

**M.Sc. in Mental Health**

**Department of Psychiatry, The Chinese University of Hong Kong**

**Second Year Program (2017-18)**

**General Guidelines on Research Projects 1 & 2 (MHLS 5302-5303)**

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## 01. Introduction

Students will carry out a research project in the field of mental health studies under the supervision of a supervisor assigned by the programme directors. This project work will be organized into two modules (MHLS 5302 and 5303).

The **key roles of a supervisor** are as follows:

At different stages of the dissertation project (from conceptualizing research questions, literature review, drafting research protocol and fieldwork plans, acquiring ethical approval, conduction of fieldwork, to data analysis and dissertation writing), **student should arrange regular meetings with the assigned supervisor through teleconferencing, Skype or other internet platforms, or meeting in person during the modules.** The research supervisor is expected to give timely advice on the *methodology issues, ethical considerations, feasibility of fieldwork, approach to data analysis, interpretation of findings, as well as style and presentation of the dissertation.*

The two modules MHLS 5302 and 5303 count towards 8 units of the second year program.

**Figures 1 and 2 outline the time-line of important tasks to be accomplished in the two modules.**

*Details of each graded component of MHLS 5302 and 5303 will be obtained in Section 04-06.*

**Fig. 1: OVERVIEW OF MHLS 5302  
(Research Project I in first term)**

**Mid-August, 2017**- Supervisor and student set up schedule to discuss project plan and supervision.  
(Student and supervisor are encouraged to start planning earlier in August 2017 if this is mutually agreeable.)

**Aug-Sep, 2017**: Supervisor to review project plan and schedule with student.

**Sep- Oct, 2017**: Student should solicit **ethical approval + approval from unit head of fieldsite** of the project from relevant organizations. Student may commence fieldwork after clearance from respective ethical review board.

**\*Oct 29, 2017**: Deadline to submit the proposal **“Project Plan”** to supervisor. **Failure to submit this document before deadline will lead to failure in MHLS 5302.**

## Figure 2. OVERVIEW OF MHLS 5303 (Research Project II in second term)

Regular supervision, ongoing fieldwork, literature search and data analysis.

**Deadline to submit “Interim Assessment Report”(Introduction and Background, Research Hypothesis, Methodology) to supervisor on or before February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018 (contributes to 25% of final score on MHLS 5303).**

**May 15-31, 2018: Submission of dissertation** that has been reviewed and endorsed by the supervisor .

**June , 2018 - June 29, 2018: Review of dissertation by two examiners** and supervisor, submission of evaluation reports (45 % of MHLS 5303 total score).

**7 July, 2018 (tentative): EXIT Assessment-written examination** (50 MCQs in one hour-5% of MHLS total score). **14 - 28 July, 2018 (tentative) EXIT Assessment (30-minute oral examination)** to be conducted by 2 panels of examiners (25 % of MHLS 5303 total score). Passing the EXIT Assessment is a pre-requisite to graduation.

**Revision of dissertations** (if any) and submission of final dissertation by **end of August, 2018.**

## 02. Warning about plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

With **each written assignment (applicable to the research dissertation in this context)**, students will be required to submit a signed **declaration** that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign on the declaration.

For assignments in the form of a **computer-generated document that is principally text-based** and submitted via **VeriGuide**, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide. A sample declaration form is as follows:

The Chinese University of Hong Kong  
Academic Honesty Declaration Statement

Submission Details

Student Name			
Year and Term	2010-2011 Term 2		
Course	MHLS-5203-- Child & Adolescent Psychiatry		
Assignment Marker	Professor LAI Yee Ching Kelly		
Submitted File Name	MSc In Mental Health - Essay 2010 - 2011 Final Version.doc		
Assignment Number	1	Due Date (provided by student)	2011-07-15
Submission Reference Number	364713	Submission Time	2011-07-15 00:17:53

Agreement and Declaration on Student's Work Submitted to VeriGuide

VeriGuide is intended to help the University to assure that works submitted by students as part of course requirement are original, and that students receive the proper recognition and grades for doing so. The student, in submitting his/her work ("this Work") to VeriGuide, warrants that he/she is the lawful owner of the copyright of this Work. The student hereby grants a worldwide irrevocable non-exclusive perpetual licence in respect of the copyright in this Work to the University. The University will use this Work for the following purposes.

(a) Checking that this Work is original

The University needs to establish with reasonable confidence that this Work is original, before this Work can be marked or graded. For this purpose, VeriGuide will produce comparison reports showing any apparent similarities between this Work and other works, in order to provide data for teachers to decide, in the context of the particular subjects, course and assignment. However, any such reports that show the author's identity will only be made available to teachers, administrators and relevant committees in the University with a legitimate responsibility for marking, grading, examining, degree and other awards, quality assurance, and where necessary, for student discipline.

(b) Anonymous archive for reference in checking that future works submitted by other students of the University are original

The University will store this Work anonymously in an archive, to serve as one of the bases for comparison with future works submitted by other students of the University, in order to establish that the latter are original. For this purpose, every effort will be made to ensure this Work will be stored in a manner that would not reveal the author's identity, and that in exhibiting any comparison with other work, only relevant sentences/ parts of this Work with apparent similarities will be cited. In order to help the University to achieve anonymity, this Work submitted should not contain any reference to the student's name or identity except in designated places on the front page of this Work (which will allow this information to be removed before archival).

(c) Research and statistical reports

The University will also use the material for research on the methodology of textual comparisons and evaluations, on teaching and learning, and for the compilation of statistical reports. For this purpose, only the anonymously archived material will be used, so that student identity is not revealed.

I confirm that the above submission details are correct.

I have read the above and in submitting this Work fully agree to all the terms.

I declare that this Work here submitted is original except for source material explicitly acknowledged, the same or closely related material has not been previously submitted for same or different courses, and that the submitted soft copy with details listed in the <Submission Details> above is identical to the hard copy(ies), if any, which has(have) been / is(are) going to be submitted.

I also acknowledge that I am aware of University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and of the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations, as contained in the University website <Honesty in Academic Work: A Guide for Students and Teachers>.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature ( )

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Instruction for Submitting Hard Copy / Soft Copy of the Assignment

This signed declaration statement should be attached to the hard copy assignment or submission to the course teacher, according to the instructions as stipulated by the course teacher. If you are required to submit your assignment in soft copy only, please print out a copy of this signed declaration statement and hand it in separately to your course teacher.

### 03. Research ethics

#### A. Guidelines for Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics (*excerpted from CUHK's "Post-graduate student handbook 2017-18"*)

##### I. Scope

Survey and behavioural research covers surveys as well as observation of human behaviour. The latter refers to the first hand public/naturalistic observations on human subjects, and the observations of human subjects in experiments. Survey, defined broadly, covers the following areas:

- questionnaire surveys, including telephone surveys (regardless of the sample size).
- either group or individual interviews.
- in-depth case study of the target participant(s).
- observation of human behavior by whatever non-clinical means.

According to the *University's Policy on Research, Consultancies and Intellectual Property*, all research proposals, contracts for consultancies and services, or applications for outside practice involving surveys would need to obtain ethics approval from the *Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee* (formerly Survey Ethics Committee) of the University. Survey and behavioural research ethics in research activities involves both ethical and legal issues. It is not only an expression of the ethical concern for the rights of the research participants, but also in compliance with local legal codes, such as the Personal Data and Privacy Ordinance.

##### II. Who Should Apply For Review

All members of the university community (teaching and research staff, postgraduate and undergraduate students) are expected to conduct their survey research studies in a legal and ethical manner. Researchers whose research strategies and plans are within the domain of survey and behavioural research (please refer to definitions in Section A above) should obtain approval from the *Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee* BEFORE they conduct their research studies.

The procedures to apply for ethics approval from the *Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee* are explained below (Section F of the Guidelines).

Researchers should examine the nature of their research studies to determine if they need to obtain approval from other research ethics committee within CUHK (e.g., Human/Clinical Research Ethics Committee, Animal Research Ethics Committee).



### III. Types of Review

The *Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee* differentiates between two types of review: An expedited review and a full review. Expedited reviews require the completion of a *Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics Form (Form)* and submission of a copy of the survey instruments to be used or a detailed description of these instruments. Researchers are not required to submit a full proposal of their research projects. If a research study does not qualify for an expedited review process, then a full review by the *Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee* has to be conducted. Researchers have to submit a full research proposal of their research studies along with the Form to the Committee so that the research procedures and rationales could be closely examined. If necessary, the Committee may request additional materials from researchers to justify their research studies.

### IV. An Expedited Review

In general, expedited reviews are granted if none of the following is involved in a research project:

- a. Participants are unable to give informed consent, (e.g. children, mentally handicapped individuals). (Sections D1 and D3 of this *Guidelines*).
- b. Excessive or inappropriate inducements, financial or otherwise, are provided to influence subjects to participate. (Section D2 of this *Guidelines*).
- c. Deception of participants is involved. (Section D4 of this *Guidelines*).
- d. The study involves studying sensitive aspects of the participant's own behaviour such as illegal conduct, drug or alcohol use, and sexual conduct.
- e. Disclosure of the observations on the participant will likely place the participant at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the participant's financial standing, employability, or personal reputation.
- f. The study can induce undue psychological stress to participants.
- g. Pain or discomfort that is higher than a reasonable level is likely to result from participating in the research study.
- h. Prolonged and repetitive testing is involved.

For research studies involving public/naturalistic observations, the following additional

conditions have to be fulfilled to qualify these studies for an expedited review:

- i. In the researcher's private data as well as in any published material, observations are recorded in such a manner that the identities of participants cannot be identified; or
- ii. The observations, even if disclosed outside the research, could not reasonably place the participants at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the participant's financial standing, employability, mental well-being, or personal reputation.

For observations with public officials, an expedited review is granted to all research involving survey, interview, or public observations of respondents who are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office.

For research studies using secondary data analyses, an expedited review is granted to research studies involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records

- (a) if these sources are publicly available, or
- (b) if the participants cannot be identified in any published material and reasonable precaution is taken to preserve the confidentiality of the identity of individuals in the research data.

## **V. A Full Review**

Projects that fail to meet the requirements for an expedited review must go through a full review.

In those cases, a researcher has to submit a completed Form and a full research proposal.

## **VI. Ethical Guidelines Concerning the Use of Human Research Participants**

### **i. Informed Consent**

The researcher must obtain either verbal or written consent from the data subject(s) who participate(s) in the surveys according to the following guidelines:

- Voluntary informed consent, in writing, should normally be obtained from any participant who is able to give such consent. However, for anonymous surveys, this

requirement is optional but strongly recommended.

- Research participants should be informed that they have the right to terminate the study at any time.
- Research procedures should be explained to the research participants before the administration of data collection.
- For studies that involve potential risk to the participants, an information sheet that is easily comprehensible by the potential research participants should be provided.
- The information sheet should set out the purposes of the investigation, the procedures, the risks (including psychological distress), the benefits to the individual or to others, a statement that participants are free to decline to participate, and significant factors that may be expected to influence their willingness to participate, including limitations in ensuring confidentiality.
- In situations when a third party (e.g. spouses or other health care professionals who are directly involved in the treatment and care of the potential subjects) is involved or affected by the research, consent should also be obtained from them.
- In the case of normal secondary school children, i.e., Form 1 and above, if the survey meets requirements of Section C1 for an expedited review AND is anonymous, school consent is deemed sufficient, and parental consent is strongly recommended but optional. However, students should be clearly informed that their participation in the study is voluntary.
- Consent of a parent or a legal guardian is needed for ALL other surveys (anonymous or non-anonymous) involving children, including primary school children.

## **ii. Undue Influence and Inducement to Participate**

- Research participants should be free from coercion of any kind and should not be pressured to participate in any research study.
- Inducements, such as unreasonable services or financial payments, are not ethically permitted.
- Reimbursement of participants' expenses, e.g., for journeys, is not considered as payment in the sense of reward, and so it is permissible.
- Any payment to research participants should be indicated on the Survey Ethics Form for consideration by the *Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee*.

### **iii. Vulnerable Research Participants Who Need Special Consideration**

- Vulnerable research participants are those who are either unable to give informed consent, or are captive participants who are less able to protect themselves.
- Children should not be asked to serve as research subjects if the required data could be obtained from adults. Please observe requirements for obtaining informed consent from children (Section D1 of this *Guidelines*).
- For research studies involving individuals who are not capable of giving informed consent because of their mental status (e.g., mental patients or individuals with cognitive disabilities), informed consent may have to come from both the participant, and his/her legal guardian, an immediate relative, and/or an attending physician where appropriate. The same principle applies to elderly or acutely ill individuals who might not be capable of making decisions regarding research participation.
- The quality of informed consent of potential participants who are in a potentially dependent or dual relationships with the researcher (e.g., students, employees and patients) requires careful consideration, as willingness might be unduly influenced by power differences, or by the expectations of advantageous benefits or penalties. Such arrangements should be avoided if research data could be collected from other sources.

### **iv. Research involving Deception of Subjects**

- The use of one-way mirrors must be clearly justified.
- In some exceptional cases, the researcher might give participants somewhat misleading information about the nature of the research. Research studies of this nature have to be approved by the *Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee* before administration. The researcher must explain in detail why the research could not practicably be carried out without the deception, and why the deception will not adversely affect the well being of the participants in a significant way. All deception must be explained to participants as early as feasible, preferably at the conclusion of their participation, but no later than at the conclusion of the research.

### **v. Guidelines on Ensuring Confidentiality of Research and Personal Data**

*The Chinese University of Hong Kong as a data user and a responsible public institution undertakes to comply with the requirements of the data protection principles set out in the*

*Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (the Ordinance), and to ensure that personal data kept are accurate, securely kept and used only for the purpose for which they have been collected. For details of the Ordinance and its provisions please refer to the website of the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data, Hong Kong at <http://www.pcpd.org.hk>. Students are also requested to observe the “Good Practices in Information Security”, especially the “Guidelines for Securely Managing Mobile Computing Devices and Removable Storage Media” listed in the website of the Information Technology Services Centre (ITSC): <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/itsc/security/gpis/index.html>.*

- Surveys are either anonymous or non-anonymous, and effort must be made to protect the confidentiality of research data for both types of surveys:
- Whatever information is obtained in research should under no circumstances be publicly disclosed in a fashion that would identify any specific person or organization (except with the participants' written consent or if subpoenaed by a court).
- Except in anonymous surveys or public/naturalistic observations, the researcher should outline to prospective research participants the purpose of the collection of the personal data and what methods the researcher would adopt to ensure confidentiality.
- For projects in which private information about participants to be collected is not considered sensitive, participants should be informed that the researcher will take precautions to preserve the confidentiality of the research data and that all reports of the research will be devoid of identifiers.
- When the researcher collects sensitive personal information about participants, the researcher should specify the precautions relating to the storage, use, and disposition of the materials. For example, data will be kept in locked files and only the researcher(s) will have access to them; data subjects will be identified by a code and therefore their personal identities will not be disclosed easily.
- In most cases, the researcher should give participants full information on the proposed management, use, and disposition of photographs and audio or video recordings.

#### **vi. Procedures to Obtain Survey Research Ethics Approval**

The researcher should fill out the Form and seek endorsement from the Department Chairperson or Unit Head. The endorsed Form, together with other relevant documents (e.g., consent form, a copy of the research questionnaire, and research proposal), should be sent to the appropriate *Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee* or *Sub-committee*.

For research projects requesting an expedited review, the researcher should provide clear and sufficient information in the Form so that the committee could make a judgment on whether the project in question is qualified for an expedited review. The researcher should also submit a copy of the research questionnaire or instrument to be used, and if unavailable, a detailed description of these instruments. Please note that the *Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee* is ultimately responsible for determining if a research study qualifies for an expedited review (i.e., exempted from a full review).

For projects that require a full review, the researcher should submit the research proposal, together with a completed Form to the *Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee*. The application should address, where appropriate, issues of informed consent (vulnerable subjects, undue inducement to participate, or deception of subjects), precautions in guarding confidentiality of sensitive data, and risks to subjects (psychological stress, significant discomfort, or damages in the event of disclosure of research data). The risks involved should be balanced against the potential benefits of the proposed research.

**vii. Research Studies Conducted by University Staff Members**

University staff members are responsible to seek approval from an appropriate research ethics committee before they engage in the data collection process. If the *Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee* is determined to be the appropriate channel, the staff member should obtain the Form from the secretary of the *Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee* (please refer to Section H of this *Guidelines* for address), or download the Form from the website of the Committee.

- a. For research studies conducted by members of the Faculties of Arts, Business Administration, Social Science, Medicine, and Education, researchers should submit their completed Form and related materials to the Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics Sub-committees at their respective Faculties (Please refer to Section H of this *Guidelines* for the Faculty's Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics Sub-committees).
- b. For research studies conducted by members of the Engineering and Science Faculties, the completed Form should be returned directly to the *Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee*. (Please consult Section H of this *Guidelines*).

**viii. Differentiation from Clinical/Human Research Ethics Committee (CREC)**

When you plan to apply for survey ethics approval, please check if your research subjects fall under the following grey areas:

1. In general, projects which embodied physiological measures on human subjects would be reviewed by the CREC.
2. Projects on epidemiological studies with a focus on the general population should normally be reviewed by the SBREC. If the epidemiological studies were "clinical" in nature or involved clinical samples, they should come under the domain of the CREC.
3. Health-related studies should normally be reviewed by the CREC.
4. Projects from the sports science disciplines involving physiological measures should normally go through the CREC, even though questionnaires might also be used.
5. Psychological experiments involving, for instance, eye-hand coordination, should go through the SBREC.
6. Non-physiological behavioral observations, including videotaping, even without involving survey and interviews, should be reviewed by the SBREC.

#### 04. Project Plan & Schedule

A project plan is set up to ensure the project is planned and agreed with the supervisor before the bulk of time and effort is committed. The plan should serve to summarize the result of a literature search and define the tasks to be completed and the timescales involved. Once agreed, the plan forms a framework against which to measure progress.

The project plan should start with a title page and contain the following suggested sections:

- a. **Aim-** a precise statement of what is to be achieved; no more than two or three sentences.
- b. **Background-** Explanation of how the project has come about, putting it in the context of previous work, and knowledge gaps in the field. This should be several paragraphs in length to include a few salient points on the theoretical background of the proposed work.
- c. **Study objectives/ hypotheses-** specification of the main tasks to be completed in this study.
- d. **Plan and schedule-** Describe the main study approach ( design and sampling), measurements, timeline of detailed literature review, conducting fieldwork, data analysis and writing up the dissertation. Realistic time periods should be allocated for each task.
- e. **Ethical approval-** specify the major ethical issues arising from the proposed work and specific plans of ethical approval ( such as indicating from which ethics committee the candidate will apply for approval, reference number of the application if any, proposed review date on the progress of ethical approval) +/- proof of ethical approval from relevant organizations.
- f. **Other necessary authorizations related to subject enrolment and data collection-** specify the field sites and potential subjects involved and propose the relevant head of unit(s) from whom an authorization should be sought + proof of authorization in writing.



The project plan will be assessed by the supervisor. The following **Project Plan Assessment Form** serves a guide for supervisors to rate the project plan and give constructive feedbacks to candidates:

**Table 1. Project plan assessment form**

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

	Unsatisfactory requiring major revision	Marginally satisfactory requiring minor revision	Satisfactory
Aim- precision?			
Background- adequate coverage on major areas?			
Tasks-Hypothesis driven? Concrete and feasible?			
Plan and schedule- realistic time-line and consideration of difficulties at each stage?			
Ethics approval from appropriate bodies			
Other necessary fieldsite authorizations related to subject enrolment and data collection			

Students should submit a copy of the research proposal, and documentation of ethics approval to the supervisor on or before October 29, 2017. Supervisors are expected to complete and submit the “Project Plan Assessment form” to our program administrator (Ms Sarah Chia; email: [pgmentalhealgh@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:pgmentalhealgh@cuhk.edu.hk)) or fax: 2667-8308. Our program administrator will send reminders to supervisors in early October 2017.

*Students will be awarded “pass grade” on MHLS 5302 only after successful completion of project plan as endorsed by the supervisor in the “Project Plan Assessment Form” (Table 1)*

## 05. Interim assessment

Interim assessment will be performed by research supervisor about three months before the deadline for submitting the final dissertation. *Our program administrator will remind all supervisors to submit interim assessment by the beginning of the second term.* The purpose of the interim report is twofold, 1. To review progress on the earlier parts of the project with formal feedbacks; 2. To ensure adequate preparation for submission of thesis.

The assessment should be based on continuous assessment (regular supervision sessions) and an interim report prepared by the student. We suggest the inclusion of the following sections in the interim report:

- i) Introduction and background- introduce the subject and indicated the latest research findings (literature review) at the moment.
- ii) Research Hypothesis
- iii) Methodology- summarize research design, stage of data collection
- iv) Interim results (if any at the time of submission)
- v) Results (if any at the time of submission)  
References (if any at the time of submission)  
Appendices (if any at the time of submission)

The **interim assessment** will contribute to **25%** of the total score on MHLS 5303 (Research Project II). The **“Interim Assessment Form”** (as set out below in Table 2) should be submitted to our administrator Ms Sarah Chia ([pgmentalhealth@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:pgmentalhealth@cuhk.edu.hk)) on **February 9, 2018** by supervisor.

**Table 2. Interim Assessment Form**

**Student** : \_\_\_\_\_ **Supervisor:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Assessed item</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
<p><b><u>Presentation and style of interim report</u></b>                      Is the material presented in a clear and well-structured way?                      Is the design consistent throughout, including using of fonts, styles, labeling of graphs, figures etc?                      Are spelling and grammar up to standard?                      Is the use of graphs, diagrams and tables sufficient and appropriate?</p>	
<p><b><u>Continuous assessment to date</u></b></p> <p><b>Review of present “body of knowledge”</b>                      Was the literature search carried out in an efficient manner?</p> <p><b>Project management</b>                      -Has progress to date been as expected in the project plan?                      -How were unforeseen problems managed?                      -Is the candidate motivated and apt to identify methodologic issues and take initiatives to discuss possible solutions timely?                      -Does the candidate show a high level of self motivation and independent working?                      -Is time management efficient?                      -(if applicable) Is collaborative work handled properly with clearly defined goals and division of labor?</p> <p><b>Study design, analysis and development of arguments (comment if applicable)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Were there significant elements of originality?</li> <li>- Was the study design appropriate?</li> <li>- Was there evidently a clear “grasp” of the problem and theoretical concepts?</li> <li>- Was the analysis carried out appropriately and adequately?</li> </ul>	

**Communications**

Has the work been reported adequately at all times?

Is the candidate able to communicate issues related to the project effectively during regular supervision?

Has an accurate record been kept throughout (logbook etc) (OPTIONAL)?

**Overall impression:**

Do you see that the candidate is fostering independent skills in scientific research?

**Global marking (out of 100):**

A > 73

A- 70 – 72

B+ 66 – 69

B 63 – 65

B- 60 – 62

C+ 56 - 59

C 53 - 55

C- 50 - 52

F (Fail) < 50

Score \_\_\_\_\_ (out of 100)

## 06 Dissertation

### **i) Types of dissertation:**

#### **a. Research Dissertation**

It is a report of an original piece of research with the following format:

1. Introduction and literature review
2. Materials and methods
3. Results
4. Discussion and conclusion
5. References

In submitting the research protocol, the candidate must provide evidence that approval has been obtained from the Ethics Committee serving his/her place of work.

#### **b. Systematic Review and metanalysis**

This is an overview of primary studies which contains a statement of objectives, materials and methods. It is conducted according to explicit, transparent and reproducible method:

1. State the objectives of the review and outline eligibility criteria;
2. Search for primary studies that seem to meet eligibility criteria;
3. Tabulate characteristics of each trial identified and its methodological quality;
4. Apply eligibility criteria and justify exclusion;
5. Assemble the most complete dataset possible;
6. Analyze the results of the eligible studies by using appropriate statistical synthesis of the data; and
7. State the results and conclusions clearly.

The Center for Reviews and Dissemination Guidance for undertaking reviews in health care published by the University of York, January 2009 provides more details.

### **ii) Length of the Dissertation**

Dissertation should not be shorter than **5,000 words and not more than 10,000 words** (excluding bibliography). The number of words should be stated.

### **iii) Format for submission**

-Two hardcopies of the dissertation should be submitted to *Ms Sarah Chia, Department of Psychiatry, CUHK; c/o Ground Floor, Multicentre, Tai Po Hospital, 9 Chuen On Road, Tai Po, N.T.* on **May 15-31, 2018**.

-The dissertation should be certified by the supervisors by signing the form given in **annex 1**.

-They should be properly bound. Only typewritten dissertation will be accepted. The typeface should be clearly readable and one-inch margins should be allowed on each side. Due attention must be given to the use of correct grammar and spelling.

-The documentation style of the whole dissertation should comply with that of the Publication Manual of the American Psychology Association (APA).

The following is a checklist for preparing a dissertation (*modified from G. Bordage 1989*):

**Title**

1. The title correctly represents the content and breadth of the study reported.
2. The title is clear and concise and gives importance to the study.

**Author**

3. The title, diploma, affiliation, and address of the author(s) are clearly indicated.

**Abstract**

4. The abstract covers each and every component of the study, namely:

Problem statement

Research question

Materials and methods

Results

Discussion, conclusion, implications

5. The abstract contains precise information.
6. The implications and benefits reported are commensurate with the results obtained.
7. Key words are listed and cover all aspects of the study.

**Introduction and review of the literature**

8. The goal or purpose of the study is clearly stated.
9. Key references are reported, and there is a clear relationship between the problem and the study.
10. The literature review provides a theoretical and methodological framework to the problem under study.
11. References to previous findings are accompanied by proper literature citations.
12. Important concepts and variables are defined clearly.
13. The pertinence of the study is presented.
14. A general overview of the study is presented.

**Materials and methods**

15. The variables selected for the study are described clearly and are appropriate, given the nature of the question asked.
16. The research/review design is described in detail.
17. The research/review design is appropriate and does not contain particular weakness.
18. The measurement instrument, including its psychometric qualities, is described clearly.
19. The population of interest and the sampling procedure are defined clearly.
20. The data collection procedure is clearly described.
21. The setting in which the study took place is described.
22. The data analysis procedures are stated in precise terms.
23. The data analysis procedures are appropriate.

**Results**

24. Specific data accompany the result statements.
25. Tables and figures are used efficiently.
26. The contents of the tables and figures are clear.
27. The Results section contains actual results only; it does not contain opinions.

**Discussion and conclusion**

28. The discussion covers all the debatable aspects of the study.
29. The discussion is directly related to the study reported.
30. The current and past findings are brought together in the Discussion or the Conclusion section.
31. The conclusions and practical outcomes of the study are commensurate with the design used and data obtained.

## References

32. The number of reference is reasonable.
33. The content of the paper clearly show that the references quoted were carefully read and well understood by the author.
34. The references are presented according to standard rules of publication (this examination asks for the APA standard).

## General considerations

35. The various sections of the paper are clearly identified and appropriate.
36. The sections are presented according to the directions in the most updated Guidelines for Candidates.
37. The terminology is uniform throughout the dissertation.
38. The tone of the paper denotes a rigorous approach on the part of the author.
39. The writing style is clear and pleasant; there are no spelling mistakes.
40. The acknowledgments are complete.

## iv) Evaluation of the dissertation

The program directors will send copies of dissertation to two examiners. The evaluation report will count towards 45% of the total score on MHLS 5303.

The evaluation report will be filed in the “**Dissertation Evaluation Report**” (Annex 2) and submitted to our administrator (Sarah Chia, email: [sarahccp@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:sarahccp@cuhk.edu.hk)) between **June 1, 2018- June 29, 2018**.

## v) Exit Assessment

**The “Exit Assessment” is a combined assessment of modules on “Research Project II” and “Clinical Supervision and Practice II” of the year 2 program of the Master of Science in Mental Health. The two components of the Exit Assessment are: i) Written Examination—50 Multiple Choice Questions to be completed in 60 minutes (5% of total score); ii) Oral Examination (25% of total score).**

The Exit Assessment aims at systematically examining the following attributes:

- a. In the professional skills related to mental health sciences:
  - a1. An awareness of the relative benefits, costs and risks of different procedures and treatments;
  - a2. Openness to change in one’s practice and beliefs in the light of demonstrated advances in knowledge;
- b. In research in mental health sciences:
  - b1. Adherence to the relevant ethical principles when involved in clinical research;
  - b2. Conformity to general accepted scientific principles, should the research be based on a thorough knowledge of the scientific literature, or be planned and executed according to established standards;



- c. In the professional role of being a health care worker serving in fields related to mental health science:
  - c1. Recognizing the obligation to maintain appropriate ethical standards in one's professional practice, and in those aspects of one's personal life;
  - c2. Seeking to develop constructive and cooperative working relationship with colleagues and other mental health professionals involved in the provision of care to patients;
  - c3. Expressing viewpoints with candor and respect in the event of differences of opinion;

### **Details of the oral examination:**

The panel of examiners will grade the oral examination that contributes to 25% of the total score on MHLS 5303 (Research Project II), as well as MHLS 5106 (Clinical Supervision and Practice II). It will be held in July, 2018 (tentative).

The panel of examiners for the *oral* examination shall be  
Program Directors  
Module/Research/Clinical Supervisor

### **Format of Exit Assessment:**

- a. 10 minute presentation of thesis.
- b. 10 minute discussion with examiners on areas related to thesis.
- c. 10 minute viva on areas related to case studies submitted, aspects on mental health care and services with special relevance to this locality. Ability to synthesize book knowledge into practical applications to different service settings will be emphasized.

### **The outcomes of the Exit Assessment as related to the research modules include:**

- 1) The assessment will contribute to 30% of the total score on MHLS 5303 (Research Project II), as well as MHLS 5106 (Clinical Supervision and Practice II).
- 2) The panel will also make specific recommendations to student on any mandatory revisions to the dissertation, based on the "Dissertation Evaluation Reports".

### **vi) Final submission of dissertation**

Three copies of the dissertation, permanently bound with revisions if any, together with an electronic copy should be submitted to Program Director of MSc in Mental Health, Department of Psychiatry. The supervisor is expected to check for satisfactory completion of revision and endorse the revised dissertation by signing the form in Annex I.

## 07 Grade calculation

**MHLS 5302-** “Ungraded pass” with submission of an endorsed “Project Plan Assessment Form” before deadline; or else the student will be graded “F” (failure) for this module.

**Total raw score on MHLS 5303 will be derived from the following formula-**

*Interim assessment report (25%) + Dissertation evaluation report (45%) + Exit Assessment (30%)*

*The raw score will be normalized by the OES to grades set by the University. The grade conversion to grade point (converted point) is shown as follows:*

Grade and Standard	Sub-divisions (if Needed)	Converted Points
A : Excellent	A	4.0
A- : Very Good	A-	3.7
B : Good	B+	3.3
	B	3.0
	B-	2.7
C : Fair	C+	2.3
	C	2.0
	C-	1.7
D : Pass	D+	1.3
	D	1.0
F : Failure	F	0.0
P : Ungraded pass	Not counted in the calculation of the grade point Average (GPA)	

## 08 Recommendation for Award of MSc in Mental Health

- 1) At the end of the second year program, 31 credit units have been earned (include 19 units from mandatory courses, 4 units from elective course and 8 units by research project) within designated period of study (normative 2 years, maximum 4 years); AND
- 2) 80% attendance of the lectures and tutorial

Term GPA= Total of (Converted Points x Module Units)/(Total number of Units attempted);

\*Cumulative GPA = Sum of (Converted Points x Module Units)/Sum of (Total number of Units attended)

**Annex I**

This is to certify that this dissertation is based on the work carried by Mr/~~Mrs~~/~~Ms~~ **Chan Tai Man**, under my supervision at the **Department of Psychiatry, The Chinese University of Hong Kong**.... The dissertation has been prepared/ revised ( delete whichever inappropriate) according to the format stipulated and is of acceptable standard.

*(If applicable) Proof of ethical approval for the project has been vetted by me on*

.....

*Certified by*

Supervisor : Name .....

Date.....

Signature .....

## Annex II

### Dissertation evaluation report

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Dissertation Title \_\_\_\_\_

#### I. Rating

1= Excellent    2= Good    3= Fair    4= Poor    5= \*N.A.

1. Importance of the subject \_\_\_\_\_
2. Attention to relevant literature \_\_\_\_\_
3. Clarity of presentation \_\_\_\_\_
4. Appropriateness of study design \_\_\_\_\_
5. Appropriateness of statistical methods \_\_\_\_\_
6. Interpretation of results \_\_\_\_\_
7. Attention to methodological limitations \_\_\_\_\_

#### II. Comments (should include suggested changes for improvement):

#### III. Global rating:

A	>73
A-	70-72
B+	66-69
B	63-65
B-	60-62
C+	56-59
C	53-55
C-	50-52
F (Fail)	< 50

Overall score (out of 100): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_

(Examiner's name and title:

, Student's supervisor)