

DHA SUFFA UNIVERSITY



PHD PROGRAM REGULATIONS- Fall 2023

(These Regulations are to be read in conjunction with DSU Statutes and HEC Graduate Education Policy 2023)

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Record of Amendments

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Chapter-1: Preliminaries

Introduction

1.1 These regulations, called as DHA Suffa University Regulations for PhD Programs, shall be read in conjunction with existing Statutes of the University and relevant HEC guidelines. The Regulations shall apply to PhD and equivalent degree programs conducted in the University.

1.2 It shall be implemented from Fall 2023 batch as per the approval of HEC Graduate Education Policy 2023 by 13th ACM. However, Students enrolled before fall 2023 may take advantage of the provisions of these regulation in the light of HEC Graduate Policy 2023. In matters where these regulations are silent, other relevant rules, regulations and procedures of DSU shall apply. In case of any doubt regarding the interpretation of these regulations, and in matters not clearly covered under these and other regulations of DSU, the matter shall be referred to Board of Advance Studies and Research or Academic Council for the final decision. In addition, PhD requirements are revised by HEC from time to time which shall be complied with and shall take precedence over these Regulations, should there be a conflict.

1.3 In the event of any change desired in the document, an amendment request is to be put up to the Directorate of Post Graduate Programs for processing.

1.4 **Definitions:** The expressions used in these regulations, unless otherwise specified, or unless there is anything repugnant to the Charter and Statutes of DSU, shall have the meanings as follows:

- a. **Admissions Committee** means a committee of academic and research staff of the University and/or other qualified persons constituted by the Head of the Constituent Unit / Dean to determine suitability of PhD candidates for admission.
- b. **Advisory Committee** means a committee of academic and research staff of the University and other qualified persons approved / ratified by the BASR for ensuring the integrity and quality of PhD Candidate's work.
- c. **Candidate** means a person seeking admission into or pursuing PhD program in DSU.
- d. **Comprehensive Examination** means an examination conducted after the successful completion of coursework of a PhD program, to ascertain the suitability of a candidate to undertake research work. The examination will carry no credit hours and be graded on Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory basis.
- e. **Co-Supervisor** means a member of academic and / or research staff of the University or a person (from outside the University) who shall, on the basis of his / her expertise in the field of study of the candidate, assist the Supervisor in ensuring the effective supervision of the research work. The Co-Supervisor will be approved/ratified by the BASR.
- f. **Defense** means a Candidate's defense of their research work, in the form of presentation and/or demonstration, before the Panel of Examiners, in the presence of the senior academic and research staff and other interested persons, within and outside the University, as may be invited by the University.
- g. **Department** means a Department of the University in which a PhD candidate is enrolled for his/her studies.
- h. **Examiner** means a person, qualified and experienced in the area of research of a

candidate, approved/ratified by the BASR to examine and/or evaluate his / her thesis work.

- i. **External Examiner** means a scholar from within or outside Pakistan, not an employee of DSU at the time, who will evaluate the thesis of the Candidate. The External Examiner shall have a PhD Degree in the relevant field and approved/ratified by the BASR.
- j. **Board of Advance Studies and Research (BASR)** means Board of Advance Studies and Research of the University, constituted under the Charter.
- k. **Supervisor** means a member of academic and research staff of the University or a person from outside the University who has expertise in the field of study of the Candidate and approved/ratified by the BASR to supervise the research work.
- l. **Program** means PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) program of study or such other programs which are considered as equivalent to it.
- m. **Research** means the process leading to the production of original scholarly work in the form of a thesis for the purpose of obtaining PhD degree.
- n. **Thesis** means the written description of results of original research undertaken for the purpose of obtaining PhD degree.
- o. **Master Programs** means sixteen years qualification and Equivalent Degree Programs.
- p. **Statement of Purpose** means the detailed declarative version of topic of the research thesis which indicates objectives of the thesis and gives the reader a precise understanding of what the thesis will cover. It is the statement of purpose around which the entire thesis revolves (as per HEC policy in vogue).

Committees for PGP Program: In addition to BASR, following committees have been constituted and their functional domains range from procedures developments to their implementing and facilitating the conduct of PhD programs of the university.

1.5 Doctoral Committee: Doctoral Committee shall deal all cases referred by the HoDs and Deans for their resolutions at university level. It shall resolve all urgent cases, if BASR is not due in one month through the on-minute sheet approval processes of the competent authorities.

1.5.1 Composition of Doctoral Committee

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| a. PVC / Appointee of the VC DSU | Chair |
| b. Deans | Members |
| c. Registrar | Member |
| d. Director PGP | Member |
| e. Director QEC | Member |
| f. Director ORIC | Member |
| g. HoDs | Members |
| h. PGPCs | Members |
| i. Deputy Director PGP | Secretary |
| j. Any other person with the approval of the Chair Person | |

1.5.2 Terms of Reference

- a. Scrutinize the agenda items being forwarded to BASR.
- b. Appraise research efforts of DSU with emphasis on quality and usefulness.
- c. Monitor the practices of HEC and DSU policies.

- d. Overview supervisor's appointment is in line with the HEC guidelines
- e. Advise on the selection of examiners where required.
- f. Review the time bar cases for their decision in BASR.
- g. Any other agenda item raised by departments.

1.6 Departmental Research Committee (DRC)

1.6.1 Composition: DRC shall be constituted by Dean of the Faculty and headed by the HOD. PGP Coordinator shall act as the Secretary of the DRC. All regular/adjunct PhD qualified faculty members of department and at least two members including from non-teaching departments of the DSU or from other Higher Education Institutions. DRCs shall be established in those departments where numbers of PGP students warrant its need with the approval of the VC. Until such committees are created, the related points shall be discussed in the Doctoral Committee.

1.6.2 Terms of Reference

- a. Propose Supervisor(s) and Examiners/Evaluators to BASR.
- b. Evaluate bi-annual progress reports of PhD scholars.
- c. Review the time bar cases of students who have extended beyond maximum duration of programs under force majeure events in the light of HEC policy.
- d. Undertake any other research related responsibility assigned by the Dean.
- e. DRC shall meet at least twice a year; however special DRC could be held whenever needed. The quorum for a meeting of the DRC shall be half of the total numbers, a fraction being counted as one. DRC shall maintain the minutes of its meetings and forward copy to the PGP Directorate.
- f. Decisions of the committee shall be made by consensus as DSU policy parameters.

1.7 Admissions Committee

1.7.1 Composition: The Admissions Committee shall be constituted by the Dean comprising at least three regular/adjunct faculty members/research staff holding PhD degrees and headed by the HOD.

1.7.2 Terms of Reference

- a. Determine/assess the suitability of PhD candidates through written test/interviews and courses undertaken. It will also assess the eligibility of candidates' interdisciplinary admissions and accordingly recommend the deficiency courses of 6-9 credits of level 7 for PhD programs.
- b. Scrutinize the documents according to eligibility criteria required for admission in respective program including the GRE/HAT General/Equivalent admission test results and equivalency certificate of all foreign degrees/certificates issued by the HEC.
- c. The Admissions Committee shall prepare the admissions test as per the latest HEC guidelines.
- d. The Admissions Committee may interview the applicants to assess their suitability for the program applied for.
- e. The Admissions Committee shall recommend suitable candidates for approval to the Vice Chancellor through Dean of the Faculty, Director PGP for admissions.
- f. The Admission Office shall send offer letters to selected candidates. The selected candidates shall be required to register on or before the date given in the offer letter; failure to do so shall result in the withdrawal of admission offer.

1.8 Advisory Committee

1.8.1 Composition: Following is the composition, the committee shall follow the HEC guidelines:-

- a. Supervisor Convener

b. Co-supervisor (if any)	Member
c. A senior faculty member as nominated by HoD	Member
d. A representative of the BASR, nominated by Dean	Member
e. Expert(s) from field of research, nominated by Dean	Member

1.8.2 Approval of Supervisors: BASR, on the recommendation of the HOD and the Dean of the Faculty, shall approve/ratify the Supervisors and Co-Supervisors.

1.8.3 Terms of Reference

- Assist the Supervisor in his/her role and provide additional advice to the PhD scholar in technical and research related matters.
- Oversee the research progress of PhD scholar to ensure that the overall progress of the thesis is on track and satisfactory and that any issues affecting progress are identified and addressed.
- Evaluate research proposal, thesis seminar and conduct thesis defense.
- Meet at least biannually to assess progress of the scholar.

1.9. Ethical Review Committee (ERC)

1.9.1 Composition: Three or more suitable members selected by the Dean from within or outside DSU depending upon kinds of expert opinion needed in the research work as per HEC guidelines.

1.9.2 Terms of Reference

- Review the research proposals involving human or other living subjects, whether individuals or communities, before the study begins, and ensure that the conditions that could affect the rights of subjects during a study are approved for the study to begin.
- Identify ethical issues or concerns posed by research involving human subjects and undertake sufficient assessment of proportionality of risks and benefits for the individuals and community involved by those issues in order to secure the individuals'/community well-being by maximizing possible benefits while minimizing risks.
- Ensure the subjects of research are clearly aware of the nature of the research work and their position in respect of it.
- Protect potential participants in the research from being coerced or manipulated to participate in the research work especially those whose capacity is impaired, not capable of giving voluntary consent, or who are in some way dependent or vulnerable to the research revealing. And ensure that the consent being secured is valid, preferably in writing, and the participants are sufficiently informed and have adequate time to decide without pressure.
- Ensure subjects shall be able to easily withdraw from a research protocol without giving reasons and without suffering any penalty or alteration in their relationship with providers of services, if any.
- Ensure respect for the research participants through protecting their individual autonomy, especially those who are not capable of taking autonomous decisions and maintaining confidentiality of the data and information collected.
- Ensure protection of the research subject against any possible serious bodily harm.
- Examine and evaluate the process, printed documents and other tools that shall be employed for collecting data.
- Assess the incentives that shall be given to the participants to ensure that no unethical

consideration is involved in the incentives being offered.

- j. Attempt to reduce and resolve the ethical issues involved in the research as much as possible.
- k. Ensure the integrity of academic research ethics in the PhD thesis.
- l. Provide guidance to the PhD Supervisor/Co-Supervisor and Students/Scholars on academic misconduct, where necessary.
- m. Promote data privacy and forbid unauthorized access to private and sensitive data.
- n. Ensure that the plagiarism has been tested by the licensed software and HEC guidelines in vogue are followed in true spirit.
- o. Conduct periodic appraisal of the research being undertaken to ensure subjects of research are protected from harm, their confidentiality is maintained, and their rights are respected. Serious adverse events shall be reported promptly to the Doctoral Committee.
- p. The ERC may withdraw approval of the research work if it is not satisfied with the level of adherence to the basic ethical guidelines by the student.
- q. Confidentiality of the ERC's proceedings shall be preserved.

1.10 Grievance Management Committee

1.10.1 Composition: Three PhD faculty members excluding supervisor appointed by the Dean for all the PhD scholars. The committee will be fully aware of grievance processes and appropriately competent to ensure that the processes are consistently applied.

1.10.2 Terms of Reference

- a. Assist the students or potential students to launch complaints without fear of discrimination.
- b. Respect the behavior of all parties when handling grievances.
- c. Communicate effectively in a timely manner to keep all parties up to date with the progress of grievances.
- d. Ensure that all information is held at the utmost confidence.
- e. Ensure that the principles of natural justice are applied.
- f. Ensure that grievances are resolved to the satisfaction of all parties.
- g. Ensure the compliance with the grievance management system as attached.

1.11 Relevance Assessment Committee (RAC): Wherever required, the subject and supervisory relevance of faculty members shall be determined based on:-

- a. Qualifications including bachelor, master, and doctoral degrees.
- b. The research includes thesis/dissertation and published articles.
- c. Experience consisting of teaching and administrative domains.

1.11.1 Composition: Minimum five PhD faculty members including respective Dean as head of committee, and Director QEC, two relevant external members (Professor/Associate Professor Level) and HOD/PGP Coordinator/FM involved in preparation of SAR will form the RAC. RAC will be recommended by the Dean and subsequently approved by the Vice Chancellor. The composition will be as per requirement of the HEC.

1.11.2 Terms of Reference

- a. Recommend appointment of the relevant PhD Supervisor and Co-Supervisor (if any) of the PhD student based on bachelor, master and PhD degree, research including supervised thesis/dissertations and published articles, teaching and administrative

experience

- b. Forward the appointment report with detailed reasons and rational for the assessment decision to the Director PGP for subsequent approval by the VC and processing in BASR.

1.12 Board of Advanced Studies and Research (BASR): It is applicable as available at Chapter 7 of DSU Statutes.

1.13 Postgraduate Programs (PGP) Directorate (PGPD): PGP Directorate ensures smooth and efficient implementation and progression of PG Programs at DSU in line with HEC instructions and DSU Statutes/Rules and policies.

1.13.1 Composition of PGPD

- a. Director (As per HEC GEP 2023, amended from time to time).
- b. Deputy Director
- c. Research Assistant (as required)
- d. Naib Qasid (exclusive or sharing arrangement, as per DSU policy)

1.13.2 Terms of Reference (Functional Domains of PGPD)

- a. Directorate of PGP shall serve as a monitoring and reporting mechanism responsible to the VC / PVC on the said programs being conducted as per HEC guidelines.
- b. It shall act as the secretariat of the Board of Advanced Studies and Research (BASR) for preparing and channelizing the agenda items till issuance of minutes.
- c. The Directorate shall be responsible for attaining and maintaining the quality of all PGPs being offered in the University as well as the research that is going to be conducted under these programs.
- d. The Directorate shall prepare and maintain operating procedures, describe the complete process for award of a graduate degree and ensure that it remains updated and available for guidance of all the students.
- e. Responsible for the quality of graduate degree programs and research conducted under these programs at DSU.
- f. Develop policies and Rules for PG programs and ensure their effective implementation.
- g. Plan measures/strategies to continuously enhance enrolment in PG programs in line with practices followed by research-led universities.
- h. Ensure induction/admission of quality PG scholars by working proactively through the Deans and the HODs.
- i. Ensure all changes suggested by the statutory and regulatory bodies (HEC, etc.) are incorporated in the PG Rules.
- j. Formally responsible for the monitoring of the progress of PG scholars throughout the academic program, to deal with any issues arising, whether academic or personal.
- k. Ensure the development of a framework and mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of PG programs.
- l. Create database of bi-annually progress reports of PG scholars in consultation with their supervisors.
- m. Develop and maintain records of current and planned PG programs in all the departments

1.13.3 Responsibilities of the Director PGP: He shall be responsible for complete functioning of the Directorate in the light of DSU policies and HEC guidelines as outlined in the HEC GEP

2023 and amended from time to time:-

- a. To monitor that the PGPs are developed and run by the departments as per HEC criteria while ensuring quality of research.
- b. To undertake annual review of the programs to see the maintenance of documents and other records as per HEC review requirements.
- c. To develop policies and regulations for PGP programs and ensure their effective implementations in the University.
- d. To suggest measures and develop strategies to continuously enhance enrolment in PGP in line with practices followed by the leading universities.
- e. To monitor the progress of PGP scholars throughout the academic programs, to deal with any issues arising, whether academic or personal, and to keep record of BASR meetings.
- f. To create database of progress reports of PGP scholars in coordination with their supervisors and HoDs as per DSU guidelines.
- g. To schedule and organize Doctoral Committee meetings; linked with the same, shall also plan and conduct BASR as its secretary.
- h. Director PGP shall also be performing any other task assigned by the VC / PVC for the growth of the programs and building reputation of the university.

1.13.4 Responsibilities of the Deputy Director PGP

- a. To remain understudy to Director PGP and assist in implementing the HEC and DSU policies by the respective department running the PG Programs.
- b. To maintain complete record of research scholars undergoing PG programs as per the check list already issued, essentially to include the following:-
 - (1) Complete details of their educational documents.
 - (2) Entry test results issued by Admissions Office.
 - (3) PG courses completed so far.
 - (4) PhD synopsis/proposals and its approval from the competent authority.
 - (5) Progress reports of the scholars submitted by the Supervisors.
 - (6) Registration, freezing of semester and dropping of courses, transfer cases etc.
 - (7) Details of foreign evaluations along with evaluation reports and details of foreign evaluators.
- c. To interact with the research scholars and their supervisor for updating records.
- d. To maintain academic records as per guidelines of Director PGP, HEC requirements and check list issued at the University level.
- e. To maintain working relations with the departmental PGPCs and respective HoDs for overall growth of the PG Programs as per HEC guidelines.
- f. To maintain and develop records of current and planned PG programs in all the departments of DSU.
- g. To search and disseminate information concerning funding and scholarship opportunities relevant to PG programs.

1.14 PGP Coordinators (PGPC): The existing arrangements at the departments' levels in the given format of PGPC or Program Coordinators or Program Managers have been reorganized in vertical and horizontal linkages and functioning. Vertically, they would continue to be responsible

and reporting to their respective HoDs. Horizontally, they shall be coordinating and adhering to the HEC and DSU policy guidelines from the PGP Directorate.

1.14.1 Appointment Requirements

- a. Preferably a PhD faculty to hold this appointment initially for 2 years, may be extended as per the requirements of the respective department.
- b. PGPC shall be fully acquainted with the HEC policies on PGP, DSU guidelines and best practices being followed in the leading universities.

1.14.2 **Appointment Privileges:** Linked with the amount of work / students' strength, reviewable from time to time upon adoption / availability of automation systems:-

- a. For student strength up to 25, 1 Credit Hours to be counted towards his / her additional responsibilities.
- b. For students' strength 25-75, PGPC is given one course exemption in his / her academic load.
- c. For students' strength 75-150, PGPC shall have two courses exemption towards his / her academic load.
- d. For students' strength 150-400, PGPC shall have three courses exemption towards his / her academic load and one supporting staff as assistant.
- e. For students' strength beyond 400, arrangements shall be reviewed on case-to-case basis in times to come.

1.14.3 Term of Reference of PGPCs

- a. To develop and run the programs as well as build the image of university for enhancing intake without compromising the quality.
- b. To undertake review of the programs at the end of each semester including roadmap, faculty and infrastructural needs in accordance with guidelines of DSU QEC and HEC Quality Assurance Manual.
- c. To be responsible for maintenance of documents and other records as per HEC review requirements and be ready to undertake academic audits.
- d. To prepare semester schedule and timetable as per HEC and DSU legal requirements and communicate with the students as per defined timelines.
- e. To prepare faculty and classroom allocation plan in consultation with the HoD well before the start of the semester.
- f. To supervise teaching by the faculty members, listen to students' problems and initiate teachers' performance reports to the HoD.
- g. To keep record and track of student's attendance and communicate shortfalls to the students' guardians.
- h. To ensure that all examination papers are up-to the mark in standard, prepared in time by respective faculty members and conducted as per DSU rules.
- i. To ensure timely conduct of quizzes and assignments and marking of the papers for compilation of final results including necessary co-ordination with the examination department.
- j. To be responsible to the HoD for ensuring proper use of the equipment and facilities as well as growth of the program.
- k. To plan educational visits for the students outside the campus after necessary

coordination with all concerned as and when needed.

- l. To provide counseling to the students in their academic as well as administrative matters.
- m. To raise requirement of funds for the program and seek new avenues for its growth and benefit to the community.
- n. To undertake feasibility studies of launching new programs including skills developments in respective domains and launch them as per DSU and HEC guidelines in consultation with respective HoDs and Deans.
- o. To ensure that each student has research supervisor as per latest HEC policy and get approval of advisory committees from BASR. Also, to initiate and maintain research progress reports.
- p. To arrange comprehensive exam, proposal defense, plagiarism check, thesis seminar, evaluation and thesis defense as per policy and keep records.
- q. To facilitate admission process and see that admission test is in line with HEC guidelines.
- r. To prepare agenda and working paper for BASR and Doctoral Committee for Master and PhD cases and submit to Dean through HoD.
- s. To perform any other task as assigned by the academic management for the growth of the program and building reputation of the university.
- t. To coordinate the affairs of Graduate Admission Committee as already in vogue and continue creating awareness for better intakes.

1.15 Teaching and Research Assistantships To Graduate Students

1.15.1 A graduate student may be employed as Teaching Assistant (TA) or Research Assistant (RA) during the course of his/her studies at DSU subject to the following rules:

1.15.2 The appointment of TA/RA is purely temporary and shall be made by the Vice Chancellor for up to six months at a time.

1.15.3 Teaching Assistant can only be employed to work under the supervision of an Associate Professor or Professor.

1.15.4 A Research Assistant can only be employed to work under the supervision of a faculty member (Assistant Professor/Associate Professor/Professor) who has an active funded research project. The salary of the Research Assistant is to be paid out of funds of the research project.

1.15.5 The workload of a Teaching Assistant shall include grading of homework assignments and quizzes, teaching in the laboratory, conducting extra help sessions for students beyond the regular/scheduled lectures, preparing material for use in the course, etc.

1.15.6 Regular/scheduled lectures are not to be conducted by a Teaching Assistant. The work of a Teaching Assistant is to be closely supervised by the faculty member to whom the Teaching Assistant is assigned.

1.15.7 The workload of a Research Assistant shall be determined by the faculty member whose research project is being used to pay RA's salary.

1.15.8 The salary of a TA/RA may range between 50% to 100% of the Basic Pay of a Lecturer (without any allowances). The salary of a TA/RA shall be recommended by the HOD, rationalized by the Dean of the Faculty and approved by the Vice Chancellor. The factors used in determining the salary of a TA/RA shall be his/her academic qualifications and the potential to perform with excellence in the tasks to be assigned to him/her.

1.15.9 The TA/RA must maintain the required CGPA to avoid academic probation or deficiency. A graduate student who is currently on academic probation cannot be appointed as TA/RA.

1.15.10 The TA/RA must observe the DSU Faculty Code of Conduct as specified in the Statutes.

Chapter-2: Admissions

Admissions to PhD Programs

2.1 Eligibility

Eligibility criteria for PhD Programs shall be as under, unless changed or modified by the HEC:

Requirement	Description
Academic Qualification	<p>MS/MPhil/Equivalent degree as described in HEC GEP 2023 with CGPA of 3.0/4.0 or 60% in annual system, whether such degree was obtained from Pakistani or foreign universities. If the CGPA/Percentage is not mentioned on the transcript, the candidate must produce equivalent weightage from the parent university. The students having CGPA lower than 3.0 or 60% marks (in the annual system) with strong demonstrated interest in obtaining PhD degree in the most recent degree obtained, may be admitted to a PhD program after fulfilling the following requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> He/she must study additional courses of 9-12 credits of level 7, taking a zero semester at DSU and score minimum 3.0/4.0 CGPA. The admission committee is satisfied that the applicant's knowledge of primary area (level 7) has sufficiently prepared him or her to undertake the course of studies of the doctoral program. These requirements shall be in addition to any other requirements already set for admission to a PhD program. <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Students pursuing MS/MPhil studies and interested in continuing to PhD may be granted provisional admission upon satisfaction of Admission Committee, subject to the fulfilment of the following conditions within a period of one year from the date of provisional admission:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Award of MS/MPhil degree, as prescribed in this policy. Clearance of the admission test, as prescribed in this policy. <p>The admitting university has the right to accept or reject candidate based on an MS degree without research</p>
	<p>For interdisciplinary admissions, the applicant has a strong interest in pursuing PhD in a different discipline. He/she has passed GRE-Subject/Equivalent Test with minimum 50% marks in the discipline of admission and has taken 6-9 CH of deficiency courses of level 7.</p> <p>*Intra-disciplinary refers to sub-disciplines that occur within one of the ten broad disciplines defined by UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-F-2013).</p>
Attestation/Equivalency	HEC's attestation on the candidate's local degrees / HEC's equivalency certificate for the candidate's foreign degrees.
Admission Test	<p>Test equivalent to GRE/HAT General developed at the University, with a passing score of 60%.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Test equivalent to GRE/HAT General, conducted by testing bodies accredited by HEC, with a passing score of 60%.</p> <p>In addition, University may conduct subject test for admission in PhD programs, if required.</p>

Statement of Purpose	<p>Applicants shall be required to submit a statement of purpose (SOP), which shall form an integral part of the application. The admissions committee shall use the information provided to ascertain the preparedness and interest of the candidate in pursuing doctoral studies, and whether the department has the requisite resources to train and supervise the doctoral candidate in the subspecialty in which the applicant is interested. A statement of purpose shall, at least, include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Title of the potential research proposal. Clear articulation of the current understanding of the intended field and ideas for potential research. Explanation of the intended impact of the proposed research. The prospective candidates shall demonstrate passion and enthusiasm for the area of research.
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2.2 Selection, Admission & Registration Procedure

- Admission application on the prescribed form, supported with relevant documents mentioned in the application form, shall be submitted to the Admission Office.
- Applications shall be scrutinized by the Admission Committee of the Department along with all documents including equivalence certificate for the foreign certificates/degrees issued by the HEC, to determine eligibility of the candidates for admission.
- The Admission Committee shall interview eligible candidates and evaluate their research proposals to assess their suitability for the PhD program. Any further selection procedure, including a test, may also be used to assess the suitability of the candidates.
- The Admission Committee shall also examine the statement of purpose of the research work submitted by the candidates along with the admission application for its relevance and strength. Admission interview evaluation shall be done on the prescribed format. The Committee shall verify the availability, consent, and relevance of potential supervisor on the prescribed format.
- Names of the candidates recommended by the Admission Committee for admission to the PhD program shall be forwarded by the HOD through the Dean to the PGP Directorate, which shall process the case for approval of the VC.
- Admission letters to the selected candidates shall be issued by the Admissions Office on the approved format. The selected candidates shall be required to register on or before the date given in the offer letter, the failure to do so shall result in cancellation of admission. Registrar Office will allocate the registration numbers to students.
- Upon registration, DRC/HoD through Dean shall recommend suitable Principal Supervisor, Co-Supervisor (if required) and Advisory Committee, which shall be presented to the BASR for approval. Subsequently, the HOD shall notify Principal Supervisor and Co-supervisor. Constitution of Advisory Committee shall be specified using.

2.3 Migration

- Scholars migrating from the other HEC recognized Universities (with Uniform Semester Examination System) shall be required to complete the residency requirements (minimum 50% time of the regular duration).
- Scholars may also ask for migration to another University or termination of program at any stage. In such cases the scholars shall only be entitled to receive the transcript mentioning the courses completed and not mentioning any research work partially completed.

2.4 Exemption and Transfer of Credits: The BASR, on the request of the HoD through Dean,

may approve/ratify Transfer of Credits or Exemption of Courses in respect of any PhD program course(s) provided that:

- a. The scholar has obtained a CGPA of 3.0/4.0 or 60% aggregate (where CGPA is not given) in the coursework at the time of migration into the DSU.
- b. TOCs and Exemptions will be considered on the basis of course contents, Credit Hours, basic eligibility criteria and a minimum of B grade according to the DSU grading system in the courses for which TOC or Exemption are being sought.
- c. The Exemptions/TOCs do not exceed the total coursework credit hours of the PhD Program offered at the DSU.
- d. Courses covered within three years shall only be considered for TOCs and exemption
- e. The final transcript of the Candidate shall indicate the exempted course(s) with credits and the name of the institution where the courses were originally taken. Transferred courses shall not be used in calculating Candidate's CGPA at DSU.

2.5 Transfer of Credit Procedures

- a. The scholar shall apply for TOC/Exemption on the prescribed format and pay the TOC/Exemption processing fee as per the DSU policy.
- b. The Dean shall constitute a three-member Equivalence Committee from PhD faculty members to ascertain equivalence of the course(s) applied for TOC/Exemption with the course(s) applied against. The Equivalence Committee shall process the case and give its findings on the prescribed format. Based on the findings of the Equivalence Committee, the HoD shall make the recommendation to the through BASR. In case BASR is not due in a month, VC shall approve the case.

Chapter-3: Coursework and Semester Guidelines

3.1 Program Credit Hours

- a. Course Work: 18 credit hours and Research Work: 36 credit hours (as per latest HEC guidelines)
- b. The courses shall be offered through regular classes (i.e., classes taught oncampus by full-time faculty members of the university).
- c. The courses shall be of 800 level. The deficiency courses for PhD should be of 700 level. The deficiency courses shall be additional and non-credit.

3.2 Duration of the PhD Programs: Minimum duration of the PhD programs shall be 3 years. During the first year (2 semesters) coursework shall be carried out by the scholars, followed by a Comprehensive Examination. Research work shall be carried out in the remaining 2 years (4 semesters). Maximum duration of the programs shall be 8 years. At the completion of 6th year, the performance of each scholar must be carefully monitored by the PGPC for subsequent extensions/waivers for 7th and 8th years, subject to the fulfillment of following conditions:

- a. The 7th year extension/waiver will be approved by the Dean subject to the processing (thesis submission or review). However, if the scholar has not been able to meet the prescribed condition, Dean shall ask Advisory Committee to investigate the matter, give a time frame to scholar to submit thesis accordingly.
- b. The 8th year extension/waiver will be approved by the VC subject to processing (thesis submission or review) of foreign evaluation (FE) and/ or final PhD Thesis defense (FTD). However, if the scholar has not been able to meet the prescribed condition, Dean shall investigate it through Advisory Committee and give a time frame to scholar to submit thesis accordingly. Post submission of thesis for FE/FTD, the extension will be recommended by the Dean for subsequent approval by the VC. The waiver request shall be initiated by the student on the prescribed form.
- c. Beyond the Maximum Duration, the scholar shall become Time-Barred. If he/she is unable to complete the PhD degree within the prescribed timeframe, waiver to the Time-Bar may be granted under force majeure events (i.e., delay on account of circumstance beyond the control of student). Under such circumstances, the waiver request shall be initiated by the student on the prescribed form.
- d. The case will be forwarded to BASR. Beforehand, DRC / Doctoral Committee under Dean will thoroughly deliberate on the case, find out the reasons for the delay, suggest the corrective measures and recommend the case with extended duration for the approval of the BASR. If the waiver (/s) is granted, the student shall be required to pay the required fee(s) applicable to the additional semester.
- e. Program duration shall be counted from the date of start of enrolled academic session up to the issuance of the final PhD notification. Time taken by the thesis evaluation process after the thesis submission for Thesis Defense shall be counted into the program duration. The scholars shall be charged a fee during the extended period as per notified DSU fee policy. The scholar shall pay the requisite fee till submission of Final Thesis after incorporating the observations highlighted in Final PhD Thesis Defense.

3.4 Registration: Registration in every semester is mandatory for Scholars even after completion of minimum duration and completion of research credit hours. After minimum duration the scholars shall be charged fee as per following schedule:

- a. 4th Year: Rs.10,000/-
- b. 5th Year: Rs.12,000/-
- c. 6th Year: Rs.15,000/-
- d. 7th onward: Rs.20,000/-

3.4 Course Withdrawal

- a. Scholars may withdraw from a registered course during 4-6 week of the semester. To withdraw from a registered course, the scholar shall have to apply to the HOD through the PGP Coordinator on the prescribed format.
- b. If the course is withdrawn within two weeks after commencement of classes, the course withdrawn shall not be recorded on the transcript. However, in case the course is withdrawn between the third and the seventh week of the semester the letter "W" shall be recorded on the transcript against the course withdrawn.
- c. A student withdrawing after the 6th week shall be automatically awarded "F" grade which shall count in the GPA and stay on the transcript.

3.5 Semester Freeze

- a. Scholars are allowed to freeze their semester due to illness or circumstances beyond their control by giving a written application to the HOD on prescribed format.
- b. Scholars can apply for semester freeze before commencement of classes. No semester freeze shall be allowed during the semester.
- c. Scholars can freeze two semesters either consecutively or staggered, while remaining within the Maximum program duration.
- d. Freezing of first semester or any of research semester (s) is not allowed. However, under special *hardship circumstances freezing of first semester can be considered by the approval of competent authority. (Iddat, Maternity/Delivery, Death in the immediate family or any other subject to acceptance on justified rationale).

3.6 Refund/Adjustment of Fees for Course Withdrawal, Semester Freeze

- a. It will be applicable as per DSU General Rules.
- b. In case of any conflict or interpretation of the aforementioned rules on refund of fee and other charges, the matter shall be referred to the VC through the Registrar whose decision shall be final.

3.7 Probation, Chance, Dropout and Course Repeat

- a. The student shall be placed on Probation if his/her CGPA falls below 3.0/4.0 (GPA if it is the first semester) for the first time. After each Probation, a formal warning letter is to be issued to the student by the concerned HOD and a copy of the same – duly signed/acknowledged by the student – is to be retained in the respective HOD office for record purposes.
- b. The student shall be placed on another Probation if his/her CGPA falls below 3.0/4.0 for the second time.
- c. The student shall be dropped from the program if his/her CGPA falls below 3.0/4.0 after two consecutive Probations.
- d. If dropped from the program, a transcript mentioning courses completed with the status endorsed as "PhD Incomplete" may be issued by the Controller of Examination to the student. Migration letter may also be issued to the student by the Controller of Examination, on request.
- e. Candidate with less than the CGPA required for the coursework of the degree may repeat a maximum of three courses in which he/she has received a grade less than 'C+', to improve his/her CGPA. Candidate shall apply to the HOD for permission to repeat a course and pay the fee.

3.8 Assessment Modalities for Coursework

3.8.1 Credited Work: Below is the suggested weightage. The course instructor may have the liberty to change it as per the need of course.

Assessment Head & Mode	Weightage	Timeframe
Subjective Quizzes from Course Contents, Home/Classroom Assignments and Presentations	30 - 40%	Through-out Semester
Mid-Term Examination, a subjective examination from Course Contents/Case Study/Book Review/Critical Review of Journal Articles/Literature review for research paper(s)	20 - 30%	Mid-Semester
Final Examination, a subjective examination from Course Contents	40%	End of Semester

3.8.2 Non-Credited Work

Assessment Head & Mode	Timeframe
Comprehensive Examination (as defined in these rules)	On completion of the Coursework
Research Proposal Defense	After passing the Comprehensive Examination
Research Article/Paper published in an HEC recognized journal based on the HEC criteria	Any time after the Proposal Defense and before submission of the thesis/ Thesis Seminar
Thesis Seminar	Before the submission of Final Thesis for Foreign evaluation
Foreign/ Local Evaluation	Any time after clearing the Thesis Seminar and Defense
Final Thesis Defense	Any time after clearing Foreign Evaluation

3.8.3 GPA

- The Grade Point Average (GPA) will be worked out by awarding letter grades and corresponding grade points on a scale of 4.00 – 0.00.

Marks	Letter Grade	Point
86-100	A	4.00
80-85	A-	3.67
76-79	B+	3.33
72-75	B	3.00
68-71	B-	2.67
64-67	C+	2.50
60-63	C	2.00
57-59	C-	1.67
54-56	D+	1.33
50-53	D	1.00
Less than 50	F	0.00
-	W	Withdrawn
-	I	Incomplete

- b. addition to 'F' grade awarded on the basis of academic failure, a student shall not be allowed to appear in final examination of a subject in which his/her attendance is less than 75%, and he/she shall be awarded 'F' grade in that subject. The 'F' grade so obtained shall only be cleared by repetition of the course whenever offered.
- c. The policies related to Examination Regulations, letter grades, award of Grade Points on the basis of letter grades, the Absolute/Relative Grading System and the calculation of the CGPA for PhD programs shall be the same as specified in the General and Undergraduate Academic Regulations.

3.9 Comprehensive Examination

- a. After having completed the coursework with minimum CGPA 3.0/4.0, the scholars shall be required to pass a written Comprehensive Examination based on the coursework completed at graduate level before being entitled to start research work. The exam should be based on recapitulation of the conceptual knowledge of the discipline to which the student is admitted. The exam shall be conducted on one composite question paper. The department shall conduct Comprehensive Examination in end of each semester for scholars completing their course work in Fall and Spring Semester, respectively. The PGP Coordinator with the consent of HOD will notify the schedule, make arrangements for and monitor the PhD comprehensive examination. Copies of the notification will be provided to the Dean of Faculty, Controller of Examinations and PGP Directorate. Comprehensive Examination on other dates may be conducted by the department in very special circumstances with the approval of Dean.
- b. A panel of three-five (3-5) Examiners drawn from the PhD faculty of DSU in relevant field by the HoD, shall prepare the Comprehensive Examination and award a "Pass"/"Fail" grade to the scholar. HOD shall notify the schedule and nomination of Examiners. The exam shall cover the courses studied preferably at the graduate level, conducted on one composite question paper. Committee may decide about number and nature of courses. Comprehensive Examination paper will be prepared in consultation with supervisor and all available teachers who have taught PhD courses to the student. Passing marks in the Comprehensive Examination shall be 60% aggregate.
- c. The Comprehensive Examination results along with examination paper and marked answer script shall be submitted by the HOD to the Examination Department, within 2 weeks from the date of Comprehensive Examination, on a prescribed format under intimation to the Dean, Controller of Exams and the PGP Directorate.
- d. If the scholar passes the Comprehensive Examination, the Examination Department shall inform him/her on the prescribed form, with permission to start the research work and appear in Proposal Defense.
- e. The scholar shall be given two chances to pass the Comprehensive Examination within preferably two years from registration/enrollment in the PhD program. If the scholar fails comprehensive examination twice, he/she shall be dropped from the program. Transcript may be issued to the scholar mentioning the coursework completed with the status endorsed as "PhD Incomplete". Migration letter may also be issued to the scholar by the Examination Department, on request.

Chapter-4: Thesis Write-up and Evaluation

4.1 Research Proposal Defense

- a. The scholar shall prepare the research proposal under guidance of the Supervisor and submit it to the HOD, within six months of having passed the Comprehensive Examination. The research area should correspond to community needs at regional and local levels and comply with the priority national research agenda. It should reflect the basic and pure research. It should signify emerging areas of research that coincide preferably with sustainable development goals (SDGs).
- b. The research proposal shall be submitted as per the prescribed format of the faculty. The word count for PhD research proposal shall preferably range from 8000 to 15000 excluding bibliography. The scholar shall submit proposal for evaluation to PGPC/HoD through Supervisor at least 15 days before defense.
- c. The scholar shall also submit the filled Ethics Review Form if needed (experiment on human or living animals included in research) along with the proposal for evaluation. Ethical Review Committee shall review the proposal before conduct of the research proposal defense, if the scholar has declared that his/her research work shall involve human subjects. ERC may invite the scholar to attend meetings of the ERC when his/her study is being reviewed.
- d. PGP Coordinator with the consent of HOD shall announce and circulate the schedule of the thesis proposal defense and make necessary arrangements. Copy of the schedule shall also be sent to the Dean, PGP Directorate and Controller of Examination.
- e. The Advisory Committee shall conduct the oral defense of research proposal. In case if external expert of Advisory Committee is not available, Dean may recommend alternate examiner for approval of VC.
- f. The scholar shall defend the proposal by giving a multimedia presentation before the Examiners. The Examiners shall assess the proposal on a prescribed Research Proposal Evaluation format. The Committee shall either accept or reject the research proposal, or ask the Candidate to revise it in the light of suggestions of the Committee. If the research proposal is accepted, the Candidate shall be allowed to carry out the research. If changes are suggested, the Candidate shall incorporate them and continue research work.
- g. If the proposal is approved, the scholar shall be allowed to start research work under the Supervisor. Letter in this regard shall be written to the scholar by the HOD. If rejected, the committee may ask the scholar to improve the existing proposal or submit a fresh one. In such a case, the PGP Coordinator shall communicate the reasons of rejection given by the Examiners to the scholar under intimation to the HoD, Dean, PGP Directorate and Controller of Examination. In case the scholar does not appear in the defense without prior authorization, the proposal shall be considered rejected.
- h. The scholar shall be given two chances to get the research proposal approved. If the proposal is rejected twice or if the scholar fails to complete the coursework, comprehensive exam and research proposal defense in first six semesters (3 years) from the date of registration/enrollment in PhD program, HoD shall recommend termination of candidacy of the scholar and shall refer the case to BASR for approval under the guidance of PGP Directorate. If the BASR is not due to meet within one month, the recommendation of termination of scholar's candidacy shall be forwarded to the VC through PGP Directorate for approval; the BASR shall subsequently ratify the VC's decision.
- i. If termination of the candidacy is approved, transcript mentioning courses completed with the status endorsed as "PhD Incomplete" may be issued by the Examination Department to the scholar along with the Comprehensive Examination result. Migration letter may also be issued to the scholar by the Examination Department, on request.

- j. Further, a post graduate diploma certificate in same discipline could be awarded to such a scholar upon completion of 18 credit hours of coursework. Besides, he/she could be awarded an MS/MPhil degree after further completion of additional 12 credit hours with or without thesis. For such cases, the roadmap will be forwarded by the HoD for subsequent approval of BASR on case-to-case basis.
- k. In an event of force majeure i.e., noncompliance to completion of coursework, comprehensive exam and research proposal defense within stipulated time on account of circumstances beyond the control of student, Doctoral Committee will thoroughly review on the case, find out the reasons for the delay, suggest the corrective measures and HoD will recommend the case of extension for the approval of BASR through Dean and PGP Directorate.
- l. Proposals Defence report and topics shall be submitted to BASR for approval/ratification.
- m. Any minor change in the topic of the thesis, if made without changing the main theme, shall be approved/ratified by the BASR on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee. If due to this change, the research is to be conducted in an entirely new area, the Advisory Committee shall treat it as a new research proposal and follow the course applicable to a new research proposal.

4.2 Supervisors

4.2.1 The scholars shall be assigned Principal Supervisor and Co-supervisor (if needed) at the time of their registration/enrollment in the PhD program. Supervisors shall be approved/ratified by BASR. The Principal Supervisor should hold PhD degree from an HEC recognized national/international university and shall be a regular/adjunct faculty member of DSU in the relevant field. The research supervisor shall be allocated to a doctoral student from the date of enrollment. Whereas Co-Supervisor should also hold a PhD degree from an HEC recognized national/international university and shall be a PhD faculty member or a researcher in R&D organization in the relevant field. However, in the case of a non- faculty PhD supervisor, who otherwise meets the criteria of being a PhD supervisor, shall be taken as an adjunct faculty member, for a period not less than the minimum time required to complete the student's PhD research, prior to assigning a PhD supervision. Such a person shall also provide an NOC from the parent organization. Adjunct faculty shall be assigned as supervisor, in case suitable/relevant supervisor is not available within the university.

4.2.2 The Principal Supervisor should have taken and qualified course(s) on MS/MPhil/PhD Supervision, which have contents on research ethics, publications, patents, etc. Such courses may include certified self-paced MOOCS, or a course designed/offered by National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE) or by DSU.

4.2.3 If the Principal Supervisor is not available for any reason, Department must assign a new Principal Supervisor to the scholar by not later than 6 weeks. Meanwhile Co- Supervisor or the HOD may act as Principal Supervisor.

4.2.4 The Principal Supervisor shall not be changed except under extraordinary circumstances. In case of a serious problem between a scholar and the Principal Supervisor, the scholar may request the HOD to change the Principal Supervisor. The HOD shall examine the matter and submit report to the through Dean and PGP Directorate BASR. The BASR shall take the final decision on the matter.

4.2.5 The supervisory workload of supervisors should be determined based on the nature of the institution, availability of teaching and research facilities, and the academic standing of supervisors. However, it is mandated that the maximum supervisory load shall not exceed five PhD students at one time.

4.2.6 Fresh PhDs can supervise MS/MPhil and co-supervise PhD students, while a PhD faculty member, after two years of obtaining a PhD degree, can supervise one PhD student in 3rd year,

two PhD students in 4th year and maximum up to 5 PhD students from 5th year onward, subject to fulfillment of conditions provided in of HEC GEP 2023.

4.2.7 In addition, a PhD supervisor must publish research articles in the HEC's recognized research journals and in the relevant category specified in the HJRS for the publication year. These conditions are different for different disciplines and aim to ensure that the potential PhD supervisor is an active researcher:

- a. *Specific Requirements for Science and Technology (For indigenous and foreign PhDs):*
 - i. Within the last 3 years after PhD: at least one research publications in W category journal.
 - OR
 - ii. Within last 5 years after PhD: at least five research publications in X category journal.
- b. *Specific Requirements for Social Science, Arts and Humanities and Business Education (For indigenous and foreign PhDs):*
 - i. Within the last 3 years after PhD: at least one research publication in W category journal.
 - OR
 - ii. Within the last 5 years after PhD: at least five research publications in X and Y category journal.
- c. *Specific Requirements for Regional and National Languages (For indigenous and foreign PhDs):*
 - i. Within the last 3 years after PhD: at least one research publication in X category journal.
 - OR
 - ii. Within the last 5 years after PhD: at least five research publications in X or Y category journal.

4.2.8 Supervision Manual, which includes the eligibility, roles, responsibilities of supervisor and supervisee, is attached at Annex D. Besides it includes supervisory process and timespan, advisory committee and grievance handling. Supervisor will keep record of all meetings with scholars.

4.3 Research Work Progress Report

- a. The Supervisor shall submit to the Dean, through the HOD, six monthly progress report of a scholar on the prescribed format by 30th June and 31st December each year. In case of an unsatisfactory progress report, the PGPC will hold a meeting to find out the reasons for the lack of progress in the research work of the Candidate. The HoD may interview the Candidate, suggest remedial measures and require the Candidate to demonstrate satisfactory progress in research work within the stipulated time period.
- b. If a scholar has received three (3) consecutive unsatisfactory reports, the BASR, on the recommendations of the HoD through Dean may terminate the Candidate's program candidature. The decision shall be communicated in writing to the Candidate within thirty (30) days of the date of decision. If the BASR is not due to meet within one month, the HoD recommendation of termination of scholar's candidacy shall be forwarded to the VC through Dean and the PGP Directorate for approval; the BASR shall subsequently ratify the VC's decision.
- c. The first report shall be submitted after the approval of Research Proposal.

- d. If termination of the candidacy is approved, transcript mentioning courses completed with the status endorsed as "PhD Incomplete" may be issued by the Examination Department to the scholar along with the Comprehensive Examination result. Migration letter may also be issued to the scholar by the Examination Department, on request.

4.4 Thesis Submission Requirements and Thesis Seminar

4.4.1 The PhD thesis/dissertation should reflect relevance, credibility, effectiveness, and legitimacy of the research. The thesis must be an original and innovative contribution to knowledge that contributes to solving socioeconomic problems. The thesis should correspond to the needs of communities at regional and local levels and must comply with the priority national research agenda. It should include basic and pure research. It must be aligned with the UN's sustainable development goals (SDGs).

4.4.2 The reporting quality of thesis should reflect following characteristics:

- a. The document is well written.
- b. The contents are balanced, well organized, appropriately styled; clearly structured, and well cohered.
- c. The document is free from grammatical and spelling errors and flawed terminology.
- d. Minor shortcomings such as inaccurate use of acronyms and clumsy looking sentence structure have been addressed.
- e. Quantitative research proposals must include a valid statistical design for data analysis.
- f. Formatting shall be compatible with international standards.

4.4.3 The methodological quality of thesis to ensure the technical soundness should comply to following guidelines:

- a. Guidelines Ensuring the Quality of Qualitative Research: A PhD thesis based on the Qualitative Research methods should satisfy, at least, the following questions:
 - i. *Does the research, as reported, illuminate the subjective meaning, actions and contexts of those being researched?*
 - ii. *Is there evidence of the adaptation and responsiveness of the research design to the circumstances and issues of real-life social settings met during the study?*
 - iii. *Does the sample produce the type of knowledge necessary to understand the structures and processes within which the individuals or situations are located?*
 - iv. *Is the description provided detailed enough to allow the researcher or reader to interpret the meaning and context of what is being researched?*
 - v. *How are the different sources of knowledge about the same issue compared?*
 - vi. *Are subjective perceptions and experiences treated as knowledge in their own right?*
 - vii. *How does research move from a description of the data through quotation or examples to an analysis and interpretation of the meaning and significance of it?*
- b. Guidelines Ensuring the Quality of Quantitative Research: A PhD thesis with Quantitative Research methods should satisfy, at least, the following questions:

- i. *Reliability – are the results repeatable?*
 - ii. *Validity – does it measure what it says?*
 - iii. *Internal validity – do the research results indicate what they appear to be?*
 - iv. *External validity – can the results be generalized to other settings (ecological validity) and to other populations (population validity)?*
 - v. *Replicability – are the results of the study reproducible?*
- c. Appropriateness of the Methods to the Aims of the Study: To achieve the research objectives, the alignment of the research approach and methods is necessary. Therefore, a PhD thesis, at least, shall:
- i. *Reflect a fair proportion of latest knowledge of contemporary techniques and methods in relation to study objectives.*
 - ii. *Contain detailed and easily comprehensible discussions regarding the applied methods and techniques.*
 - iii. *Justify the use of methods and techniques to achieve study objectives.*
 - iv. *Show evaluation of obtained results in relation with study objectives.*
 - v. *The methods and techniques used should justify the results obtained.*
 - vi. *The obtained results should support the study objectives.*
- d. Relevance to the Policy and Practice: The research should have significantly answered questions related to policy and practice in that area, establishing its usefulness and usability. Accordingly, a PhD thesis, at least, shall:
- i. *Reflect judicious evaluation of study results in relation with policy related aims and goals undertaken while starting the research.*
 - ii. *Discuss the practical implications of the study results in association with the developing practices in that area.*
 - iii. *Establish usefulness of the study results for devising policy as stated in the beginning.*
 - iv. *Discuss how the resulting policy would be useful for the organization/society.*
 - v. *The study output should be significant enough to be published or patented.*
 - vi. *The assessment of the results performed by the author must not be superficial and lack substance.*

4.4.4 The thesis should have been developed on the prescribed format. Any other type of format specific to research if intended to be used, it must be approved. However, the contents as mentioned in prescribed format must be fulfilled.

4.4.5 The word count should preferably range from 40,000 to 80,000 excluding tables, figures and bibliography.

4.4.6 Plagiarism test shall be conducted through HEC recognized plagiarism testing software by the PGP Coordinator/Supervisor and verified by QEC department and report placed in the outset of the research proposal and thesis. The overall similarity index and the similarity from a single source must conform to HEC's Plagiarism Policy/Rules in vogue. Scholar's own publication produced from the PhD research work shall be excluded while generating the similarity index report, if published work is properly cited by the scholar in his/her thesis. Furthermore, DSU Plagiarism Rules are subject to HEC Plagiarism Rules in vogue. Any changes in HEC Plagiarism Rules shall be applicable to DSU Plagiarism Rules.

4.4.7 Approval for Examination by the Principal Supervisor, Author's Declaration and Plagiarism Undertaking shall be placed in the outset of the thesis.

4.4.8 Evidence of publication of at least one research article in W-category HEC approved journal or two research articles in X-category HEC approved journals for Science disciplines, and one research article in X-category HEC approved journal or two research articles in Y-category HEC approved journals for Social Science disciplines. The publication must be relevant and based on the scholar's PhD research work. However, the acceptance of the research article is mandatory prior to thesis seminar (TS), and publication of the research article is mandatory prior to final thesis defense (FTD). The scholar must be the first author for the required article followed by the Supervisor/Co-Supervisor. Affiliation with DSU shall be mentioned as well. The Principal Supervisor and Co-Supervisor (if any) will ensure the relevance of the research publication with the PhD research on prescribed format, while Dir QEC will ensure the authenticity of the Journal as per HEC HJRS and online presence of publication.

4.4.9 Publication requirements are subject to HEC publication criteria for PhD degree requirements. Any change in these requirements shall be applicable as per HEC criteria/guidelines for relevant discipline.

4.4.10 Thesis seminar for the PhD scholar shall be carried out prior to proceeding with foreign evaluation by the Advisory Committee. Thesis Seminar shall be open to all those interested. The defense shall be in the form of a multimedia presentation by the scholar, followed by a Viva Voce Examination/Question-Answer session before the panel of Examiners. The Advisory Committee shall attend the PhD seminar and then meet to award a "Satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory" grade to the Candidate. The examiners shall submit thesis seminar report using prescribed forms. Changes suggested in seminar report must be incorporated within three months and verified by the supervisor before submission of thesis for foreign evaluation. The committee may recommend re-seminar given the thesis requires major revision. The scholar will be given a maximum of three chances to qualify for the seminar, in case of a failed attempt. Dean will chair the seminar. The maximum time for the examiners to review the thesis for the seminar is 4 weeks.

4.4.11 Submission of dues clearance letter from the Accounts Department of DHA Suffa University is mandatory for seminar registration.

4.4.12 The library shall keep record of thesis in soft and hard form.

4.4.13 The QEC department shall submit the final thesis in HEC repository.

4.5 Thesis Submission for External Evaluation: Scholar shall submit two (2) hardbound copies of the thesis and one digital copy on CD to the PG Coordinator inclusive of plagiarism report in compliance with HEC and DSU rules. The PGP Coordinator shall issue acknowledgement on the prescribed form.

4.6 Selection of External Evaluators for Thesis

4.6.1 Thesis shall be evaluated by two (2) External Evaluators (from BASR approved list of local/foreign evaluators) who are PhD faculty members from the world top 500 universities ranked by the Times Higher Education or QS World Ranking in the year corresponding to the thesis evaluation year.

OR

4.6.2 Pakistan-based Distinguished National Professors, Meritorious Professors from any national university; or professors from top universities ranked by HEC; or professors from any Pakistani University having a minimum H-Index 30 for Sciences, 15 for Social Sciences or 8 for Art & Humanities as determined by Web of Science.

OR.

4.6.3 Thesis shall be evaluated by at least one external evaluator who qualifies anyone of the conditions mentioned at clause 31.1, if the PhD scholar publishes his/her research article in a peer-reviewed journal that is classified by the HEC in category W for Sciences and X or above for Social Sciences.

4.6.4 In consultation with the Supervisor, the HOD, through the Dean of Faculty, shall submit the names of four (4) external Evaluators (foreign/local) for approval of BASR through PGP Directorate. Following guidelines to be followed while recommending the evaluators:

- a. *Relevance of Expertise*: in the same or related fields as in the thesis.
- b. *No Conflict of Interest*: in personal, financial, or professional stakes in a particular decision or outcome.
- c. *Objectivity*: capable of making unbiased evaluations.
- d. *Diversity*: in terms of geography, culture, professional backgrounds etc.
- e. *Reputation*: must be good in the field, with a track record of fair and thorough evaluations.
- f. *Availability*: should have the time and availability to review the thesis.
- g. *Professionalism*: capable of conducting themselves in a professional and respectful manner throughout the evaluation and defense process (if applicable).
- h. *Communication*: capable of providing clear and constructive feedback on the thesis.
- i. *Confidentiality*: capable of maintaining confidentiality and protecting the intellectual property of the thesis.
- j. *Compatibility*: well-versed with the research methodology, approach, and theories used in the thesis.

4.6.5 The BASR shall approve two (2) names of Evaluators from the list of four names recommended by the HoD. (In case HoD recommends 4 names from already approved BASR evaluators list, VC shall approve two names. However, same will be reported in BASR for ratification).

4.6.6 The PGP Directorate shall send a copy of the thesis to each External Evaluator on a prescribed format along with the prescribed Thesis Evaluation Report Form. The Foreign Evaluators shall be requested to evaluate the thesis and send their evaluation report within eight (8) weeks of receipt of the thesis. Where an Evaluator is unable to meet the original or a revised deadline, the VC may appoint another Evaluator out of the rest of BASR approved Evaluators.

4.6.7 All communication with the Foreign/local Evaluators after having sent them the thesis shall be carried out by the PGP Directorate.

4.7 External Thesis Evaluation Process

4.7.1 The evaluation reports shall be received by the PGP Directorate, and after hiding the name or other identity of the Evaluators, shall be passed over to the HOD/PGP Coordinator with information to the Dean and VC. The HOD/PGP Coordinator shall then handover the evaluation reports to the scholar.

4.7.2 The Evaluators can evaluate thesis and make recommendations there on in any one of the following ways:

- a. *"The thesis meets all the requirements of international standards. No changes are required. The candidate may proceed for thesis defense."* This shall be construed as Thesis **Approved**.
- b. *"The thesis requires major/minor changes, as pointed out in the detailed report. These changes be incorporated into the thesis. There is no need to send the thesis to me for reassessment; I authorize DSU to ascertain the compliance and carry out reassessment through its own system before the thesis defense."*

This shall be construed as Thesis **Conditionally Approved (A)**.

- c. *"The thesis requires major/minor changes, as pointed out in the detailed report. These changes be incorporated and the revised thesis be sent to me, along with a compliance report, within _____ weeks for reassessment.* This shall also be construed as Thesis **Conditionally Approved (B)**.
- d. *"The thesis is unacceptable. Detailed analysis is given on a separate sheet."* This shall be construed as Thesis **Not Approved**.

4.7.3 The "Approved", "Not Approved" or "Conditionally Approved" evaluations will result in a number of combination situations as tabulated, and shall be addressed as elucidated in the ensuing articles:

Case #	Evaluation	
	Evaluator 1	Evaluator 2
1	Approved	Approved
2	Approved	Conditionally Approved(A)
3	Approved	Conditionally Approved(B)
4	Conditionally Approved	Conditionally Approved
5	Conditionally Approved	Not Approved
6	Approved	Not Approved
7	Not Approved	Not Approved

4.7.4 Case 1: Approved + Approved

The Scholar shall qualify for the thesis defense & viva voce examination.

4.7.5 Case 2: Approved + Conditionally Approved (A)

The scholar shall make the suggested changes and have them endorsed by the Principal Supervisor on behalf of the Evaluator. The thesis shall then be deemed to be "Approved", and the scholar will qualify for the thesis defense & viva voce examination.

4.7.6 Case 3: Approved+ Conditionally Approved (B)

The scholar shall make the suggested changes and have them endorsed by the Principal Supervisor. The PGP Directorate will send the amended thesis back to the Evaluator. This process shall continue until 'Approved' or 'Conditionally Approved (A)' reports are received from the Evaluator. Subsequent actions shall be as per articles 3.7.4 and 3.7.5 depending on the re-evaluation report.

4.7.7 Case 4: Conditionally Approved + Conditionally Approved

- a. Actions shall be as per articles 4.7.5 and/or 4.7.6, as the case(s) may be.
- b. If both the Evaluators ask for changes which are mutually conflicting, the Principal Supervisor shall provide the necessary guidance to the scholar. If either or both Evaluators have asked for resubmission of thesis (Case B), a separate "Compliance Report" shall be sent to the Evaluators(s) who asked for resubmission along with the revised thesis, clearly identifying the conflicting changes/requirements.

4.7.8 Case 5: Not Approved + Conditionally Approved: The thesis shall be sent to a third Evaluator for evaluation and subsequent actions shall depend on the report of the third evaluator:

- a. If the third Evaluator evaluates the thesis as "Approved", it becomes an "Approved + Conditionally Approved" case, in which case articles 4.7.5 and/or 3.7.6 shall apply, as applicable.
- b. If the third Evaluator evaluates "Conditionally Approved", it becomes a "Conditionally Approved + Conditionally Approved" case. Article 4.7.7 shall apply.

- c. If the third Evaluator evaluates "Not Approved", two of the three Evaluators would have evaluated the report "Not Approved". It thus becomes the "Not Approved + Not Approved" Case. Article 4.7.10 shall apply.

4.7.9 Case 6: Approved + Not Approved: The thesis shall be sent to a third Evaluator for evaluation. The report of the third Evaluator shall be considered as final. Action shall be as follows:

- a. If the third Evaluator reports "Approved", the scholar shall qualify for the thesis defense and viva voce examination.
- b. If the third Evaluator evaluates "Conditionally Approved", it becomes "Approved + Conditionally Approved" case; actions shall be per paras 4.7.5 and/or 4.7.6, as applicable.
- c. If the third Evaluator reports "Not Approved", the situation will become tantamount to both reports evaluated "Not Approved". Article 4.7.10 shall apply.

4.7.10 Case 7: Not Approved + Not Approved: It shall be construed that the Scholar has failed in producing an acceptable thesis. Candidature of the scholar shall be decided as below:

- a. The Doctoral Committee / DRC may ask the scholar to re-register in the program and carry out the research work on a new topic from the scratch. However, coursework shall not be required in such a case.
- b. If the scholar does not want to re-register in the program, the program shall be considered as "Terminated". The HoD shall inform the PGP Directorate in this regard. The Controller of Examination may issue the transcript to the scholar mentioning courses completed with the status endorsed as "PhD Incomplete" along with the Comprehensive Examination result. Migration letter may also be issued to the scholar by the Examination Department, on request.

Chapter-5: Thesis Defense and Degree Award

5.1 Final Thesis Defense Examiners

- a. After receiving Approval of the thesis by the external evaluators, the VC shall allow a candidate to conduct the final defense of the thesis. The Panel of Examiners shall consist of the, Neutral Chair, Supervisor, the Advisory Committee, at least one external evaluator who was involved in thesis evaluation. In case of unavailability of thesis external evaluator, the HoD shall recommend two names for External Examiners having at least Three Years Post PhD experience of teaching/research after having secured their consent, to the VC for approval through Dean and the PGP Directorate. The VC shall select one external examiner from the list.
- b. The PGP Directorate shall send a copy of the thesis to each Examiner along with the prescribed Thesis Defense Evaluation Report Form. Besides, the comments from the foreign evaluators will be sent as well. The scholar will be given three chances in total to rewrite the thesis, in case of a failed attempt. All communication with the Defense Examiners shall be undertaken by the PGP Directorate after having sent them the copy of thesis. The maximum time for the examiners to review the thesis for the FTD is 4 weeks. For a successful FTD, the scholar must be passed by the majority of examiners.

5.2 Final Thesis Defense & Viva Voce Examination

- a. PGP Directorate shall announce and circulate the schedule of the thesis defense with consultation of the HOD/PGP Coordinator. HOD shall ensure necessary arrangements to conduct the thesis defense and also publish the announcement on the website. Copy of the schedule shall also be sent to the VC and Faculty Dean.
- b. The thesis defense shall be in the form of a multimedia presentation by the scholar, followed by a Viva Voce Examination/Question-Answer session before the panel of Examiners. The two may be held on the same day or the later may be deferred after mutual consent.
- c. The Supervisor/Co-Supervisor and Advisory Committee members shall remain present throughout the thesis defense. The presentation part of the thesis defense shall be open to all those interested, but the Viva voce Examination maybe conducted by the panel of Examiners in the presence of the Supervisor/Advisory Committee under the neutral chair of VC/Pro-VC or any other designee by the VC.
- d. The Examiners shall evaluate the thesis defense of the scholar on the Thesis Defense Evaluation Report Form.
- e. The thesis defense evaluation reports along with certificate of approval shall be received by the PGP Directorate and shall be passed over to the Controller of Examination under information and copy to the Dean and HOD/PGP Coordinator.
- f. The scholar shall be given three chances (in total) to defend the thesis successfully. After a failed attempt, the panel of Examiners shall specify the time period within which the scholar shall be required to defend the thesis again. If the scholar is not able to defend the thesis in the third attempt even, the candidature of the scholar shall be decided in light of provisions of Article 32.10.
- g. In case the scholar does not appear in the defense without prior permission, the thesis shall be considered failed.

5.3 Submission of Thesis Revision

5.3.1 Time Lines for Minor Corrections: All minor corrections recommended during foreign evaluation, Thesis Seminar and Thesis Defense be incorporated within 3 months after receiving of the evaluation reports. Principal Supervisor shall verify the required corrections in the form of written report within given time period.

5.3.2 Time Lines for Major Corrections: All major corrections recommended during foreign evaluation, Thesis Seminar and Thesis Defense be incorporated within 6 months after receiving of the evaluation reports. Principal Supervisor shall verify the required corrections in the form of written report within given time period.

5.3.3 Failure to incorporate the changes and submit revised thesis: If a scholar fails to incorporate and submit the changes within the stipulated given time period, following rules will be applicable:

- a. Scholars who are not time-barred can apply for an extension in submission deadline on the prescribed form. Dean may approve the extension of maximum 2 months from the last given deadlines as mentioned in para 4.3.1 and 4.3.2.
- b. Scholar who has completed the maximum duration of PhD program shall request for extension in accordance with Article 2.2.2.

5.4 Honorarium for Examiners: Suitable honorarium shall be paid to the thesis Evaluators, and Examiners (Internal, External) for Proposal Defense, External Evaluation, seminar and Final Thesis Defense, as decided by the University from time to time.

5.5 Award of the Degree

- a. After fulfilment of all the requirements for the given degree program, as laid down in these Rules, the scholar shall be entitled to receive the degree. The Controller of Examination shall complete other formalities.
- b. The award of degree and transcript shall be subject to the approval of the VC/BASR. In case of approval of the VC, it shall be ratified by the BASR. As soon as the approval is granted by the VC/BASR, the "Letter of Completion" shall be awarded to the scholar along with the transcript. The actual degree shall be conferred at the convocation.