

2. MONITORING OF MPhil, MPhil/PhD and PhD RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

2.1 Introduction

This section provides guidelines to ensure that postgraduate research students make good, steady and satisfactory progress at different stages during their registration periods.

The successful completion of a postgraduate research programme within a proper and concerted reasonable length of time lies with (i) the student, (ii) the supervisor(s) (iii) the Faculty/Centre concerned and the University.

2.2 Formal Mechanism

All students are required to submit progress reports on their completed work on a six-monthly basis and fill in the Student Progress Form (SPF) duly signed by the student and supervisor(s). These submissions shall constitute the formal mechanism by which the Research Programmes are monitored. The progress reports and the SPFs will have to be submitted two months prior to the start of the semester to allow sufficient time for processing by FRC/LLCRC (see 2.2.3). The student and supervisor(s) may also wish to bring any urgent issues to the attention of the Dean of Faculty/Director of Centre outside the six-monthly evaluation periods. The Dean of Faculty/Director of Centre shall then refer the matter to the FRC/LLCRC.

2.2.1 Progress Reports

The submission of progress reports shall provide the required framework for the Faculties /LLC to monitor, amongst others, the progress of the student's research; quality of supervision; provision of resources and other research facilities; and (where applicable) feedback to research-funding bodies and other Scholarship Awarding Institutions on the use of funds.

The progress reports will be as follows:

- (i) an 'abridged' report every six months [except at the end of the first year of the period of study – see (ii)]. This report, not exceeding 10 pages, must comment, amongst others, on the progress (versus the Gantt's chart), any shortcomings, coursework undertaken, seminars attended/given, poster/paper presented, safety issues, etc., and;
- (ii) a more detailed report of 30-40 pages, in the format of a 'mini-dissertation' (spiral bound) to be considered for re-registration and to be submitted only at the end of the first year of the period of study.

2.2.2 Student Progress Form (SPF)

Students are requested to fill in the SPF form in consultation with their supervisor(s). All completed SPFs together with the progress reports must be submitted to the FRC/LLCRC.

The SPF form enables the FRC/LLCRC:

- To review the progress achieved, and the problems encountered (including supervision, provision of resources, safety issues, etc.);
- To assess the future plan of work;
- To ensure that stages in the research programme have been reached, as initially set (e.g. literature review, collation of data, analysis of data, etc.);
- To anticipate feasibility of completion of the project in the prescribed time frame.

The SPF also allows the supervisor(s) to make specific comments on:

- Student's diligence at work;
- Regularity of student's interaction with supervisor(s);
- Progress achieved and problems encountered (including supervision, provision of resources, safety issues, etc.);
- Student's progress in research;
- Problems (and nature thereof) affecting progress of research work;
- Status to be given to registration (e.g. conversion to PhD Programme, termination of registration, leave of absence, etc.);
- Research project-related activities (e.g. poster presentation, seminar, etc.);
- Anticipated completion date (if applicable).

2.2.3 Role of the Faculty Research Committee (FRC)/Lifelong Learning Cluster Research Committee (LLCRC)

The FRC/LLCRC shall act on the Progress Reports, SPFs and any other reports received from the student/supervisor(s). The FRC/LLCRC shall make recommendations to Faculty Board/LLC Board on the status of the student's registration and the Re-enrolment of the student.

The FRC/LLCRC shall make recommendations on:

- (i) Transfer to PhD:
Recommended for external assessment on the basis of evidence from student and supervisor(s) on:
 - Extent of results achieved and contribution to area of knowledge
 - Orientation of proposed research work for doctoral studies
 - Contribution of proposed research work to original knowledge in area under study
- (ii) Ongoing registration - MPhil (or PhD)
Recommended Re-enrolment on Annual basis subject to satisfactory progress:
- (iii) Termination of registration:
Recommended Termination of registration when progress is unsatisfactory. Students shall be given the opportunity to appeal against the decisions

The FRC/LLCRC will also look into any case of plagiarism (see section 6).

2.3 Informal Monitoring: Departmental Mechanisms

2.3.1 Quality Assurance (QA) Procedures

The FRC/LLCRC may also wish to set procedures and mechanisms to ensure monitoring of a research programme. The Faculties (or Departments) will have to write down the desirable QA procedures.