

ॐ अमृतेश्वर्ये नमः



AMRITA VISHWA VIDYAPEETHAM

Ph.D. Program

(Doctor of Philosophy)

University Level Regulations

6<sup>th</sup> June 2017

## **1. ADMINISTRATION**

**1.1.** The name “Amrita VishwaVidyapeetham” will be abbreviated as “the University” in this document. PG Programs include both Masters and PhD Programs.

**1.2.** All the departments of University are grouped under different faculties. For example, Faculty of engineering, Faculty of medicine etc. Faculty is an intellectual grouping of all departments belonging to a major discipline and may be spread across different schools and campuses and is mainly meant to remove inter-department, inter-campus and inter-school barriers for PhD scholars.

**1.3.** The Dean of Postgraduate Programs (PGP Dean), Dean of Research, Deans of Faculties, Heads of Schools, PGP Chair and Co-Chairs are the main officers of the university, their responsibility is to ensure the smooth functioning of all Ph.D. Programs. The division of responsibilities among them is as follows:

- The Dean of the Faculty has overall leadership responsibility for the academic programs belonging to that Faculty. The Dean of Faculty is responsible for policy level involvement and decisions pertaining to Programs of that Faculty.
- Dean Research has overall responsibility for quality of research conducted at the University.
- The heads of schools namely Principals and Associate Deans, have operational leadership responsibility for day to day functioning of classes and courses in departments belonging to their respective schools.
- Each Faculty has a PGP chair and Co-Chairs who are responsible to implement the research related requirements of the PG Programs. PGP chair and Co-chairs also handle admissions, scholarships etc. for research programmes and serve as approval authority for PhD doctoral committees, comprehensive & qualifying exams, monitoring & compliance at each and every step of every PhD student’s progress, conducting regular reviews, record keeping and certifying completion.
- PGP Dean (in consultation with Deans of Faculties and Dean of Research) oversees at University level, policies and all aspects of the PG Programme starting from admissions, scholarship allocation & selection, research progress, output, productivity and reviews, monitoring quality of PG Programs, compliance & certifying completion to vice Chancellor, record keeping etc.

**1.4.** A Ph.D. student may appeal to the PGP Chair/Co-Chairs for a waiver/substitution of any requirement. The appeal should be in writing and supported by proper justification. If the appeal is denied, it may be escalated to Dean of the Faculty and then the PGP Dean and after that to vice Chancellor, whose decision is final and binding.

**1.5.** The award of the Ph.D. degree shall be in accordance with the regulations of the University and that of the Faculty. These set of regulations replace all previously issued regulations with regard to PhD programs in the University. Each of the Faculties can adopt these regulations as is or may have their own additional requirements. Such requirements imposed by any Faculty should be in addition to University level regulations and should not in any way conflict with University level regulations and should be approved by the University. Each Faculty may apply these revised regulations even retroactively for already registered PhD students.

**1.6.** Amendments to the policies and procedures outlined in this document may be made with the approval of the vice Chancellor and subsequently ratified by the Academic Council and Board of Management.

## **2. ADMISSION**

### **2.1. Eligibility**

Applicants holding a Master's degree are eligible to apply for admission to the Ph.D. Program. Examples of Master's degree include:

- ME, M.Tech.
- MSc, MCA, MA, M.Com, MFA, MJMCand MSW
- MBA
- MD, MS, DNB, MDS, M.Pharm, PharmD
- 2 yr. PG Diploma
- MS by research

Exceptional students currently pursuing Master's degree at Amrita University may also apply.

Each Faculty can formulate its own additional restrictions on eligibility conditions including specifications on the degrees that are valid and percentage of marks or CGPA required in the qualifying examination for eligibility for admission to that Faculty.

Each Faculty shall evaluate, as needed, whether any other degree, including a degree from a foreign University, can be considered as equivalent to one of the above degrees for the purpose of admission. All applicants are expected to have strong academic records.

### **2.2. Application**

Applications for the Ph.D. Programme will be solicited through the University website ([www.amrita.edu](http://www.amrita.edu)) and other means of advertisement, and generally admissions shall take place twice a year.

### **2.3. Categories of Doctoral Students**

A full-time doctoral student is primarily focused on carrying out at the University all course-work, research, and other doctoral requirements.

A part-time doctoral student typically has a full-time appointment at the University or at another academic/R&D organization. They are permitted to proceed at a slower pace in completing their doctoral requirements.

Transfer students: An exceptional student pursuing another advanced degree in the same Faculty here at Amrita University will be allowed to register for the Ph.D. program subject to the requirement that he or she completes all the requirements of other advanced degree prior to

'advancement to candidacy' (see section 4.4.), which marks the beginning of full time doctoral research in the Ph.D. program.

#### **2.4.Selection**

The PGP Chair/Co-Chairs shall coordinate the constitution of a selection committee that takes into account the number of available openings, the number of applications received and the research interests of the applicants. The Selection Committee may conduct an Entrance Test / Interview for all applicants.

Based upon prior academic record, research track record/potential, entrance test and interview performance, the committee shall give its recommendation to the PGP Chair/Co-Chairs who will finalize the admission with approval of the Dean of the Faculty and Dean PGP and notify the selected applicants of the date of joining.

All prospective Thesis Advisors are invited to participate in the selection process.

### **3. REGISTRATION**

#### **3.1. Faculty Categories**

Students have to register under one of the following Faculties through the respective PGP Chair/Co-Chairs:

- Faculty of Arts, Media and Commerce
- Faculty of Engineering
- Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Faculty of Inter-Disciplinary Studies
- Faculty of Management
- Faculty of Medical Sciences
- Faculty of Science

#### **3.2.Thesis Advisor & Co Advisor**

Soon upon admission to the Ph.D. Programme, every student shall be assigned a Thesis Advisor by the PGP Chair/Co-Chairs taking into account the student's interests, available Faculty and approvals from the Head of the School to which the Thesis Advisor belongs and the Dean of the Faculty in which the registration is being done.

The Thesis Advisor must be a regular or emeritus full time Faculty member of the University with a Ph.D. degree and an established research record. The Thesis Advisor is primarily responsible for guiding the doctoral student's research and ensuring that the student makes satisfactory and timely progress towards the Ph.D. degree. A Faculty member from one campus of the University may serve as Thesis Advisor for a doctoral student in another campus.

Adjunct Faculty members of the University may serve only as Co-Advisors or as members of the doctoral committee.

Occasionally, when it is desirable to have an external expert as Co-Advisor/ member, the PGP Chair/Co-Chairs through Dean of Faculty & PGP Dean shall recommend (to vice Chancellor) that the expert be appointed as an Adjunct Faculty of the University, and, subsequent to that appointment, shall appoint him or her to the Doctoral Committee.

### **3.3. Doctoral Committee**

The Doctoral Committee for each Ph.D. student will be formed by the PGP Chair/Co-Chairs. The Doctoral Committee consists of the Thesis Advisor, the Co-Advisor (where applicable), and Faculty experts from within the University in the candidate's research area. The doctoral committee shall have a total of three to five members. (In departments with a small number of Ph.D. holding Faculty, the Doctoral Committee may have three members). The Doctoral Committee is responsible for all academic matters connected with the doctoral student, including prescribing the course-work, monitoring research progress and conducting appropriate examinations.

### **3.4. Inter-disciplinary**

Advisor and co-advisor could be persons qualified in the area and outside the area respectively of the Faculty in which Ph.d. registration is being done to facilitate inter-disciplinary research.

### **3.5. International**

Co-advisor could be from one of the reputed international institutions.

## **4. Courses**

The course-work for a doctoral student is proposed by the Thesis Advisor taking into account the student's background and preparation. The proposed course-work must be endorsed by the Doctoral Committee and approved by the PGP Chair/Co-Chairs. The course work must be completed within four semesters of admission to the Ph.D. programme.

### **4.1. Credits**

Minimum number of course credits is as follows:

- For students who have completed 8 years or more of UG+PG (not including any extra time in clearing arrears, counting only the standard duration of respective UG & PG degrees) – 8 course credits
- For students who have completed six to seven years of UG +PG (not including any extra time in clearing arrears, counting only the standard duration of respective UG & PG degrees) – 12 course credits
- For students who have completed five years of UG +PG (not including any extra time in clearing arrears, counting only the standard duration of respective UG & PG degrees) – 16 course credits

Included as part of above course credits requirements, up to 4 credits may be allocated to research methodology which could cover such areas as general research methodology, quantitative methods, computer applications, research ethics and statistics.

Each Faculty may stipulate additional course credit requirements based on the student's background and intended Ph.D. research area.

In addition to regular courses offered by the University, three additional types of courses are permitted: transfer (external or internal) courses, MOOC courses, and independent-study courses.

- An external transfer course is one that the student has completed in the recent past at another reputed institution and that has not formed a part of the requirement for the award of any prior degree counted for eligibility for admission to Ph.D.
- An internal transfer course is one that the student has completed in the recent past at our University for a Master's degree that he or she may be pursuing prior to transfer to PhD Programme.
- A MOOC is one that is offered by SWAYAM or a reputable education-technology company such as Coursera, EdX, and Udacity.
- An independent-study course is developed specifically for the Ph.D. student and may involve a combination of self-study and one-to-one instruction by a professor. A student taking an independent-study course must complete a publishable Scopus/PubMed indexed conference or journal paper for successful completion of the course.

Maximum of 50% of a student's course-work may consist of transfer courses/ MOOC courses/Independent courses.

Based on the performance in each course, a student is awarded, at the end of the semester, a letter grade in each of the courses registered, in a ten point scale.

The letter grades, the corresponding grade points and the ratings are as follows:

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Grade Points</b>	<b>Ratings</b>
O	10.00	Outstanding
A+	9.50	Excellent
A	9.00	Very Good
B+	8.00	Good
B	7.00	Above Average
C	6.00	Average
P	5.00	Pass
F	0.00	Fail
FA	0.00	Failed due to insufficient attendance
I	0.00	Incomplete
W		Withheld

The student is expected to maintain a CGPA of 8.0 across all courses.

#### **4.2. Comprehensive Examination**

All doctoral students must pass Comprehensive Examination after completion of all course-work. This is normally done within one or two years after registration in the Ph.D. Programme. The Comprehensive Examination is an oral/written examination administered by the Doctoral Committee and examines the breadth of preparatory study undergone by the candidate in order to begin doctoral research.

The Doctoral Committee frames the syllabus for the examination. The Doctoral Committee will also be the Comprehensive Examination Committee. No external examiner is required for the Comprehensive Examination.

For transfer students who are exceptional students transferring from our own Amrita University Master's programme to PhD programs, their exceptional performance in Master's project defence examination can be used as a substitute in place of separate comprehensive examination.

## **5. RESEARCH**

In addition to coursework, the doctoral student is expected to carry out creative and scholarly research leading up to the completion of a written Ph.D. Thesis. Doctoral research must result in original and substantial contributions to the chosen specialized field of study. This requires mastery of the literature in the specialized field, and critical thinking and judgment. The student should also relate the field of study to the broader discipline within which the research falls.

Satisfactory progress will be judged by the Doctoral Committee on the basis of semester wise progress reports submitted by the doctoral student and/or the completion of publishable papers.

### **5.1. First Publication Requirement**

Doctoral student is required to publish at least one scopus / pubmed indexed conference or journal paper within one year of passing comprehensive examination and maintain an average of at least one publication per year.

### **5.2. Thesis Proposal, Qualifying Examination & Advancement of Candidacy**

All doctoral students must take a Qualifying Examination. This is normally done within one year of passing the Comprehensive Examination and after the completion of one conference/journal paper. In preparation for the qualifying examination, a doctoral student must submit a written Thesis Proposal to the Doctoral Committee. After approval by the committee, the student may take the Qualifying Examination, wherein he or she presents the thesis proposal.

The Qualifying Examination is an oral examination administered by a Qualifying Examination Committee consisting of the Doctoral Committee together with an external expert from a reputed academic or R&D institution.

A student who passes the Qualifying Examination "advances to candidacy," ready to embark on full time doctoral research. If a student is pursuing any other advanced degree in the same Faculty in Amrita University, he or she is required to complete all the requirements of the advanced degree prior to 'advancement of candidacy'.

### **5.3. Open Seminars / Conference Presentation**

After advancement to candidacy, all doctoral candidates are required to present two research seminars or make two conference presentations. Feedback and comments on the research obtained from these seminars may be suitably incorporated in the thesis.

### **5.4. Journal paper**

Publication of one scopus / pubmed indexed paper in a journal of acceptable quality (specified by concerned Faculty) is a prerequisite prior to submission of thesis.

## **6. THESIS**

### **6.1. Synopsis**

Once the Thesis Advisor and Doctoral Committee are satisfied that the doctoral candidate has completed the required research for the award of the Ph.D. degree and the candidate has published (or has an acceptance of) a scopus/pubmed indexed journal paper and has also given the second Open Seminar, the candidate is required to submit a written Synopsis to the Doctoral Committee for approval. The Synopsis should include the motivation, significance and main objectives of the research, along with a brief literature survey and a detailed report on the thesis research. The main conclusions and results should be highlighted and important figures and references should be provided.

The Thesis Advisor should forward to the PGP Chair/Co-Chairs the Synopsis along with the name, designation, area of interest, email ids and of at least eight examiners who are qualified to evaluate the Thesis. At least four of these examiners should be from leading academic/R&D institutions in India and at least four from leading academic/R&D institutions from outside the country. From this list as well as other examiners qualified to evaluate the thesis, the PGP Chair/Co-Chairs should obtain the consent of one examiner from India and one examiner from outside the country who will evaluate the thesis.

### **6.2. Thesis Submission & Evaluation**

The doctoral candidate should submit the Ph.D. Thesis to the Doctoral Committee. After approval by the Doctoral Committee, the Thesis Advisor forwards the Ph.D. Thesis to the PGP Chair/Co-Chairs who will send it to the external examiners. The Thesis Advisor and Co-Advisor are also invited to provide a formal evaluation of the thesis.

Each examiner can give one of three recommendations: (i) Accept, (ii) Accept with Modifications, or (iii) Reject. If neither of the external examiners recommends a Reject, the candidate is permitted to proceed to the Thesis Defence. If only one of the external examiners recommends a Reject, the thesis is sent to additional external examiner whose evaluation decides whether or not the candidate is permitted to proceed with the Thesis Defence. Prior to the Defence, the candidate must submit a revised Thesis taking into account the comments and suggestions made by all examiners.

If both external examiners recommend a Reject, the candidate is allowed to resubmit the thesis incorporating the suggestions of the external examiners. After resubmission, if both external examiners reject the thesis, then the student is given the MPhil degree.



### **6.3. Thesis Defence and Final Recommendation**

The Thesis Defence is a public presentation made by the doctoral candidate on the research reported in the thesis. The date, time, venue and title of the defence should be announced widely and well in advance to enable all interested parties to attend. The Thesis Defence Committee, which includes at least one external examiner and the doctoral committee members, must be present at the defence.

The public defence will be followed by an in-camera (closed-door) oral examination during which the candidate is required to answer queries raised by the thesis examiners. For this purpose, all examiners' reports will be made available to all members of the Thesis Defence Committee, who may cover the general background of the subject in the light of the requirements for the thesis. Where part of the work has been undertaken jointly with others, the examiners should satisfy themselves as to the adequacy of the candidate's own contribution.

If the candidate passes the oral examination, the Thesis Defence Committee shall consolidate the recommendation for the award of the Ph.D. Degree based on the report of the examiners who evaluated the thesis as well as an evaluation of the candidate's performance in the oral examination. The doctoral committee forwards the consolidated recommendation to the PGP Chair/Co-Chairs who forwards the same to the PGP Dean with the required enclosures. The required enclosures should be specified by the office of PGP Dean. The PGP Dean forwards the final recommendation to the vice Chancellor for his approval. After the vice Chancellor's approval, the registrar issues the Provisional Certificate.

## **7. PROGRESS**

### **7.1. Reviews & Reports**

The doctoral student shall submit half-yearly reports to the Doctoral Committee who in turn will forward these reports along with their evaluation to the PGP Chair/Co-Chairs. The Office of the PGP Chair/Co-Chairs will maintain the format of the progress report.

The PGP Chair/Co-Chairs may conduct periodic reviews of all doctoral students, especially those who are not making satisfactory progress, in a meeting with their Thesis Advisors and selected additional members present. Continued unsatisfactory progress, as determined by the PGP Chair/Co-Chairs, may be sufficient grounds for discontinuation of any fellowship or assistantship that has been previously awarded to the student and also dismissal from the Ph.D. Programme.

### **7.2. Proposals**

Thesis proposal should be submitted at the time of qualifying examination. Thesis Proposal is a 12-15 page document outlining the doctoral student's plan of research. It should include:

- (a) the research problem and its significance;
- (b) background and related literature;
- (c) objectives, approach, and results obtained to date;

(d) remaining research and timeline for completion;

(e) expected contributions to the field;

(f) references cited

(g) list of publications

### **7.3. Publications**

After completion of the Comprehensive Examination, every doctoral student is expected to publish at least one paper a year. These papers should be in a Scopus-indexed journal or conference proceedings. Prior to the submission of a paper to any conference or journal, a written consent should be obtained from the Chair of the Department in which the student is registered.

All publications based upon the thesis research should list the name of the Thesis Advisor and Co-Advisor, with their consent, in addition to the doctoral student's name.

Conference publications should appear in the proceedings produced by reputed international professional bodies. The PGP Chair/Co-Chairs, in consultation with the experts in the area, will decide whether the publications are of the required quality.

In order to qualify for the Ph.D. degree the student has to publish at least one paper every year after the comprehensive examination in international conference / journal out of which at least one paper in a journal with good impact factor or quality as specified by the concerned Faculty. All publications should be indexed by SCOPUS/PUBMED.

### **7.4. Residency Requirement**

Every doctoral student must fulfil a minimum residency period of one academic year in the University including the time spent on course work.

Part-time students who are employed external to the University must also fulfil the one-year residency requirement. However, this can be met through multiple visits totalling one year.

### **7.5. Duration**

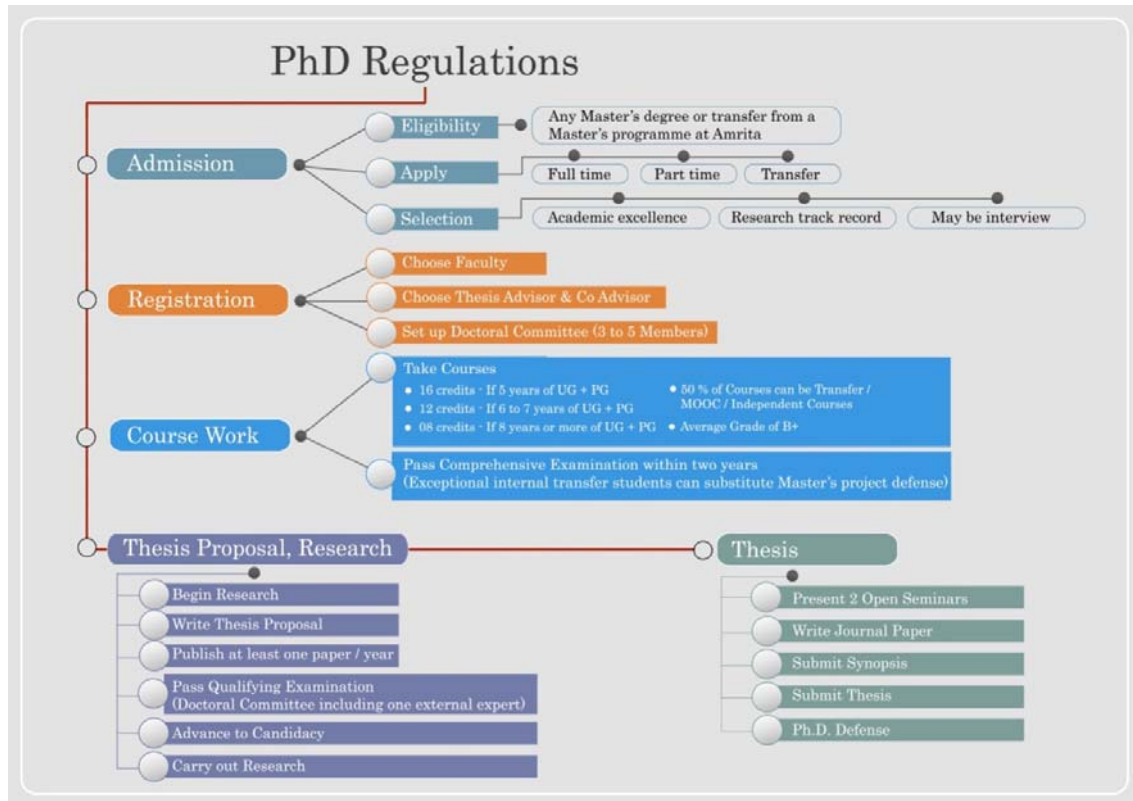
The duration for the Ph.D. depends upon the student's qualifications at the time of admission and also the category of admission.

- Full time students, the minimum duration is 3 years and maximum is 6 years
- For part-time students, the duration is between five and eight years.

### **7.6. Award of the Ph.D. Degree**

Upon approval by the vice Chancellor and subsequent ratification by the Academic Council and the Board of Management of the University, the doctoral student will be presented to the Chancellor for award of the Ph.D. Degree at the next Convocation of the University.

A doctoral student who registers and successfully completes all requirements in their Faculty will receive a PhD degree in the respective Faculty.



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