

Chapter 9

MyPhD Planner v.3.0

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Abstract

It is essential for the postgraduate students enrolled in masters and doctoral programs to complete their studies within the stipulated period (Graduate on time). This is because, the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) Malaysia and scholarship awarded university impose a necessary condition for the PhD Candidates to graduate on time within three years without any extension granted under any circumstances. Thus, MyPhD Planner is an online system which is developed to provide a platform for PhD Candidates in planning, coordinating and monitoring their PhD journey. The purpose of this online system is to assist the PhD candidates in organising their studies and facilitate the organisations in achieving their target percentage of Graduate on Time (GOT) for PhD students. The development of MyPhD Planner starts with the prototype version which offered a limited function. The second version of MyPhD Planner improvised by providing more interactive functions that help in guiding student management throughout their study period. Next, in MyPhD Planner version 3.0, the system will provide the notification and generate the report for students' reference in keeping their track of study. Hence, it is hoped that this system will bring vast benefit to the academician as well as the university in enhancing their human capital.

Keywords: Graduate on Time (GOT), Online System, Ph.D. Candidates

Introduction

The Minister of Higher Education Malaysia (MOHE) has set up The Malaysian Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (Higher Education) to ensure the sustainability continued excellence in the Malaysian higher education system by introducing ten critical shifts (MoHE, 2018). One of the key performances in the blueprint is the financial sustainability (shift No. 5) which highlighted on the improving the university financing strategies. In achieving this strategy, one of the focus is to strengthen the academic productivity in the universities. This strategy highlighted the significant impact of the intake graduate on time (iGOT). According to the data published in MyMOHES database for the year 2013 and 2014, on average, 2 in 5 post-graduate degrees (master's and PhD) students graduate on time with the median iGOT for master's and PhD were only 42% and 33% respectively (UniTP Silver Book, 2017, p.29). GOT may reduce the financial burden of the university and increase the productivity. Even though the student who took a longer time to graduate still got the degree, but, it costs more to the university (MOHE, 2017). Thus, the higher percentage of the student to graduate on time is significant to the university. Therefore, MyPhD Planner which was first developed in 2016 aims to assist the student, particularly PhD candidates to graduate on time by properly manage their PhD task and events. The first version of the planner introduced in 2016 was the initial version which has a

limited function. In the year 2017, the second version presented a little upgraded of the function. To enhance the the purpose of the planner, MyPhD Planner v.3.0 comes with a more excellent feature as described in the following subtitle.

Development of MyPhD Planner

MyPhD Planner is an online planner that has been developed based on all requirements needed by the universities, Minister of Higher Education and also other activities related to self-development of PhD students. The first version of MyPhD Planner (Figure 1.0) notified any random activities or requirements that must be fulfilled by the students in short time range. The function of MyPhD Planner v.1.0 is quite similar to the Google Calendar which the students need to set their upcoming activities and requirements that must be reminded.

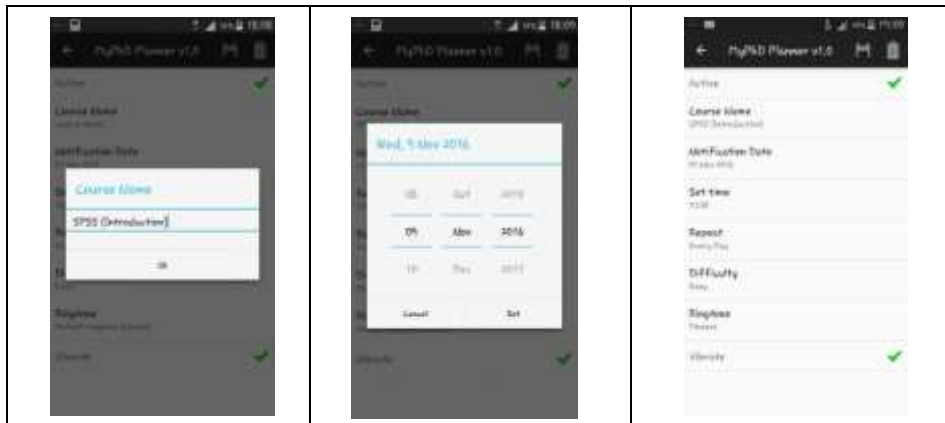


Figure 1.0 : MyPhD Planner v1.0

Next, the planner is characterized into several interface that represent various phase of study which are Pre-Phd Stage, Phd Year 1 Stage, PhD Year 2 Stage and PhD Year 3 Stage. This is because the requirements and activities for each year of study are varies according to the level of study. Every year, the students students also need to manage their academic activities in improving their progress report and performance appraisal form. The students also need to manage their activities for improving the knowledge and skills related with the PhD.

Therefore, the planner is develop to help the students to manage their needs and activities online. As example, in PhD Year 1 stage interface, all the requirements from universities (place of study and sponsorship) and Ministry of Higher Education listed in each row as shown in Figure 2.0. Other than that, there also a space to manage self-development either suggested by the university or by others. The list of each requirements and activities can be referred to the Figure 3.0, Figure 4.0 and Figure 5.0. The student need to set a date for each activities in order to remind them for completing their task on time and manage their time along the year. The students also permitted to fill in the title of the activities next to list as an evidence in preparing progress report or performance appraisal. After that, the planner will mark the activities in the MyPhD Calendar as for reminder or reference in future.

Figure 2.0 : PhD Year 1 Stage Interface



Figure 3.0 : List of requirements from the university – place of study



Figure 4.0 : List of requirements from the university – sponsorship



Figure 5.0 : List of courses for self-development by university



The significant of MyPhD Planner v.2.0 at this development stage is to enable student to plan their PhD journey by years. However, for the next version of MyPhD Planner, it will facilitate the PhD student in organizing their PhD activities by allowing them to obtain their summaries of activities for the intended years. It also will assist them to fill up their progress report every six months and performance appraisal form yearly.

Additional Features of MyPhD Planner

In MyPhD Planner version 3.0, the system provide notification for student. This notification act as reminder of activities that the students' should attend or any related submission that need to be fullfill by them. Notification will be send to users through a registered email address. Subsequently, the new and updated version of phd planner v3 also enable for report generating. Hence this function will assist students' in keeping their study track and also can be use as recorded data for future reference.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, MyPhD Planner v.3.0 comes with new and updated features that could help the PhD students to manage their activities efficiently throughout their study. My PhD Planner v.3.0 can generate semester or yearly progress report of students. This report able to facilitate the student in filling their study progress and yearly performance appraisal form.

References

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