

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG**

**Regulations Governing Postgraduate Studentships**

**I. Purpose**

The purpose of Postgraduate Studentships is to provide selected students with financial assistance in the form of a scholarship to study full-time for the degree of MPhil or PhD.

**II. Regulations**

1. Postgraduate Studentships shall:
  - (a) be awarded by the Board of Graduate Studies, on the recommendation of the appropriate Faculty Higher Degrees Committee, to selected students who (i) normally hold a Bachelor's degree at second class honours first division or above and/or Master's degree as appropriate from this University, or another qualification of equivalent standard, as determined by the Board which has sole and absolute discretion in this matter; and (ii) hold full-time candidature for the degree of MPhil or PhD.
  - (b) be tenable on an annual basis and renewable upon the conditions stated in this Regulation and Regulations 4 and 6 below being fulfilled. The maximum period of award shall be, in the case of full-time MPhil candidature, two years from the date of registration and in the case of full-time PhD candidature, the first three or four years from the date of registration, this being the period of study as specified in the "Offer of Admission" letter. In the event of transfer from MPhil to PhD or *vice versa*, the period of study for the new degree shall be calculated from the date of first registration for the initial degree. Studentship holders who are allowed to submit their theses earlier than the specified periods of study are eligible to receive the balance of the award until notification of degree conferment, on the condition that they continue to be registered for the degree, to be physically present in Hong Kong, and continue to perform their prescribed duties for the Department (see Regulation 4 below).
2. The annual value of the Postgraduate Studentship shall be determined by the University from time to time. Payments to Postgraduate Studentship holders shall be made on a monthly basis.
3. Postgraduate Studentship holders shall be responsible for paying whatever University fees are liable to be paid.
4. A Postgraduate Studentship holder may be required to undertake, under supervision, duties which carry educational benefits for the holder, as prescribed by the Head of the Department, Unit, Centre, School or Institute in which the holder is registered. The amount of such work shall not exceed 100 hours in any full twelve-month period (or *pro rata* if the period is less than twelve months), and the calculation of the hours shall include preparation time in all cases. The undertaking of this work forms a part of the Studentship contract covered by the value of the Studentship, and no other payment for these hours of work may be made to a Studentship holder. However, in addition to these 100 hours, a Postgraduate Studentship holder may work for a maximum of a further 150 hours per annum, as part of his/her Postgraduate Studentship duties, in return for a higher rate of stipend as determined by the University from time to time. The work undertaken in this capacity shall be relevant to the holder's research training, beneficial to his/her studies and subject to the concurrence of the supervisor(s). The holder shall not otherwise undertake any employment either within or outside the University during tenure of the Studentship.
5. The work referred to in Regulation 4 above is intended to constitute a part of the training of a Postgraduate Studentship holder, and the nature of the duties may for example include:
  - (a) assistance with research;
  - (b) assistance with scheduled laboratory, studio and fieldwork classes and with tutorials;
  - (c) assistance with the preparation of materials for scheduled classes;
  - (d) assistance with marking practical notebooks and answers from exercise classes; and
  - (e) assistance with invigilation of University degree examinations.
6. Continued tenure or renewal of a Postgraduate Studentship during the prescribed period of study shall at all times remain conditional upon the requirements specified in Regulations 1 and 4 above continuing to be met, and also upon:
  - (a) the holder continuing to make satisfactory academic progress; and

- (b) the holder continuing to undertake training duties as stipulated in paragraphs 4 and 5 above to the satisfaction of the Department; and
- (c) funds for the payment of the Postgraduate Studentship continuing to be available.

Should the requirement in either Regulation 6 (a) or (c) cease to apply, the Postgraduate Studentship stipend may be suspended, terminated and/or not renewed altogether, as appropriate. In case of non-compliance with Regulation 6 (b), the studentship may be reduced partially, subject to the provision of Regulation 9.

- 7. Postgraduate Studentship holders shall sign a declaration agreeing to abide by these regulations and agreeing that they will immediately inform their supervisor(s) *and* the Secretary of the Board of Graduate Studies if they cease to comply with any of the requirements specified in Regulations 1 and 4.
- 8. If academic progress is unsatisfactory, a written warning will be issued by the DRPC indicating the need for improvement within a period to be specified. The student may present his/her case to the FHDC. If progress continues to be unsatisfactory, the DRPC will recommend that the whole PGS stipend be suspended for initially up to two months. If the FHDC decides to impose the sanction, it will inform the student, giving at least one month's notice in writing, copying the letter to the DRPC Chairman and the Research Services. The student may appeal to the FHDC. The FHDC will, in light of such an appeal, review its earlier decision and determine if the sanction should be imposed. If the FHDC does not endorse the recommendation for sanction, it will notify the DRPC accordingly. Uplifting the sanction will be conditional upon demonstrated improvement to the satisfaction of the DRPC and the FHDC. A decision to resume the PGS stipend will in no way lead to the payment of stipend suspended.
- 9. If the Postgraduate Studentship holder does not perform the training duties as stipulated in Regulations 4 and 5 above to the satisfaction of the Department, a written warning will be issued by the DRPC indicating the need for improvement in performing the training duties within a period to be specified. The student may present his/her case to the FHDC if he/she so wishes. If performance continues to be unsatisfactory after the written warning has been served, the DRPC will recommend to the FHDC that an initial sanction in the form of a deduction of \$4,000 pm from the stipend value be imposed for a specified period of no more than two months. The sanction, if approved by the FHDC, will be preceded by at least one month's notice in writing to the student. The student may appeal to the FHDC. The FHDC, upon receiving the appeal, will review its earlier decision and determine whether or not the sanction should be imposed. The PGS holder will be required by the Faculty to undertake training duties during the period of sanction for a decision to be made on the subsequent resumption of the PGS in full or otherwise. Uplifting the sanction is conditional upon demonstrated improvement to the satisfaction of the DRPC and the FHDC. A decision to resume the PGS stipend in full will in no way lead to the deducted portion of stipend to be paid to the student.
- 10. In cases where the sanctions referred to in paragraphs 8 and 9 have not led to an improvement in performance to the satisfaction of the relevant department, the relevant sanction may be renewed for a further period to be specified. Suspension may in effect lead to termination of the postgraduate studentship, if academic progress remains unsatisfactory. The Board of Graduate Studies will hear appeals, if any, from students against the decision of the relevant Faculty Higher Degrees Committee. The decision of the BoGS on this matter shall be final.

### III. Administrative arrangements

- 1. Applications shall be made on the prescribed form, copies of which may be obtained from the Graduate School, the Academic Services Enquiry Office, or Faculty Offices.
- 2. The recommendation of students for the award of Postgraduate Studentships shall be made by the DRPCs of Departments, Units, Centres or Institutes in which the students are (or shall be) registered, and such recommendations shall be considered by the appropriate FHDC for recommendation to the Board of Graduate Studies.
- 3. FHDCs shall receive reports on the academic progress of Postgraduate Studentship holders and their performance of departmental duties; and shall be responsible for assessing progress and making recommendations on the continuation/renewal or otherwise of Postgraduate Studentships for the consideration of the BoGS.
- 4. Notices to deduct part of the stipend or to suspend the entire studentship are issued by the FHDCs on the recommendation of the DRPCs, whereas notices of termination are issued by the BoGS on the recommendation of the DRPCs and the FHDCs.
- 5. DRPCs will consult supervisor(s) concerned, as appropriate, before a recommendation on reduction of stipend, or suspension/termination/non-renewal of postgraduate studentship is made.

July 12, 2005

Revised on March 10, 2009

**Note:**

The Teaching and Learning Quality Committee and the Policy Board of Postgraduate Education approved in 2010-11 a policy that all new research postgraduate (RPg) students who register in September 2011 and thereafter and who are required by Faculties/Departments/other units to undertake teaching and/or assessment duties are mandatory required to complete a 24-hour training course “Certificate of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: Stage 1” offered by the Centre for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (CETL) before Faculties/Departments/other units assign such duties to them. The policy aims to ensure that RPg students engaging in teaching related duties possess the level of competence and skills required.

March 11, 2011