

Graduate Profiles and ILOs – M.Phil. & Ph.D. in Social Sciences and Humanities, PGIHS, University of Peradeniya

Program Objective: Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.)

The Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) in Social Sciences and Humanities is designed to develop graduates with advanced, discipline-specific knowledge and a strong capacity for independent research. The program aims to nurture critical thinkers and skilled researchers who are capable of contributing original insights to their chosen field, whether through pure or multidisciplinary inquiry. A key objective of the M.Phil. is to prepare students to undertake high-level scholarly research under expert supervision, resulting in a thesis that demonstrates significant academic contribution, withstands peer review, and merits publication. While coursework may be included to strengthen research readiness or add value, it does not contribute to credit accumulation for the degree. This qualification equips candidates with the competencies needed for progression to higher academic degrees or for entering specialized professional roles in research, academia, administration, and policy.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs): Upon successful completion of the MPhil degree in Humanities and Social Sciences, graduates will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a critical awareness of contemporary debates, issues, and developments within their chosen field of study in the humanities and social sciences.
2. Apply relevant theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches to address complex problems in academic and professional contexts.
3. Conduct independent and original research that contributes to the advancement of knowledge and informs both academic inquiry and practical application.
4. Supervise and critically evaluate research at advanced academic levels, including up to Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework (SLQF) Level 9.
5. Make informed and reasoned judgments on complex and contested issues, and communicate their insights effectively to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.
6. Demonstrate initiative, autonomy, and self-direction in identifying problems and implementing solutions in academic and professional environments.

The M.Phil. program at PGIHS fosters intellectual leadership, academic rigor, and the development of research-based solutions to pressing social and humanistic challenges. Graduates of the M.Phil. in Social Sciences and Humanities will be scholarly, analytical, and reflective professionals equipped with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to lead independent research and contribute meaningfully to academic, professional, and societal development. They will demonstrate:

1. **Advanced Subject and Theoretical Knowledge:** Graduates possess deep, research-informed understanding of their specialization, capable of critically evaluating existing scholarship and methodologies. They produce high-quality research that withstands peer review and merits publication.

2. **Practical Application and Research Competence:** They apply practical and intellectual skills effectively within their discipline, construct and sustain evidence-based arguments, and solve complex problems using established and innovative techniques.
3. **Effective Communication:** Graduates communicate their findings clearly and persuasively through academic publications and presentations, addressing both expert and general audiences in oral and written formats.
4. **Leadership and Collaboration:** They demonstrate originality and leadership in academic and professional contexts, work collaboratively in teams, and promote interdisciplinary research and engagement.
5. **Creativity and Problem Solving:** M.Phil. graduates formulate and test new hypotheses with scientific rigor. They approach challenges with innovation, independence, and sound judgment.
6. **Managerial and Entrepreneurial Capability:** They plan, implement, and manage research projects efficiently. They also supervise others, make informed decisions in complex scenarios, and take initiative in academic and administrative settings.
7. **Proficiency in Information and Technology Use:** Graduates demonstrate strong ICT skills, data management capabilities, and information literacy essential for modern research and analysis.
8. **Social Engagement and Networking:** They are skilled in fostering collaborative relationships, leading teams, and promoting socially responsible, inclusive, and impactful research initiatives.
9. **Adaptability and Flexibility:** M.Phil. graduates are capable of navigating and responding effectively to dynamic academic, social, and institutional environments, using strategic planning and self-direction.
10. **Values, Ethics, and Professionalism:** They embody integrity, accountability, and professionalism, and are committed to ethical conduct, civic responsibility, and high standards in all their undertakings.
11. **Vision and Purpose:** Graduates have a clear vision for personal growth and societal transformation. They are guided by long-term goals aligned with human development, equity, and sustainability.
12. **Lifelong Learning:** They are reflective learners who continuously update their skills and knowledge. They embrace independent learning and scholarly inquiry for sustained personal and professional development.

Program Objectives – Ph.D. in Social Sciences and Humanities

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Social Sciences and Humanities at PGIHS is designed to develop scholars who can conduct original, high-impact research that advances academic knowledge, informs professional practice, and contributes meaningfully to national and global development. Through rigorous academic training and professional development, the program cultivates intellectual independence, ethical responsibility, and leadership in research, teaching, and policy-making. It prepares highly skilled researchers capable of generating substantive insights within and across disciplines, producing work that meets international standards of academic excellence.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs): Upon successful completion of the PhD program, graduates will be able to:

1. Conduct independent, original, and high-quality research that contributes new knowledge to the field and meets the standards for publication in peer-reviewed and indexed academic journals.
2. Critically engage with complex, controversial, and emerging issues in their field using advanced theoretical and methodological frameworks.
3. Apply research-based knowledge and analytical skills in diverse professional contexts, including academia, policy development, administration, and technology-driven environments.
4. Demonstrate leadership in research and academia, including the ability to supervise, mentor, and evaluate postgraduate-level research with academic rigor and ethical integrity.
5. Communicate complex research findings and theoretical insights clearly and effectively to both academic and non-academic audiences, fostering knowledge dissemination and public engagement.
6. Exhibit autonomy, sound judgment, and ethical responsibility in decision-making and research practice, especially in dynamic and uncertain professional settings.

Coursework may be required as preparatory or value-added support to the research process but does not contribute to the overall credit accumulation. The program allows for both discipline-specific and multidisciplinary research approaches. Graduates of the Ph.D. in Social Sciences and Humanities are expected to emerge as thought leaders, original researchers, and professionals equipped to generate significant academic and societal impact. They demonstrate a high level of intellectual autonomy, research capability, and ethical responsibility in advancing knowledge and addressing complex issues in their field of specialization. They will be characterized by the following attributes:

1. **Advanced Subject and Theoretical Knowledge:** The graduates are capable of generating new knowledge through original, high-quality research that makes a significant contribution to their discipline. They possess the ability to critically read, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate complex data and literature, enabling them to make informed judgments and develop innovative solutions. Furthermore, they demonstrate mastery of a substantial body of knowledge and show adaptability in responding to the evolving needs of their field.

2. **Research and Practical Application:** The graduates possess an expert-level understanding of methodologies and techniques essential for advanced academic inquiry and professional practice. They apply this knowledge effectively in designing and conducting independent, high-impact research, demonstrating both depth of expertise and the capacity for meaningful scholarly contribution.
3. **Communication Proficiency:** The graduates communicate research findings clearly and persuasively through publications and presentations that meet internationally accepted standards. They effectively engage both specialist and non-specialist audiences through articulate oral and written communication, ensuring their work is accessible, impactful, and widely understood.
4. **Leadership and Teamwork:** The graduates demonstrate originality and leadership in addressing academic and professional challenges. They lead interdisciplinary teams, mentor researchers, and foster a collaborative research culture, contributing to the advancement of knowledge and the development of a supportive and innovative scholarly environment.
5. **Creativity and Problem Solving:** The graduates design and implement novel research projects with both academic rigor and creative insight. They make sound decisions even in the face of uncertainty and consistently provide innovative solutions to complex issues, reflecting a strong capacity for critical thinking and strategic problem-solving.
6. **Managerial and Entrepreneurial Skills:** The graduates exercise autonomy and initiative in managing both research and institutional responsibilities. They supervise original research and actively contribute to the strategic direction of professional, academic, or administrative environments, demonstrating strong leadership and a commitment to institutional advancement.
7. **Information Literacy and Technological Competence:** The graduate is skilled in ICT and data management tools essential for modern research. They effectively organize, analyze, and interpret information in diverse formats, ensuring accuracy, efficiency, and relevance in their research processes.
8. **Social Engagement and Collaboration:** The graduate builds professional networks, fosters social responsibility, and leads collaborative research efforts with both academic and community partners.
9. **Adaptability and Resilience:** The graduates strategically adapt to changing academic, technological, and social environments. They demonstrate flexibility and responsibility in navigating complex and unpredictable contexts, ensuring sustained effectiveness and relevance in their professional practice.
10. **Ethical Values and Professionalism:** The graduate upholds high standards of academic integrity, accountability, and social commitment. They operate with professionalism and a strong sense of purpose in all endeavors, consistently reflecting ethical conduct and a deep commitment to contributing positively to society.

11. **Vision and Strategic Thinking:** The graduate articulates a clear personal and societal vision, aligning long-term goals with sustainable and inclusive development objectives.
12. **Lifelong Learning and Reflective Practice:** The graduate engages in continuous self-directed learning to expand their expertise and remain at the forefront of scholarly and professional advancements. They employ reflective practices to foster innovation, support sound decision-making, and promote collective learning, demonstrating a commitment to personal growth and the advancement of their field.

Career Pathways for Graduates

Graduates of the MPhil and PhD programs at the Postgraduate Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences (PGIHS), University of Peradeniya, are exceptionally prepared for diverse and impactful career pathways that demand advanced academic expertise, original research capacity, and interdisciplinary thinking. In academia, MPhil and PhD holders are well-positioned to serve as university lecturers, independent researchers, curriculum developers, and academic consultants, contributing to knowledge generation and institutional development in higher education. In policy and governance, they may take on influential roles as policy advisors, analysts, or strategic planners in government agencies, think tanks, and international organizations, where their research skills and critical insights inform public policy and socio-economic planning.

In the culture and media sector, these graduates can pursue careers as cultural critics, curators, journalists, editors, or creative writers, where their analytical depth and communication abilities enrich public discourse and cultural understanding. Their expertise is also highly valued in civil society and non-governmental organizations, where they can serve as program directors, advocacy specialists, or development researchers, leading transformative initiatives and generating evidence-based solutions for social issues. In public history and heritage, MPhil and PhD graduates can work as archivists, historians, museum educators, or heritage managers, taking leadership in preserving and interpreting historical knowledge and cultural identity.

Overall, the rigorous training, independent research, and interdisciplinary exposure offered through MPhil and PhD programs at PGIHS empower graduates to become thought leaders and change-makers across academic, professional, and societal spheres—both locally and globally.