

Ph.D. REGULATIONS

2021



APPROVED ON: _____

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APPROVED BY _____

MEETING OF BOARD OF GOVERNORS, HELD ON _____

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University of South Asia

Ph.D. Regulations

In the exercise of powers vested in it, under Section 23 of the University of South Asia Act, 2005, the Board of Governors on the recommendations of the Board of Advanced Studies and Research and the Academic Council, has framed the following Regulations.

1) Title and Commencement

- a) These Regulations shall be called “University of South Asia Ph.D. Regulations 2021”.
- b) These shall come into force at once with immediate effect.

2) Definitions

- a) In these Regulations, unless the text or the context otherwise requires:
 - i) “University” means the University of South Asia.
 - ii) “Vice-Chancellor” means the Vice-Chancellor of the University.
 - iii) “Dean” means Chairperson of the Board of Faculty.
 - iv) “Head of the Department” means the Head of teaching department.
 - v) “Student” means a person admitted in the Ph.D. Program of the University.
 - vi) “Scholar” means a student of Ph.D. Program who has completed his Ph.D. course work and has started his research work after the approval of Research Proposal.
 - vii) “Supervisor / Co-supervisor” means a person holding Ph.D. degree in the relevant field and having capability to supervise the research and appointed under these Regulations according to the criteria prescribed by HEC.
 - viii) “Internal Examiner” means such examiner appointed under these Regulations.
 - ix) “External Examiner” means such examiner from outside the University to be appointed under these Regulations.
 - x) “BASR” means the Board of Advanced Studies and Research of the University.
 - xi) “Academic Council” means the Academic Council of the University.
 - xii) “Faculty” means the Faculty in which a student of Ph.D. is registered.
 - xiii) “FRAC” means the Faculty Research Advisory Committee, constituted under these Regulations.
 - xiv) “CEC” means Comprehensive Examination Committee constituted under these Regulations.
- b) The terms defined here and not defined herein shall have the meaning assigned to them in the University of South Asia, Act 2005.

3) Faculty Research Advisory Committee

The Faculty offering Ph.D. programs in its Departments shall constitute a Faculty Research Advisory Committee (FRAC) comprising of following members holding Ph.D. degree:

- a) The Dean of the Faculty (Convener)
- b) Head of Relevant Department
- c) All faculty members holding doctoral degree of the relevant field

4) Admission Eligibility

- a) Entry Level-I: BS (or equivalent degree with 16 years of education) from any HEC Recognized University with minimum 3.0/4.0 CGPA in semester system and/or first division in annual system.
- b) Entry Level-II: MPhil/MS (or equivalent degree with 18 years of education) from any HEC Recognized University with minimum 3.0/ 4.0 CGPA in semester system and/or first division in annual system.
- c) The candidates holding degrees from abroad shall provide equivalence degree certificate from HEC.
- d) Faculty Research Advisory Committee (FRAC) of discipline concerned may add special eligibility conditions if necessary.

5) Admission and Registration Procedure

- a) The candidate shall apply in response to advertisement for admission on the prescribed form along with a proposed research idea/statement of purpose to the admission office along with two recommendation letters or the names of two referees from relevant field, used to ascertain the preparedness and interest of the candidate.
- b) Applicants having strong interest in pursuing Ph.D. degree in a discipline different from prior education may apply for admission. Provided that applicant's prior education, experience and research proposal is satisfactory for undertaking the course of studies of Ph.D. program, otherwise FRAC may recommend to take additional deficiency courses notwithstanding with prior qualification.
- c) The candidate shall have to pass the Departmental Ph.D. Admission Test with at least 60% marks or have passed GRE General or Subject test with at least 60% marks or have passed a test conducted by Education Testing Council (ETC) of HEC.
- d) The GRE general or subject test result shall not be more than two (2) years old at the time of admission.
- e) FRAC shall scrutinize the applications duly assessing the academic qualifications, work experience, and research publication (if any) and generate a list of eligible candidates based on following criteria:
- f) Academic qualifications: Maximum marks = 60

7) Degree Completion Timeline

- a) Minimum duration of the Ph.D. program is three (3) years and a maximum of eight (8) years including the course work, compressive examination and research work. Provided that the delay was caused by circumstances beyond control, the Vice-Chancellor upon recommendation of FRAC may extend this period up to ten (10) years.
- b) In no event the Ph.D. degree shall be awarded more than ten (10) years after the enrollment of scholar in the program.

8) Program Credit Hours

- a) Entry Level-I = 48 Credit Hours Course Work + 30 Credit Hours Research Work.
- b) Entry Level-II = 24 Credit Hours course work subject to recommendation of FRAC + 30 Credit Hours Research Work.
- c) Entry Level-II education in another discipline = 24 Credit Hours course work + additional courses recommended by FRAC+ 30 Credit Hours Research Work.

9) Course Work (Compulsory)

- a) PhD applicant having Entry Level-I education is required to complete course work of up to 48 credit hours in first two years, followed by comprehensive examination for the grant of candidacy as PhD researcher.
- b) PhD applicant having Entry Level-II education in relevant discipline is required to complete course work of 24 credit hours and additional courses as recommended by FRAC (if any) preferably in first year, followed by comprehensive examination within first two years for the grant of candidacy as PhD researcher.
- c) Course work of PhD applicant having Entry Level-II education in another discipline shall be calculated by FRAC on case-to-case basis in accordance with the department's policy. The course work will be completed preferably in first year, followed by comprehensive examination within first two years for the grant of candidacy as PhD researcher.
- d) After passing the comprehensive examination, Research Work of 30 credit hours is required to be completed by the scholar.
- e) The student may register for a minimum course work of six credit hours and a maximum of twelve credit hours in a semester at the beginning of each semester.
- f) During the course work, a minimum class attendance of 75% shall be compulsory to appear in the mid and final term examinations.

- g) The student shall have to maintain GPA of 3.0/4.0. However, in case the student fails to maintain the required GPA, he/she may be allowed to repeat maximum four (4) courses during entire coursework.
- h) If the student fails to fulfil the requirements of Ph.D. program or completes the requirements for award of MS/MPhil (or equivalent) degree during the course of Ph.D. studies, he/she may be awarded the applicable degree.

10) Residency Requirement

The scholar must be regular and physically present in the Ph.D. residency for two (2) years under the supervision of supervisor.

11) Comprehensive Examination

- a) Following the completion of coursework, the student shall be required to pass the comprehensive examination in order to be granted status as Ph.D. Scholar.
- b) The Comprehensive Examination shall be conducted by the Controller of Examinations in collaboration with the concerned Departmental Comprehensive Examination Committee (CEC) as per approved/notified SOPs.
- c) The Comprehensive Examination shall comprise of:
 - i) Paper-I: (100 Marks) 1 hour
 - ii) Paper-II: (100 Marks) 1 hour
 - iii) Oral / Practical Exam (100 Marks)
- d) The student must score cumulative 70% marks in Comprehensive Examination and if the student fails to pass the comprehensive examination, he/she shall be allowed one more attempt to take the exam.
- e) The result of the Comprehensive Examination shall be submitted to the Controller of Examinations through respective Department for notification, office record and intimation to Registrar Office.
- f) After passing the Comprehensive Examination, the Ph.D. students shall be called “Scholar” and his admission in the Ph.D. program shall be confirmed and notified by the Registrar.

12) Appointment of Research Supervisor/Co-Supervisor

- a) The Research Supervisor shall be appointed by BASR on the recommendation of FRAC and due notification issued by the Registrar.
- b) A Research Supervisor shall be a regular faculty member of the University holding a Ph.D. degree and enlisted as HEC approved Supervisor. The Supervisor shall also act as internal examiner.
- c) The name of Supervisor will be forwarded to BASR on the recommendation of FRAC.

- d) BASR on the recommendations of FRAC may appoint a co-supervisor, if necessary, who is a faculty member/scientist of the University or other national or international Universities or research organizations.
- e) In case the Supervisor is unable to continue the supervision of the Scholar due to any reason, BASR may appoint another Supervisor or allow the Co-Supervisor to be the Supervisor, subject to the condition that he is from within the University.
- f) In case the Co-Supervisor is unable to continue the supervision of the Scholar due to any reason, BASR may appoint another Co-Supervisor.

13) Responsibilities of Supervisor

The Supervisor shall have the responsibilities to:

- a) Review the research proposal and may recommend the topic of research to FRAC for its onward submission to BASR.
- b) Provide guidance to the Scholar in different stages of the research process.
- c) Periodically review the progress of research work and provide necessary guidance.
- d) Forward scholar's six-monthly progress report to FRAC.

14) Ph. D. Research Work

- a) It shall be the responsibility of the Scholar to register himself for the research work at the beginning of every semester on a specified date.
- b) The Scholar shall submit a six-monthly progress report to the Supervisor in the prescribed format. The Supervisor shall submit the Scholar's progress report to FRAC.
- c) Where the Scholar delays the submission of required reports for three months, the Supervisor shall report the case to FRAC.
- d) FRAC shall notify the suspension of the Scholar in this regard with intimation to all concerned departments.
- e) In order to get the admission restored, the Scholar shall submit an application to FRAC, mentioning reason(s) for delay duly endorsed by the Supervisor. The Scholar shall pay the prescribed dues (if any) for restoration of registration status.
- f) Where the Scholar fails to submit two consecutive progress reports, the Vice Chancellor may, on the recommendations of the Supervisor and FRAC restore the registration on payment of the readmission fee.
- g) In case of absence without leave for more than one year, the case shall be referred to BASR through FRAC.
- h) The FRAC shall review a six-monthly progress report of each Ph. D scholar submitted by the research Supervisor. A copy of the progress report shall be given to the Scholar for information and shall also be kept in the Scholar's file to mark his/her satisfactory progress.

- i) In case the progress of the Scholar is unsatisfactory, the FRAC, after hearing the scholar, shall record the reasons and suggest corrective measures within stipulated time. If the Scholar fails to implement such corrective measures, the FRAC may cancel his/her registration and matter shall be reported to the Vice Chancellor through Registrar office.
- j) The scholar may appeal to BASR against the decision of FRAC under the preceding clause.
- k) After completing the research work, he/she shall document research details and submit his thesis for evaluation.

15) Research Proposal

- a) Scholar shall write a research proposal in consultation with the Supervisor after passing the Comprehensive Examination.
- b) The Scholar shall submit four copies of the Research Proposal to the Head of Department on prescribed format and shall present his/her work to FRAC.
- c) On the recommendation of FRAC, the research proposal shall be submitted to the Board of Faculty for approval and submission to Institutional Review Board for ethical considerations.
- d) After approval by BASR, the Registrar shall notify to all concerned departments, the details of scholar, research topic and name of the Supervisor.
- e) In case FRAC recommends changes in Research Proposal, the Scholar shall resubmit the revised Research Proposal, along with necessary changes, to the FRAC for further processing, failing which it shall lead to the cancellation of admission of the Scholar.
- f) During the due course of Research, if the Scholar and Supervisor find out that there is need to revise the research proposal or make minor changes in research title, the same shall be resubmitted to the FRAC for further processing, provided sufficient time is available for completion.
- g) On the recommendation of FRAC and approval of the BASR, the Scholar shall be allowed to continue with revised research work.

16) Thesis Submission Process for Evaluation

- a) On completion of the research work, the Scholar shall present his draft thesis to FRAC through the Research Supervisor(s).
- b) In case FRAC is not satisfied with the quality of research work done, it may recommend revision of the work on specific lines within a stipulated time.
- c) Once the thesis is revised as per FRAC recommendations, the Research Supervisor shall submit the revision report to FRAC for their information

- d) Supervisor shall further verify the supplied material as per requirement and present it to Board of Faculty for discussion and approval.
- e) Board of Faculty shall forward the case to Registrar for presentation to BASR within thirty (30) days.
- f) Thesis Submission Process shall be followed as under:
 - i) Thesis submission form signed by the Scholar and the Supervisor.
 - ii) Five copies of the thesis written on a prescribed format along with Thesis Completion Certificate.
 - iii) The thesis shall be typed on A4 size (11.69"x8.27") paper with margins of 1-½" on the left and 1" to the right, top and bottom of each page. The thesis shall be hard bound with maroon cloth cover and golden lettering on the front and the spine.
 - iv) Originality report for plagiarism checked/signed by the Supervisor as per University Plagiarism Policy.
 - v) No Objection Certificate from the University.
 - vi) Soft copy of the
 - Thesis in PDF format.
 - A list of publications from current research work (if any).

17) Thesis Evaluation & Public Defense Procedure

- a) The Vice Chancellor shall appoint the external experts/examiners for thesis evaluation from the panel approved by BASR and forward the names to the Controller of Examinations.
- b) The external Experts may be either (i) Pakistan-Based Distinguished National Professors, Meritorious Professors, or Tenure Track Professors, or (ii) Ph.D. experts from HEC approved list of academically advanced countries.
- c) In general, the Ph.D. thesis will require evaluation by two external examiners, however in case if the scholar has published his/her research in a peer reviewed journal classified by the HEC as category "X" or above, the Ph.D. thesis will require evaluation by only one external examiner.
- d) The Controller of Examinations shall send a copy of the Thesis to the examiners approved for evaluation.
- e) The external examiners shall submit a detailed Evaluation Report on the prescribed proforma, preferably within three months from the date of receipt of Thesis, clearly indicating the following:
 - i) The Thesis is recommended for the award of Ph.D. degree.
 - ii) The Thesis is recommended for the award of Ph.D. degree after minor revision.

- iii) The Thesis is recommended for the award of Ph.D. degree after major revision, subject to satisfaction of external examiner.
- iv) The Thesis is rejected.
- f) In case an examiner recommends revision of the Thesis, he shall also indicate whether he would like to re-examine the Thesis after the revision.
- g) In case both the external examiners recommend acceptance, the thesis shall be accepted for viva-voce and public defense.
- h) In case one external examiner recommends rejection and the second external examiner recommends acceptance, the Thesis shall be sent to a third external examiner (appointed by the Vice Chancellor from the approved panel). The work will be submitted to the third examiner after it has been revised in line with the suggestions made by the two original examiners.
- i) If two of the three external examiners, declare the thesis as rejected the candidate may be permitted to submit a new thesis on a new topic provided sufficient allowable time to complete the new research work is available for degree completion.
- j) In case both the external examiners recommend rejection, the Thesis shall be considered as rejected:
 - i) Provided that BASR may allow the Scholar to take up a new topic of Thesis and the Scholar shall proceed as per the prescribed Regulations.
 - ii) Provided further that the process of writing and evaluation of Thesis shall not exceed prescribed time limit.
- k) In case any of the examiners recommend revision to the Thesis, the Scholar shall carry out the necessary revision as suggested by the examiner and resubmit the revised version of the Thesis duly certified by the Supervisor.
- l) If any of the external examiners finds the Thesis as accepted with minor revisions, these may be incorporated in the Thesis with the approval of the Supervisor without referring again to the external examiners.
- m) The revised version shall be re-evaluated by the same examiner who had suggested revision of the Thesis, unless the examiner is unable or declines to do so.

18) Research Paper Publication

- a) Acceptance/publication of at least one research paper as first author during his/her doctoral studies in an HEC approved “Y” category journal or above before the conduct of Viva Voce.

19) Viva Voce

- a) The Vice Chancellor shall appoint the external examiner for Viva Voce from the panel approved by BASR and forward the names to the Controller of Examinations.

- b) The Registrar shall forward the panel of Examiners approved by the Vice Chancellor to Controller of Examinations who shall announce the date and place of Examination and ensure announcement of viva voce on University Notice boards.
 - i) Moreover, the following tasks should be carried out:
 - ii) The Controller of Examinations shall be responsible to send copy of thesis to the examiners, further get their availability for the conduct of viva voce, and intimate the progress to the Dean and Head of Department.
- c) The viva voce shall be conducted by two examiners: one internal (supervisor) and one external appointed by the Vice Chancellor from the approved panel of examiners from Pakistan. The viva voce shall be open to students and faculty of the University but the evaluation shall be done only by the appointed examiners.
- d) If the Scholar fails to satisfy the examiners in the viva voce, he may be given only one more chance for viva voce.
 - i) Provided that the BASR may recommend to the Vice Chancellor to appoint a new external examiner for second viva voce.
- e) The Controller of Examinations shall ensure that copies of thesis and the comments/suggestions of foreign evaluators are available with the examiners before the viva voce.
- f) Soft copy of comments/observations/suggestions of the foreign evaluators and subsequent corrections/revisions shall be available with the Scholar at the time of viva voce.
- g) At the end of oral examination, the examiner can give one of four decisions. The Thesis can be:
 - i) The Thesis is accepted for the award of Ph.D. degree.
 - ii) The Thesis is accepted for the award of Ph.D. degree after minor revision (The supervisor would be responsible to ensure that the modifications recommended have been carried out successfully).
 - iii) The Thesis is accepted for the award of Ph.D. degree after major revision (The supervisor would be responsible to ensure that the modifications recommended have been carried out successfully).
 - iv) The Thesis is rejected.

20) Award of Ph.D. Degree

- a) Following the successful completion of evaluation process and prior to announcement of the award of Ph.D. degree, the Scholar shall submit four hardcopies of Ph.D. Thesis in the specified format duly signed by the external examiner and supervisor along with a soft copy (PDF) to the Controller of Examinations.

- b) Upon successful completion of all the degree requirements, BASR shall forward the recommendation to the Vice Chancellor for award of Ph.D. degree.
- c) The date of notification of the award of Ph.D. degree subsequent to Ph.D. defense shall be considered to be the date of completion of Ph.D. studies.

21) Award of MPhil/MS Degree on the Basis of PhD Studies

- a) The Ph.D. scholar fulfilling the requirements of MPhil/MS degree may be awarded MPhil/MS (or equivalent) degree if he/she fulfils the requirements of MPhil/MS degree.
- b) The student unable to fulfil the requirements of Ph.D. degree or opting to discontinue the doctoral program may be awarded MPhil/MS (or equivalent) degree if he/she fulfils the requirements of MPhil/MS degree.
- c) For the award of MPhil/MS (or equivalent) degree the candidate will either complete thirty (30) credit hours of course work or complete twenty-four (24) credit hours of course work along with a minimum six (6) credit hours for research work/thesis.

22) Change of Supervisors and Transfer of Scholar

- a) Request for change of the Research Supervisor shall be sent to FRAC by the Dean in the following cases:
 - b) The Research Supervisor is not available for supervision.
 - c) By mutual consent of both the Supervisor and the Scholar.
 - d) In special circumstances, FRAC may change the Supervisor on the request of the Scholar or on its own motion.
 - e) The Supervisor, who wishes to avail leave/lien/deputation beyond a period of six months, may request FRAC to allow a Co-Supervisor for supervision of Scholar registered with him.

23) Re-Admission

- a) A student whose admission is cancelled on grounds other than disciplinary action may be re-admitted for once in the entire PhD Program duration, subject to the payment of outstanding dues.
- b) If the course work and comprehensive examination were passed within two consecutive semesters prior to the cancellation of the admission, full credit may be allowed regarding course work and comprehensive examination.
- c) In case the readmission is sought after the lapse of more than two semester but within four consecutive semesters from the date of passing the comprehensive examination, FRAC may determine the course(s) to be re-done as well as its recommendations about the comprehensive examination.
- d) If a student who is re-admitted to PhD program and had previously spent the minimum period of three years as a PhD student, he/she may be allowed to submit the thesis after

six months from the date of his/her re-admission, subject to the satisfactory report from Research Supervisor.

24) Discontinuation from Ph.D. Program

- a) During the span of Ph.D. program, the Scholar may voluntarily discontinue the program due to any reason.
- b) The University will not refund any dues already paid by the Scholar.

25) Withdrawal of an Awarded Ph.D. Degree

- a) In case of plagiarism or any other serious misconduct, the Plagiarism Committee shall investigate the matter.
- b) Consequent upon recommendation of the Committee, BASR may propose to Board of Governors to withdraw the Ph.D. degree.
- c) Where there is a dispute or discrepancy, the decision of the Board of Governors shall be final and binding.

26) Copyright

- a) The Scholar is responsible for compliance with the Copyright Act and the University's Policy on Copyright Compliance.
- b) Failure to comply with (a) may entail disciplinary action by the University.

27) General

- a) Notwithstanding anything contained in these Regulations, all Ph.D. students or scholars shall, in addition to the provisions of these Regulations, be governed by the Code of Conduct and general rules and procedures framed by the University from time to time.
- b) Matters not covered by the Regulations shall be governed by HEC and the University's Policies in force at any given time.
- c) If strict application of these regulations creates undue hardship to an individual, the regulations may be relaxed by BASR recording reasons and circumstances in writing.

28) Fees and Other Dues

Each Ph.D. candidate shall be required to pay tuition fee and such other charges as may be determined by the University from time to time.

29) Removal of Difficulties

If any difficulty arises in the application of these Regulations, the Vice Chancellor may, with the approval of BASR, pass such orders, not inconsistent with the express provisions of these Regulations, as he may deem fit in the circumstances.

30) Disputes about Interpretation

Any doubt or dispute arising from the interpretation of these Regulations shall be referred to BASR for decision.

31) Appeal

- a) A person aggrieved by any action or inaction of any person or entity except that of BASR may appeal to BASR within 30 days of the action or inaction.
- b) In case of failure to take action affecting the rights of the student or scholar, BASR may direct the person responsible for taking the action to do so within time specified by BASR.
- c) A person aggrieved by the action or inaction of BASR, may appeal to the Board of Governors within 30 days or within reasonable time as determined by the Board of Governors.
