

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
LI KA SHING FACULTY OF MEDICINE**

**Procedures for the Degrees of Doctor of Medicine (MD)
and Master of Surgery (MS)**

M27/M35 Definition

The degrees of MD and MS are research postgraduate degrees awarded to medical graduates for original observations that represent definite contribution to medical knowledge and deserving of publication as a monograph or as articles in peer-reviewed journals. MD or MS is equivalent, in status, to a higher doctorate.

M28/M36 Admission Requirements

1. A candidate for registration shall submit an application on the appropriate Form obtainable from the Registry, together with evidence of the required postgraduate training and experience and the application fee as prescribed by the University.
2. The Registry shall establish whether a candidate is *prima facie* eligible for consideration under regulations M28(a) and (b) or M36(a) and (b) as appropriate.
3. If a candidate is not eligible for consideration, the application shall be rejected by the Registry.
4. If the candidate is eligible, the Application Form and attached documents shall be sent to the Faculty Secretary who shall forward it to the Head of the Department of Medicine/Surgery and, where appropriate, the Professor of the subject concerned for completion of Section B. The Application Form shall then be submitted to the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee for consideration and recommendation to the Faculty Board.
5. The Faculty Board shall then decide if the application shall be:
 - a. accepted, or
 - b. rejected.

The applicant shall be notified in writing of the Board's decision. A decision on an application shall normally be made within three months of the receipt of a formal application.

M29/M37

Registration

1. A candidate shall be admitted on the first day of any month of the year.
2. A candidate shall be required to pay the prescribed registration fee when he or she is formally admitted.
3. If a candidate does not submit his or her thesis by the end of five calendar years from his or her date of first registration, his or her candidature shall automatically lapse.
4. The Head of the Department of Medicine/Surgery shall appoint a supervisor, who should be a member of the teaching staff from the relevant discipline and holds either a MD or MS degree, to guide the candidate on the planning and execution of the research work and presentation of the thesis.

M30/M38

Title of Thesis

1. The candidate's area of study must be well delineated and of relevance to medical practice. It can be clinical and/or laboratory-orientated research.
2. A candidate shall submit a plan of study which must be presented in adequate detail for approval at the time of application for admission after consultation with the proposed supervisor and Head of the Department of Medicine/Surgery, and where appropriate, the Professor of the subject concerned.
3. A candidate shall submit the title of his or her thesis for approval after consultation with the proposed supervisor, the Head of the Department of Medicine/Surgery, and where appropriate, the Professor of the subject concerned. Such approval must be obtained at least three months before the thesis is submitted for examination.
4. The Faculty Board shall take account of the recommendation of the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee in deciding if the title should be approved, and if any subsequent modification to the title should be approved.

M31/M39

Submission of Thesis

1. A thesis for the degree of MD or MS must be presented in the form of a thesis with comprehensive review of literature, accurate description of material and research methods, clear and proper presentation of results, in-depth analysis, critical discussion and appropriate conclusion. A thesis is more akin to a monograph on the topic but with emphasis and substantial contribution from the candidate's own results. A mere compilation of data or submission of a series of published or unpublished papers will not be acceptable.

2. Before a candidate submits his/her thesis for examination, he or she should pass a copy of the thesis to the supervisor for review and consideration of whether it is ready for submission.
3. A candidate shall deliver to the Faculty Secretary four copies of his or her thesis in temporary binding in accordance with the regulations governing the format, binding and presentation of thesis, together with the thesis submission form signed by the supervisor confirming that it is ready for examination. The Faculty Secretary shall issue a receipt for the four copies of the thesis and shall send a copy of the receipt to the Finance Office. The receipt shall include a reminder that the candidate may be required to attend an examination on the thesis.
4. The Faculty Secretary shall send one copy of the thesis to each of the three examiners, keeping the fourth in the Faculty Office.

M32/M40

Examinations

1. A Board of Examiners shall be appointed by the Faculty Board as soon as possible after the title of the thesis has been approved. For each candidate the Faculty Board shall appoint three specialist examiners, on the recommendation of the Head of the Department of Medicine/Surgery, in consultation with the supervisor and/or the Professor of the subject concerned, where appropriate, comprising:
 - (a) one external and two internal examiners (one of whom shall be the Professor of the subject concerned, if available); or
 - (b) where it is appropriate to appoint one internal examiner only (e.g. where the candidate is a Teacher of the University), two external examiners and one internal examiner who shall be the Professor of the subject concerned, if available;
2. The curriculum vitae of each proposed external examiner shall be provided by the Head of the Department of Medicine/Surgery when a recommendation for appointment is submitted to the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee for consideration, and appointment by the Faculty Board.
3. A Thesis Examining Committee (TEC) shall be established to conduct an oral examination and to recommend the examination result in accordance with Regulation M33/M41. A TEC shall consist of a Chairman and four members (3 voting members and 1 non-voting member). The external examiner(s) and internal examiner(s) are voting members while the candidate's supervisor is an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Committee. The Chairman, who is a non-voting member, shall be the Head of the Department of Medicine/Surgery or his/her delegate.
4. The appointed specialist examiners (including the additional examiner if one is appointed), the Head of the Department of Medicine/Surgery, the Chairman of the TEC (if not the Head of Department), the supervisor, the

Faculty Higher Degrees Committee, together with the Dean as Chairman shall constitute the Board of Examiners.

5. Each specialist examiner shall be issued with a copy of the regulations and of these procedures for reference.
6. The specialist examiners shall read the thesis and shall submit separate written reports **direct to the Faculty Secretary**. Each report shall include on a proforma an opinion as to whether or not the examiner considers the thesis to be of sufficient standard for the degree sought; and any recommendation concerning the contents of the oral examination. For MD candidates, each examiner's report shall also include on the proforma an opinion as to whether or not the examiner considers the thesis to be of sufficient standard to merit award of the Sir Patrick Manson Gold Medal.
7. The examiners shall be given a maximum period of three months from the date of receipt of the thesis in which to submit their reports on each thesis. By the due date, a reminder shall be sent out by the Faculty Secretary if the report has still not been received, and cases be reported to the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee for further action if reports are still outstanding at the end of four months.
8. The TEC shall be invited to consider the written reports from the examiners and conduct the oral examination and to recommend the examination result in accordance with Regulation M33/41.
9. The oral examination is compulsory. The Faculty Secretary shall organize the oral examination and arrange for copies of the examiners' reports to be seen by all the TEC members. The oral examination shall except in special circumstances be held in Hong Kong by the TEC under the oversight of the Chairman who shall ensure that the oral examination is conducted in a fair manner. The candidate shall be given by the Faculty Secretary at least one week's notice of the date of the oral examination.
10. If the external examiner(s) is (are) not available in Hong Kong at a convenient time for the conduct of the oral examination, a meeting by means of teleconferencing or video-conferencing shall be held to obtain the external examiner's input to the oral examination. If such means prove not to be possible, a suitably qualified person available locally shall be specially appointed by the Faculty Board on the advice of the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee as an additional examiner to represent the external examiner(s) for the purpose of the oral examination. The field of recruitment for such an appointment shall extend over the whole range of ability present in Hong Kong, either within or outside the universities. A person so appointed who is not a Teacher of the University shall receive an honorarium according to the rate set by the University. Only one such honorarium shall be payable for each examination candidate. The additional examiner shall participate fully at the oral examination, raising questions posed by the external examiner as well as those occurring to himself or herself.
11. The oral examination is normally considered a closed examination, although the Chairman may extend invitations to those who have been

closely associated with the preparation of the thesis. Questions will only be raised by members of the TEC.

12. Following the oral examination, the TEC will meet in camera to render an overall assessment of the thesis and of the candidate's ability to defend his/her work.
13. If the TEC cannot reach a consensus on the examination result, the Chairman shall make a recommendation to the Faculty Board, through the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee, on whether a fourth examiner, should be appointed. The fourth examiner will be informed of the difficulties encountered but not given the actual reports received from the other examiners.
14. No course work is included in the assessment of the qualification.

M33/M41

Examination Results

1. The recommendation of the TEC shall be forwarded to the Board of Examiners for consideration, together with all the relevant documents on the case.
2. The Board of Examiners shall consider the written reports on the thesis and the report on the oral examination, and shall then make a recommendation on the candidate's result in accordance with regulation M33/M41. The Board of Examiners shall consider its business in circulation. However, an actual meeting of the Board shall be held if recommended by members.
3. This recommendation shall be forwarded to the Board of the Faculty of Medicine (together with all relevant documents) who shall determine the results on behalf of the Senate. The Secretary of the Board of the Faculty of Medicine shall then inform the candidate of the Board's decision.
4. Where a candidate is required to revise and re-submit the thesis for a new examination, he or she shall be required to produce a summary of the amendments made to the revised thesis, on re-submission. At the same time the candidate shall be informed that attendance may be required at a new oral examination.
5. No candidate shall be permitted more than two submissions of thesis or more than two oral examinations.
6. A re-submitted thesis will be examined by the original examiners who shall advise whether a new oral examination is required, and may recommend only:
 - (i) that the thesis is of sufficient standard for the degree of MD/MS; or
 - (ii) that the candidate should be failed.
7. The TEC shall be invited to consider the written reports on the resubmitted thesis from the examiners and to make a decision on whether the candidate is required to attend a new oral examination.

8. If a second oral examination is required, the Faculty Secretary shall follow Procedures 9 to 12 under M32/40 above and organise a new oral examination. The Board of Examiners shall be invited to consider the examination result recommended by the TEC following Procedures 1 to 3 under M33/41 above.

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