

## AHMEDABAD UNIVERSITY, AHMEDABAD

### DOCTORAL PROGRAMME GUIDELINES 2013

#### INTRODUCTION

Ahmedabad University proposes to commence its Doctoral programme from the current academic year. To begin with, the Doctoral programme will be introduced at Amrut Mody School of Management, Institute of Information & Communication Technology and Institute of Life Sciences. As and when the other schools under the Ahmedabad University become equipped with adequate resources, the doctoral programme would be started in those schools also.

#### OBJECTIVE

The doctoral programme at the Ahmedabad University (AU) is designed to provide both research capabilities and domain knowledge to doctoral students in various subjects. The programme aims to build competent academicians, researchers, teachers and trainers in various fields. The emphasis therefore, is on:

- (a) Admitting the best students committed to teaching and research
- (b) Offering a curriculum with an appropriate balance between theory and practice;
- (c) Enabling excellence in research by emphasizing a strong analytical approach
- (d) Inculcating the spirit of inquiry.

#### Eligibility Criteria

##### Number of available Seats

Ahmedabad University will have a pre-determined number of Ph .D students for each School per year. However, this number will be subject to the availability of faculty supervisors/ guides.

##### Publicizing availability of Seats

Such pre-determined number of seats for Ph.D. shall be notified on the University website and/ or advertisement. Admission tests shall be conducted on pre announced regular basis.

##### Eligibility and Admission Criteria

The Basic qualification criteria for the purpose of admission to Ph.D programmes shall be as under:

- The candidate must have passed the Master's Degree examination in Arts or Science or Commerce or Technology or Engineering or Management (a) with minimum of sixty per cent marks or (b) with minimum of fifty-five per cent marks in master degree provided the candidate has passed the bachelor's degree examination with at least sixty-percent marks.
- The Bachelor's and Master's degrees, or an equivalent qualification must be from Universities recognized by the Ministry of HRD, Government of India, UGC, or any University incorporated by an Act of Central or State legislature in India or other educational qualifications obtained from Institutions/Universities recognized by the MHRD/UGC/AICTE as equivalent to Bachelors or Master's degree or degrees obtained from recognized foreign universities.
- The Candidate is a teacher having full time teaching experience in Degree College/University provided he/she fulfills the condition of (a) minimum sixty per cent marks in Master's degree or (b) with minimum of fifty-five per cent marks in master's degree and the candidate has passed the bachelor's degree examination with at least sixty percent marks.

##### Explanation

- i. The candidate is eligible to register for the Ph.D. degree in any subject under the branch of study (e.g. Science/Arts/Technology etc.) from which he/she has passed the post graduate examination.
- ii. The branch of study of the teacher will be determined on the basis of the branch of study under which his/her post of teacher is approved by the appropriate authority.

- iii. The branch of study of the person qualified in NET/SET/GATE/ JRF examinations of the apex bodies in higher Technical/Professional Educational such as CSIR, UGC, ICAR or other equivalent examination will be determined on the basis of which he/she appeared for and passed the said examination.
- iv. Percentage of marks will be calculated on the basis of total marks mentioned in the statement of marks issued to the candidate by the University, even if the candidate has passed the said examination in compartments.
- v. Letter grades will be computed and provided by the university where the applicant graduated from.
- vi. A candidate who has passed the Master's degree partly by Papers and partly by Research with sixty percent marks and has obtained clearing grade in Thesis (wherever awarded) will be deemed to have obtained sufficient percentage of marks for being eligible for registration for the Ph.D. degree.

### **Procedure for Admission**

- i. Doctoral students shall be admitted through an All India Entrance test conducted at Ahmedabad University. Candidates who have qualified NET/SET/GATE/JRF examination are exempted from taking the Ahmedabad University entrance test. A separate entrance test for each School/Institute will be conducted. The said Entrance Test shall be followed by an Interview which shall be organized by the respective Schools of the University.
- ii. During interviews, doctoral candidates are expected to discuss their research interest/area.
- iii. Only pre-determined number of students will be admitted to Ph.D. programmes.

Academic administration of the doctoral programme would be done by the Doctoral Programme Committee, the details of which are given below:

### **Doctoral Programme Committee (DPC)**

The DPC will be constituted to oversee all aspects of the Ph.D. programme and to make important decisions which they are empowered to take and also to make recommendations to the Academic Council and Provost for other decisions. In all cases, the final decision making authority will be the Provost of the Ahmedabad University.

A member of the faculty who is himself/herself qualified and experienced to be a guide for a Ph.D. student, will be the Chairperson of this committee. The committee members of AU faculty must be qualified and experienced Ph.D. guides. In addition to a maximum of four internal members two external members will constitute the Doctoral Programme Committee. The external members will be experts in one or more of the subjects offered for the doctoral programme. This committee will be constituted by the Provost and approved by the Board of Management (BoM) of Ahmedabad University. The tenure of each member (both internal and external) will be three years and two members of the committee will retire each year after the first three years. The members of this committee must possess a Ph.D. and should also have a good track record of research and publications in refereed national/international journals to their credit.

The Doctoral Programme Committee (DPC) shall:

- Approve the topic of thesis or dissertation in the subject,
- Recommend panel of referees for thesis or dissertation to the Provost.
- Recommend names of thesis guide to the Provost and also the members of the thesis committee. Suggest criteria for selection of both the Thesis guide and individual members of thesis committee, to the Provost, who is the ultimate decision maker.
- Advise the Academic Council on measures to improve courses of studies at Post-graduate level.
- Recommend to the Academic Council the course-structure for Ph.D.

### **Mentor**

While the candidate pursues coursework, he/she will be allotted a mentor to help the candidate select courses for study and will provide guidance for initial research required to prepare the research proposal, additional course requirements to broaden the area of research, etc. The mentor will be allotted keeping in view the interest of the students. The mentor may be considered to be appointed as the Chairman of the Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC) of the student. at a later stage when the TAC is formed.

### **Full time and part time students**

Candidates who successfully pass the written test examination as well as personal interview will be eligible to register provisionally for the Doctoral Programme as full-time or part-time candidates.

Full time students are expected to enroll for studies and work full time for their Ph.D. They will be eligible to receive an assistantship/fellowship from the UGC/CSIR/ Ahmedabad University or any other agency recognized by the Government or any Council of Higher Education in the country. All students receiving the

assistantship/fellowship will be required to do academic work for the Ahmedabad University in the respective school/Institute considering their specialization. A maximum of 20 hours of work a week as may be prescribed by the Doctoral Committee from time to time would be sufficient. Full time students cannot receive assistantship/fellowship from more than one agency/institute. For the Ph.D. programme, they will have to pay registration fees each year. Tuition fee is payable by students only if they are registered for course work in that trimester/semester. In addition, Registration fee will be payable every year till the candidate completes all requirements for award of the degree.

Both the tuition fee and the registration fee will be prescribed by the Board of Management of Ahmedabad University.

Part time students will be allowed to continue their employment, but will require a No-Objection certificate from the head of the Institution where she/he is employed.

No assistantship/fellowship of any kind shall be provided to such candidates. They will have to pay the registration fees and trimester/semester tuition fee as prescribed for the full-time students.

### **1. Course Work**

Each provisionally registered doctoral student shall be required by the University and the School to undertake course work with the following requirements:

1. There shall be at least one academic year of stipulated course work.
2. The course work shall consist of Research Tools-courses and Substantive Domain/Specialized Courses. The Course work should include courses on research methodology which may include quantitative methods and computer applications, communication and Pedagogical Methods.
3. There shall be at least 3 substantive domain courses, and these courses shall be more in the format of guided study/workshops and be based on contemporary and cutting-edge research manuscripts and articles (these shall not be traditional text-book based class room courses). These courses must be approved by the concerned school/Institute.
4. In stipulating the content of the subject domain workshops, flexibility shall be retained so that the content may be current and contemporary.
5. There shall also be requirement of a research/survey manuscript — a credible intellectual output by the student concurrent with the completion of the coursework. This manuscript will be evaluated by the concerned faculty.
6. Patents are also intellectual outputs: since patent registration takes a long time, the credibility of the patent application will be determined by the respective Guide, Department, Dean, and Doctoral Committee.
7. University will at its sole discretion decide whether the course work may be carried out by the doctoral candidates in Laboratories recognized by any University/sister institutions/ Schools within or outside this University, for which due credit shall be given to them. Individual School may be permitted by the University to design module/s as per their requirement.

### **Comprehensive Examination**

On successful completion of the course work, each provisionally registered doctoral student will have to undergo a comprehensive examination to prove his/her depth of knowledge in the chosen Subject. The comprehensive examination will be both written as well as oral. The Chairperson of the doctoral programme committee in consultation with the Dean/Director or In Charge of the school will decide the details of the comprehensive examination. The result of the examination is either pass or fail. In case a candidate fails to pass the examination, the doctoral committee would give him time to appear for the examination again. Maximum three such chances will be provided to the candidates and thereafter on a negative result, the candidate will be asked to withdraw from the programme.

### **Research Proposal**

Every doctoral candidate who clears the comprehensive examination will submit a Research Proposal to the doctoral committee through his mentor. The research proposal would elaborate the genesis of the study and all possible details of the research. He/she will present the proposal to the doctoral committee or a committee constituted by them and takes their suggestions and incorporates them, wherever necessary. The mentor will be present in the meeting where the candidate discusses the Research proposal. The doctoral committee will not reject any proposal; at the most it may ask the candidate to resubmit the proposal incorporating all the suggestions made by them. The Research Proposal should be submitted within six months of clearing the comprehensive examination.

Once the Doctoral Committee approves the proposal for the research, the University shall convert his status of "provisionally" to "registered" for doctorate. The University shall appoint a Thesis Advisory Committee for the

candidate.

### **Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC)**

1. The committee shall consist of at least one full-time permanent Ahmedabad University faculty member – he/she can be from any department or school, so long as the said committee member is considered to be an expert in the student's topic/area of interest, who will chair the Committee from Ahmedabad University.
2. The committee shall consist of three members, of which at most one will be from outside Ahmedabad University.
3. The committee may include an expert from industry or national level research organizations wherever possible to enhance the quality and relevance of the research.
4. If an academic committee member is from outside AU including from outside India, he/she should be a faculty member in a recognized university/educational/ research institution; and have participated as a member or as a chair in at least three doctoral dissertations. This condition may be waived off, if the expert is from industry.

### **Allocation of Research Guide/Supervisor**

- 1 The allocation of the guide/ supervisor shall be decided by the University /School in a formal manner depending upon the number of Students per faculty member, the available specialization among the faculty supervisors and the research interest of the students as indicated during the interview stage.
- 2 The allotment/ allocation of the supervisor/guide shall not be left to the individual student or teacher. His/her preference will be considered, if possible.
- 3 A supervisor shall not have, at any given point of time, more than four doctoral candidates.
- 4 There shall be periodic review (six monthly) of the progress of the student by way of presentation or seminar. The DPC would be responsible for monitoring the progress of the students.
- 5 Prior to submission of the thesis, the student shall make a pre Ph.D. presentation in the School that may be open to all the faculty members and research students, for getting feedback and comments, which may be suitably incorporated into the draft thesis under the advice of the supervisor.

### **Procedure for submission of thesis**

1. The candidate must submit a synopsis of his/her thesis, duly approved by TAC, before final submission of the thesis.
2. Candidates wishing to submit thesis for research degrees can do so at any time after the completion of two years from the date of registration, but not later than six years. It shall be at the discretion of the Provost/ Vice-Chancellor to extend this period by maximum one more year on an application made by a candidate, supported by his guide and on recommendation of the Dean/Head of the School concerned, stating valid reasons for the delay in submitting the thesis. The registration date is the date on which the Doctoral Programme Committee approves the thesis topic.
3. Doctoral candidates shall publish two research papers in refereed journals before the submission of the thesis and produce evidence for the same in the form of acceptance letter or reprint.
4. A candidate who has to drop out of the doctoral program because of an exigency can maintain his/her candidacy valid for one year subject to prior approval of Provost/Vice-Chancellor. The said candidate will be readmitted if she/he pays the appropriate fees at the end of the period of absence.
5. A doctoral student, who has submitted a synopsis of his thesis, shall submit his thesis within six months of the date of submission of his synopsis, and in no case later than twelve months. A doctoral candidate failing to submit his thesis within the prescribed limit shall pay a fresh fee for admission to the examination, after which he will have to undergo the procedure mentioned under Course Work.
6. Requirements of the thesis submission and defense are outlined in detail in this document which are as follows:
  - (i) Each candidate for the Doctoral Degree shall send to the University three copies of thesis in a bound form. The thesis should embody the results of his/her research and state whether the work is an original contribution based on such research. The thesis must contain appropriate acknowledgement of the work by others and this should be reflected in a-detailed bibliography and data sources. Further the candidate must not have submitted the work contained in the thesis for award of any other degree. All of the above must be certified by a statement by the candidate that shall be countersigned by the guide.
  - (ii) In addition to bound copies the final approved Thesis shall be submitted in CD or Computer readable form.
7. The Doctoral Programme Committee (DPC) shall recommend to the Provost the names of referees preferably by random selection from a pool of names generated by each School for various

subjects with their specializations. There shall be two referees from within the country of which at least one should be from outside the state and if the competent authority deems it necessary in view of nature of research, foreign referee be appointed whenever possible. As far as possible, care shall also be taken to avoid reciprocal appointment of referees vis-a- vis the guiding teacher.

8. On receipt of the report of the external referees appointed by the Board of Examinations, the internal guide and one of the external referees shall conduct the viva voce of the candidate. The other external referees may, if so desired, send written questions to the referees conducting the viva to seek clarification on any point/s in the thesis. The viva-voce test shall be conducted only after receiving favorable reports from both the external referees.
9. The viva-voce test of the candidate shall be conducted in the following manner:
  - (a) The candidate shall supply to the University with sufficient number of copies of the synopsis of the thesis as will be required by the University.
  - (b) After both the external referees have sent their positive reports recommending acceptance of the thesis for the award of the concerned Ph.D. degree, the date for open Defense shall be fixed in consultation with one external referee and the guide. At least two weeks' notice will be given to the student of the schedule of the viva voce. The Open Defense will be conducted in the following manner:
    - (i) On receipt of the positive reports from both the external referees and fixing the date of Open Defense, the University (respective schools) will arrange to send copies of the synopsis of the thesis along with the date of Open Defense to the Heads of the Departments of various Universities, Colleges and Research Institutes where research work in fields similar to the research of the thesis is being conducted and also to important scientists working in allied fields (Names to be suggested by the guide).
    - (ii) Notice of Open Defense indicating date, time and place shall be displayed on the Notice Board of the concerned School at least one week before the date of the Open Defense.
    - (iii) The person/s institution / University Departments to whom the synopsis has been sent will be requested to send in writing the questions they wish to ask at the Open Defense. Such questions shall be received at least three days before the Open Defense. All such questions will be handed over to the Chairperson of the Open Defense Committee on the date of the Open Defense.
    - (iv) The guide will be present at the Open Defense. Any other members of the faculty, research students and other interested persons may also attend the Open Defense. The Provost will appoint Dean of the concerned School/Head of the Department or any other senior faculty member as the Chairperson of Open Defense. The guide will ask questions for-which no permission of the Chairperson will be needed. As regards the written questions from other institutions and those from the persons attending the Open Defense, it will be for the Chairperson in consultation with the external referee and guide to decide whether to allow a question or not. No person in the audience will have a right to comment on the acceptability or non-acceptability of the thesis for the award of the degree.
    - (v) At the initiation of the Open Defense the candidate will make a brief power point presentation, which will be followed by questions.
    - (vi) A further viva-voce will be conducted. This viva-voce will be conducted by the external referee and guide (internal referee). The guide shall prepare a report of the viva-voce and forward it to the University. They shall either recommend the award of the degree to the candidate or a fresh viva-voce after a specific time, if the performance of the candidate is found to be unsatisfactory. Recommendations shall be specific and final. The following procedure shall be followed for holding the viva voce of a candidate for the second time:
      - (a) The re-examination of the candidate (i.e. second viva-voce/test should be held by the same referee who had conducted the viva in the first instance.
      - (b) The decision that, although the thesis was found worthy of acceptance, the candidate's performance at the viva-voce was found unsatisfactory and, therefore, he/she is required to appear again at a second viva within six months and that if he/she fails to satisfy the referees at the second viva, his/her thesis shall be rejected, will be communicated to the candidate within one month of the receipt of the viva-voce report from the referees.
      - (c) Within two months of the receipt of the communication of the decision to the candidate, the candidate should write to the University through his/her guide that he/she is prepared to appear again before the referees of his/her second viva-voce examination.
      - (d) The candidate should submit his/her application through the guide and should pay 50% of the examination fee towards conduct of the second viva-voce examination.
      - (e) An honorarium prescribed by the University shall be paid to the external referee for holding the second viva-voce examination. The Internal referee will not be entitled for any honorarium.
      - (f) The thesis of the candidate should be retained by the office till the candidate's reappearance at the second viva-voce examination and the declaration of his/her result.
      - (g) The referees should hold the viva-voce examination generally, within one month of the receipt of the communication in the matter.
9. When the opinion of the two external referees is unanimous and on successfully completing the viva-voce, the candidate shall submit to the University the final copy of the thesis after incorporating the changes and updating the data, if suggested by the referees (the guide will also certify). The final approved thesis shall be submitted on CD, in addition to a hard copy. In all three CDs are required to be submitted.

Subsequent to the acceptance of the report by the Provost, the University shall make the thesis available on the University website for a period of three years from the date of acceptance. However, if only one referee of the two external referees favorably recommends the acceptance of the thesis for award of Ph.D. degree, the Provost shall appoint one additional referee to evaluate the thesis. The Provost shall accept or reject the thesis in accordance with majority opinion of the three external referees.

10 If both the external referees submit a negative report indicating rejection of the thesis, the candidate's viva-voce shall not be conducted and he/she shall be declared to have failed to qualify for the Ph.D. degree. A work that has been rejected may be resubmitted after revision within two years of the receipt of the rejection letter and subject to the payment of prescribed examination fee.

11 The Provost will be ultimately responsible for any grievance arising out of any aspect of the doctoral programme and will institute necessary redressal mechanism.

**Depository with UGC:**

1. Following the successful completion of the evaluation process and announcement of the award of Ph.D., the University shall submit a soft copy of the Ph.D. thesis to UGC within a period of 30 days, for hosting the same in INFLIBNET, accessible to all Institutions/Universities.
2. Along with the degree, the degree awarding University shall issue a provisional certificate to the effect that the degree has been awarded in accordance with the provisions to the regulations of the UGC.

**Amendments**

The Ahmedabad University reserves its rights to change, modify or amend any of the provisions of this document provided that such changes are duly recommended by the DPC, considered and approved by the Academic Council and Provost.

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