Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health

Graduate Research Programmes

AY2023/2024 Student Handbook

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1. Introduction

1.1. Welcome

Welcome to the Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health! This handbook provides information on the School's Master of Science (MSc) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programmes. It contains important information such as University policies and regulations, programme requirements and procedures, and the facilities and support available to students. It is important that you read this handbook carefully and thoroughly. Any constructive feedback on the contents of this handbook will be most welcome.

The contents of this handbook will be updated regularly and every effort will be made to ensure that the information contained in this handbook is current at the time of going to press. If there are changes in policies, regulations or requirements, the School will notify students via email and provide students with the link to the latest version of the handbook.

1.2 About the Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health

Building upon decades of experience in research, training and practice in epidemiology and public health, the Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health (SSHSPH), under the National University of Singapore, was established in October 2011 as Singapore's national school of public health. The School is also a member of the National University Health System (NUHS).

The School aims to continually foster healthier communities in Singapore and the region, and impact public health programmes and policies through its robust educational programmes and translational cross-disciplinary research work on cohort studies and life course epidemiology, infectious disease research, health technology assessments, health promotion, workplace safety and health, health systems evaluation and health services research. An interdisciplinary approach, augmented by rigorous training, applicable research and regional partnerships, places SSHSPH at the forefront of public health knowledge discovery and practice in Asia.

1.3 Key Contacts

1.3.1 Programme Management

The School's Master of Science (MSc) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programmes are managed by a programme management committee and supported by administrative staff from the Education Office:

Graduate Research Programme Management Committee
A/Prof Liow Chee Hsiang Vice Dean (Education) Email: liowcheehsiang@nus.edu.sg
A/Prof Luo Nan Graduate Research Programme Director Domain Leader (Health Systems & Behavioural Sciences) Email: ephln@nus.edu.sg
A/Prof Alex Cook Vice Dean (Research) Domain Leader (Biostatistics & Modelling) Email: ephcar@nus.edu.sg
A/Prof Chia Sin Eng Domain Leader (Epidemiology) Email: ephcse@nus.edu.sg
Graduate Research Programme Administrator
Ms Yang Chunxuan Email: chunxuan_yang@nus.edu.sg Phone: 66012499 Office: Level 10, #10-01, Education Office

The **Graduate Research Programme Administrator** provides administrative support for the MSc & PhD programmes, and should be the first point of contact for administrative matters and general enquiries relating to the MSc & PhD programmes.

The **Graduate Research Programme Director** is responsible for all aspects of the MSc & PhD programmes and oversees the progress of all research students. All forms and procedures pertaining to research students will require the approval of the Graduate Research Programme Director and the Vice Dean (Education).

The **Vice Dean (Education)** oversees the MSc & PhD programmes and the rest of the School's educational programmes. The Vice Dean (Education) chairs the Graduate Research Programme Management Committee and makes recommendations to the University's Board of Graduate Studies.

The **Graduate Research Programme Management Committee** comprises the Vice Dean (Education), the Vice Dean (Research), the Graduate Research Programme Director and the Domain Leaders and is responsible for reviewing and making recommendations on the following:

- overall operational issues of the programme,
- management of the programme, including curriculum review and changes,
- management of programme courses,
- consider and review all potential applicants for admissions,
- review applications for scholarships and financial aid,
- make recommendations for awards and prizes and
- deliberate over any outstanding issues relating to students.

1.3.2 Research Student Representatives

The Research Student Representatives represent the Research Student Community and have a central role of liaising between the School management and the student body. Research Student Representatives should:

- Be responsible and mature
- Have no history of Academic or General Offences
- Preferably be a 2nd or 3rd year PhD student who is able to cope with coursework, research and GAP (if applicable) and has completed the PQE or is close to taking the PQE (Other year PhD student who has the passion to serve the research student community can also apply)
- Preferably based in SSHSPH (within Tahir Foundation Building), and is open to interact with students from different cohorts
- Have the support of his/ her thesis advisor to take on the role of student representation

The roles of the Research Student Representatives include:

- Act as the channel of communication between the student body and the School's management
- Attend Graduate Research Programme Management Committee meetings (upon invitation)
- Gather feedback from students on new curriculum/ policy changes, if any, and summarise the information and present to the Graduate Research Programme Management Committee. Inform the Committee of any other concerns by students, not limited to Academic Matters
- Be a point of contact/ befriender for new students, and welcome them during orientation
- Work with the Director of Student Life to enhance student life. Organize social events to bring the research student community together.

Research Student Representatives will serve for a term of one academic year, and can be re-elected for a second term. The incumbent student representatives are responsible for initiating the nomination process for the new representatives each year, facilitating the election process and ensuring a smooth handover to the new representatives.

Research Student Representatives are expected to embody the spirit of altruism and mentorship and be willing to go the extra mile to help their peers. The role will allow the individual to develop leadership, communication and management skills that will enhance personal and career development. However,

it is recognised that time and effort is required to be a student representative. Thus, student representatives who are international research scholars can clock up to 40 hours for GAP (Developmental Assignments) per term of appointment whilst those who are local research scholars can be exempted from up to 40 hours of teaching duties per term of appointment. Student representatives will need to submit a timesheet at the end of each semester to clock the hours.

Please see here for the contact details of the Research Student Representatives.

1.3.3 Student Counselling and Support

At SSHSPH, we understand that while campus life can be exciting and fulfilling, there can be stress adapting to the varying demands of a new environment and academic studies. We aim to make this experience less stressful so that students can enjoy their learning experience and adapt smoothly to their new environment.

We regard students' development, wellness and satisfaction to be of utmost importance. Do not hesitate to seek help when you are feeling overwhelmed or lost.

Through the following avenues, we are here to provide a listening ear and encouragement to help students mitigate the stress and overcome the various issues they might face. All counselling is free and confidential.

Student Counselling & Support
Student Support Manager Name: Mr Teo Mou De Email: mdteo@nus.edu.sg Phone: 66015101 Office: Level 10, #10-01, Education Office Name: Ms Leng Nur Ashikin Email: nurashikin.leng@nus.edu.sg Phone: 66011240 Office: Level 10, #10-01, Education Office
Student Life (Director) Name: Dr Ong Twee Hee Rick Email: rick.tweehee.ong@nus.edu.sg Office: Level 9, #09-01M
Student Life (Deputy Director) Name: Dr Cecilia Teng Email: ephtwcc@nus.edu.sg Office: Level 10, #10-03V
University Counselling Services Website: https://www.nus.edu.sg/uhc/mental-health/student/services Address: University Health Centre 20 Lower Kent Ridge Road, Level 2 Monday to Thursday: 8.30am – 5.30pm

	Friday: 8.30am - 5.00pm Closed on Saturdays, Sundays & Public Holidays.
Email:	ucs@nus.edu.sg
Phone:	6516 2376 6516 7777 (24-hour NUS Lifeline for students facing life threatening psychological emergencies)

NUS Care Unit (NCU)

If you or someone you know has experienced sexual misconduct of any kind, you can reach out to the NUS Care Unit (NCU) for support. NCU is here to lend a helping hand:

Website:	https://care.nus.edu.sg/
Email:	ncu_help@nus.edu.sg
24-hour helpline:	(65) 6601 4000

1.3.4 IT Support

Students who have problems with printing/photocopying access, school computers, network connections or card access within the school may approach the IT staff at level 8, #08-01D for help. Please see here for their contact details.

For all other IT issues, please contact NUS IT Care:

Email :	itcare@nus.edu.sg
Phone :	6516 2080
Location:	Level 1, Computer Centre Building

1.4 Facilities within Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health

Workstation

Full-time students will be provided with a desk in the level 9 student section and a locker for their personal belongings. Students who have submitted their thesis are not guaranteed a desk area and may be asked to move to accommodate other students. Due to space limitations, part-time students will not be given a desk and students who converted to part-time status during their candidature will be asked to vacate their desks.

Computer

Full-time students can request to loan a second-hand desktop computer, subject to availability. As these second-hand computers are of lower performance, thesis advisors are encouraged to purchase new computers for their research students using their research grants.

Printing & Photocopying

Full-time students who wish to have printing and photocopying access within the school will need to seek their thesis advisor's approval as the cost of printing & photocopying will be charged to their thesis advisor's research grant. Please check with the Graduate Research Programme Administrator for more information.

Printing facilities are also available at the Yusof Ishak House. For more information, please see here.

Card Access

All students will be given the following access to the teaching facilities at levels 8 & 9:

- Mon - Fri: 8am – 9pm
- Sat: 8.30am – 1pm

In addition, full-time students who are based in the School will be given 24/7 access to the level where their workstation is located.

Students who require access to the lift lobby meeting rooms will need to complete a form which can be obtained from the Graduate Research Programme Administrator.

Students who have problems with their card access may approach the IT staff at level 8 for assistance.

Booking of Meeting Rooms/ Teaching Facilities

Students who need to book rooms should approach the Graduate Research Programme Administrator for assistance.

1.5 Facilities at NUS

NUS Campus Map

The Campus Map is available here.

Accommodation

Information relating to on-campus or off-campus housing can be obtained from the Office of Student Affair's (OSA) website.

Students who are unsuccessful in their application for NUS accommodation may source for alternative private accommodation. Please see here for more information.

Library Facilities

The Medicine+Science Library is located along 11 Lower Kent Ridge Road, next to LT28 and LT29. Please refer to http://libguides.nus.edu.sg/ and https://nus.edu.sg/nuslibraries for the Library Guides and information on library services. Please also note the copyright matters with respect to photocopying of library materials as spelt out in the full set of Library Rules.

Canteen

The nearest canteen is Frontier, at the Faculty of Science. There is also "Eureka Taste" at MD6 and "Jewel Coffee" at MD11. For other F & B outlets, please see here.

Internal Shuttle Bus

The NUS campus is serviced by an internal shuttle bus (ISB) service that plies the entire campus. Information on the routes and timings can be found at all NUS bus stops and on the NUS website.

Sports and Recreation

Please see here for information on booking of sports facilities.

Outpatient Medical Care and Student Counselling

The University Health Centre (UHC), located at 20 Lower Kent Ridge Road, Level 1, offers outpatient medical care to all students. Student counselling services are also available at UHC.

Lost and Found

The Student Service Centre administers a Lost and Found Service. A lost report can be filed by accessing the online Lost and Found System. Staff and students can also view the lost or found items filed in the system.

NUS Co-Op

The NUS Co-Op sells a variety of items such as books, stationery, snacks, sundries, computer accessories etc. The stores are located at:

- NUS COOP@Central Forum – Central Library Building, CLB01-02
- NUS COOP@LT27 – Science Faculty – LT27, Block MD9

The notebook sales, repair and servicing centre is located at NUS COOP@LT27.

Parking at Campus

For information on parking at NUS, please see here.

Locations of ATM & AXS machines within the Kent Ridge Campus:

For the locations of ATMs and other self-service machines, please see here.

1.6 Academic Calendar

The academic year usually begins in August. There are two semesters in an academic year, and the period and duration of the semesters and vacations are indicated below:

Semester I	:	Early August to Early December (18 weeks)
Vacation*	:	Early December to Early January (4 to 5 weeks)
Semester II	:	Early January to Early May (17 weeks)
Vacation*	:	Early May to Early August (12 to 13 weeks)

***Please note that the university vacation periods do not apply to research students as research students are expected to work on their research projects on a full-time basis throughout the year. All full-time research students are required to apply for leave if they need to be away at any point of the year. Please refer to Leave Matters for more information.**

Please visit the Registrar's Office's website to download the latest academic calendar.

1.7 Student Card

Your student card, PIN and NUSNET account information will enable you to access not only physical facilities such as specific buildings/laboratories but also a variety of online resources via the NUS intranet. As such, please keep your PIN and NUSNET account absolutely confidential.

For information on loss/ replacement of Student Card, please see here.

1.8 NUS Email

All email communications from NUS and SSHSPH will be sent to your student mail only. Students may choose to redirect the NUS emails to their personal email account via the following steps:

Accessing your NUS student email:

i. Go to https://outlook.com/u.nus.edu
ii. Login using your NUSNET ID and password

Re-directing emails to your personal email account:

i. Go to https://outlook.com/u.nus.edu
ii. Login using your NUSNET ID and password
iii. Click on at the top right hand corner → Go to "Forwarding"
iv. Enter your preferred email address and click "Save"

Creating a Friendly Email:

i. Go to https://www.nus.edu.sg/ → Click on "Email" at the top right hand corner
ii. Click on "Friendly Email".

Forget your NUSNET password?

i. Please see here for instructions on how to reset your NUSNET password via SMS.
ii. Alternatively, you may email itcare@nus.edu.sg, stating your full name, student ID and attach a scanned image of your student card.

1.9 NUS Business Cards for Students

Students who wish to print NUS business cards may contact Ms Fong Mew Hoe (ephfmh@nus.edu.sg) from the School's External Relations Office for assistance. Each box of business cards contains 100 pieces and cost S$10.70 (inclusive of GST). The cost will be borne by the student.

1.10 NUS Student Insurance Scheme

All full-time students are required to subscribe to the university's medical insurance scheme. This scheme provides full-time students with basic medical and personal accident insurance coverage. Please refer to the UHC website for more information.

1.11 NUS Student Travel Insurance

The NUS Student Travel Insurance covers all NUS students travelling overseas for activities or purposes approved, endorsed, organized, sponsored or authorized by NUS. Trips must commence and end in Singapore. Students are required to keep proper record of the approval/ endorsement by the relevant approving authority in the Faculty / Department / Centre / Programme.

1.12 International SOS

NUS has engaged International SOS to manage travel and security risks for all students and staff on NUS-endorsed overseas trips.

You will need to download the International SOS App and create your own profile using the NUS Programme No: 02ASCA830500. The app will provide useful pre-trip advisories, and send you updates and alerts while you are abroad and provide support when you need help.

While abroad, check-in your location regularly so that you will receive support from International SOS when you need help or in times of emergency. You may also contact a medical or travel security professional for advice and guidance through the app. Please see here for more information.

1.13 Student Portal

The Student Portal is the NUS intranet for students. Please visit our school's page for forms and templates specific for graduate research students.

1.14 Canvas

Canvas is the NUS course management system. Students can access the course syllabus, download lecture handouts, submit assignments and watch recorded lectures, among other things. Please see here for the Canvas Student Guide.

1.15 Education Records System

The Education Records System (EduRec) is a student administrative system that integrates key activities of a student academic life cycle from admissions, course registration, student financials and progression to graduation.

To login to EduRec, you will need your NUSNET account that was given to you upon completion of Registration Part One. Please refer to the student portal for the user guides.

1.16 Notebook Ownership

NUS students can purchase notebooks at special prices offered under the Student Notebook Ownership Scheme. Please visit the notebook sales centre at NUS Co-Op @ LT-27 (next to Science Canteen) or see here for more information.

1.17 Software for Students

NUS students can install Microsoft 365 apps and selected software for free. For more information, please see here.

1.18 Qualtrics (web-based survey system)

Qualtrics is a web-based survey solution that is used by staff and students to create and distribute surveys. It has integrated graphics and statistical tools and data can be downloaded into Excel or SPSS. For more information, please see here.

1.19 nBox

nBox is an online storage space for NUS staff and students to securely access and share data any time, any place and from any device. Files you add on one device are immediately available in all your other devices. nBox has applications for your computer, phones and tablets. Each application offers a number of useful tools designed to make storing, managing, sharing, and accessing your files from anywhere as easy as possible. For more information, please see here.

2. University Policies & Regulations

2.1 NUS Personal Data Notice for Students

NUS takes responsibilities under the Personal Data Protection Act 2012 seriously. We also recognize the importance of the personal data you have entrusted to us and believe that it is our responsibility to properly manage, protect and process your personal data. The NUS Personal Data Notice for Students is designed to assist you in understanding how we collect, use and/or disclose the personal data you have provided to us, as well as to assist you in making an informed decision before providing us with any of your personal data. If you, at any time, have any queries on this policy or any other queries in relation to how we may manage, protect and process your personal data, please do not hesitate to contact our Data Protection Officer at dpo@nus.edu.sg.

2.2 NUS Code of Student Conduct

NUS students are expected to maintain and uphold the highest standards of integrity and honesty at all times, as well as embrace community standards, diversity and mutual respect for one another, both within the University and the wider Singapore community.

The Code of Student Conduct is intended to guide students' conduct in both the academic and non-academic aspects of their University life by providing an overview of the behaviour generally expected of them as a member of the University community.

One of the fundamental principles on which this Code is based is that of "Academic, Professional, and Personal Integrity".

In this respect, it is important to note that all students share the responsibility for upholding the academic standards and reputation of the University. Academic honesty is a necessary condition in the pursuit and acquisition of knowledge, and the University expects each student to uphold academic honesty.

Academic dishonesty is any misrepresentation with the intent to deceive, or failure to acknowledge the source, or falsification of information, or inaccuracy of statements, or cheating at examinations/tests, or inappropriate use of resources. There are many forms of academic dishonesty and plagiarism is one of them. Plagiarism is generally defined as 'the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own' *(The New Oxford Dictionary of English).* The University does not condone plagiarism.

2.2.1 Plagiarism Warning

Students should adopt this rule - You have the obligation to make clear to the assessor which is your own work, and which is the work of others. Otherwise, your assessor is entitled to assume that everything being presented for assessment is being presented

as entirely your own work. This is a minimum standard. In addition, the following guidelines will provide some assistance:

- When using the ideas, phrases, paragraphs and data of others in work presented for assessment, such materials should be appropriately credited and acknowledged, so that it is clear that the materials being presented is that of another person and not the student's own.

- The amount of detail required when referencing and acknowledging a source will vary according to the type of work and norms of the discipline. For instance,
    - Supervised examinations will require less detail in referencing and acknowledgement.
    - Papers written other than under examination conditions will require a full citation of all the sources utilised. While a particular style of citation is not prescribed, the citation should provide enough information for the reader to locate the sources cited.

- Research materials (including texts, graphics and data) obtained from the internet or other electronic resources should be treated in the same way as research materials obtained from traditional sources.

Any student found to have committed or aided and abetted the offence of plagiarism may be subject to disciplinary action. Plagiarism committed by graduate students will be subject to a higher level of scrutiny because graduate students have had ample or prior experience of academic practice compared to undergraduate students. Any complaint or allegation of plagiarism offence committed by a graduate student with regard to work submitted for assessment or any publications will be viewed as a possible "Serious" offence that should be appropriately determined by the Board of Discipline (BOD) after the relevant fact-finding has been rigorously performed. The student may receive a reduced grade (possibly even zero mark) for the relevant academic assignment, project, or thesis; and could receive a failed grade for the course. Any student caught plagiarising will be required to retain the plagiarised course as graded, and will not be allowed to exercise the S/U option for that course.

A student may not knowingly intend to plagiarise, but that should not be used as an excuse for plagiarism. Students should seek clarification from their instructors or thesis advisors if they are unsure whether or not they are plagiarising the work of another person. All students are also encouraged to:

- consult the resources compiled by the Centre for Development of Teaching and Learning (CDTL) on how to avoid plagiarism;
- use the service provided by the Centre for Instructional Technology (CIT) to help detect and prevent web-based plagiarism; and
- access online courses administered by the Office of Student Conduct

2.3 NUS Acceptable Use Policy for IT Resources

The NUS Acceptable Use Policy for IT Resources applies to the use of the IT resources owned, controlled or managed by the University, such as computer accounts, personal computers, servers, workstations, disk storage, software, administrative and academic applications, email, public folders, newsgroups, online discussion forums, dialup, network, Internet and databases, among others. All users who have been granted access to the IT resources, including students of the University, are to comply with this policy.

2.4 NUS Intellectual Property Policy

In addition to the provision of educational facilities at tertiary levels, the functions and objectives of the University include the promotion of research and scholarship and the advancement and dissemination of knowledge for the benefit of all. Consistent with its status as a publicly funded organisation, it is critical that the University ensures that the creation, dissemination and commercialisation of Intellectual Property is properly administered for the benefit of the public and the University. The NUS Intellectual Property Policy shall therefore apply to all Intellectual Property developed or created by a University member, including students, in the course of University research. The Industry Liaison Office manages all such issues.

2.5 NUS Do-Not-Call Policy

The University must comply with the Personal Data Protection Act 2012 (PDPA) and the Do Not Call (DNC) regime/framework. The PDPA aims to protect individuals' personal data against misuse, while promoting proper management of personal data in organizations. The PDPA requires that organizations collecting, using and disclosing personal data notify their consumers of the purposes of such data activities and seek the consent of these individuals. Personal data is defined as data about an individual who can be identified from that data. The DNC Registry will allow individuals with Singapore telephone numbers to opt out of unsolicited marketing calls, messages and faxes.

NUS must fully comply with the PDPA. To this end, NUS has developed a DNC Policy with our legal consultants to ensure compliance from our community.

2.6 NUS Student Confidentiality Agreement

All NUS students are required to acknowledge and agree to comply with the terms stated in the NUS Student Confidentiality Agreement. Students should keep absolutely confidential any Confidential Information, whether belonging to the University or other third parties be it in writing or verbally in the course of their studies, internships, attachments and/or student life at the University.

Unless express written permission has been given by the relevant authority at the University or the third party that owns or otherwise is in control of the Confidential Information, students should not discuss, release, retain, copy or remove any document or data in any format.

Students found to have made unauthorised release of Confidential Information may be subject to immediate termination of their attachment, internship, assistantship, departmental work (paid or unpaid), or such other disciplinary action as the University may deem appropriate.

2.7 NUS Software Terms of Use

All NUS students are required to read and accept the NUS Software Terms of Use before downloading, installing, accessing and/or using any information technology resources.

2.8 Student Discipline

Discipline with respect to students is governed by the University's Statutes and Regulations. Any student who is alleged to have committed or attempted to commit offences listed in Clause 3 of Statute 6 may be subject to disciplinary proceedings. For more details, please see here.

Heads of academic and non-academic units are empowered to adjudicate any offences in relation to existing students of the University. In such cases, appeals can be brought before the Dean of the Faculty if the disciplinary action was initiated by the Head of a Faculty-based academic unit, or before the Dean of Students if it was initiated by the Head of a non-Faculty-based academic unit or the Head of a non-academic unit.

The Board of Discipline is empowered to adjudicate any offences in relation to any student of the University, whether existing or for whom the candidature has ceased, as long as the circumstances giving rise to the disciplinary proceedings arose while the person was a student of the University or in connection with the person's admission into the University. The Board of Discipline is chaired by the Dean of Students or a Vice Provost and comprises two other members of the Senate and two members of the Student Union. Appeals against the decisions of this Board are heard by the Disciplinary Appeals Board.

Students of the National University of Singapore should familiarise themselves with the NUS Code of Student Conduct which is intended to guide students' conduct in both the academic and non-academic aspects of their University life by providing an overview of the behaviour generally expected of them as members of the University community.

Students may also access the Discipline with Respect to Students - Guidance Note for Students on the NUS Student Portal for better understanding of factors relevant to the classification of offences by the University.

2.9 Responsibility for Notices, Circulars and Update of Personal Particulars

All students will have an email account at NUS that will be their official point of contact. Most communications from the University to students will be via the official email account. As such, students are expected to check this account regularly. Students are also expected to be aware of the contents of the latest notices/circulars that may be posted on myPortal@NUS.

Throughout their candidature, students are responsible for keeping their personal particulars updated in the University's records in a timely manner. This means that students must notify the University within 5 working days of the effective date of change of the affected personal particulars. The University will not be accountable for delayed or lost mail due to incorrect or obsolete students' addresses and contacts. Students may check their particulars or amend their contact details via the University's Education Records System.

With effect from May 2022, except for Next-of-Kin/Emergency Contacts and Passport Number update, students may request the following information from ***Myinfo*** (authenticated through **SingPass**) to update the University records. To do so, login to ***EduRec*** > ***Personal Info*** > ***Myinfo Demographic Information*** and follow the instructions there.

- Citizenship/Residency Status
- Foreign Identification Number (FIN) (for International Students)
- Official Name
- Correspondence Contact Details

IMPORTANT: Your name captured in the University's record as your *Official Name* will be printed on the various official documents issued by the University, in particular your degree scroll and academic transcript.

The official name should be the same as your NRIC/Passport. If you have officially/legally changed your name during your course of study, or noticed that the Official Name reflected in **EduRec** is incorrect, **please update the University's records in a timely manner. No amendments of Official Name can be done once you have officially been conferred the degree.**

Do note that names that exceed more than 70 characters (including spaces) will be abbreviated. For more information, please refer to the Registrar's Office's website.

2.10 Health Screening and Vaccination

In accordance with the Singapore Ministry of Health requirements, all students who experience direct patient contact or contact with patient specimens as a course of their training and/or research must undergo the following health screening and meet these vaccination requirements:

Disease	Vaccination
Hepatitis B	Students who do not have immunity against Hepatitis B should be vaccinated. **Serological evidence is necessary**. Records of past vaccinations alone are not sufficient as vaccine response failure is not insignificant in Hepatitis B.
MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)	MMR vaccination should be offered to susceptible students. Serological evidence or documented record of vaccination can be considered as presumptive evidence of immunity. **Self-reporting of past infection or vaccination is not sufficient.**
Chickenpox	Chickenpox vaccination should be offered to susceptible students. Serological evidence or documented record of vaccination can be considered as presumptive evidence of immunity. **Self-reporting of past infection or vaccination is not sufficient.**
Influenza	Students who come into contact with patients or patient specimens should receive an annual influenza vaccine.

The cost of all health screenings and vaccinations will be borne by the student. If your research requires you to have direct patient contact or contact with patient specimens, please undergo the above health screenings and obtain the necessary vaccinations, and submit documentary proof of the health screening results/vaccination records to the Graduate Research Programme Administrator.

2.11 NUS Research Integrity Policy

Faculty, staff and students of the University community engaging in research should adhere to the highest standard of ethics and Research Integrity. This is to ensure that the reputation of the University for scholarly integrity is preserved.

Research Integrity includes the rigour, care and accountability that are the hallmarks of good scholarship and is not merely the avoidance of wrongdoing. Research Misconduct by the University community, defined as fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or other wrongdoing in proposing, designing, performing, recording, supervising or reviewing research, or in reporting research results is unacceptable and is grounds for disciplinary action.

Students are advised to read and be familiar with the Research Compliance and Integrity Handbook available here. (Note: please login to NUS WebVPN before accessing the link to the policy)

2.12 NUS Research Data Management Policy

Research data generated by NUS staff or students are the properties of NUS and should generally be archived for a minimum period of 10 years to enable retrieval and verification by the university when necessary. Good research data management practices ensure efficient accessibility and retrieval of research data for reliable and timely verification of the research findings. It helps researchers validate research data and results as needed and facilitates new innovation by other researchers who build on the knowledge contained within the dataset.

The NUS Research Data Management (RDM) Policy applies to all NUS faculty members, staff, students and any other persons at the University engaged in research, regardless of the source of funding for the project.

For SSHSPH, all staff and students have to abide by the SSHSPH Research Data Management (RDM) Policy, which elaborates for SSHSPH, the operation of the NUS RDM policy. (Note: please login to NUS WebVPN before accessing the link to the policy)

2.13 NUS Modular System

The undergraduate and graduate curricula are based on a modular system. The NUS modular system combines the rigour and depth of the British university system with the flexibility and breadth of the American system. Under this system, workloads are expressed in terms of units, and academic performance is measured by grade points on a 5-point scale. Students can progress at their own pace and choose from a wide range of courses offered by different Colleges/Faculties/Schools. The modular system offers students the possibility of accelerating their programmess of study by taking more courses per semester (i.e., above the average of 20 units per semester), subject to the approval of their home Faculty.

Course

Each course of study has a unique course code consisting of a two- or three-letter prefix that generally denotes the discipline, and four digits, the first of which indicates the level of the course (e.g., 1000 indicates a Level 1 course and 2000, a Level 2 course).

Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and Preclusions

Pre-requisites indicate the base of knowledge on which the subject matter of a particular course will be built. Before taking a course, a student should complete any pre-requisite course(s) listed for that particular course. Where pre-requisites are specified, equivalent courses will also be accepted. If in doubt, students should consult the course instructor or the Department academic advisor regarding the

acceptable equivalent courses. Co-requisites are courses that are to be taken concurrently. A course may also specify certain preclusions. These are courses that have similar emphases and may not be taken together with that particular course.

Workload

The weekly workload of each course is given in the full course description. There are five workload components to each course. In the course description, these components are given in a series of five numbers. For example, NM2217 Creating Interactive Media has a workload of '2-2-0-3-3'. If we represent the five numbers in a workload series as 'A-B-C-D-E', each letter would refer to:

Component	Description	Remarks
A	No. of Lecture hours	Actual contact hours per week
B	No. of Tutorial hours	Actual contact hours per week
C	No. of Laboratory hours	Actual contact hours per week
D	No. of hours for projects, assignments, fieldwork, etc	This caters to assignments, independent studies, fieldwork, and other forms of continuous assessment that contribute towards the final grade of the course.
E	No. of hours for preparatory work	This refers to the number of hours a student is expected to spend each week in preparing for lectures and tutorials.

Course Unit

A course unit is a measure of the effort, stated in terms of time, expected of a typical student in managing his/her workload. The unit of a course is derived by dividing the estimated total number of workload hours per week for that course by the credit factor of 2.5 (i.e., one unit is equivalent to 2.5 hours of study and preparation per week). Thus, a 4-unit course would require 10 hours of work a week, including lectures, tutorials, laboratory sessions, assignments, and independent or group study.

Grade Points

Students receive letter grades for each course taken, except for the cases listed below. Each grade corresponds to a grade point as shown below:

Grade	Grade Point
A+	5.0
A	
A-	4.5
B+	4.0
B	3.5
B-	3.0
C+	2.5
C	2.0
D+	1.5
D	1.0
F	0

As the above table indicates, a plus (+) or minus (-) suffix added to a grade raises or lowers the grade point value, except in the case of A+, which carries the same grade points as the A grade.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

Academic progress is tracked by the GPA, which is the weighted average grade point of all courses taken by a student. Therefore, a student's GPA is the sum of the course grade points multiplied by the number of units for the corresponding course, divided by the total number of units. This is represented as follows:

$$\text{GPA} = \frac{\text{sum (course grade point x units assigned to course)}}{\text{sum (units assigned to all courses used in calculating the numerator)}}$$

Courses with no assigned units or grade points are excluded from the calculation of GPA.

There are a number of situations for which no grade points are assigned:

Completed Satisfactorily/Completed Unsatisfactorily (CS/CU)
A course may be graded on a ‘CS/CU' basis, i.e., whether the course has been ‘Completed Satisfactorily' (CS) or ‘Completed Unsatisfactorily' (CU). CS/CU courses are typically industrial attachment, internship or enrichment courses. Units will be given for courses that are completed satisfactorily, although no grade point will be assigned. A course is designated ‘CS/CU'; unlike courses graded on an S/U basis, it is not an option.

Exempted (EXE)
This grade is awarded when a student is exempted from or given credit for a course under the Advanced Placement process.

Incomplete (IC)
The ‘IC' grade is assigned when a student's work is of passing quality but is incomplete for good reasons (e.g., illness during the official examination period). However, even such good reasons will not warrant an ‘IC' grade if the work already completed for the course is clearly not of passing quality; instead, students should note that the ‘F' grade will be assigned in such cases. A course assigned an ‘IC' grade normally cannot be used to fulfil the pre-requisite of a higher-level course. Should a student choose to repeat the course in a subsequent semester, none of the work done previously may be carried forward for assessment purposes.

In Progress (IP)
For a course that extends more than one semester, evaluation of a student's performance is deferred until the completion of the course. The provisional grade of ‘IP' is assigned in the intervening semesters. This is replaced with the final grade when the student completes the course.

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U)

Students may elect to have certain courses graded on a 'Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory' (S/U) basis, subject to approval by the faculty. For graduate courses graded on an S/U basis, an 'S' grade is assigned if a student receives a 'C' grade or above for the course. Conversely, students will receive a 'U' if the grade obtained is lower than a 'C' grade. The S/U option, once exercised, will be irrevocable for the course.

Withdrawn (W)

When a student withdraws from a course between the first day of Week 3 of the instructional period and the last day of the Recess Week, a 'W' grade will be recorded in the transcript. Withdrawals after this period (i.e. from the first day of Week 7 of the instructional period) will result in an 'F' grade, which will be included in the computation of the GPA and will not be eligible for the S/U option.

2.14 Examination Rules & Instructions

It is the students' responsibility to check the examination timetable and familiarize themselves with the Examination Rules, a breach of any of which will render a student liable to disciplinary action which may result in the student's expulsion from the University. For more details, please see here.

If there are any circumstances, academic or otherwise, which have adversely affected a student's academic performance during the course of Semester or examination, the student can apply for special consideration via EduRec within the stipulated deadline. The guidelines for special consideration is available here.

Students who missed the examination without valid reasons (as determined by the Board of Examiners) will be deemed to have sat for and failed the examination (i.e. obtained zero marks).

If students do not achieve a passing grade in a course, they can apply to retake the course subject to the following guidelines:

a) Students can repeat the same course only once if a course, either core or elective, has not met the minimum grade requirement and is required for the graduate programme;
b) Students can repeat up to one-third of the coursework requirements, not exceeding three courses, whichever is lower although they can repeat the same course only once;
c) Only the better grade of a course taken more than once will be computed in the GPA.

Students are not allowed to retake a course if they have obtained a pass grade (i.e. grade D or above, or Satisfactory grade) for the course.

3. Candidature, Residency & Leave Matters

3.1 Candidature Matters

3.1.1 Candidature Period

The maximum candidature for the MSc and PhD programmes are as follows:

Programme	Maximum Candidature (for both full-time & part-time students)
MSc	36 months
PhD	60 months

For research programmes, the maximum candidature is the same for both full-time and part-time students. Students are required to submit their thesis (approved by thesis advisor(s)) for examination by the maximum period of their candidature; failing which, their candidature will lapse automatically.

There is no minimum candidature for research programmes. However, students will need to fulfil the minimum residency requirements.

For more information, please see here.

3.1.2 Difference between Full-Time and Part-Time Candidature

The MSc and PhD programmes are highly intensive, and students must be able to commit to their research projects on a full-time basis. The only difference between full-time and part-time students is part-time students are allowed to hold full-time employment. All programme requirements (e.g. coursework requirements, maximum candidature, deadline to complete the PhD Qualifying Examination, tuition fees etc) are the same for both full-time and part-time students, and part-time students are required to meet the same timelines as full-time students. Some of the compulsory courses are held during office hours, and it is the responsibility of part-time students to arrange for time-off from their employers to attend the classes.

Most of our part-time students are Research Assistants who work for PIs within our school, and they use the research work that they do for their PI as their MSc/PhD project. Students whose employment is not related to their MSc/PhD will find it hard to juggle both studies and work as it is equivalent to doing a full-time MSc/PhD on top of their full-time job.

Students should note that commitments from employment will not be accepted as valid reasons for absence, uncompleted work, late submission of work, or poor performance.

3.1.3 Full-Time Students and Employment

Full-time students are discouraged from taking on paid work due to the demands of the research programmes. However, if there are financial reasons, full-time students may apply to undertake part-

time employment up to a maximum of 16 hours per week, subject to approval by the School. The cap of 16 hours per week also applies to the university's vacation terms as research students are expected to work on their research projects on a full-time basis throughout the year.

Students should note that commitments from employment will not be accepted as valid reasons for absence, uncompleted work, late submission of work, or poor performance.

3.1.4 Transfer of Candidature from MSc to PhD

MSc students who wish to upgrade to PhD must complete the PhD coursework requirements and pass the PhD Qualifying Examination (PQE) within the first 2 years of their candidature. Please refer to Section 4.6 for more information on the PQE.

If the upgrading to PhD is successful, the maximum candidature will be five years from the original date of registration. Credit will be given for the work done towards the MSc degree.

3.1.5 Transfer of Candidature from PhD to MSc

Students should complete and submit the prescribed application form, through their thesis advisor(s) to the Education Office. A student may also be advised to transfer if s/he has not been performing satisfactorily in his/her PhD. In such cases, the student should similarly complete and submit the prescribed application form.

As a result of the transfer, the maximum period of candidature will be reduced to three years from the original date of registration. The student will have to apply for extension of candidature, if necessary.

For research scholarship/fellowship/award recipients, the scholarship/fellowship/award may be terminated with the transfer. If the scholarship/fellowship/award is terminated before the end of the first two instructional weeks, the tuition fee for the semester will not be covered by the scholarship/fellowship/award. If excess payment has already been made, the student will be informed to make the necessary refund. If there is an over-consumption of leave, the appropriate amount arising from that will be added to the refund. In addition, for full-time international students whose spouse/children are here on a social visit pass sponsored by the University, the pass may also be cancelled once the application for conversion to part-time candidature has been approved.

Students who have previously enjoyed government subsidy/sponsorship in a Master-level programme should also refer to the eligibility guidelines for MOE subsidy.

3.1.6 Conversion of Candidature (between Full-time and Part-time)

Research students are to apply using the prescribed application form. The form needs to be endorsed by the student's thesis advisor(s), and submitted to the Education Office for approval.

Generally, research students should have already submitted a satisfactory first draft of the thesis to the thesis advisor before the request for conversion from full-time to part-time candidature can be considered. For students who are or who have been on research scholarship/fellowship/award, under no circumstances should they commence employment before they obtain approval from the University. Otherwise, their candidature may be terminated immediately.

Fees are still payable until such time the thesis has been submitted for examination. For full-time international students, the University will inform the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) of the conversion to part-time candidature. The student's pass must be cancelled/surrendered to ICA, using a prescribed "Cancellation/Surrender of Long-Term Visit Pass/Student Pass" form, which is downloadable from the ICA website. Any spouse/child social visit pass sponsored by the University will also have to be cancelled accordingly.

For research scholarship/fellowship/award recipients, the scholarship/fellowship/award will be terminated with the conversion to part-time. If the scholarship/fellowship/award is terminated before the end of the first two instructional weeks, the tuition fee for the semester will not be covered by the scholarship/fellowship/award. If excess payment has already been made, the student will be informed to make the necessary refund. If there is an over-consumption of leave, the appropriate amount arising from that will be added to the refund.

3.1.7 Extension of Candidature

Students who are unable to submit their thesis for examination or complete their degree requirements by the maximum period of their candidature will have to apply for an extension of their candidature. This should be done **at least three months before the expiry** of the maximum candidature. Faculties may approve extension of candidature not exceeding two years on a cumulative basis. Beyond the two-year limit, the approval of the Board of Graduate Studies is required.

Students are to apply for extension using the “Application for Extension of Candidature for Graduate Research Students Form”. The form needs to be endorsed by the student’s thesis advisor(s), and submitted to the Education Office for approval.

A candidature would be considered lapsed (candidature terminated) once the maximum candidature period of the degree is reached unless an extension was previously approved.

3.1.8 Withdrawal of Candidature

Students who wish to withdraw from their candidature will need to apply online via EduRec. Please refer to the student portal for the guidelines and administrative instructions.

3.1.9 Termination of Candidature

The candidature of a student can be terminated when the student:

- has performed unsatisfactorily in his/her coursework and/or research work;
- is the subject of a disciplinary case brought before the Board of Discipline;
- is missing in action (without approved leave);
- has failed to register for course(s) when s/he is expected to (without approved leave or other approval);
- has exceeded the maximum candidature (candidature has lapsed); or
- has overdue fees

The student will be notified officially in writing if his/her candidature is terminated and s/he is required to destroy the Student Card (by cutting it into pieces) and discard it.

Please note that students who leave the University after the second instructional week of a semester are liable to pay fees for the whole semester.

For international students holding a student's pass, the University will inform the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) of the termination. The student's pass must be cancelled/surrendered to ICA, using a prescribed "Cancellation/Surrender of Long-Term Visit Pass/Student's Pass" form, which is downloadable from the ICA website. Any spouse/child social visit pass sponsored by the University will also have to be cancelled accordingly.

Students who have been dismissed due to poor Grade Point Average (GPA) can refer to Continuation and Graduation Requirements regarding appeal for reinstatement.

Students who have been dismissed and would like to return to the same programme of study generally will have to apply for readmission and be subjected to the prevailing tuition fee rate and policy. Nevertheless, students may appeal to return within 12 months from date of termination, by submitting a request with justifications for reinstatement of candidature to their Faculty for consideration. Reinstatement of candidature will be considered on a case-by-case basis and is not guaranteed. An administrative fee of S$250 is payable for approved reinstatement of candidature.

For those on MOE-subsidised programmes and are successful in gaining readmission, they will be subjected to the eligibility guidelines for MOE subsidy.

3.2 Residency Requirements

The minimum residency requirements for the MSc and PhD programmes are as follows:

Programme	Minimum Residency (for both full-time & part-time students)
MSc	6 months (i) (ii) (iii)
PhD	18 months (i) (ii) (iii)

(i) Refers to all local NUS campuses, as well as NUS entities overseas (e.g., NUS Research Institute (Suzhou)).

(ii) Includes research carried out in the establishments of approved NUS industry partners.

(iii) The minimum residency requirements are the same for both full-time and part-time students.

Residency implies the following: a) payment of fees, b) satisfaction of all curricular requirements of the programme of study and c) satisfaction of other departmental requirements such as teaching assistance. Periods of study leave and overseas fieldwork do not count toward residency. In addition, students must be resident in Singapore during the semester in which they submit their thesis for examination, as well as throughout the tenure of the NUS research scholarship, if awarded, unless approval is granted otherwise.

3.3 Leave Matters

3.3.1 Leave Matters for Full-time Self-Financing Students

Short-term leave

All full-time research students are required to apply for leave if they need to be away at any point of the year. The university vacation periods do not apply to research students as research students are expected to work on their research projects on a full-time basis throughout the year.

Full-time self-financing students who need to take leave should apply for Leave of Absence via EduRec. Students are required to submit their application at least two weeks prior to the proposed leave period, and attach any relevant supporting documents.

Students who are reading coursework courses should not go on leave on the days where they have classes. However, if there are extenuating circumstances which necessitate the taking of leave during the instructional weeks, it is the responsibility of the student to contact the lecturers/tutors to make up for any missed classes or assignment(s) during the period of absence. Do note that if the period of absence coincides with an assessment e.g. quiz/test, there is no guarantee that a make-up assessment will be scheduled.

Long-term leave (i.e. leave of one semester or more)

Students who require Leave of Absence for one semester or more should obtain approval before the start of the semester. Leave of Absence beyond two academic years (cumulative) requires approval from the Board of Graduate Studies. Please refer to the Leave of Absence Policy.

To apply, please submit your application via EduRec and attach the relevant supporting documents.

3.3.2 Leave Matters for Part-Time Self-Financing students

Short-term leave

In general, part-time self-financing students do not need to apply for short-term leave if they are not reading any courses in the semester. Part-time students who are registered for course(s) are expected to commit to all the classes for the course(s). If there are extenuating circumstances which require the student to be absent for a class, the student will need to apply for Leave of Absence via EduRec and attach the relevant supporting documents.

It is the responsibility of the student to contact the lecturers/tutors to make up for any missed classes or assignment(s) during the period of absence. Do note that if the period of absence coincides with an assessment e.g. quiz/test, there is no guarantee that a make-up assessment will be scheduled.

Long-term leave (i.e. leave of one semester or more)

Students who require Leave of Absence for one semester or more should obtain approval before the start of the semester. Leave of Absence beyond two academic years (cumulative) requires approval from the Board of Graduate Studies. Please refer to the Leave of Absence Policy.

To apply, please submit your application via EduRec and attach the relevant supporting documents.

3.3.3 Leave Matters for Research Scholars

Holiday Leave

Students receiving the following scholarships are eligible for paid holiday leave of 21 working days per calendar year for the duration of the scholarship:

- NUS Research Scholarship
- President's Graduate Fellowship
- Commonwealth Scholarship

i. Please login to EduRec to submit your holiday leave application *(Navigation path: Academics > Graduate Research > Apply for RS Holiday Leave)*

ii. Depending on the start date and end date of the research scholarship, the leave entitlement for the year will be pro-rated accordingly.

iii. The Research Scholar leave application is auto-approved under the Research Scholar leave notification guidelines. Upon receiving the leave notification, the thesis advisor has the right to request Research Scholar to cancel/postpone the leave due to exigencies of service.

iv. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the lecturers/tutors to make up for any missed classes or assignment(s) during the period of absence. If the period of leave coincides with an assessment e.g. quiz/test, there is no guarantee that a make-up assessment will be scheduled.

v. There will not be additional leave granted for periods of research scholarship extension. However, any unconsumed leave may be taken up to the end of the extended period of the scholarship or the end of the year of the original scholarship end date, whichever is earlier.

vi. Holiday leave excludes Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays. There is no half-day leave application.

vii. Holiday leave cannot be taken during periods of scholarship suspension.

viii. Unconsumed leave in any one year will not be carried forward to the next year.

ix. Medical leave that falls within the applied holiday leave period will not be considered.

x. When the research scholarship is terminated, the leave entitlement will be pro-rated according to the termination date. If excess leave had been taken, the scholarship stipend will be deducted accordingly. Holiday leave must be consumed before the scholarship end date (including the period of extended scholarship). Holiday leave not utilized prior to the scholarship termination date will lapse and there will be no payment of stipend in lieu thereof.

xi. For transfer of candidature (from Master's to PhD and vice versa), the holiday leave entitlement will be adjusted accordingly.

Maternity Leave – (for female research scholars who have completed at least 1 semester)
(Go to EduRec → Academics → Academic Records → Apply for Leave of Absence)

i. Paid maternity leave is granted to female research scholars up to sixteen (16) weeks per childbirth.

ii. It is to be taken as one continuous block and can commence four (4) weeks before confinement or from the date of confinement (i.e. delivery of the child). Maternity leave is inclusive of Saturdays, Sundays & Public Holidays.

iii. Scholars can apply for one semester of tuition fee waiver after expiry of scholarship, subject to approval.

iv. Supporting medical documents must be submitted with the application. A copy of the birth certificate of the child is to be submitted either with the application or to the Education Office within one month from the child's birth.

Paternity Leave – (for male research scholars who have completed at least 1 semester)
(Go to EduRec → Academics → Academic Records → Apply for Leave of Absence)

i. Paid paternity leave is granted to male research scholars up to ten (10) days per childbirth.

ii. It is to be taken as one continuous block, within six (6) months from the date of the child's birth. Paternity leave is inclusive of Saturdays, Sundays & Public Holidays.

iii. A copy of the birth certificate of the child is to be submitted either with the application or to the Education Office within one month from the child's birth.

Medical Leave
(Go to EduRec → Academics → Academic Records → Apply for Leave of Absence)

i. For research scholars, paid medical leave is granted up to 30 days per calendar year for out-patient and 60 days per calendar year if hospitalization is required.

ii. Valid supporting medical certificates must be submitted with the application.

Compassionate Leave
(Go to EduRec → Academics → Academic Records → Apply for Leave of Absence)

Each research scholar can be granted a maximum of five (5) working days per demise of an immediate family member (including spouse, child, parent, grandparent, brother/sister, parent-in-law and son/daughter-in-law). Please upload a copy of the death certificate with the application.

Reservist Leave
(Go to EduRec → Academics → Academic Records → Apply for Leave of Absence)

i. For research scholars, paid leave will be granted unless the Faculty/School decides otherwise.

ii. A copy of the notice must be submitted with the application. Those who are required to serve the balance of the NS liability period will not be given paid leave.

Leave Matters for Conferences, Courses, Field Trips & Overseas Attachments

(Go to EduRec → Academics → Academic Records → Apply for Leave of Absence)

Research scholars are required to apply for leave to attend conferences, courses, field trips or overseas attachment, even if funding has been approved by the School. If approved, the stipend will still be paid for the leave period. Please note that leave of absence is inclusive of Saturdays, Sundays & Public Holidays.

For students going for overseas conferences approved by the school, leave will be granted as follows:

i. If the student goes strictly for just the conference, they will be given up to 2 extra days of leave for travelling: one day before and one day after.
ii. If the student goes on personal holiday before the conference, they will only be given 1 extra day of leave after the conference. Similarly, if the student goes on personal holiday after the conference, they will only be given 1 extra day of leave before the conference.
iii. If the student goes on personal holiday both before and after the conference, they will be granted conference leave only for the conference period.

Leave of Absence (unpaid leave)

(Go to EduRec → Academics → Academic Records → Apply for Leave of Absence)

For research scholars, leave of absence is unpaid leave. All holiday leave balance must be fully utilised before applying for unpaid leave of absence; unless the Faculty/School decides otherwise.

Leave of absence is inclusive of Saturdays, Sundays & Public Holidays. Please refer to the Leave of Absence Policy before submitting your application.

Students who require **leave of one semester (term) or more** should obtain approval **in advance of the semester**. **Please note that there will not be a corresponding extension in the duration of the scholarship award.**

Exemptions & Revisions

i. The University may revise this Scheme from time to time in its absolute discretion.
ii. The University shall be entitled to make and issue additional guidelines with respect to this Scheme from time to time and to revise or amend such guidelines as it deems fit. All such guidelines shall be deemed to be part of the Scheme.

Note:

Research scholars are encouraged to purchase travel insurance for their personal leisure trips.

3.3.4 Application for leave to participate in internships (for full-time students only)

Full-time students can apply for leave to participate in an internship with external organizations, subject to the guidelines stipulated by NUS Graduate School.

The internship must be relevant to the student's thesis research. PhD students who wish to go on internships should preferably go in their 3rd or 4th year, after completing the PhD Qualifying Examination.

Please note that internships are optional and should only be undertaken if students have the bandwidth. Students need to ensure that they are on track for the programme requirements (including GAP/teaching duties) before applying for internships. The candidature period and scholarship award period will not be extended for students who took leave for internships.

To apply, please submit the following completed forms to the Education Office:

1. Application for leave to participate in an internship form
2. Conflict of Interest Declaration Form for Graduate Research Students on Internships

4. Programme Requirements

4.1 Aims & Objectives

4.1.1 MSc programme

Graduates of the MSc programme are expected to understand the basic assumptions, approaches, designs, analytic methods and ethical principles entailed in conducting public health research. They are also expected to become confident communicators of scientific knowledge through participation in the scholastic exchanges during research rounds and thesis defences. Graduates are fully prepared to participate as key collaborators, and co-authors in public health research projects. Some MSc graduates may be able to launch their own careers as independent Principal Investigators. However, in general, it is expected that more advanced training in the form of PhD degree will be needed to establish an independent research career.

4.1.2 PhD programme

Graduates of the PhD programme will be capable of forming, leading, and supporting a multi-disciplinary research team, of successfully applying for peer reviewed finding, and of providing high level, critical thinking in the development, evaluation and conduct of their research projects. They are also expected to become confident communicators of scientific knowledge through participation in the scholastic exchanges during the research rounds and thesis defences, and preparation for the presentation and defence of their thesis. Candidates who wish to become Public Health researchers would constitute the bulk of the PhD programme enrolment.

4.2 Overview of Programme Requirements

The MSc & PhD programmes comprise the following components: coursework, research seminars and thesis research.

Coursework

MSc students are required to complete **24 units** of coursework. For the PhD programme, students who enrolled before August 2022 are required to complete **28 units** of coursework, while students who enrolled from August 2022 onwards are required to complete **32 units** of coursework. The purpose of the coursework component is to provide a graduate-level foundation and prepare students for research. Please see Section 4.3 for more information on the coursework requirements.

Research Seminars

MSc & PhD students are strongly encouraged to participate actively in research seminars within the School. Participating in research seminars not only broadens the students' insight into public health research, it also provides opportunities for students to develop presentation and communication skills.

Students who enrolled before August 2018 are required to achieve regular attendance in the school research rounds/ SSHSPH PhD thesis defences, and present at least once at the student research rounds. Please see Section 4.5 for more information on the student research round requirements.

Students who enrolled in August 2018 and after are required to complete the SPH6770 Graduate Research Seminar in Public Health course (4 units). This course replaces the student research rounds. The course aims to equip public health research students with practical research skills, expose them to the breadth of public health research topics and provide students with opportunities to develop their presentation and communication skills.

Thesis Research

The thesis research forms the main component of the MSc & PhD programmes. Students should have identified a research topic and the thesis advisor before their enrolment in the programme. MSc students are required to complete their research project and submit their thesis after 2 to 3 years in the programme. PhD students will need to complete a PhD Qualifying Examination within the first two years to be confirmed as PhD candidates. In the remaining years, PhD students will execute the rest of their research plans and submit and defend the thesis. Please refer to Section 4.7 for more information on the thesis requirements.

Suggested Workplans for MSc & PhD students:

From Year 1, both MSc and PhD students will embark on their research projects, complete core courses and choose from a range of elective courses that cater to individual research interests.

In Year 2, MSc students will start writing their thesis, while PhD students will complete a PhD Qualifying Examination (PQE) which assesses their ability to complete PhD requirements based on their academic progress and quality of their research. MSc students who wish to transfer to the PhD programme need to complete the PhD coursework requirements and pass the PQE within 2 years.

In Years 3-5, PhD students will execute the rest of their research plans and submit and defend the thesis.

Please refer to Annexes 1 & 2 for the suggested workplan for PhD and MSc students

Annex 1: Suggested Workplan for PhD students

Annex 2: Suggested Workplan for MSc students

4.3 Coursework

4.3.1 Coursework Requirements

MSc students are required to complete **24 units** of coursework. For the PhD programme, students who enrolled before August 2022 are required to complete **28 units** of coursework, while students who enrolled from August 2022 onwards are required to complete **32 units** of coursework.

Students are required to read graduate-level courses (i.e. level-5000 and above) to fulfil the coursework requirements. However, to enable students to build expertise in a new field, up to 1 course (4 units) below level-5000 may be allowed, subject to the approval of the thesis advisor and the school. Students who wish to read a course below level-5000 to fulfil coursework requirements will need to provide the justification for the school's review.

Please refer to the tables below for the coursework requirements of the different intakes. For elective courses, students should select courses that are relevant to their thesis research.

Coursework Requirements for students who enrolled from August 2022 onwards:

	Master of Science (MSc)	**Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)**
CORE COURSES	SPH5002 Public Health Research Methods (8 units) SPH6770 Graduate Research Seminar in Public Health (4 units)	SPH5002 Public Health Research Methods (8 units) SPH6770 Graduate Research Seminar in Public Health (4 units) NG5001 Academic Communication for Postgraduate Researchers (4 units)[1]
ELECTIVE COURSES	3 Elective Courses (12 units) • At least 8 units of electives must be courses offered by SSHSPH (this excludes Independent Study Courses])	4 Elective Courses (16 units) • At least 8 units of electives must be courses offered by SSHSPH (this excludes Independent Study Courses) • At least 8 units of electives must be level-6000 courses

Coursework Requirements for students who enrolled between August 2018 to Jan 2022:

	Master of Science (MSc)	**Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)**
CORE COURSES	SPH5002 Public Health Research Methods (8 units) SPH6770 Graduate Research Seminar in Public Health (4 units)	SPH5002 Public Health Research Methods (8 units) SPH6770 Graduate Research Seminar in Public Health (4 units)
ELECTIVE COURSES	3 Elective Courses (12 units) • At least 8 units of electives must be courses offered by SSHSPH (this excludes Independent Study Courses)	4 Elective Courses (16 units) • At least 8 units of electives must be courses offered by SSHSPH (this excludes Independent Study Courses) • At least 8 units of electives must be level-6000 courses

[1] Please refer to the NUSGS website for details on the NG5001 course.

Coursework Requirements for students who enrolled between Jan 2017 to Jan 2018:

	Master of Science (MSc)	Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
CORE COURSES	SPH5002 Public Health Research Methods (8 units) SPH5203 Advanced Epidemiology I (4 units) **OR** SPH6001 Advanced Epidemiology II (4 units) SPH5101 Advanced Quantitative Methods I (4 units) **OR** SPH6002 Advanced Quantitative Methods II (4 units)	SPH5002 Public Health Research Methods (8 units) SPH6001 Advanced Epidemiology II (4 units) SPH6002 Advanced Quantitative Methods II (4 units)
ELECTIVE COURSES	2 Elective Courses (8 units) • At least one elective course (4 units) must be at level-5000 or above	3 Elective Courses (12 units) • At least one elective course (4 units) must be at level-6000

Please refer to NUSMods for the full list of SSHSPH graduate courses and the course descriptions.

4.3.2 Cross-Faculty Courses

Students may also register for courses offered by other faculties, subject to approval by the Graduate Research Programme Director and acceptance by the relevant faculty/school. Some faculties/schools may also require students to submit their CV for the lecturer's review. Please refer to Annex 3 for the list of recommended cross-faculty courses.

4.3.3 Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) Option

Students who have completed their coursework requirements but would like to read additional courses for credit can elect to have these courses graded on a "Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory" (S/U) basis. Courses graded on S/U basis cannot contribute towards graduation requirements, i.e. they cannot be one of the required core or elective courses. S/U declaration must be done at the point of course registration. Please refer to the section on 'NUS Modular System – S/U Option' for more information on the S/U option.

4.3.4 Grade Point Average (GAP) computation

Please refer to the section on 'NUS Modular System - GPA' for information on how the GPA is computed.

For students who completed courses in excess of graduation requirements, the School will use the grades of the best elective courses to compute the GPA. For example, if a PhD student completes more than 8 units of level 5000 elective courses, the School will use the grades of the best level 5000 elective courses to compute the GPA. The grades of courses that are excluded from GPA computation will still be reflected on the student's transcript, but with a remark stating that the course is excluded from GPA computation.

4.3.5 Course Registration & Add/Drop Deadlines

All students are required to register for courses using the CourseReg system. For more information on CourseReg, please see here.

The time schedule for course registration is provided in the following table:

For Graduates	Semester 1 & 2
Register for/add New Course(s)	Please see here for the CourseReg Schedule.
Drop course(s) without penalty[2]	Up to Instructional Week 2
Drop course(s) with 'Withdrawn' Grade[2]	1st Day of Instructional Week 3 through last day of Recess Week
Drop course(s) with 'Fail' Grade[2]	1st day of Instructional Week 7 onwards

4.3.6 Independent Study Course for PhD students

Public Health is a diverse field, and regular course offerings may not cater to the interests and needs of all students. The Independent Study Course (ISC) aims to fulfil this learning gap in the curriculum, by giving students the opportunity to design their own learning in consultation with a supervising lecturer, who should be an NUS academic staff member. The overall objective is to allow students to further tailor their learning experience according to their needs.

Students will first identify a topic they are interested to pursue, and an NUS academic staff member who has the relevant background to guide them in their learning. The topic should fall under one of the pre-approved areas of study. Together with the ISC supervisor, the student will identify the specific learning objectives, syllabus/topics that will be covered, and the learning activities and assessment tasks to be performed and submit a detailed study plan to the School for approval. Regular meetings between the student and the ISC supervisor are expected. At the conclusion of the course, the student is required to submit a culminating essay or report concerning the findings of the topic.

As this is a level 6000 course, the ISC must meet the standards of doctoral study and inquiry. The proposed syllabus should include significant research content and cover the latest research trends.

The following are the pre-approved areas of study:

SPH6201A Independent Study (Epidemiology and Disease Control)
SPH6201B Independent Study (Biostatistics)
SPH6201C Independent Study (Environmental / Occupational Health)
SPH6201D Independent Study (Health Policy and Systems)
SPH6201E Independent Study (Health Services Research)

[2] For intensive courses, the deadline to drop the course(s) is by 5pm of the first day of the course.

SPH6201F Independent Study (Health Promotion)
SPH6201G Independent Study (Global Health)

Students can complete **only one** ISC course throughout their candidature.

APPLYING FOR AN ISC

Procedure

Students wishing to undertake an ISC will need to apply to the Education Office three weeks prior to the start of the relevant Semester.

The student, in consultation with the ISC supervisor, will work out a study plan which includes the following details:

- General Theme or Topic
- Overall Learning Objectives (i.e. state the learning outcomes to be achieved)
- Relevance of the ISC to the student's PhD research project
- Syllabus/ listing of topics that will be covered, and the specific skills that will be gained
- Modes of learning to be employed. Please list the specific learning activities that will be performed and the estimated workload (in terms of hours) for each activity.
- Reading List
- Assessment tasks to be performed and the grading criteria

The study plan must be approved by the School before the student embarks on the ISC.

Modes of Learning

Learning activities could include, but need not be limited to literature review, courses/workshops, practical work/fieldwork etc. The workload (including self-study and preparation) should justify the number of credits to be earned (4 units = 10 hours/week over one semester).

Full-time students who intend to take courses/workshops as part of their ISC may apply to the school for financial assistance for the course fee. For more details, please refer to Section 7.3 Financial Assistance for Conferences, Courses and Overseas Attachments.

Assessment and Grading

Assessment tasks could include, but need not be limited to written assignments, essays, quizzes, reports etc. This is to be based on mutual agreement between the student and the ISC supervisor, depending on the nature and topic of study. Evaluation criteria may comprise both continuous and/or final assessment, the % distribution of which will be worked out between the student and the ISC

supervisor. The ISC supervisor will submit the assessment results to the Education Office by the end of reading week.

At the conclusion of the course, the student is required to submit a culminating essay or report concerning the findings of the topic.

For all ISC courses, the school will appoint a second marker for the assessments. The weightage for each assessment will be ISC Supervisor 30% and ISC second assessor 70%.

Checklist for Submission

i. Application form signed by student, ISC supervisor and the student's research thesis advisor
ii. Detailed plan of study
iii. Plan for assessment and grading

4.3.7 Credit Transfer

Students who have completed relevant master-level or PhD-level courses in their previous degrees may apply for credit transfer, subject to approval by the student's thesis advisor, Graduate Research Programme Director and Vice Dean (Education).

Credit transfer is subject to the following guidelines:

i. The course(s) which the student completed in his/her previous degree must be of comparable content and level of sophistication and completed **less than 10 years**[3] before the date of admission to the MSc/PhD programme. The course(s) must also be relevant to the student's MSc/PhD research.

ii. Students must have obtained **at least grade 'B+'** for the course(s)

iii. Students who received credit transfer are **NOT** allowed to read excess courses on a graded basis. Courses in excess of their coursework requirements may only be read on audit or S/U basis[4]. If there are exceptional circumstances whereby a student needs to read excess courses on a graded basis, they can submit an appeal to the Education Office, subject to approval by the Graduate Research Programme Director and Vice Dean (Education). The appeal must be submitted by the first week of the semester (i.e. by instructional week 1).

iv. For students with previously completed courses from NUS:

[3] Effective for students who enrolled from January 2018 onwards. For students who enrolled before January 2018, the course(s) must be completed less than 5 years before the date of admission to the MSc/PhD programme.
[4] For Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) grading, an 'S' grade is assigned if a student receives a 'C' grade or above for the course. Conversely, students would receive a 'U' if the grade obtained is lower than a 'C' grade.

- Credit transfer can be considered for more than 50% of the total coursework requirement, on a case-by-case basis.
- Both the units and grades of the courses will be transferred if the student's application is approved.

v. For students with previously completed courses from other universities:
   - Credit transfer can be considered for up to 50% of the total coursework requirement.
   - Only credit transfer is allowed (i.e. grade transfer is not allowed). However, students are still required to have obtained an equivalent of grade 'B+' for the non-NUS course before their application can be considered.

How to Apply:

Students must apply within the first month of their candidature. The following documents are required:

i. Application Form
ii. Transcript: For non-NUS courses, the transcript should include an interpretation or explanation of the grades and marks
iii. Course outline and course schedule (including the lecture titles and hours)
iv. Course assessment criteria

4.4 English Language Requirement

New students who are required to take the Diagnostic English Test (DET) must register online for the DET within the period specified in the offer letter. The DET is administered by the Centre for English Language Communication (CELC).

Depending on the results of the DET, students may need to enrol for Graduate English Courses conducted by CELC:

For students who enrolled before August 2022:

Results	Courses to read		
Band 1	**ES5000^**	**ES5001A***	**ES5002**** (only for PhD students upon completion of ES5001A)
Band 2	**ES5001A***		**ES5002**** (only for PhD students upon completion of ES5001A)
Band 3	(Exempted from all English Courses)		

^ES5000 Graduate English Course (Basic Level)

**ES5001A Graduate English Course (Intermediate Level)*

***ES5002 Graduate English Course (Advanced Level). The ES5002 course will be discontinued and replaced by the NG5001 Academic Communication for Postgraduate Researchers course with effect from AY2022/2023 Semester 2. Students who have not yet completed ES5002 by AY2022/2023 Semester 2 will read NG5001 instead.*

For students who enrolled from August 2022 onwards:

Results	Courses to read**	
Band 1	**ES5000^**	**ES5001A***
Band 2	**ES5001A***	
Band 3	(Exempted from all English Courses)	

^ES5000 Graduate English Course (Basic Level)

**ES5001A Graduate English Course (Intermediate Level)*

***PhD students who obtained Band 1 or Band 2 for the DET will need to complete ES5000 and ES5001A before they are allowed to read NG5001.*

SSHSPH students are required to obtain at least Grade 'C+' in all the required Graduate English Courses. Please note that students who do not meet the required grade and need to repeat any of the Graduate English Courses will need to pay S$2,000 per course. This cost will be borne by the student.

For more information on the Graduate English Courses and how to register for the courses, please refer to the CELC website.

4.5 Student Research Rounds (for students who enrolled before August 2018)

4.5.1 Overview

Effective communication of scientific findings is essential in a successful career as a researcher. In addition, Public Health is a multidisciplinary field and public health researchers often have to work with researchers and professionals from varied disciplines. Hence, successful graduates must be able to effectively communicate research findings to a general audience and demonstrate an appreciation of broader issues.

The objective of the student research rounds is to broaden the students' insight into public health research, provide them with a platform to practise their presentation and communication skills, and to receive feedback from academic staff and fellow students on their research projects. Students are required to give a 40-minute presentation of their research work. Out of the 40 minutes, at least 10 to 15 minutes must be understandable by the general audience.

The student research round requirements only apply to students who enrolled before AY2018/2019. New students who enrolled in AY2018/2019 and after will complete the SPH6770 course instead of the student research round requirements.

4.5.2 Format of Student Research Rounds

Since AY2018/2019, the student research round presentations have been incorporated into the new SPH6770 Graduate Research Seminar in Public Health course. Students who have not yet given their research round presentations will be scheduled to present to the junior students taking the SPH6770 course. The following is the new format:

- Presentation by student: 40 minutes
- Synopsis by discussant and discussion between student and discussant: 10 minutes
- Q&A and feedback: 10 minutes

In the new presentation format, one of the junior students will be assigned as the discussant.

4.5.3 Requirements

Presentation

All research students who enrolled before August 2018 are required to present at the student research rounds. PhD students are required to give the presentation by their 3rd year. MSc students are required to give the presentation before thesis submission.

Attendance

Students who enrolled before August 2018 are also required to achieve regular attendance in the school research rounds/ SSHSPH PhD thesis defences. The minimum attendance required is:

- At least 8 seminars* per academic year for 3 years (for PhD students) and
- At least 8 seminars* per academic year for 2 years (for MSc students)

*The following seminars are counted towards the attendance requirement:

i. SSHSPH Student Research Rounds
ii. SSHSPH Staff Research Rounds
iii. SSHSPH PhD Thesis Defences
iv. SSHSPH Graduate Student Conference (students who attend 1 day of conference will get 1 attendance, while students who attend both days of conference will get 2 attendances)

Attendance is counted by academic year. Students who matriculated in January will need to attend at least 4 research rounds in the 1st semester, and at least 4 research rounds in the 4th semester (for MSc) and 6th semester (for PhD).

Please note that attendance at student research rounds is a criterion for graduation. Students who do not fulfil the attendance requirement will not be allowed to graduate even if they have completed other requirements satisfactorily.

4.5.4 Alternative arrangements for students unable to attend the research rounds

Students who are unable to attend sufficient research rounds in a particular year (e.g. overseas for attachment, exchange etc.) can seek permission from the Education Office to count external seminars on public health research towards the attendance requirement. This is subject to the following:

- **Permission must be sought in advance**, i.e. before the start of the semester or before the student embark on their overseas attachment, exchange etc.

- Students must specify the reason for not being able to attend the research rounds and provide information on the external seminars they intend to attend as replacement.

- If approved, students will need to produce the list of external seminars attended and a written record of what they have learnt from each seminar. This must be submitted before the start of the next academic year.

Students who are unable to attend sufficient seminars (both internal and external) in any year may be allowed to replace the attendance for that year with a well-researched and referenced essay on a public health topic unrelated to his/her MSc/PhD research project. This is subject to the following:

- All requests are subject to approval by the Education Office. Students will need to explain why they are unable to meet the attendance requirement.

- The essay must demonstrate the student's insight in public health, and the various skill sets from different disciplines needed to address the selected public health problem. The essay must reflect the student's diligence in keeping abreast with public health research unrelated to his/her MSc/PhD research.

- The essay must be submitted to the Education Office before the start of the next academic year. The essay will be graded, and students must achieve a pass grade. Students will need to submit an essay on a different topic for every year in which they fail to meet the seminar requirement.

4.5.5 Penalty for students who fail to attend at least 8 research rounds in any year

If a student fails to attend at least 8 research rounds in any year, **his/her attendance for that year will not be counted**. The student will need to either

- Attend an extra year of research rounds OR
- Subject to approval by the Education Office, the student may be allowed to replace the attendance for that year with a public health essay (as described above).

4.5.6 Schedule of Student Research Rounds and Thesis Defences

The schedule of upcoming Student Research Rounds and Thesis Defences is available in the SPH0001 Canvas Files.

4.6 PhD Qualifying Examination (PQE)

4.6.1 Overview

The PhD Qualifying Examination (PQE) is an examination which PhD students must complete within the first two years of their candidature to be confirmed as PhD candidates. MSc students who wish to upgrade to PhD will also need to pass the PQE within the first 2 years of their candidature.

The objective of the PQE is to assess whether the student can complete the PhD successfully based on the research work that has already been conducted, the plans for further research as part of the PhD, and the student's ability to defend his/her work during an oral presentation. It also provides an opportunity for students to receive detailed feedback on their ideas, research designs and plans from experts in their field.

Students are required to complete the PQE **within 24 months** of their enrolment. Students may take up to 2 attempts to complete each component of the PQE. If students are unable to complete their PQE within 24 months of their candidature or if they fail to pass the PQE after 2 attempts, they will be asked to transfer to the MSc programme where eligible.

Please refer to Annex 5 for the overview of the PQE process.

4.6.2 Pre-requisites

Students must fulfil the following requirements before they can sit for the PQE:

a) Pass 24 units of coursework with a minimum GPA of 3.50:
   i. Students are required to complete SPH5002, SPH6770 and at least 12 units of electives, of which at least 4 units must be level-6000 course(s)

b) Completed the CITI Responsible Conduct of Research – Basic course

c) Substantial data published or publishable in international peer-reviewed journals

d) A coherent theme connecting the different topics planned for the PhD, and a feasible research plan for the rest of the PhD.

e) Students who do not qualify for waiver of the English Language requirement are also required to complete all the required English Courses up to the intermediate level (i.e. ES5000 & ES5001A), with a minimum grade of C+ for each of the courses.

4.6.3 Format of the PQE

The PQE comprises a written and an oral component.

Written Component

For the written component, students are required to submit:

a) A research proposal written in the prescribed format.

b) Students must demonstrate that they have completed substantial amount of work by providing one of the following as an appendix:

   i. A draft of a chapter planned for the final thesis containing data publishable in an international peer-reviewed journal. This should be one of the chapters in the body of the thesis and not the introduction or literature review. OR

ii. A manuscript as first author ready for submission to, accepted for publication by, or published in an international peer-reviewed journal. Do note the following:

a. The article must be an original research article or systematic review and not a narrative review. Scoping reviews may be accepted on a case-by-case basis. For scoping reviews, students will need to submit the protocol for the programme director's review.

b. Joint-first author publication may be accepted on a case-by-case basis, with justifications. Students who wish to use joint-first author publication to fulfil the publication requirement will need to complete this form. Students will need to indicate clearly, in the research proposal, their own contributions to the publication.

c. Publication accepted/published in a local peer-reviewed journal may be accepted on a case-by-case basis, subject to approval by the programme director.

For the research proposal, it is important for students to present a **coherent theme connecting the different topics planned for the PhD**. In addition, students must have a feasible plan for the rest of the PhD. Students may find it helpful to look at previous research proposals[5], which can be obtained from the Graduate Research Programme Administrator.

The PhD research proposal and appendix will be reviewed by two examiners. The research proposal will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

a) Accurate and appropriate title and abstract
b) Evidence of scientific relevance of research question including importance and originality
c) Relevant introduction and background to justify the proposal
d) Clearly stated hypothesis and/or aims that relate in a cohesive manner to the overall title and objective of the proposal
e) Appropriate and clearly documented research methods and/or theoretical/conceptual framework, and where applicable, results.
f) Clear project timeline including key milestones/deliverables.
g) Evidence that the student has fully considered the ethical implications of his/her research, and has sought the necessary approvals from IRB (where applicable)
h) Use of good and succinct English with attention to detail such as use of standard referencing.

If the student passes the written component, the oral examination will be scheduled. If the student is asked to revise, he/she will be given 1-2 months to revise the proposal for re-submission. The student will be allowed to revise the research proposal only once. If the student fails the written component, he/she will be asked to transfer to / remain in the MSc programme.

[5] The sample proposals are only available in hardcopy. Students can come to the Education Office to view the report, but they are not allowed to take the report away/ photocopy/ take photos.

Oral Component

Students need to pass the written component before they can proceed to the oral presentation. Students will be given a copy of the examiners' comments on their written component to prepare for the oral presentation.

The oral component is usually of 2 hours duration. Students will make an oral presentation followed by Q&A with the examiners. Before the oral examination, students are required to submit a copy of their presentation slides to the Graduate Research Programme Administrator who will print copies for the examiners.

Format of the oral component (until 31 December 2023):

The oral component is a fully closed-door session. The following is a summary of the format:

- Presentation by the student (max 45 minutes).
  - For the presentation, the student should not just provide answers to the examiner's comments, but also provide a succinct introduction, methodology, results, and discussion.
- Q&A with examiners of variable duration. The student will be questioned on the work done as well as his/her research plans for the rest of the PhD.
- Deliberation of the examiners and the chair (student and thesis advisor will be asked to leave the room).
- Oral panel to give feedback to student and inform student of the outcome.

Format of the oral component (with effect from 1 January 2024):

The oral component will comprise an open seminar followed by a closed-door session with the examiners. The following is a summary of the format:

Open Seminar (max 45 minutes):

- Brief introduction by the Chairperson (1 minute).
- Student present his/her work (max 30 minutes).
  - For the presentation, the student should provide a brief introduction to his/her research project, and present on the methodology, results, discussion and plans for the rest of the PhD.
- Q&A with the audience (max 15 minutes).
  - It is reserved for the general audience.
  - Examiners should leave their questioning to the closed-door session.

Closed Door Session (variable duration):

- Student present point-by-point response to the examiners' comments, followed by Q&A with the examiners.

- Deliberation of the examiners and the chair (student and thesis advisor will be asked to leave the room)
- Oral panel to give feedback to student and inform student of the outcome

If the student is required to repeat the oral component, the repeat attempt will be a fully closed-door event unless the student requests to give an open seminar again.

In assessing the student, the examination panel will be concerned with answering the following questions:

- Is the student able to provide a clear oral scientific presentation?
- Does the student have a good understanding of his/her research and related methodological issues? Can the student clearly communicate this during his/her presentation and discussion with the examiners?
- Does the student have sufficient academic knowledge and skill set to independently carry out the required research?
- Will the scope of the PhD, both already completed and planned, enable the student to make an original and significant contribution to the field of study?
- Are the aims and objectives of the PhD and research questions clearly specified?
- Is the timetable realistic and achievable? Will the student be able to accomplish the research plans by the end of the 4th year of his/her candidature?
- Does the student have adequate funds to allow the fieldwork to be undertaken (if applicable)? If there is doubt, is there a viable 'Plan B' to enable timely successful completion of the research degree?

The Chairperson is empowered to make decisions on the outcome of the PQE in consultation with the other two members.

The oral PQE is an important opportunity to provide feedback to the student and thesis advisor(s) to better prepare the student for the PhD thesis defence. If there are doubts whether the student will be able to finish the PhD successfully this is an important opportunity to have the student repeat the PQE and possibly switch to an MSc if this remains unsuccessful.

For the oral component, thesis advisor(s) will be invited to sit in as observers. Thesis advisor(s) are not allowed to speak on behalf of their student unless he/she is asked to do so by the PQE panel. The thesis advisor(s) are also not allowed to participate in the deliberations on the PQE outcome.

4.6.4 Examination Panel

The examination panel comprises 3 independent assessors who are external to the student's research project:

A. Chairperson
    a. Usually a SSHSPH faculty member who is in the same discipline or subject area as the student's thesis. The chairperson will be assigned by the School.
    b. The chairperson is only involved in the oral component. He/she is not an examiner for the written component.
    c. The chairperson, in consultation with the other 2 examiners:
        i. Identifies the outcome of the PQE. The Chairperson is empowered to make decisions on the outcome of the PQE in consultation with the other two members.
        ii. Writes a summary of the recommendations of the examination panel.
        iii. Is responsible for completing the PQE assessment form and submitting it to the Graduate Research Programme Administrator.

B. Two Examiners
    a. Examiners are expected to be academically reputable in the subject of the thesis, with a significant body of published work as appropriate. PQE examiners can be university faculty or Principal Investigators from national research centres/institutes. Postdoctoral staff are usually not permitted to act as examiners.
    b. Examiners are nominated by the main thesis advisor and approved by the Graduate Research Programme Director. In cases where the Graduate Research Programme Director is a thesis advisor, the nomination will be reviewed and approved by the Vice Dean (Education).
    c. Examiners will review both the written component and the oral component.

To ensure there is no conflict of interest, the main thesis advisor will be asked to confirm that all 3 members of the examination panel meet the following criteria:

- are not related (by family) to the main thesis advisor, the co-advisor(s) or the student.
- are not the student's research collaborators/co-authors.
- have not been supervised by the main thesis advisor or the co-advisor(s).
- have not been heavily involved in the supervision of the student's thesis *(for examiners who are also TAC members)*

<u>Important:</u> Students should not, under any circumstances, communicate with any examiner on matters relating to the PQE examination. In addition, students are not allowed to know the identities of their examiners until they have passed the written component.

If students have queries regarding the examiners' comments on the written component, they should approach the Graduate Research Programme Administrator who will assist to seek clarification from the examiner(s).

4.6.5 Deadlines and Documents Required

Students in the **August intake** are required to submit the following documents **by end May** of the second year of their candidature. Students in the **January intake** are required to apply for PQE **by end October** of the second year of their candidature. Please refer to the PhD Workplan for more information.

Documents Required:

i. Application Form – As students are not allowed to know the identities of their examiners, thesis advisors should submit the application form directly to the Education Office after completing the nomination of examiners.
ii. A PhD research proposal for the PQE written component. Please refer to Annex 4 for the prescribed format
iii. Any manuscript(s) in draft, submitted, accepted or published, or a draft of a chapter planned for the final thesis. Please refer to Section 4.6.3 for more information.

Students are required to submit their PhD research proposal to iThenticate (plagiarism detection software) and indicate the percentage similarity in the PQE application form. Students are advised to apply for an iThenticate account early as it takes time for NUS Computer Centre to create the account. Please complete the account request form on the CIT website.

Examiners are given 1 month to review the PhD research proposal and submit their recommendation. If no revision to the PhD research proposal is required, the oral examination will usually take place 1 month after both examiners have submitted their recommendations.

4.7 Thesis Examination

4.7.1 Pre-requisites

MSc students must fulfil the following requirements before thesis submission:

a. Completed coursework requirements with minimum GPA of 3.00.
   Note: Students who choose to read courses in their last semester will only be able to submit their thesis after the results are released for the semester.

b. *[For students who enrolled before August 2018]* Achieved regular attendance (at least 8 seminars per academic year for 2 years) in the school research rounds/ SSHSPH PhD thesis defences, and presented once in the student research rounds

c. Satisfactory grade (at least Grade C+) in all the required Graduate English Courses, for students who do not qualify for waiver of English Language requirement

d. Completed the requirements of the Graduate Assistantship Programme (GAP) (if applicable, only for international students receiving MOE-funded scholarships)

PhD students must fulfil the following requirements before thesis submission:

a. Completed coursework requirements with minimum GPA of 3.50
   Note: Students who choose to read courses in their last semester will only be able to submit their thesis after the results are released for the semester.

b. *[For students who enrolled from August 2019 onwards]* Minimum 'C+' grade in SPH5002 Public Health Research Methods

c. Pass in the PhD Qualifying Examination

d. *[For students who enrolled before August 2018]* Achieved regular attendance (at least 8 seminars per academic year for 3 years) in the school research rounds/ SSHSPH PhD thesis defences, and presented once in the student research rounds

e. Satisfactory grade (at least grade C+) in all the required Graduate English Courses, for students who do not qualify for waiver of English Language requirement

f. Completed the requirements of the Graduate Assistantship Programme (GAP) (if applicable, only for international students receiving MOE-funded scholarships)

g. Have at least 1 first-author publication accepted/published in an international peer-reviewed journal at the time of thesis submission. The publication should be an original research article or systematic review and not a narrative review. In addition to the published article, the thesis should contain substantial data equivalent to at least 2 additional papers publishable in international peer-reviewed journals recognized within the student's domain/area of research. These could be chapters within the thesis or manuscripts that are ready for submission inserted as chapters within the thesis.

    i. Scoping reviews may be accepted on a case-by-case basis. For scoping reviews, students will need to submit the protocol for the programme director's review.

    ii. Joint-first author publication may be accepted on a case-by-case basis, with justifications. Students who wish to use joint-first author publication to fulfil the publication requirement will need to complete this form. Students will need to indicate clearly, in their theses, their own contributions to the publication.

    iii. Publication accepted/published in a local peer-reviewed journal may be accepted on a case-by-case basis. Students will need to submit the article for the programme director's review.

    Note: Meeting the publication requirement by itself does not guarantee graduation. The main criteria for a successful thesis are the overall substance of the completed research and the ability of the student to defend it.

4.7.2 Examples of Theses

Students who are starting to write their thesis will find it useful to refer to theses of previous graduates. All theses of NUS graduates are available for viewing at ScholarBank@NUS. The list of past graduates and their thesis titles is available in the SPH0001 Canvas Files.

4.7.3 Requirements of a Thesis

The thesis must be written in English, and in a format that complies with NUS Guidelines.

The thesis must consist of the student's own account of the investigations and indicate in what respect the study has advanced the subject. An MSc thesis must demonstrate scholarship and the student's ability to perform original, independent research. The MSc thesis must make some contribution to knowledge and not be mere collation of existing material. A PhD thesis must make a significant contribution to the knowledge of the subject concerned or provide evidence of originality either by the discovery of new facts or by the exercising of independent critical ability. The PhD thesis should contain

a substantial body of work that has been published or is publishable in international peer-reviewed journals.

Work which has been submitted for another degree, or for which a degree has already been conferred by the University or any other university, may not be submitted again as a thesis but students are not precluded from incorporating part of such work provided that, in the thesis, students clearly indicate the part of the work which has been incorporated. **Please note that any work carried out before the student's enrolment in the University cannot be used for submission in a thesis examination, unless the student has obtained approval from his/her thesis advisor and the School.**

Before submission of the thesis, students should seek consent from copyright owners for the inclusion of any third-party proprietary/confidential intellectual property in the thesis.

Politically and commercially sensitive information; or proprietary/confidential and personal information which is not critical to the thesis and for which consent is not granted, should be excluded from the thesis. If necessary, such information could be included as appendices instead and be excluded from the final thesis to be uploaded to the Electronic Thesis & Dissertation (ETD) System.

4.7.3.1 Expectation of an MSc thesis

The scope of an MSc thesis shall be what might reasonably be expected after two years of full-time study. An MSc thesis should contain minimum content equivalent to one academic journal paper (original research).

An MSc student needs to demonstrate, in the thesis:

a. a critical evaluation of current research in the chosen field of study

b. a comprehensive understanding of methodology, including strengths and limitations, applicable to their own research

c. practical understanding of how knowledge and methodology can be combined to create novel knowledge in the chosen field of study

The MSc thesis shall:

a. consist of the student's own account of their original research process and work;

b. give a critical assessment of the relevant literature, describe the method of research and its findings with in-depth discussion on findings, research methodology and relevance to field of study;

c. be presented in a logical and coherent manner;

d. be written in good and succinct English; and include a full reference list.

4.7.3.2 Expectation of a PhD thesis

The scope of the thesis shall be what might reasonably be expected after four years of full-time study. A PhD thesis should contain minimum content that will be sufficient for 3 publishable papers, of which one should have been published/ accepted for publication as first author at the time of thesis submission.

A PhD student needs to demonstrate, in the thesis and the subsequent oral examination:

a. the independent creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research that advances knowledge in selected field of study, of a quality to satisfy peer review, and merits publication

b. a systematic acquisition and understanding of substantial and current body of knowledge in selected field of study

c. a general ability to conceptualise, design, and implement a research project, with an understanding of strengths and limitations, and to adapt methodologies in the light of new knowledge and/or real time constraints

d. a high level of practical understanding of how knowledge and methodology can be combined to create and interpret knowledge in the chosen field of study

The PhD thesis shall:

a. consist of the student's own account of their original research process and work;

b. justify how the student's work forms a novel and significant contribution to the field of study;

c. give a critical assessment of the relevant literature, describe the method of research and its findings and include a discussion on findings, methodologies used and impact of work on the field of study;

d. be an integrated whole and presented in a logical and coherent manner;

e. be written in good and succinct English; and include a full reference list.

4.7.4 Format of the Thesis

All students must refer to the NUS Guidelines for the required format. Students may refer to the SPH0001 Canvas Files for the list of shops that offer thesis printing and binding services.

The content of the thesis should be in the following order. PhD students should also include a list of publications that have resulted from their PhD research. The publication listing can be inserted after the thesis summary.

• Title page
• Declaration page
• Acknowledgements
• Table of Contents
• Summary
• **List of Publication(s) that have resulted from the PhD research (required for PhD students)**
• List of Tables
• List of Figures
• List of Illustrations
• List of Symbols
• Main body of thesis
• Bibliography
• Appendices

Within the main body of the thesis, published papers or ready-for-publication papers may be included as chapters in the thesis (in between the introduction and discussion), provided the following criteria are met:

- The introduction and discussion must be sufficiently comprehensive to integrate the theme of the thesis topic and ensure flow and continuity between chapters. The introduction should comprise a literature review of the thesis topic and a clear description of the research aims.

- The student should be the first author in all included publications. If there are multiple authors for an article, the student should clearly state his/her contribution to the research and writing of the publication in the introduction of the thesis.

- Each of the included publications must be properly referenced and proper credit should be given to the co-authors and publishers. Students will need to declare, at the beginning of the chapter, if the contents have been published and provide the journal reference. Written permission from the copyright owners, for instance the publishers, must be obtained for any copyrighted materials for which the student is not the sole copyright owner.

- For publications with multiple authors, students should discuss and seek agreement from their co-authors with regards to the copyright clearance and embargo options.

- All published material included in the thesis must meet the formatting required by NUS (i.e. with regards to margins, font, line spacing etc). The formatting used should be consistent throughout the thesis.

Students should note that a thesis should not merely be a compilation of published papers. Examiners will expect a comprehensive introduction and discussion, including a thorough literature review, and more detailed information than a published paper.

4.7.5 Deadline for Submission

Students must submit their theses for examination (after being approved by their thesis advisor(s)) by the maximum period of candidature.

Students who wish to apply for extension of candidature need to complete the Application for Extension of Candidature for Graduate Research Students Form and submit it through their thesis advisor(s), Graduate Research Programme Director and Vice Dean (Education), preferably three (3) months before the expiry date of their candidature.

A grace period of two (2) weeks can be given by the NUS Graduate School without the need for the student to apply for extension of his/her maximum period of candidature. This request must be supported by the main thesis advisor and submitted before the expiry of the candidature.

- The request for grace period is not applicable for students who have been granted prior candidature extension(s) or students who are submitting their revised/final approved thesis.
- Any late request would be considered as reinstatement of candidature and an administrative fee of S$250 will be imposed for all successful reinstatements.
- Students who have been given the two (2) weeks grace period but are still unable to submit their theses should consult their thesis advisor(s) first before applying for any reinstatement/ extension of candidature.

Students who wish to submit their theses before the minimum residency period must submit a written request, through their thesis advisor(s), to the Graduate Research Programme Director and Vice Dean (Education) for approval before submission.

4.7.6 Thesis Submission Date & Fees Payable

Tuition and miscellaneous student fees are payable until the thesis is submitted for examination. However, the insurance premium will continue to be payable for full-time students unless the student

converts his/her candidature to part-time. A student who converts his/her candidature to part-time after Instructional Week 2 is liable to pay the insurance premium for that semester.

The tuition fees payable for the semester in which the thesis is submitted for examination will depend on the thesis submission approval date (i.e. the date on which the **main thesis advisor approves the thesis submission in the EduRec system**).

Exemption of fees will take effect from the semester after the thesis is submitted for examination, except if the thesis is submitted within Instructional Week 2 of the semester.

Important Note: For fees to be exempted, students are to submit their thesis early, to allow time for the Education Office and their main thesis advisor to review and process their thesis, so that the final date of endorsement is within Instructional Week 2 of the semester.

Date of Submission of Thesis *(Date on which the Main Thesis Advisor approves the thesis submission in EduRec)*	**Tuition Fees Payable**
By the end of Instructional Week 2	Exempted
After Instructional Week 2 but by end September/ end March	Half of Fee for the semester
Thereafter	Full fee for the semester

Notes:

i. To encourage research students to submit their thesis promptly, those who do so after Instructional Week 2, but whose thesis submission is approved by end September in Semester 1, or end March in Semester 2, would receive a half semester tuition fee refund.

ii. The fee refund is not applicable for miscellaneous fees.

iii. Research students (non-scholars) who submit their thesis for examination during the semester when they are on leave of absence or during the semester immediately after the period of leave, will have to pay fees (both tuition and miscellaneous) for one semester, even if the thesis is submitted within Instructional Week 2 or the first half of the latter semester.

iv. Research scholars whose research scholarship have expired and have not submitted their thesis are no longer eligible for tuition fee allowance. They are required to pay their own fees with effect from the current semester (if the last day of scholarship is within the first two instructional weeks of the current semester) or with effect from the subsequent semester (if the last day of scholarship is beyond the second instructional week of the current semester). Fees are payable until the thesis is submitted for examination.

v. Research scholars who submit thesis for examination will continue to receive their stipends until their final thesis submission date, or up to the 24th (for Master's by Research) or 48th (for PhD) month of their candidature, whichever is earlier. The extended stipends disbursed will be capped at six (6) months. Please see here for the details.

For more details, please refer to the information from NUS Graduate School.

4.7.7 Thesis Examiners Criteria

Important: Students should not, under any circumstances, communicate with any examiner on matters relating to the thesis examination. In addition, students are not allowed to know the identities of their thesis examiners until all examiners have submitted their evaluations.

Examiners are expected to be academically reputable in the subject of the thesis, with a significant body of published work as appropriate. Postdoctoral staff are usually not permitted to act as examiners.

An MSc thesis will be examined by two internal examiners[6], while a PhD thesis will be examined by a minimum of two internal examiners. Any request to appoint an external examiner will require prior approval from the NUS Graduate School. For PhD thesis, both examiners must be resident in Singapore and available to attend the oral examination. At least one of the examiners must be a full-time regular[7] faculty member.

TAC members (except for the thesis advisor) can serve as examiners, though in particular cases where the committee member has been highly involved in the supervision of the thesis, this should be avoided. If the thesis advisor proposes a TAC member as an examiner, he/she will need to declare in the nomination form that the TAC member has not been heavily involved in the supervision of the thesis.

External examiners examining a thesis that contains patentable/confidential materials will need to read and agree to the Terms & Conditions in the Non- Disclosure Agreement before the thesis can be sent to him/her. Students and thesis advisors are reminded that proprietary/confidential information which is not critical to the thesis and for which consent has not been granted should be excluded from the thesis.

4.7.8 Procedures for Thesis Submission

a. Propose Thesis Submission Date
   i. Students are required to propose their thesis submission date once they have reached the 22nd month of their candidature (for MSc students) and 46th month of their candidature (for PhD

[6] Internal examiners refer to examiners who are NUS staff or who hold joint appointments or adjunct appointments with NUS. Staff on visiting appointments of 3 months or less will be considered as external examiners.
[7] In general, the person should be a full-time faculty member who hold appointment and perform duties at the university for a minimum of 9 months a year (i.e. ≥75% appointment at NUS).

students). An auto-email will be sent to the student with instructions to login to EduRec to propose their thesis submission date.

b. Verify Thesis Title
   i. Students may check their thesis title by going to EduRec → Academics → Academic Records → View Milestones
   ii. If there are changes to the thesis title, please apply via EduRec *(Academics → Graduate Research → Submit Form)* at least one month before the thesis is submitted for examination. Please see here for the user guide

c. Upload Thesis Abstract
   i. Students are required to upload a 150-word abstract of their thesis to EduRec for the nomination of thesis examiners form. This should be done **at least one month** before thesis submission. Please see here for the user guide.

d. Nomination of Thesis Examiners
   i. Students should maintain close contact with their thesis advisors, so that the main thesis advisor is aware of their progress and will initiate the nomination of examiners process, **at least one month** before thesis submission. This is to allow sufficient time for processing the nomination so that the thesis can be sent for examination upon submission.
   ii. Please refer to section 4.7.7 Thesis Examiners Criteria for more information.

e. Thesis Submission
   i. Students will need to log in to EduRec (navigate to Academics > Graduate Research > Submit Thesis) to submit the thesis. Students will need to:
      a. Complete the online Thesis Submission Form (see here for the user guide)
      b. Upload a softcopy (pdf format) of the thesis
      c. Submit the following to the Education Office:
         - Thesis Submission – Plagiarism Check Form (completed and signed)
         - Printed soft-bound copies of the thesis (if requested by the examiners). Please check with the Graduate Research Programme Administrator on the number of copies required.

   ii. Students must check the latest Student Bill and pay all outstanding fees. The University reserves the right to withhold student status letters, result slips or transcripts, thesis examination and confirmation of the award of the degree, for students with outstanding fees and research scholars who have received overpayment of research stipends which have yet to be refunded.

iii. After receiving the student's submission, Education Office will verify that the student satisfies all the coursework and thesis requirements, before submitting to the main thesis advisor for approval.

iv. The main thesis advisor will verify that the student has completed the writing up of his/her thesis to his/her satisfaction and the thesis is ready for examination before approving the submission.

4.7.9 Process of Thesis Examination

A. Period of Thesis Examination

a. Education Office will send the thesis to external examiner(s) (if any) for examination. Internal examiners are able to view/download the thesis from EduRec for examination.

b. Examiners are generally given seven (7) weeks from the thesis sent date to complete the examination of the thesis and submit an evaluation report. Reminders will be sent to examiners before the deadline and to those who failed to submit their evaluation reports by the deadline.

c. Students can track their Thesis Examination Status via EduRec > Academics > Academic Records > View Milestones

B. Outcome of Thesis Examination

a. After all the examiners' reports are received, and if there are:

i. no/minor amendments:

- an automated email will be sent to Master's and Doctoral students for them to view the comments of their examiner(s) online via EduRec (Home > Academics > Academic Records). Refer to User Guide here.
- Doctoral students will be notified of the confirmed oral examination date by the Education Office. Please see Section 4.7.10 PhD Open Seminar and Oral Examination for the School's guidelines on thesis defence.
- Doctoral students are required to attend the oral examination in person and to bring along a copy of their thesis (either hardcopy or softcopy) to the oral examination venue. After the oral examination, the Oral Panel will inform the student of the outcome, the amendments to the thesis, the person(s) to advise the student on the amendments, if applicable, and the deadline to submit the revised thesis.

ii. major amendments:

- The Education Office will notify Master's and Doctoral students to revise and resubmit their thesis for further examination, if any. Doctoral students will not be scheduled an oral examination until the re-examination is completed successfully.
- The student may have to pay fees for one semester, even if the period granted to do the revision is less than six (6) months. If the student is unable to complete the revisions in six (6) months, s/he will be required to pay another semester's fees. The total revision period generally cannot exceed 12 months.

After examination/re-examination, the student must:

a. submit a copy of the final approved thesis (in any form) to the Thesis Advisor(s).
b. include the Name of Thesis Advisor/Co-Advisor(s) (if any), and Name of Examiners on the thesis title page of the final approved thesis.
c. check and ensure that thesis is final, complete, and correct version before uploading it electronically via the Electronic Thesis & Dissertation (ETD) System in accordance with the "Instructions on Final Thesis Submission". Students will be notified via email once the system is open for uploading.
d. complete and submit the personalised "GS Exit Questionnaire" which will be provided in the conveyance of outcome email.

Students are encouraged to register for an Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID). More information can be found on our NUS Libraries' webpage.

C. Award of Degree

The student will be considered for award of degree by the Board of Graduate Studies:

a. when all minor/major revisions are incorporated in the thesis to the satisfaction of the thesis advisor(s) and the Oral Panel member (if applicable); and
b. the thesis has been successfully uploaded into the ETD System.

After the degree has been awarded by the Board of Graduate Studies, the Chancellor's approval will be sought for the degree to be conferred in writing. The approximate timeframe for approval by Board of Graduate Studies and Chancellor is about two (2) months after the thesis has been uploaded into the system.

Important: Students are reminded to inform the University of any change in their contact details, such as mailing address, email address and telephone number by updating it via EduRec *(My Homepage > Personal Info > Demographic Information).*

4.7.10 PhD Open Seminar and Oral Examination

All PhD students are required to give an open seminar where the oral examination panel will assess their presentation and ability to answer questions from the audience.

Composition of the Oral Examination Panel:

- Chairperson
  - Full-time faculty member appointed by the School
  - Role: to facilitate the oral examination and ensure that it is conducted in a proper manner. The chairperson is also supposed to substitute the external examiner (if applicable) in his/her

absence and to assess if the student has adequately addressed and responded to the external examiner's comments on the thesis.

- 2 of the thesis examiners (usually the 2 internal examiners)

The PhD thesis defence is usually of 3 hours duration, and the following is a summary of the format:

Summary of the proceedings:

i. Brief introduction by the Chairperson (1 to 2 minutes)
ii. Student present his/her work (max 40 minutes)
iii. Q&A with the audience (max 20 minutes)
iv. Closed door meeting with the Board of Examiners (2 hours)

Instructions to Students:

Students are required to attend the oral examination in person and to bring along a copy of their thesis (either softcopy or hardcopy) to the oral examination venue.

The duration of the oral presentation should not exceed 40 minutes. At this presentation, the student should not spend too much time on the literature review but highlight the:

- ❖ aims of the research project
- ❖ development of new methodology used in the project (if applicable)
- ❖ original contribution made to the research area
- ❖ impact of scientific findings in the research area

After the student's presentation, there will be a Q&A session where the student will address questions raised by the audience. The examiners may ask questions during the audience Q&A, but this will be limited to a few general questions and examiners will only be allowed to raise questions only after there are no more questions from the audience.

At the end of the open seminar, the student will meet privately with the oral examination panel. Students should expect in-depth questioning from the examiners on any aspects of the thesis and the implications of their PhD work. Students must also be prepared to explain the rationale behind their study design and demonstrate some level of appreciation of broader issues. For example, for a student doing a PhD on urine metabolomics of diabetics, the student must be able to discuss the issues that need to be addressed before it can be used in clinical or public health setting.

Student who performs unsatisfactorily will be required to re-take the oral examination.

4.8 Progress Monitoring

The School monitors the progress of research students on a semestral basis via the online research progress reporting (for both MSc & PhD students) and the Thesis Advisory Committee meeting reports (only for PhD students):

4.8.1 Research Progress Reports

All MSc and PhD students are required to submit a research progress report bi-annually via EduRec (Academics > Graduate Research > Submit Research Progress Report). The report should include a summary of the work done in the current semester, self-assessment and comments. The progress report will be reviewed by the main thesis advisor, the Graduate Research Programme Director and the Vice Dean (Education) for candidature and scholarship renewal.

Students will receive an email (October/April) on the submission period and will need to complete the submission before the start of reading week to allow sufficient time for review by their thesis advisor(s), Programme Director and Vice Dean (Education).

It is important that students submit their research progress report by the stipulated deadline. The table below shows the implications of failure to submit the progress report within the deadline:

For Research Scholars	For Non-Scholars
Scholarship will be suspended as renewal of scholarship is dependent on the semestral report submission. Note: Scholars with Graduate Assistantship Programme (GAP): ○ Must report on the number of completed GAP hours during the reporting semester. ○ Must attach a completed and endorsed Summary Sheet for GAP	Status of progress report will be reflected as "Deemed Unsatisfactory"

Please see here for more information.

4.8.1.1 Format of the Research Progress Reports

Students are required to provide:

i. A summary of the work done in the current semester in a prescribed format, and upload it as a **PDF attachment**.

Students should cover the following points in their summary:

- Thesis Title
- Abstract of their PhD project (in no more than 150 words)
- Specific aims of their research projects, and the progress status (i.e. what was accomplished in the current semester, and what are your plans for the future semesters). Please list down the publications (if any) for each of the aim.
- Courses taken in the current semester and current GPA
- Status of PhD Qualifying Examination
- Any other relevant information

ii. Self-assessment and comments (e.g. achievements and problems encountered) should be provided in the free-text section titled "Student's Comments"

4.8.2 Thesis Advisory Committee Meetings (for PhD students only)

All PhD students will have a Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC), which should be formed within 2 months after the student's enrolment in the PhD programme. For MSc students who successfully transferred to the PhD candidature, the TAC should be formed within 2 months after the student passed the PhD Qualifying Examination.

Members of the TAC will be nominated by the thesis advisor(s) and approved by the Graduate Research Programme Director and Vice Dean (Education).

4.8.2.1 Composition of TAC

i. The TAC can be made up of maximum 4 members, i.e. a Chairperson, the main thesis advisor and up to 2 other members. If the student has more than one co-advisor, only one of the co-advisors is allowed to be part of the TAC.

ii. TAC members can be SSHSPH faculty, other NUS faculty or investigators from national Research Institutes/Centers. If the thesis advisor is NOT a full-time NUS staff, one of the TAC members should be a full-time NUS staff.

iii. TAC members shall select a chairperson among themselves; the chairperson cannot be the main thesis advisor or the co-advisor.

4.8.2.2 Roles of TAC

i. The TAC is responsible for monitoring the student's progress.

ii. The thesis advisor is required to convene a TAC meeting with the student on a regular basis (at least once per semester). The chairperson will chair all TAC meetings and communicate decisions

of the TAC to the Education Office. At least 2 of the TAC members (including the Chairperson) must be present at each of these meetings.

iii. At the end of each meeting, the TAC is required to complete the TAC report for submission to the Education Office. The TAC is required to submit reports on a biannual basis, **by end February and end September** of each year. The outcome of the TAC meetings can be incorporated into the student's bi-annual online research progress reports.

4.8.2.3 Guidelines for TAC meetings

i. Students do not need to wait until February/September to have the TAC meetings. TAC meetings can be held anytime in the semester as long as the reports are submitted by end February and end September of each year.

ii. Students should be adequately prepared for TAC meetings and bring a printed copy of the TAC report for completion by the chairperson. Students who need to book a meeting room for their TAC meetings can approach the Graduate Research Programme Administrator for assistance.

iii. In the first meeting, the student should present the aims of the project, proposed methodology, and any preliminary results that are available. In subsequent meetings, depending on the recommendations of the TAC, the student can provide a summary of the results obtained and any new results since the last meeting. At the end of the meeting, the TAC will make recommendations for further work where appropriate.

4.8.2.4 Exemption from TAC Meetings

i. Students can be exempted from a TAC meeting if their thesis advisor(s) and TAC members are agreeable, but they cannot be exempted from 2 meetings consecutively. If the student and TAC members decide not to have a TAC meeting, the student will still need to complete the TAC report form and send a draft of his/her progress to the TAC members for review. The TAC chairperson is still required to complete the TAC report form.

ii. Students who are in their last semester before thesis submission can request for exemption, by doing the following:

   a. Student to obtain email confirmations from both the main thesis advisor and the TAC chairperson that they are agreeable for him/her not to have a TAC meeting.
   b. Student to forward the email confirmations and a report of his/her research progress to the Graduate Research Programme Director (cc the main thesis advisor and the Graduate Research Programme Administrator) to seek approval for exemption.

4.9 Continuation Requirements

MSc

To continue in the MSc programme, a student cannot have:

- GPA below 3.00 (but ≥ 2.50) for three consecutive semesters; or
- GPA below 2.50 for two consecutive semesters.

For any semester in which the student's GPA falls below 3.00 (but ≥ 2.50), that student will be issued an academic warning. If, in the following semester, the student's GPA again falls below 3.00, s/he will be placed on probation. If the student's GPA remains below 3.00 for the third consecutive semester, the student will be issued a letter of dismissal.

For students whose GPA falls below 2.50 for two consecutive semesters, they will be placed on probation for the first semester, followed by dismissal in the second semester.

GPA	1st Semester	2nd Semester	3rd Semester
Below 3.00	Academic Warning	Academic Probation	Academic Dismissal
Below 2.50	Academic Probation	Academic Dismissal	

Such a student may appeal the dismissal if there are extenuating circumstances. The appeal must be submitted to the Education Office within two calendar weeks of the last day of the release of each semester's examination results. Generally, a student is allowed to appeal only once per candidature. If the appeal is rejected, the student will not be readmitted. However, if it is approved, the student will be given one semester to achieve the minimum GPA required for continuation and graduation.

Appeals submitted after the two calendar week period, due to extenuating reasons, will be considered on a case-by-case basis and are not guaranteed. In such cases an administrative fee of S$250 will be charged for each successful appeal for readmission.

In addition to poor GPA, a research student may also be issued a warning, placed on probation or issued a letter of termination for poor performance in the research progress, research thesis, or other programme requirements.

For more information, please refer to the information from Registrar's Office.

PhD

To continue in the PhD programme, a student cannot have:

- GPA below 3.50 (but ≥ 3.00) for three consecutive semesters; or
- GPA below 3.00 for two consecutive semesters.

For any semester in which the student's GPA falls below 3.50 (but ≥ 3.00), that student will be issued an academic warning. If, in the following semester, the student's GPA again falls below 3.50, s/he will be placed on probation. If the student's GPA remains below 3.50 for the third consecutive semester, the student will be issued a letter of dismissal.

For students whose GPA falls below 3.00 for two consecutive semesters, they will be placed on probation for the first semester, followed by dismissal in the second semester.

GPA	1st Semester	2nd Semester	3rd Semester
Below 3.5	Academic Warning	Academic Probation	Academic Dismissal
Below 3.0	Academic Probation	Academic Dismissal	

Such a student may appeal the dismissal if there are extenuating circumstances. The appeal must be submitted to the Education Office within two calendar weeks of the last day of the release of each semester's examination results. Generally, a student is allowed to appeal only once per candidature. If the appeal is rejected, the student will not be readmitted. However, if it is approved, the student will be given one semester to achieve the minimum GPA required for continuation and graduation.

Appeals that are submitted after the two calendar week period, due to extenuating reasons, will be considered on a case-by-case basis and are not guaranteed. In such cases an administrative fee of S$250 will be charged for each successful appeal for readmission.

In addition to poor GPA, a research student may also be issued a warning, placed on probation or issued a letter of termination for poor performance in the PhD qualifying examination, research progress, research thesis, or other programme requirements.

For more information, please refer to the information from Registrar’s Office.

4.10 Graduation Requirements

To graduate from the MSc programme, the student must have:

- Completed coursework requirements with minimum GPA of 3.00
- Pass in the MSc thesis (word limit of 60,000)
- *[For students who enrolled before August 2018]* Achieved regular attendance (at least 8 seminars per academic year for 2 years) in the student research rounds/ staff research rounds/ SSHSPH PhD thesis defences, and presented once in the student research rounds
- Satisfactory grade (at least Grade C+) in all the required Graduate English Courses, for students who do not qualify for waiver of English Language requirement

To graduate from the PhD programme, the student must have:

- Completed coursework requirements with minimum GPA of 3.50
- *[For students who enrolled from August 2019 onwards]* Minimum 'C+' grade in SPH5002 Public Health Research Methods
- Pass in the PhD Qualifying Examination
- Pass in PhD thesis (word limit of 80,000) and Oral Examination.
- *[For students who enrolled before August 2018]* Achieved regular attendance (at least 8 seminars per academic year for 3 years) in the student research rounds/ staff research rounds/ SSHSPH PhD thesis defences, and presented once in the student research rounds
- Satisfactory grade (at least grade C+) in all the required Graduate English Courses, for students who do not qualify for waiver of English Language requirement

5. Supervision

5.1 Responsibilities of Students & Thesis Advisors

5.1.1 General Principles

Research students are members of their thesis advisors' research team and are expected to work closely with their thesis advisors for the thesis research. It is important for students and thesis advisors to establish expectations of the student's training, supervision, and project ownership early in the student's candidature. This should be revisited if there are changes in the composition of the supervision team.

Students and thesis advisors should mutually agree on a timeframe, in advance, for the student to submit written work (e.g. PQE research proposal, thesis chapters, scientific papers, abstracts for submissions to scientific conferences etc.) to the thesis advisors for review and for the thesis advisors to return feedback to the student. It is important that both student and thesis advisor agree when work will be submitted, so that students will have a clear deadline and thesis advisors will be able to schedule time to review the student's work

5.1.2 Students' Responsibilities

General Aspect

i. Students must accept ultimate responsibility for his/her own research activity and candidacy for a degree.
ii. Students are expected to keep to agreed timelines and maintain satisfactory progress at all times with respect to the research project and any programme of work agreed with the thesis advisor(s).
iii. Students must maintain regular contact with their thesis advisors (joint responsibility with thesis advisors) and provide thesis advisors with prompt updates on their progress.
iv. Students must make known to their thesis advisor(s) any circumstances that might require his/her mode of study to be modified or his/her candidature to be extended, suspended, or withdrawn.
v. It is the student's responsibility to check with the Education Office regarding fulfilment of graduation requirements for the degree admitted. Failure to do so and not fulfilling the requirements will lead to termination of candidature.

Research Aspect

i. Students must be responsible for the directions of any innovation in the development of the research project.
ii. Students must highlight to the thesis advisor(s) problems arising related to the project as well as provide adequate explanation of any failure to attend meetings, deadlines, or other commitments, so that appropriate guidance may be offered.
iii. Students are encouraged to make use of appropriate teaching and learning facilities made available by the university. (e.g. computer clusters/center, laboratories, libraries etc)
iv. Students are to comply with the rules & regulations when using NUS facilities.

v. Students must familiarize themselves with the institutional regulations and policies that affect them, including health and safety regulations, intellectual property policy, research data management policy and ethical research guidelines.

Written Aspect

i. To submit written work in a specified and agreed time before meeting with the thesis advisor(s).
ii. To prepare periodic progress reports on the research project.
iii. To communicate research findings to others in the academic community, both orally and in written form.
iv. To successfully complete any training programme arranged by, provided, through the University or third party.
v. Please note that **plagiarism is a serious offence**. Any student caught plagiarising will be subject to disciplinary action. Offenders may have their candidature suspended/terminated. All students may refer to the Student Essentials e-Course in Canvas on what constitutes plagiarism and the consequences of plagiarism.

Teaching, Research Assignments & Developmental Assignments

a. Students who are scholarship recipients may be assigned teaching duties, research assignments or developmental assignments within the School
b. Research scholars are responsible for the work assigned to them, and to perform all assignments satisfactory and in a timely manner.
c. At any point in time, the scholar's award of scholarship can be terminated/suspended if the scholar is not executing his/her duties in a professional manner.

Most importantly, the research student must act as a responsible member of the institution's academic community.

5.1.3 Thesis Advisors' Responsibilities

i. Provide satisfactory guidance and advice to the student
ii. Be responsible for monitoring the progress of the student's research programme. Provide timely and constructive feedback on the student's work, including his/her overall progress within the programme.
iii. Establish and maintain regular contact with the student, and ensure his/her accessibility to the student, by whatever means is most suitable and agreed upon.
iv. Ensure that the student is aware of the need to conduct his/her research according to ethical principles, and of the implications of research misconduct
v. Ensure that the student is aware of institutional-level sources of advice, including careers guidance and health and safety legislation

vi. Provide effective pastoral support and/or referring the student to other sources of such support, e.g. the student support manager, the Directors of Student Life, the programme management team or others within the student's academic community.
vii. Help the student to interact with others working in the field of research, for example, encouraging the student to attend relevant conferences, supporting him/her in seeking funding for such events; and where appropriate to submit conference papers and articles to refereed journals and explore relevant continuing professional development opportunities.

5.2 Problems with Supervision

Students or thesis advisors who are having problems with supervision should discuss these first with the thesis advisor/student. If either the student or the thesis advisor does not feel comfortable discussing problems with each other, they should approach the Director or Deputy Director of Student Life, the Graduate Research Programme Director, or the Vice Dean (Education) for advice and help.

6. Teaching, Research & Other Assignments (for Research Scholars)

6.1 Overview

a. Students who are recipients of the following scholarships are required to perform teaching, research, and other developmental assignments up to the hours stipulated by their scholarship:
   i. President's Graduate Fellowship
   ii. Commonwealth Scholarship
   iii. NUS Research Scholarship

b. For International Students who are required to fulfil the Graduate Assistantship Programme (GAP)[8]:
   i. No remuneration will be given for hours clocked under GAP
   ii. If funding is available, students who perform work in excess of the hours required by GAP can be remunerated at a rate in accordance with the NUS Student Work Scheme

c. For Singapore Citizens, Singapore Permanent Residents and International Students who are exempted from the Graduate Assistantship Programme (GAP):
   i. Only teaching assignments are required:
      - MSc students are required to perform 60 hours of teaching assignments
      - PhD students are required to perform 120 hours of teaching assignments
   ii. Research scholars who submit their theses early (at least 1 semester before the end date of the scholarship) may request for the teaching hours to be pro-rated. For example, a PhD research scholar who submits his/her thesis in the 6th semester may request for the teaching requirement to be pro-rated from 120 hours to 90 hours.
   iii. Research and developmental assignments are optional. If funding is available, students can be remunerated at a rate in accordance with the NUS Student Work Scheme, subject to point d (see below).

d. The total time spent on teaching, research, and developmental assignments (including both paid hours and unpaid hours) **cannot exceed 16 hours per week**. This applies to all research scholars regardless of nationality.

e. SSHSPH will only award the hours clocked if the work done is satisfactory.

[8] Graduate Assistantship Programme (GAP) is applicable for all International Students receiving MOE-funded scholarships, for example, the NUS Research Scholarship, the Commonwealth Scholarship, and the President's Graduate Fellowship (funded by MOE). Research Scholars who are Singapore Citizens and Singapore Permanent Residents do not need to fulfil GAP. In addition, International Students receiving the President's Graduate Fellowship (funded by Jasmine Scholarship) and the President's Graduate Fellowship (funded by Lee Kong Chian Scholarship) are exempted from GAP.

6.2 Teaching Assignments

Research scholars are required to serve as teaching assistants (TA) in SSHSPH courses as part of the scholarship requirements. TAs provide essential support to faculty members and help meet the teaching needs of the School. Serving as TAs also contributes to the professional development of research students as it enables them to gain valuable experience in the classroom, develop their teaching skills and receive feedback from experienced faculty members.

For information on the roles and responsibilities of TAs, please refer to the SSHSPH Teaching Assistant Policy in the SPH0001 Canvas Files.

Research students who assist MPH students by guiding them on the use of statistical or qualitative analysis software for their practicum can count this as teaching hours, subject to the following:

- Students can clock a **maximum of 5 hours** per MPH student
- Limit to 2 – 3 MPH students in total

Students need to obtain the approval of their thesis advisor before they agree to assist the MPH student. At the end of the assignment, students will need to submit a report to the Education Office.

6.3 Research/Developmental Assignments

The following table lists the scope of duties:

Research Assignments	*Research Assignments* • Assist your thesis advisor in research assignments beyond the scope of your research project *Research Supervision* • Assist your thesis advisor in supervising attachment students, interns, or undergraduate students. • Research students are not allowed to assist MPH students in their practicum projects as MPH students are expected to work on their projects independently. However, research students may assist MPH students by guiding them on the use of statistical or qualitative analysis software, and count this as teaching hours (see above for details).

Developmental Assignments	*Organizing/ assisting in school-level events or projects, subject to approval by Vice Dean (Education). Possible assignments include:* • NUS Open Day, Commencement, and other student activities • Conferences and executive courses • Develop case studies

For international students who need to fulfil the Graduate Assistantship Programme (GAP):

- On the completion of the research assignment or developmental assignment, students will need to submit a report to the Education Office detailing the scope of duties and the hours clocked. Please see here for the report form.

6.4 Graduate Assistantship Programme (for International Students)

International Students who are awarded the following scholarships are required to perform duties under the Graduate Assistantship Programme as set out in the table below:

Degree	**Total Hours Required during Candidature**	
	NUS Research Scholarship & Commonwealth Scholarship	**President's Graduate Fellowship**
PhD	416	312
2-year Master's by Research	156	-
1-year Master's by Research	78	-

The table below sets out the maximum hours that can be clocked under the respective categories:

Category of Work	**PhD (President's Graduate Fellowship)**	**PhD (NUS Research Scholarship & Commonwealth Scholarship)**	**Master's (2-year)**	**Master's (1-year)**
Teaching Assistant (min 20%)	At least 63	At least 84	At least 32	At least 16
Research Assistant Duty (max 60%)	Up to 188	Up to 250	Up to 94	Up to 47
Developmental assignments (max 20%)	Up to 63	Up to 84	Up to 32	Up to 16
Total	**312**	**416**	**156**	**78**

a. The Scholar will not be paid any remuneration for the hours clocked under the Graduate Assistantship Programme.

b. The Scholar should work with the thesis advisor(s) on the plan to fulfil the required hours on a yearly (Academic Year) basis.

c. The duties can only be clocked for work done and deemed satisfactory by the University.

d. If the required hours are not met according to the annual plan or the quality of the work done is unsatisfactory, the School can:

   i. reduce or withhold the stipend and/or the tuition fee subsidy, and/or suspend or terminate the Scholarship; and/or

   ii. withhold the transcript (both unofficial and official) and the student status letter until the requirements are met.

e. Total required hours should be completed before expiry of the Scholarship or before thesis submission (whichever is earlier).

f. If the total required hours are not met by the time the thesis is submitted for examination, the Scholar will have his/her transcript (both unofficial and official) and student status letter withheld until the fulfilment of the requirement.

g. If the Scholar submits the thesis before the end of the Scholarship, the GAP hours may be pro-rated. Please see here for the details.

7. Fees & Financial Assistance

7.1 Fees

7.1.1 Tuition Fees

Please refer to the school's website for the latest information on tuition fees.

For fee-related matters arising from change of citizenship/ obtaining Singapore Permanent Residence and leave of absence, students should refer to the respective web pages:

- Change of Citizenship/ Obtaining Singapore Permanent Residence
- Leave of Absence

7.1.2 MOE Subsidy for Tuition Fees

The substantial tuition subsidy from the Government of Singapore comes in the form of an MOE Subsidy which is administered by the Ministry of Education (MOE) and is offered to all eligible students up to the maximum programme duration. Students need not apply for the MOE Subsidy if they meet the eligibility criteria.

7.1.3 Miscellaneous Student Fees

Miscellaneous student fees help meet costs incurred by the University in providing services to the student community that are either not covered or only partially covered by the tuition fee and government subsidy. These services include healthcare for students; facilitating student cultural, social and recreational programmes; and maintaining the shuttle bus service, IT network and other essential campus infrastructure and services. All students, whether registered on a full-time or part-time basis, are charged the miscellaneous student fees. These are due at the same time as the tuition fees.

For detailed information on the annual miscellaneous fees payable, please see here.

7.1.4 Service Obligation Scheme

International Students reading a government-subsidised PhD programme may apply for the Service Obligation Scheme to pay reduced tuition fees. For more information, please see here.

7.1.5 Payment of Fees

Please see here for information on fee payment deadlines and modes of payment. Students will receive an email notification to view their Student Bill in EduRec at least two weeks before the fee payment deadline. Students are encouraged to make payment via GIRO.

Students who do not meet fee payment deadlines may incur penalty fees. If outstanding fees are not paid, or only partially paid, by the fee payment deadline, a late payment charge will be imposed.

Should fees remain outstanding after the fee payment deadline, the University reserves the right to suspend academic rights and privileges, including to withhold degree conferment certifications. In addition, students with overdue fees may have their candidature of study terminated.

Students should also familiarize themselves with information on fee payable upon

- termination of candidature
- withdrawal of candidature
- application of leave of absence
- submission of thesis

7.2 Scholarships and Financial Assistance

7.2.1 Scholarships

(For students receiving the President's Graduate Fellowship, Commonwealth Scholarship, and the NUS Research Scholarship)

Research scholars are expected to abide by the terms and conditions of their scholarship.

All research scholars are also expected to perform teaching, research, and other departmental duties up to the required hours stipulated by their scholarship. For more information, please refer to Section 6 Teaching, Research & Other Assignments (for Research Scholars).

Payment of stipend

The scholarship stipend will begin from the commencement date of the semester, or the date of enrolment, whichever is later. Where applicable, the stipend for the first and last month will be pro-rated as follows:

$$\text{First / last month stipend} = \frac{\text{No. of Pro-rated working days*}}{\text{Total no. of working days* in the month}} \times \text{Monthly Stipend}$$

** Working days exclude Saturdays and Sundays but include public/university holidays.*

The stipend will be paid on the 18th of each month. The miscellaneous fees payable for the semester will be deducted from the stipend.

7.2.2 Staff Concession

Full-time NUS staff members enrolled in part-time, government-subsidised graduate programmes may be eligible to apply for staff concession on the tuition fees. Information on the staff concession is available here.

7.2.3 NUS Student Work Scheme

Full-time graduate research students may apply to work on a part-time basis (up to 16 hours per week) under the NUS Student Work Scheme. For more information, please see here.

7.2.4 Student Research Assistant Scheme

The Student Research Assistant Scheme allows PhD students who are in Year 5 and 6 to work as Student Research Assistants (SRAs), for up to a maximum of 44 hours per week, under NUS Student Work Scheme (NSWS) and still continue to retain their full-time students' status. For more information, please see here.

7.2.5 Short-Term Work Scheme

The Short-Term Work Scheme allows PhD students who are in Year 5 and 6, to continue to retain their full-time students' status and work for up to a maximum of 16 hours per week, under jobs accepted via NUS Student Work Scheme (NSWS) or other sources. For more information, please see here.

7.2.6 Other Scholarships/ Financial Aid

For information on other financial assistance and scholarships/awards available for graduate students, please see here.

7.3 Financial Assistance for Conferences, Courses and Overseas Attachments

7.3.1 Funding Policy

a. Full-time graduate research students may apply for financial assistance to attend scientific conferences, courses, or overseas attachments (e.g. student exchange programmes & internships):
    - Funding for PhD students is subject to a total limit of S$3,000 throughout their candidature
    - Funding for MSc students is subject to a total limit of S$2,000 throughout their candidature;
        - MSc students who subsequently upgrade to PhD without graduating from the MSc programme will have their funding limit increased from S$2,000 to S$3,000.
        - Students who graduated from the MSc programme and subsequently enrolled in the PhD programme will be eligible for up to S$3,000 of funding throughout their PhD candidature, regardless of the amount of funding they had received in their previous MSc programme.

b. This grant is a privilege and not a right and is subject to availability of funds and approval by the school.

c. Only full-time students are eligible to apply. The applicant must
    - be registered as a full-time graduate research student with SSHSPH for at least 1 year *(applications from year 1 students may be considered on a case-by-case basis, subject to availability of funding);* **AND**
    - at the time of the scientific conference/ course/ overseas attachment, be a full-time graduate research student and has not yet submitted his/her thesis (*For students who have submitted their thesis, financial assistance may be considered for conference presentations if the student is presenting on his/her MSc/PhD research).*

d. For conferences, the applicant must be presenting an original scientific paper (oral/ poster etc). If the student is presenting the same abstract at more than one conference, he/she can apply for funding for only one of the conferences. The only exception is the Singapore International Public Health Conference (SIPHC) co-organized by the school. For the SIPHC, students can apply for funding for the registration fees even if they had already received funding from the school to present the same abstract at another conference.

e. Due to limited funds, students giving oral presentations will be given priority over students giving poster presentations. Similarly, students applying for conference funding will be given priority over students attending courses.

7.3.2 Fundable Items

	Items that can be funded:
Overseas Conferences	• Economy class airfare (by the most economical and direct route) • Visa fee (if applicable)
Local Conferences	• Registration Fee
Local Courses	• Course Fee
Course (Local/ Overseas) required for the Independent Study Course (ISC)	• Course Fee
Overseas Attachments (e.g. Student Exchange Programmes & Internships)	• Economy class airfare (by the most economical and direct route) • Visa fee (if applicable)

Please note that students are required to pay for the items upfront and seek reimbursement from the school after the conference/ course/ overseas attachment is over.

7.3.3 Airfare Policy

For airfare, the school will fund the most economical and direct route for the conference period based on an online scan by an aggregator website e.g. Expedia, Skyscanner or such similar websites offering online airfare comparison.

Students will need to do an online scan on an aggregator website based on the following criteria:

a. It should be a return trip from Singapore to the Conference Venue and back to Singapore
b. Date of arrival at the conference venue should not be earlier than 1 day before the conference start date
c. Date of return should not be later than 1 day after the conference ends

The school will fund whichever is the lowest:

i) cheapest airfare by the most direct route, as quoted by an aggregator website; OR
ii) cost of air ticket purchased; OR
iii) remaining balance of funding the student is eligible for

If a student intends to purchase an air ticket that is more expensive than the cheapest airfare quoted by the aggregator website, he/she will need to provide the reasons and the relevant supporting documents for approval. If the request is not approved, the difference in pricing will be borne by the student.

7.3.4 How to Apply

Please submit the following **AT LEAST TWO MONTHS** before the start of the conference/ course/ overseas attachment to Chunxuan [e] chunxuan_yang@nus.edu.sg / [t] 660 12499, SSHSPH Education Office:

a. Application form (duly completed and signed)
b. Brochure for conference/ course
c. Proof of Acceptance
    - For conferences: abstract acceptance letter/ email from the organizers
    - For overseas attachments: proof of acceptance from the University/ Organization
d. Abstract of the paper which you will be presenting (for conferences)
e. For airfare, please provide the following:
    - Printout of the online scan by an aggregator website e.g. Expedia, Skyscanner or such similar websites offering online airfare comparison (please refer to the above section on Airfare Policy for the details). Please ensure the printout shows the selected travel dates.
    - Quotation of the air ticket that you intend to purchase (if it is different from aggregator website)
f. Proof of Visa Fee amount (e.g. printout from the embassy website on the cost of the visa)
g. Printout from the conference/ course website on the cost of the Registration Fee/ Course Fee (for local conferences and courses)

7.3.5 Documents to submit for reimbursement

Please submit the following within 2 weeks after the conference/ course/ student exchange programme/ attachment:

a. Copy of certificate of attendance
b. Request for payment form, duly completed and signed
c. Original receipt for Registration Fee and bank/ credit card statement
d. Original receipt for Course Fee and bank/ credit card statement
e. Original receipt for Airfare and bank/ credit card statement
f. Original receipt for Visa Fee and bank/ credit card statement
g. Boarding Passes
h. [For overseas attachment/ internship/ student exchange] A brief account of your overseas attachment/ internship/ student exchange experience, e.g. the activities undertaken and how the overseas attachment/ internship/ student exchange has added value to your study/ future career.

7.4 NUS Overseas Research Immersion Award (ORIA)

The NUS Overseas Research Immersion Award, administered by the NUS Graduate School, offers PhD students an opportunity for a six-month overseas research stint to experience a lab attachment with an outstanding overseas researcher; or an immersion in a prominent research environment to broaden and enrich your research perspectives. For more details, please refer to the information from NUS Graduate School.

7.5 NUS-KI Student Exchange for PhD Students

NUS has partnered with Karolinska Institutet (KI) to offer a short-term exchange programme hosting up to 2 PhD students from each university per year. For more information, please see here.

8. SSHSPH Awards for Graduate Research Students

8.1 Graduate Student Teaching Award

Overview:

The SSHSPH Graduate Student Teaching Award was established by the School to recognize the contributions of our graduate students as Teaching Assistants (TA) in the school's education programmes. It is hoped that the award would serve as an encouragement, in addition to recognition, for their efforts and excellence in carrying out the duties.

3 awards are made available each year. Awardees will receive a certificate of achievement and a cash prize of S$100, to be presented during the School Anniversary celebration.

Terms & Conditions:

a. The School will consider teaching done during the academic year, and presented during the School Anniversary in October of the following academic year.

b. There will be no call for nominations. Instead, all SSHSPH graduate students who have completed TA duties during the period of review will be considered. Students may win the award more than once during their candidature.

c. Eligibility Criteria:
   i. The TA must be enrolled as a student in the SSHSPH Graduate Programmes when completing the TA duty.

   ii. If the course spreads over 2 semesters, the end of the course will be used for the consideration of the award. For example, if the course starts in January 2020 and ends in Nov 2020, the consideration period for the award will be AY2020/2021.

d. Students will be assessed based on the following criteria:
   i. Official teaching feedback scores generated by the NUS/ NUSMED feedback system[+]
   ii. Number of best teaching nominations received
   iii. Feedback from course coordinator
   iv. Other course feedback collated in a survey/ poll done by course coordinator or school

   [+] For feedback, the course coordinator should provide the necessary information to the programme administrative personnel during the collation of information for feedback if the student was not officially assigned TA duties by the Education Office.

e. Selection Process:
   i. Education Office will tabulate the student feedback scores, best teaching nominations and feedback scores from course coordinator for each TA.

ii. Vice Dean (Education) and Graduate Research Programme Director will review the scores and qualitative feedback for each TA and select up to 3 candidates for the award based on the criteria stated in point d.

iii. Awardees will be reviewed and approved by the Graduate Research Programme Management Committee.

8.2 Graduate Student Research Award

Overview:

The SSHSPH Graduate Student Research Award was established by the School in October 2017 to recognize the research achievements of the graduate research students.

3 awards are made available each year, one for each domain. Awardees will receive a certificate of achievement and a cash prize of S$100, to be presented during the annual AlumNite.

Terms and Conditions:

a. Eligibility Criteria:
   i. The award is open to all current MSc & PhD students, and students who were conferred the MSc or PhD degree between 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.

   ii. Previous winners of the award are not eligible

b. Selection Criteria:
   i. Students will be assessed based on the following criteria:
      - Quality and quantity of the publications since enrolment
      - Public health impact of the student's work

   ii. Students need not have made outstanding contribution in both of the above criteria. For example, a student who has contributed significantly to translational work or whose research has influenced policy could be selected for the award based on the public health impact of his/her work even though his/her work may not be published.

   iii. Students will be assessed based on the work completed since enrolment. It can include work that is not related to their thesis.

c. Selection Process:
   i. Students who wish to be considered for the award must submit the following documents by the stipulated deadline:
      - CV
      - Short write-up of their research and why they are deserving of the award (maximum 500 words). In the write-up, students should highlight the impact of their research and the public health significance of their work. Students are advised not to report research metrics but to focus on the actual research.

- Include any relevant supporting information as appendix e.g. list of publications, media coverage etc. For publications, students should clearly distinguish between original research articles and commentaries.

ii. Selection will be within the domain that the student's main thesis advisor belongs to. Each domain will select their nominee and inform Education Office. Nominees will be reviewed and approved by Vice Dean (Education) and Vice Dean (Research). No award will be made unless there is a candidate of sufficient merit.

9. Appeals Procedures

9.1 Appeals Procedures

Students who meet with difficulties in their programme should first approach their thesis advisor, followed by the Graduate Research Programme Director and the Vice Dean (Education) for help and discussion. If the issue requires further deliberation, it will first be surfaced to the Graduate Research Programme Management Committee, and next to the Dean for resolution. If the issue cannot be resolved at the school level, it will be raised to the Vice Provost (Graduate Education) for resolution.

10. Annexes

Annex 1: Suggested Workplan for PhD students

a. For students who enrolled from August 2022

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="6">August Intake</td><td></td><td>Aug</td><td>Sep</td><td>Oct</td><td>Nov</td><td>Dec</td><td>Jan</td><td>Feb</td><td>Mar</td><td>Apr</td><td>May</td><td>Jun</td><td>Jul</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 1</td><td colspan="5">2 Core Courses
SPH6770 Graduate Research Seminar in Public Health (4 units)
SPH5002 Public Health Research Methods (8 units)
1 Elective Course (4 units)</td><td colspan="5">1 Core Course
SPH6770 Graduate Research Seminar in Public Health (4 units)
NG5001 Academic Communication for Postgraduate Researchers (4 units)
2 Elective Courses (8 units)</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="12">Start working on the research project</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Year 2</td><td colspan="5">1 Elective Course (4 units)</td><td colspan="7"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Work on Research Project.</td><td colspan="7">• Submit PQE (written) by end May
• Pass both PQE (written) and PQE (oral) by early August</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 3</td><td colspan="12">Work on research project</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 4</td><td colspan="11">Work on research project and start writing the thesis</td><td>Submit thesis</td></tr>
</table>

Note:

- The workplan is just a suggested guide.
- The SPH6770 Graduate Research Seminar in Public Health course spreads over 2 semesters. Students will receive IP (In Progress) grade in the first semester, and the final grade at the end of the second semester.
- All students are required to pass both written and oral components of the PhD Qualifying Examination (PQE) by 24 months. Students can take up to two attempts for each component. Students should also attempt to complete all coursework requirements within 18 months.
- For students who are required to take the Graduate English Courses, please complete ES5000 (if applicable) and ES5001A with a minimum grade of C+ for each of the courses before you apply for PQE. You will need to complete ES5000 (if applicable) and ES5001A before you are allowed to read NG5001.

b. For students who enrolled between Aug 2018 to Jan 2022

<table>
<tr><th rowspan="6">August Intake</th><th></th><th>Aug</th><th>Sep</th><th>Oct</th><th>Nov</th><th>Dec</th><th>Jan</th><th>Feb</th><th>Mar</th><th>Apr</th><th>May</th><th>Jun</th><th>Jul</th></tr>
<tr><td>Year 1</td><td colspan="5">2 Core Courses
SPH6770 Graduate Research Seminar in Public Health (4 units)
SPH5002 Public Health Research Methods (8 units)
1 Elective Course (4 units)</td><td colspan="5">1 Core Course
SPH6770 Graduate Research Seminar in Public Health (4 units)

2 Elective Courses (8 units)</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="12">Start working on the research project</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Year 2</td><td colspan="5">1 Elective Course (4 units)</td><td colspan="7"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Work on Research Project.</td><td colspan="7">• Submit PQE (written) by end May
• Pass both PQE (written) and PQE (oral) by early August</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 3</td><td colspan="12">Work on research project</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 4</td><td colspan="11">Work on research project and start writing the thesis</td><td>Submit thesis</td></tr>
</table>

Note:

- The workplan is just a suggested guide.
- The SPH6770 Graduate Research Seminar in Public Health course spreads over 2 semesters. Students will receive IP (In Progress) grade in the first semester, and the final grade at the end of the second semester.
- All students are required to pass both written and oral components of the PhD Qualifying Examination (PQE) by 24 months. Students can take up to two attempts for each component. Students should also attempt to complete all coursework requirements within 18 months.
- For students who are required to take the Graduate English Courses, please complete ES5000 (if applicable) and ES5001A with a minimum grade of C+ for each of the courses before you apply for PQE. You will also need to complete ES5002 with a minimum grade of C+ before you submit your thesis. With effect from AY2022/2023 Semester 2, the ES5002 course will be discontinued and replaced by NG5001 Academic Communication for Postgraduate Researchers.

c. For students who enrolled between Jan 2017 to Jan 2018

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="5">August Intake</td><td></td><td>Aug</td><td>Sep</td><td>Oct</td><td>Nov</td><td>Dec</td><td>Jan</td><td>Feb</td><td>Mar</td><td>Apr</td><td>May</td><td>Jun</td><td>Jul</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 1</td><td colspan="5">1 Core Course
SPH5002 Public Health Research Methods (8 units)

1 Elective Course (4 units)</td><td colspan="5">2 Core Courses
SPH6001 Advanced Epidemiology II (4 units)
SPH6002 Advanced Quantitative Methods II (4 units)
1 Elective Course (4 units)</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="12">Start working on the research project</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 2</td><td colspan="5">1 Elective Course (4 units)</td><td colspan="7"></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="5">Work on Research Project.</td><td colspan="7">• Submit PQE (written) by end May
• Pass both PQE (written) and PQE (oral) by early August</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Year 3</td><td colspan="12">Work on research project</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Year 4</td><td colspan="11">Work on research project and start writing the thesis</td><td>Submit thesis</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="5">January Intake</td><td></td><td>Jan</td><td>Feb</td><td>Mar</td><td>Apr</td><td>May</td><td>Jun</td><td>Jul</td><td>Aug</td><td>Sep</td><td>Oct</td><td>Nov</td><td>Dec</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 1</td><td colspan="7"></td><td colspan="5">1 Core Course
SPH5002 Public Health Research Methods (8 units)
2 Elective Courses (8 units)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="12">Start working on the research project</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year 2</td><td colspan="6">2 Core Courses
SPH6001 Advanced Epidemiology II (4 units)
SPH6002 Advanced Quantitative Methods II (4 units)
1 Elective Course (4 units)</td><td colspan="6"></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="6">Work on Research Project.</td><td colspan="6">• Submit PQE (written) by end October
• Pass both PQE (written) and PQE (oral) by early January</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Year 3</td><td colspan="12">Work on research project</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Year 4</td><td colspan="11">Work on research project and start writing the thesis</td><td>Submit thesis</td></tr>
</table>

Note:

- The workplan is just a suggested guide.

- All students are required to pass both written and oral components of the PhD Qualifying Examination (PQE) by 24 months. Students can take up to two attempts for each component. Students should also attempt to complete all coursework requirements within 18 months.

- For students who are required to take the Graduate English Courses, please complete ES5000 (if applicable) and ES5001A with a minimum grade of C+ for each of the courses before you apply for PQE. You will also need to complete ES5002 with a minimum grade of C+ before you submit your thesis. With effect from AY2022/2023 Semester 2, the ES5002 course will be discontinued and replaced by NG5001 Academic Communication for Postgraduate Researchers.

- All PhD students are also required to achieve regular attendance (**at least 8 seminars per academic year for 3 years**) in the school research rounds/ SSHSPH PhD thesis defences.

Annex 2: Suggested Workplan for MSc students

For students who enrolled in August 2018 and after

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="4">August Intake</td><td></td><td>Aug</td><td>Sep</td><td>Oct</td><td>Nov</td><td>Dec</td><td>Jan</td><td>Feb</td><td>Mar</td><td>Apr</td><td>May</td><td>Jun</td><td>Jul</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Year 1</td><td colspan="5">2 Core Courses
SPH6770 Graduate Research Seminar in Public Health (4 units)
SPH5002 Public Health Research Methods (8 units)</td><td colspan="5">1 Core Course
SPH6770 Graduate Research Seminar in Public Health (4 units)
1 Elective Course (4 units)</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="12">Start working on the research project</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Year 2</td><td colspan="5">2 Elective Courses (8 units)</td><td colspan="7"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="11">Work on the research project and start writing the thesis</td><td>Submit Thesis</td></tr>
</table>

Note:

- The above workplan is just a suggested guide.
- The SPH6770 Graduate Research Seminar in Public Health course spreads over 2 semesters. Students will receive IP (In Progress) grade in the first semester, and the final grade at the end of the second semester.
- For students who are required to take the Graduate English Courses, please complete ES5000 (if applicable) and ES5001A (if applicable) with a minimum grade of C+ for each of the courses, before you submit your thesis.

Annex 3: Recommended Cross-Faculty Courses

Note:

- Course offerings are subject to availability and may change with each academic year.
- Please refer to NUSMods for the course information

Courses offered by Alice Lee Centre for Nursing Studies

- NUR6004 Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis
- NUR6005 Measurement Theory and Instrument Validation
- NUR6006 Intervention Research in Nursing and Health Sciences
- NUR6007 Research Leadership and Professional Development

Courses offered by Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine

- MDG5216 Applied Ethics in Public Health and Healthcare Policy
- MDG5249 Ageing and Ethics

Courses offered by Duke-NUS Medical School

- GMS6850 Core Concepts in Bioinformatics
- GMS6904 Principles of Infectious Diseases
- GMS6907 Applied bioinformatics and omics data analysis
- GMS6910 Evolutionary Genetics
- GMS6921 Cardiovascular Molecular Biology
- GMS6950 Health Services and Systems Research
- GMS6951 Dynamic Modelling of Healthcare Services and Systems

Courses offered by the Department of Statistics & Data Science, Faculty of Science

- ST5201 Statistical Foundations of Data Science
- ST5206 Generalized Linear Models
- ST5210 Multivariate Data Analysis
- ST5212 Survival Analysis
- ST5213 Categorical Data Analysis II
- ST5215 Advanced Statistical Theory
- ST5217 Statistical Methods for Genetic Analysis
- ST5219 Bayesian Hierarchical Modelling
- ST5221 Probability and Stochastic Processes
- ST5225 Statistical Analysis of Networks
- ST5229 Deep Learning in Data Analytics *(Note: as there is significant overlap between ST5229 and SPH6004, students who have read ST5229 will not be allowed to read SPH6004 and vice versa)*

Courses offered by the Department of Pharmacy, Faculty of Science

- PR5234 Pharmacogenomics and Pharmacogenetics

Courses offered by the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy

- PP5167 Public Policy and Economics of Health Systems

- PP5173 Economics and Health in Developing Countries
- PP5222 Population, Health and Social Policy
- PP5246 Public Policy and Management of Health Systems
- PP5266 Global Health Policy and Issues
- PP5278 Health Economics and Public Policy

Courses offered by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

- NM5216 Advanced Health Communication
- SC5102 Quantitative Data Analysis
- SC5103 Qualitative Data Analysis
- SC6102 Sociological Theory
- SW6102 Policy & Research in Social Welfare

Annex 4: PhD Qualifying Examination (Format of the PhD Research Proposal)

1. THESIS TITLE

The title should be descriptive and specific rather than general and should encapsulate the overall theme of your PhD project.

2. ABSTRACT OF THE PROPOSAL

Please provide a succinct and accurate description of the proposal in no more than 400 words. The abstract must capture the following:

i. Academic significance of the research – this refers to how your research adds to existing literature. Please also highlight the potential public health implications of your work.
ii. Hypotheses or research questions to be addressed
iii. Approach and feasibility of the study.

3. DETAILS OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Give a description of the research in around **12 pages (Arial font size 10, single line spacing).** Information **SHOULD** include

i. Hypothesis
ii. Specific aim(s) of the project
iii. Scientific/clinical significance
iv. Approach/methodology
v. Results obtained thus far
vi. Innovation/possible applications and potential public health implications of your work.
vii. Ethical considerations relevant to your research, and where applicable, whether approval from IRB has been obtained.
viii. References cited should be provided at the end of the document (e.g. Grondin, B., Lefrancois, M, Tremblay, M. et al. (2007) Mol. Cell BIol. 27, 2919-2933).

Information provided should be sufficiently self-contained for an assessment of the proposal without further reference to other materials. Any published reports and submitted manuscript can be attached at the end of the grant proposal.

4. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE (GANTT CHART FORMAT)

The proposed schedule will be used for assessment and evaluation of the project.

	Quarters															
	Year 1				**Year 2**				**Year 3**				**Year 4**			
A. Project Implementation Schedule	**Q 1**	**Q 2**	**Q 3**	**Q 4**	**Q 1**	**Q 2**	**Q 3**	**Q 4**	**Q 1**	**Q 2**	**Q 3**	**Q 4**	**Q 1**	**Q 2**	**Q 3**	**Q 4**

(Note: Year 1 refers to the first year of your candidature; Year 2 refers to second year and so on)

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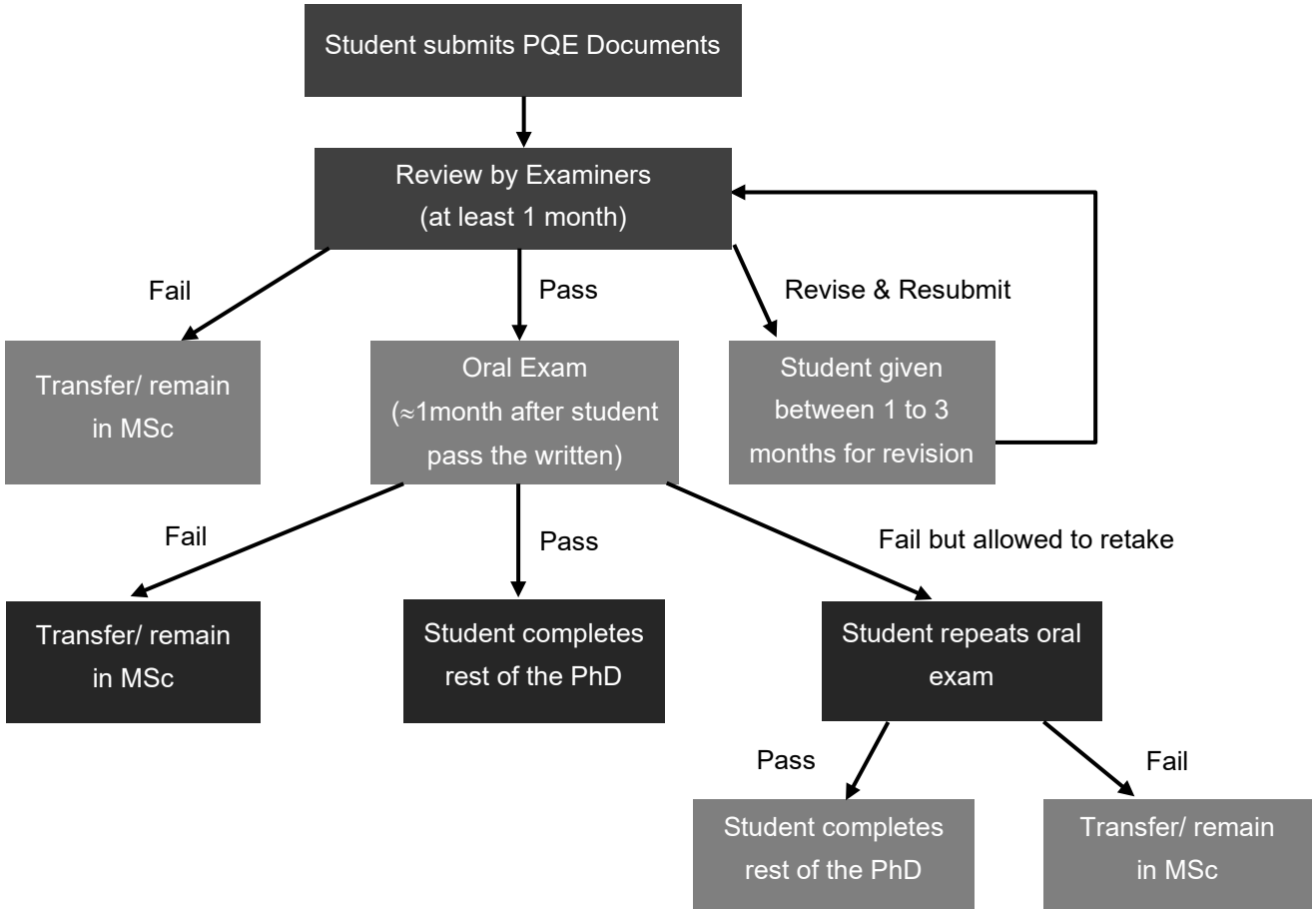
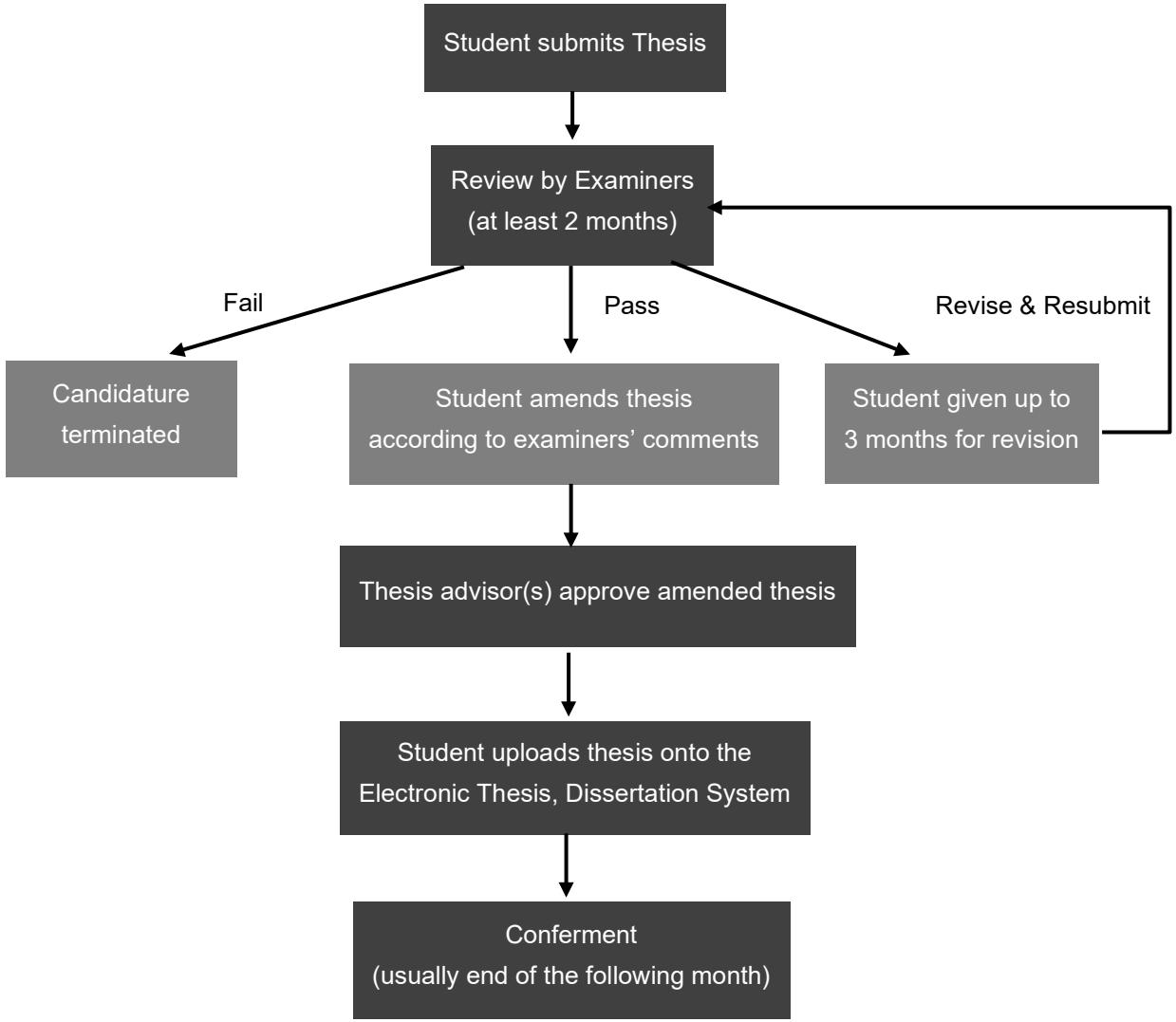
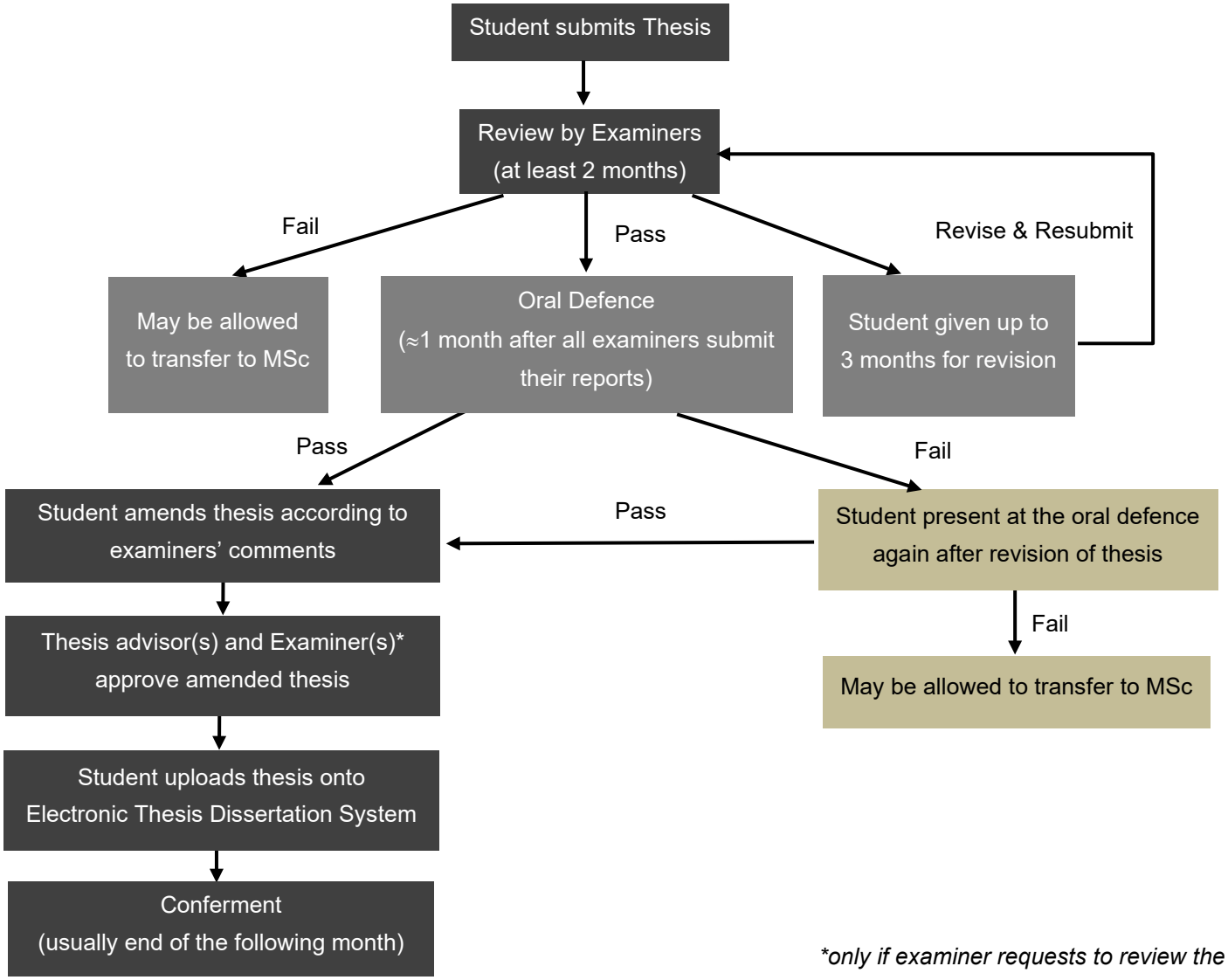
Annex 5: Overview of the PhD Qualifying Examination



Annex 6: Overview of the MSc Thesis Examination



Annex 7: Overview of the PhD Thesis Examination



**only if examiner requests to review the amended thesis*