香港教育大學
The Education University of Hong Kong

GENERAL ACADEMIC REGULATIONS FOR THE RESEARCH COMPONENT OF THE RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE PROGRAMMES

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1. Supervisory Arrangements

1.1 Supervisory Arrangements for Professional Doctorate Students

The appointed supervision panel (comprising at least two members: a Principal Supervisor and at least one Associate Supervisor) will have sufficient expertise to supervise the research.

(a) To qualify as a Principal Supervisor, one of the following criteria should be met:

i. A full-time academic staff at the Education University of Hong Kong (EdUHK) with the rank of Research Assistant Professor or above;

ii. A full-time academic staff who has been granted the Early Career Scheme (ECS) of Research Grants Council (RGC);

iii. A full-time Lecturer who has obtained a doctoral degree with at least 3 years post-doctoral teaching experience and satisfied all of the following conditions:

- There is an academic staff with the rank of Associate Professor or above who has previously supervised at least one doctoral student as Principal Supervisor through to completion be involved in the supervision team as an Associate Supervisor and agreed to be the mentor of the Lecturer concerned; and
- The Lecturer concerned is required to attend supervisor training courses provided by the Graduate School in the first year of supervision unless he/she has already completed a similar training course before;

iv. A full-time re-engaged or adjunct academic staff who has been a Principal Supervisor before the re-engagement or adjunct appointment and there should be a period of at least two years from the proposed commencement date of supervision till the end date of the re-engagement / appointment.

(b) To qualify as an Associate Supervisor, one of the following criteria should be met:

i. A full-time staff at EdUHK with the rank of Postdoctoral Fellow (RGC Postdoctoral Fellowship Scheme recipient) / Lecturer / Research Assistant Professor or above; additional Associate Supervisors, if any, can be external to EdUHK; or

ii. An Honorary or Adjunct Professor appointed by the EdUHK and there should be a period of two years or longer from the proposed commencement date of supervision till the end date of the appointment period of the honorary/adjunct professorship.

1.2 Supervisory Arrangements for Research Postgraduate Students

The appointed supervision panel (comprising at least three members: a Principal Supervisor and two Associate Supervisors) will have sufficient expertise to supervise the research.

(a) To qualify as a Principal Supervisor, the following criteria should be met:

A full-time academic staff at EdUHK with the rank of Research Assistant Professor or above, as recommended by the faculty. For those taking on the role of Principal Supervisor for the first time, it is compulsory to collaborate with at least one experienced Associate Supervisor. This experienced Associate Supervisor must hold a rank of Associate Professor or above, who has previous experience in successfully supervising at least one doctoral student to completion (including in the capacity as a co-supervisor or an Associate Supervisor or equivalent).

(b) To qualify as an Associate Supervisor, the following criteria should be met:

At least one Associate Supervisor must be an academic staff of EdUHK with the rank of Research Assistant Professor or above.

1.3 All appointed supervisors should not be a candidate for any research degree, unless prior approval is obtained from the BGS.

2. Thesis Proposal Presentation/Qualifying Examination

2.1 To proceed to thesis research stage, students are required to pass the thesis proposal presentation (for professional doctorate programmes) / qualifying examination (for Research Postgraduate programmes).

2.2 Normally, professional doctorate students are required to satisfactorily complete all the taught courses before their thesis proposal presentation; Research Postgraduate (RPg) candidates are required to satisfactorily complete all core courses before their qualifying examination.

2.3 Professional doctorate students are required to present their thesis proposal within half the time (plus or minus one semester) of their normal period of study in order to progress in the programme. RPg students are required to present their thesis proposal at the qualifying examination within half of the normal study period after being admitted in order to progress in the programme.

2.4 Students who fail the thesis proposal presentation/qualifying examination after two attempts are not allowed to continue with their studies.

3. Annual Research Progress Review

3.1 Candidates and their principal supervisor are required to complete an annual report on their research progress in the past 12 months to the Graduate School. A half-yearly review maybe required. Failure to submit the report by the stipulated deadline may lead to de-registration.

4. The Thesis

4.1 For MPhil programme, the length of the thesis is normally not more than 60,000 words; for PhD programme, the length is normally not more than 70,000 words. For professional doctorate programmes, the word requirements of the thesis are in accordance with the specific course outlines.

4.2 The thesis shall be written in English or Chinese, as specified in the programme/course requirements. In cases in the areas of Chinese Language and Chinese Literature, the thesis can be written in Chinese. For candidates in other areas, they may request the thesis to be written in a language other than English whereby recommendation shall be made by the Head of Department to the BGS via the Graduate School. Only upon approval from BGS may the thesis be written in the language as requested. For Submission of Folios, please refer to the Guidelines on Requirements for the Submission of Folios (for RPg and EdD programmes).

5. Thesis Examination

5.1 Thesis examination for professional doctorate and RPg candidates shall only be conducted when all coursework requirements of their respective programmes are fulfilled.

5.2 The thesis examination is made up of two components: the written comments provided by Thesis Examiners (in Section 7) and *Viva* examination conducted by the Thesis Examination Panel (in Section 9).

6. Nomination of Thesis Examiners

6.1 Six weeks prior to the anticipated date of submission of the thesis, candidates are required to inform the Graduate School their intention to submit their thesis.

6.2 The principal supervisor shall be responsible for the nomination of the Thesis Examiners.

6.3 At least three Thesis Examiners shall be appointed to review and grade RPg theses. Among these, at least two must be External. For professional doctorate programme, at least two Thesis Examiners shall be appointed, one of whom must be External. In each case, there may be a maximum of one Internal Thesis Examiner. The Thesis Examiners must be at associate professor level (or equivalent rank) or above. The Internal Thesis Examiners should meet the appointment criteria of Principal Supervisor of the respective RPg or professional doctorate programmes. In addition, for RPg programmes, at least one of the appointed Thesis Examiners is at professor level or above.

6.4 The External Thesis Examiners are preferably of different nations / geographic areas (Chinese Mainland, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, Macao, China, and Taiwan, China are within one geographical area).

6.5 The selection criteria for Thesis Examiners are as follow:

i. the Thesis Examiner has the required expertise in the candidate's subject area;

ii. the Thesis Examiner has the required experience of examining postgraduate thesis for a similar type of programme as that leading to the candidate's intended award;

iii. the Thesis Examiner must be currently research active in the area related to the candidate's research project;

iv. the Thesis Examiner must not have had direct involvement with the candidate's research project; and

v. the Thesis Examiner must be impartial with no conflict of interest.

Any External Thesis Examiner must NOT:

i. be a current academic staff at EdUHK;

ii. be a staff member or graduate of the University in the past five years; and

iii. be a staff member of an institution at which any of the candidate's external associate supervisors are based, or at which the candidate

has spent part or all of their candidature.

7. Written Comments by Thesis Examiners

7.1 The thesis shall be forwarded by the Graduate School or designated unit to Thesis Examiners in confidence. Thesis Examiners shall be under an obligation to maintain confidentiality.

7.2 Candidates and supervisors must not contact Thesis Examiners during the examination process in matters pertaining to the thesis examination. Any correspondence related to the thesis examination must be sent through the Graduate School or designated unit.

8. Thesis Examination Panel

8.1 The Thesis Examination Panel shall be responsible for the assessment of the *Viva* examination and recommendation of the final grade to BGS based on the *Viva* and Thesis Examiners' written comments.

8.2 Members of Thesis Examination Panel shall be appointed by BGS and normally include:

i. Chair – Dean of Graduate School or nominee;

ii. Thesis Examiners:
(for research postgraduate programmes) three external thesis examiners OR one internal thesis examiner and two external thesis examiners /
(for professional doctorate programmes) two external thesis examiners OR one internal thesis examiner and one external thesis examiner; and

iii. *Optional*: Supervisor(s) - as observer(s) in the Panel.

8.3 Additional External Independent Reviewer(s) may be appointed by the Dean of

Graduate School for advice and serve as Thesis Examiners after consultation with the principal supervisor. The appointed Independent Reviewer(s) must satisfy the requirements of External Thesis Examiners.

9. *Viva* Examination

9.1 Candidates must conduct an oral presentation (*Viva* examination) after they receive the examiners' reports. The *Viva* shall be conducted in English; or in Cantonese or Putonghua when the thesis is written in Chinese.

9.2 Candidates are required to address recommendations specified in the Thesis Examiners' reports as well as comments made by the *Viva* Examination Panel during the *Viva*.

9.2 Members of the Thesis Examination Panel may conduct the *Viva* examination via virtual or tele-communication subject to the agreement of the Chair of the Panel.

10. Assessment Grades

10.1 RPg and professional doctorate students can have one of the following grades:

i. (a) Pass

(b) Pass with textual amendment subject to the satisfaction of the Dean of Graduate School or his/her nominee; or

ii. Pass with minor revision to the satisfaction of the panel member(s) nominated by the Dean of Graduate School; or

iii. Pass with major revision to the satisfaction of the Thesis Examination Panel; or

iv. Re-submission for examination; or

v. Not qualified for a Doctoral Degree but qualified for a Master Degree:

(for EdD candidates) MEd degree award

(for PhD candidates) MPhil degree award

vi. Fail

10.2 When a RPg / professional doctorate student is required to re-submit the thesis, the following grades shall be applied for the re-submitted thesis:

i. (a) Pass

(b) Pass with textual amendment subject to the satisfaction of the Dean of Graduate School or his/her nominee; or

ii. Pass with minor revision to the satisfaction of the panel member(s) nominated by the Dean of Graduate School; or

iii. Fail

11. Appeals Against Thesis Examination Results

11.1 RPg and professional doctorate students may appeal if:

i. There is evidence that the assessment was not conducted in accordance with the assessment scheme for the programme concerned; or

ii. There are procedural irregularities in the conduct of the examination (including any instance of administrative error) of such a nature as to cause reasonable doubt as to whether the result of the examination would have been the same if they had not occurred.

11.2 An application for an appeal against the result shall be made by writing to the Vice President (Research and Development) within 14 working days of written notification of the examination result to the professional doctorate or RPg candidate and an appeal committee will be formed. Recommendation of the appeal outcome shall be submitted to BGS for approval.

11.3 Members of the appeal committee normally include:

i. Chair – Vice President (Research and Development) or nominee;

ii. Dean of the relevant faculty or nominee; and

iii. A Professor or Chair Professor nominated by the Dean of Graduate School and appointed by the Vice President (Research and Development).

The members of the appeal committee must be impartial with no conflict of interest. In the cases that:

i. the Vice President (Research and Development) is in the supervisory panel of the appeal student, the Chairmanship shall be taken up by the President or nominee;

ii. the Dean of relevant faculty / Graduate School is in the supervisory panel, the Vice President (Research and Development) shall make a nomination on the membership.

11.4 At the discretion of the Vice President (Research and Development), additional External Examiners may be consulted for advice.

11.5 The outcome of the appeal can lead to one of the grades as stated in Section 10. The decision of the appeal committee as approved by BGS is final. The Graduate School will notify the student in writing of the committee's decision.

11.6 Where no eligible grounds are given or where no evidence is submitted to substantiate the claims, the student will be advised by the Graduate School and the appeal will either be turned down or the student will be offered the opportunity to submit additional documentary evidence.

12. Submission of Final Version of Thesis

12.1 Upon the completion of their studies, research postgraduate and professional doctorate students are required to submit an electronic copy of their theses to the University for archive and consultation by the public. The University Library

will also upload an electronic copy of each thesis onto online databases for internal as well as public access. Such electronic copies will be available for discovery and downloading via the internet.

12.2 Students with valid reasons may apply to the Graduate School for a restriction on access to their theses for a maximum of three years.