

CENTRE FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

PhD HANDBOOK

2025

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1 INTRODUCTION

This program handbook prescribes the regulations applying to the Doctor of Philosophy in offered by Malaysia University of Science Technology (MUST). The contents of this document show the scope of the document. As and when considered appropriate, amendments to this version of the document shall be proposed to the Senate of Malaysia University of Science Technology for discussion and approval before they are promulgated within this document as amended.

The University Senate reserves the right to introduce any further and future methods and implementation procedures within any of the provisions of these academic regulations. All such methods and implementation procedures must be observed by the Candidate.

1.1 Doctor of Philosophy The degree of Doctor of Philosophy is awarded based on individual investigation under supervision resulting in significant contribution to knowledge in the area investigated. At MUST, the PhD investigation may cover fundamental research as well as applied research. In either case, the result of the research must form a significant contribution to knowledge in the area invested.

The PhD program is offered via Structure A based on the MQA guidelines.

Structure A (Full Research Thesis Mode):

A program offered via structure A is a full research program. Candidates conduct research under academic supervisors and prepare a thesis for complete fulfilment of the graduation requirement. The candidate's responsibility is to work with his/her Supervisor(s) to conduct research and submit a thesis for a PhD degree.

The thesis is to be written following the format and contents as required by the Guidelines for Thesis preparation. Once submitted, the candidate will be examined through a *viva-voce*, consisting of an oral presentation and defines of the thesis to a Panel of Examiners.

A candidate having graduated with a PhD through this program should be able to demonstrate a mastery of the chosen domain, together with hands-on skills and some level of contribution to the body of knowledge of the domain. He/she should be able to conduct independent research at a higher level, supervised by an experienced researcher.

2 DEFINITIONS USED

NO.	TERM	DEFINITIONS
1	Candidate	A registered student studying for a postgraduate degree
2	Candidature	Period during which an enrolled postgraduate candidate carries out his/her investigation towards the postgraduate degree
3	Degree	Verification given by MUST to a candidate who has fulfilled the requirements needed by the Doctorate Degree Program
4	Program	The study plan of the Doctorate degree in a field of study
5	Payment	Any charges or fees imposed by MUST on a candidate for a certain program
6	Examination	<u>Doctor of Philosophy:</u> The process of assessing the Thesis, testing the claims made within the Thesis, the logical development of any arguments and claims and evaluating the work done as described in the Thesis, in order to check that such work and such Thesis indeed fulfil the requirements of the award
7	Examination Board	Members comprises the Provost of Academic, Dean of School of Business, Dean of Center for Postgraduate Studies (CPS), Head of Program, Head of Registrar, Head of Admissions and Records, The Examination Board considers and approves a candidate's examination results
8	Head of Program	An academic staff appointed by the School where the Master/Doctorate degree is offered to manage the program
9	Internal Examiner	Academic staff from MUST, who is appointed by the School to assess a candidate's work in a specific program
10	External Examiner	The person or persons appointed officially by the Senate of MUST to assess a candidate's work in a specific program and/or examine a Thesis offered in fulfilment of the award
11	Postgraduate Studies Committee	The committee formed in the School to coordinate graduate programs
12	Investigation	Independent work carried out by the candidate in seeking the truth in order to test some hypothesis that is primary to the candidature. Such work is guided by a Supervisor.

NO.	TERM	DEFINITIONS
13	Research	Research is made up of an investigation, its analysis, a synthesis of several investigations and its analysis, a conclusion derived from such investigations which also substantiates any claims made as a result of the analysis
14	Thesis	A document prepared by the candidate and vetted by the Supervisor, that describes the work done during the investigation towards the award, any theory used amended or developed for the investigation, any conclusions derived from the work, all of which contributes to the fulfilment of the award requirements
15	Supervisor	A person formally appointed by the Senate of MUST on the recommendation of the Dean of School in which a postgraduate research is to be carried out, to supervise research and completion of a thesis or project, and to guide and assess the candidate's progress.
16	Supervisory Committee	The committee established by the CPS which postgraduate research is to be carried out to supervise research and thesis, and to guide and assess a candidate's work. The members comprise the supervisors of thesis
17	Senate	The Senate of Malaysia University of Science Technology (MUST)
18	Session	The academic year of which dates are determined by the Senate
19	Semester	A specific duration in a session determined by the Senate

3 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Doctor of Philosophy

- Applicants are required to have a Master's degree (Level 7, MQF); or an equivalent qualification in a relevant field from a recognized university; and

3.2 English Language Requirements

- Applicants will be required to provide documentary evidence of proficiency in English in one of the following examinations:
 - Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) at a score of 600 or higher is required.
 - International English Language Testing Services (IELTS), a minimum overall score of 6.0 and at least 6.0 on each individual component of the test.
 - Provide proof of English proficiency as evaluated through personal interviews with the Malaysia University of Science and Technology.

4 LENGTHS OF CANDIDATURE

The status of candidates as either part-time or full-time candidates determine the duration of their minimum and maximum periods of study:

Candidate Status	Minimum (Years)	Maximum (Years)
PhD (full-time)	3	6
PhD (part-time)	4	8

Notes:

- *A candidate must graduate within the minimum and maximum period, i.e. not before the minimum and not later than the maximum.*
- *Although not advisable, a candidate may apply to convert from full-time to part-time, and vice-versa. The conversion will be based on the remaining number of days from the date of application and before the expiry of the maximum period at an exchange rate of 1:2.*

4.1 Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Candidates may register as either full-time or part-time students, these being defined as follows:

Structure A	Full-Time
	Registered for all 2 semesters per year

4.1.1 Full Time Candidature

The full-time candidature for a PhD is a minimum of three years and a maximum of six years. That is, candidate will not be allowed to submit his/her Thesis in less than three

years from the date of commencement. All candidates are required to complete the requirements for the PhD in no more than 6 years from the date of commencement.

In special circumstances, the maximum period may be extended with the approval of the Dean of School and endorsed by the Examinations Board. The maximum extension is 12 months.

4.1.2 Part Time Candidature

The minimum time for part time PhD candidature is 4 years, and the maximum is 8 years. Other conditions applying to full-time PhD candidature also applies in this case.

5 APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Applications for any postgraduate degrees at MUST should be made on the Application Form available from the Registrar Office. Documentation needed to be attached before sending into MUST is indicated in the application form.

The commencement dates for the PhD program are March and September. Applications may be made at any time in the year. Notification of acceptance/rejected will be within 3 calendar months from the date of receipt of the completed application form.

Upon Acceptance: Before and Upon Arrival

An offer letter will be issued to the candidate upon acceptance. The list of things to be done and the general regulations to comply to (such as visa requirements to enter the country, for international candidates), and any other necessary information relevant to before and upon arrival at MUST, will be compiled and delivered to the candidate in a separate document.

6 Registration and Fees

6.1 Registration

6.1.1 Registration of New Candidates

- New candidates pursuing postgraduate studies must register their candidature according to the terms and conditions offered and the dates determined by the University.
- Accepted candidates may register at CPS any time of the year, but the exact period allowed for registration for each candidate will be the beginning of March and September. After this given period, the offer will lapse, and the candidate will have to reapply from the beginning.
- After this initial registration, the candidate will have to do a course registration at the beginning of the immediate next semester and all subsequent semesters. Failure to register for every semester will result to the status of student to be Default (Refer section 8.3).

- A new candidate who has been accepted but has not registered may opt to defer his studies for not less than one semester and not more than two (2) semesters by submitting a formal letter to the CPS within four (4) weeks from the date of registration.
- If a new candidate fails to register without written permission from the Dean of CPS, the acceptance offer will be considered automatically withdrawn. When the admission has lapsed, the candidate will have to make a fresh application.
- A candidate can be registered in only one program at any one time.
- Throughout a candidate's candidature at MUST, he/she is not allowed to register for or have been registered in any other similar program, in a local or foreign university, without written permission from MUST.
- Enrolment is incomplete until all prescribed fees are paid in full.
- Once enrolled in a program, the candidate's candidature shall only be interrupted by withdrawal, deferment, defaulting, termination, or graduation.
- **International candidates:**
 - International candidates are strongly advised NOT to make any travel to Malaysia until advised to do so by MUST. The university shall prepare all the necessary supporting paperwork in respect of Immigration and Home Ministry requirements.
 - MUST's International Office will advise International candidates about requirements and actions that the candidate must do in their home country prior travelling to Malaysia. Again, enrolment and fees may be settled electronically from anywhere in the world.
- Once formally enrolled, any queries by candidates should be addressed to CPS in which the candidature resides. All matters pertaining to the coursework or research must be addressed to CPS.

6.1.2 Registration of Continuing Candidates

- All continuing candidates are required to do a semester registration at the beginning of each subsequent semester. A candidate must maintain continuous registration throughout his period of study, failing which she/he is assumed to have defaulted his candidature.
- Those who are not able to register on the required date will have to apply in writing to the Dean of CPS, and written permission will have to be obtained prior to the date of registration.
- Under certain circumstances and at the sole discretion of the Dean of CPS, those without the said written permission may still be allowed to register late, but not later than four (4) weeks from the date of registration, after which the candidate's candidature will cease automatically (i.e. she/he is assumed to have defaulted his candidature). This late registration is also subject to a penalty.

- The candidature of a candidate ceases automatically once she/he exceeds the maximum period of study for the program. Under certain circumstances, the candidate may apply for an extension, but this must be done well before the maximum period.
- The candidature of a candidate also ceases automatically when she/he has fulfilled all graduation requirements for the program.

6.2 Fees

- Candidates will be provided with a Fee Schedule upon registration, detailing the types and amount of fees payable.
- **Fees are to be collected per semester and there is a penalty for late or non-payment:**
 - Fees are to be paid, latest by end of Week 2 of each new semester, penalty of RM300 will be imposed for fees payment later than Week 4, and the student candidature will be suspended if the student failed to pay by Week 4 of the semester.
 - Suspended candidate will not be considered as a student of MUST (he/she is not permitted to use the campus facilities, no meeting with supervisor, etc.) while the maximum period of candidature remains unchanged.

7 Change Registration

- A candidate shall be given a choice of undertaking the program either on a full-time or part-time basis.
- The CPS may allow a new candidate to change the nature of registration, from a full-time basis to part-time basis, or vice versa, or from one program to another, subject to the rules and regulations as stipulated within each program offered.
- In certain circumstances, a continuing candidate may apply to the Dean of CPS to request to change the nature of registration. In any case, i.e. change from full-time to part-time or vice versa, the maximum duration of study in each nature is calculated from the date of the first registration until the completion of the studies.

8 Interruption of Period of Study

8.1 Withdrawal of Candidature

- A candidate may submit a written request to withdraw within the first two (2) weeks of a semester; the candidate is entitled to a refund of all fees excluding the registration and other service fees.
- A candidate who has withdrawn his/her candidature may apply for readmission by submitting a fresh application for consideration.

8.2 Deferment of Candidature

- A candidate who has registered may apply to defer or suspend the registration on reasonable grounds. A written application to the Dean of CPS shall be submitted within two (2) weeks after the commencement of the semester.
- Deferment shall only be allowed for not more than two (2) semesters.
- A candidate, who wishes to defer his /her registration based on medical reason, must produce a medical letter certified by medical officer to prove that she/he is ill and medically unfit to proceed with the studies. The duration of deferment shall not be taken as part of the stipulated duration of studies.
- A candidate may also apply for deferment of candidature based on reasons other than medical, again for up to a maximum of two (2) semesters only. This deferment period will be counted as part of the period of studies.
- Deferment of candidature (of any kind on reasonable grounds) may be granted at most twice only within a period of study. The two periods must not be consecutive, and with each duration not exceedingly more than two (2) semester. All other situations will have to be taken on a case-to-case basis and subject to Senate approval.
- A candidate, whose deferment of registration is allowed, shall not be considered as a registered student of MUST and shall not be eligible to use the facilities provided by the University except to seek for advice to resume the studies.
- A candidate under deferment of candidature covering a full semester will be exempt from fees for that semester. If the fees have paid for a given semester and the candidate has applied and revived approval for deferment within the first two weeks of the semester, the fees shall be credited to the following semester. No provision will be made for after the week period.

8.3 Defaulting and Termination of Candidature

- A candidature is considered to have defaulted his candidature if he fails to register in any one semester during his/her period of studies.
- Subject to the approval of the Senate, candidature may be terminated at any time if the candidate is deemed to:
 - Contravene any law for the time being enforced in Malaysia.
 - Take part in activities in contravention of the Universities and University Colleges Act.
 - Behave in an unacceptable behaviour including any act of plagiarism and other unethical conduct.
 - Fail to show satisfactory progress in his/her studies for Two (2) consecutive semesters.
 - Contacting external examiner(s) who are involved in the evaluation of his/her thesis; or
 - Experience mental or serious emotional problems.

- A candidate who has defaulted his/her candidature or has been terminated by MUST may apply for reinstatement. Reinstatement is allowed only once and is subject to approval by the Senate. Conditions for reinstatement are as follow:
 - Free from any illegal or unlawful involvement.
 - Free from any misconduct.
 - Good academic standing.
 - All outstanding and current fees and all other charges (including for the period the candidate did not register) are duly settled.
 - The lapsed time between defaulting/termination and reinstatement does not exceed 12 months.

9 Roles and Responsibilities of the Supervisor

Within the rules and regulations for academic staff and those of his/her school, a postgraduate studies Supervisor has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Fully understand the MUST Postgraduate Regulations.
- Assist the candidate with the selection of a research topic considering all the limitations, constraints and potential issues of which the candidate may not be aware.
- Provide guidance and supervision to the candidate so that she/he will be able to meet all the Postgraduate academic requirements within the candidature period.

10 Roles and Responsibilities of the Candidate

The candidate for a postgraduate degree at MUST is expected to:

- Apply him/herself with dedication to the postgraduate studies, whether part course work or full research. This means that they must have a Research Plan for the whole period of candidature with milestones identified. The Plan must also contain clear objectives and expectations as well as a methodology to achieve these objectives and expectations.
- Carry out the approved Research Plan in an effective manner in order to meet all the requirements of the postgraduate studies.
- Regularly discuss his/her work with the Supervisor and capitalize on the results of the discussions where appropriate.
- Be involved in the teaching and laboratory work activities of the academic unit where appropriate and approved by the Head of the academic unit.
- Be involved in presentations of research activities in the candidate's area including assisting the Supervisor in preparation of seminars and papers through which the candidate develops his/her academic competency and career.

- Write and present papers for and at seminars and conferences when appropriate.

11 Compulsory Audit Subject / Workshop

PhD candidates are required to take Research Methodology Competency Workshop in addition to their thesis paper. The relevant audit subject / workshop is useful to guide their research work. These are normally in order to allow the candidate to acquire sufficient knowledge and skills so that she/he could carry out the research in the most effective manner and within the time limit.

12 Research Colloquium Requirements

Part of developing the academic and research competency of the candidate is for him/her to expose themselves to the evaluation of their research work by peers and experienced academics. This process should be formative and developmental rather than summative. Candidates will be counselled following their research presentations so that their future presentations will be improved.

All candidates therefore must attend PhD colloquium which is held 3 times a year. Candidates with valid reasons to absent need to get a written approval from their principal supervisor. Attendance to at least 80% of colloquium is compulsory for candidates to qualify to proceed for Proposal Defence and Final VIVA Voce.

13 Initial Research Proposal (IRP)

A Research Proposal must be developed by the candidate, his/her Supervisor and approved by the Dean of CPS. Although not obligatory, candidates are advised to think of possible projects for the thesis, and better still, to get in touch with a potential supervisor at MUST.

A proposal of no longer than 5 pages, indicating the area of research and what the candidate intends to carry out, should then be submitted to the Dean of CPS. The emphasis should be on the research contribution, and less on the product that may be the outcome of the work.

The initial research proposal should contain the following information:

- Topic of the Research Proposal.
- Name of the candidate together with brief experience and highest qualification.
- Name of the Supervisor together with a brief experience and highest qualification.
- Description of the research area, including objectives, expected outcomes, and how these relate to the award requirements.
- Timelines of the candidature with milestones identified and explained. Where appropriate a rationale for the timelines should be provided.
- The Supervisor is to state that all the equipment, hardware and software are available for the candidate to carry out his/her work in the School.

- Any contingency plans that may be required if any of the planned items are not executable.

A Postgraduate Committee will study the brief research proposal. Should it meet the standard or depth of knowledge required to fulfil the requirements, the committee will appoint a Supervisor in the area chosen. Else, the candidate will be asked to modify the proposal accordingly for resubmission. The Head of the academic unit to declare therein that the Supervisor is both able and available to supervise the candidate over the period of candidature.

A candidate has the right to ask to be supervised under his preferred area of research and to request for a Supervisor. However, the final decision will have to be based on mutual consent.

14 Research – Getting Started and Supervisor

14.1 First Meetings

After registration, all candidates are required to make the necessary appointments to meet with the appointed Supervisor to confirm and discuss details of the research scope and proposal (or to make alternative arrangements)

14.2 Thesis Topic and Supervisor

- All candidates are required to confirm the thesis topic and supervisor within two months of registration. These are to be submitted to the Dean of CPS. The topic must be relevant to the program and approved by the Supervisor and the Dean of CPS.
- The supervisor must be an academic staff of MUST and must not be in any way personally related to the candidate. The candidate must furnish a written agreement of the Supervisor and for the chosen topic.
- The candidate may also nominate a Co-Supervisor but only with a written agreement of the Supervisor and the proposed Co-Supervisor.

14.3 Changing Thesis Topic

- An application to change a thesis topic, if it is required to change the field of study, must be made in writing to the Dean of CPS via the Supervisor.
- Applications for minor changes in the title can be made at any time during the candidate's period of study, but fundamental changes must not be made later than half-way through the maximum period of candidature.
- There will be no change in the maximum period of candidature.

14.4 Changing Supervisor

- A candidate is required to nominate a replacement Supervisor in the event the Supervisor withdraws from being a Supervisor or terminates his/her services at MUST. This is to be done in writing and with the endorsement of the proposed replacement Supervisor.

- A candidate, supported by strong justifications, may appeal to the Dean of CPS to substitute the appointed Supervisor. In such a situation, the candidate has to nominate a replacement Supervisor and furnish a written acceptance from the proposed replacement.
- The decision of the Dean of CPS will prevail with no right of further appeal by the candidate, but subject to formal endorsement by Senate.
- There will be no change in the maximum period of candidature.

15 Research Progress

15.1 Registered student

After the first registration and throughout a candidate's candidature, s/he is always supposed to ensure the following:

- Registered for the program.
- Paid the required fees.
- Confirmed the title and Supervisor(s) for the thesis.
- Fixed his status: active (all above) or not active (deferred, suspended, etc).

15.2 Grade & Termination

- A candidate will always be given one of the following two grades:
 - S – Satisfactory
 - U – Unsatisfactory
- Any candidate given grade U for two consecutive semesters will be terminated from the program.
- A candidate may appeal against the termination of his candidature. This is to be made in writing to the Dean of CPS and within one month of the date of termination and supported by strong justifications. The appeal will be considered by senate, which will make the final decision.

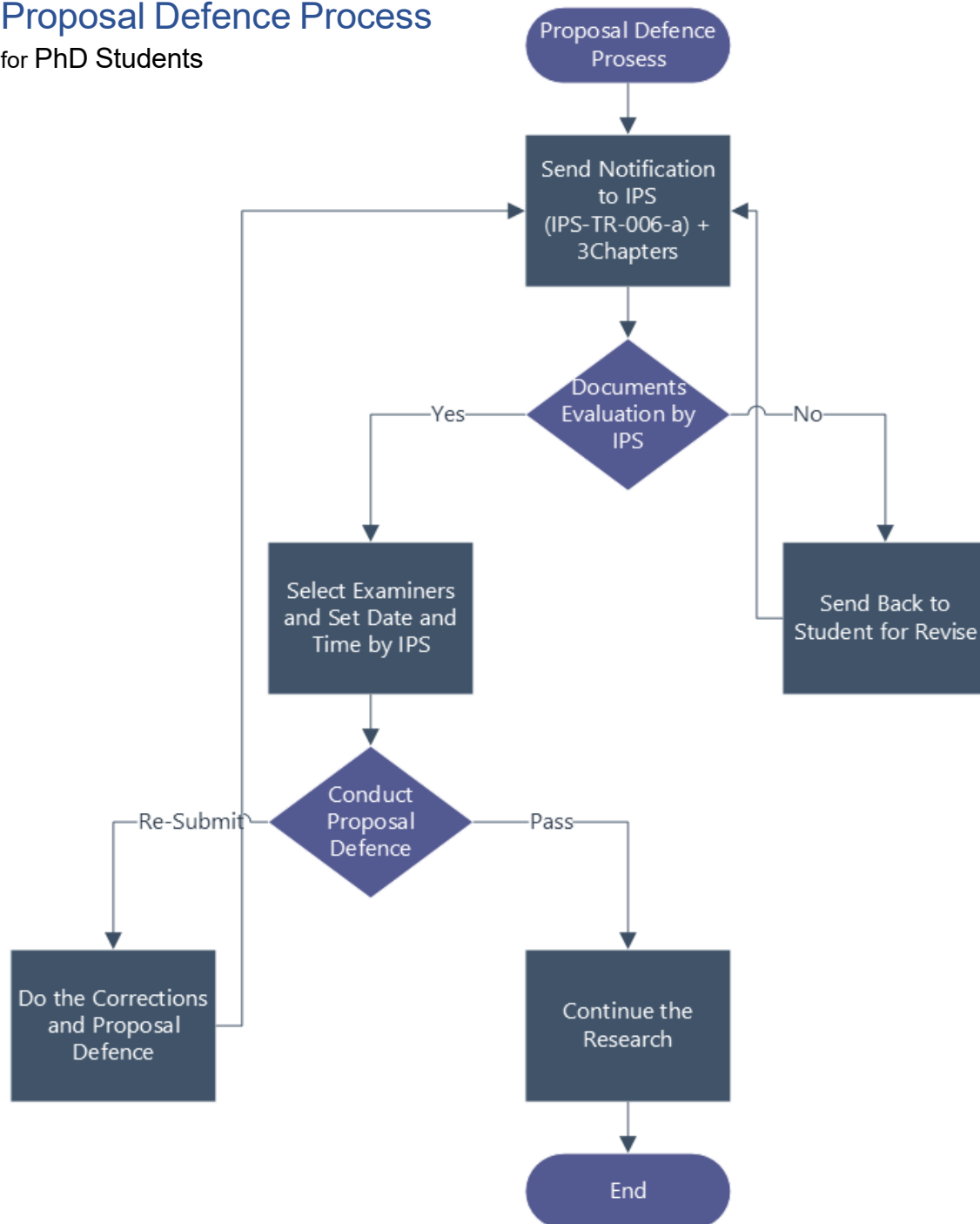
15.3 Attendance & Progress Report

- All candidates must comply to the following residential requirement, failing which he would be considered as having defaulted on his candidature:
 - Full-time: registered and present for all 2 semesters per year.
 - Part-time: registered and present at least 10 working days a year.
- A candidate must meet his Supervisor immediately after registration, immediately before submission of thesis, and at least once every two months in between (four months for part-time). Failing this, the Supervisor may recommend for the candidate's status to be changed to default.
- Each candidate must submit a progress report together with a duly completed form provided by CPS to the Head before the PhD Colloquium. Failure to do this will result in the candidate not being allowed to register for the next semester.

15.4 Thesis Proposal Defense

- The proposal defence presentation must contain at least the following:
 - a) Research Objectives
 - b) Research background/Literature Review
 - c) Research Methodology
 - d) Gantt Chart (see below under Thesis Progress)
- Should the Panel of Examiners for Thesis Proposal decide that the proposal has not met the requirements, the candidate's grade will be changed to U, but only at the point when the thesis proposal defence period as stated above has expired.
- The candidate may request for up to a total of three (3) opportunities (including the first one) to pass the thesis proposal defence, where success will place the candidate's grade at S. Failure at the third attempt, or when the U grade exceeds the allowed period (whichever is earlier), will result in the termination of the candidate's candidature.

Proposal Defence Process for PhD Students



15.5 Thesis Progress

- In the Gantt Chart within the thesis proposal defence, the candidate must submit a plan that contains at least the contents of the following:
 - Project Proposal
 - Analysis & Design
 - Mid-Project Draft
 - Draft Submission
 - Final Submission

The first column in the table refers to document that have to be submitted to show the progress of the thesis, while the other columns give the maximum timelines that have to be adhered to as they are tied to the maximum period of candidature for the candidate.

- Referring to the table above, the project proposal document has been described earlier. A typical thesis covers the following aspects, which should be covered in total by the Draft Submission and the Final Submission:
 - a) Introduction
 - Research Objectives
 - Contribution to Knowledge
 - b) Research Background / Literature review
 - c) Research methodology / Analysis & Design
 - d) Implementation / Results & Discussion
 - e) Conclusion & Future Work

The Analysis & Design document needs to cover at least up to (c), while the Mid project Draft must cover substantial elements of (d).

- Except for the project proposal and the Final submission (which are to be submitted to CPS), all other Submissions are to be made to the Supervisor. Failure to do so, or should the Supervisor deem that the contents do not meet the merit requirements of a thesis at the given stage, the Supervisor may recommend that the candidate's grade be changed to U.
- Redemption for a grade U given by the Supervisor can only be made by a proper submission deemed acceptable by the Supervisor. Any appeal will have to be made in writing to the Dean of CPS.

16 Pre-Examination / Submission

16.1 Notice of Submission

- A candidate is required to submit a notice of submission of thesis to the Head of Program via a form provided by CPS at about 3 months before the actual date of submission.
- The period for the notice of submission is very important to allow time for CPS to set up the Panel of Examiners, the members of which eventually examine the thesis as well as participate in the *viva-voce*. The examination of the thesis by an examiner would normally take two months.

16.2 Thesis Submission

- **Permission to submit**
 - Once the thesis is completed, the candidate should first seek consent from his/her Supervisors to submit the thesis via a form provided by CPS.
 - In very extreme circumstances and a very much discouraged situation, should the supervisor disagree to the submission and the candidate still insists on

doing so, he may submit the thesis with a registered disagreement from the Supervisor via a special form provided by CPS.

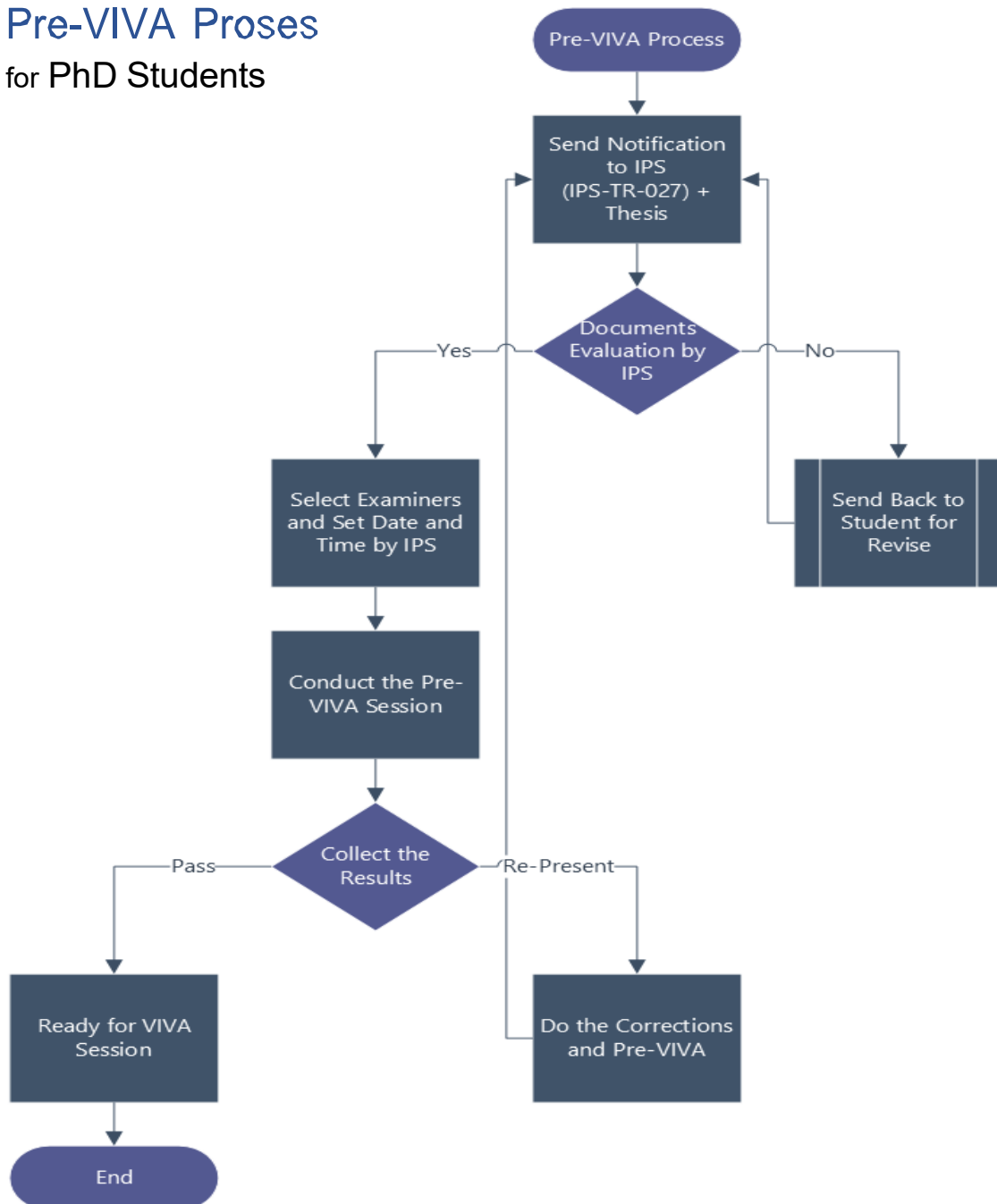
- **Final submission**

- An unbound copy of the thesis shall first be submitted to the Head of Program to be checked for conformity to the format stipulated in the 'Guidelines for Thesis Preparation' before it can be allowed to be submitted for examination.
- Once deemed to conform, THREE (3) combs bound copies and a softcopy shall be submitted to the CPS for examination, together with a form provided by CPS to be duly completed.

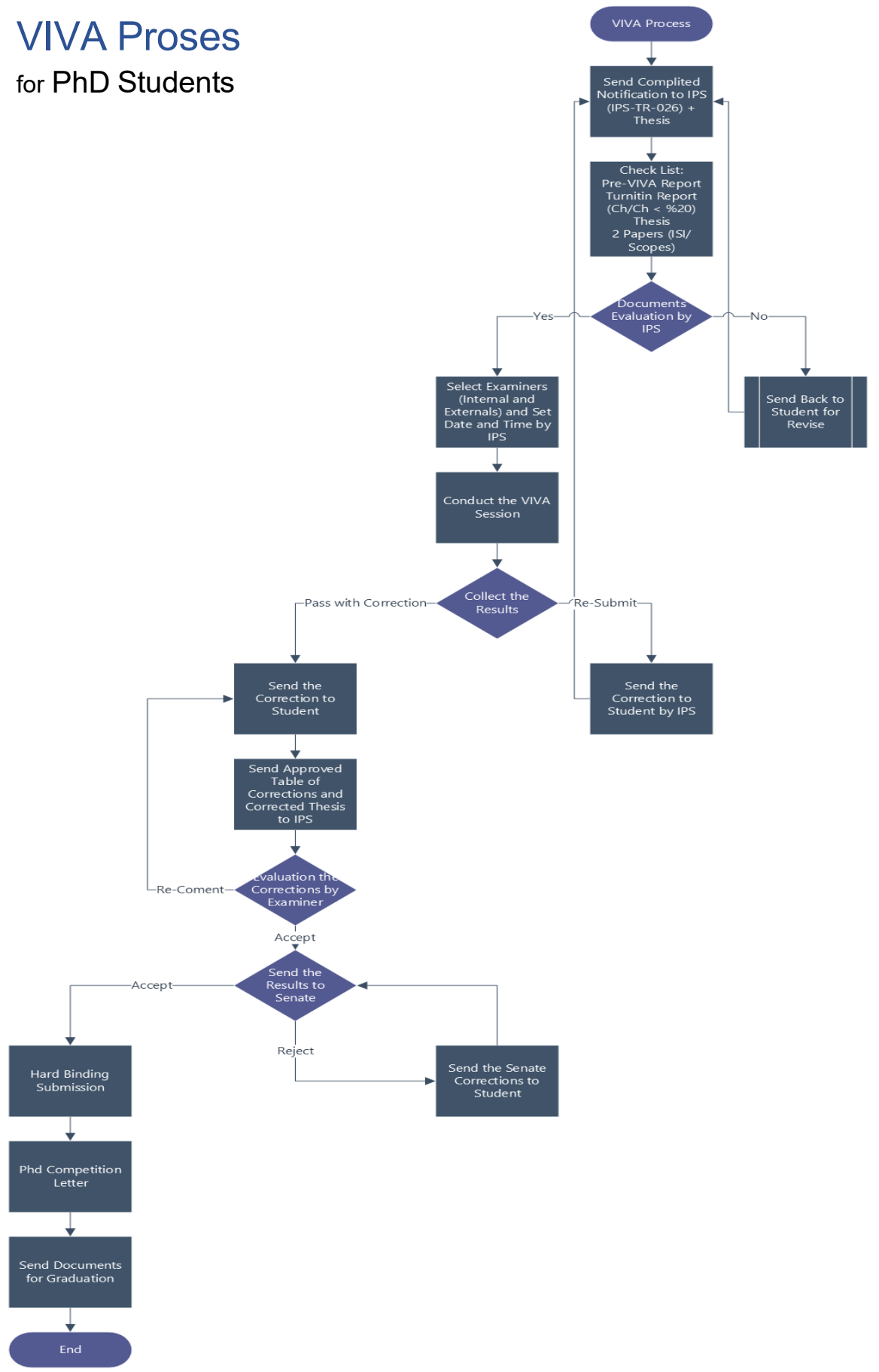
- **Fees**

All fees are to be fully paid before a *viva-voce* can be held.

Pre-VIVA Proses for PhD Students



VIVA Proses for PhD Students



17 Appointment of Thesis Examiners

Two external and one internal examiner shall be appointed for each Thesis submitted for examination. Their appointments are made by the University on the recommendation of the Dean of CPS in which the candidature was carried out.

Normally one examiner shall be appointed within Malaysia and the other from outside Malaysia if it is possible. This will ensure MUST's international status. In the case that no qualified and experienced examiner is available within Malaysia, both examiners may be from overseas.

18 Examination

The evaluation shall comprise 3 components: examination of the submission of thesis by the examiners, *viva voce*, and meeting of the Panel of Examiners. The *viva voce* will be convened once the reports from all the examiners have been received. The notice given may be very short, and as such candidates are advised to keep CPS always of their whereabouts and contact numbers.

18.1 Guidelines for Thesis Examination

The examination of the Thesis will be guided by the following:

- That the Thesis forms an integral unit of a report on work done on the topic and that it is readable at the technical level, complete and self-standing.
- That the topic is well introduced and treated.
- That the arguments put forward are logical, complete and acceptable.
- That the experiments if used are clearly described, the results are properly treated, either statistically or otherwise and they have not been manipulated in order to support the thesis.
- That conclusions have been derived in a logical and acceptable manner and that they support the thesis.
- That proper referencing and acknowledgement are carried out.
- That there is no plagiarism.

The PhD degree is awarded on the successful fulfilment of the award requirements which show enhanced understanding of knowledge in the area that would significantly contribute to the knowledge and practice in that area, and that the candidate has added new knowledge that is useful in the overall understanding and application of that knowledge. The award of the degree is subject to the following:

- The thesis is accompanied by a declaration by the candidate that the thesis is the result of his/her own independent research and work under supervision.
- The thesis is accompanied by a declaration by the candidate that the thesis had not and is not intended to be submitted for any other degree at MUST or in any other institution whether in or outside Malaysia.

- The thesis is accompanied by a declaration by the candidate's Supervisor and Dean of School in which the candidature was held, that the Thesis is *prima facie* complete and ready for examination.
- In all other respects, the thesis meets all the requirements stated in the thesis examination regulations.

18.2 Viva-Voce

- At the *viva voce*, the candidate is required to make a 25 minutes oral presentation covering all aspects of a typical thesis as listed earlier, but in a very concise form.
- This will be followed by a defence of the thesis: questions and answers (Q&A).
- After the Q&A, the candidate will be asked to leave the viva room while the Panel of Examiners deliberates. The candidate will be called back in very soon after.

18.3 The Decision

- Once the candidate is called back into the viva room, the Chairman of the Panel of Examiners will detail out (if any) the exact amendments to be made to the thesis as suggested by the Panel. The list will also be handed over to the Candidate by the Supervisor after the session.
- One of the following decisions shall be made on the thesis as the conclusion of the *viva-voce*:
 - **Accepted [1]:**
The Thesis meets all requirements for the award of the PhD degree and no further work or examinations are required. The thesis is accepted as is, or subject to formatting, typographical, spelling corrections.
 - **Accepted with Minor Modifications [2]:**
The thesis contains errors in grammar and presentation; minor improvements in the substance of the thesis may also be required.
 - **Accepted with Major Corrections [3]:**
The Thesis does not meet the requirements for the award of the PhD degree. The thesis contains serious flaws and major revisions are required to the Thesis and/or methodology and/or results and/or analysis and/or conclusions.
 - **Rejected [4]:**
The Thesis and work done do not meet the requirements and minimum standards of a PhD degree. (In the latter case, if deemed suitable, the thesis may be recommended for re-submission of work for re-examination).

19 Post-Examination / Pre-Graduation

19.1 Thesis Amendments: [1] & [2]

- A candidate whose thesis is rated as [1] or [2] is given 30 days to submit the final bound hard cover of the thesis to the Dean of CPS.

- Within that period the candidate shall have to submit the penultimate draft (an unbound copy) to the Supervisor at the soonest possible date to ensure all processes thereafter may be completed in time.
- The supervisor, together with one of the Examiners, will verify that all required amendments have been made.
- If required, the candidate can apply through his Supervisor, to the Dean of CPS for an extension of the period. At his sole discretion, the Dean of CPS can extend the period of submission, but the extension shall not be for more than 30 days, and only one extension shall be granted.
- During the period after the *viva-voce* and up to the point of submission of the final bound hard cover copies, the candidate shall have to continue to be a registered candidate and will be subject to the relevant fees.

19.2 Bound Hard Cover Submission

- Once ready within the approved period, the candidate shall submit THREE (3) bound hard cover copies and a softcopy via email to the CPS. In addition, one bound hard cover copy shall be given to the Supervisor, and one to the Co-Supervisor (if any).
- A candidate who fails to submit the amended thesis within the approved time is deemed to have the thesis **Rejected [4]**.

19.3 Re-Examination: [3] & [4]

- A candidate whose thesis is rated as: **[3] or [4]** shall be given by the Chairman of the Panel of Examiners a specific timeframe to complete his work and to resubmit a revised thesis. The same process as for the original submission should be followed
 - Only one re-examination is allowed.
 - No application for a further extension of the given period will be approved.
 - During this period, the candidate shall have to continue to be a registered candidate and will be subject to the relevant fees.
 - Although the candidate may need further assistance to carry out the major amendments, the Supervisor must ensure that the outcome is nevertheless the work of the candidate and not of the Supervisor.
 - The Supervisor needs to verify that *prima facie* the Thesis is ready for re-examination.
- Re-examination process:
 - The candidate will have to initiate the process of re-examination with a notice of submission of thesis, this time about three months before the actual submission date.
 - The rest of the examination process up to the *viva-voce* remains the same as the first-time round.
- At the second *viva-voce*,

- A thesis that is finally rated [1] or [2] will follow the same process as described above.
- A thesis that is still not rated [1] or [2] will be automatically considered to be rejected [4].

20.4 Publication

Students are required to have at least two (2) publications, with a minimum of one (1) publication in an ISI, Scopus, or ERA-indexed journal. All publications must clearly state the university affiliation and include the name of the supervisor. Additionally, only publications that are directly related to the student's thesis topic will be accepted by the Center for Postgraduate Studies (CPS).

20 Plagiarism

20.1 Prohibition

- In keeping to the tradition of scholarly pursuit, candidates are forbidden to commit plagiarism.
- A candidate shall not plagiarize any idea, writing, data or an invention of another person and claiming that the idea, writing, data or invention is the result of one's own findings or creation; or
 - a) The act of taking an idea, writing, data or an invention of another person and claiming that the idea, writing, data or invention is the result of one's own finding's or creation; or
 - b) An attempt to make out or the act of making out in such a way, that one is the original source or the creator of an idea, data, writing or an invention which has been taken from some other source.
- A candidate is considered to have committed plagiarism when he:
 - a) Publishes, with himself as the author, an abstract, article, scientific or academic paper, or book which is wholly, or partly written by some other person.
 - b) Incorporates himself or allows himself to be incorporated as a co-author of an abstract, article, scientific or academic paper, or book, when he has not at all made any contribution to the abstract, article, scientific or academic paper or book.
 - c) Force another person to include his name in the list of co-researchers for a particular research project or in the list of co-author's for a publication when he has not made any contribution which may qualify him as co-research or co-author.
 - d) Extracts academic data which are the results of research undertaken by some other person, such as laboratory findings or field work findings or data obtained through library research, whether published or unpublished, and incorporated those data as part of his academic research without giving due acknowledgement to the actual source.
 - e) Uses research data obtained through collaborative work with some other

person, whether or not that other person is a staff member or a Candidate of the University, as part of another distinct personal academic research of his, or for a publication in his own name as sole author, without obtaining the consent of his co-research prior to embarking on his personal research or prior to publishing the data.

- f) Transcribes the ideas or creations of others kept in whatever form, whether written, printed or available in electronic form, or in slide form, or in whatever form of teaching or research apparatus, or in any other form, and claims either directly or indirectly that the Candidates is the creator of that idea or creation.
- g) Translates the writing or creation of another person from one language to another whether wholly or partly, and subsequently presents the translation in whatever form or manner as the Candidates' own writing or creation. or
- h) Extracts ideas from another person's writing or creation and makes certain modifications without due reference to the original source and rearranges it in such a way that it appears as if the Candidates is the creator of those ideas.

20.2 Penalty

Where a candidate is found to have contravened plagiarism, disciplinary action will be taken against the candidate by the relevant authority of the University in accordance with the provisions of University.

21 Appeals

Where the candidate is unhappy with the results of the examination, she/he may appeal through the Dean of CPS. The Dean will provide his/her recommendations and the appeal is to be sent to the Provost for deliberation at the Academic Appeals Committee of the Senate.

If the decision of the Academic Appeals Committee is to uphold the appeal, the Office of the Provost (Academic) shall liaise with the examiner(s) of the Thesis conveying the results of the Academic Appeals Committee and requesting the examiner's comments.

In the case that appeal was denied, the decision is final, and the candidate shall carry out the amendments to his/her Thesis to the satisfaction of the examiner(s) or anyone recommended by the examiner(s).

22 Graduation

22.1 Conferment of Degree

The Senate shall award the degree upon the recommendation of the Dean of CPS once all requirements for conferment of degree as stated below have been met.

22.2 Requirements for Conferment of Degree

A candidate is deemed academically eligible to be conferred the degree if:

- All the requirements under Post-Examination/Pre-graduation have been met;

- Has completed the minimum period of study and not exceeded the maximum period allowed, as well as satisfied all residential requirements.

Apart from the academic requirements, all the following administrative requirements also need to be fulfilled:

- Is currently registered (not withdrawn, defaulted, deferred or terminated);
- Has made full settlement of fees and is free of any financial commitments and debts to the University.
- Is free from any disciplinary action or any other pending disciplinary action.
- Has made a formal application to graduate via a special form provided by CPS and has received an official verification to graduate.

22.3 Graduation Ceremony

The graduation of postgraduate degrees shall be held together with the graduation of undergraduate qualifications at MUST. Attempts shall be made by the Graduation Committee to include postgraduate graduates in the next immediate graduation ceremony closest to the date of the approval of the award of the postgraduate degree.

23 List of CPS Forms

CPS-TR-001	Details of Final Research Proposal
CPS-TR-006-a	Notice of Proposal Defence
CPS-TR-001-a	Research Proposal Evaluation Form
CPS-AP-005	Details of Preliminary Research Proposal
CPS-TR-002	Thesis/Project Paper Progress Report
CPS-TR-002-a	Thesis Consultation Report
CPS-TR-002-b	Supervisor's Assessment Report
CPS-TR-005	Appointment / Change / Discontinuation of Supervisor
CPS-TR-003	Research Evaluation Form/ Pre-Viva
CPS-TR-026	Notice of Ph.D. Thesis Submission
CPS-TR-008-a	Thesis Evaluation Report Form
CPS-AP-001	Application Form for Admission
CPS-TR-010	Application of Leave from PhD Colloquium