

Guidelines on Research Student Attachment Programme – Outgoing 2024/25 (2nd Round)

1. Introduction to Research Student Attachment Programme – Outgoing

Research Student Attachment Programme (RSAP) provides PolyU PhD students with an opportunity to pursue research attachment (hereafter “attachment”) at international institutions to foster collaborative research, and enhance students’ international networking and global vision. Two rounds of applications are invited each year.

2. Application conditions

2.1 Applications must fulfil at least one of the following conditions:

- a) attachment to a university outside their home country, and/or
- b) attachment to a top research institute or lab outside Hong Kong.

Applications from Chinese students for attachment to universities in Mainland China, Taiwan or Macau will generally not be supported unless the host unit is a national or international top research lab in a specific field. However, an exception applies to applications for attachment to Zhejiang University, which are funded by the Zhejiang University Special Funding Scheme (ZJUSFS) operated within RSAP. Please refer to item 6.1.

3. Applicant eligibility

- 3.1 Current PhD students with good academic standing are eligible for application.
- 3.2 The applicant and host supervisor should have common research interests to ensure high-quality supervision.
- 3.3 Students whose PhD registration is not confirmed may be given a conditional offer to undertake the attachment programme. If they cannot have their PhD registration confirmed before the latest commencement date of the attachment programme, the conditional offer will lapse automatically.
- 3.4 Awardees of the Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme are reminded to note the residence requirement set out in the Terms and Conditions of the Scheme, which specifies “If an awardee stays outside Hong Kong for academic/research activity for an aggregate period exceeding 90 consecutive days, or an aggregate of 183 days, the stipend will be suspended immediately unless prior approval by the Research Grants Council (RGC) has been given upon provision of strong justification by the affiliated university”, and obtain prior approval from the RGC before departure. Students should submit a request separately to gs.matters@polyu.edu.hk at least 2 months prior to the planned departure date.
- 3.5 Students who previously received financial support from RSAP cannot re-apply.

4. Period of attachment

- 4.1 The duration of attachment is from a minimum of three months to a maximum of one year. For the awardees of the Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme, the minimum duration of attachment is 85 days instead of three months.
- 4.2 The period of attachment will be counted within the normal study period of the student. The completion date of the attachment programme must not exceed the student’s normal period of study.
- 4.3 Successful applicants will receive an offer letter from the Graduate School (GS) detailing the application result, period of attachment and the approved financial support. The offer is valid for nine months from the issue date of the letter.
- 4.4 Successful applicants should adhere to the approved attachment duration. In the event of a change in the attachment duration, prior approval from the Chief Supervisor must be sought by email, and the Director of Research Postgraduate Studies (DoRPgS) should be informed. Students should forward the written approval to the GS for the record.
- 4.5 Successful applicants should commit to full-time research at the host unit. Students who have a genuine need to attend a conference during the attachment, which is supported by both their home and host

supervisors, must obtain prior approval from the GS by email. If approved, the RSAP subsistence allowance will be reduced based on the number of days away from the attachment. The period away does not count towards the minimum duration requirement of the attachment.

5. **Application procedures and timeline**

- 5.1 Applicants should seek the consent of the proposed host supervisor prior to application.
- 5.2 Application can be made via online submission system. The application timeline is presented in the *Appendix*. Required submission documents include:
 - An invitation letter from the host supervisor or host unit, specifying the full name of PhD student, the name of the host supervisor, and the attachment period;
 - The latest assessment results downloaded from eStudent;
 - A brief CV of the applicant with a list of representative publications; and
 - A brief CV of the host supervisor with a list of representative publications.
- 5.3 For item 2.1(b), applicants should provide evidence, e.g., webpage, to support that the host is a top research institute or lab in the respective discipline.

6. **Financial support**

- 6.1 Successful applicants will be offered a subsistence allowance of HK\$250 per day. The maximum allowance is capped at HK\$45,000, i.e., the amount for a maximum of 180 days.
Notwithstanding the foregoing, PolyU students from the Faculty of Business, the Faculty of Construction and Environment, and the School of Hotel and Tourism Management who attach to Zhejiang University are entitled to a monthly allowance of RMB\$7,500 with a cap of RMB\$45,000 under ZJUSFS.
- 6.2 Successful applicants will be offered a flat rate travel allowance of HK\$10,000 to cover travel expenses, including round-trip transportation to/from the host institution and ticket-related taxes, fees and levies.
- 6.3 Any visiting period before the issue date of the offer letter is not eligible for retroactive financial support.
- 6.4 Successful applicants will continue to receive stipends and pay tuition fees as required by PolyU, if applicable.
- 6.5 Students are responsible for any tuition and other fees specified by the host university. Students are advised to consult the host supervisor prior to submitting their application.

7. **Reimbursement**

- 7.1 Applicants are reminded not to commit any expense until official approval from the GS is granted as well as the visa approval. Such expense will not be reimbursed.
- 7.2 The financial support will be released in two instalments. Upon receipt of a departure form and supporting documents from students, 75% of the approved subsistence allowance will be released. The remaining amount of subsistence allowance and travel allowance are reimbursable upon submission of a reimbursement form and required documents, including airfare receipt and boarding passes, after completion of the attachment programme. The actual amount of subsistence allowance is based on the actual attachment duration. All forms are downloadable on the [GS website](#).
- 7.3 All reimbursement must be made within three months of the completion of the attachment programme.

8. **Visa and accommodation arrangements**

- 8.1 Visa and accommodation arrangements are to be made by the students. Students should take visa processing time into consideration when proposing the commencement date of the attachment.
- 8.2 For the visa application process, certain countries require an official certification of financial support and student status. Students can apply for a testimonial to certify their monthly stipends and student status by “Application for Testimonial” (Form GSB/19) downloadable on the [GS website](#).

9. **Credit transfer**

Students who have successfully completed research postgraduate subjects outside PolyU may transfer credits in accordance with the University's procedures governing credit transfer. Students should submit a completed "Application for Transfer of Credits from Studies Taken Outside PolyU After Admission" (Form GSB/48) downloadable on the [GS website](#). After the application is endorsed by the Chief Supervisor and DoRPgS, and approved by the HoD/DoS, the student record should be updated by the respective General Office.

10. **Intellectual property rights**

Students are reminded that the intellectual property rights of all your inventions, research outputs, works and designs in all forms arising from your attachment programme at the host institution, whether on an individual or collaborative basis, shall be owned by The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. In special circumstances, the ownership of intellectual property rights is subject to mutual agreements between PolyU and the host institution. For details, please consult the Knowledge Transfer and Entrepreneurship Office by email at info.kteo@polyu.edu.hk.

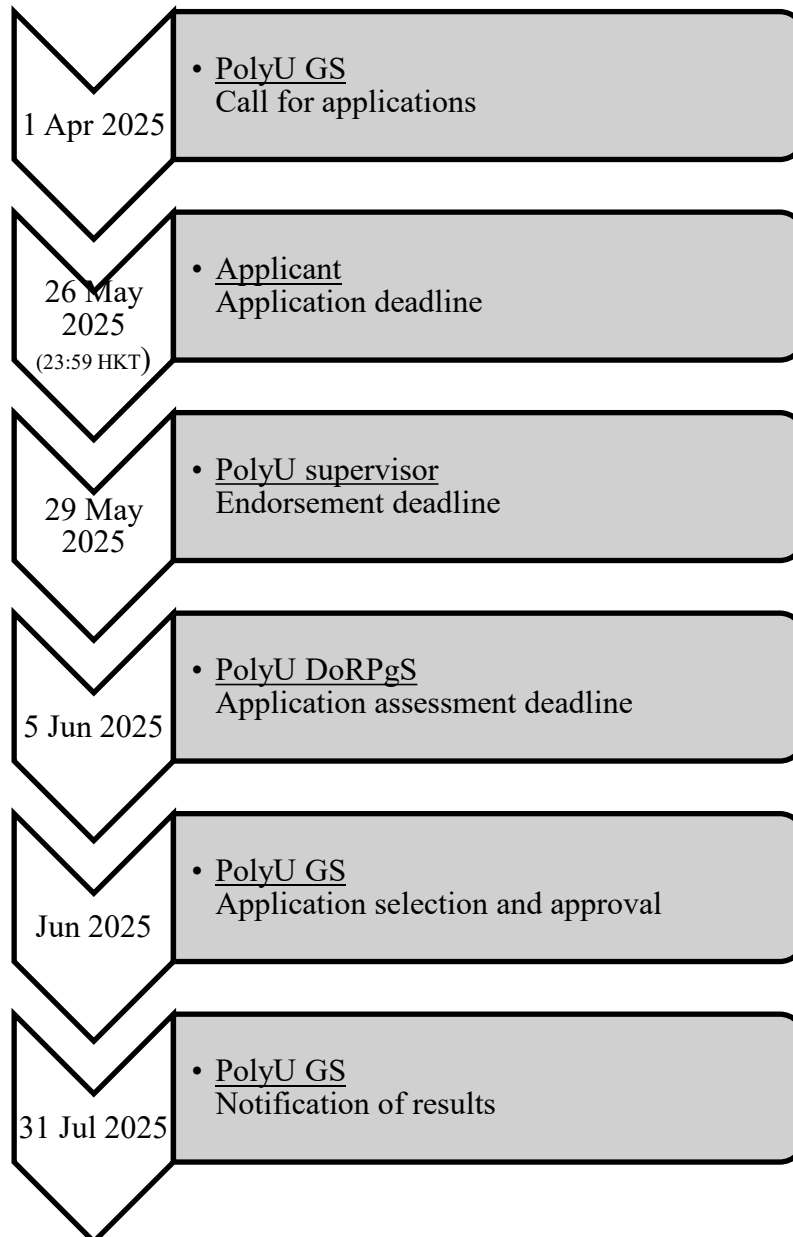
11. **Enquiries**

For enquiries, please contact the Graduate School by email at gs.attachment@polyu.edu.hk.

In the event of any disputes, the University reserves the right to make the final decision.

Updated in Mar 2025

Timeline of Application and Selection for Research Student Attachment Programme
2024/25 (2nd Round)



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