Your Master of Philosophy Candidature Lifecycle: Progress and Milestones

As a Master of Philosophy (MPhil) candidate, you will develop a resrmidate,

Start   Confirmation of Candidature   Pre-completion Seminar   Thesis Examination

Candidate/ Advisor Agreement

* Progress Report due April/October

Thesis Submission

Degree awarded

Fixed components of PD Program

* Progress report due every six months except if a milestone (Confirmation of Candidature or Pre-Completion Evaluation) has been completed successfully in the previous six months

A full-time MPhil candidature will follow the following timeline (double the due dates for part-time)

Candidate Advisor Agreement	Six weeks from commencement
Confirmation of Candidature	Six months full time equivalent
Pre-Completion Milestone	One year and six months from commencement
Thesis Submission and Examination	One year and nine months from commencement
	To be completed before 2 years full time equivalent

Beginning your MPhil Candidature:
Preparing for Confirmation of Candidature

These tips are for MPhil candidates and their advisors to consider as you prepare for the confirmation of your candidature (after reaching the six-month full-time candidature equivalent point).

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What is Confirmation of Candidature?

Preparing for Confirmation of Candidature provides you with a scaffolded approach to starting your research studies. It forms the basis of your first discussions and work with your advisory team and ensures that the scope and focus of your study will meet the requirements of the Master of Philosophy degree. You must aim to have your candidature confirmed at the six-month (full time equivalent) mark. Under exceptional circumstances only, you may apply for an extension of up to three months.

The Candidature Committee reviews your work to assess whether:

your proposed research is feasible and achievable in the time available (two years full-time equivalent) and if the outcomes of that work are likely to meet the award requirements

your presentation of the work to date demonstrates appropriate progress in developing the research skills and capacities that are needed to conduct the research at the appropriate level.

Experts beyond your advisory team provide f

Timeline

As soon as possible after course enrolment	Set a timeline for preparation of the literature review and professional development Set the seminar date and download and review the COC_Proposal Template. Review the GRS emails and website to ensure you complete the required compulsory training components
4-6 weeks prior to seminar	Submit literature review to Advisory Panel for comment
4 weeks prior to seminar	Make amendments to research proposal in accordance with Expert
2-4 weeks prior to seminar	Complete the Professional Development Audit and Plan in Appendix 1 of the COC_Proposal Template in discussion with your Advisory Panel
2 weeks prior to seminar	Advisors complete RD7001/RM7001 Advisory Panel Report on COC_Assessment Form
1 week prior to seminar	Finalise the literature review and submit it with COC-Proposal Template, COC_Assessment Form and revised Candidate Advisor Agreement to the Candidature Committee

Notes on using the template

The COC-Proposal Template provides a guide and format for the preparation of the Research Proposal and associated documents including the Professional Development Audit and Plan, and Budget as required. The Research Proposal that will be sent to the expert reviewer does not require inclusion of any appendices. The Final version of the Template to be submitted with COC-Assessment Form one week prior to the Seminar must include all required appendices. The Literature review does not form part of the template but must be attached to the COC-Assessment Form.

Tips for Success

If you are late with your Confirmation of Candidature, you are also likely to be overdue with finalising your thesis. If you start well, you are likely to finish well. Familiarise yourself with the

Plan: Think about your candidature lifecycle and look to the requirements of your next milestones (pre-completion). Plan your time and resources to make sure you are on track. There is a useful timeline in the [HDR Candidate Handbook](#) that you can use to help plan.

Notes for the Advisory Panel

Please be aware that in working with your MPhil Candidate toward Confirmation of Candidature it is your role to help them ensure they frame their topic to ensure that its scope and focus is achievable within the time and resources available.

To assist you in this work there are a series of compulsory steps that all candidates must undertake intended to ensure they are aware of degree requirements, they have access to services to support their skills development and that they are aware of their responsibilities in working with you.

Working from day one we envisage the planning for the first milestone, Confirmation of Candidature will begin and that the Research Proposal and Literature Review will inform your work together.

Please work with the candidate and College Academic Services Officer (ASO) to plan a realistic date for the Seminar - accounting for student progress and availability of panel members. The key materials to be aware of can all be viewed here including subject outlines, the template and the form. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your College ASO or the Graduate Research School. These considerations should address any need to revisit the research plan in terms of its

Please note that there is no requirement for external review of MPhil work at Confirmation of Candidature.

Your work with the candidate will culminate at least one week prior to the seminar with your approval by signature of COC-Assessment Form.

The Second Half of your MPhil Candidature:
Approaching and navigating the Pre-Completion phase

These tips are for MPhil candidates and their advisors to consider as you move into the second half of your candidature and begin to navigate the final stages.

These second half of candidature can be challenging. This guide is intended to provide advice on what is required and how to prepare and plan for this phase.

By the time you reach your pre-completion

Review your Candidate and Advisor Agreement

As you move into the second year (full-time equivalent) of your candidature, you should work with your panel to ensure you have a shared understandings of key expectations of the completion phase.

Here are some ways of thinking about those conversations and questions that you might use to inform thinking, planning, and preparation. These are offered as guides - you should modify them as needed:

Craft:	Can you detail your planned thesis structure?
Pivot:	Do you need to modify your plans for the thesis to bring it to completion on time? Does this mean shifting the structure, or changing the scope of the work?
Plan:	What is your planned pre-completion date, and what needs to happen to complete that milestone on time? What is your planned thesis submission date for examination and what needs to happen to meet that forecast deadline?
Negotiate:	How do your plans fit in with everyone?
Communicate:	Discuss needs early and revisit plans with your advisors, peers or critical friends as needed
Reach out:	Do you need help to articulate your needs with your advisors, especially around feedback timeframes and other important matters? Do you need help interpreting advisor feedback?
Create support:	What support do you need from advisors, peers, or other critical friends?

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What are the component parts of your thesis (e.g., chapters, papers, exegesis and creative work)?

Detail the title of each chapter and write a short abstract to describe the argument the section makes and how it contributes to the whole. Are the abstracts an introduction to the chapters?

Create a master file that contains all the component parts. In each part include all the written work you have done for that part to date.

Review the master file with your advisor and identify what research remains to be done. Consider if this work is essential to the thesis?

Prepare a timeline to conduct all outstanding work, including work yet to be written.

Commit to a realistic submission timeline with check in and feedback meetings. As each piece is submitted you can move to the next phase. Advisors can divide up the review work to optimise application of the expertise, ensuring quality feedback.

Once all sections are complete, review the work as a whole. Ensure you can see the coherence between the chapters and consistency of the argument presented throughout the thesis.

The introduction and conclusion are usually the last sections finalised. The intervening chapters highlight the significant contribution which you speak of in the introduction and conclusion.

5. Think about **examiner expectations**. Examiners will review your work and recommend an outcome. The process might include looking at the table of contents and bibliography to see consistent use of disciplinary practices in your work. Thesis reading may focus on sections aligned with an individual expertise. The result will be written feedback and recommendations. Examiners are looking for evidence to recommend that the thesis be passed! Review the HDR Thesis examination form together and consider if your thesis addresses all the criteria.

Build Your Support to Conquer your Barriers