<DATE>

Dear Dr. <NAME>:

On behalf of Western’s School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies I am writing to ask if you would be willing to serve as an external examiner for a PhD thesis in <Program>, entitled <THESIS TITLE>, to be submitted by <STUDENT NAME>. Please know that the student’s Supervisor has ***not*** signed to indicate his/her agreement that the thesis meets the expected standards. However the student has opted to proceed and our regulations allow this decision. (Link to our regulations).

If you agree to act as external examiner, we will email you instructions on how to download the thesis once the examination date has been determined. You will be given at least 4 weeks to examine the thesis; the preliminary thesis evaluation will be due one week before the thesis examination.

The role of each Examiner is to independently decide whether the thesis meets scholarly standards in content and form for the discipline and the degree. Please do not communicate with the candidate, the candidate's Supervisor(s) or other Examiners during the time that you are examining the thesis, i.e. prior to the thesis defense.  All correspondence about the thesis and the examination should be conducted through the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

All Examiners are required to provide a preliminary evaluation of the thesis content and form no later than 7 days prior to the examination. If the majority of Examiners judge the thesis to be acceptable in both content and form, SGPS will proceed to the oral examination.

If you approve the thesis to proceed to examination, a copy of your report will be provided to the student following a successful defense.

We invite you to attend the oral examination in person if possible.  If you are able to do so, please indicate this in your reply.  Western will reimburse you for reasonable expenses incurred as a result of your attendance.  Should you be unable to attend in person, we will facilitate your participation via teleconference or video link.

Western University pays external examiners of doctoral theses an honorarium of $100.00 Canadian which, we realize, falls short of adequate remuneration for the work involved, and does not reflect the value of the external examiner’s contribution to graduate education at Western.

Once you have decided whether or not you are able to examine the thesis, please reply to (Graduate Assistant Name).  Her/his e-mail address is: [(email address)](mailto:gthesis@mcmaster.ca).   We would appreciate hearing from you by (date).

Yours sincerely,

(name),   
Graduate Chair   
(Program Name)   
Western University