

Dear PhD Student,

Please keep this letter as a reference for completing your PhD defense.

Ph.D. Dissertation Procedure

Step 1: PhD Dissertation Document

Your dissertation must meet the university's thesis format requirements. You can find these at: <https://library.kaust.edu.sa/theses>

Step 2: Forming Your Dissertation Committee

The attached document outlines the criteria for selecting your dissertation committee.

NOTE: Dissertation committee requires External Examiner (**associate or full professor level**)

Conflicts of interest precluding role of External Examiner:

- Relative or previous mentor relation to PhD candidate
- Co-authorship with PhD candidate
- Current joint grant with PhD supervisor
- Co-authorship or co-supervision with PhD supervisor in past 5 years (dispensation by Dean's office possible under exceptional circumstances)
- Current negotiation with PhD candidate or KAUST about employment

Step 3: Setting the Defense Date with Your Committee

Before starting the petition process, you must get preliminary approval from your committee members to serve on the committee AND set the date of your defense.

Step 4: PhD Petition Form

Access the petition form

here: https://kaustforms.formstack.com/workflows/petition_to_phd_dissertation?sso=65b77a4786ba9

To complete the form, you must:

- Upload the **final draft of your PhD dissertation**.
- Upload the **CV of your external examiner**.
- Upload **your most recent CV and publication list**.
- Confirm the **defense date with your committee**. Once the petition is approved, you won't be able to change the date without the Associate Dean's approval.
- **Book the venue for your defense**.
- Submit the petition form **60 days prior** to your defense date. You must check the university [Academic Calendar](#) to align with the university deadlines.
- Sign the PhD defense petition form sent via DocuSign. You and the registrar's office will receive a copy of the completed form.

Step 5: PhD Defense

- Your PhD defense is a **public event**. The information you provide in your petition will be used to create the defense announcement.
- The PhD defense system will send you the defense result form via DocuSign 30 days before your defense date. Keep this form on hold until the defense day. Sign and submit it on the day of your defense, and DocuSign will route it to all committee members for their signatures.

- Details on possible defense outcomes and the expected timeframe for archiving your dissertation are available in the program guide.

Step 6: Archiving the Final Dissertation Draft <https://registrar.kaust.edu.sa/docs/default-source/resources/thesis-submission-to-the-kaust-repository-fall-2022-final.pdf>

Follow these steps to archive your dissertation:

1. **Download the similarity report from Blackboard:**
 - Find the [semester]_[academic year]_DISS course on your dashboard.
 - Click on **Draft Turnitin Submission**.
 - Upload your final dissertation draft.
 - Download the similarity report.
2. Email the **similarity report** and the **final draft of your dissertation** to your advisor.
3. Complete and submit the [M.Sc. Thesis and Ph.D. Defense Final Approval Form](#)
4. Save the **email approval** you receive from your advisor as a PDF file.
5. Once you have all three documents (final draft of PhD dissertation, final approval email from advisor, and PhD defense result form), go to the library archive to upload them: <https://repository.kaust.edu.sa/>

Upon successful completion of these steps, you will receive an email from the KAUST repository confirming your dissertation submission. The registrar's office will then initiate the graduation process.