

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG  
LI KA SHING FACULTY OF MEDICINE

**Important Notes for Research Postgraduate (RPg) Students**

**IMPORTANT:** This document should be read in conjunction with the Regulations, Procedures, Notes for Guidance concerning your RPg studies in the Graduate School Handbook (available at <http://www.gradsch.hku.hk/gradsch/publications-newsletters/handbook-for-mphil-and-phd-programme>).

## **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 Board of Graduate Studies (BoGS) of the University.

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 Note:* 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. 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 Safety Awareness Workshop to be organized by the Safety Office of the University on the RPg Orientation Day. Students are also required to pass a quiz during the workshop. **Attendance at the 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.**

### **3. 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 RPg students, including 3-year PhD student, are required to take the Graduate School Core Course GRSC6031 Research Ethics for Graduate Students, which is organized as a series of interactive case-based workshops on the follow topics:

- i. Research Misconduct – Falsification, Fabrication and Plagiarization
- ii. Authorship and Publication
- iii. Clinical Research Ethics
- iv. Management of Research Data
- v. Animal Research Ethics
- vi. Conflict of Interest

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 workshops comprise case presentations by moderators, group discussion and presentation.

Students must attend both the introductory and wrap-up sessions, all six workshops, complete the web-based learning module and pass the examination before their probationary period can be confirmed.

The courses will normally be held during weekday morning. Please refer to the Graduate School website <http://www.gradsch.hku.hk/gradsch/web/student/course/index.htm> for further details.

### **4. 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. Performance of candidates should be assessed by their supervisor(s) concerned and the assessment details should be included in the Supervision reports.

All students should make at least one poster presentation at the annual Research Postgraduate Symposium (RPS) organised by the Medical Faculty, or at other local/international conference within their candidature. In addition, PhD students should make at least one oral presentation at the annual (RPS), other local/international conferences, or departmental research seminars.

### **5. Transfer of candidature**

Please refer to the *Notes for Guidance of Applicants for Transfer of Candidature to the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)* available at the Postgraduate Section of the Faculty website: <http://www.med.hku.hk/images/document/03edu/research/transfer.pdf>.

## 6. Thesis submission

Candidates are required to

- (a) submit a *Notice of Intent to Submit a Thesis* (available at the Graduate School website: <http://www.gradsch.hku.hk/gradsch/downloadable-forms/current-students#3>) 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 (<http://www.gradsch.hku.hk/gradsch/downloadable-forms/current-students#3>), to be signed by the primary supervisor and each of the co-supervisors individually 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 (<http://goo.gl/Cg1pcP>), to be signed by 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;
    - has satisfied the poster/oral presentation requirement (please refer to Point 4 of this document on Presentation/Seminar).

## 7. Extension of Candidature

Candidates unable to submit their theses by the end of their study period must submit an application [[https://intraweb.hku.hk/local/gradsch/sample\\_docs/160-111-re-amended.doc](https://intraweb.hku.hk/local/gradsch/sample_docs/160-111-re-amended.doc) (160/111 re-amended)] for extension of candidature 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 Board of Graduate Studies are as follows:

- (a) Extension will only be approved by the BoGS 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 continuation fee under General Regulations G17.

## 8. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Please pay particular attention to Regulation 6 of the University's Regulations governing Conduct at Examinations, 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 work submitted for assessment as part of a University examination. Plagiarism is defined as the unacknowledged use, as one's own, of work of another person, whether or not such work has been published.”

Plagiarism will lead to failure in examination and other serious penalties imposed by the Disciplinary Committee of the University. Please refer to the booklets “What is plagiarism?” and “Plagiarism and how to avoid it” which can be found at <http://www.hku.hk/plagiarism/page2s.htm> and <http://www4.caes.hku.hk/plagiarism/>, and consult your supervisor if you have any questions.

## 9. Compulsory plagiarism check for all RPg theses

The University views any act of plagiarism with utmost seriousness and as a form of academic misdemeanour 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 workflow of the compulsory plagiarism check at <http://www.gradsch.hku.hk/gradsch/f/page/509/thesischeck.workflow.compulsary.pdf>. More information about ‘Turnitin’ is available at the University Libraries website (<http://lib.hku.hk/turnitin>). Students are also encouraged to attend training workshops on ‘Turnitin’ organized by HKU Libraries from time to time.

## 10. 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 Graduate School Handbook (also available at [http://intraweb.hku.hk/reserved\\_1/gradsch/regulations\\_procedures/gd\\_practices\\_rpg.pdf](http://intraweb.hku.hk/reserved_1/gradsch/regulations_procedures/gd_practices_rpg.pdf)), and Sections 1 and 3.5 of the *Policy on Research Integrity* in the Graduate School Handbook (also available at <http://www.rss.hku.hk/integrity/rcr/policy>).

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.