

# **Rules and Regulations Relating to PhD Program**

## **University of Health Sciences Lahore**

### **1. PREAMBLE**

These Rules called “PhD Rules” shall apply to all PhD degree programmes conducted in the Constituent and Affiliated Units of University of Health Sciences, Lahore Pakistan (UHS). These Rules shall be read in conjunction with the general rules/regulations of the University. In matters where these rules are silent, rules/regulations and procedures of UHS shall apply. In case of any doubt regarding the interpretation of these Rules and in matters not clearly covered under these and other rules/regulations of UHS, the matter shall be referred to the Advanced Studies and Research Board for the final decision. Furthermore, PhD requirements set out by the HEC and PM&DC from time to time shall be complied with, and shall take precedence over these Rules should there be a conflict.

### **2. AIM OF THE PROGRAM**

The aim of the degree of doctor of Philosophy (PhD) program at University of Health Sciences, Lahore is to produce medical scientists of high competency who can contribute significantly to academic teaching and to the translational health related research according to the needs of the country.

### **3. DURATION OF THE PROGRAM**

The PhD program at University of Health Sciences will be minimum three (03) years duration and maximum Eight (08) years duration. In case the PhD degree is not completed within eight (08) years, the candidates name will be removed from the university register. This period will be counted from the date of joining of the candidate in PhD program.

### **4. PROGRAM CREDITS**

The PhD program of UHS is of 48 credit hours with 18 credit hours of coursework and 30 credit hours of thesis.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

In these Rules, unless otherwise specified, or unless there is anything repugnant to the Act and Statutes of UHS, the expressions used in these Rules shall have the meaning as elucidated in the ensuing clauses.

- 5.1.        “**Candidate**” means a person seeking admission in PhD programmes at UHS.
- 5.2.        “**Co-Supervisor**” means a member of academic and/or research staff of the university/industry who may be appointed to provide academic/technical and/or administrative assistance whenever there is a requirement/need.
- 5.3.        “**Comprehensive Examination**” An examination, in the field of study, conducted after the successful completion of the coursework of a PhD programme, to ascertain the suitability of a scholar to undertake research work.
- 5.4.        “**Department**” means a Department of a Constituent Unit/Faculty of the University in which a scholar is enrolled for his/her studies.
- 5.5.        “**Division**” means the academic combination of relevant Departments between which the faculty can supervise students from any of the departments under a particular division. The number of faculty members with PhD in a division must be three (03) to start a PhD program.
- 5.6.        “**Defence**” means an oral examination of the scholar in the research work conducted usually in the form of presentation and/or demonstration, before the panel of Examiners, entailing arguments and points supporting the fundamental concepts having been advanced within the thesis.
- 5.7.        “**Exemption**” means the scholar is not required to take a similar course if a scholar has already completed it within the UHS or at any HEC recognized University. When granted Exemption, credits for that course earned previously are not counted towards credits or CGPA requirements for the degree. The scholar shall be required to take another course to make up for the total number of credits or CGPA required to meet the degree requirements.
- 5.8.        “**External Examiner**” means a PhD qualified person with a field of research similar to that of the scholar, appointed to conduct thesis defence of the scholar, but is not an employee of the UHS at the time of examination.

- 5.9.        **“Foreign Evaluator”** means faculty member/researcher from technologically advanced countries, categorized by the HEC with PhD qualification with a field of research similar to that of the scholar, appointed to evaluate thesis of the scholar.
- 5.10.       **“Internal Examiner”** means a person with PhD qualification with a field of research similar to that of the scholar, appointed to conduct thesis defence of the scholar, and is an employee of the UHS at the time of examination.
- 5.11.       **“Principal Supervisor”** means a person with PhD qualification with a field of research similar to that of the scholar, a member of the full time/adjunct faculty of UHS appointed to supervise the research work who will be the signatory in all administrative matters related to supervision.
- 5.12.       **“Programme”** means an academic programme in PhD studies being run at the UHS.
- 5.13.       **“Research”** means the process leading to the production of original scholarly work in the form of a thesis for the purpose of obtaining PhD degree.
- 5.14.       **“Scholar”** means a person registered in a PhD programme at the UHS.
- 5.15.       **“Statement of Purpose”** means the detailed declarative version of topic of the research thesis which indicates objectives of the thesis and gives the reader a precise understanding what the thesis will cover. It is the statement of purpose around which the entire thesis revolves.
- 5.16.       **“Supervisor”** means a person with PhD qualification with a field of research similar to that of the scholar, preferably a member of the academic/research staff of an HEC recognized university appointed to supervise the research work of a scholar.
- 5.17.       **“Supervisory Committee”** means all the personnel involved in supervision and co-supervision of the PhD Scholar.
- 5.18.       **“Thesis”** means a written description/document of the research work prepared in the format prescribed by UHS and submitted as partial requirement of the PhD degree.
- 5.19.       **“Transfer of Credits (TOC)”** refers to a process of granting credits to a scholar enrolled in PhD programme at UHS for the course(s) undertaken by the scholar at another HEC recognized higher education institution which is(are) equivalent to certain course(s) being offered by UHS in the programme scholar is enrolled in, after having carried out the equivalency ascertaining process. When TOC granted for any course, the credits

earned previously for that course are counted towards total credits requirement fulfillment for that scholar at the UHS but not added to the CGPA of the degree.

- 5.20. **“Viva Voce”** means an oral examination of the scholar following his/her presentation at the thesis defence, conducted in the form of interview and discussion aimed at ascertaining evidence and sufficiency of knowledge of the scholar about the research work the scholar has worked on.

## **6. RESEARCH COMMITTEES**

1. Advanced Studies & Research Board (ASRB)
2. Ethical Review Committee (ERC)
3. PhD Synopsis Review Committee (PhD SRC)
4. Supervisory Committee (SC)
5. PhD Committee

## **7. UHS DIVISIONS & RELEVANT PROGRAMS**

- a) University of Health Sciences has four divisions which are combination of departments that are relevant and conduct research in collaboration.
- b) For starting any PhD program in any of the departmental units there should be at least three (03) PhD faculty members in the division
- c) The Departments and the Divisions are as follows:

### **1. Division of Basic Medical & Dental Sciences**

- i. Anatomy
- ii. Biochemistry
- iii. Dental Materials
- iv. Forensic Medicine
- v. Human Genetics & Molecular Biology
- vi. Oral Biology
- vii. Pharmacology
- viii. Physiology

### **2. Division of Biomedical and Allied Health Sciences**

- i. Allied Health Sciences
- ii. Forensic Sciences

iii. Nursing

**3. Division of Health Promotion & Education**

i. Family Medicine

ii. Medical Education

iii. Public Health

**4. Division of Pathological Sciences**

i. Chemical Pathology

ii. Hematology

iii. Immunology

iv. Morbid Anatomy & Histopathology

v. Microbiology

vi. Oral Pathology

## **8. ELIGIBILITY**

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

- a) MBBS/BDS/Pharm-D;/BSc (Hons.)/Master of Science (MS) Degree in the relevant subjects.
- b) M.Phil./MS/FCPS or equivalent qualification recognized by HEC with minimum CGPA 3.0 (out of 4.0 in the Semester System) or First Division (in the Annual System) in relevant subject.
- c) GRE subject test with 60% percentile score (where subject is offered by ETS) OR GAT subject test with minimum of 60% Test Score (where subject is offered by NTS/ETS) OR If the Test is not available in NTS or ETS subject list, then 70% score, in test at par with GRE Subject Test, conducted by the University Committee consisting of at least three PhD faculty members approved by PhD Committee and HEC in the subject.
- d) If the NTS/ETS/GAT/GRE test in any subject is not specific to Medicine & Dentistry then the student will have to appear in the UHS admission test and secure 70% marks to be eligible to sit the interview as per HEC criteria.

## **9. ADMISSION**

An initial advertisement in each subject will be announced according to available slots with each potential supervisor in the Division according to the HEC rules. After an initial advertisement by the University for opening up the PhD program for various subjects, applications will be invited based on the Eligibility criteria.

- a) Application for admission to the PhD is to be made on the official application form available at UHS website along with requisite documents.
- b) Applicants will identify a potential supervisor at the time of application
- c) Applicants will submit a “statement of research interests” (not a research proposal), along with their academic/research publications and information about their previous research & teaching experiences.
- d) Entry test will be conducted by the university and its validity is for one year.
- e) Applicants will submit two letters of references from their previous supervisor/tutor.

## **10. SELECTION CRITERIA**

- a) Short listed candidates will be invited for interview by the PhD admission committee of the University. During the selection process the following elements will be considered:
  1. Academic record of M.Phil./MS/Masters/FCPS/Equivalent
  2. Teaching experience
  3. Research publications
  4. Potential supervisor and the availability of resources for the research
  5. Demonstration of the ability to pursue doctoral-level research based on the “Research Statement” at the time of admission.
- b) Names of the candidates recommended by the Admission Committee for admission to PhD programme shall be forwarded by the HOD to the PhD Committee for finalization by the Vice Chancellor.
- c) Admission letters to the selected candidates shall be issued by the PG Cell with a copy to the HoD.
- d) The selected candidates shall be required to join on or before the date given in the offer letter, the failure to do so shall result in cancellation of admission.

## 11. ENROLLMENT/PHD CANDIDATURE

- a) Selected candidates will be offered enrollment as candidate for PhD degree
- b) PhD student's enrollment will be made for the first 2-years of full-time study following the date of registration.
- c) During enrollment the student will be referred to as **"PhD Candidate"**
- d) Upon enrolment, the HOD shall assign suitable Supervisory Committee comprising of Supervisor/s, Co-Supervisor (if required) to the scholar. The HOD shall issue letter of appointment to the Supervisor/s and the Co-supervisor/s.
- e) The purpose of enrollment is to enable the PhD Committee to confirm the ability of the candidate to complete a PhD satisfactorily and to provide guidance to the candidate regarding the rate of progress expected.

## 12. PHD COURSEWORK

- a) The PhD Candidate must undertake eighteen (18) Credit hour of coursework.
- b) One credit hour will be equal to 18 contact hours of face to face instruction, 54 hours of laboratory/studio work/field work/practical work supervised and graded by the faculty and 72 hour load for assignments.
- c) The coursework components will consist of designated courses that are compulsory within one year of enrollment in the programme.
- d) All PhD courses will be designated a course code of **"8"** and will be approved by the PhD Committee.
- e) Out of 18 credit hours,
  - a. Four (04) credit hours are compulsory for all PhD students enrolled at UHS.

801: Research Methodology (RM)	Credit hours: 2
802: Advanced Biostatistics (AB)	Credit hours: 2
  - b. Four (04) Credit hours of Coursework will be completed by taking one of the following two courses:

803: Advanced Laboratory Techniques (ALT)	Credit hours: 4
804: Qualitative & Mixed Methods Research (QMR)	Credit hours: 4
  - c. Ten (10) Credit hour coursework will be developed by each department and implemented after approval from ASRB.

### **13. COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**

- a) Comprehensive Examination must be conducted at the end of one year of enrollment
- b) Paper of the comprehensive examination will be made by the Head of Department in consultation with the course facilitators.
- c) Comprehensive examination will have a theory paper of 100 marks and a viva of 100 marks. The weightage of the written paper will be 60% and of that of viva will be 40% in the declaration of final result.
- d) Passing marks for PhD Comprehensive examination will be 60%.
- e) The weightage of courses in the theory paper will be as follows:
  - a. RM & AB 20%
  - b. ALT/QMR 20%
  - c. Specific subject 60%
- f) The viva will be conducted by the department through a panel of examiners with at least one examiner from one of the other departments of the University.
- g) PhD Candidates must pass the comprehensive examination in two attempts i.e., within two years of enrollment in the PhD program.
- h) In case of not qualifying the comprehensive examination in two (02) attempts student will no longer retain the status of “PhD candidate” of the university.

### **14. SYNOPSIS/RESEARCH PROPOSAL APPROVAL BY ASRB**

- a) After approval from the Supervisory committee the synopsis on the prescribed university format should be forwarded through the Head of Department to the PhD SRC for approval.
- b) Ethical review committee will evaluate the synopsis after its approval from PhD SRC via a formal request to the Registration Department by the candidate through the HoD.
- c) The Synopsis/Research Proposal with the approval letters of both the PhD SRC and the ERC will be submitted to the registration department through HoD to be placed in ASRB for final approval.
- d) The intellectual property rights and responsibilities approved by UHS have to be strictly followed by all involved in research.



## **15. REGISTRATION**

- a) To be registered as a “**PhD Scholar**” with the University of Health Sciences, Lahore Pakistan; candidate must give proof of following:
  - 1. Completion of 18 Credit Hour Coursework
  - 2. Passing the Comprehensive Examination
  - 3. Approval of Research Synopsis/proposal by ASRB of the University
- b) All the three proofs should be sent with a cover letter by the Head of the Department to the PhD committee.
- c) The PhD Committee after being satisfied will forward the documents to the Registration Department to issue a registration number to the PhD Candidate and give him/her status of a UHS “**PhD Scholar**”

## **16. PROGRESS REPORT OF PHD SCHOLAR**

- a) There will be a bi-annual review of research progress of the PhD Scholar by the HoD.
- b) At the end of every six months after confirmed registration, PhD scholar would submit a summary of the progress of the research work on a specific proforma to through the Supervisor to the Head of the Department to be forwarded to the PhD Committee annually.
- c) Subject to the satisfactory progress of the research work, the Head of the Department would recommend the continuation of the scholar’s registration.
- d) In case of more than two unsatisfactory reports forwarded to the PhD Committee, the scholar will be notified in written and given reasonable opportunity to respond to the PhD Committee. In Case PhD Scholar fails to satisfy the committee, the committee shall recommend removal of his/her name from university register.
- e) There will be a time of 15 days given to the scholar to appeal to the ASRB through the Vice Chancellor against the decision and final decision of ASRB will be implemented.

## 17. THESIS SUPERVISION

- a) The Supervisory committee including the Supervisor/Co-supervisors will be appointed with the mutual consent of the candidate, the persons being appointed, and the HoD.
- b) There can be a maximum of four (04) members in the supervisory committee with a maximum of two (02) Supervisors. In case of more than one supervisor, the supervisor from concerned department will be the Principal Supervisor
- c) The administrative Incharge will be the supervisor of the department in which the student is enrolled.
- d) One Supervisor should be the full-time faculty member of the university and must be from the specialty that the student is enrolled in.
- e) In case a full-time PhD faculty member in the subject is not eligible to become supervisor an adjunct faculty member of the university in the subject may act as supervisor with the consent of the HoD and approval of the PhD Committee.
- f) Eligibility of the Supervisor/co-supervisor will be in line with the HEC/PM&DC guidelines
- g) Supervisor/s shall have appropriate qualifications, including extensive knowledge and research experience in the broad subject area of the student and current involvement in research groups.
- h) ASRB may also appoint a co-supervisor to provide the link if the research is of an interdisciplinary nature or if the research is being undertaken in collaboration with another organization.
- i) A Supervisor, co-supervisor shall not be related to a student by consanguinity or by affinity to the third degree inclusive or have a dual relationship with the student.
- j) Changes in composition of supervisory committee that is change of a Supervisor/Co-supervisor or addition of a supervisor/co-supervisor can be sought by the PhD Scholar and/or members of the SC through the HoD. The application must be accompanied by the written consent from both the current Supervisor/Co-supervisor and the new proposed Supervisor. When ASRB is satisfied that there is sufficient reason, it may change the Supervisor/Co-Supervisor of the Candidate on the request of either Scholar or the Principal Supervisor.

- k) Approved Synopsis/ Research Proposal is the Property of Principal Supervisor, in case of change of Supervisor a Satisfactory reason should be given to work on the same topic/project with proper recognition to previous supervisor i.e. in authorship of Publication. In other case along with change of supervisor a new Research Proposal should be submitted with sufficient changes to accommodate the new Proposed Supervisor with special focus on its Specialty.

## **18. MODIFICATION/CHANGE OF RESEARCH TOPIC**

- a) A candidate may modify/change the topic of his/her research with the approval of the ASRB by submitting an application duly supported by the Supervisor, Head of Department and recommended by the PhD Committee.
- b) The final title of the thesis shall be approved by the ASRB before the submission of thesis.

## **19. FREEZING OF REGISTRATION/DISCONTINUATION OF PHD RESEARCH**

HEC/PM&DC rules will be followed for termination or freezing of PhD programme:

- a) Where a PhD Scholar is unable to continue with their research program because of circumstances beyond their control, the Advanced Study and Research Board (ASRB) may suspend their registration for a specified period of maximum up to 1 year.
- b) The Scholar must be able to satisfy the ASRB of the University that any period of freezing will not adversely affect the viability of the candidate's research after consultation with the Supervisory Committee and HoD.
- c) Any period of freezing will be excluded from the calculation of the final submission date.
- d) While registration is suspended, a Scholar is exempted from fees, and is not entitled to any tuition or supervision, or to the use of any other research resources of the University.

## **20. THESIS SUBMISSION, EVALUATION & DEFENCE**

### **20.1. Submission**

- a) Thesis submission should be done within three to eight years of enrollment in the program.
- b) Submitted thesis must accompany the plagiarism report along with all other documents prescribed by the Examination department of UHS.
- c) When the ASRB is satisfied that there is sufficient reason, it may extend candidate's submission date maximum to six months on the recommendations of PhD Committee.
- d) At the time of submission of thesis, the supervisor would submit a list of the suitable local and foreign examiners that have relevant subject expertise through the HoD to ASRB for approval.

### **20.2. Evaluation**

- a) The ASRB would shall appoint four external examiners for the evaluation of thesis. Two examiners shall be foreign examiners from technologically advanced countries (HEC List) while two external examiners will be local (from within the country), from the list of examiners provided by the Head of the Department.
- b) Each examiner will be provided with an electronic copy of the thesis and, acting independently, is required to provide the Controller of Examinations within two months of receipt of the thesis, with a written report on the quality of the thesis. If there is no response from examiner in two months after two reminders, the examiner will be replaced.
- c) The examiners will include with their reports, on UHS approved evaluation proforma, one of the following recommendations:
  - 1. To award the degree, subject to satisfactory performance at the oral examination.
  - 2. To award the degree after specified "minor corrections" have been made to the thesis, to the satisfaction of the oral examiner, by a specified date, and subject to satisfactory performance at the oral examination
  - 3. To permit the candidate to revise the thesis to incorporate the major changes suggested and resubmit it for examination.

- d) In case of recommendations of minor or major corrections, the scholar would be asked to submit the correction within a specific period for further evaluation.
- e) The evaluation reports of the examiners would be considered in the ASRB.
- f) The scholar would be allowed to proceed to the oral examination if
  - 1. The evaluation reports approve her/his thesis
  - 2. One research paper based on the PhD research in an HEC approved “W” category journal has been published.

### **20.3. Public Defence & Oral Examination**

- a) The Controller of Examinations will arrange thesis examination
- b) Before the Oral examination, a public defense of the thesis will be presented by the scholar.
- c) Public defense will be open for the entire faculty and student participation will be compulsory.
- d) The examination must be attended by the Candidate, the Oral Examiners, and the Head of Department or a Nominee. The main supervisor or co-supervisor may attend but will not act as an examiner and may only participate.
- e) The examiners will be provided the evaluation report of the thesis by foreign and local examiners
- f) On completion of the oral examination, the Head of Department will provide a written report endorsed by the Examiners. The report can include following recommendations:
  - a. To award the degree, subject to satisfactory performance at the oral examination.
  - b. To award the degree after specified “minor corrections” have been made to the thesis, to the satisfaction of the oral examiner, by a specified date, and subject to satisfactory performance at the oral examination
  - c. To permit the candidate to revise the thesis to incorporate the major changes suggested and resubmit it for examination.
- g) After considering all of the reports of the examiners, the ASRB will make the final decision as to the award of the PhD degree.