

Research



UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA



DEWAN TUANKU SYED PUTRA

I AM USM



Handbook

2026/2027

POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

| Master & PhD by Research

Centre for Global Sustainability Studies (CGSS)

Handbook 2026/2027

POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

| Master & PhD by Research



**Centre for Global Sustainability Studies (CGSS),
Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)**

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ABOUT THE CENTRE FOR GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY STUDIES (CGSS)

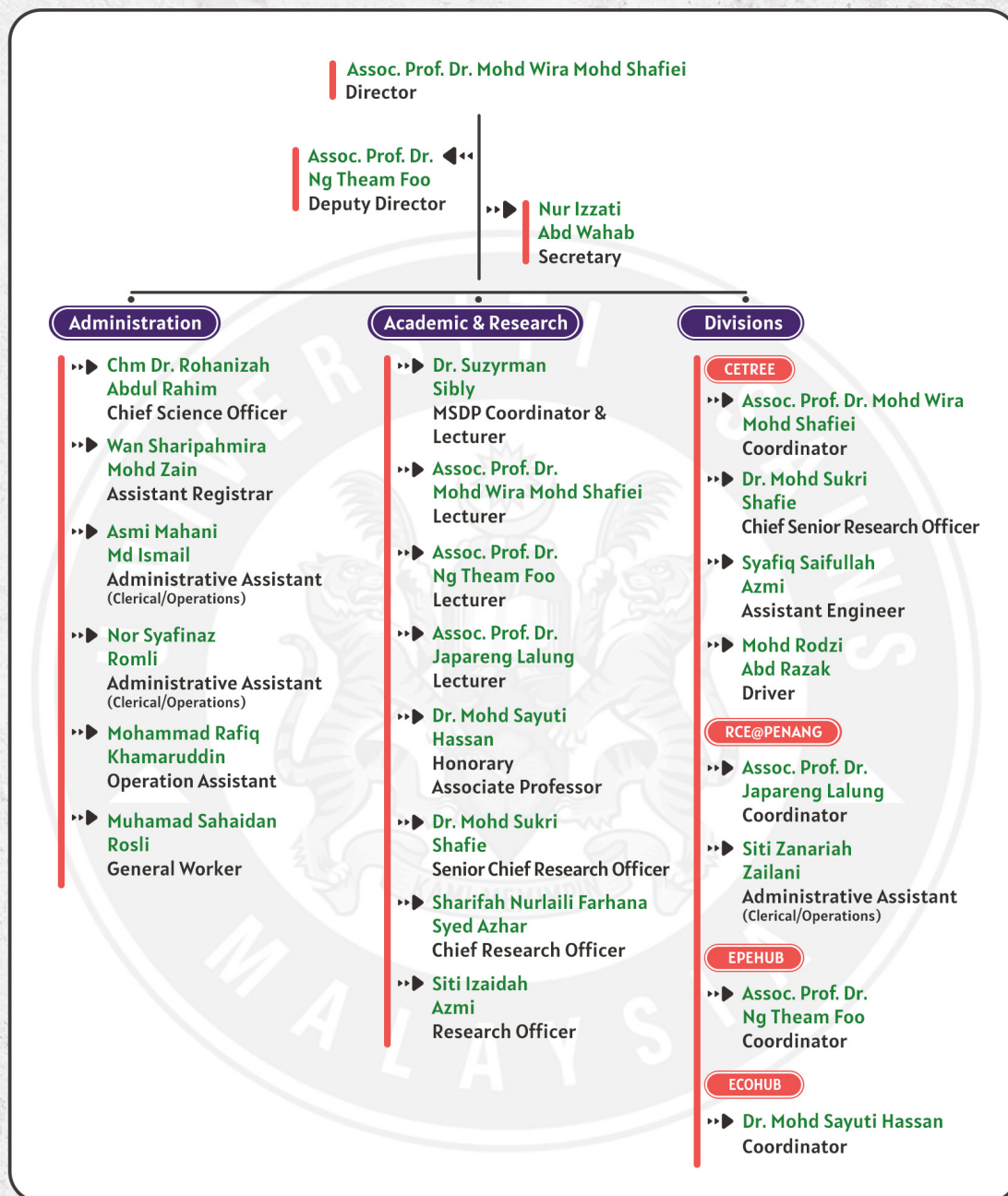
Established in 2009, the Centre for Global Sustainability Studies (CGSS) at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) serves as a multidisciplinary hub dedicated to advancing sustainable development. CGSS collaborates with various sectors, including academia, government agencies, civil society, and international organisations, to address pressing sustainability challenges, particularly those affecting marginalized communities.

The Centre's initiatives encompass education, research, policy advocacy, and community engagement, aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By fostering interdisciplinary approaches and partnerships, CGSS aims to produce tangible impacts and position itself as a leading entity in the field of sustainability.



ORGANISATIONAL CHART

CGSS plays a pivotal role in curriculum development, academic delivery, research supervision, and engagement with national and international partners. The Centre is staffed by a team of academics, and support staffs committed to addressing complex sustainability challenges. The organisational chart below outlines the structure of CGSS.



POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES AT CGSS

CGSS offers a range of postgraduate programmes designed to develop professionals and researchers who are equipped to tackle sustainability challenges through interdisciplinary knowledge, ethical leadership, and impactful research. The programmes offered are:

Master of Science (MSc) in Sustainability

Master of Arts (MA) in Sustainability

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Sustainability

Each programme is structured to provide students with:

- A solid foundation in sustainability concepts, theories, and methods.
- Opportunities to conduct high-quality research that contributes to the well-being of local and global communities.
- Interdisciplinary perspectives to solve complex sustainability issues.
- Practical engagement through collaborations with academics, industry, and civil society.

These programmes are ideal for individuals who aspire to become leaders, researchers, and change-makers in the field of sustainability. Whether pursuing careers in academia, government, industry, or non-governmental organizations, our graduates are equipped with skills to influence policy, innovate sustainable solutions, and lead interdisciplinary efforts toward a more resilient and equitable future.

POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME GOALS

Programme Educational Objectives (PEO)

Master of Science (MSc) in Sustainability

PEO	OBJECTIVES	THINKER (T)	BALANCED (B)	ENTREPRENEURIAL (E)	ARTICULATE (A)	HOLISTIC (H)
		IEG1	IEG2	IEG3	IEG4	IEG5
PEO1	Able to integrate concepts, theories, methods, and current knowledge in conducting high-quality research that benefits the well-being of both local and global communities.		✓			✓
PEO2	An expert in the field, skilled in critically and accurately analyzing issues, and capable of exploring solutions creatively and innovatively through various modern digital platforms.	✓	✓			
PEO3	Experts in the field who practice professional and ethical values in fulfilling their responsibilities to employers, society, and the nation.		✓		✓	

PEO	OBJECTIVES	THINKER (T)	BALANCED (B)	ENTREPRENEURIAL (E)	ARTICULATE (A)	HOLISTIC (H)
		IEG1	IEG2	IEG3	IEG4	IEG5
PEO4	Individuals with effective communication skills and confidence in delivering knowledge both orally and in writing.				✓	✓
PEO5	Capable of generating new knowledge through high-performance research and collaborating with various stakeholders to make an impact on the socio-economic development and sustainability of society and the nation.	✓	✓			

Master of Arts (MA) in Sustainability

PEO	OBJECTIVES	THINKER (T)	BALANCED (B)	ENTREPRENEURIAL (E)	ARTICULATE (A)	HOLISTIC (H)
		IEG1	IEG2	IEG3	IEG4	IEG5
PEO1	Able to integrate concepts, theories, methods, and current knowledge in conducting high-quality research that benefits the well-being of both local and global communities.		✓			✓
PEO2	An expert in the field, skilled in critically and accurately analyzing issues, and capable of exploring solutions creatively and innovatively through various modern digital platforms.	✓	✓			
PEO3	Experts in the field who practice professional and ethical values in fulfilling their responsibilities to employers, society, and the nation.		✓		✓	

PEO	OBJECTIVES	THINKER (T)	BALANCED (B)	ENTREPRENEURIAL (E)	ARTICULATE (A)	HOLISTIC (H)
		IEG1	IEG2	IEG3	IEG4	IEG5
PEO4	Individuals with effective communication skills and confidence in delivering knowledge both orally and in writing.				✓	✓
PEO5	Capable of generating new knowledge through high-performance research and collaborating with various stakeholders to make an impact on the socio-economic development and sustainability of society and the nation.	✓	✓			

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Sustainability

PEO	OBJECTIVES	THINKER (T)	BALANCED (B)	ENTREPRENEURIAL (E)	ARTICULATE (A)	HOLISTIC (H)
		IEG1	IEG2	IEG3	IEG4	IEG5
PEO1	Able to integrate concepts, theories, methods, and current knowledge in conducting high-quality research that benefits the well-being of both local and global communities.		✓			✓
PEO2	An expert in the field, skilled in critically and accurately analyzing issues, and capable of exploring solutions creatively and innovatively through various modern digital platforms.	✓	✓			
PEO3	Experts in the field who practice professional and ethical values in fulfilling their responsibilities to employers, society, and the nation.		✓		✓	

PEO	OBJECTIVES	THINKER (T)	BALANCED (B)	ENTREPRENEURIAL (E)	ARTICULATE (A)	HOLISTIC (H)
		IEG1	IEG2	IEG3	IEG4	IEG5
PEO4	Individuals with effective communication skills and confidence in delivering knowledge both orally and in writing.				✓	✓
PEO5	Capable of generating new knowledge through high-performance research and collaborating with various stakeholders to make an impact on the socio-economic development and sustainability of society and the nation.	✓	✓			

Programme Learning Objectives (PLO)

Master of Science (MSc) in Sustainability

Master of Arts (MA) in Sustainability

PLO	MQF 2.0 Domain	Programme Learning Outcome	IEG Element
PLO1	Knowledge	Demonstrate in-depth and frontier knowledge in the related field.	IEG1 – Thinker
PLO2	Cognitive skills	Apply knowledge critically and integratively to manage and solve complex problems using various techniques, tools or skills for the purpose of producing new ideas or innovative solutions.	IEG2 – Balanced
PLO3	Practical skills	Demonstrate effective and innovative research skills by utilizing specialized research methods and the latest investigative techniques in the relevant field with minimal supervision.	IEG2 – Balanced
PLO4	Interpersonal skills	Demonstrate the ability to collaborate with various parties in carrying out the research.	IEG4 – Articulate
PLO5	Communication skills	Present knowledge, skills, ideas, and research findings clearly using appropriate methods to various parties.	IEG4 – Articulate
PLO6	Digital skills	Utilize appropriate digital technology and software to analyze and enhance research findings.	IEG2 – Balanced

PLO	MQF 2.0 Domain	Programme Learning Outcome	IEG Element
PLO7	Numeracy skills	Use appropriate methods to analyze and evaluate data for the purpose of solving problems.	IEG1 – Thinker
PLO8	Leadership, autonomy and Responsibility	Demonstrate leadership qualities and be responsible when collaborating with others in managing research.	IEG5 – Holistic
PLO9	Personal skills	Demonstrate commitment to lifelong learning and personal development in the relevant field.	IEG5 – Holistic
PLO10	Entrepreneurial skills	Apply entrepreneurial skills to identify opportunities and implement projects related to the field of research.	IEG3 – Entrepreneurial
PLO11	Ethics and professionalism	Comply with safety rules and instructions, and demonstrate principles, professionalism, ethics, and sustainable practices in conducting research.	IEG2 – Balanced

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Sustainability

PLO	MQF 2.0 Domain	Programme Learning Outcome	IEG Element
PLO1	Knowledge	Integrate significant knowledge by using appropriate approaches to address current critical issues and generate original and impactful contributions to the relevant fields.	IEG1 – Thinker
PLO2	Cognitive skills	Critically analyze and synthesize new, complex, and abstract ideas and solve contemporary issues through advanced research methods to produce original contributions that meet international standards.	IEG2 – Balanced
PLO3	Practical skills	Develop original, complex, and specialized research methods and techniques to address emerging problems and create high-quality solutions in the relevant fields with minimal supervision.	IEG2 – Balanced
PLO4	Interpersonal skills	Demonstrate the ability to collaborate cogently with various parties in carrying out research.	IEG4 – Articulate
PLO5	Communication skills	Present research findings, ideas, issues, and solutions clearly, confidently, and effectively to the research community, peers, and society.	IEG4 – Articulate
PLO6	Digital skills	Utilize digital technologies and appropriate software to support, enhance, and justify research findings.	IEG2 – Balanced

PLO	MQF 2.0 Domain	Programme Learning Outcome	IEG Element
PLO7	Numeracy skills	Validate findings by using analysis that is appropriate to the research methods to ensure that conclusions are accurate and impactful.	IEG1 – Thinker
PLO8	Leadership, autonomy and Responsibility	Exhibit intellectual leadership qualities and skills in managing research and related resources.	IEG5 – Holistic
PLO9	Personal skills	Demonstrate commitment to lifelong learning and personal development in shaping future directions within the related field.	IEG5 – Holistic
PLO10	Entrepreneurial skills	Apply entrepreneurial skills to identify opportunities and implement innovative projects in related research.	IEG3 – Entrepreneurial
PLO11	Ethics and professionalism	Comply with safety rules and instructions, ethics and professionalism, and sustainable practices as well as identify the related issues for research advancement in the field and their impact to society.	IEG2 – Balanced

COMPULSARY COURSES

Malaysian Culture and Malay Language (LKM111)

This course is mandatory for all international students and must be successfully completed before graduation. A minimum grade of C is required to pass. Registration must be done through the Online Registration System for Postgraduate (ORSPG) during the designated course registration period. Classes are conducted online and can be accessed through the student e-learning portal.

Students who have previously completed and passed an equivalent course may apply for exemption. Applications for exemption must be submitted to the Dean of the School of Languages, Literacies and Translation for approval.

For any enquiries, please contact: ppblt_courses@usm.my

Research Methodology

This course is a graduation requirement and is compulsory for all research mode students beginning from Semester II, Academic Session 2020/2021 onwards. A passing grade is mandatory for graduation.

The course must be taken during the first semester of study. Students who register after the second week of the semester will need to enroll in the following semester instead.

REGISTRATION & FEES

Registration

- Postgraduate registration is conducted online.
- Self-registration should be completed within the specified dates as outlined in the offer package and the USM academic calendar.
- The latest announcements regarding course registration are available on the Institute of Postgraduate Studies (IPS) website, <https://ips.usm.my>.
- A registered USM student, whether enrolled on a full-time or part-time basis, is not permitted to register for another degree program at any other university, locally or abroad, without prior approval.

Fees

Non-Recurring Fees (payable once)	Recurring Fees (payable every semester)
- Registration Fee - Research Methodology Course - Personal Bond (refundable at the end of studies) - Thesis Fee	Convocation Fee

GRADUATION REQUIREMENT

Research mode students must fulfill the following requirements to be eligible for graduation:

- Fulfill the minimum duration of candidature.
- Pass the pre-requisite courses (if any) as determined by the School/Centre/Institute.
- International students must take LKM111 and obtain at least a grade C to pass.
- Pass the Research Methodology course.
- Fulfill the publication requirements as follow:

Cluster	Master's Degree	PhD
Sciences/ Engineering/ Health & Medical	At least one (1) article journal, accepted or published in journals/proceedings indexed by WoS/SCOPUS.	One (1) article journal, accepted by or published in a journal indexed by WoS in Q1/Q2 OR At least two (2) articles journal accepted or published in journals indexed by WoS/SCOPUS.
Arts	At least one (1) article journal, accepted or published in any categories listed below: i. Journals/proceeding indexed by WoS/SCOPUS/ERA. ii. Journals by the University or listed in myJurnal (Malaysian Journal Management System) from MyCite (Malaysian Citation Centre). iii. Book chapters published by publishers listed in the Thomson Reuters Web of Science (WoS) Master Book List or Penerbit USM or MAPIM.	At least one (1) article journal, accepted or published in journals indexed by WoS/SCOPUS/ERA OR At least two (2) articles journal, accepted or published in any categories listed below:- i. Journals by the University or listed in myJurnal (Malaysian Journal Management System) from MyCite (Malaysian Citation Centre). ii. Book chapters published by publishers listed in the Thomson Reuters Web of Science (WoS) Master Book List or Penerbit USM or MAPIM.

Additional requirement for research mode candidates:

Authorship

- Publications must include the candidate's supervisor(s) as co-author(s).
- The candidate must be the first student author, and only the first student author may use the publication to fulfill graduation requirements.

Plagiarism

- Articles found to be plagiarised will not be accepted for graduation purposes.

Publication Topic

- Publications must be directly related to the candidate's thesis or dissertation.

Affiliation

- All publications must include USM affiliation.

Blacklisted Journals

- Publications in blacklisted journals will not be accepted. The list of blacklisted journals can be found [here](#).

Journal Verification Form

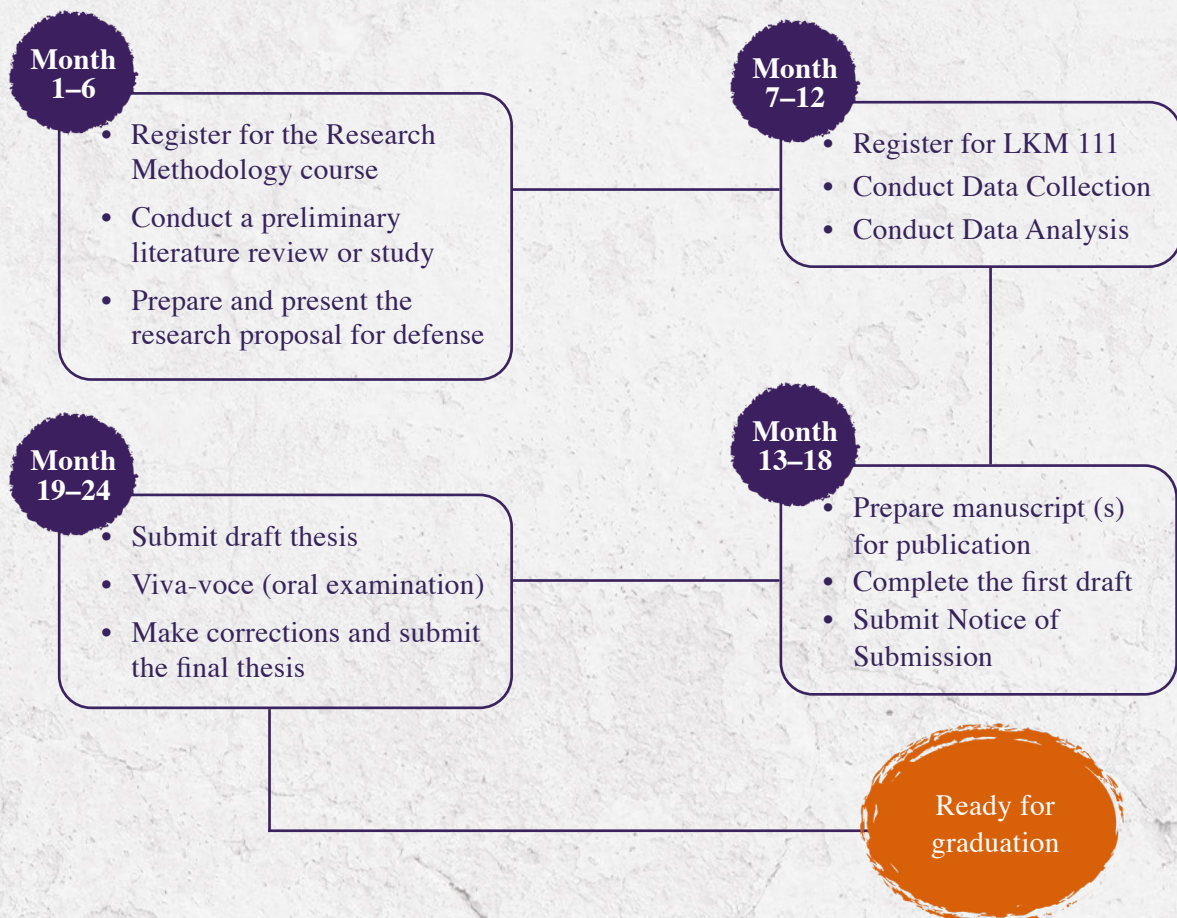
- Candidates must verify their publication using the official form, [Publication Verification Form](#).

DURATION OF CANDIDATURE

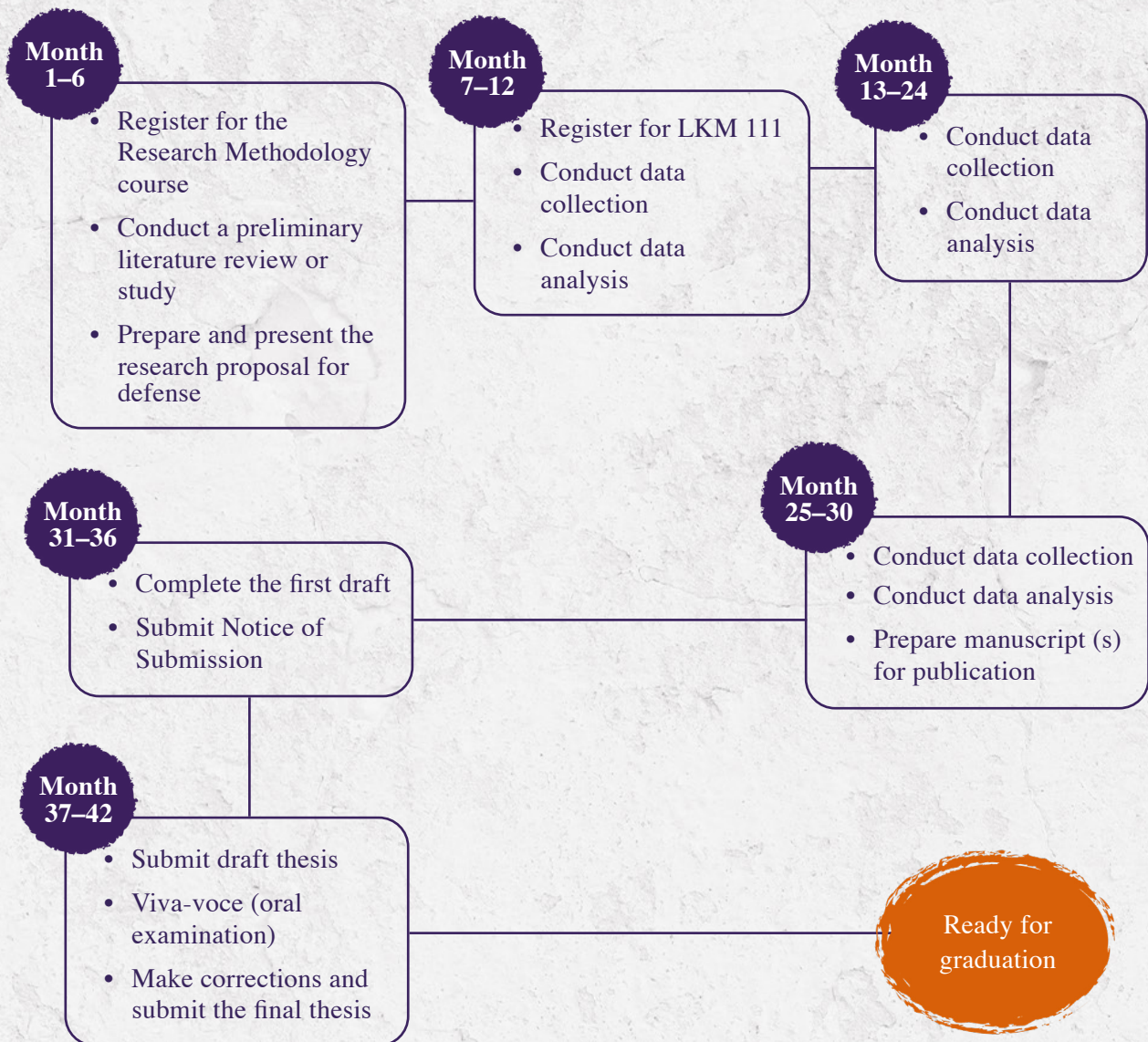
Programme	Full Time		Part Time	
	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
- Master of Science (MSc) in Sustainability - Master of Arts (MA) in Sustainability	2 semester	6 semester	4 semester	10 semester
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Sustainability	4 semester	10 semester	6 semester	15 semester

Suggested Academic Plans

- Master of Science (MSc) in Sustainability
- Master of Arts (MA) in Sustainability



• Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Sustainability



RESEARCH FIELDS & AREAS OF SPECIALISATION

The following is a list of research fields and corresponding areas of specialisation available for postgraduate students. Candidates are encouraged to select a research area that aligns with the expertise of the school and the availability of supervision.

Research Fields	Areas of Specialisation
Information, Computer and Communication Technology	• Artificial Intelligence » Machine Learning
Environmental Sciences	• Environmental Issues and Assessment » Environmental Protection » Climate Change • Environmental Management and Bioremediation » Disaster Management
Economics, Business and Management	• Economics/Applied Economics » Economic Development and Growth » Labour Economics • Management » Crisis and Risk Management
Applied Sciences and Technologies	• Construction and Project Management » Building Economics » Project Management and Costing

Notes:

- All research areas listed are offered at both Master's and PhD levels unless stated otherwise.
- Candidates are advised to consult potential supervisors and review current research trends when selecting a research area.

CGSS EXPERTS

The following is a list of academic staff and research experts from CGSS. Each expert possesses specialised knowledge and experience in areas aligned with the Centre's research focus, including sustainability, environmental sciences, policy studies, and socio-economic development. This section is intended to assist both prospective and current postgraduate students in identifying suitable supervisors and collaborators for their research projects.



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohd Wira Mohd Shafiei

Expertise:

- Construction and Project Management

<https://experts.usm.my/cvitaew/wira>



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ng Theam Foo

Expertise:

- Artificial Intelligence
- Environmental Issues and Assessment

<https://experts.usm.my/cvitaew/tfng>



Dr. Mohd Sayuti Hassan

Expertise:

- Environmental Issues and Assessment
- Environmental Management and Bioremediation

<https://experts.usm.my/cvitaew/sayuti>



Dr. Suzyrman Sibly

Expertise:

- Economics/Applied Economics
- Management

<https://experts.usm.my/cvitaew/suzyrman>

FACILITIES AT CGSS

CGSS provides a range of facilities to support postgraduate research, academic collaboration, and interdisciplinary engagement in sustainability-related studies. These facilities are provided to encourage a conducive environment for high-quality research, innovation, and academic exchange among postgraduate students.

Available Facilities:

Research Workspace

- CGSS provides a shared open-space area equipped with workstations and internet access. The workspace provides a quiet and collaborative environment for postgraduate students to carry out their research-related tasks.

Meeting and Discussion Rooms

- CGSS is equipped with dedicated rooms with audio-visual equipment for academic meetings, research discussions, proposal defences, and small seminars.

Resource Access

- As CGSS is located in the same building as the USM Hamzah Sendut Library, students also benefit from convenient access to one of the university's most comprehensive academic libraries. This proximity allows for seamless integration of research activities with a broad range of printed and digital resources.

Administrative Office

- CGSS provides assistance related to research support, postgraduate matters, and coordination of academic activities within CGSS.

ICT Support and Wi-Fi Access

- High-speed internet and IT support are available throughout the centre to ensure smooth digital connectivity for research and online classes.

Shared Equipment and Software

- CGSS provides access to relevant research tools, data analysis software (e.g., SPSS, NVivo), and environmental assessment resources which may be arranged upon request.

Note:

Facility usage may be subject to availability and advance booking. For access or enquiries, students are advised to contact the CGSS administrative office.

USM ACADEMIC CALENDAR



ACADEMIC CALENDAR - ACADEMIC SESSION 2026/2027

FOR ALL SCHOOLS (EXCEPT FOR SCHOOL OF MEDICAL SCIENCES AND SCHOOL OF DENTAL SCIENCES)

Main Campus : Registration for New Student (18 - 20 September 2026) / **Orientation Week (21 - 26 September 2026)

Engineering Campus : Registration for New Student (20 September 2026) / **Orientation Week (21 - 26 September 2026)

Health Campus : Registration for New Student (19 September 2026) / **Orientation Week (21 - 26 September 2026)

SEM	WEEKS	ACTIVITIES	DATES	REMARKS
ONE	1	Teaching & Learning (T&L 7 Weeks)	Monday, 28.09.2026 - Sunday, 04.10.2026	29 & 30.09.2026, Tuesday & Wednesday - Sultan of Kelantan's Birthday (Health Campus)
	2		Monday, 05.10.2026 - Sunday, 11.10.2026	
	3		Monday, 12.10.2026 - Sunday, 18.10.2026	
	4		Monday, 19.10.2026 - Sunday, 25.10.2026	
	5		Monday, 26.10.2026 - Sunday, 01.11.2026	
	6		Monday, 02.11.2026 - Sunday, 08.11.2026	08.11.2026, Sunday - Deepavali**
	7		Monday, 09.11.2026 - Sunday, 15.11.2026	
	8	Mid-Semester Break (Sem I) (1 Week)	Monday, 16.11.2026 - Sunday, 22.11.2026	
	9	Teaching & Learning (T&L 7 Weeks)	Monday, 23.11.2026 - Sunday, 29.11.2026	
	10		Monday, 30.11.2026 - Sunday, 06.12.2026	
	11		Monday, 07.12.2026 - Sunday, 13.12.2026	
	12		Monday, 14.12.2026 - Sunday, 20.12.2026	
	13		Monday, 21.12.2026 - Sunday, 27.12.2026	25.12.2026, Friday - Christmas Day
	14		Monday, 28.12.2026 - Sunday, 03.01.2027	01.01.2027, Friday - New Year 2027
	15		Monday, 04.01.2027 - Sunday, 10.01.2027	
	16	Revision Week (1 Week)	Monday, 11.01.2027 - Sunday, 17.01.2027	
	17	Examination (3 Weeks)	Monday, 18.01.2027 - Sunday, 24.01.2027	22.01.2027, Friday - Thaipusam
	18		Monday, 25.01.2027 - Sunday, 31.01.2027	
	19		Monday, 01.02.2027 - Sunday, 07.02.2027	06 & 07.02.2027, Saturday & Sunday - Chinese New Year
	20	Mid-Semester Break / Industrial Training (4 Weeks)	Monday, 08.02.2027 - Sunday, 14.02.2027	08.02.2027, Monday - First Day of Ramadan
	21		Monday, 15.02.2027 - Sunday, 21.02.2027	
	22		Monday, 22.02.2027 - Sunday, 28.02.2027	24.02.2027, Wednesday - Nuzul Al-Quran
	23		Monday, 01.03.2027 - Sunday, 07.03.2027	
TWO	24/1	Teaching & Learning (T&L 7 Weeks)	Monday, 08.03.2027 - Sunday, 14.03.2027	10 & 11.03.2027, Wednesday & Thursday - Eid al-Fitr**
	25/2		Monday, 15.03.2027 - Sunday, 21.03.2027	
	26/3		Monday, 22.03.2027 - Sunday, 28.03.2027	
	27/4		Monday, 29.03.2027 - Sunday, 04.04.2027	
	28/5		Monday, 05.04.2027 - Sunday, 11.04.2027	
	29/6		Monday, 12.04.2027 - Sunday, 18.04.2027	
	30/7		Monday, 19.04.2027 - Sunday, 25.04.2027	
	31/8	Mid-Semester Break (Sem II) (1 Week)	Monday, 26.04.2027 - Sunday, 02.05.2027	01.05.2027, Saturday - Labour Day 02.05.2027, Sunday - Substitute Holiday for Labour Day (Health Campus)
	32/9	Teaching & Learning (T&L 7 Weeks)	Monday, 03.05.2027 - Sunday, 09.05.2027	
	33/10		Monday, 10.05.2027 - Sunday, 16.05.2027	
	34/11		Monday, 17.05.2027 - Sunday, 23.05.2027	17.05.2027, Monday - Eid al-Adha** 18.05.2027, Tuesday - Substitute Holiday for Eid al-Adha** (Health Campus) 20.05.2027, Thursday - Wesak Day
	35/12		Monday, 24.05.2027 - Sunday, 30.05.2027	
	36/13		Monday, 31.05.2027 - Sunday, 06.06.2027	06.06.2027, Sunday - Islamic New Year
	37/14		Monday, 07.06.2027 - Sunday, 13.06.2027	07.06.2027, Monday - Substitute Holiday for Islamic New Year (Main Campus & Engineering Campus) 07.06.2027, Monday - Yang di-Pertuan Agong's Birthday
	38/15		Monday, 14.06.2027 - Sunday, 20.06.2027	
	39/16	Revision Week (1 Week)	Monday, 21.06.2027 - Sunday, 27.06.2027	
	40/17	**Examination (2 Week)	Monday, 28.06.2027 - Sunday, 04.07.2027	
	41/18		Monday, 05.07.2027 - Sunday, 11.07.2027	07.07.2027, Wednesday - Georgetown World Heritage City Day 10.07.2027, Saturday - Penang Governor's Birthday
COURSES DURING SEMESTER BREAK	42/19	Examination (3 Week)	Monday, 12.07.2027 - Sunday, 18.07.2027	
	43/20		Monday, 19.07.2027 - Sunday, 25.07.2027	
	44/21	Semester II Break / Industrial Training (10-11 Weeks)	Monday, 26.07.2027 - Sunday, 01.08.2027	
	45/22		Monday, 02.08.2027 - Sunday, 08.08.2027	
	46/23		Monday, 09.08.2027 - Sunday, 15.08.2027	15.08.2027, Sunday - Prophet Muhammad's Birthday
	47/24		Monday, 16.08.2027 - Sunday, 22.08.2027	16.08.2027, Monday - Substitute Holiday for Prophet Muhammad's Birthday
	48/25		Monday, 23.08.2027 - Sunday, 29.08.2027	
	49/26		Monday, 30.08.2027 - Sunday, 05.09.2027	31.08.2027, Tuesday - National Day
	50/27		Monday, 06.09.2027 - Sunday, 12.09.2027	
	51/28		Monday, 13.09.2027 - Sunday, 19.09.2027	16.09.2027, Thursday - Malaysia Day
	52/29		Monday, 20.09.2027 - Sunday, 26.09.2027	

**This Academic Calendar is subject to change

HEBAHAN BPA BIL. 1/2026 (13 FEBRUARI 2026)
SENAT KE-297 (29 JANUARI 2026)

CGSS DIRECTORY

Name	Contact Details
Centre for Global Sustainability Studies (CGSS)	
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