

THREE MINUTE THESIS (3MT)

The Three Minute Thesis (3MT), first developed by the University of Queensland and now carried out in universities around Australia and New Zealand, is a competition wherein postgraduate students present their research projects to a non-specialist audience in just three minutes. Some of the more prominent universities who organise 3MTs annually apart from the University of Queensland, include, the University of Melbourne, the University of Western Sydney, the University of New South Wales, Victoria University, and the University of Auckland.

In Malaysia, UPM, together with University Malaya, is one of the first to introduce 3MT as part of its effort to encourage a vibrant community of research students. We hope to open the competition to other universities in Malaysia once it has been established as part of UPM's research culture. This will enhance UPM's reputation as one of Malaysia's best research universities.

Given the strict timeframe, 3MT will compel students to primarily focus on their problem statements, and subsequently, the ways in which their research projects represent concrete solutions to these problems. Specifically, students will have to present their research topic, the ways in which the research will be conducted, as well as the impact their project will have on the general public. All of the above will take place in a context that is not only public, but one that is educational, fun and competitive.

The competition tests students' abilities to communicate the contents of their research projects to a public audience comprised of people outside the students' respective fields of study. Both the lay audience and the strict timeframe will enable students to reinforce their ideas, by way of avoiding an overreliance on either overly complex terminology or oversimplification. To determine a winner, the competition judging panel will decide which among the presentations communicated their ideas intelligently and engagingly to the non-specialist audience.

Besides being able to present their ideas to the general public, 3MT will also enable students to raise not only their own public profiles, but also that of the universities they represent, given the existing media interest in the competition overseas. This will ensure that these research projects, especially those that are funded by the public, are relevant and beneficial to society at large.

In addition, students who are seeking to raise their academic profile for their future careers will also be able to meet and network with a large number of fellow students and academicians, both in and outside their fields of study.

3MT GUIDELINES

Eligibility

- Only students currently enrolled in **PhD programmes** at Universiti Putra Malaysia are allowed to participate
- Students who have graduated from their programmes before the competition date will not be allowed to participate
- The 3MT competition will be **open** to both **Malaysian** and **International** students

Results

- The judges' decision is final and no appeals will be heard after the competition winners have been announced
- The **top three finalists** of the faculty will compete at the university heats for places in the final competition

Prizes

- First runner up : RM150.00
- Second runner up : RM100.00
- Third runner up : RM50.00

Rules

- Participants are required to communicate their thesis topics and its significance (and other points deemed absolutely relevant) in their presentations, with the aid of a single slide within the allotted timeframe
- The presentation must represent the thesis on which the student is working at the time of the competition
- The presentation must also represent the student's original work; presentations that are plagiarised will be automatically disqualified
- Given the strict time limit, students are advised to exclude an introductory address at the beginning of their presentation, as well as any detailed and lengthy elaboration of the background of their study
- Participants will only be allowed to use **one (1) PowerPoint slide** as a visual aid

- As such, the slide shall not contain any transitions (animated or otherwise)
- No additional electronic media (i.e., audio or visual files) will be permitted
- No props (i.e., costumes or objects) will be permitted
- Participants are only allowed **three (3)minutes** for their presentations
- **Two minutes and 30 seconds (02:30)** into the presentation, a warning bell will sound, followed by a bell at the **three (3)minute** mark, at which point the presentation must be concluded.
- Participants who exceed the **three (3)minute** timeframe will be automatically disqualified
- Group presentations, involving more than one participant, are ineligible for entry into the competition

Judging criteria

- The presentations will be judged on a number of criteria, which are:
- **Communication style:** Participants will be awarded points based on the appropriateness with which their thesis topic and its significance are presented to the non-specialist audience; this encompasses the language used in the presentation (i.e., Are participants over reliant on technical terms? Are these terms meaningfully elaborated? Is the participant oversimplifying the topic? etc.)
- **Comprehension:** Participants will be awarded points based on whether their presentation helped the non-specialist audience understood the research
- **Engagement:** Participants will be awarded points based on whether the oration made the non-specialist audience want to find out more about the research
- The decision of the judging panel is final and winners will be announced at the end of the competition, and no appeals after the winners have been announced will be entertained