Q1: I am currently a final year undergraduate student, can I apply for MPhil/PhD programs now?  
A: Yes. Please first submit your latest transcript online for assessment.

Q2: Can I apply for more than one MPhil/PhD program in different departments?  
A: Applicants may submit more than one application. However, we see the advantage of staying focused and getting prepared accordingly.

Q3: Can I apply for MSc and PhD program at the same time?  
A: Applicants may apply for both MSc and PhD degree at the same time. Each is assessed by different admission committees and the result would not affect each other. However, as mentioned, we see the advantage of staying focused and getting prepared accordingly.

Q4: What are the requirements of MPhil for undergraduate students?  
A: In general, a first degree of Second Upper Class in the related area is the minimum requirement.

Q5: Could an undergraduate student apply for PhD? Is a high GPA important for selection?  
A: Yes we admit Bachelor’s students directly into PhD programs. A high GPA always help. Experience of research helps too.

Q6: How will the GPA be viewed?  
A: Faculty will look into your overall profile such as your research ability in addition to the GPA.

Q7: Is there a minimum GPA requirement for PhD applicants?  
A: There is no GPA requirement but a second upper/first class honors helps.

Q8: Can a student with a low GPA but significant research experience be accepted for MPhil?  
A: There is a chance but it depends on disciplines.

Q9: Would a taught Master’s degree be beneficial for applying for MPhil/PhD program?  
A: Yes.
Q10: Is it a must that I connect with a potential supervisor and gain his/her verbal approval before submitting my application?
A: Not necessary but it depends on the requirements of individual departments. Some departments conducted the review and selection by a committee, and students would identify a supervisor upon admission.

Q11: What's the deadline of the MPhil/PhD application?
A: It varies depending on which program you are applying for. Please visit https://pg.ust.hk/prospective-students/admissions/admission-timeline for details.

Q12: Do we need to prepare a research proposal for the application? If so, how precise does it have to be?
A: All applicants of MPhil/PhD programs are required to outline their proposed research plan and past research experience in the application. It is not mandatory for applicants of Engineering programs to submit a research proposal.

Q13: How is my online application reviewed?
A: After submission, your application will be circulated among faculty. If you are selected for interview, the program office will inform you. You are advised to communicate with your potential supervisor after submitting the online application.

Q14: I have sent emails to many supervisors seeking for admission, but they are not responding. Why?
A: We suggest that applicants attach their CV and transcripts when approaching our faculty members for advice on MPhil/PhD admission. Applicants may also attach their research plan/proposed research topic to facilitate our faculty's consideration and review. Usually, we expect matching interest between faculty's research expertise and applicant's research area.

Q15: May I be selected for PhD Admission if I do not have enough knowledge on my research interest?
A: Candidates are required to provide their research proposal. It will not be too persuasive if you do not have knowledge in the area.

Q16: When will I be notified of the admission result?
A: Individual program offices will issue offers according to their own schedules. Successful applicants will receive an email notification. Please log in to the online system to keep track of your application status.
**English/Other Requirements**

Q1: I obtained a Bachelor and Master’s degree from institutions where the medium of instruction is English. Am I required to take the English Proficiency Test?
A: You are exempted to take English proficiency test if you obtained a degree from an institution where the medium of instruction was English.

Q2: I would like to ask when we should have our IELTS/TOFEL result ready?
A: The test score is an essential factor in assessing your application. You are highly recommended to take relevant test and upload score report as soon as possible.

Q3: Could the Duolingo English Test be accepted since the IELTS test center has postponed the test under the COVID-19 pandemic?
A: The University is now accepting alternative test options (e.g. Duolingo English Test) for fulfillment of English Language admission requirements under the COVID-19 situation. For details, please visit https://pg.ust.hk/prospective-students/covid-19#7.

Q4: Am I required to submit GRE score for application?
A: GRE scores are not required for Engineering programs.

**Program of Study**

Q1: What are the differences between MPhil programs and PhD programs?
A: PhD programs are more in-depth than MPhil programs although both will have a focused topic.

Q2: How long does it normally take to graduate? Will it take longer time if I joined the overseas study programs?
A: The normative study period for full-time PhD is 4 years (without MPhil) and 3 years (with MPhil), and 2 years for full-time MPhil. The overseas study programs do not necessarily delay the graduation.

Q3: How much background in a major do you need to be able to do a MSc or MPhil in an area different from your undergraduate studies?
A: Depending on the disciplines, some programs require students to take a few core courses to ensure they have the sufficient background.
Q4: Are we expected to publish papers before graduation? Is it part of the graduation requirements?
A: Most supervisors expect students to publish papers before graduation.

Q5: Usually research articles are required for completion of PhD degree, would patents be acceptable too?
A: Publications are the default standards.

Q6: Can an MPhil student transfer to a PhD program after a year of study?
A: Yes, if an MPhil student can demonstrate good academic/research performance and have the support of the supervisor(s).

Q7: Is exchange to abroad university for PhD students decided by the mentor?
A: PhD students should seek advice and consent from their supervisors when applying for exchange opportunities.

Q8: Will we get a chance to take part in some research program in HKUST in summer before being admitted?
A: We have research internship opportunities available in summer, and it may be offered subject to COVID-19 development.

Financial Support

Q1: What is the condition for applying studentship?
A: All full-time MPhil/PhD students are automatically considered for the Postgraduate Studentship. No separate application is required.

Q2: If I am currently receiving Postgraduate Studentship, can I apply for the Hong Kong PhD Fellowship next year?
A: Only if you are an MPhil student. If you have outstanding academic results, you could apply for MPhil this year and apply for Hong Kong PhD Fellowship next year.
Q3: If I apply for Hong Kong PhD Fellowship but am not selected, will I be considered for Postgraduate Studentship automatically?
A: Yes.

Q4: I am an international student. Will the MPhil stipend covers the tuition fee?
A: The stipend is provided to cover a student's tuition fee, dormitory fee and living expenses.

**Others**

Q: Is it possible for PhD Students from abroad to bring along his/her family to live with them in HK?
A: It is possible, but depending on the approval from HK Immigration Department for entry visa.

Have a question that can’t find the answer?
Send us a message at sengrpg@ust.hk.