



HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

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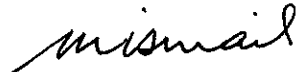
Ref. 1-4(MS/PhD)/QAD/HEC/2018/86/293

Date: December 03, 2018

Subject: **Violation of Rules in the Award of PhD Degrees**

1. It is apprized that HEC has prescribed the "Minimum Criteria for Admission in MS/MPhil and PhD or Equivalent Programs" (Annexure-I).
2. Despite of these guidelines, it has been observed that some universities are awarding PhD degrees in violation of HEC prescribed rules. This creates problem for degree holders at the time of degree verification. Therefore, a policy to stop the award of degrees in violation of rules has been approved by the HEC Competent Authority, attached as Annexure-II. All universities are hereby advised to adopt this policy and widely circulate among the concerned offices, PhD departments, faculty and students for information/ implementation.
3. Furthermore, it is to intimate that only HEC Approved Supervisors shall be required to supervise the PhD theses in future. However, HEC non-approved supervisors, currently assigned the PhD theses may continue supervising the students. But no thesis will be assigned to HEC non-approved supervisor after June 30, 2019.
4. This letter is also available at HEC website URL: www.hec.gov.pk/site/mphil-phd
5. This is issued with the approval of the Competent Authority.

With kind regards,


(Muhammad Ismail)

The Vice Chancellors

All Public & Private Universities of Pakistan

Copy for information to:

- ES to Chairman, HEC Islamabad
- ES to Executive Director, HEC Islamabad
- Advisor (HRD), HEC Islamabad
- Advisor (QAA), HEC Islamabad
- Director General (A&A), HEC Islamabad
- Director General (SIU), HEC Islamabad

Minimum Criteria for Admission in MS/MPhil and PhD or Equivalent Programs

This is for the information of all concerned that the degrees awarded by the Universities/Degree Awarding Institutions must meet the following minimum criteria for recognition by the HEC.

MS/M.Phil Programme:

1. Sixteen years of schooling or 4 year education (124 credit hours) after HSSC/F.A. /F.Sc/Grade 12 equivalent will be required for admission in the MPhil/MS.
2. Higher Education Commission recommends to the Universities for the students admitted after May 30, 2014 that;
 - ✦ Either enter into private arrangement under the University Law with the NTS for conducting GAT General/Subject as an eligibility condition for admission to MS/MPhil or equivalent programs
 - OR
 - ✦ Engage another renowned testing service provider for the purpose
 - OR
 - ✦ Conduct the test of the equivalent level at the University
3. The students admitted be till May 30, 2014 have to clear GAT-General (www.nts.org.pk/gat/gat.asp) conducted by the National Testing Service with a minimum 50% cumulative score for admission in MPhil/MS or equivalent.
4. For award of MPhil/MS/Equivalent degree, candidates will either need to complete 30 credit hours of course work or complete 24 credit hours of course work along with a minimum of 6 credit hours for research work/thesis.
5. There should be **at least 2 relevant full time PhD Faculty members** in a department to launch the MPhil/MS/MBA programs.

PhD Program:

Admission requirement:

1. For admission into the PhD minimum CGPA 3.0 (out of 4.0 in the Semester System) or First Division (in the Annual System) in MPhil/MS/Equivalent degree is required.

Subject Test:

2. Higher Education Commission recommends to the Universities for the students admitted after May 30, 2014 that;
 - ✦ Either enter into private arrangement under the University Law with the NTS for conducting GAT General/Subject as an eligibility condition for admission to PhD programs
 - OR
 - ✦ Engage another renowned testing service provider for the purpose
 - OR
 - ✦ Conduct the test of the equivalent level at the University
3. The students admitted till May 30, 2014 have to follow the policy given below;
GAT subject conducted by the National Testing Service (NTS) or ETS, USA in the area of specialization chosen at the PhD level must be cleared prior to admission for the PhD Program.
 - a. In the case of GAT Subject (<http://www.nts.org.pk/GAT/GATSubject.asp>) minimum of 60% marks are required to pass the test.
 - b. In the case GRE subject test, the minimum score will be acceptable as follows;

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- I. 45% Percentile Score: Valid for Admissions until December 31, 2010
 - II. 50% Percentile Score: Valid for Admissions until December 31, 2011.
 - III. 60% Percentile Score: Valid for Admissions after December 31, 2011.
- c. If the Test is not available in NTS subject list, then a University Committee consisting of at least 3 PhD faculty members in the subject area will prepare the Test at par with GRE Subject Test and qualifying score for this will be 70% score.
- d. Students admitted in PhD Programs after August 25, 2010 have to submit the requisite GAT Subject or GRE Subject Score within a period of one year that is by October 31, 2011.

Course Work:

4. Course work of 18 credit hours preferably in the first year is required to be completed and followed by a comprehensive examination for granting candidacy as PhD researcher.

Foreign Expert Evaluation:

5. The PhD Dissertation must be evaluated by at least two PhD experts from technologically /academically advanced foreign countries in addition to local Committee members.

Open Defense:

6. An open defense of Dissertation is essential part of PhD Program after positive evaluation of Dissertation.

Research Paper:

7. Publication of at least one research paper based on the PhD research in an HEC approved "W or X" category journal is a requirement for the award of Ph.D. degree ("Y" in case of Social Sciences only).

Plagiarism Test:

8. The Plagiarism Test must be conducted on the Dissertation before its submission to the two foreign experts, as described above.

Copy of PhD Dissertation to HEC:

9. A copy of PhD Dissertation (both hard and soft) must be submitted to HEC for placing/including in PhD Country Directory and for attestation of the PhD degree by the HEC in future.

Conduct of PhD Program:

10. There should be at least 3 relevant full time PhD Faculty members in a department to launch a PhD program.

Maximum Supervision of Scholars:

11. A supervisor can supervise a total of 12 MS/MPhil /PhD students at a time with no more than 5 of these being PhD students.

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Violations of Rules in the Award of PhD Degrees

S#	Quality Parameter	Nature of Violation	Existing Decision/Policy	Proposed Action(s) if Existing Policy is violated
1.	Admission Criteria	Violation of admission criteria	CGPA (3.0/4.0) or first division in MS/MPhil/Equivalent and Entry Test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admission be cancelled • University to return three times the amount received from the student • Disciplinary action against responsible staff
2.	Illegal Admission	Admission of students without NOC from HEC		
3.	Course Work	Degree awarded without minimum of 18 credit hours course work	Degree will be considered equivalent to MS/MPhil/Equivalent degree Ref: 1-3/AD-QA/HEC/NQAC-20/2015/389 dated 08.07.2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree will be considered equivalent to MS/MPhil/Equivalent degree • Supervisor will be banned from supervising the new PhD scholars for 05 years • Disciplinary action against Department Chair
4.	Comprehensive Examination to be passed by the scholar within 02 years	Failure to clear Comprehensive Examination within first 02 years		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Termination of candidature/registration of the student

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5.	Supervision of thesis by an HEC approved supervisor from the University where registered	Supervision of thesis by a non-HEC approved supervisor of the university after June 30, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor must be from the same university. • PhD faculty member from another university can be a co-supervisor, if required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disciplinary action against Department Chair
6.	Maximum number of students to be supervised by one supervisor	Supervision of more than 12 MS/MPhil/Equivalent and PhD students in total or 5 PhD students (The mix of MS/MPhil and PhD students should be such that the number of PhD candidates does not exceed 5)	DD-QA/HEC/NQAC/2015/125 dated February 27, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor be banned from supervising the new PhD scholars for 05 years • Disciplinary action against Department Chair
7.	Review of Thesis from Technologically/Academically Advanced Country	Thesis reviewed from one technologically/Academically advanced country only		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One paper be published by the student from his/her thesis research before degree attestation • Supervisor be banned from supervising the new PhD scholars for 05 years • Disciplinary action against Department Chair
		Thesis reviewed from more than one countries which are not included in the category of technologically/Academically advanced countries		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two papers to be published by the student on the basis of thesis research before degree attestation • Supervisor be banned from supervising the new PhD scholars for 05 years • Disciplinary action against Department Chair
		Unjustified delay in sending thesis for review by foreign experts from two technologically/academically advanced countries		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Officer (s) responsible for sending the thesis to foreign experts be warned

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8.	The thesis should be relevant to the "Title" and "Scope" of the degree	Thesis has no relevancy to the Title and Scope of the degree		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor be banned from supervising the new PhD scholars for 05 years • Disciplinary action against Department Chair
9.	One Research Paper to be published in HEC recognized journal before the award of degree	No research paper published and degree awarded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Sciences disciplines W and X categories + ISI Master List Journals are acceptable • For Social Sciences disciplines W, X and Y categories + ISI Master List Journals are acceptable <p>Note: (Z category journals for local regional languages only e.g. Punjabi, Pushto, Sindhi, Balochi, Brahvi, Saraiki & Persian)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper to be published in the required category of the HEC recognized journal before attestation of degree • Supervisor be banned from supervising the new PhD scholars for 05 years • Disciplinary action against Department Chair
Paper published but not in HEC recognized journal				
Paper published but not in required category of Journal				
Paper Published after award of PhD degree				

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		Degree awarded on the basis of the paper published before synopsis approval		
		Degree awarded on the basis of the paper that has no relevancy with thesis		
10.	Plagiarism	Degree awarded and major or minor plagiarism found in the thesis at any stage in future	Plagiarism Policy Claus 11 B (vii), 1-22 (NQAC) QAD/2017/HEC/07-364 dated March 24, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholar and his supervisor will be penalized as per the provisions of plagiarism policy
11.	PhD Duration	Degree awarded after more than 8 years or less than 3 years. Effective for students admitted after March 18, 2016	Ref: 1-3/AD-QA/HEC/NQAC(21)/2016/53 dated March 18, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree will not be accepted/attested • Supervisor be banned from supervising the new PhD scholar for 05 years • Disciplinary action against Department Chair
12.	Degree Issued in Violation of University's Own Rule/Law	Degree issued in violation of University's PhD policy/ rules in addition to HEC guidelines.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor be banned from supervising the new PhD scholars for 05 years • Disciplinary action against Department Chair and Controller of Examination

