



# **STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES HIGHER DEGREES COMMITTEE**

**HIGHER DIGREE COMMITTEE  
FACULTY OF MEDICINE  
UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA  
SRI LANKA**

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**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES  
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FACULTY OF MEDICINE, UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA**

Approved by the 478<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Faculty Board, Faculty of Medicine, 154<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Academic Planning and Development Committee, and 449<sup>th</sup> Senate Meeting, University of Peradeniya.

**Regulations:** To be cited along with 'The Rules & Regulations for Higher Degrees and Diploma Programmes in the University of Peradeniya' - Regulation No. 01 of 1993.

### **1. Composition of the Higher Degree Committee**

- 1.1 The Higher Degree Committee (HDC), Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya is a statutory committee of the Faculty of Medicine and shall be composed of Chairman, Secretary, Heads of all Departments and Units, Chairperson - Ethics Review Committee, Chairperson - Faculty Research Committee, Coordinator -MSc in Sports Sciences programme, two non-head Professors of the faculty and Senior Assistant Registrar, Faculty of Medicine.
- 1.2 The Dean of the faculty shall be the Chairman, Higher Degree Committee and the secretary should be appointed from within the committee members of HDC for a period of 3 years.

### **2. Responsibilities of the Higher Degree Committee**

The HDC, Faculty of Medicine handles the process of recommending candidates for post-graduate research degrees of MPhil (Master of Philosophy), Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy), DM (Doctor of Medicine) and D.Sc. (Doctor of Science).

### **3. Processing of a Higher Degree**

- 3.1 Higher Degrees applications should be submitted in the format (HD-01 for MPhil, Ph.D., DM and HD-02 for D.Sc.) prescribed by the HDC, which is available at the office of the Dean. The candidates should purchase the booklet titled "Procedure of Registration of Higher Degrees" from the office of the Dean, Faculty of Medicine.

- 3.2 The principal supervisor of the proposed research higher degree should confidentially submit (format HD-03) a list of five potential reviewers to the HDC, along with their addresses, contact numbers, e-mail addresses and brief curriculum vitae.
- 3.3 New applications would be evaluated by the subject clerk, HDC for completeness of the application and supporting documents, and tabled at the next available HDC meeting.
- 3.4 The eligibility of the candidature and qualifications of the supervisors will be assessed at the HDC meeting. The committee should appoint 2 or 3 reviewers considering the list of reviewers nominated by the principal supervisor, for the evaluation of proposed research project proposal. The committee may decide to seek evaluation reports from other potential reviewers other than those nominated by the supervisor.
- 3.5 The research project proposal should be sent to the reviewers soon after the nomination of reviewers at the next HDC meeting. Reviewers' comments and recommendations are expected within 3 weeks. Each reviewer should return the completed "Reviewers Comments and Recommendation Forms" (format HD-04) back to the Secretary, Higher Degree Committee, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya. The HDC could decide to have MPhil proposals reviewed by two nominated internal reviewers, to speed up the registration process in case of major delays of reviewers' evaluation. The HDC expects the internal reviewers' comments within two weeks, and a panel nominated by the HDC will evaluate the reviewers' comments. When there are minor corrections suggested by the reviewers, the panel could evaluate the revised proposal and consider approval for registration. When there are major corrections suggested by the reviewers, the revised proposal should be re-evaluated by the reviewers.
- 3.6 Approval from the Ethical Review Committee should be available for the registration.
- 3.7 Reviewers comments and recommendations should be considered at the next HDC meeting. The HDC could approve the registration for a higher degree based on the following recommendations of reviewers:
- 3.7.1 Both reviewers' recommend "Recommended without any corrections" – the HDC could approve the registration.
- 3.7.2 "Recommended with minor corrections" - If a reviewer wishes to re-evaluate the proposal after minor corrections, the HDC should send the proposal back to the reviewers following corrections by the candidate and obtain the final recommendation. Based on the second recommendation by the reviewer the HDC could approve the registration.

- 3.7.3 “Recommended with major corrections” - The revised proposal should be sent back to the reviewer for re-evaluation and to obtain the final recommendation. Based on the reviewer’s subsequent recommendation, the HDC could approve the registration.
- 3.8 Not recommended by the both reviewers: the HDC should reject the research project proposal for the applied higher degree program. If one reviewer has not recommended and the other has recommended, the HDC should have the proposal evaluated by a 3<sup>rd</sup> reviewer and decide on approval for registration.
- 3.9 The approved Higher Degree applications should be tabled at the next faculty board for the confirmation. A Letter of Registration for a Higher Degree (HD-05) should be issued to the candidate and permission should be granted to commence the studies. According to the available facilities and other requirements, the candidate could officially start the higher degree on any day after issue of the “Letter of Registration”. The candidate should notify the HDC of the date of commencement, through his/her supervisors. The durations of the higher degree (MPhil: full time 2-4 years, part time 3-5 year and Ph.D.: full time 3-6 years and part time 4-7 years) will be calculated from the date of submission of the application.
- 3.10 The HDC should issue an identify card and provide library access to the candidate along with the “Letter of Registration”.
- 3.11 All communication between the candidate and the HDC should be endorsed by the principal supervisor.
- 3.12. Progress reports (format HD-06) should be submitted by the candidate every six months, until completion of the study.
- 3.13 Registration of candidature should be annually renewed, by paying the annual registration renewal fee.
- 3.14 At the end of the first year of study, every candidate should present their research project to a panel nominated by the HDC, in the form of a 10 minute presentation. This brief presentation should include background information, objectives, work done so far and the plan of study for rest of the years. At the end of the presentation, HDC will issue a “Letter of confirmation” of the higher degree.
- 3.15 Any other communications such as change of the title, change of supervisors, change on objectives and methodologies should be communicated to the HDC through the principal supervisor.

- 3.16 The candidate should notify the HDC about the date of thesis submission at least 3 months before the proposed date of thesis submission.
- 3.17 The principal supervisor should nominate 2 potential examiners (confidentially) to the HDC (format HD-07).
- 3.18 Examiners will be appointed at the next HDC meeting and should be approved at the faculty board and the senate.
- 3.19 The candidate should submit the spiral bound thesis (3 copies) to the HDC with the proof of all the payments.
- 3.20 The submitted thesis should be sent to the two examiners approved by HDC. One month would be given for their evaluation. The examiners should fill and submit the examiner's evaluation form to the HDC (format HD-08).
- 3.21 The examiners comments and recommendations should be considered at the next HDC meeting. The HDC could approve the conferment of the higher degree based on the following recommendations by the examiners:
- 3.22 Recommended without any corrections: HDC could approve the degree.
- 3.23 Recommended with minor corrections: If examiners prefer to re-evaluate the corrected thesis following minor corrections, the revised thesis should be sent back to the examiners, to obtain the final recommendation. Based on that, the HDC could approve the registration.
- 3.24 Recommended with major corrections: The corrected thesis should be sent back to the examiners for re-evaluation and to obtain the final recommendation. Based on that, the HDC could approve the registration.
- 3.25 Not recommended by the both examiners: the HDC should reject the thesis for the registered higher degree.
- 3.26 The HDC should notify to the candidate about the date and time for the examination based on the availability of the examiners. The final examination would compose of a 15-20 minutes presentation and a VIVA examination. The board of examiners should be composed of the Chairman or Secretary HDC as the moderator, the two examiners who evaluated the thesis and supervisors only as observers.

- 3.27 At the end of the examination, the HDC should hand over the examiners comments of the thesis to the candidate. The candidate should respond to the examiners comments, edit and amend the thesis accordingly. The corrected thesis should be submitted to the HDC through the supervisors.
- 3.28 The re-evaluated, accepted version of the thesis should be submitted as a hardbound thesis with completed format HD-09 to the HDC and tabled at the next HDC meeting. If the candidate submits the hardbound final copy within one month of the date of examination, the date of examination is considered as the effective date of the degree. If candidate submit the thesis after a month of the date of examination, the final thesis submission date will be considered as the effective date of the degree.
- 3.29 The HDC approved results should be forwarded to the next faculty board and to the senate.
- 3.30 A temporary certificate of the degree and an academic transcript could be issued following the examiners approval of the final thesis.
- 3.31 Payments for the reviewers and the examiners should be organized by the HDC according the approved rate of fees.

#### **4. Termination of the candidature**

The HDC could decide to terminate the candidature in the following situations:

- 4.1 The candidature's written request to terminate the higher degree study based the personal or health conditions. Supervisors should endorse this termination request.
- 4.2 Lack of satisfactory progression of the candidate as notified by the supervisors after calling for explanations by the HDC.
- 4.3 Absence of two consecutive progress reports from the candidate following written reminders from the HDC.
- 4.4 When both examiners have rejected and not recommended the thesis for the applied degree.
- 4.5 Submission of false documents, recommendations and qualifications to the HDC.
- 4.6 Submission of work that has been already submitted for another degree.

4.7 Similarities of more than 30% of the submitted thesis.

4.8 Continuation of research work without ethical approval.

## **5. Responsibility of the Higher Degrees Committee**

5.1 Follow the Rules & Regulations for Higher Degrees and Diploma Programmes in the University of Peradeniya' – Regulation No. 01 of 1993.

5.2 Follow the approved standard operating procedures of the HDC, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya.

5.3 Accept all applications and other forms of communications with the candidates, supervisors, reviewers and examiners.

5.4 All decisions have to be taken at the HDC meeting and the minutes should be approved by the faculty board.

5.5 Conduct regular HDC meeting monthly, usually every 3rd Tuesday of the month.

5.6 The chairman and secretary could call special HDC meetings when necessary.

5.7 It is important for the members to attend HDC meetings in person. Members who are unable to attend a meeting should send a written excuse to the Chairman, Higher Degrees Committee. The minutes should record all excuses submitted.

5.8 Meetings will usually continue until all agenda items have been considered. Minutes should be officially taken during the meeting.

5.9 The Secretary of the HDC will prepare and maintain minutes of all meetings. Minutes of the previous meeting, announcement of the next HDC meeting and the agenda should be circulated among the members at least a week before the next HDC meeting.

5.10 The confirmed minutes of each meeting, will be pasted in a Minutes' Book and shall be forwarded to the Faculty Board for confirmation.

## **6. Details of minutes and meeting**

6.1 The format of the minutes will include at least the following items:

Title of the HDC meeting. Example: MINUTES OF THE *(number of the HDC meeting)* MEETING OF THE HIGHER DEGREES COMMITTEE HELD ON *(Date and the time)* IN THE BOARD ROOM *(or alternative venue)* OF THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE, PERADENIYA

1. Names of the present, excused and absent members
2. Confirmation of minutes of the previous meeting
3. Business arising from the previous minutes
4. Current HD applications
5. New HD applications and appointing reviewers
6. Progress reports
7. Title changes
8. Appointing examiners
9. Examination results
10. Correspondence
11. Any other matters

## **7. Standard documents use by HDC**

7.1 Rules and Regulations of Higher Degree Committee, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya.

7.2 Guidelines for supervisors and students register at HDC, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya.

7.3 Standard Operating Procedure of HDC, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya.



## **8. Applications and forms of HDC**

- 8.1 HD-01 Application for registration of MPhil, Ph.D, DM.
- 8.2 HD-02 Application of registration of D.Sc.
- 8.3 HD-03 Nomination of reviewers
- 8.4 HD-04 Reviewers comments on proposed research project
- 8.5 HD-05 Letter of Registration - Format
- 8.6 HD-06 Progress report - Format
- 8.7 HD-07 Nomination of examiners
- 8.8 HD-08 Examiners comments on thesis
- 8.9 HD-09 Correction approval and submission form

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University of Peradeniya and all members of Higher Degree Committee, Faculty of Medicine