

THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Common Requirements for Research Postgraduate Programmes

Graduation requirements

All RPg students are required to fulfill certain requirements for graduation. Some of the requirements are compulsory for all while some others are specific to individual programmes or individual students. Students should therefore refer to the Course List, Course Descriptions and Study Scheme of their own programme in the Postgraduate Student Handbook for the specific requirements. Besides, each RPg student should complete the Research Progress Report together with the Supervisor so as to ensure that student's progress is on the track.

Coursework requirements

The coursework requirements list the required courses and elective courses, if applicable, of the programme. Taught courses (i.e. excluding courses labeled as “research”, “thesis research”, “thesis preparation”, etc.) are added to prepare students for research and enhance relevant knowledge in their research field. The general requirement is as follows:

- not less than 12 units for research Master's;
- not less than 12 units for research doctoral students in the pre-candidacy stage, completion of which will be part of the candidacy requirements.

The two requirements could be identical, but a higher requirement can be set for the PhD candidacy if the Graduate Division so desires. Each Graduate Division may specify the minimum grade at which these courses must be passed.

Students should take at least one course in each term, unless otherwise stated in the study scheme or approved by the Graduate Division Head concerned.

In addition, each student's progress in research is monitored through courses called “Thesis Research”. The number of units should not be less than the following requirement per term. Each unit is regarded as equivalent to approximately 3 hours of study/ research per week by the student.

Status	Full-time	Part-time
MPhil	6	3
PhD (pre-candidacy)	6	3
PhD (post-candidacy)	12	6
Continuing students	3	3

Candidacy Requirements or Qualifying Examination

Candidacy requirements and qualifying examination are in fact different terminologies for the assessment of PhD students to proceed to the candidature for doctoral degree. The former is used in “articulated” programmes whereas the latter in “non-articulated” programmes. Students should refer to the study scheme of their own programmes in the Postgraduate Student Handbook for details of the requirements. For articulated programmes, the maximum period to pass the candidacy requirements, counted from first entry to the articulated programme, is tabulated below. A PhD student (pre-candidacy) beyond this maximum period will be discontinued.

Degree	Full-time	Part-time
PhD (entering with a research master’s degree)	24 months	32 months
PhD (entering without a research master’s degree)	36 months	48 months

However, for non-articulated programmes, the maximum period to pass the Qualifying Examination is defined by individual Graduate Divisions. Please refer to the Postgraduate Student Handbook of individual programmes for details.

Research thesis and oral examination

All RPg students are required to submit a research thesis and pass an oral examination for graduation.

Improving Postgraduate Learning (IPL)

While there is no university accepted approach for teaching students to be more creative in research, there are some basic principles, methodologies and skills with which students can equip themselves in the arduous task of doing research. Many of these information and skills are imparted by the students’ supervisors as they work together. However, some skills are cross-disciplinary in nature and can be taught in a more formal or systematic manner, e.g. laboratory safety, searching for and analysis of information, principles and ethics in documentation, presentation skills and so forth.

These courses are collectively referred to as the Improving Postgraduate Learning (IPL) programme and are organized and administratively supported by the Centre for Learning Enhancement And Research (CLEAR).

Most IPL courses are optional. However, RPg students are strongly advised to take every module that has potential relevancy to their research endeavors. Supervisors and Graduate Division Heads should also promote these modules to their respective students.

The module “Observing Intellectual Property and Copyright Law during Research” is compulsory for all RPg students. This is an online module and relevant information can be accessed from the website of CLEAR at www.cuhk.edu.hk/clear/programmes/programmes.html.

Different programmes may require students to complete specific IPL modules, such as “General Safety” and “Chemical Safety” or other required laboratory safety courses, depending on the nature of the research project. Students should consult their Graduate Divisions or Supervisors for details.

Other requirements

Graduate Divisions may prescribe additional graduation requirements for students of their programmes. Some of these requirements are listed below as examples:

- Language requirement, e.g. knowledge of a third language
- Additional requirements for individual students may be set up by the Graduate, depending on the academic progress of the students