



# **Regulations for MPhil and PhD Research Studies**

## **1. Establishment of the Research Degrees Committee**

There is established for the purposes of these Regulations a Research Degrees Committee.

## **2. Research Degrees Committee (RDC)**

### **A. Membership**

The Director General of the University as Chair and members as follows:

- a. A member of the Academic Council, external to the UTM;
- b. Representative of each School;
- c. Any co-opted member as and when required, as approved by the Chair.
- d. Representatives of the Open University, Mahatma Gandhi Institute, Mauritius Institute of Education and Université des Mascareignes.

### **B. Requirements of members of RDC**

- a. Two (2) successfully completed research studies supervisions, with at least one at PhD level, or, in the case of those in the medical field, be a Medical Doctor possessing a postgraduate qualification in medicine;
- b. A wide range of research experience and research-based publications;
- c. Subject expertise to reflect the range of disciplines in which students are registered;
- d. These requirements shall apply to section 2A(a) – 2A(d).

### **C. Terms of Reference**

- (i) The Research Degrees Committee shall:
  - a. Ensure the relevance, feasibility, affordability and the benefits of the research to the University and the country

- b. Ensure quality in research degrees by considering research studies proposals.
  - c. Ensure that all procedures including arrangements for registration, supervision, transfer, appointment of Examiners and examination are properly and ethically adhered to.
  - d. Consider reports for approval or for onwards recommendation to the Academic Council.
- (ii) The Research Degrees Committee shall meet as often as required but at least once every semester.
  - (iii) The Chair and five members shall constitute a quorum.
  - (iv) Members will normally serve for a three (3) years period on the Research Degrees Committee. Changes of membership will be timed such that there is continuity on the Committee.

### **3. Applying for an MPhil/PhD Research Degree [Refer to flowchart]**

- (i) To be a research student of the University of Technology, Mauritius, a candidate must apply on the 'Application for Admission' form and subsequently register for the degree of:
  - (a) Master of Philosophy (MPhil); or
  - (b) Master of Philosophy with possibility of transfer to Doctor of Philosophy (MPhil/PhD); or
  - (c) Doctor of Philosophy (direct) (PhD)
- (ii) Students registering for MPhil/PhD must fill-in the 'Registration Form for an MPhil/PhD Research Degree'.

### **4. Registering for an MPhil/PhD Research Degree**

- (i) A candidate registering for MPhil/PhD shall hold a Bachelor with Honours with at least a Second Class in the First Division or a Master degree. A candidate registering for a PhD in the field of Medicine shall have at least a Masters in the same field as the proposed PhD with either a dissertation component or shall have published at least three (3) refereed journal articles.
- (ii) A candidate applying to register for PhD (Direct) shall hold an MPhil Degree or a Masters Degree by Research in the field. A candidate holding a First Class Honours Bachelor degree may also apply but will have to successfully clear an interview prior to be considered further.

- (iii) The candidate shall have a supervisor with whom he/she can discuss.
- (iv) Registration by the issue of a letter from the Students Affairs, whether full-time or part-time, may only take place following approval of the Head of the appropriate School based on the following considerations:
  - a. Acceptance of a preliminary research proposal;
  - b. the appropriateness and suitability of the supervision arrangements of the programme of research;
  - c. Availability of the research facilities and adequate funding;
  - d. the feasibility of the research within the time proposed; and
  - e. completion of basic compulsory training including on research ethics and integrity.
- (v) The Head of School shall have 3 weeks to come up with a recommendation on an application. The Students' Affairs shall have a further 3 weeks to issue the Letter of offer to the applicant.
- (vi) Prior to embarking on the Research, students will also have to undergo/attend courses on research methods, ethics and quantitative and qualitative research. The research student will have to submit within 6 months of the letter of offer a final research proposal for the consideration of the Research Degrees Committee, prior to confirmation for MPhil and PhD Research Studies. The research student will then receive a confirmation for MPhil and PhD Research Studies.
- (vii) Candidates registered for a research degree will not be allowed to concurrently register on another programme of study at the University.

## **5. Milestones in the MPhil/PhD Research Degree**

- (i) Master of Philosophy (MPhil) Transfer Report
 

The MPhil Transfer report, when completed, will describe the critical investigation, analysis and evaluation of the research topic.
- (ii) MPhil Degree
 

The MPhil thesis, when completed, will describe the successful investigation, analysis and evaluation of the research topic and will contribute to the advancement or application of knowledge in the subject.
- (iii) Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
 

The PhD thesis, when completed, will describe the successful investigation, analysis and evaluation of the research topic and will make a significant and original contribution to the advancement or application of knowledge in the subject.

## 6. Duration of Studies

- (i) The minimum and maximum periods of registration excluding approved interruption shall be as follows:

		<b>MPhil</b>	<b>PhD through MPhil</b>	<b>PhD (direct)</b>
<b>Full time</b>	Minimum (month)	24	36	18
	Maximum (month)	36	60	60
<b>Part time</b>	Minimum (month)	36	48	36
	Maximum (month)	60	84	84

- (ii) When a candidate faces circumstances which inhibit the proper continuation of the research, he/she may apply to the Research Degrees Committee with supporting evidence for the registration to be suspended until proper progress can be resumed. Such interruptions over the research programme should not exceed twelve months.
- (iii) Candidates, who are undertaking research and wish to change their mode of study from part-time to full-time, or vice versa, and/or to amend their research title or research directions, shall apply for such changes to the Research Degrees Committee with the recommendation of the Supervisor(s).
- (iv) A candidate shall register as a student of the University of Technology, Mauritius, subject to satisfactory progress, and continue to re-register on an annual basis until the submission of the thesis. At the time of registration or re-registration, the candidate shall pay such fees as may be determined, from time to time, by the University.
- (v) A student shall be automatically de-registered in case he/she has reached the maximum duration.

## 7. Termination of Registration

- (i) The Research Degrees Committee may recommend, for the approval of the Academic Council, the termination of the registration of students not showing satisfactory progress in their research work and/or who have exceeded the maximum duration of their studies.

- (ii) Research students who are not willing to progress with their research work may apply to the Research Degrees Committee for the termination of their registration.
- (iii) All communications should be addressed to the Research Degrees Committee Secretariat.

## 8. Supervision

- (i) A research degree candidate will have at most two Supervisors, both of whom shall hold a PhD of a full Professorship.
- (ii) A Supervisor for MPhil/PhD degrees shall have a minimum of three years post-PhD work experience, be in the related field of research and shall have published articles in peer-reviewed journals.
- (iii) One supervisor having the above mentioned parameters will suffice to carry out supervision of an MPhil/PhD student. If a second Supervisor is required, proper justifications should be provided by the first Supervisor to the Research Degrees Committee.
- (iv) When there are two Supervisors, one of them will be nominated as the main Supervisor by the Research Degrees Committee.
- (v) An Internal Supervisor would be authorised to supervise a set of maximum number of research students at any one time. The maximum number is as per the following table.

	Supervisor type			
	Main	Joint	Associate	External
Professor	6	3	1	1
Associate Professor	5	2	1	1
Senior Lecturer	3	2	1	1
Lecturer	2	2	1	1
Early Career Lecturer (not meeting requirements at Section 8(ii))	-	-	3	-

**Main Supervisor:** someone having more than 80% supervision responsibilities for a student;

**Joint Supervisor:** Those having supervision responsibilities in the range of 45% to 55%;

**Associate Supervisor:** Those having between 5% and 15% supervision responsibilities;

**External Supervisor:** Those acting as Supervisor for a student registered in another University, with the matter being considered as a consultancy.

- (vi) Each supervisor or supervisory team shall have the responsibility of ensuring the progress of its research candidate and will submit a detailed six months' report on the candidate's progress, addressing all concerns, to the Research Degrees Committee.

## **9. External Collaboration**

- (i) The University of Technology, Mauritius encourages external collaboration with government bodies, industrial, commercial, professional or research establishments for the purpose of research leading to research degree awards.
- (ii) Such collaborations shall be intended to:
  - a. contribute to the economic and social development of the country,
  - b. place the candidate and the University of Technology, Mauritius in the national and international research communities,
  - c. be beneficial to the external body collaborating with the University of Technology, Mauritius, and
  - d. develop the candidate's experiences and perspectives of the subject area.
- (iii) The external collaboration in (i) above may be formal or informal.
- (iv) Formal collaboration may include:
  - a. Supervision expertise, facilities, resources or financial support and access to information; the name of the collaborating establishment to appear in the candidate's thesis.
  - b. The description of the intended formal collaboration shall be established, in a letter to the University of Technology, Mauritius and submitted by the candidate, e.g. under formal link programmes, when requesting for registration into the MPhil or PhD degree programme.
- (v) Informal collaboration may typically include access, by the candidate, to facilities, resources or discussion and will be acknowledged in the thesis, and any resulting publication/work.

## **10. MPhil Transfer Examination**

- (i) A student registered initially for MPhil with possibility of transfer to PhD and wishing to transfer to PhD shall apply to the Research Degrees Committee when he/she has made sufficient progress on the work to provide evidence of

the development to PhD. This may be done after 12 months but not later than 24 months of full-time study or after 18 months but not later than 36 months of part-time study.

- (ii) The student should submit four softbound hard copies and a soft copy of the Transfer Report in line with the 'Guideline for writing Transfer Report' and the Originality report as per the Anti-Plagiarism Regulation, together with the 'MPhil Transfer Submission Form' duly signed by the Supervisor(s) to the Research Degrees Committee Secretariat. The Supervisor shall separately submit an undertaking that the transfer report has been found satisfactory for submission to the RDC.
- (iii) The Research Sub Committee shall consider the Transfer Report, in line inter alia with the following:
  - a. Duration of Studies;
  - b. Approval from supervisor(s);
  - c. Publications;
  - d. Similarity Index;
  - e. Structure and content of Report;
  - f. Thesis title; and
  - g. Completion of any mandatory course work or preparation seminars or training.
- (iv) Should the submission be found acceptable, the RDC shall make arrangement for a VIVA to be conducted for the student.
- (v) The VIVA for an MPhil to PhD transfer shall be done either by Assessors internal to UTM or those local Assessors who are external to UTM. The Assessors shall be proposed and chosen by the RDC.
- (vi) The Assessors shall submit a report to the RDC within four (4) weeks of the VIVA, explaining in details the reasons for their decisions, and proposing how the student can improve on his/her submission.
- (vii) Membership of the MPhil Transfer Assessment Panel shall be, as follows:
  - a. A member of academic staff from the candidate's School with a doctorate or a PhD holder from another School of the University, (other than the supervisor(s));
  - b. The Chair of the Assessing Panel, with a doctorate, appointed by the RDC;
  - c. One Internal or External Assessor with a Doctorate;
  - d. The supervisor or co-supervisors may be in attendance but will have no right to participate in the discussion.

- (viii) The Research Degrees Committee shall consider the report of the MPhil Transfer Assessment Panel and either request the student to make amendments and resubmit his/her work or else submit to the Chairperson of the Academic Council for his/her approval of the transfer from MPhil to PhD.
- (ix) The RDC shall set appropriate time frames for the student to submit amendments.
- (x) A Letter of Transfer from MPhil to PhD shall be issued to the student within 2 weeks of the matter being approved by the Chairperson of the Academic Council.

## **11. MPhil and PhD Examination**

- (i) At least 2 months prior to the expected date of submission of the thesis, after consultation and agreement of the Supervisor, the student shall submit to the RDC a notice of intention to submit, accompanied with a 150 word abstract of the research work.
- (ii) At least 2 months prior to the expected date of submission of the thesis, the Supervisor shall submit to the RDC the name of potential Examiners, along with their CV, available time window and agreement to serve as Examiners, if selected.
- (iii) At submission time, the student shall submit three (3) softbound hard copy and a soft copy of the MPhil/PhD Thesis, similarity index report together with the corresponding Submission Form duly filled and signed by the Supervisor(s), to the Research Degrees Committee.
- (iv) The Research Degrees Committee shall consider the MPhil/PhD Thesis, in line with the following, inter alia:
  - a. Duration of Studies;
  - b. Follow-up of MPhil Transfer Assessment recommendations (if any);
  - c. Approval and detailed report of Supervisor(s);
  - d. Publications;
  - e. Similarity Index;
  - f. Potential list of Examiners, as submitted by Supervisor(s); and
  - g. Thesis Title
- (v) The Research Degrees Committee shall appoint the Examination Panel.
- (vi) Membership of the MPhil/PhD Examination Panel shall be as follows:

- a. A Chair, holder of a PhD with at least 5 years of post doctoral experience and having demonstrated the capability to conduct independent quality research;
  - b. Two Examiners external to UTM, one having experience in research in the general area of the candidate's thesis and the other with experience as a specialist in the topic(s) being examined;
  - c. No Examiner shall have acted previously as the candidate's supervisor or have had previous active collaboration of any kind with the candidate; and
  - d. Supervisor(s) may be in attendance.
- (vii) Each Examiner shall read and examine the thesis and submit within one month, on the PhD Exam Preliminary Report Form, an independent report before any oral or alternative examination is held.
  - (viii) In case of disagreement between the Examiners, the majority vote shall take precedence. In case of unsuccessful outcome even then, the Research Degrees Committee shall appoint a further External Examiner.
  - (ix) The Examination Panel shall conduct the Examinations, and submit its outcome to the Research Degrees Committee, together with the 'PhD Exam Joint Summary Report' duly filled and signed on the same day as the examinations.
  - (x) The Research Degrees Committee shall consider the report of the Exam Panel and shall submit its recommendations to the Academic Council within 4 weeks. Any amendments requested by the Examination Panel shall be sent directly to the student to act upon.

## 12. The Oral Examination

- (i) During the oral examination, which may be either face to face or by an online method, the examiners should seek to establish whether all the requirements for a thesis submitted for the MPhil/ PhD have been met and that the thesis is genuinely the work of the candidate.
- (ii) Viva Voce should be conducted, in such a way that the candidate has adequate opportunity, encouragement and time to explain his/her research and to defend the thesis. It is recommended that, during a long oral examination, examiners should allow short break(s) at appropriate point(s).
- (iii) Supervisors may attend the oral examination and may participate in the discussion **if and only if** invited to do so by the Examiners.
- (iv) Supervisor (s) shall withdraw from the examination room prior to the deliberations of the Examiners on the outcome of the oral examination.

- (v) Following the oral examination, the Examiners shall submit on the same day, a report on the Examiners' Joint Summary Report Form and make recommendation (s) to the Research Degrees Committee.
- (vi) Where a candidate of the University of Technology, Mauritius wishes the thesis to remain confidential for a period of time after completion of the work, an application shall be made to the Research Degrees Committee for its approval at the time of submission.
- (vii) An approved period of confidentiality shall not exceed two years from the date of the oral examination.

### 13. MPhil/PhD Thesis

- (i) The thesis shall be written and defended in English.
- (ii) As a general guide, the text of the thesis should normally not exceed the following lengths:

	Word Limit	Subject Area
MPhil	20,000	Science, Technology and Engineering
PhD	40,000	
MPhil	40,000	Business Studies, Environmental Studies, Financial Studies
PhD	80,000	Human Resource Management, Public Sector Administration, Social Studies, Tourism & Hospitality Management

- (iii) After completion of the examination, the candidate shall submit one hard-bound copy and one soft copy of the final thesis with any required corrections to the Research Degrees Committee for onward transmission to the Registrar.
- (iv) The University will not issue the Candidate's degree certificate until it has received the final hard-bound and soft copy and that the examiners/supervisor(s) have confirmed that any required amendments have been included. The hard bound copy will be forwarded to the Resource Centre for an eventual access to other students.
- (v) More details are available in the 'Guidelines for writing an MPhil/PhD Thesis.

### 14. MPhil and PhD Examiners' Recommendations

- (i) Following the examinations, the Examiners may recommend to the Research Degrees Committee that:

- a. the candidate be awarded the degree;
  - b. the candidate be awarded the degree subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis;
  - c. the candidate be awarded the degree subject to substantive amendments being made to the thesis;
  - d. the candidate be required to re-submit for the degree and be re-examined, with or without an oral examination;
  - e. in the case of a PhD examination, the candidate be awarded a PhD degree or a degree of MPhil with or without amendments;
  - f. the candidate not be awarded a degree and not be called to be examined again.
- (ii) The Research Degrees Committee shall consider the outcomes of the examination and shall make its recommendation to the Academic Council, along with standardized timescales for cases where amendments or a resubmission is recommended.
  - (iii) Amendments shall be requested directly from the students without the need to go to the Academic Council.
  - (iv) The Academic Council shall decide on the recommendations of the Research Degrees Committee.

## **15. Research Publications**

- (i) For transfer from an MPhil to PhD, the research student shall have authored at least one publication in a refereed journal, with the Supervisor(s), and with the student as the main author.
- (ii) Prior to graduating with a PhD, the research student shall have authored at least two publications in a refereed journal, with the Supervisor(s), and with the student as the main author.

## **16. Anti-Plagiarism Policy**

- (i) The University considers plagiarism as an act of intellectual and academic dishonesty and shall, under no circumstance, accept or tolerate any case of plagiarism.
- (ii) Plagiarism is defined as the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own, even unintentionally, or by failing to acknowledge the author(s)/source of a work.

- (iii) The University shall provide the appropriate tools to academic staff and students to determine the extent of similarity with existing work, so that a fair degree of plagiarism, if any, can be made.
- (iv) More details are available in the Regulations on Anti-Plagiarism.