

Capstone Experience in the Master of Buddhist Studies

Capstone – Definition

What does “capstone” mean? A capstone is the final stone, laid on the top of a structure, to strengthen and signify its completion.

What is Capstone Experience in the Master of Buddhist Studies (MBS) programme?

“Capstone Experience” is the final “stone” laid on the MBS programme. It strengthens what we have learned and symbolizes the completion of the Master programme.

Purpose of the Capstone Experience:

- To integrate what students have learned in the curriculum.
- To develop students’ analytical and critical skills.
- To enable students to conduct further research in Buddhist studies.

The Capstone Experience is mandatory for the completion of the MBS programme.

How can the Capstone Experience be fulfilled?

There are two options for completing the Capstone Experience:

	Credit
(i) writing a <u>dissertation</u> (BSTC8999); or	12
(ii) taking ONE <u>extra elective course</u> (BSTC8XXX) + writing a <u>portfolio</u> .	Credit for elective course: 6 Credit for portfolio: 6

Option (i) - Dissertation

The word limit of the dissertation is 10,000 to 15,000 words. This includes the footnotes/endnotes but not the bibliography.

The dissertation should focus on a selected topic and title. Students who are planning to write a dissertation should obtain written approval from a potential supervisor* before enrolling in the dissertation option (BSTC8999).

After submission of the dissertation proposal, the choice of supervisor will be confirmed officially by late December. Guidance and supervision will be provided by means of face-to-face meetings and email communication.

* List of Teachers who can provide supervision for Dissertation:

1. Prof. Georgios T. Halkias
2. Prof. K.-D. Mathes
3. Prof. Catherine Hardie
4. Dr. Guang Xing
5. Dr. G.A. Somaratne
6. Dr. Chung-hui Tsui
7. Dr. Mingyuan Gao

Assessment: 100% coursework

Option (ii) - Extra Elective Course (BSTC8xxx) with Portfolio

Students are required to fulfil all the coursework requirements (coursework and/or examination) of the chosen extra elective course, and to write a “portfolio” with a word limit of 10,000 to 15,000 words, including footnotes/endnotes but not the bibliography.

The portfolio can be composed by revising, integrating and consolidating three or four individual essays of 2,500 to 3,000 words from a total of two to four different courses that a student has taken in the MBS curriculum.

A mission statement of about 1,000 words should be provided in the portfolio to substantiate how/why these essays are included for understanding the specific theme of the portfolio.

Supervisors of the Portfolio will be assigned by the Capstone Experience Coordinator by late December 2025.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Submission Timeline

For Full-time Students from 2025-26 cohort & Part-time Year 2 (Final Year) Students from 2024-25 cohort[#]:

Sept to mid-Nov 2025	To choose either (i) Dissertation or (ii) Extra elective course plus Portfolio. To decide the topic/title of the dissertation/portfolio (by consulting the course teachers and the Capstone Experience Coordinator).
15 Nov 2025	To submit the “Form for Submission of Proposal”, indicating the choice of dissertation/portfolio, the proposed title, and the proposal.
19 Dec 2025	Students will be informed of the result of their choices on dissertation/portfolio. To change their choices if being rejected.
Jan to July 2026	To work on the dissertation or portfolio under supervision of the assigned supervisor.
31 July 2026	To submit the dissertation or portfolio.*

[#]The same principle applies to **part-time students from 2025-26 cohort** who will finish their study in the second year of the curriculum (i.e. in 2026-27). Students are required to **submit the “Form for Submission of Proposal” in November 2026**, and the **deadline for submission of their dissertations or portfolios is 31 July 2027**.

*If a student cannot submit his/her dissertation or portfolio by the deadline, he/she may not be able to graduate at the end of 2026.

Proposed Title and Proposal

Students can consult the Capstone Experience Coordinator regarding the topic/title and proposal of the dissertation/portfolio. After a supervisor is assigned, students can consult their supervisor as well.

In the “[Form for Submission of Proposal](#)”:

- (a) if a student chooses to write a dissertation
 - a proposal of 1,000-1,500 words.
- (b) if a student chooses to compose a portfolio
 - a proposal of 300 to 500 words.

Tutorials will be arranged to assist the students on the Capstone Experience. Dates of the tutorials will be announced further.

Enquiries about the Capstone Experience

Please contact Dr. Tony Chui, the Capstone Experience Coordinator, at 3917-7204 or tonychui@hku.hk if you need further information.