



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ASIA
REGULATIONS FOR MS/MPhil PROGRAMS
2024

**Adopted from HEC's Graduate Education
Policy (GEP) 2023**

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Table of Contents

1. Short Title and Commencement	3
2. Definitions	3
3. Pre-Requisites for MS/MPhil Programs.....	4
4. Departmental Research Committee (DRC).....	5
5. Functions of DRC	5
6. Eligibility Criteria for Admission	6
7. Procedure for Admission	6
8. Duration of Program	7
9. Scheme of Studies.....	8
10. Registration and Enrollment of Coursework (Compulsory)	8
11. Coursework, Examinations and Attendance	8
12. Award of Grades, Grade Points and Grade Point Average	9
13. Transfer of Credit Hours/Exemption of Courses	9
14. Semester Regulations	10
15. Appointment of Research Supervisor/Co-Supervisor.....	10
16. Responsibilities of Supervisor	10
17. Registration/Enrollment of Research Work, Development of Synopsis	11
18. MS/MPhil Research Work Progress.....	12
19. Thesis	13
20. Thesis Examination	13
21. Fees and Other Dues	14

REGULATIONS FOR MS/MPhil PROGRAMS 2023

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.

Preamble

- (1) The University of South Asia shall offer Programs leading to the degrees of Master of Science/Master of Studies, abbreviated as MS, or Master of Philosophy, abbreviated as M.Phil. or otherwise as prescribed for the Program introduced from time to time.
- (2) Wherever applicable the Regulations prescribed from time to time by all professional councils created through Act or by HEC.

1. Short Title and Commencement

- (1) These Regulations shall be called “Regulations For MS/MPhil Programs 2023”.
- (2) These shall come into force with effect from Spring 2024.

2. Definitions

- (1) In these Regulations, unless the text or the context otherwise requires:
 - a. “Academic Department” means a teaching department maintained and administered, or recognized by the University in the manner prescribed;
 - b. Academic Calendar: A schedule of the whole academic year (including fall, spring and summer semesters, semester starting date, holidays during the semester, semester termination date, Mid-Term exam week, Final exam week, Result notification date etc.)
 - c. Accreditation Councils: A council established either by the Act of Parliament or under clause 10(e) of the HEC ordinance 2002 to carry out accreditation of institutions including their departments, faculties, and disciplines by giving them appropriate ratings.
 - d. “Authority” means any of the Authorities of the University specified in Section 14 of University Act 2005 (Act IX of 2005);
 - e. “BASR” means Board of Advanced Studies and Research;
 - f. “Board of Faculty” means the board comprising of specified members under Section 2 of the First Statutes of University Act 2005 (Act IX of 2005);
 - g. “CH” means Credit Hours. One credit hour is equal to one hour of student – teacher contact per week for the aforementioned purpose.
 - h. “Dean” means the Chairman of the Board of Faculty;
 - i. “External Examiner” means the examiner from outside the University to be appointed under these Regulations;
 - j. Graduate level: As defined in the National Qualifications Framework, this is equivalent to level-7 and level-8 qualifications.
 - k. “HOD” means Head of Department of the Academic Department;
 - l. Interdisciplinary Qualifications: Refers to sub-disciplines occurring within one of the ten broad disciplines defined by UNESCO's

- International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-F-2013).
- m. Level 6 Degree Programs: As defined and mentioned in the National Qualifications Framework including Bachelor (Hons): BS, B.E., B Arch., BSc (Eng), BSc (Agri), B.Tech (Hons), LLB, B.Com, MBBS, DVM, BDS, Pharm D etc.
 - n. "MPhil" means Master of Philosophy;
 - o. "MS" means Master of Science/Studies;
 - p. "Prescribed" means as prescribed by Statutes, Regulations or Rules of the University;
 - q. "Research Scholar" means student of MS/MPhil program after approval of his/her Research Proposal (synopsis);
 - r. "Relevant Subject" means a subject of MS/MPhil candidate, that he/she has opted as major for his/her MS/MPhil course work;
 - s. "Supervisor/Co-supervisor" means a person holding MS/MPhil or equivalent degree with 04-years post qualification teaching/research experience in the relevant field, having capability to supervise the research and appointed under these Regulations according to the criteria prescribed by HEC;
 - t. "Thesis" means a thesis encompassing original research conducted by a scholar following the prescribed criteria of the University;
 - u. "University" means the University of South Asia;

(2) The terms defined here and not defined herein shall have the meaning assigned to them in the University of South Asia, Act 2005.

3. Pre-Requisites for MS/MPhil Programs

- (1) The Academic Department of the University may launch the MS/M.Phil degree program after fulfilling the following criteria:
- a. The Act/Charter of the University allows the program to be offered or its provision is available through the approval from University Authorities.
 - b. The rationale for launching the program is established. It delineates that the need, scope, and objectives of launching the degree program in terms of market demand and supply (both students and resources) have been assessed; societal problems expected to be resolved have been identified, and employability of graduates that the prospective program is expected to enhance has been determined and approved by all relevant statutory bodies keeping in view the University Vision, national research agenda and sustainable development goals.
 - c. The title of the program is defined in light of the "Criteria for Use of Titles/Nomenclature for the Degree" as listed in the National Qualification Framework(2015).
 - d. The curriculum of the program is consistent with the guidelines issued by the HEC, University's vision and international best practices.
 - e. The program completion requirements satisfy the HEC's minimum criteria for awarding graduate degrees.
 - f. The other requirements of HEC regarding the arrangement of

relevant faculty (in terms of numbers, level, student-to-teacher ratio, student-to-supervisor ratio etc.), establishment of a library and laboratory have been met.

- g. The degree program has been approved for launch by all relevant statutory bodies of the University.
- h. If applicable, any necessary approvals have been obtained by accreditation councils to launch the program.
- i. If applicable, HEC's permission has been sought to launch a new graduate degree program.

4. Departmental Research Committee (DRC)

- (1) Each department shall have a Departmental Research Committee.
- (2) The Committee shall be notified by the concerned Dean on the recommendation of the concerned head of academic department.
- (3) The committee shall consist of the following members, minimum qualification for the member shall be MS/MPhil, and the quorum for a meeting of the committee shall be minimum three (3):
 - a. Head of the Academic Department (Convener)
 - b. Two senior most PhD faculty members from the department nominated by the HOD.
 - c. One faculty member, other than the two PhD faculty members already nominated, of the department to be nominated by the HOD.
 - d. One faculty member of the department to be nominated by the Dean.
 - e. One faculty member from any other teaching department of the University to be nominated by the Vice Chancellor.
- (4) The Convener may appoint one of the members to act as the Secretary of the Committee.
- (5) The Convener may co-opt relevant experts from within or outside the University.

5. Functions of DRC

- (1) To help in operations from admission to final thesis submission of MS/MPhil candidate.
- (2) To adopt a suitable criterion for admission, accept, scrutinize and evaluate the applications for shortlisting the candidates to be called for admission test/interview.
- (3) To make the test paper (wherever needed), conduct the test, evaluate the test papers and conduct interviews, determine the merit and recommend admissions for approval of the Dean.
- (4) To review the research proposal and finalize the topic of research, permit & review presentation of research proposal (synopsis), and periodically review the progress of the research work.
- (5) To recommend allocation of the research supervisor/co-supervisor.
- (6) To take up any other matter or issue related to MS/MPhil Program including admission, periodic assessment, supervisor/co-supervisor, research facility or faculty development etc.
- (7) To nominate examiners for evaluation of admission test.
- (8) To decide on the transfer of credit hours applications.

6. Eligibility Criteria for Admission

(1) Basic Academic Qualification:

- a. Sixteen years of schooling or 4 year education (minimum 120 credit hours) with at least 45% marks in the annual system or a minimum cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 2.00 out of 4.00 (or an equivalent letter or numerical grade) in the semester system post Intermediate qualification or Equivalent shall be eligible for admission in the MPhil/MS/Equivalent program.
- b. The candidate possessing a degree in relevant subject from a foreign University/ DAI shall provide a degree equivalence certificate from HEC Pakistan.
- c. In case the %age of marks or CGPA obtained by the candidate is not mentioned on his/her transcript the academic qualification marks shall be calculated as per USA evaluation policy.

(2) Admission Test:

The concerned academic department will:

- a. Conduct a rigorous admission test as an eligibility condition for admission to MS/MPhil/Equivalent programs, with a passing score of 50%.
OR
- b. Accept the GRE* /HAT General/Equivalent tests, with a passing score of 50%.
- c. The above-mentioned test result(s) should not be more than two (2) years old at the time of seeking admission.

(3) Interdisciplinary** Qualifications

The candidate may be allowed to pursue MS/MPhil degree in an interdisciplinary area, if the DRC is satisfied that the applicant's knowledge of primary area that has sufficiently prepared them to undertake MS/MPhil/equivalent program and has taken additional 6 to 9 CH of deficiency courses of level-6 after starting the program.

* In case the GRE-Subject test for a specific field/discipline is not available/conducted in Pakistan

** Intradisciplinary refers to sub-disciplines occurring within one of the ten broad disciplines defined by UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-F-2013).

7. Procedure for Admission

- (1) The University shall offer admissions to MS/MPhil programs only for regular (Spring/Fall) semesters through advertisement.
- (2) The Registrar shall launch the advertisement for admissions in the newspaper(s), on the USA website and/or on its official social media platforms as per USA academic calendar, notifying well in advance, the subject/discipline wise list of MS/MPhil programs, criterion and procedure for admission and all other relevant information.
- (3) The candidate shall apply for admission to a program in response to the advertisement on a prescribed form along with the required documents specified in the form and submit the same to the admission office.
- (4) The DRC shall ascertain the eligibility of the candidate by scrutinizing the admission forms and academic documents. The list of candidates

shortlisted for admission test shall be presented to respective Dean for approval.

- (5) The syllabus of the University admission test shall consist of 50% of research methodology and 50% subject specific. The test shall be checked by examiners nominated by DRC and only successful candidates shall be called for the interviews.
- (6) Admission to the program shall be made on the basis of cumulative score out of 100 including marks for previous academic record, admission test and interview as per below mentioned criteria:

MERIT DETERMINATION CRITERIA		
A	Total Marks for BS (Hons) or equivalent degree	50
	45.00% to 59.99% (Annual System) or CGPA 2.00 to 2.49 (Out of 4) (Semester System)	35
	60.00% to 64.99% (Annual System) or CGPA 2.50 to 2.99 (Out of 4) (Semester System)	40
	65.00% to 70.00% (Annual System) or CGPA 3.00 to 3.49 (Out of 4) (Semester System)	45
	> 70.00 % (Annual System) or CGPA 3.50 to 4.00 (Out of 4) (Semester System)	50
B	Total Marks for Subject Based Admission Test	30
C	Total Marks for Interview	20
	Subject Knowledge	4
	Research Aptitude	4
	Communication Skills	4
	Personality	4
	General Knowledge	4
TOTAL MARKS		100

- (7) The DRC shall forward a merit-based provisional list of selected candidates to the concerned Dean and upon approval from the Dean, the Registrar shall notify the same.
- (8) The selected candidate shall have to submit the required documents (if pending) and deposit the prescribed University fee and dues within the stipulated time frame in the authorized bank account, failure to which shall result in the cancellation of the provisional admission.
- (9) The Registrar shall issue a University registration number to each student upon fulfillment of admission requirements and submit a duly signed confirm list of admitted students to the CoE for record. The Registrar and HOD concerned shall further maintain a personal file of each admitted student.

8. Duration of Program

- (1) The MS/MPhil degree shall be awarded by the university not before the completion of 1.5 years or three (03) regular semesters and not after completion of four (04) years or eight (08) regular semesters except for in the circumstances mentioned in the clause below.

- (2) In case a student is unable to secure an MS/MPhil within the prescribed timeframe and requests for an extension in duration, the DRC shall determine the causes of delay. In the event of force majeure (i.e., delay on account of circumstance beyond the control of student), the Vice Chancellor on the recommendation of DRC may grant an extension in the period of award of MS/MPhil degree in accordance with the duration limiting factor(s) and shall also take corrective measures in case the delay is caused by process or administrative reasons.

9. Scheme of Studies

The MS/MPhil program shall comprise a minimum 24 credit hours of coursework and a minimum 6 credit hours of research work. In case the student does not want to do the research work, he will study 2 additional courses of 3 credit hours each in lieu of research work.

10. Registration and Enrollment of Coursework (Compulsory)

- (1) The department shall open the course registration and complete the enrollment of students before the commencement of a semester.
- (2) The student shall register for the courses offered by the department on a prescribed Course Registration and Semester Enrollment Form in consultation with his/her HOD.
- (3) If a student fails to register the courses before the commencement of the semester, the Dean on the recommendations of HOD, may allow the student to register for courses within two weeks after the commencement of semester subject to the payment of late enrolment fees as prescribed by the University from time to time.
- (4) The student shall enroll for minimum of 6 and maximum of 12 credits in regular (Fall/Spring) semester and maximum of 6 credit hours or 2 courses in a summer semester, if offered by the department. In a summer semester only the deficiency or repeatable courses with Grade "C" or below may be allowed to register. However, a student may be allowed to undertake a course with grade "W" in a summer session only with the permission of the Dean.
- (5) The student shall deposit fees and dues of a semester before commencement of the semester. The course registration and semester enrollment form shall not be accepted if the student has any outstanding fees and dues of previous semester.

11. Coursework, Examinations and Attendance

- (1) Coursework evaluation shall be on the basis of quizzes, class test(s), assignment(s), individual group presentations and projects, mid and final term examinations and/or otherwise as prescribed by the teacher.
- (2) Each course shall carry 100 marks and minimum passing marks for each course shall be 60%.
- (3) The student shall have to maintain CGPA of 2.50 out of 4.0 for completion of degree program. However, in case a student fails to maintain the required GPA, he/she may be allowed to repeat a maximum of four (4) courses during the entire coursework.
- (4) A student shall be allowed to appear in the mid and final examinations provided that he/she:

- a. has been on the rolls of the University during that semester and has registered for the courses of study
- b. has attended at least 75% of the lectures/laboratory work
- c. has paid all prescribed fees and dues for the semester and any other pending dues before the commencement of the mid and final term examinations.
- d. The student falling short of the required percentage of attendance of lectures/seminars/practical/laboratory work etc., shall not be allowed to appear in the mid and final term examinations of the concerned course and shall be treated as having withdrawn from that course. The course shall appear on the transcript with a letter grade "W".

12. Award of Grades, Grade Points and Grade Point Average

- (1) The academic work shall normally be evaluated on the basis of percentage of marks obtained and the grade points according to the following grading system:

Ready Reckoner for Calculating Grade Point Based on Letter Grades and Corresponding Numerical Grades

Score (out of 100)	Grade	Grade Points
90 – 100	A	4.00
80 – 89	A-	3.75
75 – 79	B+	3.50
70 – 74	B	3.00
65 – 69	C+	2.50
60 – 64	C	2.00
Less than 60	F	0.00
Transferred Credits	P (Exempted)	0.00
Withdraw	W (Withdraw)	0.00
Incomplete	I (incomplete)	0.00
Audit	Au (Audit)	0.00

13. Transfer of Credit Hours/ Exemption of Courses

- (1) A candidate registered with another University/Degree Awarding Institute (DAI) and seeking admission in the similar MS/MPhil program of the University may request for transfer of his/her earned credit hours along with the admission application to the Department.
- (2) The transfer shall normally be sought on course-to-course basis where transferable courses shall have at least 80% similarity of the course contents/syllabi with the corresponding core courses of the program under current scheme of study.
- (3) In case of courses corresponding to the elective courses, DRC shall evaluate and recommend the transfer of such courses which shall lead to fulfill the overall objectives of the programs.
- (4) Maximum 50% of courses work can be accepted and no credit of a course shall be transferred if the letter grade is less than B with minimum grade point of 3.00.

- (5) The transfer of research work is permissible, provided that the DRC accepts the research conducted at the parent university prior to the credit transfer.
- (6) The transferred/exempted courses and their credit hours shall appear on the transcript as transferred and/or exempted along with the name of the University/DAI from where these were originally qualified and earned.
- (7) The grade and the grade point of the transferred courses shall not be used in calculation of GPA and CGPA.
- (8) The candidate shall be responsible for providing the migration certificate/NOC, syllabi of courses, letter grades and the grade points of all the courses that he/she has qualified/earned at the previous University/DAI and shall meet all the admission requirements of the program.

14. Semester Regulations

The University approved "Semester System (admissions, registration & examination) Regulations of 2017" framed as per HEC's "Policy Guidelines For Implementation of Uniform Semester System of HEI's of Pakistan" and changed from time-to-time shall apply for any other semester system guidelines not covered under these Regulation (**Annexure-A**).

15. Appointment of Research Supervisor/Co-Supervisor

- (1) The Research supervisor shall be appointed by BASR on the recommendation of DRC and due notification issued by the Registrar.
- (2) The eligibility of the Research supervisor shall be determined as per the criteria set by HEC.
- (3) A co-supervisor may also be appointed by the BASR if the research work requires interdisciplinary resources from industry or other particular reasons. In either case the specific roles and responsibilities of the co-supervisor shall be provided to BASR for consideration.
- (4) The co-supervisor shall have minimum MS/MPhil or equivalent qualification.
- (5) 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.
- (6) In case the Co-Supervisor is unable to continue the supervision of the Scholar due to any reason, BASR may appoint another co-supervisor.

16. Responsibilities of Supervisor

- (1) Review the research proposal and recommend the topic of research to DRC for its onward submission to BASR.
- (2) Provide guidance to the Scholar at different stages of the research process.
- (3) Periodically review the progress of research work and provide necessary guidance.
- (4) Forward scholar's three-monthly progress report to DRC

17. Registration/Enrollment of Research Work, Development of Synopsis

- (1) In case the student opts for the Research Work/Thesis, he/she shall submit his/her registration request to the concerned HOD on an enrolment form.
- (2) The student can start their research work from 2nd semester onwards subject to GPA of 3.00 and above in the 1st semester.
- (3) The student shall prepare a synopsis (research proposal) in consultation with his/her (proposed) research supervisor, provisionally appointed by the HOD, within a period of one month after registration and enrollment for research work.
- (4) The synopsis shall include the topic of research, the name and consent of the (proposed) research supervisor and the time period for submission of the thesis within the prescribed time limits.
- (5) The student shall submit four copies of synopsis (research proposal) in a prescribed format along with summary sheet and acceptance letter from the supervisor to DRC.
- (6) DRC shall review the proposal and arrange an oral presentation of scholar and upon approval, forward the case to University Ethical Review Committee (UERC) or Institutional Review Board (IRB), as referred in the PhD Regulations of the University, for ethical considerations.
 - a. Following shall be the composition of the UERC/IRB, the Vice Chancellor shall approve its members for a period of three (03) years extendable for multiple tenures:
 - i. Pro-Vice Chancellor
 - ii. Dean of Concerned Faculty
 - iii. Concerned HOD or his nominee
 - iv. Legal expert from the Law department to be nominated by Dean Faculty of Law
 - v. Director ORIC or his nominee
 - vi. One faculty member from any other teaching department to be nominated by the Vice Chancellor
 - b. The Committee shall meet as per the requirement. In case of the unavailability of the chair, a Co-chair can be nominated by the Chair from the Committee. Following shall be TORs of the Committee, it shall be responsible:
 - i. For the development of ethics review policy and process(es).
 - ii. To review all the research for ethical review and after reviewing it shall issue a Certificate of Ethical Clearance to those successfully pass the review.
 - iii. For the protection of rights and welfare of human subjects in research conducted at the University by faculty, staff and students.
 - iv. For the protection of participating animals, human

beings and environment by minimizing the harm or risk to which they may be exposed to.

- v. To review and stop where the research is not impartial or against the state, any religion, sect, gender and ethnicity.
- (7) After ethical approval the DRC shall recommend the case to BASR for final approval and synopsis/ research proposal. After approval by BASR, the Registrar shall notify to all concerned departments, the details of scholar, research topic and name of the supervisor.
- (8) In case BASR recommends changes in Research Proposal, the Scholar shall resubmit the revised Research Proposal within one month, along with necessary changes, to the DRC for verification that all changes recommended by BASR have been fulfilled, failing which it shall lead to the cancellation of admission of the Scholar.
- (9) No change in the synopsis after the approval shall be allowed; however, as a special case, on the recommendation of the supervisor through HOD may forward the case to BASR for the needful changes. In case a major/entire change in the approved research topic/subject is required the case shall be considered afresh. The reason of change and the change shall be forwarded to the BASR for consideration and approval following the due procedures. However, time limits of the program shall not be changed in any case.

18. MS/MPhil Research Work Progress

- (1) The Scholar shall deposit the prescribed fees and dues on account of registration/ enrollment and examinations of his/her research work on the semester/session basis to maintain his/her candidature for the research work for the given semester/session.
- (2) The Supervisor shall submit the Scholar's three-monthly progress report to DRC.
- (3) Where the Scholar delays the submission of required reports for one month, the Supervisor shall report the case to DRC.
- (4) Where the Scholar fails to submit two consecutive progress reports the DRC shall notify the suspension of the Scholar in this regard with intimation to all concerned departments.
- (5) In order to get the admission restored, the Scholar shall submit an application to DRC, mentioning reason(s) for delay duly endorsed by the Supervisor.
- (6) The DRC shall review a three-monthly progress report of each MS/MPhil 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.
- (7) In case the progress of the Scholar is unsatisfactory, the DRC, 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 DRC may cancel his/her registration and matter shall be reported to the Vice Chancellor through Registrar office.
- (8) The Scholar may appeal to Vice Chancellor against the decision of

- DRC under the preceding clause.
- (9) The Vice Chancellor may, on the recommendations of the Supervisor and DRC restore the registration on payment of the re-admission fee (if any).
 - (10) The time limit of research work shall be counted from the date of approval of synopsis by the BASR.
 - (11) If the Scholar fails to complete his/her research work within the stipulated time, the Dean may permit on recommendation of the supervisor through DRC, extension in the period for completion of the research work
 - (12) The extended period shall not exceed beyond the maximum time period of the program i.e., four years for a full-time student and seven years for a part-time student from the date of registration into program.
 - (13) Provided also that the student shall deposit the prescribed fees and dues for the extended period(s).

19. Thesis

- (1) The Scholar shall present his/her research work to the research supervisor in the form of a written thesis. The thesis shall comply with the following conditions:
 - a. It shall be certified and signed by the supervisor and the co-supervisor (if any) that the contents mentioned are accurate to the best level.
 - b. It shall not include the research work for which a degree has already been conferred by the University or by any other University/DAI.
 - c. It shall be written in English for all subjects except the oriental languages, in which case it shall be either the language itself or English, or otherwise as approved by the BASR on recommendations of the supervisor.
 - d. It shall have the format, writing, referencing, paper, binding and other related matters as approved by the BASR from time to time.
 - e. It shall have been checked with Turnitin software with plagiarism report attached. Where checking of the Plagiarism shall be the responsibility of the Scholar concerned.

20. Thesis Examination

- (1) There shall be standing panel of external examiners (not in service of the Department) for research examinations for each department consisting of the persons of eminence in the respective field of research. The list shall be recommended from time to time by the concerned DRC to the BASR for approval.
- (2) The Vice Chancellor shall nominate one external examiner from the standing list of external examiners approved by BASR.
- (3) The CoE shall forward one copy of the thesis to the nominated external examiners along with the information related to the date, time and venue of the viva-voce examination
- (4) In case where External examiner or HOD or Supervisor concerned, due to inevitable circumstances is not able to physically attend the Viva Voce

he/she may be allowed to join the Final Viva Voce online. The Scholar concerned shall not be allowed for Final Viva Voce online thus physical appearance of scholar concerned before the Final Viva committee is mandatory, however under extraordinary circumstances the BASR may allow the scholar to appear online for Viva Voce.

- (5) The Supervisor and External Examiner shall award the marks to the candidate out of 100 each and HOD shall submit the average awards on the prescribed Performa.
- (6) The Scholar after viva-voce examination and making corrections suggested by the external examiner (if any) shall submit three hard bound copies and electronic copies (writeable CD/PDF format along with complete file of Turnitin plagiarism report) through his/her supervisor and the Department to the CoE.
- (7) The CoE, after affixing his/her signatures and stamp to declare the copy of the thesis as final and checking all the requirements shall forward these copies within 10 working days to the followings under a covering letter:
 - a. One copy to Library (Hard and Soft)
 - b. One copy to Department concerned/ Supervisor Concerned (Hard)
 - c. One copy to Scholar Concerned (Hard)In case HOD is the supervisor of the Student, a senior member of the department shall chair the session.

The Controller of Examinations shall issue a Degree Completion Certificate and Transcript.

21. Fees and Other Dues

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