

**REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY  
(MPhil)**

*Applicable to the September 2007 and subsequent intakes.*

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**MPH1            Definition**

The degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) is a research postgraduate degree. Such a degree shall be awarded to a candidate who, on the successful completion of formal coursework requirements, and on the completion of an approved scheme of research,

- (a)    presents a successful thesis representing the result of the candidate's research which displays some originality and which demonstrates a sound understanding of the field of study and appropriate research methods; and
  - (b)    satisfies the examiners in an oral examination (and any other examination if required) in matters relevant to the subject of the thesis.
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**MPH2            Admission Requirements**

A candidate who:

- (a)    complies with the General Regulations;
  - (b)    holds either
    - (i)     a Bachelor's degree with honours from this University; or
    - (ii)    another qualification of equivalent standard from this University or from another university or comparable institution accepted for this purpose; and
  - (c)    holds any additional qualifications as may be required by the Faculty concerned; and
  - (d)    satisfies the examiners in a qualifying examination if required;
- shall be considered for admission.

**MPH2A**        A candidate who does not hold a Bachelor's degree with honours from this University or another qualification of equivalent standard may in exceptional circumstances be permitted to register for the degree on demonstrating adequate preparation for research studies at this level, and satisfying the examiners in a qualifying examination.

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**MPH3            Qualifying Examination**

- (a)    A qualifying examination may be set to test the candidate's ability to pursue the research project proposed. A qualifying examination shall consist of one or more invigilated written examination papers; additionally, the invigilated written paper(s) may be supplemented by other forms of examination.
  - (b)    A candidate who is required to sit a qualifying examination shall not be permitted to register until all examination requirements are satisfied.
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**MPH4            Registration**

- (a)    A candidature shall commence upon registration, which is permitted only on the first day of September or the first day of January of each year.

- (b) A student may register as a full-time candidate when he or she holds
  - (i) no employment; or
  - (ii) part-time employment (whether inside or outside the University), provided that the employment entails not more than 150 hours of work per annum; or
  - (iii) a University research assistantship, provided that the work undertaken in this capacity is focused on the topic of the holder's research degree study.

The full or part-time status of the candidature must be affirmed in the form of a written declaration by the Chairman of the Departmental Research Postgraduate Committee and the student.

- (c) A full-time candidate may hold a University postgraduate scholarship (PGS) or other postgraduate studentship or scholarship intended to enable him or her to study on a full-time basis.

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**MPH5                      Probation and Confirmation of Candidature**

- (a) A candidate whose application is accepted shall be subject to a probationary period of twelve months in the case of a full-time candidate or eighteen months in the case of a part-time candidate. By the end of this probationary period, the candidate must demonstrate capability in research, submit a detailed scheme of research, and complete the required proportion of coursework prescribed by the Policy Board of Postgraduate Education.
- (b) Before the end of the probationary period, the Faculty shall make a decision on whether the candidature shall be confirmed or terminated.

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**MPH6                      Transfer of Candidature**

- (a) A candidate whose candidature has been confirmed and who has satisfactorily completed all coursework requirements may be permitted to transfer the candidature to the degree of PhD, provided that such transfer is approved at least three months prior to the expiry of the MPhil candidature.
- (b) At any stage of his/her studies, a candidate may be permitted to transfer from full-time to part-time candidature for the same degree. A candidate may similarly be permitted to transfer from part-time to full-time candidature for the same degree, provided that the requisite coursework requirements can be completed before submission of the thesis.
- (c) Any transfer shall take effect only on the first day of any calendar month.

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**MPH7                      Period of Study**

- (a) A candidate registered for the degree shall follow an approved course of study and research under at least one supervisor for a period of 24 months in the case of a full-time candidate, and 36 months in the case of a part-time candidate, beginning on September 1 or January 1. The minimum study period is half of the study period.
- (b) A candidate shall be required to spend the whole period of study in Hong Kong, unless leave of absence, provided for under Regulation MPH9 below, has been granted. Since part-time students may have a full-time job which demands them to be away from Hong Kong from time to time, they may be

granted approval to be away from Hong Kong for up to six months in any academic year (see Note).

- (c) Any extra period allowed for revision or re-submission under Regulation MPH16A shall not count towards the period of study.

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**MPH8 Coursework Requirements**

- (a) The approved course of study and research specified in Regulation MPH7(a) shall include a coursework component, the objective of which is to aid research work and preparation for writing the thesis.
- (b) The formal requirements relating to such coursework shall be determined by the Policy Board of Postgraduate Education from time to time.
- (c) The coursework requirements must be fulfilled before the candidate is permitted to submit the thesis.

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**MPH9 Leave of Absence**

- (a) Research study in the University is considered a year-round activity that continues between terms and throughout the summer months.
- (b) A candidate who wishes to be absent from Hong Kong and/or the approved course of study and research, or who proposes to take vacation, shall be required to submit a written application for leave of absence. There are three types of discretionary leave, namely, vacation leave, study leave and non-study leave (See Note).

Vacation Leave

- (c) A candidate may be granted up to 14 days of vacation, excluding Saturday afternoons, Sundays and public holidays, in each twelve months of the period of study. This is however not an entitlement. Whether approval will be granted to a candidate will depend on the progress of the candidate and the requirement of the candidate to provide departmental services associated with his/her PGS as stipulated in the Regulations governing Postgraduate Scholarships. Leave of absence granted for vacation shall be counted towards the period of study.

Study Leave

- (d) A candidate may be granted study leave for the purposes of study or research outside Hong Kong. Unless special circumstances warrant an exception, leave of absence under this category shall not normally be granted for a cumulative period of more than twelve months for the entire period of study, except in the case of a candidate undertaking research at an overseas partner institution with which the University has entered into a formal exchange agreement and in which case study leave of up to half of the period of study as defined in MPH7 may be granted. Any period of study leave granted shall be counted towards the period of study.

Non-study leave

- (e) A candidate may be granted non-study leave when he/she is best advised for personal, health, or other reasons to have time completely away from his/her academic responsibilities. Under no circumstances shall leave of absence

under this category be granted on each occasion for a period of less than 7 calendar days or cumulatively for a period of more than twelve months for the entire period of study. A candidate shall apply for vacation leave to cover leave of a non-study nature of less than 7 calendar days. Any period of non-study leave granted shall result in the extension of the period of study by the period of absence.

#### Sick Leave

- (f) In addition to the above, a candidate shall follow the arrangements on sick leave as specified in General Regulation G8(b)(i) on the understanding that the candidate shall also inform his/her supervisor and Department immediately of his/her sick leave.

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#### **MPH10 Progress**

A candidate shall submit a progress report at six-monthly intervals, and may be required to give one or more seminars on any part of his or her course of study and research.

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#### **MPH11 Discontinuation**

A candidature may be discontinued

- (a) if academic progress is not satisfactory; or
- (b) if the student has failed to meet the requirements as stipulated in this set of Regulations.

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#### **MPH12 Notice of Intention to Submit Thesis**

To allow sufficient time for appointment of examiners for thesis and an oral examination, a candidate shall serve written notice of intention to submit a thesis for examination at least 3 months prior to the expected date of submission. The notice shall be accompanied by a provisional thesis title.

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#### **MPH13 Submission of Thesis**

- (a) A candidate shall submit four copies of his/her thesis for examination, in accordance with the regulations governing the format, binding, and presentation of theses, together with a written declaration that the thesis represents the candidate's own work.
- (b) A candidate shall not submit work that has been included in a thesis, dissertation or report which either has been previously submitted to this University or any other institution, or being submitted to any other institution, for a degree, diploma, or other qualifications. Original work of the student related to the thesis may be published prior to submission of the thesis and may be included in the thesis.

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#### **MPH14 Examinations**

- (a) A candidate shall be examined by examiners appointed for this purpose both on the thesis itself, and at an oral examination on the subject of the thesis

and/or the approved course of study and research. A candidate may also be examined by other means.

- (b) A candidate's coursework shall also be assessed by examiners appointed for this purpose.

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**MPH15 Coursework Examination Results**

- (a) Coursework shall be assessed on a pass/fail basis.
- (b) A candidate who has not satisfied the examiners in respect of the coursework requirements at the first attempt shall be re-examined in the same, or an equivalent, course. A candidate who does not satisfy the examiners in such re-examination may be required to discontinue his or her studies.
- (c) A candidate who is unable to be present for any written examination due to acceptable extenuating circumstances may apply for permission to present himself or herself at a supplementary examination.

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**MPH16 Thesis Examination Results**

A candidate who has satisfied the examiners shall be recommended for conferment of the degree of Master of Philosophy.

**MPH16A** A candidate who has not satisfied the examiners

- (a) may be required to resubmit the thesis after making corrections and amendments as required by the Board of Examiners, without a new examination; or
- (b) may be required to revise and resubmit the thesis for a new examination within a specified period, and may also be required to satisfy the examiners at an oral examination, or any other examination as appropriate, on the subject of the revised thesis and/or the approved course of study and research; or
- (c) may be required to attend a new oral examination, or any other examination as appropriate, within a period not exceeding six months; or
- (d) may be deemed to have failed, without the option of resubmission.

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**MPH17 Publication based on Thesis**

Any publication based on work approved for a higher degree should contain a reference to the effect that the work was submitted to The University of Hong Kong for the award of the degree.

*Note: For the purpose of this Regulation, a candidate is considered to be absent from Hong Kong when he/she is outside Hong Kong and is not able to conduct studies in the normal manners in the University. A candidate who resides near the vicinity of Hong Kong which allows him/her to return to the University campus for his/her studies in the same manner as other students is not regarded as being absent from Hong Kong.*

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