

School of Dental Sciences

Postgraduate Student

Handbook

Coursework and
Mixed-Mode
Academic Session 2026/2027



This handbook contains the rules and regulations of postgraduate studies at School of Dental Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia.

All postgraduate candidates should comply with these rules and regulations.

USM reserves the right to amend the rules and regulations from time to time.

Disclaimer

This handbook has been prepared with the utmost care to ensure the accuracy of its content at the time of publication.

The university reserves the right to revise, amend, or update any part of the information as deemed necessary during academic and administrative reviews.
(June 2026)

**Postgraduate and International Office,
School of Dental Sciences,
Universiti Sains Malaysia**

June 2026

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School of Dental Sciences Postgraduate Student Handbook Correct at the time of publishing

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USM MISSION AND VISION

Vision : Transforming Higher Education for a Sustainable Tomorrow

Mission : USM is a pioneering, transdisciplinary research intensive university that empowers future talents and enables the bottom billions to transform their socio-economic well-being.

Accelerated Programme for Excellence (APEX)

Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) was chosen in 2008 to implement the Accelerated Programme for Excellence (APEX), a fast-track initiative aimed at elevating universities to world-class status. The programme seeks to boost international recognition and raise the standard of higher education in Malaysia. The Ministry of Higher Education invited both public and private institutions to submit proposals for APEX status. USM's mission in this programme is to become a pioneering, trans-disciplinary, and research-driven university that nurtures future talents and improves the socioeconomic well-being of underserved communities. USM's vision for APEX is to lead in academic excellence, innovation, and sustainability, with a commitment to societal and national development, under the theme: "Transforming Higher Education for a Sustainable Tomorrow".

Institutional Education Goals Five (5) USM

Institutional Educational Goal (IEG) aims to produce graduates that are able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge and skills, especially in their professional discipline with global mindset using critical thinking and problem-solving approaches.
2. Exhibit balanced attributes of altruistic values and attitudes, ethics and professionalism, scientific thinking, arts and humanity toward good citizenry and nation building.
3. Demonstrate socio-entrepreneurial skills and mindset, capable of contributing to the wellbeing of society in bridging inequality and enhancing sustainability.
4. Communicate effectively and with confidence, encompassing intra-and inter-disciplines, society and technology.
5. Demonstrate leadership, teamwork skills and practice lifelong learning, especially in their professional discipline.

For further details, please visit <https://www.usm.my/>

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1. DEAN'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the School of Dental Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM).

It is a pleasure to welcome you to our postgraduate clinical training community. At USM, we are committed to provide a comprehensive and high-quality specialist training environment that integrates academic excellence, clinical competency, professionalism, and evidence-based practice to meet the evolving needs of oral healthcare.

Our postgraduate clinical programmes are designed to develop competent and ethical dental specialists who are capable of delivering advanced patient care, engaging in lifelong learning, contributing to research and innovation, and serving the community at both national and international levels.

Throughout your training, you will be exposed to a diverse range of clinical cases, multidisciplinary collaborations, academic discussions, research activities, and professional development opportunities. Under the guidance of experienced academic staff and clinical supervisors, you will refine your diagnostic abilities, clinical judgement, technical skills, and leadership qualities required for specialist practice.

As a clinical postgraduate student, you are expected to uphold the highest standards of patient care, professional conduct, academic integrity, and teamwork. The training journey will be demanding and challenging, but it will also be rewarding and transformative, preparing you to become a future leader in your respective specialty.

We are confident that your time at the School of Dental Sciences, USM, will be a valuable and enriching experience that strengthens your professional expertise and contributes meaningfully to the advancement of oral healthcare.

We wish you every success in your postgraduate clinical training and welcome you to the next phase of your professional journey.

Professor Dr. Norhayati Luddin

Dean
School of Dental Sciences
Universiti Sains Malaysia



2. DEPUTY DEAN'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the postgraduate clinical programme at the School of Dental Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM).

As the Deputy Dean (Postgraduate and International), I am delighted to support your academic and professional development throughout this important phase of your specialist training. The programme you have embarked upon is both challenging and rewarding, requiring dedication, discipline, resilience, and a commitment to excellence in clinical practice and patient care.

Our postgraduate clinical programmes are designed to develop competent and ethical dental specialists through structured clinical training, close mentorship by experienced supervisors, exposure to a wide range of complex clinical cases, and participation in academic and research activities. In addition to enhancing your clinical competencies, the programme aims to foster critical thinking, professionalism, leadership, and lifelong learning.

We encourage you to actively engage in seminars, case presentations, journal clubs, research activities, and multidisciplinary collaborations. These opportunities will enrich your learning experience, broaden your professional perspective, and prepare you to meet the evolving demands of specialist dental practice.

Effective communication is essential throughout your training. Should you encounter any academic, clinical, or administrative challenges, please do not hesitate to seek guidance from your supervisors, programme coordinators, or the Postgraduate and International Office. Your progress and success are a shared responsibility, and we are committed to supporting you at every stage of your postgraduate journey.

We hope that your time at the School of Dental Sciences will be productive, fulfilling, and transformative. The knowledge, skills, and experiences you gain here will serve as a strong foundation for your future career as a dental specialist and enable you to make meaningful contributions to oral healthcare and the wider community.

We wish you every success in your postgraduate clinical training and look forward to witnessing your achievements in the years ahead.

Dr. Fadzlinda Baharin

Deputy Dean (Postgraduate and International)
School of Dental Sciences
Universiti Sains Malaysia



3. POSTGRADUATE AND INTERNATIONAL OFFICE, SCHOOL OF DENTAL SCIENCES

Professor Dr. Norhayati Luddin
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4. VISION AND MISSION OF SCHOOL OF DENTAL SCIENCES

VISION:

The School of Dental Sciences, USM is to be the center of excellence in academia, innovations, research and services, and to be the catalyst and leader for new knowledge in teaching, learning, research and services for Malaysian higher education and the world.

MISSION:

The School of Dental Sciences, USM is committed to the pursuit of excellence and innovation in academia, services, research, development of human resources by fostering a conducive educational environment and promoting holistic development programmes to meet national needs through exploring new frontiers of technology, and remain globally competitive to fulfill our community responsibility

5. BACKGROUND OF THE SCHOOL OF DENTAL SCIENCES

In the early 90s, University Sains Malaysia (USM) had begun the planning of School of Dental Sciences, to complement the existing School of Medical Sciences. The establishment of the school was approved by the university Board of Directors in October 1998. Assoc Prof Dr Ab. Rani Samsudin was appointed as the first Dean on 1st November 1998. The new school is located in USM, Kelantan Branch (now known as Health Campus) situated in Kubang Kerian, Kota Bharu, Kelantan. It was created to address the growing national need for qualified dental professionals and to complement USM's strong presence in the health sciences alongside the Schools of Medical and Health Sciences.

The school started on 1st December 1998 at the Nursing Educational Unit. It was moved to a new location near the USM Hospital Accident & Emergency (A&E) Department on 26th January 1999. The initial small number of pioneer staff soon began to expand with the appointment of other professional and support staff. In early 2000, initial works on the development of the new building took place. By September 2001, the building was completed at an estimated cost of RM 12.5 million. On a historic day of 22nd March 2003, the building was officially inaugurated by the then Education Minister, Tan Sri Musa bin Mohamad.

The school welcomed its first cohort of 40 students in May 1999, offering the Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) programme, a comprehensive, five-year curriculum designed with a problembased learning (PBL) approach and strong emphasis on community engagement and holistic care. This innovative teaching method positioned the school as a pioneer in progressive dental education in Malaysia. The first intake had graduated in August 2004.

Since its inception, the school has grown significantly in both capacity and reputation. It now offers postgraduate programmes including a coursework-based Master in Dental Science (MDS), research-based Master of Science (Dentistry) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degrees, as well as clinical specialisation.

Over the years, the school has developed a strong research portfolio, with modern laboratories focusing on craniofacial science, biomaterials, digital dentistry, and oral pathology. It maintains close clinical collaboration with the Hospital Pakar Universiti Sains Malaysia (HPUSM), providing students with direct exposure to real-world patient care. Today, the School of Dental Sciences continues to be a leading centre for dental education and research in Malaysia, producing competent dental surgeons and specialists who contribute meaningfully to national and global oral health.

6. REGISTRATION

Self-registration must be done according to the stipulated dates found in the offer package for admissions to USM and the academic calendar. Latest announcements for course(s) registration are available in the IPS website <https://ips.usm.my>

Registration for postgraduate studies is to be conducted via online.

Original document of degree certificates and academic transcripts must be presented for verification upon request by IPS.

A USM registered student, either on a full-time or part-time basis is not allowed to register for another degree with any other University either local or abroad without permission.

Every registered student will be given an official email address that serves as a single unique ID for USM e- platform (such as Student Portal and Library access).

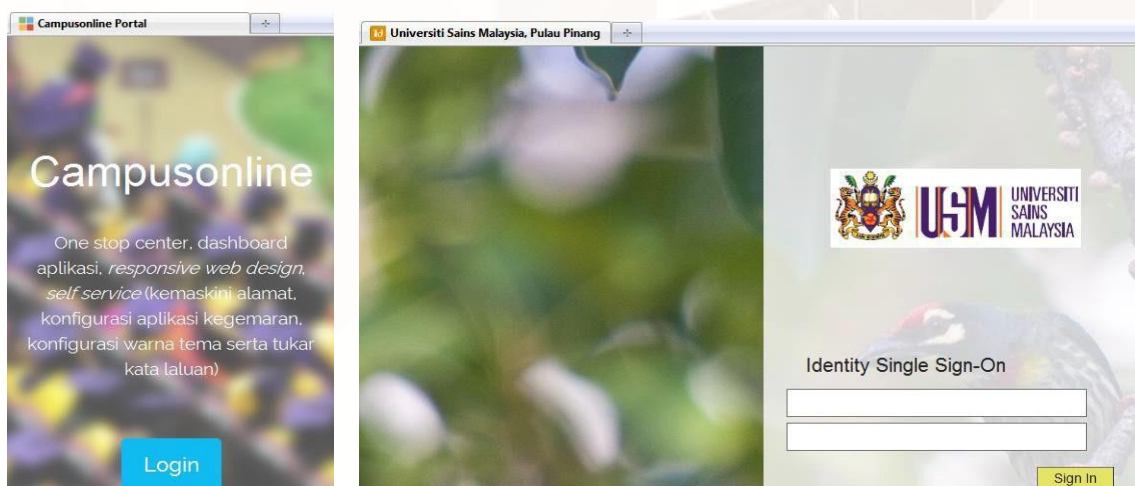
For **coursework/mixed mode students**, pre-registration process normally begins two months before the semester commences. During this period, students must complete processes like creating email ID, student card, registration of courses and pay the fees.

a. Access to **<https://self.usm.my/>** to setup your email and password. Click 'Register New Identity', key-in your USM ID or Malaysian ID and the pin number provided.

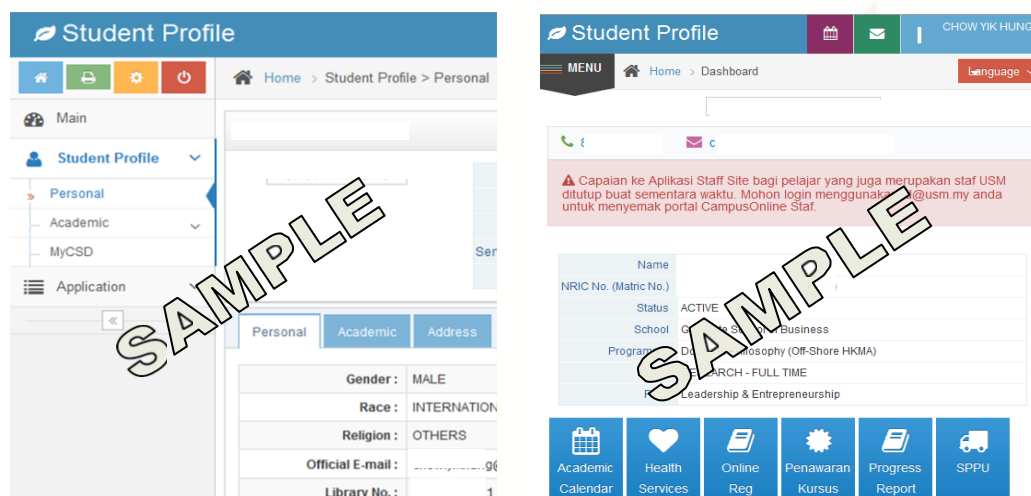


b. Upon successful, access to CampusOnline Portal at **<http://campusonline.usm.my/>**, click LOGIN.

c. Enter your official registered email address (.....**@student.usm.my**) and the created password.



d. Your student profile page will be displayed as below.



E-Learning Portal

Access to e-Learning portal is necessary for all students. Lecturers will provide course outline, learning materials, etc. in this platform. List of registered courses will be displayed after activation of status and confirmation of payment by Bursary Department

Internet access / Student E-mail

Please note that your email ID can be used as the login ID to USM Wi-Fi. You can visit the Centre for Knowledge, Communication & Technology (PPKT) for assistance in setting up the USM Wi-Fi connection for your laptop or mobile devices.

Helpdesk: 604-653 4400 / infosec@usm.my

7. FEES

Non-Recurring Fees (payable once)

- Registration Fee
- Personal Bond (refundable at the end of studies)
- Convocation Fee

Recurring Fees (payable every semester)

- Tuition Fees

Coursework and Mixed-Mode tuition fees will be determined by the number of units taken. The course(s) registered will automatically be confirmed upon issuance of receipt.

Online payment is advisable and mostly preferred. However, payment by credit/debit card is accepted at the Bursary counter. Cash payment can only be made at the counter of any branch of CIMB Bank and payment slip must be submitted during registration process for verification by USM Bursary.

8. DURATION OF CANDIDATURE

A student who registers for postgraduate study must fulfil the duration of candidature as stated in the offer letter.

Programme	Full-Time	
	Minimum	Maximum
Master in Dental Science	2 Semesters (1 Year)	4 Semesters (2 Years)
Doctor in Periodontology	6 Semesters (3 Years)	10 Semester (5 Years)
Doctor in Prosthodontics	6 Semesters (3 Years)	10 Semester (5 Years)

9. RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION AND COURSE(S) REGISTRATION

It is the responsibility of a student to renew registration every semester and pay tuition fees within the renewal registration period. The announcement for the registration renewal and courses registration period will be published on the IPS website, <https://ips.usm.my/> usually two (2) months before the commencement of the new semester. Students are advised to check the website and USM official email regularly for information updates prior to the registration period.

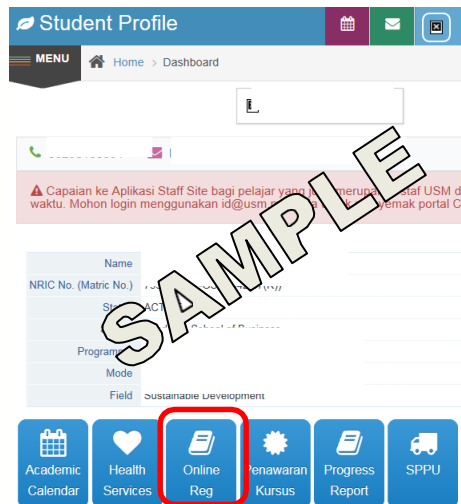
Renewal of registration guideline is available in IPS website
(<https://ips.usm.my/index.php/current-student-v2/candidature-matters/renewal-registration>)

Renewal of Registration

Compulsory to be completed via the CampusOnline Portal (<http://campusonline.usm.my>) before the beginning of each semester.

Coursework / Mixed Mode

Login to the CampusOnline Portal and click 'Online Reg'. You will be directed to course registration page. Complete the course selection process until invoice of the fees is generated. Fees payment need to be made before the new semester commence.



Payment of Tuition Fees

Renewal of registration is considered complete upon completion of tuition fee payment. All payments **MUST** be cleared within the stipulated period to avoid the late registration penalty. A copy of scholarship letter **MUST** be sent to the Bursary at the respective campuses within the renewal period of every semester.

Health Campus : postgradkck@usm.my

Students who have renewed the registration via online but did not complete the payment within the stipulated period will be considered as late registration and as such, liable for the late registration penalty of RM200/USD50.

Students who fail to renew the registration within the stipulated period (without justifiable reasons) will be terminated from their studies.

If any course(s) to be registered for that semester is not offered, students can apply for postponement of studies for that semester. Hence, renewal of registration is not required but the postponement request must be made before the date of the new semester commence.

(Refer to Tuition and Retaining Fees Charges Table)

Course(s) offered for every semester can be referred to Programmes Guidebook.

10. MALAYSIAN CULTURE AND MALAY LANGUAGE (LKM 111)

Compulsory for all international students and to be passed prior to graduation. The minimum required passing grade is C. Registration of the course is through Online Registration System (ORSPG) during stipulated time for course registration. Classes are online and accessible through student e-learning portal.

Exemption can be given to students who have taken and pass the equivalent course. Application for exemption must be submitted for approval to the Dean, School of Languages, Literacies and Translation.

For any enquiries, please e-mail to ppblt_courses@usm.my.

11. ADD/DROP OF COURSES FOR COURSEWORK & MIXED MODE STUDENTS

Any add/ drop of course(s) must be made using the Add/Drop form available at <https://ips.usm.my/index.php/download/candidature> . Final confirmation of course registration after the add/drop of courses can be checked through CampusOnline Portal (<http://campusonline.usm.my>)

Upon receiving the form, students will be contacted by IPS should there is any extra payment required or eligible for refund.

Add of Course(s)

Course(s) can be added within the first two (2) weeks of the semester. The application must be made using the Add/Drop Form.

Drop of Course(s)

Course(s) can be dropped up to the sixth (6) week after the semester commence.

Tuition fee will be credited into the student's account for the following semester if the course(s) is dropped within the first two (2) weeks of the semester. **No refund will be made for courses dropped after the second (2) week of the semester.**

The application must be made through Online Registration System (ORSPG).

Students are required to check the final list of courses registered through the CampusOnline Portal latest by the ninth (9) week of the semester.

12. POSTPONEMENT OF STUDIES

Postponement of studies is only allowed after registration and completion of at least one (1) semester, except for medical or valid personal reasons. Students are allowed to postpone their studies maximum of two (2) semesters throughout the entire duration of the candidature period. Postponement application must be submitted through CampusOnline portal.

Tuition and Retaining Fees charges are subjected to the date of postponement application:

DURATION OF APPLICATION	DETAILS
Application send to school before the new semester commence until week-2 of the new semester	Retaining Fee will be imposed a. Local –RM150 b. International –RM250
Week-3 until Week-9	50% of the tuition fee will be imposed
After Week-9	Full tuition fee will be imposed

Note: Retaining Fee is to ensure student's candidature status remain ACTIVE

13. WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAMME

Withdrawal from programme can be made by sending a withdrawal letter to Dean, School of Dental Sciences.

Coursework/Mixed mode student - Refund of all fees (except registration and smart card fees) will be made for withdrawal up to two (2) weeks from the date of registration.

14. EXTENSION OF CANDIDATURE

Application for extension of candidature must be made two (2) months prior to the date of expiration of a student's candidature. The maximum period of extension allowed is two (2) semesters only. Application must be made using the available form at <https://ips.usm.my/index.php/download/candidature>.

15. TERMINATION OF CANDIDATURE

The University reserves the right to terminate a student's candidature based on:

- Unsatisfactory academic performance (Coursework/Mixed mode).
- Failure to pay the tuition fees
- Reach maximum candidature period

16. EXAMINATIONS (Applicable for Coursework & Mixed-Mode Students)

Examinations are conducted at the end of each semester. The examination slip is required for admission into the examination venue and can be printed from the CampusOnline Portal (<http://campusonline.usm.my>). It is the responsibility of the student to comply with and to be present at the examination venue during the stipulated time, date, and place of the examination.

If a student is unable to sit for the examination, the student is required to immediately notify the Postgraduate and International Office in writing and attach evidence (if any) to accompany the notification. Students must comply with all academic requirements (for lectures, tutorials, practical, etc.) to qualify them to sit for the examinations.

The examination process is based on the principle of continuous assessment that comprises the coursework and the written examination components. The coursework component can be based on participation in tutorials, tests, essays, project work, studio work, fieldwork, etc.

In general, performance is assessed according to the examination grading method, which the Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) is based on the following scale:

Grade	Points	Passing Grade
A	85-100	Pass
A-	77-84	
B+	68-76	
B	60-67	
B-	55-59	Fail
C+	46-54	
C	40-45	
C-	36-39	
D+	32-35	
D	28-31	
D-	25-27	
F	0-24	

17. PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is defined as the act of presenting, quoting, copying, paraphrasing or passing off of ideas, images, processes, works, data, own words or those of other people or sources without proper acknowledgement, reference or quotation to the original source(s). The acts of plagiarism include but are not limited to the following:

- Quoting verbatim word for word replication of work of other people.
- Paraphrasing another person's work by changing some of the words, or the order of the words, without due acknowledgement of the source(s).
- Submitting another person's work in whole or part as one's own.
- Auto plagiarising or self-plagiarising one's own previous work or work that has already been submitted for assessment or for any other academic award and pass it as a new creation without citing the original content.
- Insufficient or misleading referencing of the source(s) that would enable the reader to check whether any particular work has indeed been cited accurately and/or fairly and thus identify the original writer's particular contribution in the work submitted.

Any other acts, which in the opinion of the University, fall into the plagiarism definition.

Good Academic Practice

Academic Integrity

All parties shall help the University to prevent any misconduct which comprise misattribution of data, stealing of ideas or direct plagiarism, deliberate interference and failure to act with integrity in the creation, development, application and use of knowledge, ideas and information in relation to the work of others.

Intellectual Property (IP)

The University is committed to safeguard its intellectual property (IP), including all assets arising from the University's research, innovation, invention and creative output as well as the management, creation, protection, commercialization, exploitation and expansion of such rights.

Levels of Plagiarism

A complaint on plagiarism shall be investigated from all perspective including;

- a. degrees of similarity [quantitative] as determined by the detection tool
- b. levels of plagiarism [qualitative/descriptive]
- c. the significance of the plagiarism
- d. the person's intention and/or motivation
- e. mitigating factors such as:
 - i. stage/level of the academic programme

- ii. number of previous offences
- iii. the person's academic/education background
- f. academic conventions within the relevant discipline
- g. the impact of a particular outcome on a person's progression
- h. information provided to the person about academic integrity

The University reserves the right to take one or more action in the event depend on the levels of plagiarism defined as below:-

Level One

The extent of plagiarism at this level includes but is not limited to inadequate or misleading quoting, referencing or paraphrasing. Rather than intention to deceive, it is determined that plagiarism at this level would have arisen from limited knowledge about plagiarism, conform to academic honesty and integrity, or from carelessness or neglect. At this level, plagiarism does not amount to an academic misconduct. If the degree of plagiarism falls within Level One, repeat offenders will be reclassified as Level Two or Level Three offenders.

Level Two

The extent of plagiarism at this level includes inappropriate or fraudulent acts of work due to ignorance of academic honesty and integrity, where it would be expected that there is adequate knowledge of honesty and integrity. It is also classified as Level Two if it is apparent that there was an intention to deceive or cheat by way of plagiarism. Plagiarism at this level is considered as an academic misconduct.

Level Three

The extent of plagiarism at this level includes a copied work that arises from a clear intention to deceive by way of plagiarism. Level Three plagiarism is considered as an academic misconduct. Repeat offenders of Level Two will be classified as Level Three offenders.

Level Four

The extent of plagiarism at this level is beyond reasonable doubt which includes a substantive plagiarised work as evident from the quantified degree of similarities (such as that from a credible detection tool), that arises from an irrefutable intention to deceive. Level Four plagiarism is considered as an academic misconduct. Repeat offenders of Level Three will be classified as Level Four offenders.

For more information on USM Policy on Plagiarism, please refer to <https://ips.usm.my/index.php/current-student-v2/others/usm-policy-on-plagiarism>

18. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Student must comply with the following graduation requirements:

- a. Pass all courses and examination determined by the respective programme;
- c. Obtain at least a CGPA of 3.00;
- d. Fulfill the minimum duration of candidature;
- e. Complete all programme requirements as prescribed by the programme;
- e. Must obtain minimum grade C for Malaysian Culture and Malay Language (LKM111). This course is compulsory for all international students.

19. GRADUATION-IN-COUNCIL (GIC)

GIC is a policy on the submission of degree scrolls and academic transcripts to the graduates after graduation approval by the Senate.

Terms and Conditions:

- Graduates are required to settle all outstanding debts with the University (tuition fees, accommodation fees, library, etc).
- All applications are subject to the approval of the Registrar.
- The degree scroll and academic transcripts will be given after 14 working days from the date of approval.
- GiC graduates are permitted to attend the Convocation Ceremony.

Once graduated, graduands can submit GiC application through CampusOnline portal.

20. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

University provides student support services to enhance postgraduate student knowledge and values. Below are the services provided:

Professional and Personal Development (PPD) Programmes

PPD is series of workshops provided to research mode students to equip them with the essential knowledge that they may need throughout their research journey and skills after graduation. The workshops/seminars under this programme are conducted by expert speakers. List of modules are available at <https://ips.usm.my/index.php/current-student-v2/others/workshops>

21. STUDENT CARD (ID)

A student card is issued to all registered USM postgraduate students upon completion of the registration process. This card is non-transferable and are for the following purposes:

- Identification/security check for entry and movement within the campuses
- Access to and use of University facilities (i.e. Library, Laboratory, Recreation and Sports, etc.)
- Examination (accessible to examination venue)
- Medical treatment at the University's Wellness Centre/Panel Clinics or Hospitals
- Other related matters pertaining to immigration authorities and police

Loss of the student card must be reported immediately to USM Security Office and IPS. A fee of RM30.00 (USD10) will be charged for every card replacement.

22. DRESS CODE

Students must observe the rules for the stipulated dress code of the University and be appropriately attired at all times.

Formal attire

Students are required to wear formal attire at any official functions/activities. Students will be denied entry if they fail to adhere to this ruling.

Casual attire

Students are not allowed to wear casual attire for official functions/activities. Students should wear appropriate attire according to the activities. Female students are strictly not allowed to wear sleeveless shirts, miniskirts or extremely short of shorts and revealing/skimpy clothes. Flip flops should not be worn by all students while attending classes or interviews, visiting University departments, etc. Male students should not have long hair that touches the collar.

Sports attire (shorts) can be used for areas allocated for sports only.

Laboratory coats are meant for working in the laboratories only.

23. CONTACT & ENQUIRIES

Health Campus, Kubang Kerian	
Postgraduate & International Office School of Dental Sciences Universiti Sains Malaysia 16150 Kubang Kerian, Kelantan All postgraduate matters	Working hours: Sunday – Wednesday: 8.10 am – 5.10 pm Thursday: 8.10 am – 3.40 pm Break Time: Sunday – Thursday: 1.00 pm – 2.00 pm Tel: 609-767 5756 ext. 5826 / 5855 / 5706 e-mail: whafizol@usm.my
Unit Pengurusan Siswazah & Antarabangsa Universiti Sains Malaysia 16150 Kubang Kerian, Kelantan All postgraduate matters	Working hours: Sunday – Wednesday: 8.10 am – 5.10 pm Thursday: 8.10 am – 3.40 pm Break Time: Sunday – Thursday: 1.00 pm – 2.00 pm Tel: 609-767 2382 ext. 2383 / 2384 / 2386 / 2387 e-mail: shahieda@usm.my
Security Department (24 hours)	Tel: 609-767 5999
Visa Unit, International Office All International student	Working hours: Sunday – Wednesday: 8.10 am – 5.10 pm Thursday: 8.10 am – 3.40 pm Break Time: Sunday – Thursday: 1.00 pm – 2.00 pm Tel: 609-767 2389 ext. 2381 / 2385 / 2388 e-mail: norashiken@usm.my