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NOTIFICATION

Consequent upon the recommendations of 21st Academic Council under agenda item No 07 and subsequent approval by the syndicate in its 28th meeting held on 22.05.2026 under Agenda Item No 02, approved "*FATA University Graduate Degree Programs Regulations and Procedures-2026*".


**Deputy Registrar
(Academics)**

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**Deputy Registrar
(Academics)**

**FATA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE DEGREE
PROGRAMS REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES-
2026**



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1. Short Title, Commencement, and Applicability

1.1. Legal Title and Validity

These Regulations shall be called the “FATA University Graduate Degree Programs Regulations and Procedures-2026”.

1.2. Commencement

These Regulations shall come into force with effect from the academic session Fall 2026. However, if any existing students may benefit from these regulations, they shall also be allowed to avail the same

1.3. Applicability

These Regulations shall be applicable to all graduate degree programs offered by the FATA University.

1.4. Derivation of Validity

These regulations emanate from the policies and guidelines of the Higher Education Commission regarding the conduct of graduate degree programs in various disciplines of study. These regulations derive their validity from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities Act, 2012 (Amended till date). Any amendment or changes to these regulations will be carried out as per the procedure described in the Act and Statutes.

1.5. Interpretation and Silent Matters

In situations where these regulations or procedures are silent, other relevant rules and regulations (such as semester rules, various approved policy matters, etc.) of the University shall apply.

2. Definitions

In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions shall have the meanings hereby respectively assigned to them:

2.1. "Act" means the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities Act, 2012 (Amended till date);

2.2. "Admission Test" means test conducted by National Testing Services (NTS)/Education Testing Council (ETC)/Educational Testing Service (ETS) or the University for the admission to the Graduate Degree Programs (UGAT).

2.3. "Board" means Advanced Studies and Research Board (ASRB), constituted under Section 7 of the University of Peshawar Constitution, Functions and Powers of Authorities of the University Statutes, 2016’.

2.4. "Convener of the Board" means the Vice-Chancellor.

2.5. "DAS" means Directorate of Advanced Studies.

2.6. "Dean" means Dean of a Faculty of the University.

2.8. "Department" means a constituent Teaching Department/College/Institute/Centre/ Academy of the University.

2.9. "DGAC" means Departmental Graduate Admission Committee constituted under Section 8.4 of these regulations.



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- 2.10. "Faculty" means an administrative and academic unit of the University consisting of one or more than one teaching departments.
- 2.11. "GEP-2023" means Graduate Education Policy 2023, notified by the HEC.
- 2.12. "GRC" means Graduate Research Committee of the concerned teaching Department/Centre/Institute, constituted under Section 37 of these regulations.
- 2.13. "GSA" means Graduate Scholars Advisor of the concerned teaching Department/Centre/Institute, as constituted under Section 39 of these regulations.
- 2.14. "Registrar" means the Registrar of the University.
- 2.15. "Secretary" means Secretary of the Board appointed by the Vice-Chancellor.
- 2.16. "Head of Department (HoD)" means the Chairperson/Director/Principal of a Teaching Department and Centre.
- 2.17. "HEC" means Higher Education Commission, Islamabad.
- 2.18. "MS Course-based" means a graduate degree program without Thesis.
- 2.19. "MS/MPhil Research-based" means a graduate degree program with thesis.
- 2.20. "Scholar" means a student of the graduate degree program.
- 2.21. "AGRC" means Academic Grievance Redressal Committee.
- 2.22. "University" means the FATA University.
- 2.23. "Vice-Chancellor" means the Vice-Chancellor of the University.
- 2.24. "PGRHC" means Postgraduate Regulations & Hardship Committee.
- 2.25. "GACC" means Graduate Admission Confirmation Committee.
- 2.26. "UGAT" means University's Graduate Admission Test of each department.
- 2.27. "UAC" means University Appellate Committee.
- 2.28. "PDC" means Public Defense Committee.

All other expressions and terms used in these rules shall have the same meanings as assigned to them under the Act and Statutes.



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PART-I: MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY OR EQUIVALENT DEGREE PROGRAMS

3. Criteria for Launching of the Program

- 3.1. There shall be at least two relevant full-time PhD faculty members in the Department.
- 3.2. To launch a new graduate program, the department shall observe HEC Graduate Education Policy 2023 guidelines.

4. Eligibility of the Candidate on the basis of Basic Academic Qualification

- 4.1. Sixteen years of schooling or 4 years education after HSSC/F.A./F.Sc/Grade 12 or Equivalent in the relevant field.
- 4.2. At least 50% passing score in GRE/GAT/HAT General/Equivalent test or University own test (UGAT).

5. Eligibility of the Candidate on the basis of Intradisciplinary Qualification

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).

- 5.1. Intra-disciplinary admission may be granted to an applicant only if:

- (i) The candidate has a strong interest in pursuing an MS/MPhil degree in a different discipline.
- (ii) The candidate has passed GRE-Subject/equivalent test with minimum 50% marks in the discipline of admission and has taken 6-9 CH of deficiency courses of level 6 as per the National Qualification Framework 2015.
- (iii) The DGAC is satisfied that the applicant's knowledge of primary area (level 6) has sufficiently prepared the candidate to undertake the course of studies of the MS/MPhil/LLM (or, in the opinion of the DGAC, the preparation can be deemed satisfactory by taking a few additional relevant courses after starting the program). The eligibility criteria for the Intra-disciplinary admission shall be determined by the DGAC of the concerned department.
- (iv) No objection certificate (NOC) for in-service candidates shall be mandatory from the respective employer, attached with the admission form in original. Without NOC, the application shall not be considered.
- (v) Good moral character. All those candidates who were punished by any Degree Awarding Institute (DAI) for acts of plagiarism, indiscipline, and other undesirable activities and were awarded major penalties, shall not be admitted to MS/MPhil or equivalent program in the university under any circumstances.

6. Coursework/Credit Hours Requirements for Award of MS/MPhil/LLM Degrees



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6.1. The University shall require:

- (i) Completion of 30 credit hours of coursework in the case of a Course-based degree;
or
- (ii) Completion of 24 credit hours of coursework along with a minimum of 06 credit hours for thesis.

7. Degree Completion Timeline

7.1. The University shall not award MS (course-based) degree before the completion of 1.5 years or three (03) regular semesters, or after completion of four (04) years or eight (08) semesters. The minimum duration for a research-based degree program is 02 years (04 Semesters) and the maximum is 04 years (08 Semesters).

7.2. In case a scholar is unable to secure the degree within the prescribed timeframe and claims an extension in duration, the Board may extend the duration of the degree in the event of force majeure (i.e., delay on account of circumstances beyond the control of the scholar). The Board in such case shall clearly assess the duration of extension requested against the genuineness of the force majeure with proper record, so that the provision is neither exploited unduly by the scholar nor the Board. The scholar in his request for extension shall clearly mention the duration of extension required, the nature of force majeure, and the authenticity of the extension claimed. The University may also take corrective measures in case the delay is caused by process or administrative reasons (see Section 2.3(ii) of GEP-2023).

7.3. The completion date of MS/MPhil degree shall be reckoned from the date of notification of the award of the degree.

7.4. The maximum duration shall be determined from the date of scholar enrolment until the date of the completion notification of the MS/MPhil degree.

8. Admissions Procedure

8.1. Office of the Director Admissions shall seek consent of HoDs/Chairpersons, through a letter or email, interested to offer admissions in MS/MPhil programs.

8.2. The HoDs/Chairpersons in response shall communicate their willingness for admissions within the prescribed deadline. The interested HoDs/Chairpersons shall communicate to the Office of the Director Admissions the number of admissions they propose, in conformity with HEC policy regarding the supervisor-to-student ratio, HEC's NOC for the program, and any other requirement specified by HEC or the University. Failure by any office/officer to comply may be subjected to the initiation of disciplinary proceedings.

8.3. The Director Admissions shall, upon satisfaction that all requirements have been fulfilled, advertise the permissible number of seats to ensure wide publicity. Additionally, the Office shall utilize the University website and all available social media platforms to maximize outreach.



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8.4. The Office of the Director Admissions may require interested applicants to submit their applications on a prescribed form, either available in its office or downloadable from the University's website (www.fu.edu.pk), in hard or soft (online) form.

The Director Admissions shall maintain a complete list of all applications received and shall forward the applications to the concerned HoDs for consideration of the Departmental Graduate Admission Committee (DGAC). The DGAC shall comprise the Chairperson/Head of the Department, two senior faculty members, and the Graduate Scholars Advisor. The DGAC shall be responsible for the scrutiny and admission of candidates to graduate programs.

8.5. The DGAC shall scrutinize the applications and conduct a Test (if required) and interview to determine the merit of the applicants. The DGAC's decision regarding admissions shall normally be considered final. However, if an applicant feels aggrieved by the DGAC decision, he may submit an appeal with proper justification, before commencement of classes, to the Director Admissions. The Director Admissions may resolve the matter either himself, depending upon the nature of the grievance, or refer it to the Academic Grievance Redressal Committee (AGRC) (see Section 49 of these regulations) for decision at the earliest.

8.6. Merit shall be determined on the basis of the following criteria:

- (i) 50% weightage shall be given to the marks obtained in the last qualifying examination.
- (ii) 40% weightage shall be given to the entry test.
- (iii) 10% weightage shall be given to the performance in the interview.

8.7. Passing marks of interview shall be 50% and all members of DGAC including its convener shall have equal marks.

8.8. The names along with relevant documents as required for admission, of the provisionally admitted candidates shall be forwarded by the Convener of DGAC to the Directorate of Admissions for approval. The Directorate of Admissions shall approve the provisional admissions, subject to the completion of requirements, of the scholars recommended by the concerned DGAC.

8.9. The Directorate of Admissions through CMS shall maintain a register of provisionally admitted scholars and assign a registration number to each scholar at the time of provisional admission in his respective Department. The assignment of registration numbers for each department shall start after the registration number assigned to the last scholar of the previous batch (e.g. if 10 students were admitted in the first batch in any department and assigned registration numbers 01 to 10, then the registration for the second batch will commence from 11 onwards). This procedure aims to maintain an accurate record of the total number of MS/MPhil scholars in each department and in the University as a whole.

8.10. The Director Admissions shall forward the files of all provisionally admitted scholars, including all required documents as specified by the University, to the ASRB for approval.



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9. Scheme of Studies

- 9.1. The scholar shall study coursework from the approved syllabus of the program.
- 9.2. In case of a research-based degree, the scholar shall conduct research on the topic approved by the Board.
- 9.3. The scholar shall complete the degree within the maximum duration of eight (08) semesters.
- 9.4. The scholar shall appear for viva voce for the purpose of defending the thesis.
- 9.5. There will be no thesis and viva-voce requirements for Course-based degree programs.

10. Coursework Requirements

- 10.1. Research-Based Program: A scholar admitted to MS/MPhil programs shall complete a minimum of 24 credit hours of coursework, with a minimum CGPA of 2.5, in courses of 700 level.
- 10.2. Course-Based Program: A student admitted in a course-based program shall have to complete a minimum of 30 credit hours coursework in courses of 700 level.
- 10.3. The scholar shall attend at least 75% of the total contact hours of a course. Provided that the concerned Head of the Department may condone up to 05% of the attendance in real hardship cases for reasons to be recorded in writing.
- 10.4. The course evaluation shall be as follows:
 - (i) 30% for mid-term examination
 - (ii) 20% for assignment/presentation
 - (iii) 50% for final-term examination

The passing marks in a course will be 50% on aggregate basis of assignment, mid-term, and final-term.

11. Research Work Requirements

- 11.1. On successful completion of the required coursework, the Research scholar shall submit a research proposal (as per University template, in consultation with the supervisor and co-supervisor, if any), for the approval of the Board through the concerned GRC, along with an anti-plagiarism certificate from the Directorate of Quality Enhancement or any other office as designated by the University. Nonetheless, the University may devise any suitable mechanism for resolving the issue of plagiarism in subjects not covered by anti-plagiarism software.
- 11.2. The Research scholar shall write a thesis in the field of the major subject.
- 11.3. A soft copy of the thesis both in MS-Word/LATEX and PDF formats via official e-mail by the concerned supervisor and a panel of examiners, along with an anti-plagiarism certificate, shall be submitted to the HoD/Chairperson for onward processing to the Directorate of Advanced Studies, through the concerned Dean, for the purpose of



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evaluation — preferably not after the end of the seventh (7th) semester of admission of the concerned scholar — to ensure that the evaluation process is completed and the result is declared within the maximum allowed eight (08) semesters for the completion of the MPhil degree.

Provided that where a scholar fails to submit his thesis within the semester, the scholar will submit a certificate duly signed by his supervisor accepting responsibility for the late submission of the thesis, and the consequent non-completion of MS/MPhil degree, if the evaluation process followed by the notification for the award of degree could not be completed within the maximum allowed eight (08) semesters due to the delayed submission of thesis.

11.4. The thesis shall be of six (06) credit hours and shall not be assigned any numerical grade.

12. Appointment of Examiners and Their Recommendations

12.1. Internal Evaluation/Pre-evaluation Seminar of the MS/MPhil Thesis/Dissertation

12.1.1. The Chairperson shall call a meeting of the GRC (internal members only) for the Pre-evaluation (exit) Seminar for the student(s).

12.1.2. The Scholar shall present the thesis to the GRC for internal evaluation purposes (this shall also be considered as a Pre-evaluation Seminar). The Department shall not arrange this event during public holidays, over-weekend, and other designated holidays announced by the Government. However, in case of emergency, permission from the Dean and Vice-Chancellor must be obtained before organizing a pre-evaluation seminar on a weekend only.

12.1.3. Like other examinations, the Pre-evaluation Seminar can be conducted through Video-link. However, in such cases, approval from the Dean concerned shall be mandatory.

12.1.4. The suggestions or corrections (if any) recommended by the GRC shall be communicated to the student for compliance.

12.2. External Evaluation

The Chairperson/HoD, in consultation with two senior faculty with PhD (NOT SUPERVISOR), through the respective Dean, shall send a panel of three examiners from within the country but outside the University, out of which one examiner shall be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor for thesis evaluation. Furthermore, the Director of Advanced Studies as well as the GRC shall ensure that the examiners hold relevant qualification, are preferably recommended from universities, and are not from the same department/University.

12.2.1. Criteria for the Examiner(s)

(i) The Panel of examiners should preferably comprise Professors and Associate Professors.



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(ii) In case evaluators/examiners at such senior levels are not available in the discipline, Assistant Professors and Lecturers with PhD degrees will be acceptable.

(iii) The evaluator/examiner should have no conflict of interest in personal, financial, or professional stakes as provided in HEC Graduate Education Policy 2023.

12.2.2. Appointment Procedure and Timeline

(i) The Directorate of Advanced Studies shall send the thesis to the examiner preferably in soft form (email etc.) or hard form, if required.

(ii) The examiner/evaluator will be given thirty (30) days for submission of the evaluation report. If the examiner does not submit the report within thirty (30) days, he will be immediately reminded by the DAS through a formal email/letter to submit the report within the next fifteen (15) days. If the examiner again fails to submit the report within the given fifteen (15) days, he will be immediately issued a second/final reminder by the DAS to submit the report within the next seven (07) days. If the report is not received within seven (07) days, the examinership of the concerned examiner will be immediately revoked for the thesis under consideration, and the DAS will communicate to the chairperson for submission of a revised panel through the GRC and the Dean, by replacing the name of the non-responsive examiner with another examiner while the remaining members of the panel will remain the same. The thesis will be sent to another examiner/evaluator approved by the Vice-Chancellor out of the revised panel of three examiners recommended by the GRC.

12.3. Recommendations of the Examiner

12.3.1. The examiner shall either:

- (i) Recommend the thesis for the award of degree in the present form; OR
- (ii) Recommend the thesis for the award of degree with minor changes/revision; OR
- (iii) Recommend the thesis for the award of degree with major changes/revision.

Provided that in case of major changes/revision the scholar may be allowed to improve and submit the thesis to the Directorate of Advanced Studies at most within 3 months and there will be no need for Re-evaluation. However, the supervisor will submit in such case a certificate that the comments/changes/suggestions have been rectified and addressed by the scholar in the revised version of the thesis; OR

- (iv) Recommend the thesis for resubmission/re-evaluation with major changes/revisions:

Provided that the scholar in such case may be allowed to improve/revise the thesis as per comments/changes/suggestions of the examiner/evaluator within 3 months and the same examiner will be required to re-evaluate the thesis within 3 months of resubmission. In addition, the supervisor will submit a certificate that the comments/changes/suggestions have been rectified and addressed by the scholar in the revised version of the thesis.

- (v) Reject the thesis with valid reasons.



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12.3.2 After revision of the thesis in light of the reviewer's comments/suggestions, the scholar must submit the itemized responses to the comments in tabulated form, and the same shall be signed by the scholar as well as by the concerned supervisor along with a correction certificate for the consideration/record or any further action of the Directorate of Advanced Studies.

12.3.4. Final corrected copy, as the case may be, shall be submitted by the department to DAS for approval of viva voce.

12.3.5. At the result declaration stage, a certificate shall be provided by both scholar and supervisor that the soft and hard copies of the thesis are the same.

12.4. Single Step Procedure for Anti-Plagiarism Certification and External Evaluation

A single step procedure shall be adopted for issuance of anti-plagiarism certificate and for external evaluation of MS/MPhil thesis/dissertation:

- (a) The chairperson shall furnish a list of two (02) ASRB approved external evaluators (prior consent is necessary) who shall be:
 - (i) Unrelated to student and supervisor
 - (ii) Not a part of any academic and research collaboration with supervisor
- (b) Forward list of evaluators and internally approved thesis to DAS through the Dean concerned.
- (c) The Director of Advanced Studies shall issue the anti-plagiarism certificate based on the similarity index report submitted and verified by supervisor.
- (d) In case of submission of forged/tampered similarity index report, the supervisor shall be held responsible.
- (e) The thesis shall be evaluated by one external evaluator.
- (f) The DAS office shall get the approval of external evaluator from Vice-Chancellor in sequential order of principal and standby as 01 & 02.
- (g) The Director of Advanced Studies, after receiving the evaluation report, shall communicate it to the Chairperson/HoD for compliance by the student.
- (h) The student shall submit the corrected/revised copy of the thesis (taped/spiral bound) after incorporation of corrections (if any) to the Chairperson/HoD concerned through his/her supervisor. The Chairperson/HoD shall forward the corrected version of the thesis to DAS through the Dean concerned.
- (i) The supervisor shall be responsible to ensure the incorporation of all corrections/suggestions proposed by the external evaluator by the student before the final defense of the thesis.
- (j) In case the thesis is not recommended by the evaluator, a committee comprising the Dean concerned, Director of Advanced Studies, and Chairperson/HoD will review the decision of the external evaluator. If the committee is not satisfied with the decision,



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the thesis shall be sent to another examiner. In case the second examiner also rejects the thesis, the decision shall be considered final. If the second examiner recommends the thesis, it shall be processed as usual.

13. Thesis Viva Voce

The Research scholar shall pass a thesis viva voce examination. The examination shall be conducted by the approved examiner in accordance with Section 12.1 of these regulations in the presence of HoD/Chairperson, supervisor/co-supervisor (if any), or any other faculty member nominated by the supervisor. In case where either of the scholar, supervisor/co-supervisor, or examiner cannot appear physically for the viva voce examination for a genuine reason, he may request the GRC to conduct the viva voce online. The GRC, after due consideration of the request, if it considers it justified, may recommend to the Vice-Chancellor through the Dean and DAS to hold the viva voce online. The viva voce will be conducted online after the approval of the Vice-Chancellor.

Provided that if the viva voce examination is delayed for more than a month despite fulfilling all the requirements for its conduct, the concerned Dean, after recording the reasons for the delay in writing, will make such arrangements, in consultation with the DAS, to conduct the viva voce within a week.

13.1. Viva Voce Committee

The Chairperson/HoD shall forward the corrected thesis to the Dean concerned and Director of Advanced Studies for appointment of Examiners by Vice-Chancellor for Viva-Voce.

A committee comprising Chairperson/HoD, External Examiner, Internal Examiner, and Supervisor(s) concerned shall conduct the Viva-Voce on the pattern of public defense.

13.2. Viva Voce Scheduling

The date and timings of viva shall be finalized by the mutual consent of the Chairperson and the external examiner. The Director of Advanced Studies shall notify the date accordingly.

13.3. Physical Presence

On the day of viva voce, the student shall be required to be present in person in the concerned department for examination.

13.4. Online Viva-Voce

Online Viva may be conducted in special circumstances if required, subject to the approval of:

- (i) Vice Chancellor (through DAS) if the student appears online; and
- (ii) Dean of Faculty if the external examiner wants to be online.

13.5. Post-Viva Corrections



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In case the evaluation committee suggested minor changes, corrections, or observations after the examination, the supervisor shall ensure that all the observations are properly addressed by the student within the specified period, preferably not more than one month from the day of the viva voce.

13.6. Thesis Submission

The passed student shall submit three (3) hard-bound copies (01 for central Library and one for the controller of examination and one for the student) as per approved format of the thesis to the department.

13.7. Award List Submission

Upon successful viva voce, the award list along with all other necessary documents shall be sent by the Chairperson/HoD to the Director of Advanced Studies. The Director of Advanced Studies shall forward the complete file to the Controller of Examination along with the signed copy of thesis (both hard and soft form) for final notification.

14. Re-Viva Voce

If the thesis is adjudged as adequate but the scholar fails in the viva voce, the scholar may be given a chance to reappear in the viva voce within a maximum period of three months. In such case, the scholar shall pay an amount as determined by the University from time to time.

If the thesis is declared acceptable but the student fails to satisfy the Viva-Voce Committee, the Committee may recommend/allow the student to present the thesis in a Re-viva Voce examination within a maximum period of ONE MONTH.

In case the student fails to defend the thesis to the satisfaction of the Viva-Voce Committee in the second attempt, the student shall be deemed as FAIL.

15. Thesis Submission Fee

In addition to the normal or examination fee (charged for the purpose of evaluation of thesis by the examiner) or any other fee not expressly mentioned here, the scholar shall deposit thesis processing fee as per University MPhil Thesis Evaluation Fee, or as notified by the University from time to time, in the designated University bank account, at the time of thesis submission. The fee will be applicable to all scholars who submit their theses after the notification of these regulations.

16. Thesis Format

Format of the thesis shall be as per the University approved format.

17. Adoption of HEC Policy

Any changes notified by the HEC in Graduate Education Policy 2023, that are not in conflict with these regulations, shall stand adopted mutatis mutandis, and shall be notified by the Registrar's office on the recommendation of the DAS. Nevertheless, if the changes



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are in conflict with these regulations, the DAS may refer the case to the Registrar's Office for placement before the relevant forums.

PART-II: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD)

18. Criteria for Launching PhD Program

18.1. There shall be at least three relevant full-time PhD faculty members in the Department or as determined by HEC from time to time.

18.2. To launch a new graduate program, the department shall follow/observe the guidelines as provided in HEC Graduate Education Policy 2023.

19. Eligibility Criteria for Admission

19.1. Candidates possessing MS/MPhil/LLM (Research-based/minimum 18 years of education)/equivalent degree with at least CGPA of 2.5 (out of 4 in semester system) or 1st Division (in annual system).

19.2. Candidates possessing MS Course-based (minimum 18 years of education)/equivalent degree with at least CGPA of 2.5 (out of 4 in semester system) or 1st Division (in annual system), and having two published research articles in HEC recognized journals (at least 'Y' category) as principal or corresponding author.

The scholars admitted before the notification of these regulations will be required to publish the paper before the submission of thesis.

19.3. If the CGPA/Percentage is not mentioned on the transcript, the candidate must produce equivalent weightage from the parent University.

19.4. CGPA Below 3.0. The students having strong demonstrated interest in obtaining a PhD degree, but whose CGPA is below 3.00 (out of 4.0 in the semester system) or 60% marks (in the annual system) in the most recent degree obtained, may be admitted to a PhD program after fulfilling the following requirements:

(a) Shall study additional courses of 9-12 CH of level 7 taking a zero semester at the admission awarding university/HEI/DAI and score minimum 3.00 out of 4.00 GPA.

(b) The DGAC is satisfied that the applicant's knowledge of primary area (level 7) has sufficiently prepared him or her to undertake the course of studies of the doctoral program.

(c) These requirements shall be in addition to any other requirements set in this policy for admission to a PhD program.

20. Admission Test

20.1. The University may conduct the test equivalent to GRE/HAT General developed at the University, with a passing score of 60%; or

20.2. Accept a test equivalent to GRE/HAT/GAT General, conducted by testing bodies accredited by HEC, with a passing score of 60%.

20.3. The applicant shall submit a Statement of Purpose along with the application form. It shall be an integral part of the application. The admission committee shall use the information provided to ascertain the preparedness and interest of the candidate in pursuing doctoral studies, and whether the department has the requisite resources to train and supervise the doctoral candidate in the subspeciality in which the applicant is interested. A Statement of Purpose shall, at least, include the following:

- (i) Title of the potential research proposal
- (ii) Clear articulation of the current understanding of the intended field and ideas for potential research
- (iii) Explanation of the intended impact of the proposed research
- (iv) The prospective candidates shall demonstrate passion and enthusiasm for the area of research.

21. Eligibility of the Candidate on the basis of Intradisciplinary Qualification

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).

Intradisciplinary admissions may only be allowed if:

- 21.1. The applicant has a strong interest in pursuing a PhD in a different discipline.
- 21.2. The applicant has passed GRE-Subject/Equivalent Test with minimum 60% marks in the discipline of admission and has taken 6-9 CH of deficiency courses of level 7.
- 21.3. The DGAC is satisfied that the applicant's knowledge of the primary area (level 7) has sufficiently prepared him or her to undertake the course of study of the doctoral program (or, in the opinion of the DGAC, the preparation can be deemed satisfactory by taking a few additional courses after starting the program).

22. Degree Completion Timeline

- 22.1. The minimum duration of PhD is 3 years (06 semesters), and maximum duration shall not exceed 8 years (16 Semesters).
- 22.2. In case a scholar is unable to secure the degree within the prescribed timeframe and claims an extension in duration, the Board may extend the duration of the degree in the event of force majeure (i.e., delay on account of circumstances beyond the control of the scholar). The Board in such case shall clearly assess the duration of extension requested against the genuineness of the force majeure with proper record, so that the provision of force majeure is neither exploited unduly by the scholar nor by the Board. The scholar in his request for extension shall clearly mention the duration of extension he requires, the nature of force majeure, and the authenticity of the extension claimed. The University may also take corrective measures in case the delay is caused by process or administrative reasons (see Section 2.3(ii) of GEP-2023).



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22.3. The completion date of PhD degree shall be reckoned from the date of notification of the award of PhD degree.

22.4. The maximum duration shall be determined from the date of student enrolment until the date of the notification of the award of the PhD degree.

23. Admission Procedure

23.1. Office of the Director Admissions shall seek consent of Chairpersons/HoDs, through a letter or email, interested to offer admissions in PhD programs.

23.2. The Chairpersons/HoDs in response shall communicate their willingness for admissions within the prescribed deadline. The interested Chairpersons/HoDs shall communicate to the Office of the Director Admissions the number of admissions they propose, in conformity with HEC policy regarding the supervisor-to-student ratio, HEC's NOC for the program, and any other requirements specified by HEC or the University. Failure by any office/officer to comply may be subjected to the initiation of disciplinary proceedings.

23.3. The Director Admissions shall, upon satisfaction that all requirements have been fulfilled, advertise the permissible number of seats in at least two daily newspapers (preferably one in English and one in Urdu) to ensure wide publicity. Additionally, the Office shall utilize all available social media platforms to maximize outreach.

23.4. The Office of the Director Admissions may require interested applicants to submit their applications on a prescribed form, either available in its office or downloadable from the University's website (<http://www.fu.edu.pk>), in hard or soft (online) form. The Director Admissions shall maintain a complete list of all applications received and shall forward the applications to the concerned Chairpersons/HoDs for consideration of the DGAC for scrutiny and admission.

23.5. The DGAC shall scrutinize the applications and conduct a Test (if required) and interview to determine the merit of the applicants. The DGAC's decision regarding admissions shall normally be considered final. However, if an applicant feels aggrieved by the DGAC's decision, he may submit an appeal with proper justification, before commencement of classes, to the Director Admissions. The Director Admissions may resolve the matter either himself, depending upon its nature, or refer it to the Academic Grievance Redressal Committee (AGRC) (see Section 49 of these regulations) for decision at the earliest.

23.6. Merit shall be determined on the basis of the following criteria:

- (i) 50% weightage shall be given to the marks obtained in the last qualifying examination.
- (ii) 40% weightage shall be given to the entry test.
- (iii) 10% weightage shall be given to the performance in the interview.

23.7. Passing marks of interview shall be 50% and all members of DGAC including its convener shall have equal marks.



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23.8. The names along with relevant documents as required for admission, of the provisionally admitted candidates shall be forwarded by the Chairperson/HoD to the Directorate of Admissions preferably in the first month but not later than the end of the first semester for approval. The Directorate of Admissions shall approve the provisional admissions of the scholars recommended by the concerned DGAC, subject to the completion of requirements.

23.9. The Directorate of Admissions shall maintain a register of provisionally admitted scholars and assign a registration number to each scholar at the time of provisional admission in his respective Department. Assignment of registration numbers for each department shall start after the registration number assigned to the last scholar of the previous batch (e.g. if 10 students were admitted in the first batch in any department and assigned registration numbers 01 to 10, then the registration for the second batch will commence from 11 onwards). This procedure aims to maintain an accurate record of the total number of PhD scholars in each department and in the University as a whole.

23.10. The Director Admissions shall forward the files of all provisionally admitted PhD scholars, including all required documents as specified by the University, to the Directorate of Advanced Studies for approval.

(i) The PhD scholar shall qualify the comprehensive examination after completion of coursework and before the sixth semester of the program.

(ii) The provisional admission of a PhD scholar shall be confirmed by the ASRB on recommendations of the concerned Chairperson/HoD after the completion of codal formalities.

24. Scheme of Studies

24.1. The scholar shall study coursework (level 800 & above) from the approved syllabus of the program.

24.2. The scholar shall pass the Comprehensive Examination by securing at least 50% marks after completion of the required coursework.

24.3. Thesis on a topic approved by the Board.

24.4. Publication of a research article from the thesis in an HEC recognized journal as first author, as per Section 27.4 of these regulations.

24.5. PhD thesis Public Defense.

25. Coursework Requirements

25.1. A scholar admitted in the program shall complete a minimum of 20 credit hours coursework with a minimum CGPA of 3.0, in courses of level 800 & above.

Provided that where a student fails a course, he may either take the failed course, or another course in lieu of the failed course, in the next semester onwards.



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Provided further that the student shall be required to successfully complete the coursework requirements in a maximum of six (06) semesters, failing which his name shall be struck off the rolls of the University.

25.2. The course evaluation shall be as follows:

- (i) 30% for mid-term examination
- (ii) 20% for assignment/presentation
- (iii) 50% for final-term examination

The passing marks in a course will be 50% on aggregate basis of assignment, mid-term, and final-term.

25.3. In case the CGPA falls below 3.0 at the end of the coursework, a scholar may be allowed to improve the CGPA by taking course(s) in lieu of the already taken course or by repeating the course(s) already studied after completing the requirements. However, improvement may be allowed only in those courses in which the obtained GPA is less than 3.0.

Provided that the improvement shall be allowed in subsequent two consecutive semesters.

Provided further that the total duration of the degree shall not exceed sixteen semesters.

The scholar shall attend at least 75% of the total contact hours of a course. Provided that the concerned Chairperson/Head of the Department may condone up to 05% of the attendance in real hardship cases for reasons to be recorded in writing.

26. Comprehensive Examination

26.1. On completion of the coursework, a PhD scholar shall pass the comprehensive examination, conducted by the concerned GSA, with at least 50% marks, in the courses already studied in PhD coursework prior to submission of the research proposal, not later than the first two years.

26.2. The GSA shall notify the comprehensive examination with the approval of Vice-Chancellor.

26.3. The Comprehensive Examination should be based on recapitulation of the conceptual knowledge of the discipline to which the student is admitted.

26.4. The GRC shall collect at least four questions from the teachers of each course studied by the student at the doctoral level. The GRC shall then prepare a composite question paper by choosing two questions from each course amongst the questions submitted by the teachers. The student shall be required to attempt one question of each course. All questions will carry equal marks, and the passing marks will be at least 50% on an aggregate basis, expressed in terms of pass/fail and shall not be graded. The duration/time of the examination will be determined by the GRC.

26.5. There shall be two chances for qualifying the comprehensive examination.



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26.6. In case of failing the second comprehensive examination, a scholar admitted may get only a course completion certificate containing details of the courses studied with grades from the office of the concerned department and countersigned by the Controller of Examinations, subject to fee clearance of the studied semesters.

26.7. Appeal Process: In case the research scholar is not satisfied with the result of the comprehensive examination, he/she will have the right to appeal to the Examination Coordinator for re-checking of the examination papers.

27. Research Work Requirements

27.1. On successful completion of the required coursework and passing of comprehensive examination, the Research scholar shall submit a research proposal (as per University template at <http://www.fu.edu.pk>), in consultation with the supervisor and co-supervisor (if any), for the approval of the Board through the concerned GRC, along with an anti-plagiarism certificate from the Directorate of Quality Enhancement or any other office as designated by the University. Nonetheless, the University may devise any suitable mechanism for resolving the issue of plagiarism in subjects not covered by anti-plagiarism software.

27.2. The scholar shall write thesis in the field of the major subject. Furthermore, the research area of the scholar shall:

- (i) Correspond to the community needs at regional and local levels and comply with the priority national research agenda.
- (ii) Reflect basic and applied research.
- (iii) Signify emerging areas of research that coincide preferably with sustainable development goals (SDGs).

27.3. A soft copy of the thesis in MS-Word/LATEX and PDF formats via official e-mail by the concerned supervisor and a panel of examiners, along with an anti-plagiarism certificate, shall be submitted to the Chairperson/HoD for onward processing to the Directorate of Advanced Studies, through the concerned Dean, for the purpose of evaluation.

27.4. For the award of degree, the scholar shall be required to publish at least:

- (i) One research article in 'W' category journal or two research articles in 'X' category journals, for Science disciplines.
- (ii) One research article in 'X' category journal or two research articles in 'Y' category journals, for Social Science, and Arts & Humanities.
- (iii) The PhD scholar shall be the first author of these publications.
- (iv) The research article shall be relevant to the PhD research work of the PhD scholar.
- (v) The article shall be published after approval of the research proposal.
- (vi) The article shall be published in a relevant research journal. Relevancy shall be determined by the office of QEC.



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27.5. The thesis shall be of nine (09) credit hours and shall not be assigned any numerical grade.

27.6. Plagiarism and COPE Guidelines: (i) Under no circumstances shall a dissertation based on plagiarized research be acceptable. It is the primary responsibility of both PhD researcher and supervisor to prevent plagiarism. (ii) For Plagiarism, COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics) guidelines must be followed. (iii) If a PhD dissertation is found to be plagiarized, it will be handled in accordance with the Anti-Plagiarism Policy issued by the Higher Education Commission, Pakistan, as updated from time to time. (iv) In accordance with the Academic Research Ethics described in Section 5 of Part-II by the HEC GEP-2023, a similarity test shall be conducted by the Supervisor on the dissertation before its submission for evaluation.

28. Appointment of Thesis Evaluation Committee

28.1. The PhD dissertation must be evaluated by an evaluation committee comprising:

A. External Expert

(a) At least two external experts who shall be:

(i) PhD faculty member from the world top 500 universities ranked by the Times Higher Education or QS World Ranking in the year corresponding to dissertation evaluation year; OR

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

(b) At least one external expert qualifying any one of the conditions mentioned at 28.1(a)(i) or 28.1(a)(ii) above, if the PhD candidate publishes thesis research article in a peer-reviewed journal classified by the HEC in category 'W' for Sciences and 'X' or above for Social Sciences.

B. Examiner for PhD Defense

(i) Apart from the experts in the relevant field from outside the country (evaluators), one (01) examiner outside the University from within the country shall evaluate the PhD thesis and shall also be the examiner in the PhD Defense.

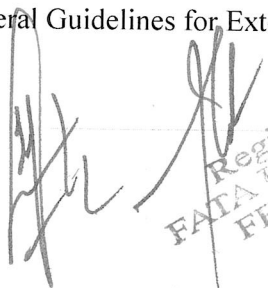
28.2. Criteria for the Appointment of Examiner for PhD Defense:

(i) The Panel should preferably comprise Professors and Associate Professors.

(ii) In case evaluators/examiners at such senior levels are not available in the discipline, Assistant Professors and Lecturers with PhD degrees, having supervised at least one PhD, will be acceptable.

(iii) The evaluator/examiner should have no conflict of interest in personal, financial, or professional stakes as provided in HEC Graduate Education Policy-2023.

28.3. General Guidelines for External Evaluator Selection:


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The following general guidelines shall, at least, be observed while selecting external evaluators:

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

28.4. Standing List of External Examiners

There shall be an ASRB approved standing list(s) of external examiners for each department consisting of persons of eminence in the relevant field. In case of QS or Times higher education ranking, then there is no need of ASRB approved list. In addition, if the examiner has H-Index 15 or 30 then again there is no need of ASRB approved list.

29. Appointment of Examiners and Their Recommendations

29.1. The Pre-evaluation Committee approved by the Vice-Chancellor on the recommendations of the Chairperson/HoD of the department and Dean concerned shall comprise the supervisor and three faculty members of the relevant subject. The Committee shall be chaired by the Dean of the faculty concerned.

29.2. The Chairperson/HoD in consultation with the Convener of Pre-evaluation Committee shall notify the date and time of the meeting two weeks before the seminar by providing soft/hard copies of the dissertation to each member of the committee. Upon satisfaction of the committee, the Pre-evaluation Seminar shall be arranged by the department with its intimation to the research scholar.

29.3. The committee shall decide by majority vote and in clear terms as to whether approve/not approve/refer back/reject the dissertation with recorded justifications within one week of the seminar.



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29.4 The GRC, in consultation with the a senior faculty member of the department holding a PhD degree, through the respective Chairperson and Dean, shall send a panel comprising five experts as per Section 28 (A) and three experts as per Section 28-B(i) to DAS for further approval of the Vice-Chancellor.

29.5. The Directorate of Advanced Studies shall send the thesis to the examiner preferably in soft form (email etc.) or hard form if required.

29.6. The examiner shall either:

- (i) Recommend the thesis for the award of degree in the present form; OR
- (ii) Recommend the thesis for the award of degree with minor changes/revision; OR
- (iii) Recommend the thesis for the award of degree with major changes/revision.

Provided that in case of major changes/revision the scholar may be allowed to improve and submit the thesis to the Directorate of Advanced Studies at most within 6 months and there will be no need for Re-evaluation. However, the supervisor will submit in such case a certificate that the comments/changes/suggestions have been rectified and addressed by the scholar in the revised version of the thesis; OR

- (iv) Recommend the thesis for resubmission/re-evaluation with major changes/revisions:

Provided that in such case the scholar may be allowed to improve/revise the thesis as per comments/changes/suggestions of the examiner/evaluator within 6 months and the same examiner will be required to re-evaluate the thesis within 3 months of resubmission. In addition, the supervisor will submit a certificate that the comments/changes/suggestions have been rectified and addressed by the scholar in the revised version of the thesis.

Provided further that in case where an examiner/evaluator suggests major changes and refuses to evaluate the same thesis after revisions/corrections as recommended by him, the office of DAS shall send the corrected/revised copy of thesis for evaluation to another examiner/evaluator.

- (v) Reject the thesis with valid reasons.

29.7. The examiner/evaluator will be given thirty (30) days for submission of the evaluation report. If the examiner does not submit the report within thirty (30) days, he will be immediately reminded by the DAS through a formal email/letter to submit the report within the next fifteen (15) days. If the examiner again fails to submit the report within the given fifteen (15) days, he will be immediately issued a second/final reminder by the DAS to submit the report within the next seven (07) days. If the report is not received within the seven (07) days, the examinership of the concerned examiner will be immediately revoked for the thesis under consideration, and the DAS will communicate to the Supervisor for submission of a revised panel through the GRC and the Dean by replacing the name of the non-responsive examiner with another examiner while the remaining members of the panel will remain the same. The thesis will be sent to another examiner/evaluator approved by the Vice-Chancellor out of the revised panel of examiners recommended by the GRC.



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29.8. After revision of the thesis in light of the reviewer's comments/suggestions, the scholar must submit the itemized responses to the comments in tabulated form, and the same shall be signed by him as well as by the concerned supervisor along with a correction certificate for the consideration/record or any further action of the Directorate of Advanced Studies.

29.9. Final corrected copy, as the case may be, shall be submitted by the department to DAS for approval of Public Defense.

29.10. At the result declaration stage, a certificate shall be provided by both scholar and supervisor that the soft and hard copies of the thesis are the same.

30. Public Defense

30.1. The scholar shall pass the thesis Public Defense. The Public Defense shall be conducted fairly by the approved examination committee. In the Public Defense, the scholar shall make a proper presentation of his work and defend the same to the satisfaction of the examination committee.

30.2. The examination committee shall comprise the following:

- (i) Evaluator/External Examiner: As per Section 28(B)(i) of these regulations
- (ii) External Examiner: from relevant field of the university
- (iii) Internal Examiner: supervisor/co-supervisor

Provided that the Vice-Chancellor may appoint, in genuine cases, any other faculty member in the absence of supervisor/co-supervisor, on the supervisor's request, to be part of the examination committee.

30.3. On the request of the supervisor and Chairperson/HoD concerned, the date of Public Defense of the PhD candidate shall be notified by the Controller of Examinations following approval from the DAS. The Defense of the thesis shall be open for all interested persons and shall be widely publicized for maximum participation.

31. Public Defense Committee (PDC) Composition

The Public Defense Committee (PDC) shall consist of the following members:

- (i) Dean - Neutral Chair/Convener
- (ii) Chairperson/HoD - Member
- (iii) Two local examiners (including the one who evaluated the dissertation) - Member
- (iv) Internal Examiner from the same faculty of a relevant department - Member

32. Public Defense Procedures

(a) Public Announcement: The Director of Advanced Studies shall make an announcement of Public Defense at least two weeks before the date of Public Defense. The announcement shall be circulated through various forms of communication so that anyone interested can participate.

(b) Neutral Chair: To ensure that the defense was conducted fairly and in accordance with the rules and regulations, the Dean of the faculty concerned shall act as observer/neutral chair.

(c) For the purpose of Public Defense, the research scholar shall be required to present in person at the place on the date(s) and time in the University premises.

(d) If the research scholar cannot attend the Public Defense in person due to any hardship/genuine problem, the Viva Voce/Public Defense can also be done by Skype/Teams/Zoom or by any other video conferencing software. The online Viva Voce shall be approved by the Vice Chancellor on the recommendations of the Director of Advanced Studies. In such case the research scholar shall submit sufficient genuine evidence(s) for the conduct of online Viva Voce/Public Defense.

(e) Final Decision: The PDC shall evaluate the following parameters of the Public Defense:

(f) Presentation: of the dissertation by the PhD researcher

(g) Question and Answer Session: To provide a basis for defense evaluation.

(h) Objective Evaluation: based on the quality of the research and the researcher's ability to defend.

33. Final Decision in the Public Defense

The examination committee may make any of the following decisions concerning the PhD dissertation:

(i) Pass; OR

(ii) Pass with minor amendments; OR

(iii) Deferred for re-submission/re-Defense; OR

(iv) Fail (in exceptional circumstances and for the reason to be recorded by the examination committee)

33.1. Post-Defense Amendments

Any amendments/suggestions/comments proposed during the Public Defense shall be communicated to the supervisor within one week from the date of Public Defense for incorporation of suggestions/comments.

34. Re-Defense

If the dissertation is adjudged as adequate but the scholar fails in the Public Defense, the scholar may be given a chance to reappear in the Public Defense within a period not exceeding three months. In such case, the scholar shall pay an amount as determined by the University from time to time. The scholar may be given any further chance in case of fail and shall be required to pay double the amount paid during the first reappearance, and the amount shall continue increasing in the same way with each further failure.



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PART-III: GENERAL REGULATIONS

35. Supervisor and Supervision

- (i) In consultation with the scholar, a PhD teacher in the relevant field from the concerned department shall be appointed as supervisor preferably in the first semester.
- (ii) In case of PhD supervision, the faculty member shall fulfil HEC criteria.
- (iii) The GRC shall forward the name of the supervisor, if he agrees to such supervision, through the Dean, for approval of the Board.
- (iv) No teacher who qualifies supervision criteria shall refuse to supervise scholars. In such case his name shall be reported by the Chairperson/HoD through Dean to the Vice-Chancellor for necessary action.
- (v) A co-supervisor may be appointed from the relevant field of specialization who may be either from the same department, or any other academic department in or outside the University, within the Country or abroad. Furthermore, the University may allow, in genuine cases, a co-supervisor on the recommendations of GRC from relevant reputed research industries. In all cases the co-supervisor must be holding a PhD degree, appreciable research supervision experience, and a good publications record in peer reviewed international journals available in HEC recognized lists.

Provided that the ASRB on the recommendation of the GRC may appoint a non-PhD expert as a co-supervisor in case of clinical/industrial research.

Provided that the proposed co-supervisor must have an appreciable publications record in high impact factor journals.

Provided further that he must also have commendable experience and skills in the concerned field exhibited through industries' products.

- (vi) A supervisor and co-supervisor can supervise twelve (12) MPhil/MS/LLM/PhD scholars at a time, with no more than five (5) of these scholars being enrolled in PhD program.
- (vii) In case the supervisor leaves the University permanently and is unable or not interested to supervise the student, the co-supervisor shall act as supervisor or the student may be provided with an alternate supervisor on his request after following the procedure as laid down under Section 34(iii).

Provided that a supervisor who leaves the University permanently may opt to act as co-supervisor of the student if he and the scholar both agree.

- (viii) The scholar may request for the change of supervisor, with proper justification, only once in the entire degree program.
- (ix) In case of retirement of the supervisor from University Service, may continue supervision. Nonetheless, a teacher after retirement shall in no case be allowed to supervise a new scholar in the capacity of supervisor.
- (x) A supervisor shall perform the following functions:



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- a) To recommend and plan courses of studies for the scholar in consultation with the GRC. In case of any disagreement the decision of GRC shall be final. In all cases the decision must give proper consideration to the available resources and University policy.
- b) To guide the scholar in finalization of the research topic/proposal and place it (proposal) in consultation with the scholar before the GRC for consideration and decision.
- c) To supervise and review progress of the scholar on a regular basis and apprise the supervisory committee and any other office as required accordingly.

(xi) Fresh PhD Faculty Supervision Load

Fresh PhD Faculty can supervise MS/MPhil and co-supervise PhD students, while a PhD faculty member, after two years of obtaining a PhD degree and subject to fulfilment of other conditions provided in these regulations/HEC policy:

- can supervise one PhD student in the 3rd year
- two PhD students in the 4th year
- maximum up to 05 PhD students from 5th year onward

(xii) Co-Supervisor Eligibility (Alternative Path)

A faculty member who has supervised three (03) MPhil theses after obtaining an MPhil degree but before obtaining a PhD degree shall be exempted from the three (03) years post-PhD experience requirement for co-supervision.

(xiii) Supervisor-File Maintenance

- a) A supervisor shall maintain all the records in the Supervisor-File as per checklist approved by the University/HEC.
- b) The supervisor shall submit the final documentation on the Supervisory-File, duly complete in all respects, to the Directorate of Advanced Studies.
- c) The supervisor shall be responsible for producing, through the Chairperson/HoD, a duly updated Supervisor-File (of each scholar under his/her supervision) to HEC/Self-Graduate Review or Institutional performance evaluation panel.

(xiv) PhD research work completed under supervision is a shared intellectual property of supervisor and supervisee. All publications resulting from such research shall reflect the authorship of both parties and shall be subject to mutual consent.

(xv) The supervisor (other than adjunct) shall be from the same department where the scholar is enrolled.

(xvi) The honorarium to the supervisor and co-supervisor shall be paid as per HEC/University policy, in vogue from time to time.

36. Six-Monthly Progress Report

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A supervisor shall submit a detailed biannual progress report on the prescribed proforma to the ASRB with its intimation to GRC. This report is a mandatory record document to be maintained by the Supervisor concerned in the Supervisory File in sequential order.

37. Ethical Consideration

The scholar enrolled in MS/MPhil/LLM/PhD program shall be required to give due attention to the ethical considerations required in research. If the proposed research raises ethical issues, the scholar, prior to undertaking research work, shall be required to seek formal ethical clearance from the University Research Ethics Board through GRC. In addition, the scholar shall be required to strictly conform to the guidelines pertaining to the originality of the work/theses as provided under Section 5 of Part-II: 'Governing the systems of doctoral research', in GEP-2023.

38. COPE Guidelines

For Plagiarism, COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics) guidelines must be followed.

39. Graduate Research Committee (GRC)

There shall be a Graduate Research Committee (GRC) for a period of two years to be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor.

- (i) The Chairperson/HoD - Convener
- (ii) Two senior most teachers of the concerned teaching department - Members
- (iii) Two eternal members, to be nominated by the Dean in consultation with HoD./Chairperson
- (iv) If a member does not attend three consecutive meetings without the consent of the convener, the convener may recommend his replacement in consultation with the Dean through DAS for approval of the Vice-Chancellor.

40. Functions of GRC

40.1. To manage and facilitate the smooth functioning of the Graduate programs by undertaking any such activity required, and not expressly assigned to it in these rules.

40.2. To conduct and supervise the Institutional Assessment Test, Interview, and comprehensive examination.

40.3. To evaluate and recommend MS/MPhil/LLM & PhD research proposal/synopsis of the scholar to the Board for approval in hard or soft form after duly signed by GRC.

Provided that in case of MS/MPhil/LLM the GRC shall submit proposal to the relevant Sub-committee (refers to ASRB Sub-committee as provided in Section 55 of these regulations) for evaluation, which shall further place it along with its evaluation/recommendations before the Board for approval/decision. While in case of PhD, the GRC shall submit proposal after due evaluation to the Board for approval. The GRC, if it does not recommend a proposal even after two considerations, shall refer it along with the reasons/recommendations to the Board (in case of PhD) or Sub-committee (in case of

MS/MPhil/LLM) for advice/decision/approval. The decision of the Board/Sub-committee shall be final and will be referred to the GRC for compliance.

Provided further that the scholar may appeal to the Academic Grievance Redressal Committee (as provided in Section 49 of these Regulations).

40.4. To forward course completion of the scholar to DAS for approval.

40.5. To forward provisional admissions of the scholar to DAS for confirmation.

40.6. To forward names of supervisor and co-supervisor (if any) to DAS for approval.

40.7. To forward cancellation of admissions of scholars to DAS for consideration/approval, if any.

40.8. To forward list of examiners, as recommended by the concerned supervisor for the evaluation of the thesis to DAS for the approval of the Vice-Chancellor. GRC may change the overall proposed panel or an examiner(s) therein if either the examiner(s) is/are not relevant or there exists any other reason, in its opinion, that compromises transparent evaluation. In such case GRC must record the reasons of change(s) in the panel.

40.9. To consider and process the recommendations of the supervisory committee concerning a scholar's progress/performance. The GRC may also take such advisory or corrective steps which it considers essential for the timely completion of the degree programs in individual or collective cases. In such case the GRC shall record the reason(s) with each step taken.

41. Graduate Scholars Advisor (GSA)

(i) There shall be a Graduate Scholars Advisor, who shall be a faculty member of the concerned teaching department, preferably a PhD, and appointed by the concerned Dean on the recommendation of the Chairperson/HoD.

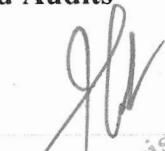
(ii) The GSA shall be responsible to:

- a) Make all arrangements for GRC meetings, such as preparation of agenda items and recording the minutes;
- b) Arrange the timetable for courses, date sheets for examinations and comprehensive tests;
- c) Provide guidance on graduate policy, regulations, and rules to the scholars from time to time; and
- d) Act as secretary of the GRC.

42. Grades and Academic Standing

The grading system for the graduate program courses for MS/MPhil/LLM (700 & above) and PhD (800 & above) shall be done on a scale of 1-4.

43. Credits and Audits



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(i) Unless otherwise noted, a credit shall represent study in an approved course carried out for one theory hour or two laboratory hours per week per semester.

(ii) A scholar who desires to attend a course without taking examination in that course shall be called an Auditor and shall be shown as such in the transcript. An Auditor must secure the consent of the concerned teacher offering the course, in or outside the department, on the recommendations of the supervisor before he is registered as an Auditor. He shall pay the regular fees, but no credit shall be granted for the course and no exam shall be taken.

44. Course Change and Credits

A scholar may request the Head of the Department/Chairperson that his status in a course be changed to that of Auditor, as provided in Section 42(ii) of these regulations, or that he may be permitted to withdraw from a course, not later than the end of the fourth week of the semester. If the request is accepted, the scholar's record shall be marked as Auditor or as Withdrawn against that course. A scholar who fails to complete a course without having his status so changed to Auditor or Withdrawn shall receive, at the teacher's discretion, either a grade of I (Incomplete) or F (Fail).

45. Study Leave and No Objection Certificate

Obtaining leave for higher studies and NOC from employer shall be the sole responsibility of the scholar. If he fails to provide NOC from the employer, his admission shall be deemed cancelled. Provided further that any concealment of facts regarding his employment status would make him liable to cancellation of admission.

46. Freezing of Semester(s)

(i) Semester freezing will be granted by the relevant Dean on the recommendations of the concerned HoD in response to a request made by the student with reasonable justification.

(ii) An MS/MPhil/LLM scholar can freeze up to one semester at the maximum during the coursework of the relevant program of studies.

(iii) A PhD scholar can freeze up to two semesters at the maximum during the coursework of the relevant program of studies.

(iv) No freezing during the semester is allowed, i.e. whenever semester freezing is granted on the request of the scholar it would be effective from the beginning of the respective semester, thus all the attendance, quizzes, assignments, mid-term, etc. taken so far in the semester by the student would be deemed as not having taken place in respect of the concerned student.

(v) If a scholar is not enrolled in any course in a semester, he will not be considered a regular student of the University in that period. The scholar may then enroll in these courses in a subsequent semester; however, he will have to meet pre-requisites of any



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course taken. In addition, it is understood that the University is not required to offer all courses in each semester.

(vi) Freezing of the first semester is not allowed. However, in special hardship circumstances, freezing of the first semester can be considered. Such hardship circumstances may include:

- Iddat
- Maternity leave
- Any other reason with justified rationale

Note: Freezing of a Semester will only be allowed after successful completion of the 1st Semester as a prerequisite, except under clause (vi).

47. Cancellation of Admission

- (i) If a scholar does not fulfill the requirements as prescribed, his admission shall be cancelled.
- (ii) The admission of a scholar may be cancelled if the academic progress or conduct is found unsatisfactory at any stage on the recommendation of the supervisory committee. The supervisory committee in such case must submit proper reason(s)/record through GRC to the office of DAS.
- (iii) The admission of the scholar may also be cancelled if he is found involved in subversive activities, blasphemy, or harassment, or in any such activity that jeopardizes the good order of the University or tarnishes the image of the country.
- (iv) The scholar shall be required to properly observe the rules and regulations of the University.
- (v) The admission cancelled by ASRB shall be restored by ASRB through the Hardship Committee.

48. Transfer of Credit Hours

The transfer of credit hours will be allowed by meeting the following criteria:

- (i) The grade in the total studied courses must be "B" or higher. A course below "B" grade shall not be transferred.
- (ii) A student must have a proper admission in the graduate program of the University and should earn a minimum of 50% of total credit hours in the concerned department.
- (iii) Credit hours transfer shall only be acceptable into this University after taking fresh enrollment, subject to furnishing an NOC from the University where the scholar was enrolled previously.
- (iv) Credit transfer from the FATA University to some other University shall be allowed after the completion of the required formalities.
- (v) Acceptance of courses and their relevancy shall be determined by the GRC of the respective teaching department. Consideration of the transfer by the University shall be



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based on at least 75% of courses being relevant to the subject concerned. The GRC may, however, require such students to attend course(s) depending upon the expertise/exposure of the scholar concerned in the department.

(vi) Transfer from Other HEC Recognized Universities

Students from other HEC recognized universities may be transferred subject to scrutiny by the Standing/Transfer Admission Committee. Transfer cases (if any) will be processed by the Standing/Transfer Admission Committee as per University and HEC guidelines. The content should have at least 80% similarity in the said program of both institutions.

49. Academic Grievance Redressal Committee (AGRC)

A. Establishment

There shall be an Academic Grievance Redressal Committee to be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor to address an applicant/scholar grievance related to the degree program he/she aspires to enroll in or is already enrolled in.

B. Composition of AGRC

The AGRC shall comprise:

- (i) A Dean or any Professor - Convener
- (ii) Three Faculty members - Members
- (iii) Chairperson of the concerned department, where needed - Member
- (iv) Director Admissions/Director Advanced Studies & Research - Member/Secretary

Provided that the term of members listed at Serial Nos. 49(B)(i) and 49(B)(ii) shall be determined by the Vice-Chancellor from time to time. The decision of the AGRC shall be final.

Provided further that in matters falling after the confirmation of admissions, Director Advanced Studies and Research shall act as Member/Secretary while in matters falling before the confirmations, such as admissions, Director Admissions shall act as Member/Secretary.

The quorum shall be three, and the decision shall be taken by majority. In case of a tie, the Convener shall have a casting vote.

Provided that if the concerned Dean is a member of the relevant GRC about which the complaint is being lodged, in that case the Vice-Chancellor shall appoint a Dean from another faculty to act as its convener.

50. Functions of Academic Grievance Redressal Committee (AGRC)

- (i) To redress the grievances of students/scholars relating to admissions or any other academic matters such as assessment & evaluation, conduct of comprehensive examination, award of grade, delay in processing of research proposal or thesis processing, etc.

 
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- (ii) To provide proper opportunity to stakeholders to express their grievances freely without any fear of being victimized.
- (iii) To ensure that there is no reprisal of any kind against any applicant, witness, or any other participant in the grievance redressal process.
- (iv) To protect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties during the inquiry, consistent with and subject to the policy guidelines.
- (v) To obtain the facts through relevant sources in a fair and objective manner and to work out a resolution of the issues involved with the parties named in the grievance application.
- (vi) To ensure disposal of grievance application within a maximum period of one month of the receipt of application.
- (vii) The AGRC shall submit its recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor for consideration/approval.

51. Result Declaration and Award

- (i) After viva, the complete file along with award sheet duly signed by the supervisor, examiners (internal external), and chairperson will forward it to the controller of examination for notification. Once the result is notified, then the scholar may apply for official transcript and degree.
- (ii) At the result declaration stage, a certificate shall be provided by both the scholar and his/her supervisor that the soft and hard copies of the thesis/dissertation are explicitly and implicitly the same.
- (iii) The date of result declaration notified by DAS for the award of the degree shall be deemed to be the date of the award of the degree subsequently notified by the Controller of Examinations.

52. Directorate of Advanced Studies and Research

- (i) The Director of DAS shall serve as the secretary of the Board.
- (ii) Office of the DAS shall ensure timely processing of the cases as per required regulations.
- (iii) DAS shall arrange meetings of the Board with the approval of Vice-Chancellor.
- (iv) DAS shall circulate the agenda and minutes to the members and concerned HoD, supervisor, and scholar.
- (v) DAS shall maintain the record of all the students.
- (vi) DAS may perform any other function as prescribed by the regulations.

53. Advanced Studies and Research Board

53.1. There shall be an Advanced Studies and Research Board which shall consist of the following:

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- (i) The Vice-Chancellor - Convener
- (ii) The Deans - Member
- (iii) Three University Teachers to be nominated by the Syndicate other than Deans based on their research contribution from different faculties - Members
- (iv) Three nominees of the Academic Council from amongst its members based on their research contribution from different Faculties - Members
- (v) Director Office of the Research, Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC)
- (vi) Secretary of the Board shall be the Director of DAS.

53.2. The term of office of members of the Advanced Studies and Research Board, other than ex-officio members, shall be three years.

53.3. The quorum for a meeting of the Advanced Studies and Research Board shall be two-third of the notified members.

54. Functions of the Advanced Studies and Research Board

54.1. Advise the Authorities on all matters connected with the promotion of Advanced Studies and Research in the University.

54.2. Consider and report to the Authorities on the institution of research degrees in the University.

54.3. Propose Regulations regarding the award of research degrees.

54.4. To appoint supervisors for research students and to determine the subject of their thesis.

54.5. Recommend panel of names of examiners for evaluation of thesis and research examinations.

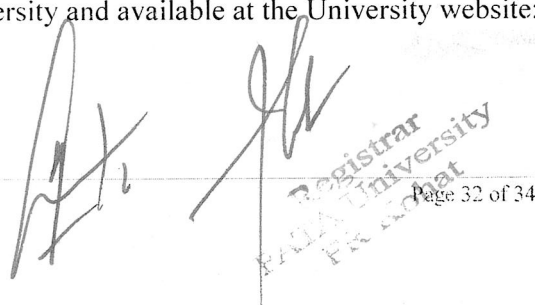
54.6. Approval of Research Proposal/Synopsis of MS/M.Phil/LLM or Equivalent and PhD thesis and dissertation.

54.7. To constitute ASRB Sub-committee(s) for each faculty(ies) or as it deems appropriate, to evaluate and recommend MS/MPhil/LLM or equivalent Research Proposal/Synopsis of the research scholars of the concerned faculty, to the Board through Directorate of Advanced Studies for consideration/approval.

54.8. To consider and decide any graduate program related item/matter, not expressly prescribed in these regulations, which in its (Board) opinion needs immediate attention/resolution.

54.9. To refer back any proposal to the concerned GRC, with proper instructions, in case of serious problems with its organization or novelty.

54.10. Research proposal shall be submitted in the format approved by the FATA University and available at the University website: <http://www.fu.edu.pk>.



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54.11. The final approved copy of the research proposals shall be sent to DAS for its office record.

54.12. The meeting of the ASRB shall meet preferably once a month or whenever deemed appropriate by the convener.

54.13. Perform such other functions as may be prescribed by regulations.

55. Thesis/Dissertation Format

The details about the dissertation/thesis format.

56. Removal of Difficulty

If any difficulty arises in giving effect to any of the provisions of these regulations, the following committee constituted by the Vice-Chancellor for a period of two years may make such decisions, not inconsistent with the spirit of these regulations, as may appear to be necessary for the purpose of removing the difficulty, provided that such a decision is not ultra vires of the Statutes and Act.

Composition of the Committee

- (i) Dean - Convener
- (ii) Two Professors - Members
- (iii) Three Associate Professors - Members
- (iv) Director Advanced Studies - Member/Secretary

57. University Appellate Committee (UAC)

There shall be a University Appellate Committee to handle appeals related to comprehensive examinations and other academic matters where scholars are not satisfied with decisions made by GRC or other committees.

The composition and functions of UAC shall be determined by the Vice-Chancellor from time to time.

58. Entry into PhD Country Directory (PCD)

For inclusion in PCD, a graduate and the Controller of Examination shall be required to submit an online application following the prescribed procedure in order to enter the name of the PhD-graduate in the PCD. The Chairperson with the help of the Supervisor and the pass-out scholar will be responsible for provision of authentic data/information to the CE office, who in turn will submit it to HEC concerned quarter as per prescribed procedure as early as possible after issuance of the PhD qualification notification/degree issuance.

59. Compliance and Violation

These regulations along with the other Graduate policies/rules of the University and of the HEC GEP-2023 need to be complied with in true spirit. In case of violation, HEC has given the retributive/reprisal actions.

— End of Regulations —



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