

(For students admitted in 2025-26 or before)

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 are required to submit their proposal to a potential supervisor* by November 15, 2026. The supervisor will review the proposal and confirm those students whom they are willing to supervise by providing their written approval by December 31, 2026. Students may only proceed with enrollment in the dissertation course (BSTC8999) after receiving the supervisor’s written approval.

Those who fail to secure a dissertation supervisor by December 31, 2026 should choose to do Option (ii) below.

Please prepare the following when approaching your potential dissertation supervisors:

1. A research proposal for the dissertation (1,000-1,500 words)
2. Brief literature review section
3. Related bibliography

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 (halkias@hku.hk)
2. Prof. Klaus-Dieter Mathes (kdmathes@hku.hk)
3. Prof. Catherine Hardie (cehardie@hku.hk)
4. Prof. Ma Zhouyang (mzy2026@hku.hk)
5. Dr. Guang Xing (guangxin@hku.hk)
6. Dr. G.A. Somaratne (soma@hku.hk)
7. Dr. Chung-hui Tsui (chunghui@hku.hk)

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 to students based on the area of interest indicated on the Capstone Experience application form.

Submission Timeline

For final year students*:

Date	Students concerned	Details
Sept to mid-Nov 2026	For ALL final year students	To consider whether to do (i) Dissertation or (ii) Portfolio
November 15, 2026	ONLY for students who plan to do Dissertation	Deadline to reach out and submit complete dissertation proposals to potential supervisors for their consideration.
December 31, 2026	ONLY for students who plan to do Dissertation	Final day to receive written confirmation from a potential dissertation supervisor. Students who have not secured a supervisor by this date should consider their dissertation application unsuccessful and must proceed with the “Portfolio” option.

January 10, 2027	For ALL final year students	Submission of the <u>“Capstone Experience Application Form”</u>
January 31, 2027	ONLY for students who do Portfolio	Final day to receive notification on the assignment of supervisors.
January to July 2027	For ALL final year students	To work on the dissertation or portfolio under supervision of the assigned supervisor. Students are expected to reach out to their supervisors proactively for supervision.
July 31, 2027	For ALL final year students	Submission deadline of both Dissertation and Portfolio.

*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 2027.

Submission of “Capstone Experience Application Form”

Students should submit the [“Capstone Experience Application Form”](#) along with the following:

- i) for student choosing **Dissertation**, please attach:
 1. a complete proposal endorsed by the supervisor, including the following:
 - i) A research proposal for the dissertation (1000-1500 words)
 - ii) Brief literature review section
 - ii) Related bibliography
 2. the written approval from the supervisor on agreeing with the supervision
- ii) for student choosing **Portfolio**, please indicate:
 1. one area of interest among the choices available in the application form
(Portfolio topic is not needed in the application stage and will be developed after supervisor is assigned to student)

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.