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This Handbook for Taught Postgraduate Studies is produced by the Office of Postgraduate Studies.

An electronic edition of this Handbook is available at the following URL address: http://pg.ust.hk/tpghandbook/.
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Preface

This Handbook has been prepared with the purpose of helping incoming students of taught postgraduate programs understand their responsibilities and rights as postgraduate students, and the policies related to various aspects of their studies.

This Handbook may also serve as a useful reference for faculty members and administrative staff who may need to advise students on procedural matters concerning their studies at the University.

For students taking a postgraduate degree, the onus is on them to find out what they need to do or know about their program of study and the related University regulations. Ignorance of the rule does not exempt a student from the requirement to comply with the rule. We hope this booklet serves as a handy reference for these students throughout their course of study.

Students should refer to the Academic Regulations website (http://publish.ust.hk/acadreg/) for academic regulations and policies related to their study. As the content of this Handbook may change from time to time, readers are advised to refer to the online version (http://pg.ust.hk/tpghandbook/) for the most updated information.

Office of Postgraduate Studies
August 2014
1. Regulations for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity

1.1 The HKUST Academic Honor Code

Honesty and integrity are central to the academic work of HKUST. Students must observe and uphold the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty in all the work they do throughout their program of study.

As members of the University community, students have the responsibility to help maintain the academic reputation of HKUST in its academic endeavors.

Sanctions may be imposed on students if they are found to have violated the regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.

1.2 Student Conduct

The University expects good conduct from students. Complaints against a student for misconduct should be referred to the Dean of Students. Where the Dean of Students is satisfied that there has been misconduct, the Dean may impose sanctions. In serious cases, or where the Dean of Students determines that the University’s interests will be best served, the Dean may refer the case to the Student Disciplinary Committee.

The student may submit an appeal against the decision of the Dean of Students or the Student Disciplinary Committee to the Provost or the President respectively.

1.3 Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the basic to the work of all students at the University, and to scholarly and scientific work in general. Academic integrity and honesty are critical values in upholding HKUST's reputation as a community of scholars and its claim to the "intellectual property" created by staff and students. Students are required to act
Regulations for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity

truthfully and honestly in their academic pursuit, and acquaint themselves with the University’s policy on academic integrity and discipline. It is the policy of the University that there should be zero tolerance of academic dishonesty. Students who are found to have violated the principle of academic integrity will be subject to academic disciplinary actions.

There tenets of academic integrity may be violated in a number of ways. The offenses stated below are by no means exhaustive and the determination of academic dishonesty is based on a consideration of the broader context of the students’ possible intent to mislead an instructor or the University as to their academic achievement, status, or qualifications. “Students” as used here includes currently registered students as well as those who have graduated or left the University.

The University’s approach to cases of academic misconduct is fundamentally educational. The process for dealing with these cases is designed to enable students to better understand the nature of academic dishonesty and the high standards of academic integrity that are expected. The sanctions available in confirmed cases of misconduct are intended to signal the importance that the University places on maintaining these high standards and to communicate this to students.

**Plagiarism** is defined as the presentation of work which originates from other sources as one’s own without appropriate attribution to the source. It includes but not limited to the presentation of someone else’s work/argument in one’s own words without acknowledgement, in theses, examinations, tests, term papers, and other assignments, for credit in a course or program of study or toward the fulfillment of degree requirements.

The University views plagiarism (whether intentional or unintentional) as a serious offence. Students should practice with extreme care when conducting research.

**Cheating** is defined as conduct designed to mislead those responsible for making a judgment on a student’s academic performance or standing. It includes but not limited to:

i. Unauthorized conveyance or receipt of examination or test
questions
ii. The giving, receiving or utilizing of unauthorized information or assistance in completing an assignment, test or examination
iii. Breaches of the regulations for examinations set out in the Annex of the Regulations for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity
iv. Impersonating another student or allowing oneself to be impersonated by another student in participating in a test or examination
v. Submission of academic work containing purported statements of fact or references to sources that have been fabricated
vi. Presenting for credit work that has already been accepted for credit in another course

1.4 Regulations for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity

Detailed Academic Regulations of the University are available online at http://publish.ust.hk/acadreg/generalreg/.
2. Admissions

2.1 General Admission Requirements

To qualify for admission to the University, applicants must meet (i) the general University admission requirements; (ii) the specific admission requirements of the program applied for; and (iii) the English Language admission requirement.

University and program admission requirements are minimum requirements for admission. Meeting these minimum requirements does not guarantee admission. Applicants who possess other qualifications equivalent to the University requirements for admission may submit applications for consideration on the basis of individual merit.

Applicants seeking admission to a master’s or graduate diploma program should have obtained a bachelor’s degree from a recognized institution, or an approved equivalent qualification; and satisfied the specific requirements prescribed by the school and department concerned as to their fitness to pursue postgraduate study.

Details of the admission requirements of the University and individual programs are available at http://pg.ust.hk/admissions.

2.2 English Language Requirement for Admission

Applicants whose first language is not English and whose bachelor’s degree or equivalent qualification was awarded by institutions where the medium of instruction was not English are required to fulfill one of the following minimum English Language requirements:

- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) - a paper-based test score of no less than 550; or an internet-based test score of no less than 80; or
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) - an overall score of 6.0 with no sub-score lower than 5.5.

N.B. TOEFL and IELTS scores are valid for two years from the test date.
In addition to the above, individual schools or departments may stipulate higher English Language proficiency requirements.

### 2.3 Application for Admission

Applicants should observe the application procedures set out by the Postgraduate Outreach and Admissions Team (PGOA) of the Office of Postgraduate Studies.

Applications for admission to postgraduate programs in Fall Term are normally invited from September in the previous year. There may be different application periods for programs which do not follow the regular Term System of the University. Interested persons are strongly advised to apply well before the application closing dates. In order to allow sufficient time to obtain a student visa/entry permit, non-local applicants are encouraged to submit their applications as early as possible and not to delay submission until the closing date.

Selected applicants may be invited for an admission interview. Successful applicants will receive an offer (firm or conditional) of admission from PGOA. Applicants receiving an offer will be expected to accept or decline the offer and pay a nonrefundable deposit by a date specified on the admission offer letter. Detailed application procedures are set out at [http://pg.ust.hk/admissions](http://pg.ust.hk/admissions).

### 2.4 Non-local Applicants

The University welcomes applications from non-local students who are seeking admission at the postgraduate level.

For admission purposes, non-local students are defined as those who enter Hong Kong for the purpose of education with a student visa/entry permit issued by the Director of Immigration, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). This is applicable to all non-local students including visiting and inbound exchange students.
(i) Student Visa or Entry Permit

All non-local students must obtain approval from the Immigration Department of the HKSAR (HKImmDept) before the commencement of their studies. Without such an approval, they are not allowed to register for any program of study at the University. Students who are unsure of whether or not they need a visa/entry permit should check with the HKImmDept directly (Tel: 2824 6111; Email: enquiry@immd.gov.hk).

Upon approval by the HKImmDept to enter Hong Kong for the purpose of pursuing the specified program of study at HKUST, Chinese Mainland residents, and Chinese residents from Taiwan and Macau residents will be issued an entry permit label. Non-local students from other places will be issued a student visa.

Students have to apply for the student visas/entry permits after they have completed the admission offer acceptance process. Chinese Mainland residents must apply for the entry permit through the University. Other students are strongly advised to apply for the student visas/entry permits through the University though they may choose to file an application on their own. While students have to initiate the student visas/entry permits application process, PGOA will provide appropriate assistance.

The HKImmDept normally takes 2 months to process a student visa/entry permit application. Students, who are Chinese Mainland residents, will receive the entry permit labels from PGOA, and have to apply for an “Exit-entry Permit for Traveling to and from Hong Kong and Macau” at the Public Security Bureau Office where their household registrations are kept. This process will take an additional 2 weeks.

(ii) Costs of Study

In addition to tuition fees, costs associated with staying and living in Hong Kong include accommodation, medical and living expenses. Non-local students should carefully consider the financial aspects of their study in Hong Kong before coming to Hong Kong.

An average HKUST student spends approximately HK$100 per day for meals on-campus. The cost of meals off-campus varies and is
substantially higher. Depending on the spending pattern of individuals, personal miscellaneous expenses on local transportation, laundry, sundries and entertainment, etc. will be about HK$400 per week.

(iii) Employment During Study

Non-local students should note that, while the HKImmDept has relaxed its employment restrictions, they are only allowed to take up on-campus part-time work, summer work and study-related internship, subject to rules and conditions specified by the HKImmDept and the University. Detailed information can be found at: https://career.ust.hk/popup_Non-local_Stud_Work_HK_Part_One041108.html.

2.5 Deferred Admission

Under special circumstances, students may apply in writing to PGOA for deferred admission to a subsequent term. Requests will be considered on an individual basis by the relevant school/department who will notify the applicant of the outcome. All approvals for deferred admission are valid for not more than two consecutive regular terms, after which re-application for admission to the University must be made.

2.6 Re-admission

Students who have withdrawn from the University may apply for admission into any program of study by following the regular admission procedures. However, those who are required to withdraw from the University due to academic reasons or failure to meet the prescribed conditions set for re-enrollment at the end of an academic leave may not apply for re-admission into the same program.

For re-admitted students, course grades and credits taken within five years prior to re-admission and not used to earn any academic qualification at the University or elsewhere may be used to fulfill requirements of the new program of study, subject to approval of the major department.
3. Fees

3.1 Tuition Fees

Taught postgraduate programs are self-financing programs. Tuition fees may vary between programs, and are usually payable in equal installments at the beginning of each regular term. Information on tuition fees for individual programs is available in their respective program entries in the PG Program Catalog at: http://publish.ust.hk/prog_crs/pgprog/tpg_index.html.

Students who have to extend their study beyond the normative period of study may be required to pay a term-based fee, or they may need to pay additional fees based on the number of credits they enroll for the term concerned.

3.2 Refund Policy

Tuition fees paid are normally not refundable.

3.3 Caution Money

Each new student is required to pay a deposit of HK$300 as caution money when they first register. Charges will be made against this deposit if there are any unpaid claims against the student, such as outstanding library dues. The balance will be refunded if the student leaves the University before graduation. At graduation, the student is required to restore the balance of the caution money to its original level and the full amount of the caution money will be credited against the graduation fee.

3.4 Graduation Fee

On completion of the program of study and before the degree or diploma is awarded, each student is required to pay a graduation fee of HK$300. The fee is normally settled by transferring the full amount of the caution money.
3.5 HKUST Students’ Union Fee

Students joining the HKUST Students’ Union are required to pay an initial entry fee and thereafter an annual subscription. These fees are set by the Union and collected by the University on behalf of the Union. The entry fee, applicable to students admitted for the first time, is HK$100 and the annual subscription fee is HK$100.

3.6 Late Charges

Students may be required to pay late charges for failure to complete certain University procedures by stipulated deadlines. These include fines for overdue library books. Late charges are levied in accordance with the rules and regulations set by respective offices.

3.7 Charges for University Student Accommodation

The University offers on-campus accommodation at the Stephen Kam Chuen Cheong Hall (SKCC Hall), and has also rented some off-campus apartments in Tai Po Tsai and Sam Long, to provide accommodation for full-time taught postgraduate students. Information on the charges for the SKCC Hall or off-campus apartments will be provided through schools and program offices. Students who wish to apply for student accommodation should contact their respective program offices.

3.8 Compulsory Medical Insurance

University policy stipulates that compulsory medical insurance is mandatory for all registered full-time degree-seeking non-local undergraduate and postgraduate students studying at HKUST on student visa/entry permit. Students are required to purchase this insurance from the University.

The compulsory medical insurance aims to provide better resources and safety net for non-local students in the event that they need prompt, appropriate and affordable medical services locally or outside of Hong Kong. While students may use the free general consultations and medications of the campus clinic, they might need other medical services
such as hospitalization in some circumstances. There are always long waiting lists for public hospital services in Hong Kong, while medical costs in private hospitals are high.

All new and continuing non-local full-time degree-seeking students starting their study in Fall Term must pay a medical insurance fee of HK$531 with the tuition fee. Students who commence their study at HKUST in Spring Term on or after 1 February each year shall pay HK$310 for the medical insurance coverage till the end of August. This arrangement also applies to students on exchange.

Further details about student insurance schemes can be found on the website of the Scholarships and Financial Aid Office at: http://sfao.ust.hk/insurance/info.html.

### 3.9 Other Fees and Charges

Other fees and charges students may come across include, but not limited to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Per-copy Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application for Testimonial</td>
<td>HK$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application for Transcript of Studies*</td>
<td>HK$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(excluding mailing charges)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacement of Student ID Card</td>
<td>HK$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application for Award Certification Letter*</td>
<td>HK$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacement of Diploma (excluding mailing charges)</td>
<td>HK$400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* A free copy of transcript will be issued to students upon graduation or withdrawal from the University.

* A free copy of certification letter will be issued to students upon graduation.
4. Scholarships, Awards and Financial Assistance

4.1 Scholarships

The University administers a number of scholarships and awards on behalf of individual and corporate donors. Most are offered to students on the strength of academic merit and the recommendations of a school or department. Other scholarships may have conditions specified by the donors. Program-specific scholarships are also available for some taught postgraduate programs. Details are available on the website of the Scholarships and Financial Aid Office at:


4.2 Government Student Financial Assistance

Students of self-financing taught postgraduate programs who have the right of abode in Hong Kong are eligible to apply to the Government Student Financial Assistance Agency (SFAA) for financial aid. Holders of student visas are not eligible to apply for any financial aid from SFAA, irrespective of their number of years of residence in Hong Kong. Assistance is offered through the following schemes:

(i) Extended Non-means-tested Loan Scheme (ENLS)
Under this scheme, non-means-tested financial assistance is provided in the form of a loan to eligible students, up to the amount of tuition fees. Students have to repay the loan at a cost recovery interest rate within a specified period after graduation or upon leaving the University. Application forms and further details are available on the SFAA website at http://www.sfaa.gov.hk/eng/schemes/nlss.htm.

(ii) Continuing Education Fund (CEF)
The Continuing Education Fund (CEF) subsidizes adults with learning aspirations to pursue continuing education and training courses. Eligible applicants will be reimbursed 80% of the tuition fees, subject to a maximum sum of HK$10,000 (whichever is the less), on successful completion of approved reimbursable course(s). Application forms and further details of CEF are available on the SFAA website at http://www.sfaa.gov.hk/cef/.
Students with financial difficulties are urged to apply for government assistance as soon as it is open for application.

4.3 University Loans and Bursaries

Students with additional financial needs may apply for loans and bursaries administered by the University. In general, these funds are used to supplement, but not substitute for, government financial assistance.

Details of loans and bursaries are available at: http://sfao.ust.hk/sfa/info_university.html.
5. **Registration in Programs**

### 5.1 Definition

Enrollment in programs involves payment of tuition and other prescribed fees where appropriate and completion of the registration process. Failure to enroll in the program in any regular term will result in automatic withdrawal from the program and the University, unless a formal approval of Leave from Study has been obtained (see Section 5.7). Moreover, a student must be officially registered in the program in the regular term when the student is being considered for graduation from that program.

### 5.2 Double Registration

Unless prior permission from the Director of Academic Records and Registration is obtained, students are not permitted to concurrently register for another program at this University or at another local/non-local tertiary institution. If students are found to be registered elsewhere without seeking prior approval, they will normally be required to discontinue their study at this University.

Students who wish to apply for simultaneous registration are required to submit an “Application for Double Registration” (form RR-29)* to the Academic Records and Registration Office (ARRO) together with appropriate documentary evidence. Students will be notified of the result of the application in writing.

### 5.3 Late Registration

Non-local postgraduate students admitted to the University in a particular academic year must complete registration in their programs by the end of the add/drop period in the Fall or Spring Term. Under special circumstances, students may apply in writing to ARRO via the department for late program registration for the term concerned.
5.4 Mode of Study

Most postgraduate programs are available on both full-time and part-time basis. The taught programs leading to the EMBA, MA, MBA and MSc degrees, as well as graduate diplomas, are suitable for students interested in part-time study.

Students may apply to their home department, prior to the beginning of a regular term, for transfer from full-time to part-time status or vice versa. When such a transfer is allowed, the remaining program requirements will be determined.

Full-time students in taught programs are expected to be in attendance during those terms for which their programs are scheduled. For part-time students, attendance shall be as above except on a part-time basis as defined by the requirements of their programs of study.

5.5 Study Commitment

Students admitted to a full-time program are expected to study full-time for their programs, and are cautioned that outside work commitments may impede their academic performance.

Full-time taught postgraduate students may not engage in part-time employment for more than 10 hours per week in regular term. They may apply for taking up study-related internship, of no more than 20 hours per week throughout the year, subject to the prior approval of the program director. For exceptional cases involving internship work of more than 20 hours per week, case-by-case approval has to be obtained from the program director, Associate Dean (PG), and the Office of Postgraduate Studies.

5.6 Duration of Study

The normative period of study for the part-time graduate diploma programs is one year and a half. For the full-time graduate diploma programs, the normative period of study is half a year to one year.
The normative period of study for the full-time taught master’s programs is one or one-and-a-half years as specified by individual programs. For part-time taught master’s programs, students may expect to take twice the time of full-time students.

The maximum time allowed for degree completion is five years for a master’s degree. The maximum period of study for a graduate diploma program is three years. Time limits for part-time study are the same as for full-time study. The time limits are in effect whether or not the student is in continuous registration. That is, period of approved Leave from Study (see Section 5.7), and suspension period are also counted toward the maximum time allowed for degree completion.

### 5.7 Leave from Study

Students are discouraged from interrupting their program of study. In exceptional circumstances with sufficient justifications, students may apply for Leave from Study for one regular term, subject to approval of the major department. Applications for Leave from Study for two consecutive regular terms require the approval of the school. Applications for Leave from Study for more than two consecutive regular terms will normally not be considered. Any exception to this rule requires the approval of the Office of Postgraduate Studies.

The approved period of Leave from Study will be counted towards the time limit for completion of the program being pursued (see Section 5.6).

To apply for Leave from Study, students should submit an “Application for Leave from Study” (form RR-8a)* together with the appropriate supporting documents to the department for approval before the start of the proposed leave period.

### 5.8 Change of Registration

A student may change from one program of study to another with the permission of the major department to which the student wishes to transfer. If a transfer is approved, that department will determine which credits from the student's former program apply to the new program.
Registration in Programs

Normally, the transfer will not be effected until the following regular term. Students who wish to transfer to another program of study in the middle of a term should obtain the prior approval of the major department and the Dean or the Dean’s designate. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, requests for program transfers to be effected in the middle of a term are not supported.

For students who have transferred from one program of study to another, the maximum time for degree completion will be counted from the first day of registration at the University.

To apply for program transfer, students are required to submit an “Application for Program Transfer” (form RR-6a)* to the receiving department for consideration.

5.9 Registration Beyond Program Completion

Students who have completed their program requirements are not allowed to continue their registration for the same program of study in subsequent terms.

5.10 Withdrawal from the University

Students who withdraw or are required to withdraw from the University must complete clearance procedures as specified by the Director of Academic Records and Registration. Only those who have completed the formal procedures for withdrawal will be entitled to receive refund of caution money and a free copy of the transcript.

To apply for withdrawal and refund of caution money, students should complete and return the “Application for Withdrawal of Study” (form RR-12)* form to ARRO.

* All forms are downloadable from the ARRO website under the section “Useful Information and Forms” at http://arr.ust.hk/reg/in/in_forms/forms_std_student/forms_std_student.html.
6. Curriculum Requirements

6.1 Medium of Instruction and Assessment

Unless otherwise approved by the Senate for a specific course or program of study, English is the medium of instruction and assessment at the University.

6.2 Adherence to the Curriculum

Each student enrolled in a specific program is subject to the requirements of the major department and the University. All postgraduate students must adhere to the curriculum of the year of entry throughout their program of study.

Departments should, as far as possible, deliver the curriculum advertised unless due to special circumstances, changes to the original curriculum are necessary or advantageous.

Students should ensure that they understand the program requirements and plan ahead to complete their program within the permitted duration of study. Deviations from University requirements must be approved by the Office of Postgraduate Studies. Deviations from school/departmental requirements, or requirements of major programs must be approved by the Dean or the Dean’s designate.

Detailed curriculum requirements for students admitted in the current academic year are published at http://publish.ust.hk/prog_crs/pgprog, and for students admitted in previous years at http://pg.ust.hk/progcatalog/.

6.3 General Requirements of Taught Postgraduate Programs

Students on graduate diploma programs must fulfill a minimum coursework requirement of 15 credits.

Students on master’s degree programs including EMBA, MA, MBA, and MSc programs must fulfill a minimum coursework requirement specified
Curriculum Requirements

by individual programs. Students may also undertake a project under supervision of a faculty member. Projects require the submission of a written report, as specified by the department, and carry a maximum of nine credits.
7. Course Registration (Class Enrollment)

7.1 Definition

Course registration (Class enrollment) deals with the selection of and enrollment in appropriate courses for a specific term. Enrollment in a specific course for a term requires approval from the major department. The student’s program registration status will be revoked if there is no formal enrollment in any course. Students should ensure that they have properly enrolled in the courses specified for the term concerned. Students whose names are not on the class enrollment list will not be allowed to sit for examinations of the courses concerned and will not be awarded any grades for the courses.

Students should acquaint themselves with the general rules for postgraduate course registration (class enrollment) and departmental course requirements for the program. They should also refer to the online Course Catalog at http://publish.ust.hk/prog_crs/pgcourse/ and read the course description and requirements carefully before selecting a course.

7.2 Credit Requirements

Credit requirements for postgraduate programs apply only to course and project work. For students on graduate diploma programs, unless restricted by program regulations, a maximum of three credits of approved undergraduate courses at 4000-level may be used for postgraduate credit.

For students on taught master’s programs requiring 30 credits or above, unless restricted by program regulations, a maximum of nine credits of approved undergraduate courses at 4000-level may be used for postgraduate credit. Of the nine credits, no more than six may be from the student’s major department. For programs requiring fewer than 30 credits, a maximum of six credits of approved undergraduate courses at 4000-level may be used for postgraduate credit. Of the six credits, no more than three may be from the student’s major department.
7.3 Study Load

The normal study load for students on part-time graduate diploma programs is six credits for each regular term. The maximum load is eight credits per term. For full-time graduate diploma programs, the minimum study load is nine credits per regular term.

The normal study load for full-time students on taught master’s programs is twelve credits per regular term, with nine credits being the minimum. The MBA and MSc programs offered by the School of Business and Management, however, have a heavier study load than other taught postgraduate programs. For part-time students, unless otherwise specified by program regulations, the maximum study load is eight credits per term.

7.4 Background, Prerequisites, Co-requisites, Exclusions and Co-listed Courses

A course may require a certain general level of desired prior knowledge as background. Students should ensure that they have the necessary background to undertake a course, and may seek help from their program directors.

If a course designates other courses as its prerequisites, students must have taken and passed the prerequisites before they may enroll in the course, unless exemption is granted by the course offering department. If a course designates other courses as its co-requisites, students must have taken the co-requisites prior to, or at the same time as, the specified course. Exemption from prerequisite or co-requisite requirements requires the approval of the instructor of the course concerned.

If a course has exclusions specified, students are not allowed to enroll in the course if they have already taken and passed any of the stated exclusions. Also, students are not allowed to enroll in a course together with any of its stated exclusions in the same term.

A co-listed course is a course offered under more than one course code. Differences in assessment schemes or assignments for students enrolled in different classes will be explained to students at the beginning of the
class. Students may enroll in and earn credits for only one of the co-listed versions of the course.

### 7.5 Course Auditing

With the permission of the course instructor, postgraduate students may enroll in a course as an auditor, who attends a course and participates in activities up to and including the writing of the final examination but not receiving a formal grade.

Subject to satisfactory completion of the requirements set by the course instructor, the course will be designated “AU” on the student’s transcript; otherwise the course will be removed from the class enrollment record.

The credit load of audit courses is counted toward the study load of a student. Students on taught postgraduate programs may not be allowed to audit courses without enrolling for normal coursework simultaneously in a term. Exceptions may be allowed for Summer and Winter Terms with the approval of the program director concerned.

For students who are on taught postgraduate programs which adopt a per-credit tuition fee system, the tuition fee for the audit courses is the same as that of regular courses.

### 7.6 Course Add/Drop and Course Withdrawal

Students may make changes to their course registration (class enrollment) during the add/drop period which is scheduled at the beginning of each term. Changes made in this period will not be reflected in the student’s record.

Requests to add or withdraw from courses after the add/drop period will not be accepted, except under extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the student. Students wishing to request for course add or withdrawal after the add/drop period will be required to provide the home department with full justification for making the application. The request has to be supported by the course instructor concerned, and endorsed by the department head, and the Dean or the Dean’s designate
before it is forwarded to ARRO for consideration. If approval is granted for course withdrawal, the Withdrawal without Penalty Grade “W” will be recorded on the student’s transcript as the course grade.

For students who are on taught postgraduate programs which adopt a per-credit tuition fee system, there is no refund of the tuition fees paid for the withdrawn courses.

To apply for course add or withdrawal after the add/drop period, students are required to submit an “Application for Class Enrollment/Withdrawal after Add/Drop Period” (form RR-22)* to the department for approval.

* All forms are downloadable from the ARRO website under the section “Useful Information and Forms” at http://arr.ust.hk/reg/in/in_forms/forms_std_student/forms_std_student.html.
8. Course Substitution and Credit Transfer

8.1 Course Substitution

Course substitution may be granted if the student can provide evidence, such as a transcript and course syllabus, that a course is equivalent in content and level to another course taken elsewhere, for which a satisfactory grade has been obtained. The course taken previously should be equivalent to an undergraduate course at 4000-level or above.

Application for course substitution must be made to the major department during students’ first term of study after admission. Students on graduate diploma programs must submit their applications within the first month after admission. The application must first be reviewed by the course instructor on the equivalency in course content and level; if supported, approval from the department head/program director is required.

If approved, no credits will be given for the exempted course, and the student will be required to take an approved alternative course to fulfill the credit requirements of the program.

8.2 Credit Transfer

Credit transfer may be granted to students in recognition of previous studies completed elsewhere at an appropriate level as recognized by the University. Students applying for credit transfer must provide evidence, such as a transcript and course syllabus, to illustrate that a course is equivalent in content and level to another course taken elsewhere, for which a satisfactory grade has been obtained.

Applications must be made to students’ major department during their first term after admission. Students on graduate diploma programs must submit their application to the major department within the first month after admission. For students who complete studies elsewhere during their registration at HKUST, for example on an exchange program, applications must be submitted to the department for approval within one month after students’ return to their study at HKUST. Late
Course Substitution and Credit Transfer

applications will not be considered.

Applications must first be reviewed by the course instructor; if supported, approval from the department head/program director is required. The number of transfer credits to be granted will be determined by the major department following a review of past academic records and the level of equivalence to HKUST courses concerned. Conditions on the granting of transfer credits to taught postgraduate students are as follows:

(i) Credits earned at the undergraduate level can only be used for credit transfer purpose if the credits had not been used to earn another academic qualification, and that the course must be at 4000-level or above;

(ii) Transfer credits cannot be granted in recognition of non-coursework experience or research work completed either at the University or at other institutions;

(iii) Credits for transfer must be at grade “B” or above;

(iv) No more than half of the required coursework may be granted transfer credits;

(v) Credits previously used to satisfy the requirements of other academic qualifications may not be transferred; and

(vi) Subject to the approval of the major department, credits earned from a graduate diploma of the University may be transferred to its articulated master’s degree program.

Transfer credits granted will not be included in the calculation of grade averages but the courses approved for credit transfer will be reflected on students’ transcripts.

8.3 Transfer of Course Grades and Credits on Resumption of Studies

Students who had previously withdrawn from their program of study at the University but who, after a period of time, are re-admitted to a
program at the University, may be allowed to transfer their previous course grades and credits to the new program of study, subject to approval. Such a transfer of course grades and credits is restricted to courses which had been completed within five years prior to the resumption of study at the University. In addition, these credits must not have been used to earn any academic qualifications either at the University or elsewhere.
9. Course Grading

9.1 Assignment of Course Grades

Grades with grade points assigned are the default grades for courses. Other grading scheme may only be used where this is approved for the course.

Grades given in each course are based on student performance in the final examination, tests, essays and reports, presentations and other forms of classroom participation, assignments, and laboratory exercises, although not all these elements may be present in each course. A failing grade in the laboratory component, if any, of a course may result in a failure in the whole course. The instructor in each course will announce the course grading scheme to the class in the first week of lectures.

9.2 Grades for Postgraduate Courses

Students receive grades and grade points for each course in which they are enrolled. Grades range from A+ to F. The grades C- to D-, and E, are not used in postgraduate courses. For the purpose of calculating the grade point averages, numerical grade points are assigned to each course grade, except HP, P, LP, U, Y, AU, I, P, PP, T and W which are not included in the calculation of the grade point averages. Grades and grade points for courses are shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>Excellent Performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>Good Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>Marginal Performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F (1)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Failure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Grading

**P/F Grades**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>(2) Pass, Ungraded</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>(1) Failure</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**HP/P/LP/U/Y Grades (3)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HP</td>
<td>High Pass</td>
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<td>P</td>
<td>Pass</td>
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<tr>
<td>LP</td>
<td>Low Pass</td>
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<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>(4) Unsatisfactory</td>
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<td>Y</td>
<td>(5) Incomplete</td>
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</table>

**Other Grades**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>(6) Audited</td>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>(7) Incomplete</td>
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<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>(8) Permitted to Proceed</td>
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<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Transferred</td>
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<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>(9) Withdrawal without Penalty</td>
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</table>

**Notes:**

1. A failed course (graded F) will not be credited toward a degree.
2. The “Pass, Ungraded” (P) grade is given only for courses that are indicated in the course description in the Course Catalog that they will be graded as such.
3. The HP, P, LP, U and Y grades are for use exclusively on courses of the Kellogg-HKUST Executive Master of Business Administration and the HKUST Executive Master of Business Administration programs offered by the School of Business and Management.
4. An Unsatisfactory (U) grade will not be credited toward a degree.
5. An Incomplete (Y) grade is used when there is initial delay in coursework. This grade must be converted to a regular grade within a specified deadline; otherwise it will be converted to a U grade.
6. The Audited (AU) grade will be assigned when an auditing student has completed, to the satisfaction of the instructor, any conditions established at registration as an auditor. If the conditions are not met, the course will be deleted from the student’s record.
7. An Incomplete (I) grade is used when work is necessarily delayed through no fault of the student, such as a medical problem or an equipment breakdown. This grade must be converted to a regular grade at least one working day before the start of the following regular term; otherwise it is converted to an F grade. The I grade given to students on graduate diploma programs must be converted to a regular grade within one month from the last day for grade reporting for courses, which is normally the sixth working day from the last day of examinations for the rest of the courses otherwise it is converted to an F grade.
8. When progress in thesis or project work is satisfactory but not scheduled for completion at the end of a regular term, the “Permitted to Proceed” (PP) grade is used.
9. The “Withdrawal without Penalty” (W) grade is given when a student is granted special approval for withdrawal from a course after the add/drop period.
9.3 Grade Reports

After the examination period, students are required to check their own course grades which are available online at the Student Information System (SIS). Course grades will be posted on SIS as soon as they become available, but not later than six working days from the last day of the examination period for the term.

9.4 Grade Averages

A grade average (GA) is the weighted average grade obtained in a group of courses where each course is given a weight equal to its credit value. Transfer credits, exchange credits, and courses graded HP, P, LP, U, Y, AU, I, P, PP, T and W are not included in the calculation.

There are three grade averages. The term grade average (TGA) is the grade average covering all courses taken in a specific term. The cumulative grade average (CGA) is based on all the courses taken by the student up to the time of calculation. Students’ TGA and CGA will be calculated at the end of each of the four terms. At graduation, a graduation grade average (GGA) will be calculated from the courses that are presented for an academic award. The GGA for graduation for all postgraduate programs must at least be 2.850.

9.5 Grade Review

A student may apply for a grade review of a course in which the student was enrolled in the term just completed. Students who consider that a mistake has been made in the process of calculating or determining a grade for a course may apply for a grade review. They should first discuss the matter with the course instructor as soon as the course grades are released. Where a clerical or administrative error has been made, the course offering department will report the revised grade to ARRO.

If the student’s concern remains unresolved after this informal discussion, the student may submit a request for a grade review to the head of the course offering department in writing within two weeks from the day the grade is released:
Course Grading

i. Stating the grounds for the request for review;
ii. Describing the relevant facts; and
iii. Providing supporting evidence.

If a review is granted, the department head will arrange for the review within three weeks after the release of the grade.

Requests for review of course grades should normally be resolved at the department level. Students who wish to appeal against the decision of the department must do so in writing to the Dean of the School within two weeks of receiving the decision stating the grounds for the appeal. Upon receipt of the written request, the Dean will determine whether or not a further review of the grade should be granted and how the review will be conducted. The Dean’s decision is final.

9.6 Course Repeats

A course with a grade lower than C shall not be credited toward a program although it will be reflected in the student’s record. Only two courses (excluding audited courses) in a postgraduate program may be retaken, and each may be repeated only once. The new grade obtained at the second attempt will replace the previous grade in the calculation of the grade averages.

9.7 Illness or Other Circumstances Affecting Assessment

If students wish the University to take into account medical reasons or some other extenuating circumstances beyond the student’s control that have affected their performance in an examination, or ability to attend an examination, or to complete other assessment activities, they must report the circumstances of the case in writing and provide appropriate supporting documents to ARRO within one week of the scheduled date of the assessment activity.

The Director of Academic Records and Registration will review the case and make recommendations to the Dean or the Dean’s designate. The student will be notified of the result of the request within one week from the date the request is lodged with ARRO. The make-up examination, if
any, will be held within five weeks after the regular examination period. The format of the make-up examination will be decided by the course instructor concerned.
10. Progression and Academic Standing

10.1 Academic Standing

The academic standing of all postgraduate students is reviewed at the end of each regular term and assessed by their departments. Unsatisfactory performance may result in students being denied the opportunity to continue their study.

In order for postgraduate students to attain good academic standing, they must, at the end of each term,

(i) obtain a cumulative grade average (CGA) of 2.850 or higher; and

(ii) show a reasonable progress toward program completion.

Students who fail to maintain good academic standing in a term will be issued a letter of warning by the department head.

10.2 Academic Leave and Academic Dismissal

Students who fail to maintain good academic standing in two consecutive regular terms will have their records reviewed by the department and may be required to take academic leave and have their study suspended. The academic leave will last from one to three regular terms during which students may apply for re-enrollment in their program of study at the end of their suspension period. If this application for re-enrollment is approved, certain conditions may apply and the student must regain good academic standing in the term immediately following re-enrollment. Students will be dismissed from the University if the conditions are not met. If re-enrollment in the program is not granted by the expiry of the academic leave, the suspension will be converted to a dismissal from the University.
11. Graduation

11.1 Graduation on Completion of Studies

When students have completed the degree requirements for an award, or are enrolled in courses that will complete the requirements for an award, they will be included in the list of potential graduates.

To be considered for graduation, a student must:

(i) Complete the courses specified for the program;
(ii) Achieve a graduation grade average of at least 2.850 in the courses used to satisfy the program requirements; and
(iii) Complete the program within the specified time limit.

11.2 Graduation Grade Average (GGA)

At graduation, a graduation grade average (GGA) will be calculated from the courses that are presented for an academic award. The GGA for graduation for all postgraduate programs must at least be 2.850.

If a student has taken more courses than required by the degree, upon the recommendation of the department, certain courses included in the calculation of the CGA can be excluded from the GGA calculation to improve the GGA of the student. Otherwise, all courses taken will be included.

11.3 Graduation Approval and Award of Degrees

Endorsement by School Boards or its Postgraduate Studies Committee is required to confirm the graduation list and any special recommendations by departments for degree completion. Departmental and school recommendations are then considered and approved by the Committee on Postgraduate Studies (CPS), as delegated by the Senate.

The official degree diploma is issued only after degree conferment. The University confers degrees twice a year, once in April/May and once in
November. Diplomas are normally distributed to graduates within one month after the conferment of the degree.

11.4 Congregation

The Congregation is the formal graduation ceremony at which students are awarded their degrees by the Chancellor or other officers of the University as stipulated in the University Statutes. This graduation ceremony is held in Fall Term of each year at a time and place determined by the University.

Attendance at the Congregation is not compulsory. The degree will be awarded in absentia to those graduands who are not present at the ceremony.

11.5 Degree Diploma

Diplomas are distributed to graduates around one month after the conferment of the degree. Diplomas show in Chinese and English the following:

- Name of the graduate, in the same words and format as shown on the graduate’s Hong Kong Identity Card, with the surname capitalized and appearing first, followed by a comma and the given names;

- Degree title, which is shown the same as the program title, with no option/stream/concentration given; and

- The date of degree conferment. (In the case of diplomas for graduate diploma programs, the meeting date of CPS when the graduation case was approved will be shown.)
12. Appeals and Grievance Channels

12.1 Appeals

A student may make an appeal in writing to the Associate Dean of the relevant school responsible for postgraduate studies for matters related to his study.

12.2 Grievance Channels

If students have any grievance about their program or their study, channels are readily available to help them settle their grievance and alleviate their concerns.

When a student encounters any difficulty or has any concern that he feels should be conveyed to or discussed with the University, the first stop should normally be the program director. If this does not work or is not appropriate for some reasons, the next level for voicing grievance is to the department head. If the issue cannot be settled satisfactorily in the department, the student may approach the Associate Dean of the school responsible for postgraduate studies for advice. In the event that the issue still cannot be resolved within the school, the next stop is the Office of Postgraduate Studies. If the issue-in-question involves existing academic policies, the matter may be referred to the Committee on Postgraduate Studies or Senate for consideration.

In general, if the grievance is of a personal nature, the student may consider talking to a student counselor of the Counseling and Wellness Center of the Student Affairs Office for advice.
Appendices
Appendix I

Committee on Postgraduate Studies (CPS)

A. Terms of Reference

1. To advise and make recommendations to the Senate on policies and regulations, and to monitor and review procedures, quality and performance relating to postgraduate studies, including, but not limited to:

   (i) General program requirements;
   (ii) Program development including new programs recommended by School Boards;
   (iii) Program quality control, including examinations and award of degrees;
   (iv) Matters from the School Boards relating to postgraduate studies and student appeals;
   (v) Selection and admission of postgraduate students;
   (vi) Collection and maintenance of student records;
   (vii) Student fees and financial assistance; and
   (viii) Other matters as may be required by the Senate.

2. To submit to the Chairman of the Senate no later than 31 July each year a written report covering the period 1 July – 30 June on the activities of the committee during the previous academic year.

B. Powers

1. To co-opt such additional voting members as may be required but not exceeding one-third of the formal Committee membership.

2. To form any working groups as considered necessary.
**C. Membership (Information as of 1 August 2014)**

Chairman  
Appointed by the Chairman of the Senate  
Professor Ravindra GOONETILLEKE

Member and Secretary  
Associate Vice-President for Postgraduate Studies, *ex officio*  
Professor Mordecai J. GOLIN

Members  
(a) Deans of Schools or designees  
Science – Professor Penger TONG  
Engineering – Professor King Lun YEUNG  
Business & Management – Mr Sean FERGUSON  
Humanities & Social Science – Professor Zongli LU  
HKUST Fok Ying Tung – Professor Furong GAO  
Graduate School

(b) One representative to be selected by each School Board  
Science – Professor Ian WILLIAMS  
Engineering – Professor Charles NG  
Business & Management – Professor Inchi HU  
Humanities & Social Science – Professor Yimin LIN

(c) The Director of Academic Records and Registration, *ex officio*  
Mr Robert BRASHEAR

(d) One postgraduate student representative each from each School to be nominated by the Students' Union  
Science – Miss Yeung Yeung CHAU/PhD(NSNT)  
Engineering – Miss Samira NIAFAR/PhD(ECE)  
Business & Management – Mr Shuang JIN/PhD(FINA)  
Humanities & Social Science – Mr Hao DONG/PhD(SOSC)

(e) Co-opted Member  
Head of Interdisciplinary Programs Office or his designee  
Professor Alexis LAU
For student members, a staggered term of one or two years, renewable; and for others, two years, renewable.
## Appendix II

### Important Dates in the 2014-15 Academic Year

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<th>Week</th>
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<th>M</th>
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<th>W</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>Events</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>August, 2014</strong></td>
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<td><strong>22/7</strong> Program Registration – New UG students (1st round)</td>
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<td><strong>11-13</strong> Program Registration – New UG students (2nd round)</td>
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<td><strong>16</strong> Program Registration – New PG students</td>
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<td><strong>16, 18</strong> Last day of Summer Term, 2013-14</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>23</td>
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<td><strong>25-28</strong> Class Enrollment starts – All UG students *</td>
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<td><strong>26</strong> Class Enrollment starts – All PG students *</td>
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<td><strong>September</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>29</strong> Last day for submission of final thesis examination results and thesis copies for Summer 2013-14</td>
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<td><strong>1</strong> Commencement of the 2014-15 Academic Year</td>
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<td><strong>October</strong></td>
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<td><strong>29</strong> Last day of Fall Term classes</td>
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<td><strong>6-7</strong> Congregation</td>
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<td><strong>November</strong></td>
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<td><strong>8-19</strong> Fall Term Examinations</td>
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<td><strong>19</strong> Last day of Fall Term</td>
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<td><strong>December</strong></td>
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<td><strong>31</strong> Last day for submission of final thesis examination results and thesis copies for Fall</td>
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<td><strong>1-6</strong> Study Break</td>
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PUBLIC HOLIDAY – Events that will not take place on these dates.

EXAMINATION PERIOD/BREAK – Events that may not take place on these dates.

**BOLDTYPE** – Important dates for students to note.
# Appendices

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Appendix III

Bad Weather Arrangements for Classes and Examinations

A. In Case of Typhoon or Rainstorm

1. When the Amber or Red Rainstorm Warning or Typhoon Signal No. 1 or 3 is in effect, all scheduled classes and examinations will be held as usual.

2. When a Black Rainstorm Warning is in force, all classes and examinations will be canceled. Those in progress will normally continue until the end. Stay indoors wherever you are and do not leave until the warning is canceled and the conditions are safe.

3. When a Typhoon Signal No. 8 is to be issued within 2 hours (pre-No. 8), all classes and examinations will be canceled. Those in progress will normally continue until the end. Stay indoors in a safe place or return home if traffic and weather conditions permit.

B. Cancellation of Typhoon or Rainstorm Warning

1. If Signal No. 8 or above or a Black Warning is canceled at or before 6:30am, classes and examinations starting from 8:30am and onwards will be held as scheduled.

2. If Signal No. 8 or above or a Black Warning is canceled at or before 12 noon, classes and examinations starting from 2 pm and onwards will be held as scheduled, while classes and examinations starting before 2 pm will be canceled.

3. If Signal No. 8 or above or a Black Warning is canceled at or before 4 pm, classes and examinations starting from 6 pm and onwards will be held as scheduled, while classes and examinations starting before 6 pm will be canceled.

4. If Signal No. 8 or above or a Black Warning is still in force at 4 pm, all evening classes and examinations will be canceled.
## Appendix IV

### Supporting Services

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<td>Program Registration</td>
<td><a href="http://arr.ust.hk/">http://arr.ust.hk/</a></td>
<td>2358-6618</td>
<td><a href="mailto:proreg@ust.hk">proreg@ust.hk</a></td>
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<td>PG Course Registration</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:coursesreg@ust.hk">coursesreg@ust.hk</a></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:parking@ust.hk">parking@ust.hk</a></td>
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