

**Pakistan Institute of Engineering & Applied Sciences**  
**Nilore, Islamabad, Pakistan**  
**Council for Graduate Studies and Research (CGSR)**  
**Rules and Regulations**

September 17, 2019  
Jan 24, 2024

**1. Eligibility for Admission**

- a Formal education of 18 years (MS or equivalent) with minimum CGPA of 3.0/4.0 in the semester system or 1st division in the annual system and for 16 years education (BS or equivalent) having minimum CGPA of 2.5/4.0 in semester system or 1<sup>st</sup> division in annual system.
- b The students, with MBBS background, having strong demonstrated interest in obtaining PhD degree, but their CGPA is below 3.00 (out of 4.0 in the semester system) or 60% marks (in the annual system) in MPhil/MS (most recent degree obtained), may be admitted to a relevant PhD program after fulfilling the following requirements:
  - i. Shall study additional/deficiency courses of 9-12 CH of level 6 and score minimum 3.00 out of 4.00 GPA,
  - ii. The admission committee is satisfied that the applicant's knowledge of primary area (level 6) has sufficiently prepared him or her to undertake the course of studies of the doctoral program.
  - iii. These requirements shall be in addition to any other requirements set in this policy for admission to a PhD program.
- c GRE (General/Subject) 60 percentile, or GAT/HAT (General/Subject) 60 percent or University Equivalent Test (Subject for which GAT and GRE are unavailable) 60 percent. For discipline change, Subject test in the discipline of admission with minimum 50% score will be required.
- d Any additional requirements of HEC as adopted by PIEAS.

**2. Admission Procedure**

- a A candidate desirous of seeking admission to PhD program shall apply on the prescribed form to the Registrar.

All applications shall be forwarded to the concerned departments by the Registrar.

The department will scrutinize the application for the eligibility.

- b The HoD will propose relevant faculty members for the interview Admission Committee to be constituted by the Dean (Research). The Admission Committee will be convened by the Dean of the concerned faculty. The candidate has to submit the following:

**Statement of Purpose**

As part of the application for admission 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 sub-speciality 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.

The interview Admission Committee shall evaluate the eligible candidates and forward its recommendation to the Dean (Research) through HoD.

- c Dean (Research) will approve the admission on recommendation of Admission Committee and forward the case to Registrar.
- d Registrar will give an offer of admission valid for one year.
- e **Joining PhD Program:**
  - i. The student shall report to the concerned HoD and submit the required joining proforma. HoD will forward the joining proforma to Registrar. The copies of original application, joining report and all the documents will be forwarded by Registrar to concerned sections in R&E division, Dean (Research) Office and HoD to maintain their record and proceed further.
  - ii. Registrar office will notify the joining after all the required documents have been submitted by the student to the registrar office.

- iii. Copies of the joining report will be sent to all concerned including supervisor, Controller of Examinations, Head of Department, funding agency, security, accounts etc.,
- iv. Registrar office will send student's admission file to Dean (Research) for further processing. (SOP)

**3 PhD Supervisory Committee:**

- a HoD will notify a PhD Supervisory Committee comprising supervisor, co-supervisor and two experts of the area identified by the supervisor. The meetings of the PhD Supervisory Committee will be convened by the supervisor for consultations.
- b Copies of the notification will be sent to all members of PhD Supervisory Committee, concerned Dean and Dean (Research).

**4 Program of Studies**

- a The study period of PhD program shall be counted from the date of joining PhD studies till the submission of copies of the final thesis to Dean (Research) office after incorporating all the suggested changes pointed out by the internal examiners.
- b The minimum period for PhD thesis submission for evaluation is two and half year.
- c The minimum period for the completion of PhD studies shall be three years whereas the maximum period shall be six years.
- d Upon recommendation of supervisor and HoD, Dean (Research) may extend the maximum period by one year.
- e On the recommendation of BoS, an extension up to another one-year may be granted by the CGSR.
- f Student's plan of study recommended by the BoS will be submitted to the Dean (Research) within three months after joining. The plan of study shall include Area of Research and Courses to be studied.
- g The course work comprising graduate level courses of 18 Credit Hours with minimum CGPA of 3.0 shall be required. All the 18 CrHr courses shall be offered through regular classes.

- h All PhD students shall be required to register in each regular semester at PIEAS for a minimum of 9 Credit Hours and for minimum 3 Credit Hours in summer session.
- i Failure to register in any semester may result in cancellation of PhD registration.
- j For a student registered in research, progress report (on a prescribed proforma) shall be evaluated by the supervisor at the end of each semester as Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory and communicated to Dean (Research) with a copy to Controller of Examinations.
- k All the departments shall declare at least four core courses through respective Board of Studies for each program. These courses will be passed by the students who are changing their major discipline.
- l The students are required to pass any deficiency courses recommended by the Admission Committee. These courses shall be mentioned in the plan of study as core courses or recommended courses.
- m Each PhD student is required to take her / his course work and qualifying examinations during the first two years of her / his PhD study period.
- n In extraordinary cases, Dean (Research) may extend the period up to one year. Such requests shall be recommended by the concerned supervisor and forwarded through HoD.
- o Rules & Regulations for MS courses / thesis research registrations will be implemented to all PhD students unless otherwise mentioned explicitly.
- p A PhD student may be allowed course credit hours transfer to be decided by the interview committee at the time of admission.
- q A maximum of 9 credit hours completed as PhD courses in an HEC recognized university can be transferred.
- r Courses passed with GP 3.0 or more out of 4 can only be considered for transfer.

## **5. Semester Freeze**

A student can freeze one or more semesters provided that she / he is expected to complete PhD during the stipulated time. The semester freeze shall be subjected to the following conditions:

- i. The student has a valid reason for it.
- ii. The student should submit an application to the concerned Head of Department through her/his supervisor.
- iii. Head of Department shall forward the case with her/his comments/recommendations to the Dean (Research).
- iv. For the request of freezing more than one semester, a committee comprising Supervisor, HoD and Concerned Dean will review the request and send its recommendation to the Dean (Research).
- v. Freeze semester period will be counted towards the maximum study period. However, the freeze semester will not be counted towards the minimum period required for the award of PhD degree.
- vi. The office of Dean (Research) shall notify to all concerned.
- vii. In the transcript, it will be indicated as "Semester Freeze".

## 6 **Passing Criteria:**

- i. A PhD student registered for a minimum of 9 credit hours of course work in a semester and obtaining a semester GPA of less than 1.0 shall be declared Fail and her / his registration shall be cancelled.
- ii. A minimum grade point (GP) of 2.0 is required to pass a course.
- iii. Student can repeat a course only twice.

## 7 **Qualifying Examinations**

A PhD student shall be required to pass Comprehensive Qualifying Examination (CQE) and Subject Qualifying Examination (SQE). The details are as follows:

- i. The CQE shall be based on the PhD courses (18 credit-hour) approved in the plan of study.
- ii. The exam shall be conducted twice a year (if required) and a student has to qualify it within one year after completion of PhD courses.
- iii. The mode of examination shall be comprehensive written test.

- iv. Overall 60% marks shall be required to qualify the CQE. The evaluation shall be on an aggregate basis, expressed in terms of pass/fail and shall not be graded.
- v. If a student does not pass this examination in first attempt, then she / he may be given one more chance.
- vi. The registration of a PhD student shall be deemed as cancelled if she / he fails to qualify this examination in two attempts.
- vii. The paper for the CQE will be prepared and checked by the concerned department, the HoD will appoint a committee within the department for this purpose.
- viii. The result alongwith details (date-sheet, question paper and the answer sheets) for this examination shall be submitted to the office of Dean (Research) by the concerned HoD.
- ix. Office of Dean (Research) shall notify the result of CQE.

After passing the CQE, the student shall appear in Subject Qualifying Examination (SQE) which is meant to assess the approach of tackling research problems. The following procedure shall be followed:

- i. The mode of examination is presentation of proposed PhD research before a committee appointed by the HoD comprising two examiners and PhD Supervisory Committee.
- ii. The grading shall be either pass or fail. If the student does not pass this examination in first attempt, she / he may be given one more chance.
- iii. The registration of a PhD student shall be deemed as cancelled if she / he does not pass this examination in two attempts.
- iv. Results for each student will be submitted to Dean (Research) in the prescribed proforma.
- v. Office of Dean (Research) shall notify SQE results submitted by HoD.

## **8 Failure / Probation in Research Work**

- i) A PhD student registered in research shall be required to maintain 'Satisfactory' Grade throughout her / his study period.
- ii) A PhD Student obtaining an 'Unsatisfactory' result at the end of any semester in research will be placed on probation.
- iii) A PhD Student obtaining two consecutive 'Unsatisfactory' results or three total 'Unsatisfactory' in research will cease to be a PhD student

9 After passing the qualifying examination, the student is required to give at least two seminars on her/his thesis topic of research, preferably one during third year and second just before submission of the thesis. Notifications of these seminars need to be circulated to all interested and copies be sent to all Deans, Pro-Rector and Rector.

10 **PIEAS and Constituent Institutes/College**

i) Students of PIEAS and Constituent Institutes/College shall mention Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences (PIEAS), Islamabad as an address (affiliation) in their research papers even if these are submitted / accepted after completion of PhD if the work is relevant to PhD research.

ii) The scholar will submit the paper through her/his supervisor.

11 i) Before submission of thesis for evaluation, at least one research paper shall be required as published / accepted in Scientific Information (ISI) Indexed non-zero impact factor Journal.

ii) Only those papers shall be counted in which the students is the 1<sup>st</sup> author, or a 2<sup>nd</sup> author if the first author is her / his PhD supervisor.

12. **Option of MS / MPhil**

A student cannot continue as a registered PhD student in any of the following circumstances:

i) She / he is unable to obtain a minimum CGPA 3.0 out of 4.0 in the PhD course work after availing two chances of grade improvement.

ii) She / he fails twice in either CQE or SQE.

iii) Without any valid reason, she / he does not appear in the qualifying examination within 24 months from the date of joining.

iv) She / he obtains two consecutive UNSATISFACTORY results in research / dissertation course (XXX699)

v) She / he obtains in total three UNSATISFACTORY results in research / dissertation course (XXX699).

13. **Thesis Submission, Evaluation, Defence and the Award of PhD Degree**

a **Thesis submission**

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

- ii. Upon completion of all PhD study / research requirements, the candidate shall submit to Dean (Research), through HoD, one hard-bound copy and one soft copy (pdf format) of the thesis on a CD along with an application form duly approved by her / his PhD Supervisor / co-supervisor for the evaluation of her / his thesis. Dean (Research) may forward the hard copy and send soft copy by email to the CoE.
- iii. Thesis for the PhD degree must form a distinct contribution to knowledge and afford evidence of originality either by the discovery/revelation of new facts. It must also not include the work for which a degree has already been conferred upon the candidate or someone else.
- iv. For any part of the thesis that may have been published before the final submission of the thesis (as 1st or 2nd author), a list of publications must be appended with the thesis.
- v. It must be written in English language and the writing quality of the dissertation must be at par with the standards of publications in a peer-reviewed ISI indexed journal.
- vi. The thesis must be formatted and bound in accordance with the specifications mentioned in the most recent version of Thesis Guidelines

**b Thesis evaluation by reviewers from advanced countries**

a. The PhD dissertation must be evaluated by:

1) 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 any Pakistani University having a minimum H-Index 30 for Sciences.

OR

- iii. At least one external expert qualifying any one of the conditions mentioned at 'i' above if the PhD candidate publishes dissertation research in a peer-reviewed journal that is classified by the HEC in category W for Sciences.

b. The following general guidelines shall, at least, be observed while selecting external evaluator:

- i. Relevance of Expertise: in the same or related fields as in the dissertation.

- ii. No Conflict of Interest: in personal, financial, or professional stakes in a particular decision or outcome.
  - iii. Objectivity: capable of making unbiased evaluations.
  - iv. Diversity: in terms of geography, culture, professional backgrounds etc.
  - v. Reputation: must be good in the field, with a track record of fair and thorough evaluations.
  - vi. Availability: should have the time and availability to review the dissertation.
  - vii. Professionalism: capable of conducting themselves in a professional and respectful manner throughout the evaluation and defense process (if applicable).
  - viii. Communication: capable of providing clear and constructive feedback on the dissertation.
  - ix. Confidentiality: capable of maintaining confidentiality and protecting the intellectual property of the dissertation.
  - x. Compatibility: well-versed with the research methodology, approach, and theories used in the dissertation.
- c. The Rector shall appoint a panel of external reviewers on the recommendations of the HoD and supervisor from the comprehensive list of reviewers approved by CGSR. This panel will include three external reviewers, from technologically / academically advanced countries approved by HEC.
- d. Controller of Examination will send the thesis to the approved reviewers by e-mail with the request of thesis evaluation within a period of six weeks. A copy of the letter shall also be forwarded to Dean (Research).
- e. Each reviewer in the panel will assign one of the three categories to the thesis given below. The reviewer will also be required to provide a detailed evaluation and critique of the thesis on the prescribed pro forma
- Satisfactory (S): The thesis meets the degree requirements in scope, contribution to knowledge and research methodology. Some minor improvements in one or more of the following may also be suggested: presentation and analysis of results, layout and quality of writing
  - Major Revision Required (M): Thesis requires major changes. (Detailed comments would be attached)

- Unsatisfactory (U): The thesis does not satisfy the expectations and requirements of a PhD degree. (Reasons would be cited)
- f. CoE will receive the evaluation report and forward it to Dean (Research) and concerned HoD/Director of Constituent Institute/College for further processing.
- g. Dean (Research) shall send a hard copy of the evaluation reports to the relevant HoD / Director of the Constituent Institute/College, who will communicate to the supervisor and the co-supervisor.

**14. The following table describes the action in response to thesis evaluation reports:**

S.No.	No. of Received Reports	Evaluation	Action
13.b.a.1.iii	Only one reports have been received after six weeks	S	Schedule the PhD Defense
		M, U	Proceed to get the second report as per defined procedure
13.b.a.1.i, 13.b.a.1.ii	Only two reports have been received after six weeks	SS	Schedule the PhD Defense
		SM, SU, MM, MU	Proceed to get the third report as per defined procedure
		UU	Declare failure
13.b.a.1.i, 13.b.a.1.ii	Three reports have been received	SSS	Schedule the PhD Defence
		SSM, SSU	Schedule the defense with the suggestion to include or incorporate the suggestions of the third examiner with the recommendations of supervisory committee
		SMM, SMU, MMU, MMM	Review of the comments by the supervisory committee to incorporate the suggestions.

			<b>Resubmission of the revised thesis in the time allowed by supervisory committee, not exceeding one year.</b> <b>Re-evaluation of the revised thesis afresh.</b>
		<b>SUU, MUU, UUU</b>	<b>Declare failure</b>

- i. In case, an external reviewer does not respond within six weeks, and two satisfactory reports have been received, the student will be allowed to defend her / his thesis in front of the panel of thesis examiners.
- ii. In case two or more evaluation reports are not received within a period of three months, the procedure from Clause 13.b will be repeated for appointing new reviewer(s).
- iii. Dean Research office shall keep track of the reports received. In case of a delay of more than six weeks, Dean (Research), shall initiate a request to the Controller of Examinations (PIEAS) for a reminder of the evaluations.
- iv. Only Controller of Examinations (PIEAS) will be authorized to communicate with the examiner as regards to thesis being examined. Controller of Examinations will keep Dean (Research) in the loop.

## 15. Thesis Defense

Rector PIEAS will appoint a panel of thesis examiners which will include the supervisor, co-supervisor (if any), HoD, Dean (Research) and at least two PhD experts from the comprehensive list of examiners approved by CGSR. These examiners will review the thesis before defense.

The defense will be in the form of oral presentation in an open gathering, followed by a detailed meeting of the panel to examine the student with the queries on the thesis. The decision of the panel shall be based on majority.

If the candidate fails to satisfy the examiners in the thesis defense examination, the panel of thesis examiners may require the candidate to defend the thesis for second and the last chance within a period of six months.

For successful defense with minor changes, the student shall incorporate all the suggestions and shall submit to Dean (Research) through the supervisor and Head of the Department a point by point summary of the changes incorporated in the thesis along with one hardbound copies of the thesis

Two CDs/DVDs containing soft copies of the thesis and abstract in pdf format shall also be provided to the office of Dean (Research).

The notification of the award of PhD degree shall be issued after all the administrative formalities / requirements have been completed for the degree. The Dean (Research) shall initiate the case through Rector, PIEAS for the final notification

#### 16. **Miscellaneous Issues**

A pool of foreign and local (Pakistani) examiners / reviewers will be maintained by Dean (Research) office. These examiners will be approved by CGSR after the recommendations of BoS. However, the PIEAS faculty with University Faculty Designation of Associate Professor and above will be regular members of this pool.

**Supervisor:** shall be a regular faculty member of PIEAS.

**Supervision Duration:** Supervision duration of a PhD student shall be counted till the submission of final thesis after PhD Defence.

Change of supervisor and co-supervisor may be allowed with the approval of Dean (Research) within first two years of the PhD studies.

**Option for MS:** When a student registered for PhD is unable or not willing to continue but completed the minimum requirements of MS from PIEAS then she / he may opt for MS from PIEAS. Concerned department will submit the case to Dean (Research) for approval.

#### **Policy for Similarity Index:**

The PhD Student will submit two copies in *pdf* format (i) complete thesis ready to print (ii) selected pages from 'Abstract' to 'Reference' (references are excluded) on CD/DVD.

The scholar shall also provide a list of her/his publication in a separate file, especially the publications which are the part of the thesis.

Only those publications will be excluded from similarity index in which the scholar is first author or second author in case supervisor is the first author.

The thesis will be accepted only when both similarity index based on Turniton is less than 19% and individual source is less than 5% or as per HEC policy.

***IRSIP Policy***

It is approved by CGSR and attached as Annex 1.

***Any Other Matter:***

- a. The student, supervisor and co-supervisor will ensure that the rules are followed and the time limit is met.
- b. The copy rights for thesis and its material will be reserved for PIEAS.
- c. The results obtained during PhD studies will remain the intellectual property of PIEAS and the Constituent Institute/College.
- d. Intellectual rights of all the stake holders including student, supervisor(s), and collaborators in research will be protected by the supervisor. Any unresolved conflict of interest may be referred to *PIEAS Plagiarism Standing Committee* with necessary material/evidence for its ruling that will be final.

## 16. GOVERNING THE SYSTEMS OF DOCTORAL RESEARCH

### GOVERNING THE RESEARCH SUPERVISION

#### 16.1 Principles and Purposes

To inculcate a research culture to produce high-quality research, policies and procedures governing the overall system of research guidelines are as follows:

#### 16.2 Supervision of Doctoral Dissertation

##### 16.2.1 General Conditions to Supervise Doctoral Research

The following general guidelines shall, be observed while allocating a PhD supervisor. At the time of supervisor allocation, the supervisors:

- i Shall be a Ph.D. degree holder complying with the criteria and standards provided in this policy.
- ii Must be relevant to the field of research in which the student intends to conduct research.
- iii Should have NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST in personal, financial, or professional stakes.
- iv Should have the time and availability to supervise PhD dissertation and give clear and constructive feedback.
- v Should be capable of conducting themselves professionally and respectfully throughout the supervision process.
- vi Should be capable of maintaining confidentiality and protecting the intellectual property of the dissertation.
- vii Should, primarily, be a regular faculty member of PIEAS/Constituent College of PIEAS.

In addition to the aforementioned guidelines:

- viii The research supervisor shall be allocated to a doctoral student from the date of enrollment.
- ix The supervisory workload of research supervisors should be determined based on the nature of the institution, the availability of teaching and research facilities, and the academic standing of supervisors. However, it is mandated that the maximum supervisory load shall not exceed five PhD students, simultaneously. Further, fresh PhDs can supervise MS/MPhil and co-supervise PhD students, while a PhD faculty member, after two years of obtaining a PhD degree, can supervise one PhD student in 3rd year, two PhD students in 4th year and maximum up to 5 PhD students from 5th year onward, subject to fulfillment of other conditions provided in this policy.
- x PIEAS Space Committee shall allocate supervision/research space to the doctoral students.
- xi PhD research work completed under supervision is a shared 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.
- xii The guidelines for PhD supervision should be followed in letter and spirit, as prescribed in this policy.

##### 16.2.2 Criteria to Be a PhD Supervisor

To be a PhD research supervisor, an individual shall meet the following requirements:

#### i. General Requirements:

- a. A PhD degree holder from an HEC recognized national/international university/degree awarding institute (DAI).
- b. The research supervisor shall be given opportunities to attend and qualify course(s) on MS/MPhil/PhD Supervision which should also have contents on research ethics, publications, patents, etc. Such courses may include certified self-paced MOOCS, or a course designed/offered by National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE) or by a university in the following manner:
  - i. Basic level course: to supervise students of MS/MPhil/equivalent degrees.
  - ii. Advance level course: to supervise PhD researchers.
- c. A regular faculty member of PIEAS.

ii. **Publication Requirements:**

A. **Specific Requirements for Science and Technology:**

- a. Within the last 3 years after PhD: at least one research publication in W category journal. OR
- b. Within last 5 years after PhD: at least five research publications in X category journal.

**16.2.3 Supervisory Process**

To guide the supervisory process of doctoral dissertation towards the desired goals, Dean Research shall:

- a. devise a supervision manual and ensure its implementation, and
- b. Constitute a Ph.D. Supervisory Committee for each individual doctoral student.

The research supervision manual shall elaborate the following areas to guide the supervisory process:

- i Description of roles of supervisor & supervisee
- ii Prescription of supervision timespan
- iii Guidance about preparation for best supervision
- iv Guidance to discuss questions and problems with constructive comments by observing the elements of mutual respect.
- v Guidance on setting reasonable amount of work and receiving constructive feedback.
- vi Directions for supervision as per the social norms
- vii Provision of tentative timetable and schedule of meetings
- viii Provision of proformas/registers showing meetings and research records etc.
- ix Provision of grievances policy

ii. Recommended composition of Ph.D. Supervisory Committee, for each doctoral researcher, to supervise the doctoral research:

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| a. Supervisor                             | Convener |
| b. Co-supervisor (if any)                 | Member   |
| c. Two Experts from the field of research | Member   |

**16.3 Council for Graduate Studies and Research (CGSR)**

- i Dean Research: Overall responsible for all matters relating to the PhD admission and conduct of PhD research in PIEAS Main Campus and its constituent colleges as per the admission policy,
- ii CGSR: All matters related to PhD studies shall be approved by the council, unless otherwise delegated to Dean Research. Dear Research will be the Secretary of CGSR and will make sure that at least 4 meetings of CGSR are held in a year. The CGSR shall monitor and ensure that thesis/dissertation is progressing in accordance with the time prescribed with PIEAS PhD Rules. It includes, but is not limited to, the timely approval of the research synopsis, evaluation of the research thesis/dissertation in accordance with the HEC guidelines as well as its submission, and finally the conduct of open defense.
- iii Dean Research Office: Dean Research will be assisted by Dean Research Office to maintain record of all PhD Scholars.

**16.4 Teaching Assistantships and Research Assistantships:**

The university departments may offer Teaching and Research Assistantships to outstanding PhD enrolled students at various stages of their enrollment.

- i Teaching assistantship provides an opportunity to PhD students to assist professors in preparing teaching and research materials for groups of students enrolled in their classes.
- ii Research assistantships are paid fellowship stipends for outstanding research scholars for assisting a professor, who pays the research assistant out of the research grant s/he has received. The stipend varies based on the level of effort and budget available to the Principal Investigator.

## **16.5 PRACTICING THE ACADEMIC RESEARCH ETHICS**

### **16.5.1 Principles and Purposes**

The International Center for Academic Integrity<sup>16</sup> (2022) defines Academic Integrity as “*commitment, even in the face of adversity, to six fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage. From these values flow principles of behavior that enable academic communities to translate ideals into action.*” Thus, the main purpose of this section is to guide academics on how to put these core values into practice at PIEAS, so that academic communities can be protected by preventing academic misconduct. However, it may be noted that these guidelines are not binding, but rather prescriptive in nature. In this regard, the main regulatory framework to prevent academic misconduct lies with the Anti-Plagiarism policy issued by the Higher Education Commission, Pakistan.

### **16.5.2 Guidelines to Ensure Academic Research Integrity:**

To inculcate a culture of academic integrity, PIEAS shall:

- i Develop/adopt/adapt and regularly publicize policies promoting academic integrity and dealing with allegations of academic misconduct.
- ii Develop procedures to prevent foreseeable risks to academic and research integrity.
- iii Strengthen the system governing the conduct of doctoral research.
- iv All governing bodies must ensure that the occurrence of academic misconduct and breaches are monitored, and action taken to document and address the underlying cause.

## 17. QUALITY ASSURANCE

This section prescribes minimum standards/guidelines for launch of new programs at the graduate level. In this section, it requires universities to provide evidence of compliance with these standards/guidelines to obtain approval from the HEC before starting the graduate programs. The purpose of this policy is that only those universities should start graduate programs that have the necessary faculty and infrastructure resources to impart education at the highest level in the discipline. The Quality Assurance Agency (HEC) shall validate the implementation of these standards/guidelines prescribed in Part-I and Part-II as well as mentioned hereafter through its QA Framework:

### 17.1 Minimum Requirement for Academic HR

#### 17.1.1 Faculty and supervisory requirement

- a. At least two (2) full time faculty members holding PhD degrees in the relevant field shall be available/appointed to the department to launch an MS/MPhil/Equivalent program that may be increased up to three (3) if a PhD program is also to be launched in the same discipline and department<sup>20</sup>.
- b. The minimum appointment tenure for full-time faculty members must not be less than the duration of the intended degree program.
- c. The teacher to student ratio shall be 1:12, where a supervisor can supervise a total of twelve (12) MS/MPhil/PhD students at a time with no more than five (5) of these students being PhD students. Graduate teaching and supervision load shall be adjusted, accordingly.

#### 17.1.2 Determining relevance of faculty with subject/degree program

- a. Wherever required, the subject and supervisory relevance of faculty members shall be determined based on:
  - i. Qualifications including bachelor, master, and doctoral degrees.
  - ii. The research includes thesis/dissertation and published articles.
  - iii. Experience consisting of teaching and administrative domains.
- b. To ascertain the relevance of the faculty in the related discipline to the program and supervision of theses, the university shall:
  - i. constitute a Relevance Assessment Committee (RAC)/equivalent body, with the approval of the Vice Chancellor/Rector/Head of the HEI.
  - ii. The RAC shall consist of at least five (5) members:
    - a) Dean Research
    - b) Respective Dean of the university
    - c) Director QEC of the university
    - d) Two External subject expert not less than a Professor /Associate Professor level
    - e) Program Team/Assessment Team member who was involved in preparing self-assessment report of the program.
- c) The RAC shall submit a report with detailed reasons and rationale for the assessment decision.
- d) The Report shall be effective with the approval of CGSR.

### 17.2 NOC Requirements for Launching Graduate Programs

#### 17.2.1 Classification-based application of NOC requirement

- a. Effective from the enactment date of this policy, PIEAS being a top-ranked university need NOT obtain the No Objection Certificate (NOC) from HEC, provided that PIEAS has not violated the HEC's rules, regulations or policies in any material respect in the last two years, unless and until, found

violating the HEC's rules/regulations/policies, shall be included in the lower category and may be dealt with in accordance with the HEC's policy for violation of rules.

- b. All the universities/DAIs/HEIs enlisted in the categories below the top category must obtain NOC, prior to the launch of any graduate program, adhering to the following timelines:
  - i. Graduate Programs Launched After November 7, 2013:  
For any graduate program launched before November 7, 2013, universities shall be required to ensure compliance with this policy. HEC shall ensure compliance systematically by applying an approved quality assurance mechanism.
  - ii. Any graduate program started after November 7, 2013, without getting an NOC from the HEC, shall not be recognized, and degrees awarded by such programs shall not be attested by the HEC.
- c. The lower-category universities/DAIs/HEIs that have taken adequate and timely remedial measures to rectify the deficiencies/violations and have demonstrated an ability of sustainable compliance with the HEC's requirements may be included in the top category at the sole discretion of HEC.
- d. Similarly, the top category universities may also be demoted to lower category where such universities have been found violating HEC's requirements within the past two years. For this purpose, the under-observation universities/DAIs/HEIs must take adequate and timely remedial measures to rectify violations.
- e. The lowest category (Unclassified/Ineffective) universities shall not be allowed to launch more than two (2) PhD programs in a single year.
- f. The Higher Education Commission shall issue lists of universities that are categorized in the aforementioned terms.
- g. The universities/DAIs/HEIs, which are found violating the HEC's rules/regulations/policies, shall be dealt with in accordance with the HEC's policy.

### **17.2.2 Process and timelines for obtaining an NOC to launch graduate programs**

The process and timeline for requesting NOCs to launch graduate programs shall be as follows:

- a. Universities intending to launch a new graduate program shall submit a prescribed dossier, duly signed by the Dean, Registrar, Director Quality Enhancement, and head of the relevant university, who shall certify the correctness of the information provided and shall ensure that all required documents are attached to the application dossier.
- b. Universities shall apply for the NOC, before launching any new graduate programs, and no admissions shall be advertised unless the NOC has been obtained from the HEC.
- c. Universities requesting NOCs to launch graduate programs in the fall semester shall apply no later than March 31 of the same year.
- d. Universities requesting NOCs to launch a graduate program in the spring semester, shall apply no later than September 30 of the last year.
- e. The HEC may, at its discretion, require an external review or zero visit in connection with the launch of graduate programs by a university. a. The university shall ensure that it will continue to comply with the requirements set in this policy during the entire period in which it offers the graduate program.
- f. If an ongoing program fails to meet any of the requirements set in this policy, the university shall immediately stop further admissions to the program and notify the HEC, including providing information on remedial actions being taken.

### **17.2.3 Continuing compliance with the HEC's policies**

If a university's application for launching a graduate program is successful, it shall be granted an NOC to start the program. Upon receiving NOC from the HEC, the university may launch the program subject to the following conditions:

**17.2.4 Cancellation of NOC and/or demotion to the lower category**

If a graduate program fails to meet the requirements set in this policy, HEC may:

- a. Stop all activities of the program for six months to compensate for the deficiencies, save exceptions mentioned at clause 7.2.4(c.iv).
- b. Further intake may be stopped if deficiencies are not fulfilled within six (6) months of the date of the review report.
- c. In case the major deficiencies are not fulfilled even one year after the date of review report, HEC may take the following actions:
  - i. The university may be demoted to lower categories (if applicable), and
  - ii. NOC of the deficient graduate program may be cancelled; and/or
  - iii. Further, NOC for the under-consideration program may be banned for at least two years.
  - iv. In case a program is stopped, or NOC is cancelled, the students who are at an advanced stage i.e., have passed Comprehensive Examinations and their research synopses have been notified by the Directorate of Advance Studies (or equivalent department), may be allowed to continue with their research if research supervisors are available. However, those who are yet to pass a comprehensive exam may stop or be allowed to quit or shift to another university at the risk and cost of the parent university.
- d. The officers responsible for the cancellation of the NOC shall be subject to dealing under the retributive action policy.

**17.3 Retributive Actions for violation of rules**

In addition to the aforementioned, the following<sup>22</sup> retributive actions shall also be applicable in case the rules and regulations mentioned in this policy are violated:

Sr.	Quality Parameter	Nature of Violation <sup>23</sup>	Proposed Action(s) if Existing Policy is Violated
i	Admission Criteria	Violation of admission criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Admission be cancelled.</li> <li>ii. University to return three times the amount received from students.</li> <li>iii. Disciplinary action against responsible staff.</li> </ul>
	Illegal Admission	Admission of students without NOC from HEC	
iii	Course Work	Degree awarded without fulfilling the minimum credit hours requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The degree shall be considered equivalent to the MS/MPhil/Equivalent degree.</li> <li>ii. Disciplinary action against Department Chair and relevant staff.</li> </ul>
iv	Comprehensive Examination	Failure to pass Comprehensive Examination within the prescribed number of attempts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Termination of PhD candidature/registration of student.</li> </ul>
v	Supervision of dissertation	Supervision of a PhD dissertation by a person who does not fulfil the minimum criteria for a PhD supervisor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Disciplinary action against the Department Chair</li> </ul>

vii	Maximum number of Supervisee	A supervisor, supervising PhD students beyond the maximum number specified by the HEC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The supervisor shall be banned from supervising new PhD researchers for a maximum of five (5) years.</li> <li>ii. Disciplinary action against the Department Chair.</li> </ul>
viii	External Evaluation of PhD dissertation	The external evaluation of a thesis is not in accordance with the prescribed criteria of HEC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. One additional paper shall be published by the student from his/her dissertation before degree attestation.</li> <li>ii. Disciplinary action against Department Chair and officer(s) responsible for sending dissertations for external evaluation.</li> </ul>
		Unjustified delay in sending dissertation for external evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Officer(s) responsible for sending dissertations for external evaluation shall be warned.</li> </ul>
ix	Relevance	The dissertation has no relevancy to the Title and Scope of the degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Supervisor shall be banned from supervising new PhD researchers for a maximum of five (5) years.</li> <li>ii. Disciplinary action against Department Chair.</li> </ul>
x	Research Publication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i No research papers were published but a degree was awarded.</li> <li>ii Papers published but not in HEC's recognized journal.</li> <li>iii Papers published but not in the required category of journals.</li> <li>iv Paper published after the award of a PhD degree.</li> <li>v Degree awarded based on a paper published before the approval of the PhD research synopsis.</li> <li>vi Degree awarded based on a paper that has no relevance to the dissertation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Paper to be published in the required category of the HEC recognized journal before attestation of degree.</li> <li>ii. Supervisor be banned from supervising the new PhD researchers for maximum 05 years.</li> <li>iii. Disciplinary action against the Department Chair and the relevant staff of the Controller of Examinations.</li> </ul>

xii	Plagiarism	Degree awarded, and major or minor plagiarism found in the thesis at any stage in the future.	i. The PhD researcher/degree holder and his supervisor will be penalized as per the provisions of the Anti-Plagiarism Policy of the HEC.
xiii	Degree Issued in Violation of University's Own Rules / Law	Degree issued in violation of the university's PhD Policy/rules in addition to HEC guidelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i Supervisor be banned from supervising the new PhD researchers for a maximum of 05 years.</li> <li>ii Disciplinary action against the Department Chair and the Controller of Examination.</li> </ul>
xiv	Poor Governance System of the Doctoral Research	Absence of the systems elaborated in Part-II of this policy i.e., Governing the Systems of Doctoral Research	i. In addition to the actions mentioned in clause "Cancellation of NOC and/or demotion to the lower category", disciplinary actions shall be taken against the relevant officers/heads of the Directorate of Advanced Studies and Research/Equivalent Body, Quality Assurance/Equivalent Body, Controller of Examinations etc., if applicable.

#### **17.4 Requirements for Entering PhD Country Directory (PCD)**

For inclusion in PCD, graduates and universities/HEIs/DAs are required to submit an online application following the prescribed procedure.

**Policy for PhD Students Availing HEC's IRSIP Program or Equivalent Program**

1. A PhD student with consent of his/her supervisor can apply for IRSIP or equivalent program.
2. After getting award letter from HEC or selection in equivalent program, the student shall apply through Head of Department for approval of Rector, PIEAS with copies of the following documents:
  - a. Prescribed duly filled form for approval
  - b. Award letter of HEC or Sponsoring Organization
  - c. Acceptance letter of the university / Research Institute
3. After approval from Rector, the student shall apply for No Objection Certificate (NOC) to Dean (Research) with duly filled departure proforma.
4. On return back, the student shall provide following documents to Dean (Research) through concerned Head of Department:
  - a. Joining proforma (one prescribed form)
  - b. Copy of letter issued from the University/Research Institute regarding completion of research work.
  - c. Copy of passport
  - d. Air ticket (copy)
  - e. Research report
5. Dean (Research) shall notify the departure and arrival of the student with copy to the following:
  - a. HEC (if applicable)
  - b. Concerned Head of Department
  - c. Supervisor of the student
  - d. Concerned Student
  - e. Registrar
  - f. Controller of Examinations
  - g. Student's file
6. The time spent abroad by a student shall be included in the PhD duration of studies.
7. Regular semester registration of the student will be done even if he/she is abroad for research work. Result of the research work in the form of 'Research in Progress' will be submitted by concerned department and will be notified by Controller of Examinations.

8. For registration in a semester during stay abroad, the student will make the request via email to the Controller of Examinations with a copy to his supervisor and HoD.
9. For any extension in the approved period, the student shall apply to Rector PIEAS through supervisor, HoD and Dean Research. The office of Dean Research will notify the decision of the competent authority.
10. Any duration beyond the approved period will be treated as absent.
11. Semester registration fee shall be charged in case a student spent more than 50% time of a regular semester abroad. However, full regular semester fee shall be charged otherwise.