

Defending and evaluating a master's thesis

1. General Framework

Majmaah University adheres to the unified regulations for postgraduate studies at Saudi universities, as well as its own specific regulations and procedures. The final stage of the master's program includes the thesis defense and evaluation, a formal academic process that assesses the quality, originality, and scholarly value of the research.

The Deanship of Graduate Studies manages this process in coordination with the relevant academic department and college. All key steps are documented using standardized official forms available on the university website.

Discussion and evaluation of the thesis

1. **Thesis completion and supervisor approval:** The student completes the thesis under the supervision of the main supervisor (and the assistant supervisor, if any). The supervisor verifies that the work adheres to academic standards and is prepared for defense.

2. Forming a committee to discuss the thesis

The department proposes the committee members based on university practices and standard regulations:

The committee chair (usually a senior faculty member)

Main Supervisor

Co-supervisor (if appointed)

Internal examiner (or examiners) from the university

At least one external examiner (from outside the university)

The proposed committee is approved sequentially by:

Board of Directors

College Council

Deanship of Graduate Studies

Official form: Request to form a thesis discussion committee.

3. **Initial suitability check**

The committee members (especially the external examiners) review the draft of the thesis. If approved, the process moves to the scheduling stage.

Official template: A member of the defense committee's report on the suitability of the message for defense.

4. **Setting a date for the defense hearing**

The supervisor or committee chairperson requests that a date and time be set. The department reviews and approves the application.

The defense session can be held in person or online (via Blackboard, Zoom, or similar platforms, as has been officially supported since 2020).

Official form: Request to schedule a discussion.

5. **Defense session proceedings**

The session is usually **public** or semi-public (open to faculty members and graduate students).

Standard structure:

The student presents their thesis (usually 20 to 40 minutes) that covers the research problem, objectives, methodology, results, discussion, and conclusions.

Committee members ask questions, provide comments, and discuss the work.

The student answers the questions and defends the research.

Duration: Usually from one to three hours, depending on the depth of the discussion.

6. **Evaluation and Committee Decision**

- After the general discussion, the committee meets in secret to deliberate.
- Each member evaluates both the written message and the student's performance during the discussion.

• **Possible decisions:**

1- The dissertation has been accepted as is.

The degree is recommended immediately.

2- Acceptance of the thesis with **minor revisions** (most common outcome).

No further defense is needed; an appointed committee member checks the revisions and recommends awarding the degree.

3- The thesis was accepted with **substantial revisions**

The student must make substantial revisions; it may require reassessment (and possibly a second discussion).

The message requires substantial revisions, a complete re-discussion after the corrections.

4- The message was not accepted (this is rare).

Official Form: Report of the Committee for the Defense of the Thesis Submitted for the Master's degree.

5- **Implement corrections (if necessary)**

- a. The student revises the thesis according to the committee's comments.
- b. The appointed committee member (or supervisor) confirms that the corrections are satisfactory.

Official template: Report on the implementation of corrections to the letter.

6- **Final application and recommendation for the academic degree**

- a. The student submits the final, corrected version of the thesis to the college deanship.
- b. The university deanship reviews all documents and recommends awarding the master's degree to the university council.

Official form: Receipt of letter submission (related to the graduation certificate process).

7- **Awarding certificates**

- a. After final approval, the university council awards the certificate.

b. The student receives the official graduation certificate.

3. Main formal templates (selected examples)

- Request to form a defense committee
- Request to schedule a defense date
- A report on the suitability of the defense
- Defending the thesis
- Report on the letter corrections

4. Important Additional Notes

- The entire process from defense to graduation usually **takes one to six months**, depending on the extent of the corrections required.
- Electronic defenses remain officially permitted when approved.
- The university places great importance on academic integrity, plagiarism checking, and adherence to the guidelines for formatting academic papers.
- All procedures comply with **the unified postgraduate regulations** and the university's internal executive rules.

Source reference: This report is based on official documents and forms published by Majmaah University, including those on the Deanship of Graduate Studies website (mu.edu.sa), program specifications, supervisors' guides, and published defense mechanisms.

[The latest versions of the forms or program variations, please refer directly to: https://www.mu.edu.sa/en/deanships/deanship-of-graduate-studies .](https://www.mu.edu.sa/en/deanships/deanship-of-graduate-studies)