



SHAHEED ZULFIQAR ALI BHUTTO UNIVERSITY OF LAW

(Established by Govt. of Sindh under Sindh Act XIII of 2013)

Chaudhry Khaleeq-uz-Zaman Road, Near Lilly Bridge,

Clifton, Karachi, Pakistan. URL: www.szabul.edu.pk

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Dissertation / Thesis Evaluation Policy

1. Preamble

Dissertation is a mandatory part of the PhD program. It provides practical insight to the scholar about research and the scientific method of presentation. The dissertation not only contributes towards development of the scholar's skill but it also leads to the development of new knowledge, ideas and innovation that ultimately results in societal improvement and national growth.

2. Definition

Approved Supervisor: A PhD degree holder whose degree has been recognized by Higher Education Commission & who has completed the publication and other requirement if any and has been qualified by HEC as an HEC approved supervisor.

Residency requirement: A minimum time requirement that scholars must spend completing a part of the PhD degree requirements.

Similarity / originality report: It refers to a report that shows the sources and material that has been found similar from other articles, dissertation and other sources.

Dissertation: The meaning of DISSERTATION is an extended usually written treatment of a subject; specifically: one submitted for a doctorate degree.

3. Aim

Dissertation / thesis evaluation policy is designed to ensure that original, scientific and significant research work is presented. The policy aims at determining students' knowledge and expertise in their relevant field related to problem identification and development, investigation, evidence presentation and problem solution. The policy will ensure that research dissertations that significantly contributes towards addition of knowledge and new idea generation are developed by scholars.

4. Applicability

The policy of Dissertation / thesis evaluation will be applicable to all students who will be enrolled in the PhD program that will be offered by all departments of SZABUL. Moreover, this policy will also provide relevant guidelines to faculty, examination and other relevant department.

5. Supervision

The Phd dissertation shall be supervised by a faculty member who holds a PhD (or equivalent) degree and is an HEC approved supervisor at the time of appointment as a supervisor, the faculty member shall be a full-time faculty member of the university.



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6. Eligibility

Scholars who have successfully completed coursework and have at least 3.0 out of 4.0 CGPA moreover they have also successfully cleared their comprehensive examination will be eligible to submit their dissertation for evaluation. The scholars must also have met the residency requirement of at least 2 years in coursework before starting dissertation and at least 1 year has passed after the approval of synopsis by the competent board.

7. Plagiarism & Similarity

The dissertation submitted will be checked for plagiarism and similarity. Currently the university generates originality / similarity report through TURNITIN software as recommended by HEC however the university can use any tool or software at its discretion to check for similarity. The acceptable limit of similarity is less than 19% with no more than 5% from a single source.

7.1 Similarity / Originality report guidelines

- i. Similarity index is based on percentage of matched text out of total number of words in the document.
- ii. Instructor/Faculty member has to verify each and every similarity index for potential clue of plagiarism
- iii. If similarities in the document are significant then scholar/student may be guided accordingly or case may be reported on the basis of that evidence.
- iv. The similarities in the document may contain matches with author's previous work; it may be ignored if it is the same work.
- v. Bibliography and quoted material may be excluded after verifying. It is important to note that too much quoted material is not desired as per policy.
- vi. Common phrases and proper nouns also appear as similarities in the report; therefore, every instructor/faculty member should ignore matches returned from them.
- vii. Originality report will show similarities from three major sources: internet, periodicals and student repository. Similarities returned from student repository may be ignored if it is author's own same work. Similarities from Student repository helps in detecting collusion in the documents.
- viii. The graphs, tables, formulae and other pictorial material is not matched through the service therefore, it will only offer similarities with only text.
- ix. The instructor/faculty member supervising students/scholars can give verdict of plagiarism after interpreting report. The report will be used as evidence of the report.

7.2 Similarity / originality report guidelines for Instructors / evaluators

- i. Instructors are required to create classes and enroll students in these classes.
- ii. Students/Scholars should be informed that their work will be checked through anti-plagiarism service, therefore, they must follow proper documenting style in writing report/paper/thesis.
- iii. References/bibliography and table of contents must be removed from document which is submitted. If these are included then similarity index of the document will be increased.



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- iv. Instructor may allow students to view their reports.
- v. Instructor will maintain the privacy and will not disclose any report to anyone except the concerned person and to the concerned authorities, if required.
- vi. If Scholar/Student is involved in checking of papers and of theses of any other person, then Instructor shall report to University authorities about that with valid proof.
- vii. Originality/Similarity reports generated by the Turnitin provide clues in form of text matches. Proverbs, Universal Truths, phrases etc.
- viii. Scholars/Students must make sure that document they are submitting is in proper documenting style (i.e. IEEE, Chicago, MLA, APA etc.) and is free of plagiarism.
- ix. If the report has similarity index <19%, then benefit of doubt may be given to the author but, in case, any single source has similarity index $\geq 5\%$ without citation then it needs to be revised.
- x. If similarities of a report are from author's own (previous) work then these may be ignored only if the material has been cited by the author.
- xi. As documents which are checked through this service are not yet published and no benefit is acquired, therefore, no punishment or penalty is recommended. It is advised that similarities at greater level may be taken care of in the light of the HEC plagiarism policy.

8. Procedure & Structure

- a. The dissertation / thesis in hardcopy and softcopy will be submitted through the concerned supervisor to the Department of ORIC. The ORIC department will generate a similarity index report through Turnitin software. If the dissertation / thesis originality / similarity index report is within the limits specified in the section of "Plagiarism and Similarity" then the dissertation / thesis will be forwarded to 2 internal members for evaluation.
- b. The two internal members need to be holder of Doctoral degree from an HEC recognized institution.
- c. In the event the dissertation / thesis fails to successfully clear the plagiarism and similarity requirement then the said dissertation / thesis will be returned to student. In the event there is significant plagiarism / similarity found in the dissertation then the matter may be reported to the Plagiarism Standing Committee of the university.
- d. The internal evaluators after evaluating the thesis will approve or reject the thesis for onward evaluation by national or international evaluators. If the dissertation / thesis is approved the process of evaluation will commence. In the event there are issues found in the dissertation / thesis then the concerned student will be informed and the dissertation / thesis will be returned for correction.

9. National / International Evaluator

In addition to the PhD internal evaluators, the PhD dissertation / thesis must be evaluated by at least two external experts who may either be i) Pakistan-based Distinguished National Professor, Meritorious Professors or Tenure Track Professors or ii) PhD experts from academically advanced countries, however if PhD candidate publishes his or her dissertation research in a peer reviewed journal that is classified by HEC as category X or above, the PhD dissertation will only require only one external expert.



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10. Dissertation Evaluation

Each examiner will be provided with an Electronic Copy of Thesis and will be required to provide Controller of Examinations within two months of receipt of the thesis, a written report on the quality of the thesis. If there is no response from examiner in two months after reminders, the evaluator will be replaced. The examiners will submit their opinion and result on SZABUL approved Form of Evaluation, one of the following recommendations must be made by each examiner:

- a. Approved
- b. Minor changes are made and thesis to be submitted again.
- c. To permit the candidate to revise the thesis to incorporate the major changes suggested and resubmit it for examination.
- d. Rejected

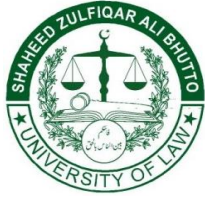
The thesis has to be approved by two evaluators, having received favorable result from one of the evaluators will not suffice and the dissertation / thesis will not to be considered approved. In such case resubmission if required by the second evaluator will need to be furnished. If the scholars wish they have the chance of opting for a third evaluator however charges will apply and will be paid by the scholar. In the event that the second evaluator has completely rejected the dissertation / thesis then the case will be forwarded to ASRB where it will be determined whether the dissertation / thesis will be sent to another evaluator or will it be returned to the scholar for fresh submission. In the case that ASRB decides to forward the dissertation / thesis for further evaluation then charges will apply and will be paid by the scholars.

11. Evaluation Charges

All evaluation charges and postage charges if any are to paid by the scholars. In case payment is to be made to foreign experts the charges will be as per the currency exchange rate. There may be a difference in amount at the time of collection of charges from scholars to disbursement of payment to evaluators which may require additional payment due to exchange rate difference, if such additional payment is required it will be charged from the scholars, apart from payment to evaluators university will also charge a dissertation / thesis evaluation fee from scholars.

12. ASRB Review

The result of dissertation / thesis evaluation will be presented in ASRB. Based on the results the ASRB will issue instructions to the scholar and in cases where resubmission is required a time frame will be determined and communicated by the ASRB to the research scholar. ASRB will also furnish complete details of the objections that has been identified by the evaluators and will communicate the same to the scholar. In the event the dissertation / thesis is completely rejected, scholars will be asked to furnish a fresh research work or they even may be asked to submit a fresh synopsis for approval from the ASRB. In the event that ASRB approves the dissertation / thesis based on opinions/recommendations/results of the two evaluators the scholar case will be processed for open defense as per related policy.



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13. Note

All amendments or improvements made by HEC from time to time shall automatically be considered incorporated and research scholars' cases will be considered accordingly



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Research Publication Policy

1. Preamble

Publication of research paper related to the dissertation of the PhD thesis ensures quality of research. The paper reviewed by the editorial board identifies issues and missing areas in the scholar research work which can be incorporated in the dissertation to make it more contributing and effective. The publication of research paper also justifies the significance of research work and its contribution to the relevant field.

2. Definition

HEC 'Y category': It refers to a system of recognition that has been adopted by Higher Education Commission where research journals has been categorized based on their impact and editorial.

Research Paper: A paper which is developed for publication and is based on empirical findings. The paper is structured as per the scientific method of research and is written in some form of writing format like APA, MALA Chicago and others

Original work: It refers to the material presented in the research publication or dissertation that is free from plagiarism and has not been copied from any other source. Furthermore, all sources are properly mentioned and cited.

Dissertation: The meaning of DISSERTATION is an extended usually written treatment of a subject; specifically: one submitted for a doctorate degree.

3. Aim

The aim of the research paper publication policy is to ensures quality of research. Publication of research paper in an accredited HEC recognized journal provides an idea about the expertise of research scholar in the relevant field, it also provides an insight into the scholars' ability to conduct scientifically grounded research. The publication also results in dissemination of new knowledge and ideas in relevant field.

4. Applicability

The policy of research paper publication will be applicable to all students who will be enrolled in the PhD program that will be offered by all departments of SZABUL. Moreover, this policy will also provide relevant guidelines to faculty and other relevant department.

5. Eligibility

Scholars who meet the following criteria will be eligible and qualify for publication of research. Any publication without meeting the following criteria will not be considered as fulfilment of research paper publication requirement for the award of PhD degree:



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- i. Successfully completed coursework.
- ii. Successfully cleared comprehensive examination.
- iii. Minimum CGPA of 3.0 out of 4.0
- iv. The status of PhD Researcher has been awarded by the university,
- v. Research synopsis has been approved by the competent board i.e. ASRB
- vi. Scholars will be eligible for research paper publication 6 months after the approval of synopsis.

6. Procedure & Structure

The research paper would comprise of all sections that are in line with the international standards of research publication. The PhD scholar should be the first author of the research paper publication and the concerned supervisor will be the coauthor. The research paper should not have more than 2 authors. Research paper needs to be published in an HEC recognized and approved 'Y category' (or above) journal. The journal can be national or international but it needs to be recognized by HEC and be categorized in 'Y category' or above at the time of publication. Acceptance of research paper will not be considered, only published research paper that appear either online on the journal website or are in print form will be considered. Scholars will be required to submit hardcopy of their publication along with proof of HEC recognition and categorization to the concerned Head of Department. The head of department will forward the details of publication by the scholars to the Dean for onward submission to ASRB for approval. The ASRB will review the publication to ensure that it is in line with HEC guidelines that are related to plagiarism, ethics and others.

7. Publication Charges

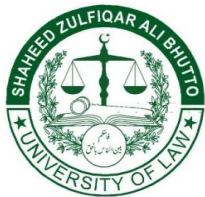
All expenditures, fees and charges that are related to publication will be paid by student. The university will not bear any cost related to publication and nor students will be reimbursed for any expenditures.

8. ASRB Review

ASRB will determine that the research publication is the authors' original work and is related to research work of the dissertation topic that has been approved by the board. The ASRB has the right to call in the author / research scholar for clarification of any dispute or issues that the board may find. After review the board will determine the status of research publication as "Accepted" or "Rejected". In the event the board accepts the publication as part of the requirement of the PhD program the students will continue to work on their dissertation and will be allowed to submit the same for evaluation.

9. Rejected by ASRB

In the event that the PhD scholar research publication is rejected by the board, the scholar will be required to publish another research paper in an HEC recognized 'Y category' or above journal. Once published the research publication will be forwarded to ASRB through the concerned personnel for approval. It is only after the approval of research publication that the dissertation of the PhD scholar will be accepted for evaluation.



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10. Note

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Comprehensive Examination Policy

1. Preamble

In order to ensure quality comprehensive exam are conducted as mandatory part of PhD program. It is a detailed exam covering topics from courses taught throughout the PhD program. Comprehensive exam attempts to test student capability to link topics that have been covered in different courses and come with the solution to questions.

2. Definition

Comprehensive exam: An Evaluation that measures a student's competency and mastery of concepts in the field of an academic discipline

PhD Scholar: It refers to the person who is eligible, qualified and has been admitted into a PhD program

PhD Researcher: It refers to a status which is granted after completing all coursework and successfully qualifying comprehensive exams. It basically status that the scholar can start research work as part of the PhD degree requirement.

Dissertation: The meaning of DISSERTATION is an extended usually written treatment of a subject; specifically: one submitted for a doctorate degree.

3. Aim

Comprehensive exams are conducted in order to measure student's competency and grasp of concepts in their respective field. The exam also determines whether the scholar is prepared and ready to move into the dissertation process of the PhD degree. The aim of comprehensive exam is to filter out scholars and ensure that only those scholars enter into the dissertation process and are awarded the status of PhD Candidacy who are qualified, competent and research ready.

4. Applicability

The policy of comprehensive examination will be applicable to all students who will be enrolled in the PhD program that will be offered by all departments of SZABUL. Moreover, this policy will also provide relevant guidelines to faculty and examination department.

5. Eligibility

The scholars having successfully completed the coursework of the relevant program and obtaining minimum CGPA 3.0 out of 4.0 will be eligible to appear in the comprehensive examination.

6. Procedure, Structure & Duration

A panel of examiners will be formulated by the concerned department to develop the comprehensive examination paper, the panel will comprise of 2 PhD from relevant field. Recommendation of the examiners will be made to the Dean by the concerned Head of Department. Upon approval the



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examiners will be provided with the list of courses and course outlines covered during the program by the scholars. The examiners will be required to develop a comprehensive examination paper preferably containing objective and subjective questions. The paper will be of 100 marks and will be for the duration of 3 hours. The examiners will be required to develop the paper from the topics that has been covered by the candidate during the course of the PhD program. The examiners are entrusted with the confidentiality of the paper and will be required to submit the paper to the Controller of Examination. The examination department will be responsible to schedule, conduct and announce the comprehensive examination.

7. Fees

Student will be required to register for the comprehensive examination by submitting an application to the examination department. A fee equivalent to one course will be charged for the comprehensive exam and will be submitted along with the application. In case the student is unable to clear the comprehensive examination and wishes to re-attempt the exam, the same fee shall be charged for the second attempt.

8. Results

After conduction of the comprehensive examination the papers will be handed over to the respective examiners for checking. The grading will be done on pass / fails basis. The examiners will get the result signed by the concerned head of department and will submit the same to the examination department for announcement of result. Upon announcement of result by the examination department the successful students will be allowed to start work on dissertation and the status of PhD Researcher will be awarded.

9. Failure of Comprehensive Exam

In the event that the PhD scholar fails to clear the comprehensive examination or is absent in the comprehensive examination the candidate will be allowed a second / last attempt to appear in the comprehensive examination in the subsequent semester. If the student is unable to pass the comprehensive examination in the second attempt or is absent then the scholar will be dropped from the program. PhD scholars who are unable to pass the comprehensive examination may be issued a transcript stating all the courses completed during the program. The transcript will also state the status of the scholar as "PhD Incomplete". The student will not be allowed to continue further.

10. Note

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Open Defense Policy

1. Preamble

The justification and requirement for an open defense of PhD dissertation by the respective scholar is twofold; one is it provides the opportunity to the scholar to express, present and defend his research in front of panel of experts which provides further refinement in research. Second is that it disseminates knowledge to other research scholars about their own work.

2. Definition

Open Defense: An oral evaluation that measures a student's competency and mastery of concepts in the field of an academic discipline also known as Viva Voice

PhD Scholar: It refers to the person who is eligible, qualified and has been admitted into a PhD program

Open Defense Evaluation Panel: It refers to a panel of experts in front of whom the scholars presents and defend their dissertation/research\ work.

Dissertation: The meaning of DISSERTATION is an extended usually written treatment of a subject; specifically: one submitted for a doctorate degree.

3. Aim

The purpose and aim of open defense is to share the results of the study and to demonstrate to the committee and the academic community that the scholar has done work of sufficient quality to receive the PhD degree. It assesses the merits of the completed dissertation research. Furthermore, it also demonstrates the scholars' ability of public speaking and presentation to an open forum. It also determines scholar's ability to interpret and explain research results and implications.

4. Applicability

The policy of open defense will be applicable to all students who will be enrolled in the PhD program that will be offered by all departments of SZABUL. Moreover, this policy will also provide relevant guidelines to faculty, examination department and other concerned department.

5. Eligibility

Scholars having successfully completed their dissertation. The dissertation has been evaluated and approved by two evaluators. The supervisor has issued a certificate stating that the recommended changes if any by the two evaluators have been incorporated by the scholar in the dissertation and the scholar's dissertation has been approved by the ASRB will be eligible for open defense.

6. Procedure & Structure

Once the ASRB has allowed the dissertation to be defended the examination department will schedule an open defense for the defense of the dissertation by the scholars. The schedule will be communicated



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to all concerns by the examination department. A panel will be formulated for the open defense, the panel will comprise of Dean, two PhD or equivalent faculty members, Director ORIC, one external associate professor or above and relevant Head of Department. The Dean shall be the chairperson of the panel. All members of the committee will pose questions related to scholars' research work/dissertation and based on answers will "Approve" or "Reject" the research work of the scholar. The panel must give a unanimous vote of approval to the scholar. In the event the votes are not unanimous the objections and observations made by the members will be communicated and explained to the scholar for incorporation of the same in the dissertation. The panel will also provide a time frame to the student for resubmission of dissertation. The supervisor will review the dissertation after incorporation of the observations made by the members of the panel. Upon satisfaction the supervisor will issue a certificate stating that the changes required by the panels members have been incorporated in the dissertation and forward the same to the concerned Dean. The Dean upon receipt of the certificate will give approval stating that the scholar has successfully defended the dissertation in an open forum and his case may be further processed for award of PhD degree to ASRB.

7. Remuneration

The university will pay to all members of the open defense evaluation panel along with external reviewers an appropriate remuneration amount for their services.

8. Results

The Open Defense Evaluation panel will submit the result to the examination department, the controller of examination will announce the result of the open defense and the same shall be submitted to ASRB. The ASRB will furnish the list of all scholars who have successfully defended their PhD dissertation open defense and forward the same to the examination department for onward processing with respect to issuance of degree and other academic documents

9. Note

All amendments or improvements made by HEC from time to time shall automatically be considered incorporated and research scholars' cases will be considered accordingly