4. Registration/Residence Requirements/Leave of Absence

4.1 Orientation

Each year in August, OSA arranges an orientation programme for new postgraduate students. The programme covers matters relating to academic study and campus life. Some of the topics are listed below:

- Postgraduate Studies at CUHK
- Improving Postgraduate Learning
- Honesty in Academic Work
- Using Your Library for a Successful Study at CUHK
- Mental Wellness and Postgraduate Studies
- Career Planning and Development
- Diversity and Inclusion@CUHKCampus
- Crime Prevention and Road Safety
- Tips for Non-local Students

New students are strongly advised to participate in the orientation programme to get acquainted with life in CUHK and - for non-local students - also with life in Hong Kong.

4.2 Student registration

An applicant who has been offered admission to a course of study at the University shall pay the fees and register at the University by the respective deadlines. Anyone who fails to pay fees and register by the specified deadline shall be considered to have declined the offer. An applicant who has been offered admission but wishes to defer registration, i.e. deferred admission, should submit an application before the start of the academic year to the Head of the Graduate Division for approval.

A student shall not be registered simultaneously for another programme of studies leading to the award of a degree, diploma or certificate at this University or at any other tertiary institution unless an application has been submitted in advance to the Graduate Division, endorsed by the Faculty and approved by the Graduate Council. A student in breach of this regulation shall be required to discontinue studies at the University.

4.3 Course selection

The Graduate School announces schedules for course selection and course add/drop on its website. Students are able to complete course selection and course add/drop where applicable through CUSIS. All relevant materials, such as study schemes and teaching timetables, are available at CUSIS. If students wish to register course(s) outside their own study schemes, they should make an application to obtain prior approval from the Supervisors and the offering department of the course(s).

Students are able to check their own course register at CUSIS during and after the course selection period.   The course register is tentative until approval has been obtained from the Graduate Division after the add/drop period.   Students will be informed when the final course register is available. Enrolment of courses with limited quota is subject to the Graduate Division's confirmation.   Students are therefore advised to check their final course register before attending classes.

Courses of each programme listed in the *Postgraduate Student Handbook* will be offered according to resources available each year and are subject to approval by respective Faculty Boards.   Students should refer to the "Teaching Timetable" on the Graduate School website for information of course offerings in the current academic year.

According to the Regulations, a student should take at least one course in each term, unless otherwise stated in the study scheme or approved by the Head of the Graduate Division.   Students who have already submitted their theses are not required to take any courses.

Only under special circumstances may a student apply for permission to withdraw from a course or enrol in another course after the add/drop period.   Such an application with justification and supporting documents, if any, should be submitted to the Supervisor and Graduate Division Head for endorsement and the Dean of the Graduate School for approval.   A student who does not complete a registered course without approval to withdraw from it will obtain a failure grade for the course.   Students are not allowed to withdraw from a course after the end of the term concerned.

4.4   Residence requirements

Residence requirements as defined below are applicable to all full-time and part-time RPg students:

(a) A student is classified as being in residence if he/she is attending courses as prescribed by his/her programme and receiving supervision on a regular basis.

(b) A student who is in Hong Kong except for absences not exceeding three weeks continuously and not exceeding one month aggregate in any one academic year is deemed to be receiving regular supervision, and is regarded as in residence provided that he/she is also attending courses, if required.

(c) A student who is not in Hong Kong is normally deemed to be not receiving supervision, and is regarded as not being in residence.   In cases where the student would nevertheless receive adequate supervision on a regular basis while away from Hong Kong, or where the absence from Hong Kong is related to an academic purpose, an application should be made beforehand via the Supervisor and Head of the Graduate Division for approval of the Dean of the Graduate School in order to regard the student as being in residence during that period of absence.

(d) A student may also be regarded as being in residence while being away from Hong Kong if the programme of studies approved by the Graduate Council and the Senate so provides.

Except for periods of approved leave, and except as provided in (b) to (d) above, all students are required to be in residence during their period of study.   Residence requirements may be waived for

part-time students for up to six months in any academic year, upon the written approval of the Supervisor and Head of the Graduate Division.

4.5 Normative and maximum study periods

An RPg student is required to submit his/her thesis and complete all other graduation requirements by the end of the normative study period unless an extension has been granted.   Beyond the normative study period, students will be classified as Continuing Students.   A student must complete the graduation requirements within the maximum study period, which shall include any periods of leave of absence and any suspension of studies.   A student who cannot complete all requirements within the maximum study period shall be discontinued from studies at the University.

The normative and maximum study periods of different research programmes are tabulated below:

Degree	Normative Study Period		Maximum Study Period	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Ph.D., D.Mus.				
- Students with a research master's degree	36 months	48 months	84 months	96 months
- Students without a research master's degree	48 months	64 months	84 months	96 months
Ph.D. (M.Phil.-Ph.D. Programmes)				
- Students with a research master's degree	36 months	48 months	72 months	84 months
- Students without a research master's degree	48 months	64 months	84 months	100 months
M.Phil.	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years
M.Mus.	1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years
M.F.A.	2 years	--	4 years	--

More details of the study periods can be found in the *General Regulations Governing Postgraduate Studies* on the Graduate School website. Students may check their own normative study end date and maximum study end date via CUSIS (https://portal.cuhk.edu.hk).

4.6 Shortening of normative study period

A student who wishes to graduate before the normative study end date may apply to the Graduate Council via the Graduate Division to shorten the study period, provided that the application is in line with the following principles:

(a) For students who are receiving PGS, the award period will be shortened according to the new end date;
(b) The application must be endorsed by the Graduate Division;
(c) The student must complete all programme requirements by the new end date; and
(d) The student should have passed his/her thesis without the need for major revision.

In any case, the minimum normative study period is 12 months for master's programmes and 24 months for doctoral programmes.

A student who is approved to shorten the normative study period should settle the full tuition fee for the term (or the 6-month period for Ph.D. students) that he/she has partially attended.

4.7 Programme change or candidature transfer

Students may apply to change programme or transfer candidature. Different scenarios and the respective approval procedures are described in the following table:
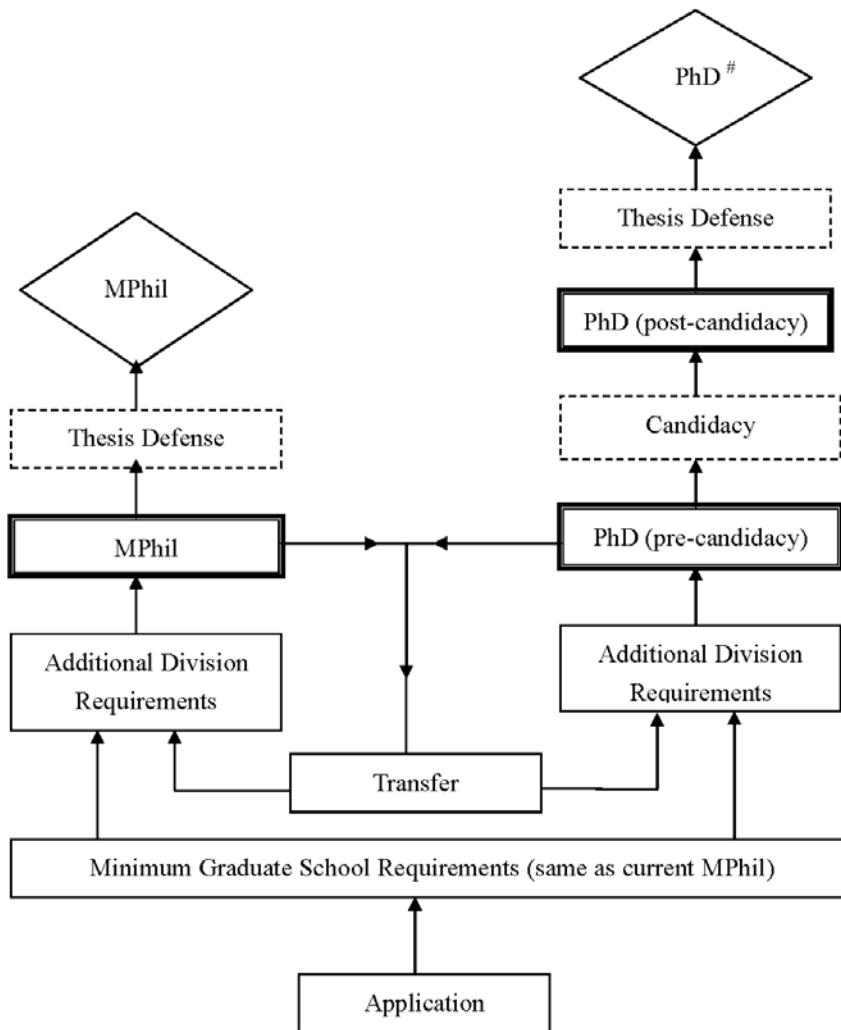
Scenarios	Approval Procedures
1. Change to another programme of a different Graduate Division	1. Heads of both Graduate Divisions to endorse 2. GCExCo to approve
2. Change from one master's programme to another master's programme in the same discipline (e.g., from MSc to M.Phil. of the same Graduate Division), where period of study carried over <u>is equal to or NOT more than 50%</u> of the normative period for the new programme	1. Supervisor/Programme Director to endorse 2. Graduate Division Head to approve and report to GS 3. GCExCo to note
3. Change from one master's programme to another master's programme in the same discipline (e.g., from MSc to M.Phil. of the same Graduate Division), where period of study carried over is <u>more than 50%</u> of the normative period of the new programme	1. Supervisor/Programme Director and Graduate Division Head to endorse 2. GCExCo to approve
4. Change of the mode of study (full-time/part-time)	1. Supervisor/Programme Director and Graduate Division Head to endorse 2. Dean of GS to approve
Non-articulated M.Phil./Ph.D.	
5. Transfer of candidature (from M.Phil. to Ph.D.): straightforward cases	1. Supervisor to endorse 2. Graduate Division Head to approve and report to GCExCo to note
6. Transfer of candidature (from M.Phil. to Ph.D.): for cases not meeting entry requirements but with publications	1. Supervisor and Graduate Division Head to endorse 2. Dean of GS to approve
7. Transfer of candidature (from M.Phil. to Ph.D.): other special cases	1. Supervisor and Graduate Division Head to endorse 2. GCExCo to approve
8. Transfer of candidature (from Ph.D. to M.Phil.)	1. Supervisor and Graduate Division Head to endorse 2. GCExCo to approve
Articulated M.Phil.-Ph.D.	

Scenarios	Approval Procedures
9. Transfer of candidature (from M.Phil. to Ph.D. (pre-candidacy) or vice versa	1. Supervisor to endorse 2. Graduate Division Head to approve 3. GCExCo to note
10. Transfer of candidature (from Ph.D. (post-candidacy) to M.Phil.	1. Supervisor and Graduate Division Head to endorse 2. GCExCo to approve

Regarding scenarios 10 above, transfer from the Ph.D. (post-candidacy) stage to M.Phil. stream is normally not permitted; exceptions will be considered by GCExCo. The transfer process of articulated M.Phil.-Ph.D. Programmes is shown in the diagram below:

4.8 Leave of absence

In case of illness necessitating absence exceeding three weeks, a student should submit an application together with a medical certificate signed by a registered medical practitioner to obtain endorsement

The Thesis Assessment Committee may recommend the award of an M.Phil. degree to a Ph.D. student. In this case full justification is requested for the consideration of the Graduate Council.

from the Graduate Division and permission from the Dean of the Graduate School.

Applications for leave of absence for non-medical reasons are handled as follows:

Leave of Absence	Approval Procedures
Annual Leave (i.e., 14 working days with pay per academic year)	Department Chairperson to approve
Academic Leave (i) In-residence leave (for conference and other academic purposes) • within 20% of the normative study period	 1. Supervisor and Head of the Graduate Division to endorse 2. Department Chairperson to approve
• exceeding 20% of the normative study period	1. Supervisor, Head of the Graduate Division and Department Chairperson to endorse 2. Dean of GS to approve
Non-Academic Leave (i) No-pay leave (i.e., leave with PGS suspended) • up to one year cumulatively	 1. Supervisor and Head of the Graduate Division to endorse 2. Department Chairperson to approve
• exceeding one year cumulatively	1. Supervisor, Head of the Graduate Division and Department Chairperson to endorse 2. Dean of GS to approve
• exceeding two years cumulatively	1. Supervisor, Head of the Graduate Division and Department Chairperson to endorse 2. GCExCo to approve

A student who has been absent without approved leave of absence or who is in breach of the residence requirements for a continuous period exceeding one month will be considered as having withdrawn from studies.

4.9 Student visa

As of 30 September 2022, CUHK's enrolment of postgraduate students is 14,372, including a substantial portion of international students from around the world, who must first obtain a student visa or other forms of permission by the Immigration Department of the Government of HKSAR for studying in Hong Kong. Under the refinement measures implemented in March 2014 in relation to Hong Kong's development as a Regional Education Hub, the length of stay for non-local students studying full-time locally-accredited post-secondary local programmes will be aligned with the normal duration of programmes, subject to a maximum of six years. All non-local students must comply with the conditions and requirements attached to their student visa.

The following are some highlights of the immigration arrangements applicable to non-local RPg students:

(a) Full-time students may take up study-related internships as arranged or endorsed by institutions, as well as part-time on-campus jobs for up to 20 hours per week, and off-campus summer jobs during June to August.   All students, local and non-local, are required to comply with the CUHK policy on taking up of part-time jobs and internships.

(b) All non-local students will be allowed to pursue short-term studies in programmes offered by Hong Kong higher education institutions with degree-awarding powers, provided that the cumulative duration of short-term studies should not exceed 180 days within any 12-month period.   All students, local and non-local, are required to comply with the CUHK policy on concurrent registration.

(c) Non-local fresh graduates who wish to apply to stay and work in Hong Kong after graduation are not required to secure an offer of employment upon application.   They may be granted a 12 months' stay without other conditions of stay provided that normal immigration requirements are met, and during which they are free to take up or change employment in Hong Kong.

Up-to-date information and further details about student visa can be found on the Hong Kong Immigration Department website at www.immd.gov.hk/.

4.10 Employment

According to the University Regulations, all full-time students are not allowed to take up any full-time employment, paid or unpaid, during term time.   Moreover, PGS holders are not allowed to take up full-time or part-time employment.   However, there are still chances of employment during their studies:

(a) Taking up of part-time on-campus employment by PGS holders – PGS holders may take up part-time engagements of up to 50 hours per academic year.   If the engagement concerned was requested by the students' Graduate Division, the ceiling would be relaxed to a total of 100 hours per academic year.   The approval authority rests with the Head of the Graduate Division. However, applications that exceed the ceiling should be submitted to GCExCo for prior approval.

(b) Taking up of remunerative engagements (full-time or part-time) by PGS holders – PGS holders may take up research or studies related remunerative engagements within their normative study period. Students are required to seek prior endorsement from their thesis Supervisor and Head of the Graduate Division, and approval of GCExCo before taking up the engagement. Subject to the approval of GCExCo, the students will need to take in-residence leave and relinquish or deduct the PGS during the period concerned.

(c) Taking up of full-time employment by full-time students – students who are approaching the end of the normative study period may take up a full-time employment if the student concerned already completed all programme requirements and submitted the thesis for examination, subject to the endorsement of the Supervisor and Head of the Graduate Division, and approval of GCExCo.

Non-local students should also refer to the previous section on student visa.