

# University Student Handbook

2023-2024

## General Regulations for Professional Doctorate Degree/Taught Postgraduate Degree/Diploma/Certificate Programmes

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## 1. Admission, Enrolment and Registration

1.1 Admission to taught postgraduate degree programmes is subject to satisfying the admission requirements of the respective programmes (refer to the section on "*Admission of Students*").

1.2 All students enrolled in the University are required to register for courses during the course registration period as specified in the *Academic Calendar* or by the Programme Office where applicable in accordance with the study schedule of their programmes in every term. Non-registration may result in a change of the student's study status to Unofficial Withdrawal. Late registration is subject to approval of the Academic Registrar (or designate).

1.3 (Applicable to taught postgraduate programmes only)  
Students should complete an on-line tutorial on avoiding plagiarism in the first two months after commencement of studies; otherwise, they would be barred from registration for courses in the next term. (Professional doctorate students should refer to paragraph 18.2 for requirements in research ethics training.)

## ***Registration of Courses***

1.4 New students enrolled in their first term with the University will be registered on courses which are required by their programme of study. Registration for the remaining course(s) shall be conducted by students during the add/drop period.

1.5 Starting from the second term, students will participate in an early registration exercise for the selection of core/elective courses. Students who fail to gain admission to some courses due to limited places are required to complete the course registration during the add/drop period (please refer to the *Academic Calendar* for the dates).

1.6 Enrolment records indicating the courses registered are available to students for verification after course registration.

## ***Adding/Dropping of Courses after Registration***

1.7 Adding/dropping of courses is allowed during the course add/drop period (please refer to the *Academic Calendar* for the dates). Requests for adding/dropping a course(s) after the add/drop period are normally not approved.

***Withdrawal from Courses after the Period of Adding/Dropping of Courses***

1.8 Permission to withdraw from courses after the deadline for adding/dropping of courses will only be given under exceptional circumstances, such as illness, personal or academic problems, or other unforeseen circumstances deemed acceptable to the Department/Programme and the Academic Registrar (or designate).

1.9 Application for withdrawing from a course shall be submitted via *BUniPort* at least four weeks prior to the term examination period. If the application is approved, Grade W will be assigned to the course.

***Double Registration (applicable to Postgraduate Diploma in Education programme only)***

1.10 Unless otherwise approved by the University, students are normally not permitted to register part-time or full-time for any other qualification either at the University or at any other local institutions of higher learning. Students breaching this regulation are subject to discontinuation of their studies at the University.

## 2. Period of Study

2.1 Normally, part-time programmes are designed to be completed in 24 months while full-time programmes are to be completed in 12 months unless otherwise specified. With special permission, individual students may extend the programme of study for a period of not more than 12 months.

### 3. Unit and Study Load

3.1 All students enrolled in the University are required to register for courses to be taken on their programmes in every term. Upon successful completion of the courses, students shall gain the respective units for fulfilling the graduation requirements. For students enrolled in a programme with parallel course(s), the maximum number of units gained from such course(s) for



counting towards graduation is 25% of the total unit requirement (rounded up to the nearest whole course unit) of the programme concerned.

### ***Unit***

3.2 The number of units assigned to a course is indicative of the total time spent by an average learner in all modes of learning, including lectures, self-study, and other teaching, learning and assessment components to achieve the learning outcomes of the course, normally over a period of one term.

3.3 In general, a single unit corresponds to 45 notional learning hours.

### ***Study Load***

3.4 Normally, students are required to register for all courses prescribed by their programmes, including elective courses, each year where applicable. The year-by-year listings of courses to be taken on different programmes are available in the University Information System (*BUniPort*) and the relevant programme document.

The unit requirements for different levels of taught postgraduate programmes are as below:

- a. a minimum of 48 units for professional doctorate degree level programmes;
- b. a minimum of 27 units for taught master's degree level programmes;
- c. a minimum of 18 units for taught postgraduate diploma level programmes; and

d. no minimum unit requirement for taught postgraduate certificate level programmes.

Each programme may deviate from this norm slightly. Study load on part-time basis normally ranges from 6 to 9 units per term while the number of units is about double for full-time studies.

Unless otherwise specified in the approved study plan, a student should not register for more than 9 units (part-time basis) or 18 units (full-time basis) in a term. Students who wish to register for more than the specified units in a term must obtain recommendation from the respective Programme Directors and approval from the Academic Registrar (or designate) during the course add/drop period.

3.5 With the recommendation from the Programme Director concerned and the Academic Registrar (or designate), students who have no registered courses(s) during the semester/trimester will be placed on leave of absence.

## 4. Attendance

4.1 Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes for which they have registered and observe any other participation requirement(s) as specified by their study programme. For provision of better support to students, individual course instructors may take class attendance.

4.2 Classes will be suspended in the event of typhoon or bad weather. Normally, classes will be cancelled upon issuance of Typhoon Signal No. 8 or above or Black Rainstorm Warning

Signal. Students should take note of the "Arrangement of Classes During Typhoon Signal No. 8 or Black Rainstorm Warning Signal" which can be found on the *Academic Registry web page*.

## 5. Assessment

5.1 Students are assessed by different assessment tasks, such as coursework assignment, essay, presentation, project and examinations etc., as specified in the programme document and course outlines.

### ***Academic Honesty***

5.2 Students who are found to have committed an act of academic dishonesty such as plagiarism, submission of material(s) for assessment which is not the students' own work,

the use of fabricated or copied data for assessment, shall receive an "F" grade for the course. In addition, the case may be submitted to the Student Affairs Committee for further action.

5.3 Students found to have committed academic dishonesty may be excluded from participation in the Course Feedback Questionnaire (CFQ) for the course concerned.

5.4 Only students whose names are on the course enrolment record are permitted to sit for the final examination of the course.

5.5 Students should sit for all scheduled examinations. Student failing to do so without official permission will receive an "F" grade for the examination concerned.

5.6 Normally, the end-of-term or year examination are scheduled within the University examination period by the Academic Registry as two- or three-hour closed-book written

examinations. For alternative arrangements, the course instructor must submit the details with the approval of the Programme Director to the Academic Registry for record.

### ***Eligibility for Term Examinations***

5.7 It is required that students should have completed the necessary course enrollment procedures, as shown in the University's official record, as one of the conditions for sitting the term examination of a course.

### ***Make-up Examination***

5.8 Students missing an examination because of extenuating circumstances such as illness, injury or other personal emergencies may apply in writing to the Academic Registry for a

make-up examination. Applications should be supported by relevant proofs and made within five working days after the missed examination.

5.9 In case of illness or injury, the application should include the "Form of a Medical Certificate" completed by a qualified medical practitioner certifying that the student is unfit for the examination and a medical certificate recommending the student to take sick leave on the date of the missed examination.

5.10 The following situations would normally not be considered:

- a. elective surgery scheduled to be held on the examination day;
- b. attending public examinations such as TOEFL, SAT, GRE, GMAT, etc., held on the examination day; or
- c. having forgotten or misread the examination schedule.



5.11 If the application is approved, the make-up examination will normally be arranged by the Academic Registry within six weeks after the examination period.

5.12 No further arrangement will be made if the student is unable to attend the make-up examination.

5.13 The course instructor should set a new examination question paper for the make-up examination. The relevant Department/Programme will decide if the grades for the make-up examinations should be lowered.

5.14 Students missing an examination who do not apply for a make-up examination or whose application is disapproved, will receive zero mark for that examination.

### ***Supplementary Examinations***

5.15 Students, who fail a course(s) in the final examination may, upon Programme's approval, be recommended to sit for a supplementary examination if the course(s) is/are taken in the final year and is/are not offered in the following term. The grade received in the supplementary examination will replace the failed grade for the course and the highest grade given is Grade C-.

5.16 In the event the failed courses as indicated in 5.15 do not have a final examination component, students may be given another form of assessment deemed appropriate by the Programme Director as an equivalent supplementary assessment.

5.17 An oral examination may be required for marginal/borderline cases.

## 6. Examination Regulations

6.1 Students are not allowed to sit for an examination if they:

- a. have not completed the proper course/section enrolment procedures; or
- b. have not settled any fees due to the University.

6.2 Students should read the examination timetable carefully and take note of the date, time and venue of the examinations. Having forgotten or misread the examination timetable is normally not an excuse to apply for make-up examinations.

6.3 Students should arrive at the examination venue at least 10 minutes before the scheduled time of the examination. Once they enter the examination venue, they should sit according to the seat number assigned to them.

6.4 Students will not be allowed to enter the examination venue after the first 30 minutes of the examination.

6.5 Students are not allowed to leave the examination venue after they enter the examination venue (except with the permission of the invigilator), during the first 30 minutes and the last 15 minutes of the examination.

6.6 Students must bring their Student ID Card (or HKID Card) and put it at the top right-hand corner of the desk throughout the examination. Students without any such identification may not be allowed to sit for the examination.

6.7 Before entering the examination venue, students must make sure that unauthorized articles/items (e.g. books, manuscripts, notes, papers and all kinds of electronic/communication devices, including smart watches) are taken out from their pockets and placed inside their bags. All electronic/communication devices must be turned off.

6.8 Once they enter the examination venue, students should place their bags under their seats immediately. They should also make sure that no unauthorized articles/items are put on the desk unless prior approval is given by the invigilator.

6.9 Students should place their stationery on the desk and their pencil case/box under the seat.

6.10 Students must not turn over the pages of the examination question paper and must not start working until they are instructed to do so.

6.11 Students should remain absolutely silent once they enter the examination venue. They must not talk to or disturb other students. If they have questions, they should put up their hands and wait patiently for an invigilator.

6.12 Students who wish to leave the examination venue temporarily during an examination session must:

- a. raise their hand and wait for an invigilator;
- b. leave only with the approval of the invigilator.

Before students leave the venue, the invigilator has the right to check whether any unauthorized articles/items have been placed in their pocket(s).

6.13 Students who have completed their examination and wish to leave the venue early during an examination session must:

- a. first check the answer book(s) and papers that they bear their names, student numbers, course code and section number (even if no attempt has been made to answer any questions);
- b. raise their hand and wait for an invigilator;

c. leave only with the approval of the invigilator.

6.14 At the end of the examination, students must:

- a. promptly stop writing, put their pens down at once, remain seated and wait silently until the invigilator has collected all answer books;
- b. leave only when the invigilator tells them to do so;
- c. not remove anything from the examination venue except personal belongings and the question papers (if allowed).

### ***Penalty/Disqualification***

6.15 Students have the sole responsibility to ensure that the examination regulations are observed and complied with.

Students who are found to have breached any of the examination regulations will be subject to penalty or disqualification.

6.16 Students who commit any of the following offences are subject to receiving an “F” grade for the course:

- a. Copying other students' work or any form of cheating inside or outside the examination venue;
- b. Having unauthorized articles/items on the examination desk, in the pockets or on their body after entering the examination venue and during the examination session;
- c. Removing articles/items other than personal belongings from the examination venue;
- d. Leaving the examination venue without permission;
- e. Disobeying instructions of an invigilator.

In addition, such cases of breaching examination regulations will normally be submitted to the Student Affairs Committee for further disciplinary action.



6.17 Students who are absent from an examination without an acceptable reason and proper documentation evidence will receive zero mark for that examination.

***Arrangement of Examinations on the Approach of Typhoon/Rainstorms***

6.18 Students should follow the arrangement of examinations due to bad weather conditions, which can be found on the *Academic Registry web page*.

6.19 All examinations postponed due to bad weather conditions will be conducted at the same hours on the first working day after the last day of the examination.

*Notes:*

1. *“Examination venue” is a generic term. When an examination is conducted online, examination venue refers to the online examination platform specified by the course instructor.*

2. *Students should join the online examination platform using the name as printed on the student card.*

## 7. Assessment Grading System

7.1 Letter grades are used to indicate the results of assessment.

The number of grade points gained by a student in a particular course corresponds to the letter grade.

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Academic Performance</u>	<u>Grade Point Per Unit</u>
A )	Excellent	4.00
A- )		3.67
B+ )	Good	3.33
B )		3.00
B- )	Satisfactory	2.67

C+ )		2.33
C )		2.00
C- )	Marginal Pass	1.67
F	Fail	0.00
I	Incomplete	Not included in GPA calculation
S	Satisfactory	Not included in GPA calculation
U	Unsatisfactory	Not included in GPA calculation
W	Withdrawn	Not included in GPA calculation
YR	Year Grade	Not included in GPA calculation
NR	Not Yet Reported	Not included in GPA calculation

Grade A (i.e. A and A-) indicates an excellent performance on all Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and a thorough mastery of the subject matter.

Grade B (i.e. B+, B and B-) indicates a satisfactory to good performance on all ILOs and the student is competent in knowledge of the subject matter.

Grade C (i.e. C+, C and C-) indicates a marginal acceptable performance on the majority of the ILOs.

Grade F indicates an unsatisfactory performance on the majority of the ILOs. Students with grade F in the first term of a year course is not allowed to continue their studies in that course in the following term(s). Courses with grade F must be repeated.

Grade I is a temporary grade to be given only when the required work for the course has not been completed due to unavoidable reasons acceptable to the course instructor. If the work is not completed within six weeks after the official announcement of the course term grades by the Academic Registry, or if the course

instructor does not submit an appropriate grade by this date, the grade I will be converted to grade F. Grade I is not included in the grade point average calculation.

Grade S is used to indicate satisfactory completion of a course. It is not included in the grade point average calculation.

Grade U is used to indicate unsatisfactory performance in a course. It is not included in the grade point average calculation and is applicable only to courses approved by the Senate.

Grade W is applicable to students who have received the permission of the Academic Registry to withdraw from the course after the deadline for dropping courses as stipulated in the *Academic Calendar*. The deadline for withdrawing from a

course would normally be four weeks before the commencement of the term examination. Grade W is not included in the grade point average calculation.

Grade YR is a temporary grade applicable both to the first term component of a year course and to courses that span over more than one academic year or one term. The YR grade indicates that the student will be assessed at the last term of the course. The grade will be changed to the same grade that the student receives for the last term of the course, or a grade different from that of the last term. If the student drops or withdraws from the course in the last term, the YR grade will be converted to grade W, or any letter grade, depending on the student's performance up to the end of each term preceding the last term of the course. Grade YR is not included in the grade point average calculation.

Grade NR is a temporary grade. The NR grade indicates that the grade for the course is not yet reported by the course instructor at the time the term grade report is prepared. Grade NR is not included in the grade point average calculation. The conversion of NR grade to a normal letter grade should be made within six weeks after the announcement of course grades.

### ***Grade Point Average (GPA) and Retaking of Courses***

7.2 Grade Point Average (GPA) is an important indicator of the academic standing of a student. It is obtained by adding all the grade points gained and then dividing the sum by the total number of units attempted.

7.3 The term GPA is calculated from all the grade points gained and the number of units attempted in a given term. The cumulative GPA (cGPA) is calculated from the cumulative grade

points gained and the cumulative number of units attempted.

7.4 Courses with grade F must be repeated. Students can at most repeat two such courses and each course can only be repeated once. If the course to be repeated is an elective course, it may be replaced by another course approved by the Department/ Programme.

7.5 Notwithstanding 7.4 above, students may be required by the Programme to repeat a maximum of three courses, in which they have received less than satisfactory grades (i.e. Grade C+ or below), to fulfil specific course and/or programme requirements.

7.6 The original grades or the repeated grades, whichever are higher, will be included in the cGPA calculation.

## 8. Academic Results



8.1 Student's academic results are officially recorded in the Academic Registry at the end of each term. Normally, a grade report will be released approximately five to six weeks after the examination period. Any inaccuracy or inconsistency should be reported within three weeks after the reports have been issued.

### ***Unsatisfactory Academic Performance***

8.2	Academic Warning:	Applicable to students with term GPA between 2.20 and 2.49
	Academic Probation:	Applicable to students with term GPA below 2.20
	Academic Dismissal:	As required by the Senate when <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Students' term GPA is below 2.20 for two consecutive terms;</li><li>- Students fail a total of three or more courses in their programme of study, or the accumulated failures reach three courses after allowable repeats (Please refer to section 7.4);</li><li>- Student fail to meet the cGPA requirement for graduation after repeating a maximum of three courses for which they have previously obtained Grade C+ or below. (Please refer to</li></ul>

	section 7.5); or - on other academic grounds.
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8.3 Students who have been placed on academic warning or academic probation are advised to schedule an appointment to meet with the respective Programme Director or designate to discuss and agree on a study plan for improvement. Any revision to the study plan and/or course schedule shall be confirmed within the add/drop period of the specified term as stated in the *Academic Calendar*.

## 9. Transfer of Units and Course Exemption

9.1 Transfer of units or course exemption may be granted to students if they have previously taken relevant and comparable course(s) from a recognised institution no more than eight years before the date of commencement of their studies at the

University; or if they have successfully completed a pre-approved exchange and/or study abroad programme during their course of study.

### ***Transfer of Units***

On the approval of the admission panel, the maximum number of units of advanced standing and/or transfer is 50% of the total unit requirement (round up to the nearest whole course unit) of the programme concerned, subject to the following:

- a. The maximum number of units for transfer before the commencement of studies should not exceed one-sixth of the total unit requirement of the relevant programme concerned, except for units earned from an HKBU postgraduate diploma programme. For such cases, unit transfer of a maximum of 50% of the total unit requirement of

a relevant Master's degree programme may be granted; and

- b. The units earned from an approved exchange and/or study abroad programme after the commencement of studies can be transferred, and is subject to a cap of 50% of the total unit requirement of the Master's degree programme concerned, inclusive of any other units transferred.

Students are not required to make up for the units transferred.

The units transferred from other institution(s) are recorded, and do not count in the grade point average calculation.

### ***Course Exemption***

Upon receipt of their applications for unit transfer by the admission panel, students may be exempted from taking certain course(s) in their study curriculum and required to replace the

exempted course(s) with other course(s) to make up for the exempted units to fulfil the graduation requirement.

9.2 Students may apply to the admission panel via the Programme Director for transfer of units or course exemption during the University's first add/drop period. The applications should be supported by relevant proof, including but not limited to course outline/syllabus and academic transcript for the course(s) seeking unit transfer or exemption.

9.3 For students who apply to undertake exchange and/or study abroad programme (exchange programme) during their course of study, applications for transfer of units should be made before its commencement. They are subject to two reviews. The first review is conducted prior to the start of the exchange programme. Students may be given approval-in-principle with or without condition(s). The second review is conducted upon successful

completion of the exchange programme. The approval is subject to (a) the students' satisfactory completion of their studies; and (b) fulfilment of the conditions given at the time of the first review.

9.4 Students seeking transfer of units or course exemption are required to have successfully completed the courses(s) concerned at a recognised institution, and attain a course result which is equivalent to B- or above in the University's grading system. Where appropriate, students may be required to sit for and achieve satisfactory results in the University's proficiency test(s) or qualifying examination(s) before their application for transfer of units is approved.

10. Leave of Absence, Suspension, Withdrawal and Dismissal

## ***Leave of Absence***

10.1. Students may apply to take leave of absence on a term basis, for a period of up to 12 months. This is granted in cases of health problems, financial difficulties, urgent family affairs or job-related problems. For students who are constrained by extenuating circumstances such as medical reasons to complete the application procedure, with sufficient documentary evidence, the Programme Director concerned may recommend such students to take leave of absence.

10.2. Application for leave of absence, together with supporting documents including an explanatory letter and the recommendation from the respective Programme Director, shall reach the Academic Registry at least four weeks prior to the term examination period. Late application may not be processed or may incur additional study related fees.

10.3. The Academic Registry will notify the students of the application result. For successful applications, students will be notified of: (i) the approved leave period and (ii) the course grade(s) to be assigned to course(s) enrolled during the approved leave period, where applicable.

10.4. Upon expiration of the leave period, students must resume their studies. For leave of absence approved on medical grounds, a medical document certifying that students are fit for study may be required before students are allowed to resume studies. If students fail to report to the Academic Registry according to schedule, they will be classified as having unofficially withdrawn from the University.

10.5 During the term period, if students have missed/will miss a class(es) and/or an assessment(s) due to illness, injury, or other personal emergencies, such students should apply in writing and



provide sufficient documentary proof(s) to the course instructors and Programme Director concerned for consideration within five days after the absence. It is the students' responsibility to seek advice/approval from the course instructors and Programme Director concerned on whether arrangement could be made for making up any outstanding academic requirements during the leave period.

### ***Suspension***

10.6 Students may be required by the University to have their studies suspended for a period up to 12 months as a disciplinary sanction.

10.7 Certain conditions may be applicable to the students in which they must satisfy before they are allowed to resume studies and/or after they have resumed studies. If the students

cannot meet such conditions, they may be required to further suspend studies or withdraw from the University.

10.8 For suspension period lasting for one term or more, a remark regarding the student's' suspension of studies will be shown on the academic transcript.

10.9 Upon expiration of the suspension period, the student must return to their studies. If the students fail to report to the Academic Registry according to schedule, they will be classified as having unofficially withdrawn from the University.

### ***Withdrawal***

10.10 Students intending to leave the University prior to graduation must apply for official withdrawal. Students leaving the University without following proper procedures will be considered as having unofficially withdrawn from the University.

No official documents will be issued to such students, and they will not be re-admitted in the future to any programme. Unofficially withdrawn students are required to pay a fee to reinstate their student status.

10.11 For official withdrawal, students must complete the clearance procedures at the department/programme office, Library, Office of Student Affairs, Finance Office and the Academic Registry. Students must settle the outstanding tuition fee and other necessary fees before an official withdrawal status is given by the Academic Registry.

10.12 Upon completion of all necessary procedures, the Academic Registry will inform students the effective date of the official withdrawal.

### ***Dismissal***

10.13 The University may at any time, by action of the Senate, require any students to terminate their studies at the University either on academic or disciplinary grounds, or on other grounds deemed as appropriate. The Senate may also dismiss students whose conduct or general influence is considered harmful to the institution. Such students will normally not be considered for re-admission.

## 11. Graduation, Awarding of Postgraduate Degree/Diploma/Certificate and Scholastic Awards

### ***Graduation Requirements***

11.1 The awarding of a postgraduate degree/diploma/certificate (by coursework) is on the basis of fulfilment of the following graduation requirements and the approval of the Senate. A candidate should have:

- a. completed the required number of units for an approved programme of study;
- b. submitted all coursework required;
- c. presented a written dissertation/project approved by the Department/Programme (if applicable);
- d. passed all requisite examinations; and
- e. obtained a cGPA of at least 2.50.

### ***Awarding of Postgraduate Degree/Diploma/Certificate and Scholastic Awards***

11.2 Individual programmes are responsible for checking the fulfilment of the graduation requirements of their students and the Academic Registry provides a counter-checking mechanism.

11.3 Students will normally be awarded, upon completion of the graduation requirements, an appropriate postgraduate degree with an award class based on their cGPAs as follows:

<u>Award Class</u>	<u>cGPA</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Distinction	3.67 or above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- At least 50% of the total units required for graduation must be gained by completion of courses which have a grade point per unit for GPA calculation.</li><li>- No course grade below B-</li><li>- No repeated courses</li></ul>
Merit	3.40 – 3.66	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- At least 50% of the total units required for graduation must be gained by completion of courses which have a grade point per unit for GPA calculation.</li></ul>
Pass	2.50 – 3.39	--

11.4 The granting of Scholastic Award shall be governed by the following criteria:

- a. The top graduates of the graduating class in a programme who have attained an award classification of Distinction shall be eligible for the award. The number of awards will be limited to one per every one hundred graduates in the same class.
- b. If the number of graduates eligible for the Scholastic Award exceeds the limit due to identical cGPA, all these graduates shall be awarded the Scholastic Award of that programme.
- c. The Senate reserves the right to refuse granting Scholastic Award to students who have breached the University's standards of conduct.

11.5 Specific programme requirements for individual programmes, the study schedules and individual course descriptions are listed in the *University Student Handbook*.

### ***Exit/Interim Award***

11.6 Where an exit/interim award is built into the programme structure as specified in the programme document, students who, for any reason, are leaving the programme and have satisfied the requisite requirements may be recommended to receive an exit/interim award.

### ***Diploma***

11.7 Graduates having completed all graduation requirements upon approval of the Senate will be given the relevant diploma as the official document of graduation. The diploma will be issued to students after they have completed the graduation requirements



and are approved by the Senate for graduation. Diploma for graduates with outstanding fees to the University will be withheld until the fees are settled.

### ***Summer Study***

11.8 Students who do not satisfy the graduation requirements may be allowed to take course(s) during summer for making up the unit/GPA deficiency for graduation. The availability of summer study is subject to the recommendation and arrangement of the Departments/Programmes concerned.

## **12. Student Enquiries and Appeals Regarding Academic Matters**

12.1 Students may address queries on academic matters to the Academic Registrar (or designate), the Dean of the Faculty/School, the Programme Director, or any member of the

teaching staff as relevant. The usual channel is for students to consult the course instructor when the query is about work in a particular course on a programme, the Programme Director when the matter is related to the programme as a whole, and the Academic Registrar (or designate) when the query concerns academic policies and procedures. If the query has the potential to become a matter for appeal, students should submit their official enquiries in writing to the Academic Registry.

### ***Student Appeals against Course-Based Assessment***

12.2 Students who wish to appeal against the result of course-based assessment should follow the following procedures:

- a. Students wishing to appeal against the result of course-based assessment including examination grades should first appeal in writing to the course instructor and Programme

Director concerned within two weeks after students are notified of the course grades.

- b. The course instructor shall further discuss with the Programme Director regarding the appeal request. The Programme Director may recommend the course instructor and/or an independent internal reviewer with relevant academic background/expertise to reassess the coursework and/or examination grades as appropriate. In any case, the course instructor or the Programme Director shall notify the student of the appeal result in writing within four weeks after receiving the request. Any change in the course grade should be reported to the Academic Registry at the same time.
- c. Students who are not satisfied with the Programme's decision on the appeal request may lodge an appeal to the

Academic Registrar (or designate) by submitting an appeal in writing within seven working days after receiving the decision or reassessment result from the Programme. The student is required to pay a fee for the appeal to the Academic Registry.

d. The Academic Registrar (or designate) shall review the appeal request, and determine if there are grounds for re-consideration:

(i) If the Academic Registrar (or designate) considers that there are insufficient grounds for the request, the appeal will not be accepted and the decision is final.

(ii) If the appeal is accepted, the Academic Registrar (or designate) shall reconsider the request in consultation with the course instructor and the Programme Director to make a final decision. If necessary, an independent internal and/or external assessor(s) with relevant academic

background/expertise may be called upon to aid the decision. The Academic Registrar (or designate) may convene an Appeal Panel to review the request on a need basis. In any case, the decision of the Academic Registrar (or designate) or the Appeal Panel is final. The Academic Registry shall normally notify the student of the appeal result within six weeks after receiving the request.

### ***Student Appeals against Academic Decisions (Repeat Study and Dismissal)***

12.3 Upon the recommendation of the Programme Director, the Senate may require students with poor academic results to repeat study or be dismissed from the University. Students who wish to appeal against such academic decisions should apply in writing to the Academic Registrar (or designate), giving full

reasons in support of the appeal; and pay a fee for appeal against the academic decision. The above procedures shall be completed within seven working days from the date of letter of dismissal. Upon receipt of the complete application, the students concerned will be placed on leave of absence. If the appeal is successful, students shall apply for resumption of studies via the respective Programme Office. Certain conditions may apply to the resumption of studies and the students must regain good academic standing in the regular term immediately following re-enrollment. Students will be dismissed from the University if the conditions are not met. If the appeal is not successful, the leave of absence will be converted to a dismissal from the University.

12.4 The Academic Registrar (or designate) will determine if there are grounds for re-consideration:

- a. If it is considered that there are no grounds for the appeal, the

original Senate decision requiring repeating study or dismissal will be upheld and the decision is final.

- b. If the appeal is accepted, an Appeal Panel will be convened to consider the case. A decision of the Appeal Panel to uphold the original Senate decision of requiring the student to repeat study or dismissal is final.

Any recommendation of the Appeal Panel to revoke Senate decision shall be subject to ratification by the Senate.

12.5 The composition of the Appeal Panel shall be as follows:

- a. Chairperson: Chairperson of the Taught Postgraduate Regulations Committee or in absence, a senior academic to be nominated by the Academic Registrar (or designate);
- b. One senior academic nominated by the Chairperson of the Appeal Panel;

c. The Academic Registrar.

## 13. Definition of Professional Doctorate

13.1 The professional doctorate programmes comprise both taught component and research component, each of considerable weighting, culminating in the submission of a thesis or portfolio of works to a requisite standard. The Professional Doctorate (PD) is considered a terminal degree, equivalent to the Doctor of Philosophy of the University, in a professional context.

13.2 The Professional Doctorate award has the following features:

- a. There is a considerable weighting given to a taught component: the taught component comprises an integral and key part of the programme, and the assessment of the taught component contributes directly towards the final award.
- b. The research component, also carrying a considerable



weighting, is normally in the form of a thesis or portfolio of works which will make an original contribution to knowledge within the relevant area(s) of professional practice.

## 14. Mode of Study of Professional Doctorate Programme

Professional Doctorate programmes are offered in part-time, full-time or part-time/full-time mixed modes.

## 15. Duration of Study of Professional Doctorate Programme

15.1 The length of professional doctorate programme is normally 3–8 years for part-time, 2–5 years full time and 3–6 years for mixed mode.

15.2 Individual programme documents should specify the minimum and maximum study periods for different modes of study.

## 16. Admission to Professional Doctorate Programme

The general prerequisites for admission are:

16.1 A Master's degree in a related discipline from a recognised university plus substantial relevant professional work experience, normally not less than 7 years;

16.2 Fulfilment of English proficiency requirement as specified in the specific programme documents;

16.3 Any additional entrance qualifications or requirements as stipulated by individual programmes.

## 17. Recognition of Prior Learning of Professional Doctorate Programme

17.1 Students may be given units for their prior learning through completed formal studies at doctoral level of study. Such unit transfer is limited to one-sixth of the total unit requirement from recognised higher education institutions. On recommendation by Programme Director and by special approval of the Academic Registrar (or designate), students may transfer units of up to 50% of the taught course requirement provided that the units were obtained from doctoral programmes completed within the University. No units could be transferred to the research component of the programme. Given unit transfer is allowed, the charging system should be stipulated at accreditation and stated in programme document.

17.2 For recognition of prior learning through the returning mechanism of students with an interim award, please refer to section 21.

## 18. Professional Doctorate Programme Structure and Progression

18.1 The minimum unit requirement for professional doctorate programmes is 48 units. The research component should comprise at least 40% of the total units.

18.2 Candidature of students is confirmed when students have satisfactorily completed all essential taught components, including a minimum of 12 modules of the online course "*Responsible Conduct of Research*", submitted and successfully defended a Research Prospectus. Components such as practicum, workshops and other relevant components can be trailed to the research stage. The programme document shall spell out the details.

18.3 Students shall be required to pass all elements of the taught components at cGPA 2.67 before the thesis/portfolio of works can be submitted for examination.

### ***Unsatisfactory Academic Performance***

18.4	Academic Warning:	Applicable to students with term GPA between 2.40 and 2.66
	Academic Probation:	Applicable to students with term GPA below 2.40
	Academic Dismissal:	As required by the Senate when the student's term GPA is below 2.40 for two consecutive terms; or on other academic grounds.

## 19. Coursework of Professional Doctorate Programme

19.1 All the taught courses shall be taken at the postgraduate level, with the majority at doctoral level. A maximum of 30% of the taught component can be at master's level and no undergraduate courses shall be allowed.

19.2 The taught component should include courses on research methodologies relevant to the profession to enable smooth progression to the research stage.

19.3 The taught component may include structured courses, seminars, practicum, workshops or other forms appropriate to the nature of the profession.

19.4 The University Assessment Policy should be adopted.

## 20. Research Component of Professional Doctorate Programme

### 20.1 Format of research outputs

While the output for the research stage is normally a research thesis, depending on the nature of the profession, this could be a portfolio of research outputs or creative works with a coherent

theme. Regardless of the format, the output must make an original contribution to knowledge within the discipline.

## 20.2 Length of Thesis

The length of thesis/portfolio of works can vary from programme to programme, having regard to the nature of the programme.

Normally it should fall between 40,000 and 60,000 words.

## 20.3 Supervision

- a. Each student should be assigned a Principal Supervisor, who is an academic staff from the academic unit of the University offering the programme, and a Co-supervisor, who can be an academic staff or a practitioner with relevant qualifications and professional experience.
- b. The appointment procedures and the role of supervisors shall follow the guidelines stated in section 6 of the "Guidelines

and Procedures for Research Postgraduate Degrees” of the *Handbook for Research Postgraduate Student*.

## 20.4 Examination

- a. Students will need to have successfully presented and defended their thesis or portfolio of works in order to graduate.
- b. The same composition of PhD examination panel applies. In case the PD programme is not offered by a department, and the Department Head is not relevant in this context, the Internal Examiners can be any academic staff in the relevant fields.
- c. Unless otherwise specified in this regulatory framework, the University’s normal regulations for the examination of research degree students shall apply. Where specific



programme regulations demand variation from, or amendment to, these regulations, this shall be clearly stated in the definitive programme document and approved through accreditation.

## 21. Scheme of Award of Professional Doctorate Programme

21.1 The awarding of a professional doctorate is on the basis of fulfilment of the following graduation requirements and the approval of the Senate. A candidate should have:

- a. completed the required number of units for an approved programme of study;
- b. submitted all coursework required;
- c. successfully presented and defended the thesis/portfolio of works;

- d. passed all requisite examinations;
- e. fulfilled the Senate-endorsed requirements (if any) prevailing at the time of the studies; and
- f. obtained a cGPA of at least 2.67.

21.2 Where a Master's degree as an interim award is built into the programme structure as specified in the programme document, students who, for whatever reasons, are leaving the programme and have satisfied the requisite requirements are eligible to be awarded the interim award.

21.3 Students who have obtained the interim award are required to surrender the award should they wish to continue their studies afterwards within a timeframe that shall be specified in the programme document. In this circumstance, all the units earned

could be recognised subject to the approval of the Programme Director who would decide whether the courses taken are still relevant.

## 22. Other Regulations and Requirements of Professional Doctorate Programme

22.1 The professional doctorate programmes are subject to the requirements stipulated in the General Regulations for Professional Doctorate Degree/Taught Postgraduate Degree/Diploma/Certificate Programmes and the thesis administration, the General Regulations for Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree unless otherwise stipulated in the regulations for Professional Doctorate Programmes. Owing to the self-financed nature of the programmes, regulations with cost implications for RPg students would not be applicable to professional doctorate programmes.

22.2 All other policies and requirements prevailing at the time of offering of the programmes should be adhered to.

22.3 Due to the different nature of and objectives of the programmes, programme-specific regulations could be developed.

## 23. Professional Doctorate Programme Monitoring

Since professional doctorate programmes comprise substantial taught components, they shall be kept under the purview of the Taught Postgraduate Regulations Committee.