**1. DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION OF THESIS**  
  
The University’s regulations set limits on the length of time students should take to complete a degree, and it is very important that you meet these deadlines. The expected deadlines for completing and submitting a PhD thesis are by the end of third year. If you do not submit within this time limit, you will have to apply through your supervisor for an extension of time, and you will have to pay fees for the extra period. Any extension granted will be for up to one year beyond the time limits set out above. Subsequent requests for a second extension of time will be scrutinised very carefully, and will only be granted if there is evidence that you are taking positive steps to complete your thesis.  
  
  
**2. THESIS-ONLY ENROLMENT**  
If you have been enrolled for the equivalent of three full-time years and have completed your research you may (with permission) enrol for up to one year as a “thesis- only” student in order to write up your work. You will be expected to remain in contact with your supervisors during this writing-up period, but you will not be allowed to use University facilities such as laboratories. Because of space constraints within the University, you may lose your entitlement to an office or desk once you go thesis-only. If the thesis has not been submitted by the end of the thesis-only year, you will have to revert to either full-time or part-time registration and pay the appropriate fees. You may require an extension of time for your thesis-only year, depending on the length of time for which you have been enrolled.   
  
  
**3. DECIDING WHEN TO SUBMIT**  
  
You and your supervisors should decide together when the thesis is ready for submission, although the final decision rests with you. Please note that agreement from your supervisors that the thesis is ready to be submitted does not guarantee a successful outcome of the examination.   
  
  
**4. NOTICE OF INTENTION TO SUBMIT**  
Before you can submit your thesis, you must provide notification in writing to the relevant University authority of your intention to submit. Your letter must specify the title of the thesis (which cannot then be changed) and the date by which you intend to submit it. The deadlines for giving notice and for submitting a thesis are as follows:-   
  
July graduation - Submit notice by 1 February - Submit thesis by 1 MayDecember graduation - Submit notice by 1 May - Submit thesis by 15 September  
  
If you submit on time, the University will make every effort to ensure that the examination process is complete in time for you to graduate in that session (assuming you are successful), although this cannot always be guaranteed as it depends on the availability of external examiners. Missing the deadline for submission - even by only a few days - makes it much less likely that the examination process will be complete in time to allow you to graduate in that session.   
  
  
**5. HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR THESIS**  
You must hand your thesis in to the Student Records and Examinations OfFice in the Student Guidance Centre, and complete the necessary forms ([Click here](http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/srecords/FileStore/Filetoupload,16554,en.pdf)). You must supply a copy of the thesis for each examiner (there are normally two; your supervisor will inform you in advance if more copies are needed) and you should keep a copy for yourself. There are rules governing the layout and format of a thesis and these may be accessed through the Student Records and Examinations Office ([Click here](http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/srecords/Examinations/Postgraduate-Research/SubmittingyourThesis/)).   
  
  
**6. FAILURE TO SUBMIT AFTER GIVING NOTICE OF INTENTION TO SUBMIT**  
If you do not submit your thesis by the notified date, you must agree a new date with your supervisors who will seek the appropriate University endorsement, following the same procedures as above). If the new date is not within the permitted period of registration, you will have to apply for an extension of time (see section above).

**7. THE EXAMINERS**  
Examiners will be appointed for your thesis in consultation with your supervisors and your Head of School. There are normally two examiners: an internal examiner - who will be someone from your   
school, but not one of your supervisors - and an external examiner. The external examiner will be a senior academic from another university or someone of equivalent status from, for example, industry or one of the professions. Your supervisors will tell you who the examiners are.   
  
  
**8. THE INDEPENDENT CHAIR**  
An independent Director of Research will be appointed to act as an independent Chair of the oral examination. The independent Chair will take no active role in the process and will be in attendance   
only for the purpose of monitoring the conduct of the examination. This is intended to safeguard the fairness and consistency of the examination   
process, and to provide assurance that the viva is conducted in an appropriate manner.   
  
  
**9. THE EXAMINATION**  
The examination will be in two parts. First, the examiners will read your thesis and will - without consulting each other - prepare individual reports, based on their reading. You will then be required  
to attend an oral examination, when the examiners will question you about your research and the thesis. The oral will take place in the University and will normally last between one and two hours.   
One of your supervisors may attend the oral but cannot take part in the examination. You and your supervisors should discuss in advance which of them will attend. You have the right to ask for your supervisor not to be present at the oral, and you should arrange this in advance through your Head of School or school postgraduate tutor.   
  
  
**10. THE RESULT**  
At the end of the oral examination, you and your supervisor will be asked to withdraw while the examiners reach their decision. The Student Administrative Services and Systems Division will notify you in writing of the outcome of the examination, and will send you a copy of the examiners’ reports on your thesis. The possible outcomes are as follows:   
  
(i) award of the degree for which the thesis was submitted  
(ii) award of the degree subject to minor amendments  
(iii) permission to revise and re-submit the thesis for re-examination   
(iv) award of a Master’s degree in lieu of a PhD   
(v) award of a Master’s degree in lieu of a PhD subject to minor amendments   
(vi) requirement that a thesis submitted for the degree of PhD be revised and re-submitted for consideration for a Master’s degree;   
(vii) no award.   
  
You can appeal against outcomes (iv) to (vii) above.   
  
  
**11. APPEALS**  
Research students can appeal against specified outcomes of an examination (see section 9.4 above) or against the decision of a School. If you need to appeal, you should contact the Postgraduate Office and/or the Vice-President (Education) of the Students’ Union as soon as possible for advice on how to proceed. You must act quickly, as the deadline for submitting appeals is 10 days from the date that you were informed of the decision against which you want to appeal. A late appeal will not be considered. The appeals procedure is set out in full in the core regulations for the degrees of PhD and MPhil (www.qub.ac.uk/postgraduate), and you should read this carefully before proceeding. Your appeal must be in writing, and must state clearly the grounds on which you are appealing. You should note that challenges to academic judgement will not be considered. It is in your own interests to be as full and frank as possible in your letter of appeal. Please be aware that your letter of appeal will be released to the members of a central Postgraduate Appeals Committee, the Head of your School, your supervisors and, if applicable, your examiners.   
  
You will be invited to appear in person before a central Postgraduate Appeals Committee when it meets to consider your appeal, and you are strongly advised to avail of this opportunity. You may, if you wish, be accompanied at the meeting by a registered student of the University, a sabbatical officer of the Students’ Union, a member of University staff or a University chaplain. The Committee has the right to reach a decision in your absence if you choose not to attend the meeting. You will be informed of the outcome of your appeal, in writing, within five working days of the Committee’s decision.