



Research Guide Booklet

M. Phil/PhD Program

As per Revised HEC, QEC & NUML Exam Policy-2023



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Mission Statement of the University-NUML

To foster creative pedagogy, innovative research and inclusive communication.

The mission of the National University of Modern Languages is to establish, sustain and enhance itself as a quality-centric higher education institution that provides excellent academic environment and opportunities for creating educated, productive, and responsible citizens of Pakistan and the global citizenry through intellectual, personal and professional growth.

To advance its pristine vision and mission of creating educated, productive and responsible citizens, the university shall focus its efforts on 3 goals: high student achievement and success, institutional and competitive excellence, and responsible public service. These interrelated goals will be facilitated by adopting the following means: distinguished intellectuals as faculty who challenge and mentor students to attain their fullest potential; talented, desirous and promising students who are devoted to the pursuit and advancement of knowledge; broad-based quality programs; state-of-the-art facilities and new trends in e-learning and information communication technologies; exemplary administration and qualified administrative staff dedicated to the highest professional standards and service; that thus share a common vision and an integral commitment to continuous improvement at all levels and to ensure competitive excellence and international compatibility.

Mission Statement of the Faculty-FSS

The Faculty of Social Sciences (FSS) works with Social Sciences Departments to establish and maintain high standards of academic excellence and scholarship, with special focus on higher research degrees such as the MS/ MPhil and/or PhD. With interdisciplinary education as one of the primary foci within its plans, FSS is dedicated to create a supportive and generative site for engaging faculty and students around research and theory across various units, and in the process of intellectual advancement, make ways to increase faculty development and participation, develop and support diverse knowledge, new trends in research and innovative methodologies in line with HEC requirements and international standards.

Vision of the Program-IR

Aspire to become center of excellence on creating cutting-edge knowledge, preparing future leadership through scientific research and innovative pedagogies in national and international affairs.

Mission Statement of the Program-IR

Promote rigorous scholarship and academic excellence that enable potential graduates to understand the intricacies of national and international challenges and equip them with relevant skills, knowledge and competencies to handle social challenges in an apt manner and contribute towards development of enlightened society.

About the Post-Graduate Program-IR

- The Post-Graduate Program started in 2010 as M. Phil leading to PhD
- Independent PhD Program begin in 2015.

Strategic Plan- M. Phil/PhD Program

To achieve excellence in producing scholars equipped with in-depth knowledge and research skills, capable of making significant contribution to the society.

Program Learning Objectives (LOs) & Outcomes (OCs)

Program Objectives	Program Outcomes
To provide greater access to advanced study around theory and practice with a multi-dimensional analytical approach.	Students are able to comprehend/analyze and research international relations/issues through an integration of theory and practice. They can think on international problems and their solutions critically by employing their knowledge of various theoretical perspectives and multi-dimensional approach.
To impart advanced knowledge to students with an inter-disciplinary approach.	Utilizing their inter-disciplinary knowledge base, students are able to analyze international relations/issues from different perspectives such as political, economic, security, social and legal. They are capable to combine such diverse perspectives to understand the complexity of international problems and propose possible solutions.
To promote research culture among students and faculty.	Faculty can contribute research-based knowledge to national internal and foreign policy debate and prepare students ready to assume challenging positions in relevant fields.
To contribute to qualitative professional development and educational growth.	Faculty and students attend seminars, conferences and workshops, and look forward to participate in the same. Those faculty members, who have not completed PhD, are engaged in pursuing the same. Qualified students have jobs in related fields.
To provide continuous support and guidance to students.	Quality of research topics and research process has improved. Students are keen to extend M.Phil. level research to pursue PhD degrees.

Program Eligibility Requirements

- a) Academic quality is ensured by conditioning students for maintaining minimum 3.0 CGPA
- b) 75% attendance is mandatory in each module. It can be condoned on case-to-case basis in consultation with concerned course instructor and the Head, taking into account student's progress and the authenticity of ability to attend classes.
- c) Active participation in class activities carries 35% marks.
- d) Clearing the entire course work is a pre-requisite to qualify for synopsis presentation both for M. Phil/PhD.

Class performance is assessed continuously during the semester through class tests and Weightage is given to class presentations, class assignments and class participation.

M. Phil/MS Program

SOPs- MS/M. Phil:

- Rules for MPhil/MS program have been formulated in the light of HEC guidelines and NUML's Revised Graduate Policy 2023

Degree Requirements:

- NUML awards degree to MPhil/MS students who fulfill following conditions: -
 - Complete 30 credits with following breakup
 - Coursework: 24 Credits
 - Research/Thesis/Project: 6 Credits
 - A minimum CGPA of 2.50/4.00 in course work and passing of Research/Thesis/Project
 - Passing criteria-50% Marks minimum
 - Total duration for the program is **1.5 (minimum) to 4 years (maximum)**.
 - Duration of a regular semester is 16-18 weeks.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO AWARD MS/MPHIL/EQUIVALENT DEGREES (LEVEL 7)

Admission to an MS/MPhil/Equivalent Degree Programs: Eligibility Criteria

1. Basic Academic Qualification:

Sixteen years of schooling or 4-year education (minimum 120 credit hours) after HSSC/F.A./F.Sc/Grade 12 or Equivalent shall be required for admission in the MPhil/MS/Equivalent program with following score: -

- i **Semester system:** 2.50/4.00 CGPA or grade “B”.
- ii **Annual System:** 50% marks

2. Admission Test: University is required to:

- a) Conduct a rigorous GAT admission test as an eligibility condition for admission to MS/MPhil/Equivalent programs, with a passing score of 50%.
- b) Accept the GRE/HAT General/Equivalent tests, with a passing score of 50%.

3. Intradisciplinary Qualifications¹

- a) The interdisciplinary admission may only be allowed, if:
- b) The university/HEI policy allows, and
- c) The applicant has a strong interest in pursuing an MS/MPhil/equivalent degree in a different discipline.
- d) The applicant has passed GRE-Subject/equivalent test² with minimum 50% marks in the discipline of admission and has taken 6-9 CH of deficiency courses of level 6.
- e) 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 MS/MPhil/equivalent program (or, in the opinion of the admission committee, the preparation can be deemed satisfactory by taking a few additional courses after starting the program).

Coursework Requirement for Award of MS/MPhil/Equivalent Degrees

For award of MPhil/MS/equivalent degree, candidates shall:

- a) Either need to complete 30 credit hours of course work or

¹ Intradisciplinary refers to sub-disciplines occurring within one of the ten broad disciplines defined by UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-F-2013).

² In case the GRE-Subject test for a specific field/discipline is not available/conducted in Pakistan

- b) Complete **24** credit hours of coursework along with a minimum of six (6) credit hours for research work/thesis with a minimum CGPA of 2.50/4.00 in course work
- c) One Non-Credit Course on ‘Academic Writing’ in line of NUML’s revised graduate policy 2023 is a part of post-graduate course work. This course is taught through seminar/symposium.
- d) In case a degree is offered with research work, the university shall develop a policy regarding thesis defense and evaluation through its statutory bodies.
- e) The MS/MPhil degree shall be awarded by the universities not before the completion of 1.5 years or three (03) regular semesters and not after completion of four (04) years or eight (08) regular semesters, save exceptions mentioned at clause 2.3(ii).
- f) In case a student is unable to secure an MS/MPhil within the prescribed timeframe and claims for extension in duration, the university may constitute appropriate authority and determine the causes of delay. In the event of force majeure (i.e., delay on account of circumstance beyond the control of student), the university may grant an extension in the period of award of MS/MPhil degree in accordance with the duration limiting factor(s) and shall also take corrective measures in case the delay is caused by process or administrative reasons.

Credits Transfer, Evaluation and Grading

- i. The credit transfers of coursework from one university/DAI/HEI to another as well as to evaluate students’ academic performance (both formative and summative) and award of grades, HEC’s Policy Guidelines, issued from time to time, for implementation of the Uniform Semester Examination System in Higher Education Institutes of Pakistan shall be referred.
- ii. The transfer of research work is permissible, provided that the host university accepts the research conducted at the parent university prior to the credit transfer.

Semester Duration: Duration of a regular semester will be **16-18 weeks.**

- a. A special intensive summer semester will be offered with a minimum duration of eight weeks.
- b. Summer semester must cover the same course contents as in a regular semester.
- c. Only one summer semester will be offered in a calendar year.

Registration of Courses. At the beginning of a semester, a student shall register in the course(s) being offered by the department.

- a. A student shall normally be required to register for 9 to 12 credits in a semester. However, the HoD may allow a student to register up to 15 credits in a semester as a special case.
- b. In summer semester a student may register for a maximum of two courses only of up to 8 credit hours.
- c. In the second or a subsequent semester, a student may improve/repeat courses in which he obtained C/F grade provided it is within limits of Para ‘a’ above.
- d. A student may drop course(s) within first two weeks of a semester on the recommendation of the HoD concerned without refund of fee and without reporting the grade and counting towards repeat/improve chances.

- e. Students are not allowed to register in more than one-degree program in NUML or anywhere concurrently.

Grading & Evaluation

The performance of students is evaluated through a system of continuous testing spread over the entire duration of semester. In addition to the final examination given at the end of each semester, students are tested through mid-term examination and internal evaluation consisting of a series of short quizzes, class discussions, written assignments, presentations, and class projects etc., all of which contribute to the final grade. However, following will also be applied: -

- a) If the paper of end term exam is cancelled due to involvement in unfair means case, the marks of class evaluation and midterm exam will not be calculated to declare the result.
- b) If a student is absent in final exam and his aggregate marks are 50 in remaining two components, he will not be declared as passed.
- c) 25% marks in end term exams should be mandatory for the calculation of aggregate passing marks.
- d) Marks of a subject in decimal of 0.5 or above will be rounded off to the next digit and below than 0.5 will be ignored.

Course Evaluation Breakdown. Breakdown of course evaluation is as follows: -

- **End term Exams 50% Duration (Sit-in Exam)- 03 hours**
- **Midterm Exams: 30 % Duration (Classroom Research-Based Activities)**
- **Internal Evaluation: 20% (Classroom Research-Based Activities)**
 - (a) Quizzes (5-10%)
 - (b) Assignments: (5-10%)
 - (c) Project/Presentation/Technical Report (5-10%)
 - (d) Before Midterm Exams: 2 x quizzes – 2 x Assignments – 1 x Presentation
 - (e) After Midterm Exams: 1-2 x quizzes – 1-2 x Assignments – 1 x Project

NUML's Updated Graduate Policy (2023) for the Teaching & Assessment of PhD/M.Phil Programmes

Following assessment along with distribution of marks is recommended:

- ✓ Mid-term evaluation (minor assignments as per mid-term schedule) = 30 marks.
- ✓ Internal Evaluation = 20 Marks
- ✓ End Term Exam = 50 Marks. (sit-in exam)

Note: Midterm evaluation and internal Evaluation should be carried out through rubrics developed by the concerned faculty member, included in the course outline, and disseminated to the scholar in the first week of the semester.

- **Rationale**—shift from traditional to research-oriented teaching/assessment methodology Approved in 24th Academic Council and to be implemented w.e.f. Fall 2023 semester in accordance with Bloom's Taxonomy³

³ Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)—Bloom's Taxonomy—Bloom's taxonomy is a set of three hierarchical models used for classification of educational learning objectives into levels of complexity and specificity. The three lists cover the learning objectives in cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains.

➤ **Research-oriented pedagogy**

- Combination of lecturing method (30%) and research-related activities (70%)
- Minor Assignments (as midterm evaluation) such as case studies, seminars, discussions, and critical analysis of articles/book chapters
- 1x Major Research Assignment (as Internal Evaluation) such as term paper, book review, or literature review

Grading Ranges. Absolute grading system with following ranges* will be used: -

Grades	Percentage	Grade Points
A+	90% and above	4.00
A	80-89.99%	4.00
B+	75-79.99%	3.50-3.99
B	70-74.99%	3.00-3.49
C+	65-69.99%	2.50-2.99
C	60-64.99%	2.00-2.49
F	Below 50- 59.99%	0.00

Transfer of Credits

Credits may be considered for transfer from other local or foreign accredited universities/institutes of similar quality if they are relevant and appropriate to an MS/MPhil/PhD program in a discipline approved by NUML.

Following rules will be applicable for the transfer of credits: -

- i. Only MS/MPhil/PhD level courses in which at least a 'B' grade or its equivalent was received shall be considered for transfer.
- ii. A maximum of 50% of total credits for a program may be transferred but the CGPA/grades will not be transferred. Final transcript will reflect the grades of transferred courses but the grades will not be used for calculation of CGPA.
- iii. The transfer of credits will be recommended by concerned Dean keeping in view time duration of course work and deficiencies, if any. The transfer of credits will be allowed only up to the third semester. Academic branch will process the case for approval of Pro Rector (Academics) and notify the transfer of credits.

Following procedure will be followed for transfer of credits: -

- a) The applicant shall apply to the Academic Branch on the credit transfer application form available on the university website.
- b) The application must accompany the transcript of current program and copies of certificates/degrees from matric onwards along with NOC from previous institution.
- c) Director Academic will forward complete application to the concerned Faculty/department for evaluation/recommendations as per following parameters:
 - The applicant must fulfill the pre requisites for admission to the program for which he is applying.

- The amount of time spent in the previous Institution for completion of course work will be considered towards the total duration of course work/program specified by the university. It would be ensured that the student would be able to complete the remaining course work within the time limit specified by the “Timelines”.
- Deficiencies, if any, from NUML curriculum to be made up by the applicant must be specified clearly.
- The credits to be transferred must be specified clearly indicating the number of credits and grades.
- The applicant must fulfill the pre requisites for admission to the program for which he is applying.
- The credits can be transferred any time after the first semester provided that the student has studied at least 50% courses according to NUML scheme of studies.

Academic Deficiencies

A student under one or more of the following conditions is considered to be academically deficient:

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. Failure in a course | c. CGPA ⁴ less than 2.50/4.00 |
| b. SGPA ⁵ less than 2.00/4.00 | d. Attendance less than 75% |

Disposal of Academically Deficient Students

- Academically deficient students are categorized as follows:
 - Placed on probation.
 - Relegated to a junior semester.
 - Ceased from university
- The deficiency status will be reflected in the final result notification issued by the examination branch.

Probation

A student is placed on academic probation under following conditions: -

- If a student earns a CGPA of 2.00/4.00 or more but less than 2.50/4.00 in any semester, he will be placed on 1st probation.
- If a student is on 1st probation and again earns a CGPA of more than 2.00/4.00 but less than 2.50/4.00 in very next semester, will be placed on 2nd probation.

Relegation

Relegation means that a student is not promoted and is allowed to repeat/improve courses of his previous semester (s). A student may be relegated due to following: -

- If he earns an SGPA of less than 2.00/4.00 in 1st semester, he will not be promoted but will be allowed to repeat his full semester. This repeat of semester will not be counted as a relegation for the first time.

⁴ Cumulative Grade Point Average-CGPA means Cumulative Grade Point Average and is the measuring grade for your overall performance during an academic year.

⁵ SGPA-Semester Cumulative Grade Point Average- essentially reflects a student’s performance over a stipulated period, generally a semester.

- b. If a student earns Final/2nd consecutive probation and again earns a CGPA of less than 2.50/4.00.
- c. If a student earns a CGPA of less than 1.50/4.00 in any semester.
- d. If a student fails in more than 50% of the registered courses. Final year project/Thesis is not considered a course in this regard.

Ceased

Ceased means that a student is considered unsuitable to continue his studies and his name is removed from the program. A student may be ceased due to following reason(s): -

- a. If a student earns 2nd relegation due to any reason.
- b. If a student fails to achieve a CGPA of 2.50/4.00 even after availing maximum improvement chances (i.e., three courses) within two years (maximum course work duration).
- c. If a student exceeds the maximum time duration of the program i.e., four years.
- d. If a student fails to defend his **Research Proposal/Synopsis** by the end of 4th month of 5th semester (maximum two attempts), his case will be referred to BASR.
- e. If a student fails to submit his **Final Thesis** despite availing extensions and issuance of 3rd warning letter, his case will be sent to BASR for dismissal.
- f. If a student fails to achieve the required/ acceptable similarity index of 19% even after availing two repository attempts run by QEC.

Re-Admission Procedure for Ceased Students

A ceased student may seek re-admission only once in same degree program subject to the following conditions:

- a. The student will apply for re-admission in a regular semester.
 - b. The student will be exempted from entry test. In case of MPhil/Ph.D. admission, the student will be exempted from GAT General/subject, if already qualified.
- c. The student will pay re-admission fee as per university rules.
- d. New registration number will be allotted to the student.
- e. The student will apply for exemption of courses as permissible.

Exemption of Courses

The ceased students will be granted exemption of courses passed with Grade C or above marks for undergraduate and Grade B or above marks for M. Phil/Ph.D. scholars on re-admission in the same program.

Struck off from University Roll

A student may be struck off from university rolls due to the following reasons: -

- a. If a student remains absent without sanctioned leave for 10 working days during a semester, the departments shall forward his name to Academic Branch for struck off from university rolls. However, he will be considered for re-admission once in a semester subject to payment of requisite fee within 10 working days of the issuance of the notification of his struck off.

- b. If a student neither freezes his semester nor registers himself in a semester within 30 days of commencement of a semester, the departments shall forward his name to Academic Branch for struck off from university rolls. However, he will be considered for re-admission in the next semester subject to the fulfilment of other requirements.
- c. During the extended semester (beyond minimum duration), if a student is still deficient to fulfill the degree requirement and neither applies for continuation of his study nor deposits his fee within 30 working days of the commencement of a semester, he will not be allowed to register his course(s) in current semester. However, he will be allowed to continue his study in remaining semesters to fulfill his degree requirements within maximum duration of the course. Moreover, the student will be bound to deposit the fee of missing semester according to the credit hours.

Attendance Requirements

75% attendance in a course is mandatory to become eligible to appear in the final examination, failing which, the student will be awarded 'F' grade in the course. 'F' grade will be treated as a normal 'F' grade earned by a student by failing in a course and it will carry all penalties associated with it.

Repetition / Improvement of Courses

- a) A student must repeat a course in which he earns an 'F' grade / re-appear.
- b) A student may improve his CGPA by taking courses in which he obtained D/D⁺ & below grade.
- c) A student can only improve a maximum of following number of courses: -

Program Duration	Max Number of Courses Allowed to Improve
4 years	6
3.5 Years	5
2 - 2.5 Years	3
1 – 1.5 years	2

- d) The student repeating/improving a course will be required to complete all formalities applicable to a regular course that is attendance, midterm examination, final examination, internal evaluation based on quiz, assignments and projects etc. The same will also be applicable for a summer semester.
- e) It will be the student's responsibility to repeat/improve courses within the prescribed time limits to avoid relegation and / or cease.
- f) Repetition of courses may be done in summer or with junior classes or whenever the course is offered (subject to availability of necessary resources, and date sheet/time table limitations etc.). The minimum duration of a specially arranged repeat course will be at least 8 weeks. It will be ensured that required number of credits are covered in a repeat course.

- g) If a student repeats/improves a course, both of his grades will be reflected on his transcript. However, better grade will be used for calculation of CGPA.
- h) The change in academic status, if any, of a student will take effect from the date of notification of the result of the repeated / improved course.

Procedure / Time Line for Repeat/Improve

The student will apply to the department for repeat/improve of a course within **5 working days** of the commencement of a semester. The HoD will ensure the eligibility of the student and will forward a consolidated list of all these students to examinations /academic Branch within **2 working days**. The examination branch shall further examine the eligibility of the students in the light of their semester result/status and shall forward the list to Finance Branch through academic branch within **3 working days** for issuance of fee challans forms. The finance branch will issue fee challans within **3 working days**. The students will deposit their fees within **5 working days** after issuing of the challan form and will submit a copy of fee slip in their respective department. (All above procedure must be completed within **18 working days** of the start of a semester).

Semester Freeze

However, MPhil/MS students are allowed to freeze only one semester during entire course work duration. Freeze of first semester is not allowed.

- a. Semester freeze of up to two regular semesters (in entire program) during course work (within the minimum duration of a program) is allowed to students facing extraordinary circumstances / valid reasons subject to approval of the Rector on recommendations of Dean/HoD. Penalties associated with relegation will not be applied to a semester freeze.
- b. In case semester freeze is requested within first 30 days of commencement of a semester, the student will pay 25% of the total tuition fee and allied charges. If the request is made after 30 days of commencement of a semester but before start of the Midterm Examination, the student will have to pay 50% of tuition fee and allied charges.
- c. In case an emergency/illness occurs after the midterm examination, the semester freeze may be allowed but no fee will be refunded at this stage.
- d. Semester freeze in 1st semester of a program is not allowed.

RESEARCH PHASE

Allocation of Supervisor

The department will issue the list of available supervisors and their area of research for dissemination among perspective students in the beginning of each semester.

- a. A student who fulfills the requirements of course work will consult faculty members of the university from his research area. He will get the Form signed from proposed supervisor. The form will be countersigned by the HoD and approved by the Dean.

- b. The eligibility of supervisor will be as per HEC rules on the subject.
- c. The maximum number of MPhil/MS students working under supervision of a faculty member will be as per HEC policy.
- d. Supervisor shall ensure that synopsis/thesis is prepared as per the approved format of the faculty (**Annex B**).
- e. Students are allowed to have a co-supervisor with the approval of HoD/Dean. However, students working in inter-disciplinary fields will be required to have a co-supervisor from the related field.
- f. The coordinator will ensure and pursue supervisor for timely issuance of progress report **MSTH2 (Annex C)** and warning letters by the Department/Faculty as per requirements of the "Timeline".
- g. **Selection of Examiners**. The process of selection of examiner(s) will be initiated by the respective department and will be sent to the respective Dean. The Dean will recommend the examiner(s) for approval by the competent authority. The academic and examination branch will be responsible to review and scrutinize the cases in term of timelines and other university and HEC requirements.

Change of Supervisor

Supervisor may be changed in case of extra ordinary circumstances. Following procedure will be adopted: -

- a. The student will apply to HoD through the form for the change of supervisor by mentioning the reasons.
- b. The student will give an undertaking that he is responsible for meeting all deadlines/Timelines. He should state that he understands that no extension or relaxation will be given in the prescribed Timeline because of change of his supervisor.
- c. Remarks /consent of the current and proposed supervisor will be obtained on MSTh2 Form. If the change is approved by the Dean, it will be processed for the provisional approval of FBS.
- d. Final approval for the change will be given by BASR.

Research Proposal Defense

- a. The student will prepare his research proposal under guidance of his supervisor. The same will be presented in a meeting of GAC. The result of the Defense will be declared. The department must hold the meeting of GAC at least twice in a semester.
- b. The proposal will be provisionally approved by FBS.
- c. Final approval of the proposal will be given by BASR.
- d. Proposals must be prepared according to the guidelines and format provided by the respective Faculty.
- e. All proposals shall be run on Turnitin by the department to ensure permissible similarity index and it must be certified by the Supervisor.
- f. Proposals prepared in foreign languages shall have an English/Urdu version as well.
- g. A maximum of two attempts are allowed for proposal defense. However, he must defend his proposal by the end of 4th month of 5th semester, failing which he will be ceased.

- h. Synopsis will be presented in the target language with a brief in English/Urdu.
- i. Questions may be asked in the target language or English/Urdu and replies shall be given in the language the question is asked.

Length of Thesis

Minimum length of thesis including footnotes/ end notes but excluding prefatory pages, references, bibliography and annexure/s is as under: -

Faculty of Social Sciences = 20000 to 25000 words

Similarity Check of Thesis

The turnitin software is used to check the similarity index (text-matching) of a document with (an)other source/s whereas plagiarism means the presence of unacknowledged material. The two are different and should not be equated or considered identical. Following procedure will be adopted:

- a. Hard and soft copies of thesis will be submitted to QEC by respective Faculties/ departments for similarity Index evaluation.
- b. Student must state if he or his supervisor has already run his thesis on Turnitin so that necessary steps are taken to avoid getting high similarity index.
- c. NUML shall not take any responsibility if incomplete information is provided.
- d. The departmental coordinator will get the final report from QEC within six working days of the submission.
- e. Turnitin report, submitted by QEC, shall only be considered as valid and final.
- f. There will be only two attempts of non-repository to check acceptable similarity index of 19% or below and only two attempts of repository run by QEC.
- g. No thesis shall be sent for evaluation unless the similarity index falls within the permissible limit.
- h. In case of re-Defense with major changes, it will be treated as a fresh similarity check. Earlier attempts will not be counted.
- i. If a student fails to achieve the required/ acceptable similarity index of 19% or below through **two repository attempts**, he will be ceased from the program

Plagiarism Check

- a. In case plagiarism in a thesis is detected at any stage after the submission of thesis, it will be dealt with as per HEC plagiarism policy.
- b. In disciplines where plagiarism check software is not available, an affidavit prepared on Rs.100/- stamped paper duly signed by the student and countersigned by the supervisor shall be submitted.
- c. The text of the affidavit shall be provided by the respective Faculty/ department.
- d. Plagiarism detected at any point, even after issuance of degree, is punishable under the rules as per HEC policy on plagiarism.
- e. NUML has zero-tolerance on submission of fraudulent or plagiarized data/thesis/papers. Such cases will be forwarded to the Plagiarism Standing Committee of the university (PSC).

Thesis Defense:

- a. Thesis defense will be an Open Defense which will be held only after all reports have been received and reviewed by the Supervisor and proposed changes, if any, have been incorporated. After the open defense a close viva/Defense session may be conducted by the TDC.
- b. After Defense, the scholar will be responsible to resubmit the dissertation to his supervisor after incorporation of all changes. The supervisor will obtain approval of HoD/Dean.
- c. Finally, the student will submit the error free bound copy of the thesis to his HoD for approval/signature of Dean.

Thesis Re-Defense

- a. A student failing in the Ist attempt of defense may be given another chance upon the recommendation of TDC. No Third chance will be given. The TDC reserves the right (on a majority decision) to reject a thesis without giving second chance if the performance of the student is extremely poor. Similarity check of the revised document is mandatory for re-defense.
- b. Similarity check attempts carried out for the Ist defense will not be counted as chance(s) for the similarity check of the revised document.

Thesis Grading:

The Thesis shall be graded for 200 marks for allocation of grade. However, minimum passing grade is “C+” (2.50 points). The faculties / departments will formulate their own policies for breakdown of 200 marks and forward the same to the Examination Branch for seeking approval of the competent authority.

Allocation of Grade

The thesis will be assigned grade as per grading ranges already mentioned on page 6. However, minimum pass grade for a thesis will be C⁺ (2.50/4.00 CGPA). The grade will be considered for calculation of CGPA and will be reflected on the transcript.

Completion of MPhil/MS Degree

A student must register for all semesters till submission of his MPhil/MS thesis. However, the date of notification for M. Phil/MS degree will be treated as completion date of the degree.

PhD Program

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR AWARD OF DOCTORAL DEGREE (LEVEL 8)

Rules for PhD program have been formulated in the light of HEC guidelines. However, these rules are subject to changes/amendments because of time-to-time changes in HEC rules/policies. Milestones specified by the Timeline (**Annex D**) have been incorporated in these rules.

Qualification

Prior to admission into a PhD program, the student shall have been awarded MS/MPhil or equivalent degree as described in this policy OR

Students pursuing MS/MPhil studies and interested in continuing to PhD may be granted provisional admission upon satisfaction with the Admission Committee regarding Statement of Purpose and students' commitment to the PhD program, provided that confirmation of the admission shall be subject to the fulfilment of the following conditions within a period of one year from the date of provisional admission:

- a) Award of MS/MPhil degree, as prescribed in this policy
- b) Clearance of the admission test, as prescribed in this policy.

Intra-disciplinary Qualifications

Consistent with best practices internationally (including leading global universities), intradisciplinary admissions may only be allowed, if:

- a) The university/HEI policy allows, and
- b) The applicant has a strong interest in pursuing a PhD in a different discipline.
- c) The applicant has passed GRE-Subject/Equivalent Test6 with minimum 50% marks in the discipline of admission and has taken 6-9 CH of deficiency courses of level 7.
- d) The admission committee is satisfied that the applicant's knowledge of the primary area (level 7) has sufficiently prepared him or her to undertake the course of study of the doctoral program (or, in the opinion of the admissions committee, the preparation can be deemed satisfactory by taking a few additional courses after starting the program).

Eligibility Criteria for PhD

- 1) For admission in PhD programs, a minimum CGPA of 3.0 (out of 4.0 in the semester system) or 60% (in the annual system) in the MS/MPhil/equivalent degree being considered for admission, is required, whether such degree was obtained from Pakistani or foreign universities.
- 2) If the CGPA/Percentage is not mentioned on the transcript, the candidate must produce equivalent weightage from the parent university.
- 3) The students 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 the most recent degree obtained, may be admitted to a PhD program after fulfilling the following requirements:
 - a. Shall study additional courses of 9-12 CH of level 7 taking a zero semester at admission awarding university/HEI/DAI and score minimum 3.00 out of 4.00 GPA, and

- b. The admission committee is satisfied that the applicant's knowledge of primary area (level 7) has sufficiently prepared him or her to undertake the course of studies of the doctoral program.
- c. These requirements shall be in addition to any other requirements set in this policy for admission to a PhD program.

Admission Test

- 1) University is required to:
 - a) Conduct the test equivalent to GRE/HAT General developed at the University, with the passing score of 60%. OR
 - b) Accept a test equivalent to GRE/HAT General, conducted by testing bodies accredited by HEC, with a passing score of 60%

Statement of Purpose (Research Proposal)

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 subspecialty in which the applicant is interested. A statement of purpose shall, at least, include the following:

- a) Title of the potential research proposal
- b) Clear articulation of the current understanding of the intended field and ideas for potential research
- c) Explanation of the intended impact of the proposed research
- d) The prospective candidates shall demonstrate passion and enthusiasm for the area of research.

Coursework and Residency Requirement

The following requirements shall be fulfilled before the award of a PhD Degree:

- a. Completion of 18 credits of course work with a minimum CGPA of 2.50/4.00.
- b. The courses shall be offered through regular classes (i.e., classes taught on campus by full-time faculty members of the university)
- c. The courses shall preferably be of 800 level.
- d. PhD degree should be based on research, not only on credit hours.
- e. Publication/acceptance letter for the research paper in the relevant field in HEC recognized journal of specified category.
- f. The notification for the award of Ph.D. degree will be issued subject to the submission of published article by the scholar within the prescribed duration of a degree program, failing which the scholar will stand ceased from the university rolls.

Length of Program. Total duration for PhD program is **3-8 years.**

Semester Duration.

- a. Duration of a regular semester will be 16-18 weeks.
- b. A special intensive summer semester will be offered with a minimum duration of eight weeks.

- c. Summer semester must cover the same course contents as in a regular semester.
- d. Only one summer semester will be offered in a calendar year.

Transfer of Credits

Credits may be considered for transfer from other local or foreign accredited universities/institutes of similar quality if they are relevant and appropriate to an MS/MPhil/PhD program in a discipline approved by NUML.

Following rules will be applicable for the transfer of credits: -

- a) Only MS/MPhil/PhD level courses in which at least a 'B' grade or its equivalent was received shall be considered for transfer.
- b) A maximum of 50% of total credits for a program may be transferred but the CGPA/grades will not be transferred. Final transcript will reflect the grades of transferred courses but the grades will not be used for calculation of CGPA.
- c) The transfer of credits will be recommended by concerned Dean keeping in view time duration of course work and deficiencies, if any. The transfer of credits will be allowed only up to the third semester. Academic branch will process the case for approval of Pro Rector (Academics) and notify the transfer of credits.

Following procedure will be followed for transfer of credits: -

- a) The applicant shall apply to the Academic Branch on the credit transfer application form available on the university website.
- b) The application must accompany the transcript of current program and copies of certificates/degrees from matric onwards along with NOC from previous institution.
- c) Director Academic will forward complete application to the concerned Faculty/department for evaluation/recommendations as per following parameters:
 - i. The applicant must fulfill the pre requisites for admission to the program for which he is applying.
 - ii. The amount of time spent in the previous Institution for completion of course work will be considered towards the total duration of course work/program specified by the university. It would be ensured that the student would be able to complete the remaining course work within the time limit specified by the "Timelines".
 - iii. Deficiencies, if any, from NUML curriculum to be made up by the applicant must be specified clearly.
 - iv. The credits to be transferred must be specified clearly indicating the number of credits and grades.
 - v. The applicant must fulfill the pre requisites for admission to the program for which he is applying.
 - vi. The credits can be transferred any time after the first semester provided that the student has studied at least 50% courses according to NUML scheme of studies.

Academic Deficiencies

A student under one or more of the following conditions in a semester final result is considered academically deficient:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. Failure in a course | c. CGPA less than 2.50/4.00 |
| b. SGPA less than 2.00/4.00 | d. Attendance less than 75% |

Disposal of Academically Deficient Students

Academically deficient students are categorized as follows:

- Placed on probation.
- Relegated to a junior semester.
- Ceased from university

The deficiency status will be reflected in the final result notification issued by the examination branch.

Probation

A student is placed on academic probation under following conditions: -

- a) If a student earns a CGPA of 2.00/4.00 or more but less than 2.50/4.00 in any semester, he will be placed on 1st probation.
- b) If a student is on 1st probation and again earns a CGPA of more than 2.00/4.00 but less than 2.50/4.00 in very next semester, will be placed on 2nd probation.

Relegation

Relegation means that a student is not promoted and is allowed to repeat/improve courses of his previous semester (s). A student may be relegated due to following: -

- a) If he earns an SGPA of less than 2.00/4.00 in 1st semester, he will not be promoted but will be allowed to repeat his full semester. This repeat of semester will not be counted as a relegation for the first time.
- b) If a student earns Final/2nd consecutive probation and again earns a CGPA of less than 2.50/4.00.
- c) If a student earns a CGPA of less than 1.50/4.00 in any semester.
- d) If a student fails in more than 50% of the registered courses. Final year project/Thesis is not considered a course in this regard.

Ceased

Ceased means that a student is considered unsuitable to continue his studies and his name is removed from the program. A student may be ceased due to following reason(s): -

- a) If a student earns 2nd relegation due to any reason.
- b) If a student fails to achieve a CGPA of 2.50/4.00 even after availing maximum improvement chances (i.e., three courses) within two years (maximum course work duration).
- c) If a student exceeds the maximum time duration of the program i.e., four years.
- d) If a student fails to defend his **Research Proposal/Synopsis** by the end of 4th month of 5th semester (maximum two attempts), his case will be referred to BASR.
- e) If a student fails to submit his **Final Thesis** despite availing extensions and issuance of 3rd warning letter, his case will be sent to BASR for dismissal.
- f) If a student fails to achieve the required/ acceptable similarity index of 19% even after availing two repository attempts run by QEC.

Re-Admission Procedure for Ceased Students

A ceased student may seek re-admission only once in same degree program subject to the following conditions:

- a) The student will apply for re-admission in a regular semester.

- b) The student will be exempted from entry test. In case of MPhil/Ph.D. admission, the student will be exempted from GAT General/subject, if already qualified.
- c) The student will pay re-admission fee as per university rules.
- d) New registration number will be allotted to the student.
- e) The student will apply for exemption of courses as permissible.

Exemption of Courses

The ceased students will be granted exemption of courses passed with Grade C or above marks for undergraduate and Grade B or above marks for M. Phil/Ph.D. scholars on re-admission in the same program.

Struck off from University Roll

A student may be struck off from university rolls due to the following reasons: -

- d. If a student remains absent without sanctioned leave for 10 working days during a semester, the departments shall forward his name to Academic Branch for struck off from university rolls. However, he will be considered for re-admission once in a semester subject to payment of requisite fee within 10 working days of the issuance of the notification of his struck off.
- e. If a student neither freezes his semester nor registers himself in a semester within 30 days of commencement of a semester, the departments shall forward his name to Academic Branch for struck off from university rolls. However, he will be considered for re-admission in the next semester subject to the fulfilment of other requirements.
- f. During the extended semester (beyond minimum duration), if a student is still deficient to fulfill the degree requirement and neither applies for continuation of his study nor deposits his fee within 30 working days of the commencement of a semester, he will not be allowed to register his course(s) in current semester. However, he will be allowed to continue his study in remaining semesters to fulfill his degree requirements within maximum duration of the course. Moreover, the student will be bound to deposit the fee of missing semester according to the credit hours.

Attendance Requirements

75% attendance in a course is mandatory to become eligible to appear in the final examination, failing which, the student will be awarded 'F' grade in the course. 'F' grade will be treated as a normal 'F' grade earned by a student by failing in a course and it will carry all penalties associated with it.

Repetition / Improvement of Courses

PhD scholars are allowed to **improve only two courses** during the entire study program.

- A student must repeat a course in which he earns an 'F' grade / re-appear.
- A student may improve his CGPA by taking courses in which he obtained D/D⁺ & below grade.
- A student can only improve a maximum of following number of courses: -

Program Duration	Max Number of Courses Allowed to Improve

4 years	6
3.5 Years	5
2 - 2.5 Years	3
1– 1.5 years	2

- The student repeating/improving a course will be required to complete all formalities applicable to a regular course that is attendance, midterm examination, final examination, internal evaluation based on quiz, assignments and projects etc. The same will also be applicable for a summer semester.
- It will be the student's responsibility to repeat/improve courses within the prescribed time limits to avoid relegation and / or cease.
- Repetition of courses may be done in summer or with junior classes or whenever the course is offered (subject to availability of necessary resources, and date sheet/time table limitations etc.)
- The minimum duration of a specially arranged repeat course will be at least 8 weeks. It will be ensured that required number of credits are covered in a repeat course.
- If a student repeats/improves a course, both of his grades will be reflected on his transcript. However, better grade will be used for calculation of CGPA.
- The change in academic status, if any, of a student will take effect from the date of notification of the result of the repeated / improved course.

Procedure / Time Line for Repeat/Improve

The student will apply to the department for repeat/improve of a course within **5 working days** of the commencement of a semester. The HoD will ensure the eligibility of the student and will forward a consolidated list of all these students to examinations /academic Branch within **2 working days**. The examination branch shall further examine the eligibility of the students in the light of their semester result/status and shall forward the list to Finance Branch through academic branch within **3 working days** for issuance of fee challans forms. The finance branch will issue fee challans within **3 working days**. The students will deposit their fees within **5 working days** after issuing of the challan form and will submit a copy of fee slip in their respective department. (All above procedure must be completed within **18 working days** of the start of a semester).

Semester Freeze

However, MPhil/MS students are allowed to freeze only one semester during entire course work duration. Freeze of first semester is not allowed.

- i. Semester freeze of up to two regular semesters (in entire program) during course work (within the minimum duration of a program) is allowed to students facing extraordinary circumstances / valid reasons subject to approval of the Rector on recommendations of Dean/HoD. Penalties associated with relegation will not be applied to a semester freeze.
- ii. In case semester freeze is requested within first 30 days of commencement of a semester, the student will pay 25% of the total tuition fee and allied charges. If the request is made after 30 days of commencement of a semester but before start of the Midterm Examination, the student will have to pay 50% of tuition fee and allied charges.

- iii. In case an emergency/illness occurs after the midterm examination, the semester freeze may be allowed but no fee will be refunded at this stage.
- iv. Semester freeze in 1st semester of a program is not allowed.

PhD Course Work Evaluation Breakdown. Breakdown of course evaluation is as follows:

- **End term Exams 50% (Classroom Research-Based Activities/Assignments)**
- **Midterm Exams: 30 % (Classroom Research-Based Activities)**
- **Internal Evaluation: 20% (Classroom Research-Based Activities)**
 - Quizzes (5-10%)
 - Assignments: (5-10%)
 - Project/Presentation/Technical Report (5-10%)
 - Before Midterm Exams: 2 x quizzes – 2 x Assignments – 1 x Presentation
 - After Midterm Exams: 1-2 x quizzes – 1-2 x Assignments – 1 x Project

NUML’s Updated Graduate Policy (2023) for the Teaching & Assessment of PhD Programmes

- **Rationale**—shift from traditional to research-oriented teaching/assessment methodology Approved in 24th Academic Council and to be implemented w.e.f. Fall 2023 semester in accordance with Bloom’s Taxonomy⁶
- **Research-oriented pedagogy**
 - Combination of lecturing method (30%) and research-related activities (70%)
 - 1x Major Research Assignment (as Internal Evaluation) such as term paper, book review, or literature review
 - Internal Evaluation (Major Assignment): 20 Marks
 - Mid-term Evaluation (Minor Assignments): 30 Marks
 - End-term Evaluation:
 - Minor Assignments in case of PhD. 50 Marks

Note: Midterm evaluation and internal Evaluation should be carried out through rubrics developed by the concerned faculty member, included in the course outline, and disseminated to the scholar in the first week of the semester.

Comprehensive Examination

- i. Following the completion of coursework, every PhD student shall be required to pass the comprehensive examination to be granted candidacy as a PhD researcher, with the provision that the student failing to pass the comprehensive exam, shall be allowed to retake the exam once.
- ii. The required coursework, comprehensive exam, and defense of synopsis/research proposals should be completed within the 1st six semesters of the registration into a PhD program. The responsibility in this regard rests collectively with the PhD student and the university. In case of

⁶ Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)—Bloom’s Taxonomy—Bloom's taxonomy is a set of three hierarchical models used for classification of educational learning objectives into levels of complexity and specificity. The three lists cover the learning objectives in cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains.

noncompliance, the registration shall be cancelled and transcripts for completion of coursework may be issued to the student.

- iii. In an event of force majeure i.e., noncompliance on account of circumstances beyond the control of student, the university may consider the matter in accordance with the procedure prescribed at 3.12(iv).⁷
- iv. The following are the guidelines for a conducting Comprehensive Examination.
 - a. The exam should be based on recapitulation of the conceptual knowledge of the discipline to which the student is admitted.
 - b. The exam shall cover the courses studied, preferably at the graduate level, conducted on one composite question paper.
 - c. The evaluation shall be on an aggregate basis, expressed in terms of pass/fail and shall not be graded.

RESEARCH PHASE- PHD

Doctoral Dissertation

Each PhD researcher shall write a doctoral dissertation reflecting relevance, credibility, effectiveness, and legitimacy of the research. The dissertation must be an original and innovative contribution to knowledge that contributes to solving socioeconomic problems. To improve the quality of a doctoral dissertation, some regulations have been suggested in the following areas:

Selection of Research Area

The research area of the PhD researcher shall:

- a) Correspond to the community needs at regional and local levels and comply with the priority national research agenda.
- b) Reflect the basic and pure research.
- c) Signify emerging areas of research that coincide preferably with sustainable development goals (SDGs)

Research Proposal Defense

- a. The student will prepare his research proposal under guidance of his supervisor. The same will be presented in a meeting of GAC. The result of the Defense will be declared. The Department must hold meeting of the GAC at least twice in a semester.
- b. The proposal will be provisionally approved by FBS.
- c. Final approval of the proposal will be given by BASR.
- d. The proposal must be prepared according to the guidelines provided by the respective Faculty.

⁷ In case a student is unable to secure a PhD degree within the prescribed timeframe and claims for extension in duration, the university may constitute appropriate authority and determine the causes for delay. In event of force majeure i.e., delay on account of circumstance beyond the control of student, the university may grant an extension in the period of award of PhD degree in accordance with the duration limiting factor(s) and shall also take corrective measures in case the delay is caused due to process or administrative reasons.

- e. All proposals shall be run on Turnitin to ensure permissible similarity index and it must be certified by the Supervisor.
- f. Proposals prepared in foreign languages shall have an English / Urdu version as well.
- g. Proposal will be presented in the target language with a brief in English/Urdu.
- h. Questions shall be asked in the target language and English/Urdu and replies shall be given in the language in the question is asked.
- i. If the scholar fails in proposal defense in first attempt, he will be given one more chance/attempt to defend a new/same proposal. However, he must complete his defense by the end of 6th semester, failing which he will be ceased.

Length of Thesis

Minimum length of thesis including footnotes/ end notes but excluding prefatory pages, references, bibliography and annexure/s is as under: -

Faculty of Social Sciences

- Quantitative Research **55000 to 60000 words**
- Qualitative Research **75000 to 80000 words**

Quality in Reporting

The quality of presentation and reporting in dissertation shall reflect the following characteristics:

- a) The document is well written.
- b) The contents are balanced, well organized, appropriately styled; clearly structured, and well cohered; and
- c) The document is free from grammatical and spelling errors and flawed terminology.
- d) Minor shortcomings such as inaccurate use of acronyms and clumsy looking sentence structure have been addressed.
- e) Quantitative research proposals must include a valid statistical design for data analysis.
- f) Formatting shall be compatible with international standards.

Methodological Quality

To produce PhD researchers capable of conducting research independently, ensuring the technical soundness of their PhD dissertations is integral. The following guidelines shall be useful in making the PhD research methodologically sound:

Guidelines ensuring the quality of Qualitative Research

A PhD research dissertation, based on the Qualitative Research methods should satisfy, at least, the following questions:

- a) “Does the research, as reported, illuminate the subjective meaning, actions and contexts of those being researched?”
- b) “Is there evidence of the adaption and responsiveness of the research design to the circumstances and issues of real-life social settings met during the course of the study?”
- c) “Does the sample produce the type of knowledge necessary to understand the structures and processes within which the individuals or situations are located?”

- d) “Is the description provided detailed enough to allow the researcher or reader to interpret the meaning and context of what is being researched?”
- e) “How are the different sources of knowledge about the same issue compared and contrasted?”
- f) “Are subjective perceptions and experiences treated as knowledge in their own right?”
- g) “How does the research move from a description of the data through quotation or examples to an analysis and interpretation of the meaning and significance of it?”

Guidelines ensuring the quality of Quantitative Research:

A PhD dissertation with Quantitative Research methods should satisfy, at least, the following questions

- a) Reliability – are the results repeatable?
- b) Validity – does it measure what it says?
- c) Internal validity – do the research results indicate what they appear to be?
- d) External validity – can the results be generalized to other settings (ecological validity) and to other populations (population validity)?
- e) Replicability – are the results of the study reproducible?

Appropriateness of the Methods to the Aims of the Study

To achieve the research objectives, the alignment of the research approach and methods is necessary. Therefore, a PhD dissertation, at least, shall:

- a) Reflect a fair proportion of latest knowledge of contemporary techniques and methods in relation to study objectives.
- b) Contain detailed and easily comprehensible discussions regarding the applied methods and techniques.
- c) Justify the use of methods and techniques to achieve study objectives.
- d) Show evaluation of obtained results in relation with study objectives.
- e) The methods and techniques used should justify the results obtained.
- f) The obtained results should support the study objectives.

Relevance to the Policy and Practice

The research should have significantly answered questions related to policy and practice in that area, establishing its usefulness and usability. Accordingly, a PhD dissertation, at least, shall:

- a) Reflect judicious evaluation of study results in relation with policy related aims and goals undertaken while starting the research.
- b) Discuss the practical implications of the study results in association with the developing practices in that area.
- c) Establish usefulness of the study results for devising policy as stated in the beginning.
- d) Discuss how the resulting policy would be useful for the organization/society.
- e) The study output should be significant enough to be published or patented.
- f) The assessment of the results performed by the author must not be superficial and lacking substance.

Similarity Check of Thesis

- a) Hard and soft copies of thesis will be submitted to QEC by respective Faculties/ departments for similarity Index evaluation.
- b) Student must state if he or his supervisor has already run his thesis on Turnitin so that necessary steps are taken to avoid getting high similarity index.
- c) NUML shall not take any responsibility if incomplete information is provided.

- d) The departmental coordinator will get the final report from QEC within six working days of the submission.
- e) Turnitin report, submitted by QEC, shall only be considered as valid and final.
- f) There will be only two attempts of non-repository to check acceptable similarity index of 19% or below and only two attempts of repository run by QEC.
- g) No thesis shall be sent for evaluation unless the similarity index falls within the permissible limit.
- h) In case of re-Defense with major changes, it will be treated as a fresh similarity check. Earlier attempts will not be counted.
- i) If a student fails to achieve the required/ acceptable similarity index of 19% or below through **two repository attempts**, he will be ceased from the program

Plagiarism Check

- a) In case plagiarism in a thesis is detected at any stage after the submission of thesis, it will be dealt with as per HEC plagiarism policy.
- b) In disciplines where plagiarism check software is not available, an affidavit prepared on Rs.100/- stamped paper duly signed by the student and countersigned by the supervisor shall be submitted.
- c) The text of the affidavit shall be provided by the respective Faculty/ department.
- d) Plagiarism detected at any point, even after issuance of degree, is punishable under the rules as per HEC policy on plagiarism.
- e) NUML has zero-tolerance on submission of fraudulent or plagiarized data/thesis/papers. Such cases will be forwarded to the Plagiarism Standing Committee of the university (PSC).

Plagiarism, Similarity Test and Open Defense

- a) Under no circumstances shall a dissertation based on plagiarized research be acceptable. It is the primary responsibility of both PhD researchers and their supervisors to prevent plagiarism. To avoid plagiarism, it is important to follow the provisions outlined in this document i.e., Governing Research Supervision and Research Ethics.
- b) For Plagiarism COPE guidelines must be followed.
- c) If a PhD dissertation is found to be plagiarized, it will be handled in accordance with the Anti-Plagiarism Policy issued by the Higher Education Commission, Pakistan, as updated from time to time.
- d) 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.
- e) An open defense of the dissertation is required after positive evaluation of the dissertation by committee members. In general, the following minimum principles and guidelines shall be ensured:
 - i. **Public Announcement:** On the university website and other forms of communication, so that anyone interested can participate.
 - ii. **Public Access:** Within or outside the university such as community/town halls or important public venues.
 - iii. **Neutral Chair:** To ensure that defense was conducted fairly and in accordance with the rules and regulations.

- iv. Review Committee: To evaluate the dissertation and defense.
- v. Presentation: of the dissertation by the PhD researcher
- vi. Question and Answer Session: To provide a basis for defense evaluation.
- vii. Objective Evaluation: based on the quality of the research and the researcher's ability to defend.
- viii. Final Decision: expressed in the following terms:
 - Pass or
 - Pass with minor amendments or
 - Deferred for resubmission and re-defense or
 - Fail (in exceptional circumstances and for the reasons to be recorded by the defense committee)

Research Publication

For award of PhD degree, a PhD researcher shall be required to publish research articles meeting the following criteria: At least:

- i. One research article in W category¹² journal or two research articles in X category journals, for Science disciplines
- ii. One research article in X category journal or two research articles in Y category journals, for Social Science disciplines
- iii. The PhD researcher shall be the first author of these publications.
- iv. The research article shall be relevant to the PhD research work of the PhD researcher.
- v. The article shall be published after approval of the research synopsis.
- vi. The article shall be published in a relevant research journal.

Evaluation Procedure

Selection of Examiners

- a) The process of selection of examiner/s will be initiated by the respective department and will be sent to the respective Dean.
- b) The Dean will recommend the examiner/s for approval by the Competent Authority. The academics and examination branch will be responsible to review and scrutinize the PhD cases in terms of timelines and other University and HEC requirements.
- c) Thesis should be accepted for evaluation well in time. It will be accepted by the department keeping in view sufficient time for evaluation **AND IN LINE WITH NUML TIMELINE FOR RESEARCH WORK.**
- d) After successful similarity check report from QEC the student will formally submit his thesis to his supervisor.
- e) The Dean on the recommendations of HoD/coordinator will send the thesis to reviewer (approved as per 25th Academic council decision for reviewers) within 10 working days.
- f) The identity of the evaluator will be kept confidential.
- g) All examiners will be requested and persuaded to submit their evaluation report/s within eight weeks of receipt of the thesis. After the expiry of this period, a reminder will be sent to the examiner/s after every 15 days up to a maximum of two months only.
- h) In case of refusal or no response from the evaluator/s, the thesis will be sent immediately to (a) new evaluator/s.

- i) Evaluation reports shall be shared with the scholar to ensure incorporation of changes before Defense.

Foreign/External Evaluation of Thesis

- a. After successful plagiarism check, the thesis must be evaluated by **1 x foreign expert** who shall be a PhD faculty member from the world top 500 universities ranked by the Times Higher Education (THE) or QS World ranking in the year corresponding to dissertation evaluation year AND
- b. **Two Pakistani-based experts** in the relevant field with sound reputation OR Professors from any Pakistani university having a minimum H- Index 15 of social sciences AND
- c. **1 x internal expert** from NUML having PhD in the relevant field.
- d. In case, if the Scholar is a NUML faculty member, the Thesis will be sent to **Three** external reviewers and no internal reviewer from the University.

Composition of Thesis Defense Committee (TDC)

- i. Pro Rector (Academic) Chairman
- ii. Concerned Dean
- iii. Concerned Head of Departments
- iv. 1 x Local External Examiner
- v. 1 x Internal Examiner from NUML (Two local external examiners, in case if the candidate is NUML's faculty member)
- vi. Supervisor
- vii. Co-Supervisor (If appointed)
- viii. Subject Expert (optional)
- ix. Director Academics (Non-voting member)
- x. Director QEC (Non-voting member)

Thesis Defense

- a. Thesis defense will be an Open Defense which will be held only after all reports have been received and reviewed by the Supervisor and proposed changes, if any, have been incorporated. After the open defense a close viva/Defense session may be conducted by the TDC.
- b. Result of defense will be declared.
- c. After Defense, the scholar will be responsible to resubmit the spiral bound copy of dissertation to his supervisor after incorporation of all changes. The supervisor will obtain approval of HoD/Dean on this copy.
- d. Finally, the student will submit the error free bound copy of the thesis to his HoD for approval/signature of Dean.
- e. Thesis should be accepted for evaluation well in time. It will be accepted by the department keeping in view sufficient time for valuation. A minimum of one and half (1.5) years should be spared for evaluation of Ph.D. thesis and completion of all other formalities.

Thesis Re-Defense

- a. A student failing in the 1st attempt of defense may be given another chance upon recommendation of the TDC. No Third chance is given. The TDC reserves the right (on a majority decision) to reject a thesis without giving second chance if the performance of the student is extremely poor. Similarity check of the revised document is mandatory for re-defense.
- b. Similarity check attempts carried out for the 1st defense will not be counted as chance(s) for the Similarity check for the revised document.

Thesis Grading

in the transcript)

PhD thesis shall be graded as under: - (the grade will be reflected

- a. Distinction: Unconditional pass – no changes / amendments.
- b. Honors: Pass with minor revisions–some changes/amendments required.
- c. Pass: Satisfactory Thesis and satisfactory performance or pass in 2nd attempt.

Completion of PhD Degree

A student must register for all semesters till formal submission of his PhD Thesis. However, date of notification for PhD degree will be treated as completion date of the degree.

Degree Completion Timeline

- a) The PhD degree shall be awarded by the universities not before the completion of three years or six regular semesters and not after completion of eight years or 16 regular semesters, save exceptions mentioned at clause (d below).
- b) The completion date of PhD degree shall be reckoned with the date of notification of the award of PhD degree.
- c) The maximum duration shall be determined from the date of student enrollment until the date of the completion notification of the PhD degree.
- d) In case a student is unable to secure a PhD degree within the prescribed timeframe and claims for extension in duration, the university may constitute appropriate authority and determine the causes for delay. In event of force majeure i.e., delay on account of circumstance beyond the control of student, the university may grant an extension in the period of award of PhD degree in accordance with the duration limiting factor(s) and shall also take corrective measures in case the delay is caused due to process or administrative reasons.