GUIDELINES

SUPPORT SERVICES FOR POST GRADUATE STUDENTS

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA

CONTENTS

SPS – School of Graduate Studies

PSD - Professional & System Development

PGSS – Post Graduate Student Society

SSA - Support Studies Activities

SSA COORDINATOR - Consists of PGSS president from each faculty and their committee members

SSA ADVISORS – Academic staff that appointed by the faculty to advise and guide PGSS faculty's activities and future plan

PGSC – Support program organized by PGSS faculty / PGSS UTM to help postgraduate students improving or enhancing their research skills which includes but not limited to academic writing, software learning, presentation skills and so on besides to help them graduate on time

PGEC – Support program that include the literacy and life skills elements which emphasize the 21st century elements

3MT - 3 Minute Thesis Competition

GREX – Graduate Research Exhibition

IGCESH - International Graduate Conference On Engineering, Science & Humanities

INTRODUCTION

The School of Graduate Studies is committed to support personal and professional development of our postgraduate researchers. We aim to equip our postgraduate researchers with the skills, attributes and knowledge to thrive as independent researchers and professionals.

The range of personal, professional and career development opportunities offered to all postgraduate researchers at UTM is extensive. Programmes of training are tailored to the individual needs of the postgraduate researcher, and reviewed each year in consultation with the researcher's supervisory team.

The School of Graduate studies under Support Studies Activities (SSA) consist of support program developed for postgraduate students through our structured courses and elective programme. The structured courses, consists of nine courses, conducted at each faculty, are fundamental courses aims at developing researcher identity and equipping students with the skills needed during their PhD study. Aside from developing the research skills, our students are also furnished elective courses that aim at harnessing both personal and professional skills and aptitudes.

SSA emphasizes on the students' different developmental needs such as their sense of moral values and attitudes, skills and creativity. Through their participation in SSA, students can improve their communication skills, to cooperate with other people and in addition to enrich their life experience. To those who are given the opportunities to organize SSA (PGSS faculty), they will gain first-hand experience of program planning and leadership, thus enabling themselves to discover and develop their potential.

These sets of guidelines include basic concepts related to the planning and organization of activities and this will be a reference for others to implement their SSA programs efficiently.

Our Aim & Mission is to provide support program according to the following clusters which include 21st Century elements namely; Critical thinking and problem solving, communications and collaboration, self-sufficiency, creativity and innovation.

Desired Characteristics for UTM Students:
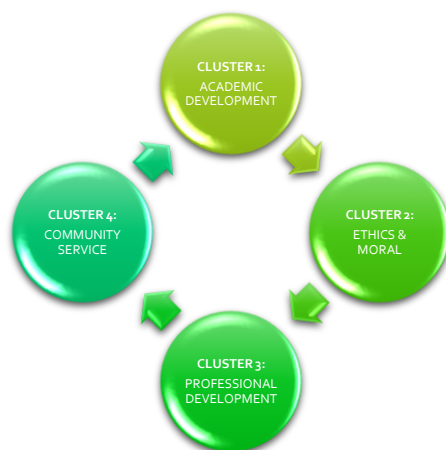
Cluster 1: Academic Development
Academic writing, publication, proposal writing, effective presentation, abstract preparation for seminar/conference, software application, poster preparation, exhibit preparation
Cluster 2: Ethics and Moral
Honesty in knowledge, plagiarism
Cluster 3: Professional development
Leadership skills, teamwork, communication skills, public speaking, spiritual enhancement, cultural awareness
Cluster 4: Community Service
Charity, philanthropy, community work

CHAPTER 1 - FUNCTIONS

SSA should have the following functions:

1. Promoting students' personal development by broadening their interests, developing their potential and providing opportunities for character formation and leadership training;

2. Promoting students' social development by offering opportunities to broaden their social experiences, the practice of social skills and the internationalization of moral and social values;

3. To facilitate students development through co-curriculum and extracurricular programs and activities in line with the University's vision and mission.

4. To provide quality and effective services to support the students' educational and career goals

5. To inculcate student empowerment through service learning

6. To make sure that our UTM students will inline with 21st Century Education

7. To create a supportive learning environment in order to help learners acclimate, connect with others and to help them complete their studies

2.1 General duties of Support Studies Activities (SSA) – is monitored and advised by PGSS faculty's advisor (Academic Staff) and PSD (Professional & System Development), School of Graduate Studies (SPS UTM).

All SSA are coordinated and organized by PGSS faculty / PGSS UTM. At faculty level, all programs are well monitored by their advisors. Meanwhile, for support program conducted for UTM level, it is advised by PSD. However, PSD are responsible to set goals, directions and policies of all SSA (Faculty / UTM Level). These include types of program conducted and allocation budget.

PGSS Faculty / UTM as SSA coordinator is responsible towards the success of program organization starting from application process, promotion and etc. As part of the middle management in faculty, the SSA Coordinator, monitored by PGSS faculty's advisor and PSD are accountable in carrying out the following tasks:

2.1.1 Manpower planning

The SSA coordinator known as PGSS President is responsible for recruiting the necessary personnel for the implementation of SSA. He/she should understand the strengths, interests and abilities of his/her fellow colleagues with a view to suggesting to the faculty principal the distribution of work for SSA. He/she should also pay attention to the performance of the faculty activities with a view to providing them with assistance and encouragement. The President may set up an SSA committee in this regard to help the SSA Coordinator with his/her work.

2.1.2 Activity planning

The PSD Unit is responsible to plan the topic and area of SSA that need to be conducted by PGSS faculty in yearly basis. The SSA coordinator needs to plan and coordinate the activities and to plan the date of activities, the time of the speaker and facilitator and the arrangement of facilities. It is important to ensure that students enjoy a well-balanced campus life through their participation in SSA. The coordinator has to work out the timetable and ensure that it is implemented within their planning. Nonetheless he/she should be flexible and be alert to any need for adjustment as and when required. At the planning stage, the PSD Unit should monitor the management of the PGSC, PGEC and others programme that related to students' activities

2.1.3   Use of resources

PSD Unit should monitor and give suggestions to the faculties regarding the utilization of finances, the allocation of resources and the equipment needed for the running of SSA. Administratively, the faculty may authorize the SSA coordinator to plan the financial budget, to control the expenses of various activities or to assist in administering the SSA fund.

2.1.4   Training and support

The SSA co-ordinator is responsible for promoting the SSA of the faculty. He/she should participate in setting up faculty new activity plans. In the course of an activity, he/she is required to acquaint himself/herself with the operation in order to assist in problem-solving and to ensure achieving the preset objectives.

2.1.5   Evaluation and appraisal

The PSD Unit should design an evaluation and appraisal system for the proper assessment of various activities and student performance. This will help to improve the planning of future activities. On the basis of such evaluation, the SSA Coordinator should submit a report to the PSD Unit after the program. The points mentioned above are the general duties of an SSA Coordinator. The faculty is free to make adjustments in the light of its own circumstances. Furthermore, the SSA Coordinator should exercise his/her professional knowledge and administrative skills to lead fellow colleagues in achieving the goals set by the PSD Unit.

(Refer to Appendix 1) – Participant's Feedback Form

2.2   Duties of SSA Advisors

Is a PSD duty to appoint lectures as SSA Advisors (Academic Staff in each faculties-in charge) according to the faculties needs and to guide SSA Coordinator for each activity groups. The SSA Advisor, being the frontline leader of activities and it is responsible for the various duties listed below.

2.2.1   Organization

The SSA advisor is responsible for planning the relevant activities, recruiting members and helping to establish an executive committee for PGSS. He/she should, as far as possible, make suggestions to the executive committee in matters relating to the nature of activities, arranging meetings and preparing financial budgets.

2.2.2 Participation

The SSA advisor should participate in the meetings and activity groups to give support. He/she should ensure that the activity goals are achieved and provide suggestions to the executive committee for more effective implementation of the activities. The SSA advisor's participation can raise the morale as well as build up a sense of belonging amongst the club members.

2.2.3 Monitoring

In the course of an activity, the SSA advisor should make sure that the members play their respective roles.

2.2.4 Appraisal

The SSA advisor is responsible for compiling a list of committee members, keeping a record of their participation and appraising their performance.

2.2.5 Record

The SSA advisor should, at the end of the activities, file a report for all the activities that have been done, the list of participating organizers, members and students and the feedback from the participants. The above-mentioned duties fall into the general responsibilities of an SSA advisor.

3.1 Setting goals

Since SSA are part of the curriculum to promote life-wide learning, they can be seen as a means of accomplishing the goals of education. It follows that before carrying out SSA, we should set up distinct goals according to the needs of students. These goals should include aspects related to intellectual, physical, social and personality development. After the establishment of the goals, appropriate activities should be selected, with due consideration paid to the format and content which will enable the participants to best achieve these goals. These are important means to promote cross-curricular activities in civic education and moral education, to foster the relationship between all lectures and students, and to create a harmonious UTM climate.

3.2 Manning SSA

Following the setting of the goals, format and content of the activity, suitable personnel should be enlisted to plan and carry out the work. These include SSA advisors, coordinator, students and alumni of UTM. The SSA Co-ordinator should serve as a link among the different parties. It is most important of all to train the students to organise activities. Not only does this help the activity to continue for a longer period, it also develops the students' leadership ability, which remains one of the SSA goals.

3.3 The scheme of activities

This does not simply involve devising activities and following up with the recruitment of participants. It also represents a stage in student development that should take into account students' interests and orientations in order to achieve the goals of education.

3.4 Planning and running activities

Whether or not an activity can be run smoothly depends firstly on a comprehensive plan. The plan includes distribution of work, timetabling, budgeting and programmes. After completing the job of planning, it is necessary to keep the students informed of the activity via proper channels. There are several common ways, such as bulletins, posters, banners, public announcements, newsletters and personal contacts. In the course of carrying out an activity, attention and counselling should be given to the students as appropriate.

3.5 Feedback, evaluation and improvement

It will not be possible to evaluate unless goals are established. Once set, the success of each activity depends on the appreciation of its goals. It is essential to know why a goal cannot be reached. If an activity is run within a long period of time, one may use formative evaluation to examine the planning and implementation of the activity quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative measures include attendance records and activity records, whereas qualitative measures include various kinds of feedback, like chatting and observations. Other measures, such

as whether the plan is followed, participants' responses and a mid-year review can also be considered. There should be a summative evaluation for each SSA at the end of the semester. The target group may include any of the following: participants, observers, planners, advisors and non-participants. The purpose of the evaluation is to further improve the activity in the long run. Any significant information about the conduct of an activity may be retained in a data bank for SSA; the keeping of such information, will also facilitate long term planning.

(Refer to Appendix 1) – Participant's Feedback Form

For each SSA, the feedback form to all participants will be given to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the overall program including Course Organization, Speaker and Course Effectiveness. Basically, the feedback form consists of 11 questions and 1 for additional comment.

In addition, to ensure the SSA effectiveness and the impact towards Post Graduate student's study, PSD has conducted quantitative research among part of the participants who completely participate in Post Graduate Structured Courses (Part of SSA). Post Graduate Structured Courses (PGSC) was designed to help PG Students in their research, overall study and to help them Graduate on Time. In relation to this research, we have checked the proposal defend status of all Year 1 students and it was found that 82.4% of the participants have successfully passed the proposal defends. Besides that, for Year 2 students, we've checked their data collection status and were found that 62.5% of the participants have undergone their data collections.

To strengthen the findings, Research Officer and PSD have conducted Qualitative Research through interview session with all the respondents as above. Based on the interview, we found that all respondents agreed that the PGSC conducted has brought the positive impact towards their research.

3.9   Retention and utilization of records

Records must be kept for all activities to serve as future reference. To support this activity a system was introduced to record the attendance of each student in each of the programs held. This attendance record will be issued in the form of 'Transcript' which is produced by the UTMAcad system. This system can be accessed by all students. These records will be useful in writing student references and recommendations.

The Post-Graduate Student Society UTM (PGSS UTM) is a representative society which is concerned with all the interests of postgraduate students at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia and the MOTTO of this society is **FROM STUDENTS TO STUDENTS**.

The formation of this society consists of 2 levels as stated below:

1. **PGSS FACULTY FORMATION PROCESS**

   Usual practice of PGSS faculty starts with the conduct of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) among all post graduate students at each faculty, involving faculty's top management and PGSS Advisor as guests. In this meeting, all students have an opportunity to vote for their representative in PGSS. Positions that need to be voted are President, Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer and other Exco (s) depending on faculty's need. The AGM for faculty level should be organized at least 1 month before the AGM at UTM Level. The duration of appointment is for 1 Year (2 semesters). The current PGSS Faculty committee members are the one who responsible to conduct AGM at faculty level for the next session.

2. **PGSS UTM FORMATION PROCESS**

   The Annual General Meeting for PGSS UTM needs to be conducted on September every year (after new PG student's intake). The main mission of this AGM is to select the top management of PGSS Center (PGSS UTM). Only Presidents of each faculty have the right to be voted for the position in PGSS UTM. There will be 2 Presidents of PGSS UTM; one is based in UTM Johor Bahru and one in UTM Kuala Lumpur. The positions to be voted are same as positions in PGSS Faculty which are President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Exco (s). The duration of appointment is for 1 Year (2 Semesters). The current PGSS UTM committee members are the one who responsible to conduct AGM at UTM level for the next session.

1.0   PGSC – POST GRADUATE STRUCTURE COURSES

For the purpose of Learning Skills, School of Graduate Studies, took the initiative to introduce Structured Courses to post-graduate students, especially for PhD students beginning in the middle of 2015 and has been initiated entirely by faculty beginning September 2015.

Generally, SPS has set 3 courses for each year of Doctor of Philosophy student study in a total of 9 courses (for a 3 year course). In the early stages of the course development, SPS has provided an example of a course title to the faculty as a guide, but the faculty can change the course title according to their respective faculty & requirements as long as depicts PG Attribute UTM. Therefore each faculty has the appropriate courses for their respective levels and fields.

When viewed in the current course, more emphasis on learning skills and literacy skills. This course should be attended by Doctor of Philosophy students to assist them in pursuing their research and thesis and can graduate within the prescribed period (GOT).
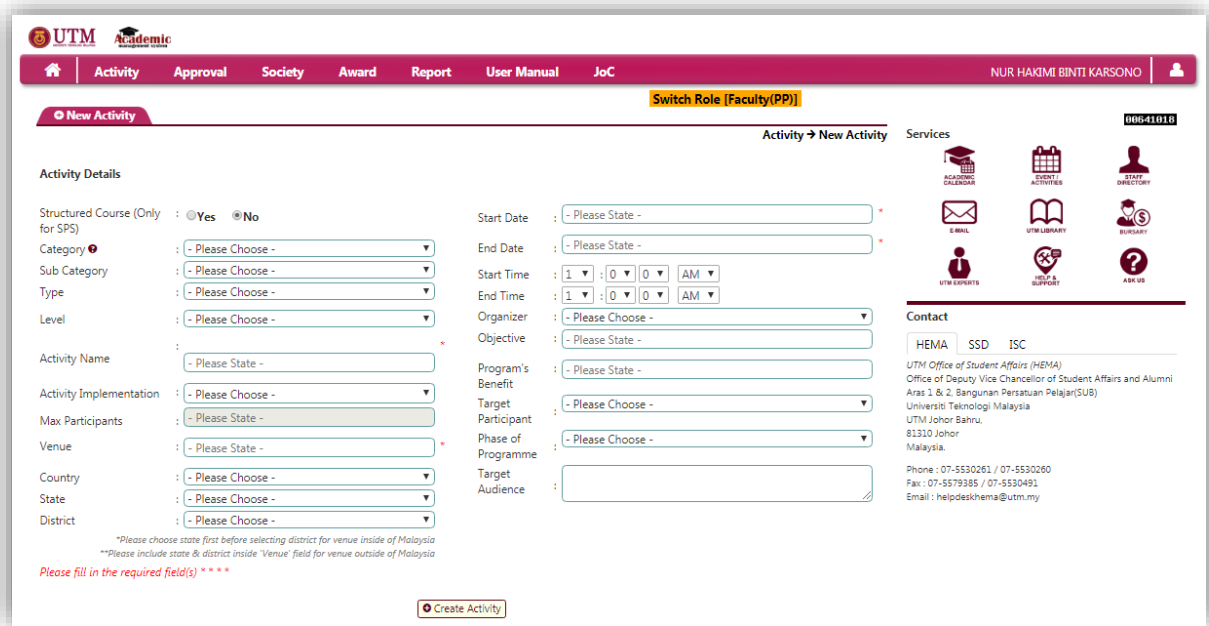
In support of the implementation of this structured program, SPS has assisted the CICT to develop the UTMAcad System for student activity modules and make this process workable online in 2016. For information on all applications, approvals and records related to date, place, cost of expenditure and attendance list is available from the system. In addition, the HEMA, CICT, SPS & AMD have also agreed to issue additional transcripts for post-graduate students attending these courses through the developed UTM Acad system.

1.1   Program Implementation

Post-graduate students need to follow the 9 'Compulsory' courses that have been set by SPS where course management is managed by the PGSS Graduate Students Society of each faculty.

The process to organize this program starts with application through manual form by PGSS Faculty. After the form was completed and approved by faculty, they need to upload the document in UTMAcad (Student Activity's Module) for further process by SPS. If the application is complete, PSD, SPS will issue the approval letter to PGSS faculty through an email. The main goal of developing the UTMAcad (Student Activity's Module), is to produce the additional transcript to all Post Graduate Students who have attended and participate in the SSA program.

For the first phase of UTMAcad System development, we have successfully achieved the mission to develop the approval process through system. Currently, SPS, HEP and CICT are working on phase 2 (approval letter through system) and phase 3 (e-transcript).

Pic. 1: Screenshot of program application through UTMAcad System

2.0 PGEC – POST GRADUATE ELECTIVE COURSES

In addition, to support additional activities besides academic program activities, the implementations of elective courses taking into account the elements of Literacy and Life Skills elements which emphasize the 21st century elements are also held. Among the courses that will be conducted are courses related to Stress Management, Financial Management, Leadership, Productivity, Entrepreneurship etc.

It is hoped that this existing course will be enhanced and will be able to offer better value-added programs to post-graduate students in ensuring that UTM graduates are competitive and have graduated elements of the 21st century in line with the recommendation of the Ministry of Higher Education Currently.

2.1 Program Implementation

The implementation and process to organize this program are same with the PGSC implementation where it starts with application through manual form by PGSS Faculty. After the form was completed and approved by faculty, they need to upload the document in UTMAcad (Student Activity's Module) for further process by SPS. If the application is complete, PSD, SPS will issue the approval letter to PGSS faculty through an email. The main goal of developing the UTMAcad (Student Activity's Module), is to produce the additional transcript to all Post Graduate Students who have attended and participate in the SSA program.

For the first phase of UTMAcad System development, we have successfully achieved the mission to develop the approval process through system. Currently, SPS, HEP and CICT are working on phase 2 (approval letter through system) and phase 3 (e-transcript).

3.0   International Graduate Conference on Engineering, Science & Humanities (IGCESH)

IGCESH has been organized since 2008 and this program is a one-off program once in two years. As this international conference is a large-scale program, its organization also involves PGSS UTM and all faculties at UTM.

This international conference provides a platform for academics, research and students to meet and share ideas, achievements and experiences in the field of Engineering, Science and Humanities through presentations that will be presented either through oral presentations or posters, as well as provide space for participants to highlight the latest developments in the fields they have studied.

3.1   The purpose of this conference is as follows:

   a) Nurture and polish skills to present research findings.
   b) Examine the understanding and ability of research students in delivering their PhD and Master's studies and analysis.
   c) Encourage and stimulate research activities among UTM research students.
   d) As a platform for post-graduate students so they can share their knowledge and new findings of their research.
   e) Improve collaboration networks

3.2   Participant Targets

This conference targets all UTM, UTM post-graduate students local and international, other UA and International University.

3.3   Program Implementation

The process of this conference's implementation starts with the preparation of paperwork in order to gain an approval from SPS, DVCAI Office and JPU. In a meantime, organizing committee and Scientific Committee need to be established. Organizing committee consists of PGSS Committee, SPS academic staff, PSD and SPS Finance Unit whereas Scientific Committee was formed by one academic staff representative from each faculty. Main activity in this International Conference is related to Extended Abstract and Full Paper Submission, Proceedings, Publication, Oral and Poster Presentation where all camera ready Extended Abstract will be published in Conference Proceedings and selected papers will be submitted to journals which part of its will index by Scopus Journal, etc.

4.0   3 Minute Thesis (3MT)

Three Minute Thesis (3MT®) is a research communication competition developed by The University of Queensland. The exercise challenges PhD students to present a compelling oration on their thesis topic and its significance in just three minutes. 3MT develops academic, presentation, and research communication skills and supports the development of research students' capacity to effectively explain their research in language appropriate to a non-specialist audience.

The first 3MT was held at The University of Queensland in 2008 with 160 RHD students competing. Enthusiasm for the 3MT concept grew and its widespread implementation by universities has led to the development of an international competition. The Strong support for 3MT exists in Australia and New Zealand with 44 institutions coming together to participate in the 2013 Trans-Tasman 3MT Competition. The event also hosted special guests from Fiji and Hong Kong. The inaugural International U21 competition was also launched in 2013. The global reach of the competition can be seen by the extent of participation with universities in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and Vietnam also hosting local 3MT events.

Eligibility:
OPEN TO ALL UTM ACTIVE PhD Students

4.1   Terms & Conditions

4.1.1   Comprehension

- ➢ Ability to explain the research within time given
- ➢ The selection of suitable and appropriate words

4.1.2   Engagement
- ➢ Ability to attract the audiences' attention
- ➢ Body Language that suits the tone of the presentation

4.1.3   Communication Style:
The research is clearly and effectively communicated

4.1.4   Slide
- ➢ Logical slide presentation
- ➢ Easy to follow
- ➢ Participant's Briefing (Faculty) – Refer to Appendix 2 (Participant's Briefing Slide Presentation)

4.2   Program Implementation

There are 2 level of 3MT Competition conducted by PGSS Faculty, PSD and SPS and this program will be conducted once a year. For the first stage, all eligible PhD students need to compete at their faculty level. The top 3 winners will go for UTM Level.   For UTM

Level, the participants will be divided into 3 categories; Engineering, Science & Technology and Social Science based on their presentation topic. Later, each winner from each field will have an opportunity to compete in 3MT Competition (National Level).

The process will be same to others SSA program where it starts with program application and approval, registration and marking system preparation, logistics, organizing committees, promotion and etc.

5.0   Others Related Activities

Besides PGSC, PGEC, 3MT, IGCESH, other yearly activity that conducted by PSD and PGSS are Graduate Research Exhibition (Graduate Academic), Runtactic (Sports and Leisure), Talk and Seminars and others. These activities were aimed to enhance students' social, soft skills and to live a healthy live.

The process and implementation of the program will be same to others SSA program where it starts with program application and approval, logistics, organizing committees, promotion and etc.

Procedure to Organize Activity:

- Fill in the Activity Application Form (Appendix 3) and upload the completed and approved (faculty level) form in the UTMAcad system. The application must be made at least 2 weeks before the date of program.

- Once approved, start all the ground works.

- Finance
    o As stated in the PGSS Structured/Elective Course Application Form

    o As stated in the IGCESH paperwork

    o As stated in the 3MT paperwork

    o For Add Hoc Programme - a special paperwork needs to be produced and the approval will be given one off by the PSD Unit.

- Activity Promotion
    o All posters and notices should be stamped by the PSD and taken down by the club/society members immediately after the event.

- Security
    o Due to limited campus security, please end all night functions by 10.00 pm

- Wrap-up Session
    o After the program is being done by faculties all reports and photographs are required to submit to SSD within 2 weeks after the date of the program. (Refer to Appendix 4 – Report Checklist)

    o PSD will conduct audits once a year.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1 – Participant's Feedback Form

Appendix 2 – Slide of 3MT Competition Participant's Briefing

Appendix 3 – SSA Manual Application Form

Appendix 4 – Report Checklist

Appendix 5 – PGSC (Course Name)

Appendix 6 – PGEC (Course Name)