

Ph.D. Qualifying Exam Guide

(2025-2 Graduate and International Student Committee, Revised in 2024.2.6)

Ph.D. Qualifying Exam (QE) takes place twice a year, once each semester (Spring and Fall). Students may submit the QE Application at all times, but can only take the exam once per semester.

1. Schedule

Type	Exam Notification	Application Submission Due	QE Preparation Meeting	Results Announced	Academic System Registration
Spring	Early May	Late June	Early August	Mid-August	Mid-August
Fall	Early November	Late December	Early February	Mid-February	Mid-February

2. Procedure

1	Student	1) Application 2) 2 copies of Thesis Proposal (for committee) 3) Advisor Recommendation Letter 4) Research achievements and evidential documents 5) English proficiency test results	⇒	- Submit all application documents (Due: Late June/December) - Discuss schedule and evaluation method of the thesis proposal with 2 other members of the committee
2	Advisor	1) Recommend two members for the qualification exam committee 2) Submit all documents to the department, including a recommendation letter (Submission due: First week of January/July)		
3	Department	1) Notify the students about the committee and request for scheduling 'Thesis briefing (in-person or virtual)' 2) Students proceed with the thesis briefing to the committee		
4	Committee	1) Evaluate thesis proposal and submit evaluation report to the department (Evaluation period: until third week of January/July)		
5	Department	Enter evaluation score in 'Ph.D. Qualification Exam Results' document		
6	Advisor	Final confirmation and resubmission to department (Due: Last week of January/July)		
7	Department	1. Qualification Exam Assessment Meeting (Early February/August) 2. Announcement of results (Second week of February/August) 3. Enter changes to Academic System		

3. Required Documents

- 1) Application Form
- 2) Advisor Recommendation Letter (Including student number, name, and thesis title)
- 3) Thesis Proposal (Should be within 50 pages (A4); Attach cover page (Attachment 2)), including following components:

= Components of Thesis Proposal =

- o Introduction (Necessity and significance of research)
- o References
- o Scope of research and methodology
- o Possibility of obtaining research results
- o Interim results from related studies

- 4) List of research achievements and cover pages of evidential documents
- 5) English Proficiency Test Score

4. Qualifying Exam Committee

- The student's advisor must select a committee of three faculty members (including the advisor) from the student's department. If the committee should include members from other departments, prior approval from the Department Head is required.
- The student's advisor serves as the committee chair.

6. Evaluation Documents

- The first draft of the Ph.D. Qualifying Exam Results Report (Attachment 3) is written by the department. The thesis proposal is evaluated by the two committee members recommended by the student's advisor, and is collected by the department along with all other documents. The Chair follows the procedure written in '2. Procedure' for evaluation, and

submits the Ph.D. Qualifying Exam Results Report to the department after entering the scores.

7. Qualifying Exam Evaluation Meeting

- The department holds a Qualifying Exam Evaluation Meeting twice a year, where examination results are finalized for the Ph.D. Qualifying Exam Results Reports received before the date of the meeting.
- Qualifying Exam Evaluation Meetings are held in August (for the Spring Exam) and February (for the Fall Exam).
- The Evaluation Meeting is valid when more than half of the department faculty members attend.
- Attendance of the student's advisor is mandatory (If the advisor's absence is unavoidable, prior approval from the Department Head is required).

2025 Announcement of the 2nd Ph.D. Qualifying Exam

We announce the 2nd Ph.D. Qualifying Exam for Department of Aerospace Engineering in 2024.

1. Eligibility

- Students who have not passed the Ph.D. Qualifying Exam within one year and six months of admission (excluding up to two years of leave of absence)
(Government-sponsored, KAIST scholar, General scholar, International students)

2. Procedure

- For details regarding the application process, location, and other information, please contact the department office or refer to the website (☎ : 350-3708)

3. Exam schedule and Required Documents

1) Exam schedule

- Distribution of Application Forms and Registration: refer to the templates
- Announcement of Results : To be determined

2) Required Documents

- 1 copy of the Application Form
- 1 copy of the Advisor Recommendation Letter (Attachment 1)
- 2 copies of the Thesis Proposal (Attachment 2)
- List of research achievements and cover pages of evidential documents (Attachment 3)
- 1 copy of English Proficiency Test (TOEFL etc.) Score Report

4. Notes

- Students who are taking a leave of absence at the date of the exam are not eligible for the Ph.D. Qualifying Exam.
- Ph.D. students must pass the Qualifying Exam within one year and six months of academic residence. (No restriction on the number of applications)
- In the case of transfer students, they must pass the Qualifying Exam held by the department they transferred to, within one year and six months of the transfer.
- If you fail to pass within the above-mentioned deadline, you will be expelled through a prescribed procedure.

2025. 5. 8

Department of Aerospace Engineering

Related: Department Faculty Meeting (13. 7. 18)

Department of Aerospace Engineering Ph.D. Qualifying Exam (Proposal)

2013. 7. 17 (3rd Revision)

1. Overview

Starting with students entering KAIST in the Fall semester of 2013, the current Ph.D. Qualifying Exam will be further improved to accurately assess students' abilities while minimizing their time away from studies and research.

Under the new scheme, the exam will be carried out through document screening only; applicants should obtain 60 points or higher out of 100 points in order to pass. The score allotted for each evaluation item are as follows:

- o Advisor Recommendation Letter (20 points) - Evaluation by advisor
- o Thesis Proposal (20 points) - Evaluation by the Qualifying Examination Committee members
- o Research Achievements (40 points) - Quantitative evaluation / Papers that have been published in the past 48 months including those that have been approved by scientific journals for publication
- o English proficiency test score (20 points) - Only scores earned within the last 48 months are accepted.

2. Evaluation

1) Advisor Recommendation Letter

- The student's advisor evaluates whether the applicant has the following qualities necessary to complete the Ph.D. program (academic performance, research ability, diligence, creativity, etc.), rating the qualities in the following five steps.

Evaluation	Score
Excellent	20
Satisfactory	15
Sufficient	10
Poor	5
Fail	0

- The student's advisor must submit comments supporting the above evaluation results in the prescribed form (**Attachment 1**).

2) Thesis Proposal

- The student must submit a thesis proposal which includes the following elements on the topic of the student's Ph.D. dissertation. This should be no more than 50 pages (A4). (Please fill out and

attach the cover page (**Attachment 2**)

- o Introduction (Necessity and significance of research),
- o References
- o Scope of research and methodology
- o Possibility of obtaining research results
- o Interim results from related studies

- The thesis proposal will be reviewed by the members of the Qualifying Exam Committee, excluding the student's advisor. (If necessary, an interview may be conducted for evaluation)

Level of Thesis Proposal	Score
Very high	20
High	15
Average	10
Low	5
Very low	0

- The final evaluation score for the thesis proposal is the average of the scores given by each member of the committee.

- If the student has already passed the pre-defense process for the Ph.D. dissertation, the student does not have to submit a Thesis Proposal and will be given the perfect score of 20 points.

3) Research Publication Performance

- The score for the student's publication performance within the last 48 months are calculated as follows:

If there is a co-author, the student is given the allotted score divided by the author order (n).

ex) The first author (n=1) of an international journal article is given 40 points; the second author (n=2) is given $40/2 = 20$ points; the third author (n=3) is given $40/3 = 13.3$ points; the fourth author is given $40/4 = 10$ points etc.

Types of publication	Score (per article)
International Journal Articles	40
Domestic Journal Articles	30
International Conferences	20
Domestic Conferences	10

4) English Proficiency Test Score

- For the test scores earned within the last 48 months, the points are allotted as follows.

2024. 2. 6 Revised

English Proficiency Test Score Conversion Table			
TOEIC	TEPS	TOEFL(IBT)	Score
900 or higher	370 or higher	105 or Higher	20
850 ~ 899	336 ~ 369	98 ~ 104	15
800 ~ 849	309 ~ 335	91 ~ 97	10
720 ~ 799	272 ~ 308	81 ~ 90	5
below 720	below 272	below 81	0

- Only test scores earned within the last 48 months of the date of the Qualifying Exam are acceptable.

- If there is an english proficiency test score submitted for the master' s or doctoral admission, it can be substituted by submitting a certificate of english proficiency.

- You do not need to provide an English Proficiency Test score if you have completed a qualification equivalent to a Bachelor' s degree or higher from the following countries (an evidence document must be supplemented):

(Guyana, Grenada, New Zealand, Dominican Republic, Republic of Malta, USA, Barbados, The Bahamas, Belize, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis, Ireland, Antigua and Barbuda, United Kingdom, Australia, Jamaica, Canada, Trinidad and Tobago (19 countries)

5) Passing Score

- To pass the qualifying exam, the student must score at least 60 out of 100.

※ Please note that students who have received 0 point in any of the four evaluation items (Advisor Recommendation Letter, Thesis Proposal, Research Publication Performance, English Proficiency Test Score) will be considered as having failed the examination.

Attachment 1:

Advisor Recommendation Letter

(Ph.D. Qualifying Exam)

Student Name		Student ID Number			
Title of Thesis Proposal	Korean:				
	English:				
Advisor Comments					
Evaluation Score (Check the appropriate box)	Excellent (20)	Satisfactory (15)	Sufficient (10)	Poor (5)	Fail (0)

※ Leave the Advisor Comment and Evaluation Score blank and submit to the department office

Date :

Advisor : (Signature)

Attachment 2 :

Thesis Proposal

(Ph.D. Qualifying Exam)

Student Name		Student ID Number			
Title of Thesis Proposal	Korean :				
	English :				
Summary					
Keywords					
Evaluation Score (Check the appropriate box)	Excellent (20)	Satisfactory (15)	Sufficient (10)	Poor (5)	Fail (0)

※ Submit 2 copies to the department office with the evaluation score left blank

Date :

Committee :

(Signature)

Attachment 3 :

List of Research Publications

(Ph.D. Qualifying Exam)

Student Name		Student ID Number	
Research Publications	International Journal	1. include all co-authors 2. 3.	
	Domestic Journal	1. 2. 3	
	International Conferences	1. 2. 3.	
	Domestic Conferences	1. 2. 3.	

- ※ 1. Copy and submit the first page of each research publications as evidence
 2. List the research publications in detail

Attachment 4:

Ph.D. Qualifying Exam Results Report

Student Name					Student ID No.				
Evaluation Items	Evaluation Results								Score
1) Advisor Recommendation Letter (Quality Evaluation)	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (20) <input type="checkbox"/> Poor (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory (15) <input type="checkbox"/> Fail (0) <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient (10)								/ 20
2) Thesis Proposal (Level Evaluation)	Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Very High (20) <input type="checkbox"/> Average (10) <input type="checkbox"/> Very Low (0) Member 1 <input type="checkbox"/> High (15) <input type="checkbox"/> Low (5) Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Very High (20) <input type="checkbox"/> Average (10) <input type="checkbox"/> Very Low (0) Member 1 <input type="checkbox"/> High (15) <input type="checkbox"/> Low (5)								/ 20
3) Research Publications [Within the last 48 months, including approval for publication]	Author order	International Journals (40/article)	Domestic Journals (30/article)	International Conferences (20/article)	Domestic Conferences (10/article)				
	1 st	pts	pts	pts	pts				
	2 nd	pts	pts	pts	pts				
	3 rd	pts	pts	pts	pts				
	4 th	pts	pts	pts	pts				
	5 th	pts	pts	pts	pts				
	Total	pts	pts	pts	pts				
4) English Proficiency Test Score [Within the last 48 months]	TOEIC	TEPS	TOEFLIBT)			Score			
	900 or higher	370 or higher	105 or higher			20			
	850~899	336 ~ 369	98 ~ 104			15			
	800~849	309 ~ 335	91 ~ 97			10			
	720~799	272 ~ 308	81 ~ 90			5			
	below 720	below 271	below 81			0			
Total	* Sum of the scores of the four evaluation items If the student has 0 pts in any of the items 1), 2), 3), 4), the applicant will fail the exam.								/100
Evaluation Result	Pass				Fail				

Date of Evaluation :

Committee : Chair

(signature)

Attachment 5 :

Certificate of English Proficiency

Student Name		Student ID Number	
<p>English Proficiency Test Score [Within last 48 months*]</p>			
<p style="text-align: center;">Confirm that the English Proficiency Test Score provided was submitted during the application for the master's or doctoral admission.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2025. . .</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 20px;"> Student (signature) Person who verified (서명) </div>			

Attachment 6 : Reference : Faculty Meeting ('14. 7. 17)

『 Ph.D. Qualifying Exam Pass Criteria 』

Type Method	Document Evaluation
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Document Screening : 100 pts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Advisor Recommendation Letter (20 pts):</u> Advisor evaluates the student's qualities - <u>Thesis Proposal (20 pts):</u> This must be on the topic of the student's Ph.D. dissertation, and will be evaluated by the Qualifying Exam Committee - <u>Research Publication Performance (40 pts):</u> The publication performance will be quantitatively evaluated ※ Publications within the last 48 months only - <u>English Proficiency Test Score (20 pts):</u> Based on the English Proficiency Test Score Conversion Table ※ Only scores obtained within the last 48 months accepted
Pass criteria	<p>Applicants with 60 points or higher out of 100 will pass the exam</p> <p>※ If the student receives 0 point in any of the 4 evaluation items, the student will fail.</p>
Maximum number of applications	Twice per year
Exam schedule	<p>Notification : June / December</p> <p>Department Qualifying Exam Assessment Meeting : August / February</p>

2025 2nd Ph.D. Qualifying Exam Application Form

Registration No.	2025-2-					Exam No.			
<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center;"> Picture (3cm×4cm) </div>		☞ All items must be filled out				Scholarship Type	Government-funded		
		Student ID Number		Program			(Phone)		
		Name		Contacts			(Mobile phone)		
							(E-mail)		
Resident Registration Number	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> — *****					General			
Address	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> — <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>						International		
		(Home)							

Academics	(YYYY.MM)	University	Department	Admission Year:	Qualifying Exam	1st	2nd	3rd
	(YYYY.MM)	University	Department	Duration:				
	MS Program Graduated/Completed/Attending			Admission Year:		4th	5th	6th
	(YYYY.MM)	University	Department	Duration:				
Ph.D. Program Graduated/Completed/Attending				Admission Year:				
				Duration:				

Work Experience	Name of workplace	Duration	Tasks	Committee Member 1	
				Committee Member 2	

Grade		
MS	Credits	
	GPA	/ 4.3
Ph.D.	Credits	
	GPA	/ 4.3

Leave of absence

I am applying for the 2025 1st Ph.D. Qualifying Exam.

Date:

Student: (sign)
Advisor:: (sign)

Receptionist Confirm
(H)