

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
LKS FACULTY OF MEDICINE**Important Notes for Research Postgraduate (RPg) Students**

Important: This document should be read in conjunction with the regulations, procedures, and guidance notes concerning your RPg studies in the [Handbook for MPhil and PhD Programmes](#) issued by the Graduate School.

Introduction

To ensure your successful completion of the MPhil/PhD programme, the progress of your study is monitored by your supervisor(s), the Departmental Research Postgraduate Committee (DRPC), the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee (FHDC) and the Graduate School (GS).

Students are required to closely observe the requirements below.

1. Bi-annual Progress Reports and Confirmation Reports

Research postgraduate students and their supervisor(s) are required to submit Candidate's Progress Reports and Supervision Reports respectively at six-monthly intervals to the FHDC through the DRPC. In addition, a confirmation report should be submitted two months before the completion of their probationary period. The reports should focus on the work accomplished by the candidate in the specified period, and include a working plan for the following six months, so as to allow the FHDC to identify any problems as early as possible and recommend remedial measures accordingly in consultation with the supervisor(s) and/or the respective Chairman of the DRPC.

Important: The postgraduate scholarship for full-time candidates may be suspended if their progress reports are not submitted by the stipulated deadlines, or if their progress is not satisfactory.

2. Data Management Plan (DMP)

Beginning with the September 2017 intake, all HKU research postgraduate students have the responsibility for (i) using a data management plan (DMP), where applicable, to describe the use of data in preparation for, or in the generation of their theses, and (ii) depositing, where applicable, a dataset in the HKU Scholars Hub. RPg students registered in September 2017 and thereafter are required to submit a DMP before the expiry of their probationary period, if data is to be collected or generated as part of the research. Details of submission of DMP are available on the [website of the University Libraries](#).

3. Safety Awareness Workshop

In order to raise students' awareness on the importance of safety, especially in laboratory settings, all new research postgraduate students are required to attend the online Safety Awareness Workshop, organized by the Safety Office of the University during the RPg Orientation. Students are also required to pass an online quiz with the workshop. The online workshop is compulsory for all new RPg students and passing of the quiz is one of the requirements for confirmation of candidature by the end of the probationary period. Exemption is automatically granted to PhD students who are MPhil graduates of the Medical Faculty and have already attended the Workshop and passed the Safety quiz.

4. Graduate School Core Course (Case-based Workshops) on Research Integrity

In line with the University's directive and commitment to uphold the highest standard of research integrity, all MPhil and 4-year PhD students registered in or after September 2009 and 3-year PhD students registered in September 2011 and thereafter are required to take the GS Core Course GRSC6031 Research Ethics for Graduate Students if they have not completed equivalent training in previous research degree programmes. The course is organized as a series of interactive case-based workshops on the follow topics:

- (i) What Constitute Research Misconduct? Falsification, Fabrication and Plagiarism

- (ii) Management, Ownership and the Legal Aspects of your Research Data
- (iii) Publication, Contribution and Justification of Authorship
- (iv) Conflict of Interest: Declare and Beware!
- (v) Animal Research Ethics: Laboratory Animal Welfare Compliance
- (vi) Clinical Research Ethics: The Rights of the Human Research Subjects

The objectives of the workshops are (i) to address issues relating to research integrity, (ii) to facilitate sharing of values and best practices that are conducive to honorable research conduct, and (iii) to raise the consciousness of researchers to the professional hazards, pitfalls and temptations in the conduct of research.

The course comprises nine hours (three 3-hour classes with each on two topics) and is to be completed during semester 2 of every academic year. The class normally includes video / dialogue-based informal lectures, in-class and case-based group discussions. Students must attend both the introductory and wrap-up sessions, all three workshops, complete the web-based learning module and submit a 500-word essay before their probationary period can be confirmed.

All workshops are compulsory. Please refer to the section on [Coursework Enrolment from the GS website](#) for further details.

5. Presentation / Seminar

Qualifying Research Seminar (for confirmation of candidature) - Research postgraduate students are required to give a qualifying research seminar before their candidature can be confirmed. The seminar should be arranged by the supervisor(s) with the assistance of the Department concerned. The FHDC will only recommend confirmation of students' candidatures subject to the support of the supervisor(s) and the Chairman of the DRPC concerned.

Annual Seminar - Research postgraduate students are required to give a presentation on their research work annually at local/international conferences. Performance of candidates should be assessed by their supervisor(s) concerned and the assessment details should be included in the Supervision reports.

Research Postgraduate Symposium (RPS) - The RPS is an annual event organized by the Faculty to facilitate academic interaction and intellectual advancement among research postgraduate students and teaching staff. MPhil and PhD students are required to present at least once and twice respectively at the RPS during their period of study. Students who have presented at the RPS, if attended and assessed by their supervisor(s), can be considered as having satisfied the aforementioned requirement for the Qualifying Research Seminar or Annual Seminar.

6. Transfer of Candidature

Please refer to the [Notes for Guidance of Applicants for Transfer of Candidature to the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy \(PhD\) \(M.136/705\)](#) for details.

7. Extension of Candidature

Candidates unable to submit their theses by the end of their study period must submit an [Application for Extension of Candidature \(338/519\)](#) at least 3 months before the expiry of their study period. Requests for extension are regarded as exceptional cases, for which consideration will only be given to those with sound and full justifications. The criteria for extension of candidature as laid down by the GS are as follows:

- (a) Extension will only be approved by the GS based on good justifications with recommendation by the supervisors and endorsement by DRPC and FHDC;
- (b) The student must undertake to complete the study within a specified period;
- (c) The student must, in consultation with his/her supervisor, submit a study plan for the period of extension;
- (d) The progress of the student as shown from the bi-annual progress reports must be satisfactory;
- (e) The award of Postgraduate Scholarship will not be extended despite the extension of candidature; and
- (f) The FHDC may interview candidates with problems in completing their work on time.

Students granted extension of candidature are required to pay a continuation fee as stipulated under General Regulations G17 of the GS Handbook for MPhil and PhD Programmes.

8. Thesis submission

Candidates are required to:

- (a) submit a [Notice of Intent to Submit a Thesis \(MPhil and PhD students\) \(206/1116 re-amended\)](#) available from the GS website to the FHDC via their primary supervisor and Chairman of the DRPC concerned at least 3 months before the expected date of submission of their theses for examination before the expiry of the study period; and
- (b) submit their theses for examination by the end of their period of study, together with the following documents:
 - (i) The [Thesis Submission Form of the Graduate School \(207/1116 amended\)](#) to be signed individually by each supervisor to declare that they have read the thesis and its Turnitin originality report and consider the thesis ready for examination.
 - (ii) The [Thesis Submission Form of the Medical Faculty \(M.166/1014\)](#), to be signed by both the primary supervisor and the student to confirm that the student has:
 - submitted all the original research data related to his/her MPhil/PhD thesis to his/her primary supervisor; and
 - has satisfied the poster/oral presentation requirement (please refer to Point 5 above on Presentation / Seminar).

9. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Please pay particular attention to Regulation 6 of the University's Regulations Governing Students' Academic Conduct Concerning Assessment, which reads:

"A candidate shall not engage in plagiarism nor employ nor seek to employ any other unfair means at an examination or in any other form of assessment. Plagiarism is defined as the use of another person's work (including but not limited to any materials, creations, ideas and data) as if one's own without due acknowledgement, whether or not such work has been published and regardless of the intent to deceive."

Plagiarism will lead to failure in examination and other serious penalties imposed by the Disciplinary Committee of the University. Please refer to the webpages on [What is plagiarism?](#) and [Plagiarism and how to avoid it](#) and consult your supervisor if you have any questions.

10. Compulsory Plagiarism Check for All RPg Thesis

The University views any act of plagiarism with utmost seriousness and as a form of academic misdemeanor which will not be tolerated. Therefore, for quality assurance purposes and to deter students from committing plagiarism, all MPhil and PhD theses submitted for examination must go through plagiarism check by the students and their supervisors via Turnitin. Please refer to the [Turnitin@HKU Student Guide](#). More information about Turnitin is available at the [University Libraries website](#). Students are also encouraged to attend training workshops on Turnitin organized regularly by HKU Libraries.

11. Proper Acknowledgement of Work Done by Others in a Thesis

Research postgraduate study should involve a process of research leading to the writing up of a thesis. If a research project involves experiments or any other work conducted in collaboration with or with the assistance of anyone else (e.g. Postdoctoral Fellows, Research Officers, Research Associates, Technicians or Research Assistants etc. in the same or another department), proper acknowledgement of such contribution must be made in the thesis. The acknowledgement should

specify the experiments or work involved and the extent of contribution by others in order to enable examiners to form an opinion on whether the student himself/herself has done substantial work for the degree sought. A mere note to thank somebody for technical assistance is not sufficient. It is also the responsibility of the student to make known the acknowledgement to all parties concerned.

Please pay particular attention to point (e) of the [Good Practices for Research Postgraduate Students](#) in the [Handbook for MPhil and PhD Programmes](#), and Sections 1 and 3.5 of the Policy on Research Integrity in the Handbook (also available at the [Research Services Website](#)).

You should consult your supervisors about how to make proper acknowledgement in your thesis well before submission. Part-time RPg students in particular should pay special attention in this respect and seek advice from their supervisors and DRPCs in case of questions.

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