

PROCEDURES FOR CONFIRMATION AND TRANSFER OF MPhil/PhD CANDIDATURE

You should refer to the Graduate School Handbook for MPhil & PhD programmes (<https://www.gradsch.hku.hk/gradsch/current-students/handbooks>) for details regarding confirmation of candidature and transfer of candidature (from MPhil to PhD, or from full-time to part-time). Confirmation/transfer occurs towards the end of your probationary period (12 months for full-time MPhil and 3-year PhD students, and 18 months for full-time 4-year PhD students). Your supervisor will make a recommendation to the Departmental Research Postgraduate Committee (DRPC) for endorsement, and the recommendation will then be passed to the FHDC (Faculty Higher Degrees Committee) for approval.

Requirements for confirmation/transfer of candidature

1. You will need to prepare a **detailed research proposal** that satisfies your primary supervisor and the DRPC chair. The deadline for this report is one month prior to the expiry of your probationary period. There are no specific guidelines on the format, but it is recommended that the content should include: (a) an Introduction, with a detailed literature review that explains the proposed research in the context of existing knowledge, as well as highlighting the hypotheses to be tested and your anticipated contributions to science; (b) the Materials and Methods, explaining your experimental design, methodology, sample sizes, analytical procedures, permits required, etc.; (c) your preliminary Results, showing what proportion of each research topic has been completed; and (d) an extensive citation of the literature. It is essential that you engage your supervisor in a discussion of his/her expectations regarding the extent and content of the research proposal.
2. **Satisfactory completion of coursework:** you must pass the assessments for all Graduate School (GS) courses (and departmental courses if taken in lieu of GS courses), and at least 50% of departmental courses.
3. Confirmation (via the biannual progress report) that you have obtained all necessary **ethical approval** (as appropriate) for your research.
4. Submission of an on-line **Data Management Plan** (DMP; <https://hub.hku.hk/researchdata/rpg.htm>), endorsed by your primary supervisor.
5. Successful completion of an **assessed oral presentation** on your research: this is usually completed as part of one of the biannual Qualifying Seminar Symposia organized by the DRPC every June and December. In rare cases an ad hoc qualifying seminar will be arranged if you are unable to attend your allocated symposium (and if supported by your primary

supervisor). Assessment is pass/fail, following the majority opinion of at least three people (the DRPC chair or his/her representative; another DRPC member from a similar field; and the primary supervisor or his/her representative).

6. Although a satisfactory assessment by your supervisor in the **biannual progress report** is not specifically listed as a prerequisite for confirmation or transfer of candidature, repeated failure to receive such support from your supervisor is a clear indicator that you may face difficulties. In some cases a supervisor may propose that your probationary period be extended to allow additional time for you to complete the above requirements.

Prof. Richard Saunders

DRPC Chair, SBS

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