

# Three Minute Thesis Competition

**HDR CANDIDATE  
INFORMATION SESSION**

# What is 3MT?

The Three Minute Thesis is a research communication competition developed by UQ.

- Celebrates the exciting research conducted by PhD students.
- PhD students have three minutes to present a compelling oration on their thesis and its significance.
- Challenges students to consolidate their ideas and research discoveries and cultivates students' academic, presentation, and research communication skills.
- Supports students' capacity to effectively explain their research and its significance in three minutes, in a language appropriate to a non-specialist audience.

# Competition Dates

## **Wildcard Competition**

Wednesday 3 September 2025 [Live Event]

Time & venue to be confirmed

## **UQ 3MT Final**

Wednesday 10 September 2025 [Live Event]

5:30pm - 8:00pm

GHD Auditorium, Advanced Engineering Building (49-200 ), St Lucia, QLD 4072

## **Virtual Asia-Pacific 3MT Competition**

Wednesday 15 October 2025 [Zoom Webinar]

2:00pm - 3:00pm

# 3MT Format - UQ

To take part in the UQ 3MT Competition each participating school, institute and faculty will hold a live in-person competition to select a winner.

The format of the UQ 3MT Competition **at all levels** is to be a **live in-person event** and all competitors are required to be judged on a **live in-person** performance.

# Competitor Registration 2025

All students wishing to compete in the UQ 2025 3MT Competition are required to register their details via Student Hub.

As the 3MT Event Coordinator you are required to contact the students to confirm their participation and provide additional details about your schools/institute or faculty 3MT competition.

**[2025 3MT Competitor Registration Form](#)**

# Eligibility

## **Eligibility**

Active PhD and Professional Doctorate (Research) candidates who have successfully passed their confirmation milestone (including candidates whose thesis is under submission) by the date of their first presentation are eligible to participate in 3MT competitions at all levels, including the Asia-Pacific 3MT competition. Graduates are not eligible.

## **UQ Specific Eligibility**

MPhil and pre-confirmation PhD and Professional Doctorate (Research) candidates who are active in program will still be eligible to participate in the UQ 3MT competition up to Faculty/Institute finals but cannot advance to the UQ 3MT Final.

# Competition Rules

- A single static slide is permitted, presented from the beginning of the oration.
- No additional electronic media or props are permitted.
- Presentations are to be spoken word.
- Presentations have commenced when the presenter starts their presentation through movement or speech.
- Presentations are 3 minutes and competitors exceeding 3 minutes are disqualified.
- The decision of the adjudicating panel is final.

# Judging Criteria

## Comprehension and Content

- Presentation provided clear motivation, background, and significance to the research question;
- Presentation clearly described the research strategy/design and the results/findings of the research; and
- Presentation clearly described the conclusions, outcomes and impact of the research.



# Judging Criteria

## Engagement and Communication

- The oration was delivered clearly, and the language was appropriate for a non-specialist audience
- The PowerPoint slide was well-defined and enhanced the presentation
- The presenter conveyed enthusiasm for their research and captured and maintained the audience's attention

# Prizes

## **School/Institute Heats**

- School/Institutes are welcome to provide prizes to participants

## **Faculty/Combined Institute Final**

- School/Institutes are welcome to provide prizes to participants
- People's Choice progresses to Wildcard Competition
- Winner progresses to UQ Final

## **Wildcard Competition**

- No prize is provided for this event
- Winner advances to UQ 3MT Final

# Prizes

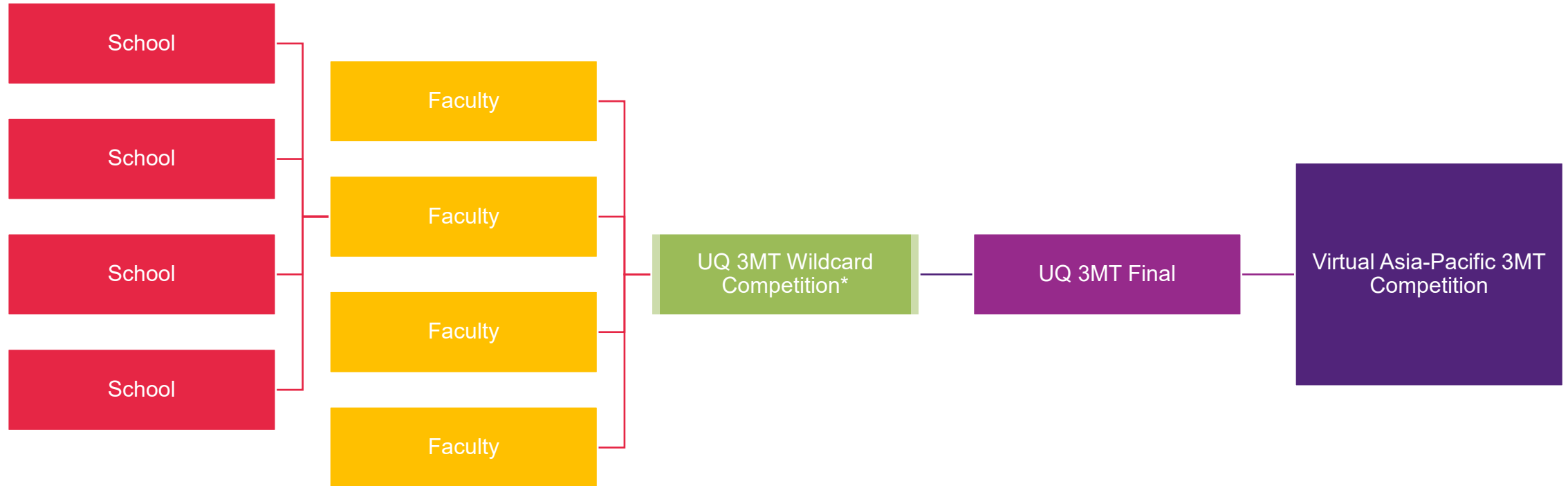
## UQ 3MT Final

- First Prize: \$5000 research grant
- Runner-Up: \$2000 research grant
- People's Choice: \$1000 research grant
- Winner represents UQ at [Virtual Asia-Pacific 3MT Final](#)
- Winner represents UQ at [Virtual U21 3MT Competition](#)

## Asia-Pacific 3MT Final

- First Prize: \$5000 research grant
- Runner-Up: \$2000 research grant
- People's Choice: \$1000 research grant

# Progression



The winner of each heat or final is expected to represent their school/faculty/university at the next stage of the competition. If the winner does not wish to proceed, the runner-up will proceed to the next round of the competition in their place.

# Why Participate?



During your PhD there is a strong focus on the production of your thesis. The ability to communicate the importance of your research project and articulate your findings is very valuable.

3MT provides you with the opportunity to:

- **Communicate** your ideas effectively to the wider community;
- **Describe** your research findings to a non-specialist audience;
- **Crystallise** your thoughts about your thesis;
- **Increase** your profile within UQ's research community, staff and wider community; and
- **Network** with other HDR students.

# 3MT Drafting



## **Write for your audience**

- Avoid jargon and academic language.
- Explain important concepts of your research (you know all the theories, but your audience may not).
- Highlight the overall desired outcome(s) of your research.
- Imagine you are explaining your research to a close friend or fellow student from another field.
- Convey your excitement and enthusiasm for your subject.

## **Tell a story**

- You may like to present your 3MT as a narrative, with a beginning, middle and end.
- It's not easy to condense your research into three minutes, so you may find it easier to break your presentation down into smaller sections.
- Try writing an opener to catch the attention of the audience, then highlight your different points, and finally have a summary to restate the importance of your work.

# 3MT Drafting



## Have a clear outcome in mind

- Know what you want your audience to take away from your presentation.
- Try to leave the audience with an understanding of what you're doing, why it is important, and what you hope to achieve.

## Revise

- Proof your 3MT presentation by reading it aloud, to yourself and to an audience of friends and family.
- Ask your audience if your presentation clearly highlights what your research is about and why it is important.
- Ask for feedback.



# PowerPoint Slide

**Less is more:** text and complicated graphics can distract your audience – you don't want them to read your slide instead of listening to your 3MT.

**Personal touches:** personal touches can allow your audience to understand the impact of your research.

**Creativity drives interest:** do not rely on your slide to convey your message – it should simply complement your oration.

**Work your message:** think about how your slide might be able to assist with the format and delivery of your presentation – is there a metaphor that helps explain your research?

**Engaging Visual:** An engaging visual presentation can make or break any oration, so make sure your slide is legible, clear and concise.



# 3MT Presentation



## **Practice, practice, practice**

- Feeling nervous is natural and can be beneficial to your speech.
- Practice so you can present with confidence and clarity.
- Practice to help time your 3MT, so you keep within the time limit.

## **Vocal range**

- Speak clearly and use variety in your voice (fast/slow, loud/soft).
- Do not rush – find your rhythm.
- Pause at key points as it gives the audience time to think about what you are saying.

## **Body language**

- Stand straight, confidently, head up and make eye contact.
- Practise using your hands and moving around. It is okay to move around, but also ok to present from a single spot.
- Do not roll on your heels, pace or play with your hair/clothing - these are distracting.
- Never turn your back to the audience.

# 3MT Presentation



## Record yourself

- Record/listen to your presentation to hear where you pause, speak too quickly or get it just right.
- Then work on your weaknesses and exploit your strengths.

## Watch

- Watch other presentations from academics, politicians and journalists, and break down their strengths and weaknesses.
- Analyse how they engage with their audience.
- View presentations by [previous 3MT finalists](#).

## Dress

- There is no dress code, if you are unsure of how to dress, dress for a job interview.
- Be aware of the noise your footwear might make.
- Do not wear a costume of any kind as this is against the rules (as is the use of props).

# Resources - Students



## Student Resources

- Available to view on the 3MT Website. Go to → [2025 UQ 3MT Competition](#)
  - 3MT Training and Development

## Contact



[www.threeminutethesis.org](http://www.threeminutethesis.org)



[3MT@uq.edu.au](mailto:3MT@uq.edu.au)

# Three Minute Thesis Competition