



UNIVERSITY OF
SINDH

UNIVERSITY OF SINDH
GRADUATE EDUCATION POLICY
Procedures and Guidelines for
Degree Completion
for
MS/MPhil and PhD Programs

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1 Introduction

This policy defines the Graduate Education Policy for MS/MPhil and PhD programs at the University of Sindh, Jamshoro, in accordance with HEC guidelines and best practices from public universities nationwide. It aims to ensure high-quality education, uphold research integrity, and maintain compliance with national and international academic standards. The policy establishes clear criteria for enrolment, coursework, supervision, research evaluation, plagiarism control, and degree completion procedures and timeline.

2 Aims and Objectives

Aims:

- To establish a structured and transparent framework for graduate education at the University of Sindh, ensuring academic excellence and research integrity.
- To align MS/MPhil and PhD programs with national and international higher education standards, fostering innovation and intellectual growth.
- To provide clear guidelines for admission/enrolment, coursework, supervision, research evaluation, degree completion time frames.
- To ensure timely completion of graduate programs while maintaining quality and compliance with HEC regulations.
- To promote an academic culture that upholds ethical research practices, originality, and academic integrity.
- To facilitate inter- and intra-disciplinary research collaborations, encouraging scholars to contribute to societal and economic development.
- To enhance the quality of postgraduate research through effective supervision, rigorous evaluation, and quality assurance mechanisms.
- To support students with flexible academic policies that enable smooth transitions, credit transfers, and fair grievance resolution mechanisms.

Objectives:

1. Enrolment and Admission Standards:

- Define clear admission criteria for MS/MPhil and PhD programs, ensuring merit-based selection.
- Set minimum academic qualifications, test requirements, and statement of purpose guidelines for PhD applicants.

2. Degree Completion and Research Requirements:

- Establish coursework requirements, research publication criteria, and dissertation evaluation procedures.

- Ensure thesis/dissertation originality by enforcing plagiarism and AI detection policies.
 - Set timelines and extension policies for degree completion, avoiding unnecessary delays.
3. Supervision and Academic Guidance:
- Implement strict criteria for selecting qualified supervisors.
 - Limit supervisory loads to maintain effective student guidance.
 - Provide clear processes for changing supervisors, ensuring continuity in research work.
4. Credit Transfer and Academic Flexibility:
- Facilitate intra-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary research opportunities.
 - Allow credit transfers subject to departmental and as per HEC guidelines.
5. Quality Assurance and Ethical Research Practices:
- Develop a robust framework to assess research quality, ensuring compliance with HEC's Graduate Education Policy-2023.
 - Monitor the supervision process, research progress, and degree awarding mechanisms.
6. Grievance and Student Support Mechanisms:
- Establish a transparent grievance management system to address academic, research, and administrative concerns.
 - Implement formal policies for student appeals, academic probation, and disciplinary actions.
7. Continuous Improvement and Policy Evaluation:
- Periodically review and update the policy to incorporate evolving academic, research, and regulatory changes.
 - Encourage feedback from students, faculty, and researchers to refine postgraduate education practices.

3 Enforcement

This framework shall take effective from batch-2024 and onward upon approval by the appropriate governing body of the University of Sindh. Amendments or modifications shall be subject to approval by the Advanced Studies and Research Board (ASRB) in compliance with HEC guidelines and University policies.

Part-I: Degree Programs and Awarding Criteria

1 MPhil (MS Equivalent) Degree Program

1.1 Enrolment or Admission Criteria

- a) Basic Academic Qualification: 16 years of schooling or 4 years of education after HSSC/F.A./F.Sc/Grade 12 or equivalent, in relevant field decided by the concerned department, with 2.4 CGPA or 60% marks in annual system degree.
- b) Admission Test: A passing score of 50% in GRE/HAT General or an Equivalent Admission test conducted by the University of Sindh is required.

1.2 Degree Awarding Criteria

Coursework Requirement: Depending on the program requirements.

- o Either complete 30 credit hours of coursework, OR
- o Complete 24 credit hours of coursework along with 6 credit hours for research work/thesis.

1.3 Evaluation Criteria

- a) Coursework and Thesis Evaluation: Evaluation based on coursework and research thesis, with grades awarded as per the university's grading system.
- b) Mandatory Defence of Research Proposal/ Topic approval (First Seminar): The candidate shall be required to formally present and defend their Research Proposal/Topic approval (First seminar) before the departmental committee, following the approval of the Dean (Detail in Part-II).
- c) The successful defence of the proposal shall serve as a prerequisite for the continuation towards submission of the research proposal for approval. Failure to obtain approval may result in the candidate being required to revise and resubmit the proposal within the prescribed timeframe.
- d) The final research proposal must be submitted within 06 months after announcement of results of second semester.
- e) Open Defence or Final Seminar Requirement: Subsequent to the completion of the dissertation, the candidate shall be required to participate in an Open Defence (Final Seminar). The open defence shall be conducted in accordance with the procedural framework established by the University and shall serve as a decisive criterion for the conferral of the MPhil degree.
- f) Dissertation Evaluation and Final Viva Voce: The submitted dissertation shall undergo a rigorous evaluation process, wherein its originality, methodological

robustness, and relevance to academic policy and professional practice shall be assessed. The evaluation shall be conducted in strict adherence to the Graduate Education Policy 2023 (GEP-2023). Upon successful completion of the external evaluation, the candidate shall be required to appear for a Final Viva-Voce Examination, wherein the research findings shall be defended before external expert. The decision of the evaluation expert/examiner shall be conclusive in determining the acceptance or rejection of the dissertation to be submitted before the ASRB for final decision.

1.4 Publication Criteria

- Publication is not mandatory for the MPhil program but encouraged.

1.5 Degree Awarding

Degree will be awarded after saucerful evaluation procedures and approval by the ASRB.

1.6 Degree Completion Timeline for MPhil

a) Duration of MPhil Degree:

The degree program must be completed within a standard period of two (02) years and a maximum period of four (04) years from the date of enrolment. Extensions beyond the stipulated timeframe may be granted only in cases of *force majeure* or for valid reasons as determined by the university through its evaluation process. (Further details are provided below.)

b) Minimum Thesis Submission Timeline

The submission of the final work/thesis shall not be permitted earlier than Nine (09) months from the date of topic registration. However, early submission may be considered if the work is deemed worthy of submission, as evidenced by its publication in a journal recognized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC). However, the thesis cannot be submitted before 18 months (1.5 years) of time duration from the date of enrolment.

c) Standard Thesis Submission Timeline

The standard timeframe for submission of the final work shall be between nine (09) to twelve (12) months from the date of topic registration.

d) Extension for Non-Submission Within Stipulated Time

In the event of non-submission within the standard twelve (12) months from the date of topic registration, an extension may be granted, subject to approval by the Advance Studies and Research Board (ASRB). The initial extension period shall not exceed one (01) year. A maximum of two (02) extensions may be granted under exceptional circumstances.

e) Cancellation of Admission After Four Years

If the degree is not completed within the maximum four (04) year period from the date of enrolment, the admission shall be deemed cancelled.

1.7 Supervision Policy

- Supervisors: Supervisors must hold a PhD or MPhil degree (with co-supervision experience of two years) with expertise in the student's research area. However, MPhil holder faculty member can be co-supervisor expertise in the student's research topic.
- Supervisory Load: A supervisor can supervise up to maximum 12 students given that no more than five PhD students.

2 PhD Degree Program

2.1 Enrolment or Admission Criteria

- a) Basic Academic Qualification: A Masters' degree (MS/MPhil or 18-year equivalent) in relevant field decided by the concerned department, is required for admission.
- b) CGPA: A minimum CGPA of 3.0 out of 4.0 or equivalent, or 60% in the annual system.
- c) Admission Test: A passing score of 60% in GRE/HAT General or an equivalent admission test conducted by University of Sindh is required.
- d) Statement of Purpose: Applicants for the PhD program must submit a Statement of Purpose (SOP) that clearly outlines their research interests, academic background, and preparedness for doctoral studies. The SOP should demonstrate the candidate's motivation, alignment with the program's research objectives, and how their proposed study contributes to the existing body of knowledge. Additionally, it should highlight relevant academic and professional experiences, research skills, and long-term career aspirations. The document should be structured logically, reflecting clarity of thought and a well-defined research direction.

2.2 Evaluation Criteria

- a) Comprehensive Examination Requirement: Upon successful completion of the prescribed coursework, the candidate shall be required to undertake and pass a Comprehensive Examination as a mandatory prerequisite for advancement to doctoral candidacy. Failure to meet this requirement shall result in the candidate being ineligible to proceed with the research phase of the program.

- b) **Mandatory Defence of Research Proposal (First Seminar):** The candidate shall be required to formally present and defend their Research Proposal before the departmental committee headed by the Dean. The successful defence of the proposal shall serve as a prerequisite for the continuation towards submission of the research proposal for approval. Non-compliance or failure to obtain approval may result in the candidate being required to revise and resubmit the proposal within the prescribed timeframe. The final research proposal must be submitted within two years from the date of enrolment.
- c) **Conduct of Progress Seminar (Second Seminar):** The candidate shall be obligated to demonstrate substantive progress in their research through a Progress Seminar to be presented after at least six months after the topic registration. The successful completion of this seminar is a requisite for the continuation of research towards dissertation submission.
- d) **Final Seminar (Open Defence) Requirement:** Subsequent to the external evaluation conducted by one external evaluator of the dissertation and compliance with publication requirements (at least one publication), the candidate shall be required to participate in the Final Seminar (Open Defence). The open defence shall be conducted in accordance with the procedural framework established by the University and shall serve as a one of decisive criterion for the conferral of the doctoral degree.
- e) **Dissertation Evaluation and Final Viva Voce:** The submitted dissertation shall undergo a rigorous evaluation process, wherein its originality, methodological robustness, and relevance to academic policy and professional practice shall be assessed. The evaluation shall be conducted in strict adherence to the Graduate Education Policy 2023 (GEP-2023). Upon successful completion of the external evaluation, the candidate shall be required to appear for a Final Viva Voce Examination, wherein the research findings shall be defended before external experts. The decision of the evaluation panel shall be conclusive in determining the acceptance or rejection of the dissertation.

NOTE: All the seminars will be presided over by the Dean of the concerned faculty or his/her nominee. Except for the final PhD seminar which is to be presided by the Vice-Chancellor or his/her nominee.

2.3 Publication Criteria

- a) **Publication Requirement:**
- **Science disciplines:** One article in a HEC's W-category journal, or two in X-category journals.
 - **Social Sciences:** One article in an HEC's X-category journal, or two in Y-category journals.

- b) The authors must include names of the researcher and the supervisor(s). The researcher must be the first author of the publications, and they must be related to the PhD research. The paper(s) must be published in a relevant Journal.

2.4 Similarity Index Criteria

- a) Similarity Test: A similarity test is required at the time of final thesis submission. Plagiarism will lead to rejection of the dissertation, and the case will be handled according to the Anti-Plagiarism Policy.
- b) Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated content must be declared and justified as per HEC Anti-Plagiarism policy.

2.5 Degree Awarding

Degree will be awarded after saucerful evaluation procedures and approval by the ASRB.

2.6 Degree Completion Timeline

a) PhD Duration

The degree program shall be completed within a minimum period of three (03) years and a maximum period of eight (08) years from the date of enrolment as per HEC GEP-2023. Extensions beyond the stipulated timeframe may be granted only in cases of force majeure or for valid reasons as determined by the university through its evaluation process. (Further details are provided below.)

b) Minimum Thesis Submission Timeline

The submission of the final work/t thesis shall not be permitted earlier than Two (02) years from the date of topic registration. However, the thesis cannot be submitted before 36 months (3 years) of time duration from the date of enrolment.

c) Extension for Non-Submission Within Stipulated Time

In the event of non-submission within the standard five (05) years from the date of enrolment. Extension(s) may be granted, subject to approval by the Advance Studies and Research Board (ASRB). The initial extension period shall not exceed one (01) year. A maximum of three (03) extensions may be granted under exceptional circumstances.

d) Cancellation of Admission After eight Years

If the degree is not completed within the maximum eight (08) year period from the date of enrolment, the admission shall be deemed cancelled.

2.7 Supervision Policy

- Supervisors: Supervisors must be PhD holders with expertise in the research area. A PhD supervisor's workload should not exceed five PhD students at a time.
- Supervisory Load:

The supervisory workload of research 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, simultaneously. Further, 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 other conditions provided in this policy

- Supervisory Committee: Each doctoral student will have a supervisory committee at the department level, including a supervisor, co-supervisor (if applicable), and subject experts.

3 Plagiarism Criteria

- Similarity Test: A plagiarism test must be conducted before the submission of the thesis. If plagiarism is detected, corrective actions will follow according to HEC's Anti-Plagiarism Policy.

4 Credit Transfer Policy

- a) The transfer of coursework is permitted as per HEC's Uniform Semester Policy, provided the host department/institute accepts the credits.
- b) Research work transfer is allowed however the candidate must conduct at least 50% research work at the host department within the stipulated timeframe. The candidate must conduct research work under the supervision assigned by the university.

5 Intra-Disciplinary Programs Criteria

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-2013¹).

¹ <https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/international-standard-classification-of-education-fields-of-education-and-training-2013-detailed-field-descriptions-2015-en.pdf>

The University of Sindh allows intra-disciplinary admissions, enabling students to pursue advanced studies in a related but distinct field within their primary discipline. This flexibility is provided under the following conditions:

- i. The university policy permits intra-disciplinary transition, subject to departmental approval.
- ii. The applicant must demonstrate a strong academic background and interest in the new discipline.
- iii. The applicant must pass the GAT-Subject Test with a minimum of 60% marks in the relevant discipline.
- iv. The candidate is required to complete 6-9 credit hours of Level-7 deficiency courses to bridge knowledge gaps before advancing to core coursework.

Intra-disciplinary admissions foster academic diversity, allowing students to expand their expertise while maintaining alignment with their foundational knowledge.

Coursework and Credit Hours

MS/MPhil programs require a total of 30 credit hours, which may consist of either 30 coursework credits or 24 coursework credits combined with 6 credit hours dedicated to a research thesis. If a thesis is undertaken, students must complete a defence process as per university policy.

PhD programs require a minimum of 24 credit hours for students from the same discipline, whereas intra-disciplinary students must complete 30-33 credit hours of coursework. Additionally, PhD candidates must complete at least 9 credit hours dedicated to dissertation research. All coursework must be conducted on campus with full-time faculty supervision to maintain academic quality.

Part-II: GOVERNERNING THE SYSTEMS OF POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH

1 Degree Completion Processes

1.1 MS/MPhil Degree Completion Process

- i. Two semesters of coursework, with 12 credit hours per semester.
- ii. The Controller's Office will issue the final transcript within 15 days of receiving the results from the department concerned.
- iii. The student passing score of 3.0 CGPA will submit research proposal/synopsis described by the DRGS office.
- iv. MS/MPhil scholars must submit their research proposal/synopsis for topic registration within the allowed timeframe.
- v. The proposal defence (1st Seminar²) will be considered as topic approval or proposal scrutiny at the department level and conducted before the final approval of the research topic by the ASRB followed by the Scrutiny committee.
- vi. Progress Reporting: The student must submit a six-month progress report duly signed by the supervisor concerned to the DRGS.
- vii. Successful defence of Final Seminar after Thesis Draft submission.
- viii. Final Thesis Submission: Research thesis must be submitted within the allowed timeframe.
- ix. External Evaluation: The thesis will undergo external evaluation as per the existing HEC GEP-2023.
- x. The student will defend thesis in final viva-voce.

² All seminars shall be publicly announced through official circulars, online platforms, and the University's official website.

1.2 PhD Degree Completion Process

a) The PhD student must complete:

- i. Two semesters of coursework, with 9 credit hours per semester.
- ii. After successful completion of PhD coursework, the comprehensive examination will be conducted within 15 days of the last coursework paper.
- iii. The comprehensive examination will be conducted by the two-three senior professors within the department under the supervision of the Chairperson/Director/HoD.
- iv. The comprehensive examination is not a credit-bearing test, therefore, only Pass or Fail will be marked on the transcript with date of conduct.
- v. In case of failure one or number of subjects or improving of the GPA/CGPA is allowed one time in relevant semester. Failure candidates will face automatic termination of degree program.
- vi. The comprehensive examination results, along with all other coursework results, will be communicated to the Controller of Examinations within two weeks.
- vii. The Controller's office will issue the final transcript within 15 days of receiving the results from the concerned department.
- viii. PhD scholars must submit their research proposal/synopsis within the allowed timeframe.

b) Comprehensive Examination & Publication Requirements

- i. PhD students must pass a comprehensive examination after completing their coursework. The exam assesses disciplinary knowledge, research competence, and analytical skills. Students are allowed a maximum of two attempts to pass; failure to do so results in removal from the PhD program.
- ii. Publication requirements for PhD students include at least one W-category or two X-category publications in the sciences and one X-category or two Y-category publications in the social sciences. The student must be the first author on the publication.

c) Dissertation Evaluation & Degree Award

After submission of final thesis, through proper channel, PhD dissertations must be reviewed by two external examiners, one of whom must be from an international university ranked among the top 500 in QS or Times Higher Education rankings. External reviewers must have an H-index of at least 15 (Social Sciences) or 30 (Sciences) and hold a full professorship at a recognized research institution.

National reviewers for PhD dissertations must be senior faculty members with a strong academic background, having at least five research publications in reputable HEC-recognized journals and three years of experience in evaluating doctoral research. national reviewers are responsible for assessing the dissertation's methodological rigor, originality, and scholarly contribution before it is sent for external evaluation.

List of External and National reviewers/Examiners on the basis of GEP-2023, must be developed at the Department level and approved by the Board of Studies.

The dissertation defence must be conducted in an open session, where the candidate's knowledge, methodology, and findings are rigorously evaluated. The final approval and awarding of the degree occur only after the successful defence and completion of all coursework, research, and publication requirements.

2 Topic Approval

- i. Candidates who have attained a CGPA of 3.0 or above in their first semester shall be eligible to apply for topic registration/research proposal at the département/institute/centre level through the concerned dean office. Those failing to meet this criterion may apply after their second semester results, provided their CGPA remains at or above 3.0.
- ii. Upon successfully defending their research proposal (1st Seminar) before Departmental Committee for graduate Studies, the candidates must submit their topic registration application online, ensuring it is forwarded through the proper channels to the DRGS.
- iii. The DRGS shall prepare working papers for scrutiny committee at concerned Dean's office.
- iv. After receiving minutes of scrutiny committee, the DRGS shall prepare working papers for ASRB, incorporating the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee.
- v. The Advanced Studies and Research Board (ASRB) shall review and approve the registration request, following which registration letters shall be issued describing the terms and conditions of the award of the degree.
- vi. The date of scrutiny shall be considered as the official topic approval date.
- vii. If a candidate fails to register their research topic within six (06) months from the date of result declaration for an MPhil program or within one (01) year for a PhD program, their admission shall be considered automatically cancelled.

3 Topic Modification, Change of Supervisor, Co-Supervision Requests, Student Withdrawal, and Credit Transfer Cases

All requests for topic modification, change of supervisor, co-supervision, student withdrawal, or credit transfer shall be subject to:

- Scrutiny and verification by the Faculty Scrutiny Committees.
- Final approval by the Advanced Studies and Research Board (ASRB).

4 Plagiarism & AI Detection Policies

Plagiarism is strictly prohibited, and all research must undergo scrutiny using HEC-approved anti-plagiarism software. The maximum allowed similarity index is 19%, with no single source exceeding 5% similarity without proper citation. AI-generated content must be carefully reviewed to ensure authenticity, and its use must be explicitly declared and justified. Researchers must follow HEC's ethical research guidelines to maintain academic integrity. Further to this HEC Anti-Plagiarism policy may be referred.

5 EVALUATION PROCEDURES

5.1 Final PhD Seminar

- i. Candidates who have successfully delivered their first and second seminars shall be eligible to apply for their final PhD seminar along with first draft of thesis copy through the DRGS office.
- ii. Upon application, DRGS shall issue an official request to the departmental head for the formation of an examination panel, in consultation with the candidate's supervisor.
- iii. The thesis evaluation and examiner - panel formation: 06 national experts, with their official email addresses.
- iv. The Vice-Chancellor shall formally appoint examiner upon submission of panel by DRGS.
- v. DRGS shall issue letters to the student and the supervisor for the final seminar, confirming the date of the seminar.
- vi. Upon receipt of the supervisor's confirmation through the proper channel, DRGS shall issue official seminar notices for the final PhD seminar.

5.2 PhD Thesis Submission

- i. Upon submission of the final thesis after successful final seminar, DRGS shall conduct a similarity check by the Focal Person (FP) Anti-Plagiarism.
- ii. In cases where plagiarism is detected, DRGS shall issue a formal notification to the candidate and supervisor for necessary revisions.
- iii. If the thesis meets similarity criteria, DRGS shall issue a letter for the submission of the examiner/evaluator panel.
- iv. The Vice-Chancellor shall appoint two (02) national and two (02) international examiners or as per GEP-2023 policy to evaluate the thesis.
- v. If an examiner declines or fails to respond within fifteen (15) days, DRGS shall recommend the appointment of an alternate examiner to the Vice-Chancellor.
- vi. Upon receiving all evaluation reports, DRGS shall communicate the necessary revisions to the candidate, who must submit a revised thesis incorporating the suggested modifications.
- vii. The final viva voce examination shall only proceed if all four (4) examiners approve the thesis. In case of negative report(s), the thesis may be sent to alternative examiner(s) once following the above-mentioned procedures. If reports are still negative(s), the case may be reported to ASRB for further decision.
- viii. Upon successful completion of the viva voce, DRGS shall verify the student's research publications and category before presenting the case to ASRB for final degree approval.

5.3 MPhil Thesis Submission

- i. The MPhil thesis submission process shall adhere to the same procedures as PhD submissions, with the following exception:
 - The thesis shall be evaluated by only one (01) national expert instead of four (04).
- ii. Upon receiving the evaluation report, DRGS shall notify students of required modifications and issue a final viva voce examination date.
- iii. Once the viva voce examination is successfully conducted, the case shall be presented to ASRB for final degree approval.

6 Degree Award

Degrees for MS/MPhil and PhD programs are awarded upon the successful completion of coursework, research requirements, progress seminars and dissertation defence. The official completion date is recorded upon the final defence notification. The University of Sindh is committed to maintaining high academic standards and producing graduates who contribute meaningfully to research and knowledge in their respective fields.

7 Supervision Guidelines

PhD supervisors must hold a PhD degree in a relevant field and be approved by the university as per GEP-2023.

Each supervisor is allowed to oversee in total 12 MS/MPhil and PhD students with a maximum of 5 PhD students.

Co-supervisors may be appointed for interdisciplinary or intra-disciplinary research projects with be approved with strong justification.

Supervisors are responsible for guiding students through research proposal development, ensuring compliance with ethical research standards, and preventing plagiarism through regular monitoring and feedback.

The supervisory workload of research 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, simultaneously. Further, 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 fulfilment of other conditions provided in this policy.

Co-supervisors can be appointed for interdisciplinary research projects, especially when the research requires expertise beyond a single discipline. Co-supervisors must meet the same qualifications as primary supervisors, ensuring that students receive well-rounded guidance. Supervisors are required to maintain a record of meetings with the research scholar and submit quarterly progress report routed through the Head of Department to the concerned Dean. If two consecutive progress reports are not submitted, the supervisor must issue a warning letter to the candidate. If no satisfactory response is received within one month, the supervisor must inform the DRGS through the Director and the Dean regarding the discontinuity of the candidacy. However, if a candidate submits an application requesting to park their research work for a maximum of two months with a valid reason, the application may be considered.

7.1 Supervisory Process

In order to effectively guide the supervisory process of doctoral dissertations toward achieving desired academic and research goals, University of Sindh shall implement the following measures:

- i) Development and Implementation of a Supervision Manual

The University shall develop a comprehensive supervision manual that must be implemented consistently to standardize and streamline the doctoral supervision process.

ii) Formation of a Supervisory Committee

For each doctoral student, a Supervisory Committee must be constituted to ensure adequate guidance, support, and evaluation throughout the dissertation process.

i. The Research Supervision Manual

The supervision manual shall include, but not be limited to, the following key areas to facilitate and guide the supervisory process:

- a) Roles and Responsibilities: A clear description of the roles and responsibilities of both the supervisor and the supervisee.
- b) Supervision Timeline: Specification of the recommended supervision timespan, setting clear milestones for the doctoral journey.
- c) Preparation for Effective Supervision: Guidance on how to prepare for supervision sessions to ensure their efficiency and productivity.
- d) Constructive Communication: Recommendations on how to foster an environment of open dialogue, where questions and issues are addressed with constructive feedback, ensuring mutual respect.
- e) Workload and Feedback: Guidelines on setting reasonable expectations for the workload and the process of providing and receiving constructive feedback.
- f) Adherence to Social Norms: Directions on conducting supervision in a manner that aligns with established academic and social norms.
- g) Timetable and Meeting Schedule: Provision of a tentative timetable, including a schedule for regular meetings between the supervisor and supervisee.
- h) Documentation of Meetings and Research: A system for maintaining records of meetings and research progress, including proforma or registers for tracking these activities.
- i) Grievance Handling Policy: Establishment of a formal policy for addressing grievances that may arise during the supervisory process.

7.2 Supervisory Committee Composition

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) recommends the following composition for the Supervisory Committee of each doctoral researcher to ensure comprehensive supervision:

- a) Supervisor – Serving as the Convener of the Supervisory Committee.
- b) Co-supervisor (if applicable) – Serving as a Member of the Committee.
- c) Minimum of Two PhD Faculty Members – At least two faculty members, one of whom must be from a department other than the student's own department within the same university, to provide a diverse range of expertise and guidance.

This framework shall ensure that the doctoral dissertation process is managed effectively, promoting academic success and research integrity.

7.3 Process for Changing a supervisor

A research scholar may request a change of supervisor under exceptional circumstances, including transfer, health issues, disciplinary matters, or the unfortunate demise of the supervisor. The process for supervisor change is as follows:

- i. The research scholar must submit a formal application for a change of supervisor, stating the reason for the request. The application should be endorsed with the consent of the new supervisor.
- ii. The application must be forwarded through the concerned Head of Department, who will provide comments and recommendations.
- iii. The application, along with the comments from the Head of Department, must be routed through the scrutiny committee for further verification.
- iv. The ASRB review the request and deliberate on it in a meeting with the approval members.
- v. Based on the committee's decision, the DRGS will issue a formal notification of supervisor change or provide a justified reason for rejecting the request.
- vi. If a new supervisor is assigned, the scholar must continue research under the guidance of the newly appointed supervisor, ensuring continuity in research work.

7.4 Criteria to Be a PhD Supervisor

To be a PhD research supervisor, an individual shall meet the following requirements:

General Requirements:

- a) A PhD degree from an HEC recognized national/international university/degree awarding institute (DAI).
- b) The research supervisor shall be given opportunities to attend and qualify course(s) on MS/MPhil/PhD Supervision which should also 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 a university in the following manner:
 - i. Basic level course: to supervise students of MS/MPhil/equivalent degrees.
 - ii. Advance level course: to supervise PhD researchers.
- c) A regular/adjunct faculty member or researcher at a public or private university or DAI, or position of researcher or scientist at any R&D or public/private sector organization. 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.

Publication Requirements:

In addition to fulfilling the General Requirements, a PhD supervisor must publish research articles in the HEC's recognized research journals and the category specified in the HJRS/HEC 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 publication 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.

8 Quality Assurance

To ensure the consistent quality of graduate programs, the University of Sindh has established a Graduate and Research Studies Directorate. This body is responsible to oversee all aspects of graduate education, including admissions, coursework, research progress, and compliance with HEC policies. Additionally, the directorate is authorized to monitor grievances and ensure transparency in all academic processes. By centralizing quality assurance, the university aims to maintain high academic standards.

9 CGPA Improvement for MPhil/PhD Programs

- i. Candidates must complete the prescribed coursework with a Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 3.0 or above to be eligible for topic registration.
- ii. Candidates seeking to improve their CGPA may apply to DRGS through the proper channel, provided their CGPA is less than 3.0.
- iii. DRGS shall issue a prescribed fee challan and permission letter for candidates who wish to reappear in examinations for CGPA improvement.
- iv. Such permission shall be granted only once.
- v. If a candidate fails to achieve a CGPA of 3.0 after the two permitted attempts for improvement, their admission shall be cancelled.

10 Grievance Management

A comprehensive grievance management system shall be established at both the Departmental and Faculty levels to effectively address the concerns of students and faculty members. This system aims to ensure a transparent and equitable process for filing and resolving complaints related to admissions, supervision, and research activities.

In this regard, a Departmental Grievance Committee shall be constituted in each department/institute, comprising senior faculty members and chaired by the Head of Department (HoD) or the concerned Dean, as duly notified.

11 Admission Cancellation/termination

- If a student's research progress is evaluated as unsatisfactory in two consecutive progress reports, the supervisor shall initiate the admission termination process through the DRGS via the proper channel.
- The student shall have the right to appeal the proposed termination by submitting a request for restoration of admission to the Departmental Grievance Committee (DGC), chaired by the respective Dean.
- The DGC shall review the appeal and forward its recommendation—whether in favour of restoration or termination—to the Advanced Studies and Research Board (ASRB).
- The ASRB shall have the final authority to approve or reject the termination or restoration of a student's admission based on the DGC's recommendation and supporting documents.

12 Departmental Committee for Graduate Studies

The committee must be consists of following members at the departmental level.

- Dean or his/her nominee,
- Director/Chairperson or his/her nominee,
- one senior professor and
- two senior faculty members

13 Scrutiny Committee

As defined in University Code Book 2013;

- i. The Faculty Scrutiny Committee shall be responsible for assessing the viability, scope, and available research facilities for all research topics and modifications.
- ii. The Scrutiny Committee shall comprise the following members:
 - a. The Dean of the Faculty (Chairperson)
 - b. The Director/Chairperson of the relevant Institute/Department/Centre
 - c. The senior-most professor (excluding the Chairperson) from the relevant department
 - d. Two (02) professors from a relevant discipline outside the department, appointed by the Dean.
 - e. The candidate's supervisor
 - f. The Director of Graduate Studies
- iii. The Scrutiny Committee shall also evaluate requests for:
 - a. Appointment or change of supervisors/co-supervisors
 - b. Topic revisions
 - c. Transfer of registrations to the PhD program
- iv. The decisions of the Scrutiny Committee shall be subject to final approval by ASRB.

-----The End -----

Postgraduate Academic Calendar

Admissions announcement: Feb-March

Test conduct: March

Provisional Admission Letters: April-May

Date of Enrolment: **August**

First Semester start date: August

First Semester End date: November

First Semester Examination: December

---Winter Break---

Second Semester start date: January

Second Semester End date: April

Second Semester Examination: May

Results announcement: June