

Frequently Asked Questions for Arranging Overseas Research Learning Experience

a) Financial Support

1. What is the funding support for overseas attachments/research learning experience provided to PhD students under the 4-year PhD Programme?

The University provides a maximum of HK\$20,000 research student expenses (RSE) for eligible PhD students (except UIC and self-funded students) to overseas attachment, international conference and other research-related activities. The cap for accommodation has been increased from 25% of the airfare to HK\$10,000.

For HKPFS awardees, the RSE is HK\$32,000* per year for a maximum of 3 years plus the University's provision of HK\$20,000 for the student's 4-year study period.

**Rate for 2021/22 academic year. For 2022/23, the rate will be HK\$33,600.*

2. Is it possible to use the RSE to cover extra quarantine expenses incurred from the overseas attachment/research learning experience?

Students can apply for reimbursement for such expenses if the cap for accommodation (i.e. \$10,000) has not been fully utilised. HKPFS awardees can also apply to use RSE to cover such expenses.

3. Can students receive honorariums for their active contributions to the collaborative project participated during the period of overseas attachment?

Students are not encouraged to receive honorariums, especially for those HKBU studentship recipients. Students should also observe the taxation requirement and relevant laws of the visiting countries concerned.

4. How can I apply for the funding support?

Students please follow the two steps below for claiming RSE:

- 1st step: Budget Approval: Submit [Application for Budget Approval](#) to the Graduate School **at least 3 weeks before** the event takes places; and
- 2nd step: Budget Reimbursement: Submit [Application for Reimbursement](#) to the Graduate School in **1 week after** you have returned to Hong Kong.

b) Format and nature of overseas attachment/research learning experience

5. Is it allowable to attend online programmes held by overseas institutions for fulfilment of overseas research learning experience?

In view of the pandemic, VPRD has specially approved that virtual overseas attachment is acceptable for fulfilling the graduation requirement.

6. After I returned to HK from an overseas attachment, I continued to participate in the discussion of the collaborative project with the overseas institution. Can this be counted as overseas attachment? If yes, how can I apply for it?

Yes. The virtual overseas attachment could be considered as long as you could provide written proof by the collaborator/ the hosting institution with the endorsement of your Principal Supervisor on such virtual arrangement.

7. If I attended several virtual and physical research activities overseas, can I combine them in order to fulfil the 1-6 months OA requirements?

Yes. You can adopt an accumulative mode to add up all the recognised virtual and physical overseas research activities.

8. What are the recognised activities for overseas attachment?

Students could participate in the following recognised activities for fulfilling the 1-6 months OA requirements:

- Engagement in a research project conducted in an overseas country
- Fieldwork and data collection with overseas collaborator(s)
- Attending workshops or conferences overseas
- Attending international research summer or winter schools
- Research internship overseas
- Visiting fellowship at an overseas university
- Other types of research training overseas

9. How can I contact potential exchange supervisors?

Students are advised to discuss the arrangement of overseas attachment with your Supervisors.

c) *Visa/Status*

10. When arranging attachment with overseas institutions, what are the status can we ask for with the institutions?

Students are expected to be an exchange student/ visiting researcher during the overseas attachment. GS will help prepare a letter of proof to facilitate your visa application; and please provide an invitation/ acceptance note issued by the hosting institution as a supporting document.

11. May I choose a home country's institution for overseas research learning experience?

In general, students should refrain from taking overseas attachment at their home countries. In special circumstances, students can seek discretionary approval from the Executive Associate Dean of Graduate School. Strong justification and endorsement from Principal Supervisors are required.

12. What are the internal procedures for applying overseas attachment?

Student should submit *“Application for Study Leave (Overseas Learning Experience)”* via BUniPort together with supporting documents:

(1) invitation/ proof of acceptance from the partner institution

(2) your research plan with details on purpose of the study and the research work to be undertaken.

13. I am a student from the year of 2019/20 cohort, can I plan to go to overseas attachment in the coming January 2023?

The overseas attachment shall normally take place after the confirmation of candidature and not fall within the last 6 months* of the students’ normal study period to avoid time clash with class attendance (before confirmation of candidature) or thesis writing/ experimental work at final stage of your studies. Depending on discipline’s need, you may further discuss the arrangement with your Supervisor.

**It applies to physical exchange. During the pandemic, flexibility is given to allow virtual OA be conducted during the students’ normal study period.*

d) Others

14. What actions should we take after completing the overseas attachment? What type of official documents and reports do we need to prepare?

For conference/ research schools/ internship, students should obtain a certificate/proof of accomplishment/ attendance from the organisers as far as possible. Students should then fill-out the form *“Application for Fulfilment of Graduation Requirement”* after completing the overseas attachment. You are also advised to observe the Faculty specific reporting requirements, if any.