



INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY
UNIVERSITY

ITU PhD Regulations

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1. Short Title and Commencement

- These regulations will be called **ITU PhD Regulations**.
- These shall come into force at once and applicable to graduate degree programs and applicable with effect from semester Fall 2025 to all enrolled students.

Definitions

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

I. Credit Hour:

(1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen to eighteen weeks for one semester, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or

(2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including research work, laboratory work, internships, field work, practical, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

OR

One credit hour of laboratory or practical work / project would require lab contact of three hours per week throughout the semester.

II. Grade Point Average (GPA):

A weighted average of grades for courses taken at ITU in one semester.

III. Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA):

CGPA is a weighted average of grades for all semesters up to the latest semester.

IV. External Examiner

An examiner of teaching staff and/or subject/industry experts, other than ITU to review portfolios/projects, thesis and equivalents.

V. Registrar:

"Registrar" means the Registrar of University.

VI. Controller of Examinations

"Controller of Examinations" means the Controller of Examinations of the University.

VII. Semester:

A division of academic duration lasting between 15-18 weeks.

VIII. Faculty:

"Faculty" means Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, and Lecturer /Teaching Fellow engaged by the University for teaching graduate and postgraduate classes and such other persons as may be declared as "Teachers" by the regulations.

IX. Teaching Department:

"Teaching Department" means a teaching department established and maintained by the University.

X. Vice Chancellor:

"Vice Chancellor" means the Vice Chancellor of the University.

XI. ACM:

ACM stands for Academic Council Meeting of Information Technology University.

XII. BASR:

BASR stands for Board of Advanced Studies and Research of Information Technology University.

XIII. MS:

MS Stands for Master of Science/Studies.

XIV. MPhil:

MPhil stands for Master of Philosophy.

XV. PhD:

PhD stands for Doctor of Philosophy.

XVI. Adjunct Faculty:

A contractual faculty member, temporary or part-time, hired outside their full time profession such as researchers and scientists at any R&D or public/private sector organization, by educational institutions, typically colleges or universities, to teach specific courses or provide instructional support.

Ph.D. Regulations of Information Technology University of the Punjab

A detailed roadmap for the PhD Engineering and Computer Science programs has been approved by the Academic Council (ACM), Board of Advanced Studies and Research (BASR) and other competent authorities at ITU. Following regulations regarding PhD programs have been approved for the smooth functioning of the Teaching, Academic and Examinations departments.

2. Doctoral Program Review Committee (DPRC)

The role of the Doctoral Program Review Committee is to ensure that all rules and procedures that are set forth are duly followed. The DPRC will also revise the program and procedural rules whenever needed, in order to update them with new HEC rules and regulations that come into effect. The DPRC will also ensure that the doctoral program undergoes both formative and summative evaluation.

- a. The committee comprises full-time faculty members of the university. The Vice-Chancellor will formulate, and notify, a DPRC of the following faculty:
 - i. Dean of the Faculty as Chair
 - ii. Chairperson(s) of the departments in the relevant Faculty as members

- iii. One PhD faculty, from same faculty, will be nominated as Secretary DPRC by Dean of the concerned Faculty
- b. DPRC will ensure conformity of PhD being carried out in that faculty to the rules set forth.
- c. DPRC will also ensure the quality of the PhD program being carried out in the concerned faculty.

3. PhD Eligibility Requirements

- a. A student must have completed 18 years of education by completing M.Phil./MS/Equivalent degree (with at least 6 credits hours of master's research thesis) in a relevant discipline from an HEC recognized university.
 - i. The relevant disciplines will be approved by the Central Admission Committee via concerned faculty's Doctoral Program Review Committee (DPRC).
 - ii. The student must hold a valid accredited degree, for admission in the PhD program of FoS and FoE.
- b. Students pursuing MS/MPhil studies and interested in admission to PhD may be granted provisional admission provided that confirmation of the admission shall be subject to the fulfillment of the following conditions:
 - i. MS/MPhil degree completion within three months from the date of provisional admission, as prescribed in this policy otherwise his admission will be revoked.
 - ii. Clearance of the admission test, as prescribed in this policy.
 - iii. A student with provisional admission will not get PhD stipend until his/her admission is confirmed.
- c. Tuition fee waiver and/or stipend will be determined from case to case basis. The mandatory other university dues will remain applicable.
- d. For foreign qualified students, an equivalence certificate issued by HEC will be required.
- e. Admission Criteria:
 - i. Internal criteria for admission is given below and it can be changed by the Central Admission Committee: 40% Academic History + 40% Test Score + 20% Interview. Academic history will consider grades in SSC, HSSC, BS, and MS degrees with weightages defined by the Central Admission Committee.
 - ii. The candidate is required to secure at least 60% marks in each of the academic history (combined), interview, and the ITU admission test.
 - iii. In place of ITU admission test, a test equivalent to GRE General, conducted by testing bodies accredited by HEC, with a passing score of 60% or as approved by ACM, might be accepted.
 - iv. For admission into the PhD program, a minimum CGPA 3.0 out of 4.0 in the Semester System or equivalent, as per HEC CGPA-Percentage conversion formula, in the Annual System in MS/MSc./M.Phil/Equivalent degree is required.
- f. The admission is conditional to the acceptance of an ITU faculty member to being the PhD supervisor, alongwith fulfillment of other criteria and standards.

4. PhD Admission Tests

- a. Admission tests will be conducted by ITU.
- b. Tests will be prepared by the relevant faculty.
- c. All admission tests will be conducted as per rules approved by DPRC keeping in view HEC guidelines.
- d. Any change in the test format will be recommended by DPRC and approved by CAC.

Statement of Purpose

As part of the admission process to PhD programs, applicants shall be required to submit a statement of purpose, which shall form an integral part of the application. The admissions 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 subspecialty 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.
- v. The candidate is required to submit original academic documents to the Academics department for the duration of the Phd program.

5. PhD Fees and Scholarships

- a. Students may join ITU on regular fees, tuition fee waiver, external scholarships and/or ITU scholarships.
- b. To get ITU PhD scholarship, a candidate needs to be a full time student with at least six registered credit hours in each semester.
- c. In case of external scholarships, a student has to follow the requirements of the relevant funding agency in addition to the university's policies.
- d. All students getting ITU scholarship are required to observe the residency requirement of 40 hours per week for a minimum duration of four years.

6. PhD Supervisor and Co-supervisors

- a. A supervisor must be ITU approved with an allowable limit of the number of PhD students set forth by HEC.
- b. A supervisor should be a regular PhD faculty member of ITU at the time of supervisor allocation.
- c. If the supervisor is from a different faculty within ITU, then a co-supervisor must be selected from the student's faculty.

- d. Co-supervisors must have PhD Degree and may be selected from ITU or any other local or foreign university/institute of good repute as approved by the DPRC.
- e. Approval of Supervisor/Co-supervisor will be obtained from DPRC and endorsed by BASR.
- f. Any change of Supervisor or Co-supervisor of a PhD student will also be approved by BASR through DPRC.
- g. Any changes in GEC will be approved by DPRC.
- h. If a supervisor leaves ITU after the synopsis defense of his/her PhD student, he/she may continue as a supervisor after approval of DPRC and BASR. The supervisor may be hired as an adjunct faculty member and he/she will continue supervision in the adjunct faculty rule. A co-supervisor from the concerned department must be appointed in this case.

7. Graduate Evaluation Committee (GEC):

- a. The Graduate Evaluation Committee (GEC) will be formed during the first semester of the PhD program.
- b. GEC will have at least two members in addition to the main supervisor.
- c. All co-supervisors will be part of the GEC committee.
- d. At least one GEC member should be an ITU faculty member.
- e. All GEC members must have completed PhD degrees from well reputed universities.
- f. Supervisor will propose names of potential GEC members to the DPRC for approval from BASR.
- g. Any change in GEC members will need to be approved by DPRC and endorsed by BASR.

8. PhD Student's Course work:

- a. Students will take at least six subjects comprising 18 credit hours, within the first three semesters, following the recommendations of the supervisor and the GEC. Graduate level courses will be counted in the credit hours of a PhD student.
- b. A supervisor may require a student to take extra courses to improve his/her skills. Courses taken below graduate level will not be graded, rather only marked Pass/Fail.
- c. Students have to maintain a minimum CGPA of 3.0 in his coursework.
 - i. If the CGPA falls below 3.0, that student will be on probation.
 - ii. A PhD student on probation will be given one more semester to recover 3.0 GPA.
 - iii. If the student fails to recover it in the next semester, his/her case will be referred to DPRC.
 - iv. DPRC will make a decision if more time should be given to the student or termination from the program.
- d. If a student gets a grade less than C+ in a course, he/she must repeat that course. If that particular course is not offered in the next semester, then the student's supervisor will decide a replacement course in consultation with GEC.

- e. PhD Students may be offered one-to-one courses by the approval of the supervisor and GEC. Maximum of two such courses can be counted towards the coursework requirement of the PhD student.

9. Pre Synopsis Research Credit Hours:

- a. If enough relevant courses are not available before the synopsis, then the student may register in Pre Synopsis Research Credit Hours to have at least six credit hours in each semester to maintain his or her full-time status.
- b. A student can take a maximum of 12 Pre Synopsis Research Credit Hours in total. However, the PhD student cannot register more than six Pre Synopsis Research Credit Hours in each semester before the completion of coursework.
- c. Pre Synopsis Research Credit Hours will be graded as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory.
- d. Pre Synopsis Research Credit Hours grade will not count towards GPA/CGPA.
- e. Minimum of 06 Pre Synopsis Research Credit Hours with a satisfactory grade is one of the requirements for the successful completion of a PhD degree.

10. PhD Comprehensive Exam

- a. Comprehensive exam would be taken after completing the course work.
- b. Comprehensive exam is recommended to be conducted aligned with the midterm of every semester, or final term.
- c. PhD students may be given two opportunities to clear comprehensive exams within 4 regular semesters.
- d. The defense of synopsis/research proposals should be completed within six semesters. In case of non-compliance, the registration shall be cancelled and a transcript for completion of coursework may be issued to the student.
- e. The following are the guidelines for conducting Comprehensive Examination:
 - i. The exam should be based on recapitulation of the in depth knowledge of the discipline to which the student is admitted.
 - ii. The evaluation shall be expressed in terms of pass/fail and shall be shown on transcript.
- f. The PhD comprehensive exam has two parts of equal weightage:
 - i. "Major Exam" examining the depth of the PhD student's knowledge
 - ii. "Minor Exam" examining the breadth of the PhD student's knowledge.
- g. The content of both the major and minor exams will be decided by the student's supervisor in coordination with GEC.
- h. The exam content will be communicated to the student by the relevant department and scheduled with the Examinations department.
- i. Both parts of the exam will be conducted as a written exam and can be taken the same day or on separate days.
- j. Any change in the format of the exam will be approved by DPRC.

- k. The result will be submitted by the supervisor and GEC through the Examinations department.
- l. Maximum two attempts of Comprehensive exam will be allowed in each part of the exam separately. In case a student fails one part of the exam but passes the second part, then the student has to repeat only the failed part.
- m. A student must obtain absolute 60% marks in each part of the exam (major and minor).

11. PhD Synopsis Defense:

- a. A student must have passed the Comprehensive Exam before appearing for the synopsis defense.
 - i. Once a student is ready for the synopsis defense, the student will submit an application on a prescribed form to the department.
 - ii. The schedule of synopsis will be communicated to the Examinations department.
 - iii. Synopsis presentation will be announced and open to the ITU community.
 - iv. Synopsis defense is meant to ensure that the identified research problem is worthy of PhD-level research as determined by GEC. Synopsis defense will be conducted by the department and evaluated by the GEC and supervisor.
- b. A synopsis report and presentation will also be submitted to the department outlining the details of the synopsis. It must contain a sufficiently broad area survey and identification of the potential research gaps. It must also contain the potential solutions of the problem with preliminary results which the student will explore in future.
- c. The result of the synopsis defense will be declared as satisfactory/unsatisfactory by the supervisor and the GEC committee members on prescribed forms and submitted to the Examinations department.
- d. If the synopsis defense is unsatisfactory, the student will be allowed to re-appear after a minimum of one month. Maximum two attempts of synopsis defense will be allowed.
- e. Synopsis summary will be recommended by DPRC and approved by BASR.

12. PhD Research Credit Hours:

- a. PhD research credit hours will be enrolled after successful synopsis defense.
- b. The students should take a total of 42 research credit hours apart from the course work and comprises Pre Synopsis Research Credit Hours (6-12 CHs) and PhD Research Credit hours (30-36 CHs).
- c. PhD Research Credit Hours will be graded as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory.
- d. PhD Research Credit Hours grade will not count towards GPA/CGPA.

13. Publication Requirement Towards Completion of PhD:

- a. For the award of a PhD degree, a PhD researcher shall be required to publish a minimum of one research article in a W category journal.
 - i. Only first authored papers presenting scholarly research will be counted.
 - ii. Survey papers or review papers will not be counted.
 - iii. The paper must get accepted after the synopsis defense to be counted/considered towards fulfilment of PhD requirement.
 - iv. The papers published by the PhD student, if included in his thesis, must be properly cited and may be excluded from the thesis similarity report as determined by the supervisor as per HEC rules.
- b. In coordination with GEC, the supervisor may increase the publication requirement in terms of the number of conference/journal papers or specify certain top venues in an area.

14. PhD Thesis Evaluation:

- a. The supervisor will nominate at least three foreign experts and four local experts to the DPRC as potential thesis evaluators. Supervisor will preferably obtain the consent of these evaluators beforehand.
 - i. The relevance of the potential experts will be reviewed by DPRC.
 - ii. All potential evaluators must belong to reputable institutes and must satisfy the requirements set forth by the HEC.
 - iii. Evaluators should not have co-authored papers with the PhD student.
- b. DPRC will select one foreign/external expert and two local experts/examiners to review the thesis. One expert in each category to be selected as reserved.

The one foreign/external expert shall be:

- i. PhD faculty members 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 30 for Sciences, 15 for Social Sciences or 8 for Art & Humanities as determined by Web of Science and approved by BASR.

- c. The secretary of DPRC will request the expert/examiners to review the thesis.

- d. Final approval of selected local and foreign experts will be endorsed by BASR.
- e. At least one foreign expert and two local experts must recommend the work done in the thesis to be sufficient for the award of a PhD degree in well reputed Universities as one of the requirements of PhD completion.
- f. Both the local and the foreign evaluators will be offered compensations as approved by the competent authority.
- g. All evaluators will submit their recommendations on specified forms to DPRC which will be submitted to the Examinations department.

15. Plagiarism

A similarity test, in accordance with ITU's Anti-Plagiarism Policy, must be conducted on the dissertation before its submission to the external experts by the student.

The thesis will be checked using Turnitin by Supervisor and GEC for plagiarism. A copy of the originality report should be attached with the thesis and submitted to DPRC. The similarity found should be within limits as per HEC plagiarism policy and instructions.

According to the HEC Anti-Plagiarism policy, HEC allows the Similarity Index to be less than or equal to 19% and less than 5% from a single source.

16. PhD Thesis Defense:

- a. Before public PhD thesis defense, an in-house defense will be scheduled by the supervisor and GEC members approved by DPRC.
 - i. Supervisor and GEC will ensure that all changes recommended by the evaluators have been incorporated in the thesis.
 - ii. Student has completed all requirements for the award of the PhD degree.
 - iii. Results of in-house thesis defense will be announced on approved forms and communicated to the Examinations department.
 - iv. The proposed date of public defense will also be communicated by the department to the Examinations department through DPRC.
- b. Public PhD defense will be announced by the Examinations Department after ensuring that all requirements are completed.
 - i. Public defense will be announced at least 10 working days before the final public defense.
 - ii. The public defense will be conducted on campus and online.
 - iii. The Review Committee will comprise local PhD thesis evaluators, supervisor and GEC members.
 - iv. The public defense will be announced publicly.
 - v. Relevant recommendations given by the evaluators are required to be incorporated in the PhD thesis.
- c. The result of the public PhD defense will be submitted on approved forms to the Examinations department.

17. PhD Degree Award

- a. Candidate must have passed the Public PhD defense.
- b. Three hard bound copies of the PhD thesis duly signed by the supervisor, co-supervisor, GEC members, and local evaluators will be submitted to the Examinations office. These copies will be saved for record as follows:
 - i. Examinations Department copy
 - ii. Library Copy
 - iii. Supervisor copy
- c. A student must have completed a minimum of total 60 credit hours including research and coursework.
- d. All requirements (public defense and thesis) set forth for the completion of PhD at ITU must be completed within 8 years.
- e. The completion date of the PhD degree shall be reckoned with the date of notification of the award of PhD degree.
- f. The maximum PhD duration shall be determined from the date of student enrollment until the date of the completion notification of the PhD degree.
- g. In case a student is unable to secure a PhD degree within the prescribed time frame and claims for extension in duration, the DPRC will recommend and BASR will decide considering the causes for delay. In event of force majeure i.e., delay on account of circumstance beyond the control of student, the university may grant an extension in the period of award of PhD degree in accordance with the duration limiting factor(s) and shall also take corrective measures in case the delay is caused due to process or administrative reasons.
- h. Clearance from all relevant departments is required for the award of degree.
- i. The student's PhD file having the original documents and approvals will be submitted to the Examinations department after completion of degree requirements for issuance of notification.

18. Deferment of PhD Program:

- a. A student who has secured admission, may get his PhD program deferred for the first semester only.
- b. Deferment of admission cases will be decided by the supervisor and department and communicated to the Examinations department. DPRC may decide to revoke the admission if the student fails to join the program.
- c. In the deferred semester, the student will not pay the tuition fee, however he will pay all Other Dues before deadlines set forth by the university.
- d. Maximum duration of PhD program will be considered from the date of admission. All other requirements required for the completion of PhD will remain the same.
- e. If such a student fails to join the department from the second semester, his admission to the PhD program will be cancelled.

- f. The student will be responsible for all academic consequences of the semester deferment.

19. Semester Freezing During PhD Program

- a. Under special circumstances, freezing of a semester can be considered for at most one semester in each academic year.
- b. Semester freeze requests will be submitted to the advisor and referred to DPRC who will decide on the semester freeze application.
- c. A PhD student cannot get a semester freeze for the first semester. If the student has got the first semester deferred, the student cannot request a semester freeze for the second semester.
- d. For a semester freeze, the student will not pay the tuition fee, however he will have to pay the Other Dues.
- e. All milestones and requirements set for the successful PhD completion will remain the same. Maximum duration of the PhD program will remain the same.
- f. The student will be responsible for all academic consequences of the semester freeze.

20. PhD Fellowship at Faculty of Engineering/Sciences

- a. Only selected/enrolled PhD students will be offered a PhD fellowship.
- b. Each PhD fellow will be paid a stipend of Rs. 80,000 per month with an annual increment of 10 percent. The stipend amount may change as per university policies without prior notification.
- c. Tuition fee of the PhD fellows will be waived off; however, they will pay Other Dues as per university rules.
- d. A PhD fellow must be a full time PhD student with six credit hours in each semester and must maintain a minimum CGPA of 3.0.
- e. In case of employment, a PhD fellow would require obtaining leave from his employer to join ITU on a full-time basis.
- f. A PhD fellow shall sign an agreement with ITU on non-judicial paper (stamp paper) to the effect that in case the awardee fails to complete his/her study, s/he will refund ITU the total amount released on his/her studies by the ITU. That amount will include the stipend amount and the amount of tuition fee waiver availed by him/her.
 - i. In addition, a personal guarantee of a person of means on non-judicial (stamp) paper to the effect of ensuring the recovery in case of default would need to be furnished.
- g. Supervisor of a PhD fellow would monitor the academic progress/performance of the PhD fellow on a monthly basis. In case of poor performance, the supervisor may recommend partial/full deduction in the stipend.
 - i. In case of PhD fellows not obtaining stipend, performance will be monitored at the end of each semester. Tuition fee waiver will only be offered for the next

semester if the supervisor certifies a satisfactory performance during the last semester.

- h. If a PhD fellow gets a semester freeze, the PhD student stipend will be kept on hold and may continue on the recommendation of the supervisor.
- i. A PhD Scholar will have to obtain a 'No Objection Certificate' (NOC) from his/her parent department, where applicable.

21. Honorarium for PhD Supervisors

The supervisor will be entitled to an honorarium on completion of different stages of the PhD programme. The three stages and their honorarium amounts are attached at Annexure A which can be amended from time to time with the approval of the Vice Chancellor.

22. Unsuccessful Exit from the PhD Program

- a. In case of an unsuccessful exit of a PhD fellow, the case will be referred to the DPRC who will determine the responsibility of failure of the student.
 - i. Depending upon the responsibility of failure, DPRC may recommend reduction in the recovery of the amount of fellowship.
 - ii. In case of death/acute medical conditions or on compassionate grounds, DPRC may recommend complete/partial waiver of recovery of the amount.
 - iii. In case a student leaves the PhD program, he / she will have to refund the total amount of fellowship to ITU.
- b. In addition to the refund amount, he will obtain clearance from all concerned ITU departments before release of his securities.