Chair will review report received with remaining examiners and decide what questions, if any, might be reasonably asked based on the report. (That discussion should be in camera prior to any audience being admitted.) Chair will decide who should ask any questions so derived. If report is entirely laudatory, no questions need to be derived.
    - iii. Defence should proceed.
  - c. External Report not received and insufficient basis for a vote
    - i. Defence would have already been postponed already if no report was received.
- 2. Remote committee member loses connection, insufficient basis for a vote**
  - i. No more that 10 minutes should be taken trying to reconnect.
  - ii. Proceed.
  - iii. Vote should be taken with remaining committee members.
- 3. Two remote participants (one External and one committee member) lose connection**
  - i. No more than 10 minutes should be taken trying to reconnect.
  - ii. In camera discussion prior to vote should include assessment of how questions were handled prior to the connection dropping.
  - iii. Vote should be taken with remaining committee members.
- 4. Connection to remote External lost midway through defence but we have the questions**
  - i. No more than 10 minutes should be taken trying to reconnect.
  - ii. Proceed without External.
  - iii. Chair will ensure and determine that Externals questions are assigned, asked, and reasonably considered.

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- 5. Connection to remote External lost midway through defence and we do not have the questions**
  - i. No more than 10 minutes should be taken trying to reconnect.
  - ii. Chair will call for a brief adjournment and will review report received with remaining examiners and decide what questions, if any, might be reasonably asked based on the report. (That discussion should be in camera prior to any audience being admitted.) Chair will decide who should ask any questions so derived. If report is entirely laudatory, no questions need to be derived.
  - iii. Defence should proceed.
- 6. Committee member doesn't show, quorum is met (Chair, Supervisor, External and 2 Committee Members are present)**
  - i. Proceed.
- 7. Committee member doesn't show, quorum is not met (Chair, External and Supervisor present)**
  - i. Proceed.
- 8. Chair doesn't show (extra Committee Member available)**
  - i. Brief adjournment while extra committee member is briefed on requirements and obligations of being a Chair.
  - ii. Proceed.
- 9. Chair doesn't show (no extra Committee Member available)**
  - i. Adjourn for up to an hour while an Associate Dean or other non-committee member chair is sought. Contact SGS immediately for support at [gthesis@mcmaster.ca](mailto:gthesis@mcmaster.ca).
  - ii. Attempt to reschedule later in the day or next day when someone is available to chair.
- 10. Supervisor doesn't show**
  - i. Wait for the Supervisor to arrive for 30 mins.
  - ii. Attempt to reschedule later in the day or next day when the Supervisor can attend. Consideration for rescheduling at a later date must be given if illness prevents participation.
- 11. Remote Supervisor loses connection, insufficient basis for a vote**
  - i. No more that 10 minutes should be taken trying to reconnect.
  - i. Attempt to reschedule later in the day or next day when the Supervisor can attend.