



Doctor of Philosophy Transfer Report Guidelines (FICT) May 2026

1. Transfer of Studies from MPhil to PhD.

Candidates are in the first instance registered for MPhil studies and they are expected to submit a Transfer Report to transfer studies to the PhD degree.

Timeframe: After 12 months and not later than 24 months of full-time study or equivalent in part-time study have elapsed. Intention to submit transfer form should be filled in and submitted at least 3 months before deadline to transfer studies.

The Faculty recommends that students should submit their transfer report as soon as possible after the lapse of 12 months, in order to allow sufficient time for completion of their studies.

Procedure: Candidate prepares a Transfer Report (check 3 below). A transfer assessment board (TAB) is appointed consisting of an examining chairperson, the principal supervisor (also an examiner) and another member (internal examiner). The TAB reviews the submission in the light of: a) Quality of the research work presented; b) Potential to reach the standard appropriate to that required of a doctoral degree.

Check official guidelines (ProceduresforthetransferfromMhiloPhD.pdf (um.edu.mt)) published by the Doctoral School.

2. Rationale

The report and viva exam are expected to demonstrate:

- A comprehensive understanding of theoretical frameworks, the current knowledge base (background) and relevant literature (state-of-the-art).
 - A clear awareness of the research context, alongside an understanding of prevailing trends within the discipline.
 - Well-defined research objectives and the identification of research methodologies most appropriate for addressing the objectives.
 - Initial handling and analysis of data, where applicable.
 - Consideration of the broader implications of the findings and the anticipated impact or outcomes of the research.
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3. The Transfer Report

Abstract: An abstract of not more than 300 words to summarise aims of the research, methodology and interim results.

Page count: The maximum page count is 60. Front matter, bibliography and appendices are not included in the page count.

Format and Style: [Forms and guidelines - L-Università ta' Malta \(um.edu.mt\)](http://um.edu.mt)

Chapters (typical not strict):

- *Front matter* inc. abstract, table of contents, table of figures, etc.
 - *Introduction Chapter:* An introduction to the area including the problem description, the motivation and a high-level overview of the proposed approach. A clear outline of the research aims and detailed objectives should be present here.
 - *Background and Literature Review:* A review of relevant literature that analyzes current knowledge, gives the necessary background, and formulates a hypothesis for the research (motivation). In cases of interdisciplinary work (e.g. Computing and Finance, etc.), this could include dual backgrounds and literature streams.
 - *Methodology Chapter:* A clear overview of the planned research methodology, highlighting any of the stages completed. Confirmation of ethics approval when required. A discussion detailing intended further work and any risk mitigation strategies should also be included in this chapter.
 - *Preliminary Results Chapter:* Presentation of the data and findings compiled to date with any further data analysis planned. The research design may consist of inter-related separate study phases and such a design may lend itself better to a structure where the methodology and results of each phase are presented together in separate chapters for each phase. The candidate, with the guidance of the supervisory team is to select the most appropriate scholarly scientific distribution of the chapters. Note that the software, workflows and datasets developed constitute examinable material. If the Transfer Report is submitted closer to the 24-month mark, this chapter may also include preliminary results.
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- *Discussion Chapter:* Review and discussion of the work already completed. Reflection on original contribution (if any at this stage) of the research to knowledge. Clearly articulate the planned objectives for the completion of the PhD.
- *Appendices:* Include additional material such as research tools, results, dissemination outcomes (scientific papers, presentations).
- *References:* It is recommended that you adopt the IEEE citation style.

4. Plagiarism/Ethics/Generative AI/DMP

Plagiarism is the act of presenting another person's work as your own without proper acknowledgment of the sources, or intentionally incorporating material from another's work (published or otherwise) into your own without credit. Students are advised to consult the University of Malta's guidelines on avoiding plagiarism, using Turnitin, and interpreting Turnitin reports, which are available on the university's website. [Turnitin - L-Università ta' Malta \(um.edu.mt\)](http://um.edu.mt) and [UniversityGuidelinesonPlagiarism.pdf \(um.edu.mt\)](http://um.edu.mt)

Consult [Research ethics - L-Università ta' Malta](http://um.edu.mt) for information on procedures related to Ethics and Data Protections in research.

In addition, be sure to check the University's official guidelines on the use of Generative AI tools - [Use of Generative AI Guidelines](http://um.edu.mt)

Where applicable data-management plans; FAIR/EOSC alignment; authorship and publication strategy; should be included. Consult with the UM DM Policy (OAR@UM: [Research Data Management Policy](http://um.edu.mt)) for additional information.

5. Submission

A soft copy using the VLE system should be uploaded. Students should also forward a copy of the Turnitin receipt by email to the current FDC admin support.
