

VIGNAN UNIVERSITY

RULES AND REGULATIONS OF RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

PREAMBLE

The objectives of these programmes are to impart research training to the scholar, and prepare him/her for a career in independent investigation and original research so as to enable him to make a significant contribution to knowledge in his/her field and profession. The training programme shall ensure that it is not, an end in itself, but a means for a fruitful research career.

To achieve these objectives, the training programme shall ensure the following:

- § Acquisition of fundamental knowledge in the chosen discipline.
 - § Acquisition of in-depth knowledge in the field of research.
 - § Training in the use of research tools of the field, and develop skill and capability to conduct original research.
- The testing and examination procedure to measure the achievement of these objectives is prescribed in these Regulations under appropriate headings.**

DEFINITIONS

- § **“Research”** means systematic study or investigation in order to discover new knowledge in the form of facts/patterns or new interpretation of ideas or inventions of new devices or to explore a unified theory to explain diverse facts.
- § **“Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)”** signifies that the awardee of the degree has undertaken a substantial piece of original research, which has been conducted and reported by the holder under proper academic supervision, and in a research environment for a prescribed period.
- § **“Research Student/Scholar”** means a student who is admitted to Ph.D. Programme of the Vignan University through the procedures adopted by the University.
- § **“Supervisor”** means a member of the faculty of Vignan University or a person recognized by the Vignan University and authorized to be a supervisor who supervises the research work carried out by the Research student/scholar for Ph.D.
- § **“Co-Supervisor”** means a person who may or may not be a member of the faculty of Vignan University, who is recognized by the University to supervise the research work of a student jointly with a Supervisor.

Functions of the Supervisor(s):

The functions of the Supervisor/Co-Supervisor shall be as under:

- § Assessment of the suitability and aptitude of the applicant for the proposed research work and reporting the same to the appropriate Committee, and the facilities required for the same.
- § Critical evaluation of the proposed research work of the applicant with a view to ensure that it would be a piece of original work, and when completed, it would positively contribute to the knowledge in the field.

§ Guidance and supervision of the work of the scholars after the approval and registration.

The Co-Supervisor (if any) shall undertake joint supervision/guidance of the work of the scholar under mutual consultations with the supervisor.

§ **“University Research Committee (URC)”** is the apex body that administers the research programmes of the University. The Vice-chancellor of the University constitutes the committee by nominating a Professor from each Department/School. The Vice-chancellor shall be the chairperson of the URC and Director (Research) shall be the Member - Secretary.

§ **“Doctoral Monitoring Committee (DMC)”**: The formation of the DMC shall be initiated by the supervisor(s) to monitor the progress of each of the research students. The DMC shall consist of supervisor(s) and a minimum of two faculty members, otherwise eligible to be supervisors, of the concerned School/Department in which the research student pursues his/her research work, with the HOD/Dean of the School or his/her nominee as the chairperson. A maximum of two members may be drawn from related department(s)/Schools of the University or from reputed research organizations to this committee. Director (Research) is another member of DMC. The number of members of the DMC shall not exceed 7 (Seven).

§ **“Board of Examiners of Thesis (BET)”**: Board of Examiners for examination of a thesis shall consist of three external examiners. The external examiners shall be chosen by the Chairperson, URC from a panel of fifteen members proposed by the DMC. The DMC shall propose the panel of examiners at the time of submission of synopsis of the thesis.

§ **“Oral Defence Evaluation Committee (ODEC)”**: Oral Defense Evaluation is an essential component of the evaluation process. Oral Defence Evaluation Committee of a research student shall evaluate the performance of the Viva-voce examination or oral defence of the research work carried out by him/her. The committee shall consist of the external examiner of BET selected by the Chairperson, URC and all the members of DMC. Chairman, DMC shall be the Chairman of ODEC. If none of the External examiner of BET is available for evaluation of oral defense, an alternative examiner shall be selected by the Chairperson, URC preferably from the panel of examiners submitted by the DMC.

§ The comments of the three examiners of the thesis shall be sent to the supervisor as also to the examiner who will be present at the oral defense at-least one week before the oral defense or as soon as they are received by the University. Also, the comments are supplied to the members of the DMC at the time of oral defense.

1. ELIGIBILITY AND ADMISSION OF CANDIDATES

1.1. Categories of candidature

The University shall admit students to the research program leading to Ph.D. degree under the following categories

- a) **Full Time:** Students under this category shall work full time for Ph.D. course work and thesis and may receive assistantship from the Institute or fellowship from CSIR/UGC or any other recognized funding agency or may be self financed.
- b) **Part Time:** Persons employed in academic institutions/universities (including Vignan University)/R&D organizations/industries that have facilities for research may be considered for admission into the Ph.D. programme of the University, through the normal admission procedure. They shall fulfill the stipulated requirements for Ph.D. admission.
- c) **External:** Candidate employed in an organization/institution/industry that has facilities to carry out research in the candidate's chosen field, can register as an external candidate. He/She can take permission to work externally in his/her parent organization, after the course work is completed. He/She should have supervisor in that organization, authorized by the University. He/She may also have another supervisor from the University.
- d) **Project Fellow:** Persons working on different research projects at Vignan University may be admitted to the Ph.D. programme provided they satisfy the eligibility criteria, subject to the consent of the Principal Investigator of the project.

1.2. Educational Qualifications

For Engineering disciplines, candidates must have obtained Post Graduate Degree or equivalent in the relevant engineering field. For management studies, the candidate must have Post Graduate Degree in the relevant field or any Masters degree with relevant experience. Candidates must have obtained minimum marks of 60% aggregate in the qualifying degree. However URC may give 5% relaxation if the candidate is found otherwise admissible by the selection committee.

Candidates who have qualified in the UGC/CSIR/NET examination, or awarded with Research Fellowship by UGC/CSIR/Government Organization are exempted from written test for Ph.D admission but however they should appear for the interview.

1.3. Eligibility

- § A candidate who wishes to work for Ph.D degree under full time/part time/external scheme should apply in the prescribed form on or before the due date fixed for the same.
- § External candidates sponsored by and employed in reputed Research and Development Organizations/National Laboratories/Industry having research and development facilities recognized by Department of Science and Technology or by the University Research Committee of the Vignan University, Vadlamudi on request by the Industry can apply for external registration.
- § Members of faculty and research staff of the University who wish to work on a part time basis for Ph.D Degree should also apply in the prescribed form on or before the due dates.
- § Part time candidates from outside the University must be a full time/regular faculty of AICTE approved degree level engineering institutes or scientists/Engineers in organizations.

1.4. Test and Interview

- § Eligible candidates have to appear for a Test and Interview
- § HOD/Dean of the School will forward the list of selected candidates for admission into Ph.D programme of their Department/School to Director (Research).
- § The Director (Research) in consultation with Director-Admissions will recommend the list of selected candidates to the Chairperson of the URC to complete admission formalities.

1.5. Admission

- § Candidate whose selection is approved by the Chairperson, URC, will be admitted to Ph.D programme after payment of prescribed fees and completion of the procedures.
- § Ordinarily, a candidate is not eligible for re-registration for Ph.D after cancellation of his/her earlier registration for any reason. However, based on the merits of the individual case, and taking into consideration any special circumstances, a candidate may be considered for re-registration.

1.6. Choice of Supervisor(s)

- § Allotment of research scholars to Supervisors will be made by the Head/Dean of the School taking into consideration the preferences of the research scholars and Supervisors with their consent obtained in writing.
- § There shall not be more than two guides for a research scholar.

1.7. Supervisorship

- § All permanent faculty members of the institute/university or regular faculty of AICTE approved Engineering/Management Institutes with Ph.D qualification and having 3 research papers in referred international journals or international conferences of repute are eligible to guide Ph.D students.
- § Notwithstanding what is stated above, the Chairperson, URC reserves the right to approve any faculty member as Research Supervisor, depending upon the merit of the case.

1.8. Change of Supervisor

- § A research scholar may seek to change his/her supervisor giving reasons. The DMC shall evaluate the case and may recommend the change to the Chairperson of the URC, who may permit the change.

2. Doctoral Monitoring Committee

The Doctoral Monitoring Committee shall consist of normally five members and a maximum of seven members as given below:

1. The HOD/Dean of the Department/School or his/her nominee shall be the Chairman of the Committee.
2. Director (Research) – Member

3. The Supervisor(s) – Member(s)
4. One/Two members of the Department/School who are eligible to be supervisor of a research student.
5. One/Two experts from the Schools/Departments related to the domain of research – Member(s)

Functions of the Doctoral Monitoring Committee:

After the registration of the scholar for the programme, the Doctoral Monitoring Committee shall perform the following functions:

- § Shall recommend the subjects of course work for the scholar as specified and as approved by the URC. The recommendation in the prescribed format shall be submitted to the Controller of Examinations through Director (Research) for conducting the qualifying examination.
- § Shall make at least half yearly review of the scholar's research work, in association with the supervisor(s).
- § Shall forward the review report to the Chairperson, URC, through Director (Research) on the progress of scholar's research programme in the prescribed format.
- § The progress of the research scholar will be categorized as one of the following by the DMC:
Excellent/Very Good/Good/Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory
- § Suggest suitable remedial action to the appropriate authority if the scholar's progress is not satisfactory for any reason.
- § Shall organize a Seminar after completion of the research work before submission of the synopsis of the scholar.
- § Shall conduct synopsis meeting.
- § When the scholar submits the synopsis of his/her thesis, the DMC, after due verification of the compliance requirements, shall recommend names of examiners for the evaluation of the Thesis.
- § On receipt of the observations/recommendation of the examiners of the thesis, shall submit these with the Committee's recommendations to the Chairperson, URC through the Director (Research) for further necessary action.

3. Course Work

The Ph.D. Programme is aimed at giving a broad based training in the concerned field in addition to specialization in a particular area.

- § Completion of post-graduate/doctoral level coursework of 8-12 credits is compulsory for doctoral students entering with M.E./M.Tech./M.S./M.Phil/MBA or equivalent degree.
- § The candidates are required to complete the course work with minimum marks of 50% in each subject. If a candidate scores less than 50% in any subject he/she may take further attempts to get 50%. In case a candidate fails to clear a subject with 50% marks in three attempts, his/her admission shall be cancelled.
- § The full time candidates may attend to classes along with P.G., students of the respective department or allied departments, if the subjects prescribed to them are offered in the ongoing PG programs.
- § The External and Part time candidates will be permitted to write examination after attending the classes along with PG students (or) the classes conducted exclusively for them. However, they must satisfy the 'minimum residential requirement' period within two years after admission.

4. Progress Report

- § A research scholar shall submit within two weeks after the end of each 6 months period a written report of research work done by him/her in the prescribed proforma to the Supervisor who shall forward it to the HOD/Dean with his remarks for consideration by the DMC.
- § A research scholar shall appear before the DMC once every semester after completing the course work and 'registration seminar' to present his/her work for Progress evaluation.
- § Meetings of the DAC will be convened twice in an year to assess the progress in of research work in the School/Department and recommend renewal of scholarship/registration wherever applicable. If the progress is tardy, the DAC shall record the reasons for tardiness, and suggest corrective measures.
- § The progress of the research scholar will be categorized as one of the following by the DMC:
Excellent/Very Good/Good/Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory

The progress report in the prescribed proforma is to be approved by the members of DMC before transmission to Director (Research).

5. Registration Seminar

- § In addition to the course work, the candidate has to clear a "Registration Seminar", during which he/she presents the proposed topic, work plan, literature study etc.
- § Circular of "Registration Seminar" will be sent to all the Departments/Schools. Interested faculty members and students (preferably research scholars & PG students) can attend this seminar. They can ask questions and/or offer suggestions to the candidate about how the work can go on.
- § Candidate has to submit the report of "Registration Seminar" to DMC, one week before the scheduled date of the seminar.
- § DMC assesses the presentation seminar and decides whether the candidate can go ahead with his proposed work plan. DMC's assessment report should be sent to Director (Research).
- § There after, the candidate has to present his work to DMC at the end of every semester and DMC sends its assessment report to Director (Research) till the completion of thesis work.

6. Cancellation of Registration

- § The registration of a research scholar whose progress is not satisfactory or who has not enrolled in person for any one semester is liable to be cancelled by the DMC or by the Chairman, URC or his nominee.
- § The registration of a research scholar who has not submitted his/her thesis by the end of the extended period as provided in the Regulations will be cancelled administratively by the nominee of the Chairman, URC.

7. Minimum Residential Requirement

The residential requirement is essential to build the research atmosphere in the Institute. The residential requirement for external/part time Ph.D. candidate will normally be 12

weeks at the Institute, including the duration spent for course work. The duration of residency may, however, be spread over the duration of research activity. **The fulfillment of residency requirement has to be certified by the Doctoral Monitoring Committee at the time of submission of his/her thesis.**

- § The scholar for the Ph.D. programme should normally carry out his/her research work at the Institute. In special cases, depending on the merit of each case, the DMC may permit a scholar to do part of his/her work in another institution/organization.
- § All scholars registered for Ph.D. work at this Institute shall make at least half yearly presentation of his/her work on a date and time as directed by the concerned Chairman of DMC. This half yearly presentation, henceforth, will be known as the semester progress report of the scholar's work. The venue of the yearly presentation shall be the Institute. A copy of the Annual Progress Report with the comments of the DMC must be sent to the Director (Research) within a week of the presentation.

8. Duration of Programme

- § Research Scholars can submit thesis at any time after completing 3 years from the date of registration.
Early Submission:
If a research scholar desires to submit a thesis prior to the completion of three years, he/she should have
 - § completed two/two-and-half years (for FT/PT scholars respectively)
 - § published at least two (2) international journal papers
 - § have recommendation of DMC
 - § have an outstanding contribution
 - § Cleared the 'registration seminar'
 - § passed the prescribed courses
 - § have valid reason thereof for early submission
- § The maximum duration to submit the thesis is within 5 years from the date of registration.
- § However, the URC may extend the period of submission of thesis by not more than 3 years on valid reasons and on the recommendation of the DMC.

9. Change of Registration from Part time to Full time Programme and vice-versa

- § A student admitted to Part time/External registration programme may be allowed to change his/her registration to Full time studies at the beginning of a semester on the recommendation of DMC and with the approval of URC. However, for determining the duration of the programme, one half of the period spent, as a Part time student, will be counted.
- § Similarly, a student admitted to a Full time Ph.D programme may be permitted to change to a Part time Ph.D programme on a request from him/her provided:
 - § He/She has completed the course work and clear the registration seminar.
 - § Get the request endorsed by the Supervisor(s) and the DMC.
 - § Produce a no objection certificate from the Head/Director of the Institution/University/Organization, which he/she proposes to join.

10. External Registration Scheme

- § A candidate working in Research and Development Establishment with adequate research and library facilities may be considered for admission to Ph.D. programme provided they satisfy the minimum eligibility conditions. There must be a competent person to supervise his work in that organization. The candidate should provide the Bio-data of the prospective supervisor. External Registration will be granted only when the URC recognizes that the prospective supervisor has necessary academic qualification.
- § The Departments/Schools will have to identify an internal guide to each of the candidates who would work under the External Registration Scheme. If suitable guide is not available in Department, the External Registration to such a candidate will not be granted.
- § It is for the DMC to recommend to the URC for approval of an organization for carrying out Ph.D. research in a specified area under the External Registration Scheme. An application for admission from a candidate working in the approved organization will be considered only if he/she wishes to work in the specified area recognized by Vignan University.

11. Fee Particulars

On selection for admission, candidates shall be required to pay the prescribed fee as determined by URC from time to time. The fee and deposits have to be paid on stipulated dates regularly every semester, till the successful completion of the programme and submission of thesis or cancellation of the admission as the case may be. If the fee is not paid by the stipulated due date, a late fee will be levied. Non-payment of the prescribed fee beyond the extended due date will lead to the cancellation of admission with prior notice to the candidate.

12. Seminar prior to thesis submission

Each candidate shall present a seminar before submission of thesis in the concerned Department/School to the DMC on the research work carried out by him/her. The DMC is empowered to make suggestions for improving the work on the basis of the seminar. The seminar is followed by synopsis and thesis submission.

Guidelines for Pre-submission/Synopsis Seminar

1. Two copies of the thesis have to be submitted for review to the members of the Doctoral Monitoring Committee (DMC) at least two weeks in advance.
2. The copies have to be duly certified by the supervisor and are properly written following the guidelines for writing the thesis.
3. The exact title of thesis may also be discussed during the seminar if the same is not already approved by the Doctoral Monitoring Committee.
4. Presentation of approximately 2 hours should be made using Power Point Presentation. The presentation must cover the following.
 - § Objectives and Scope of the Study
 - § Literature review (briefly 2-3 slides only)
 - § Identification of the research gaps based on literature review
 - § Problem Formulation
 - § Research Methodology
 - § Experimentation/ Data Collection/Analysis
 - § General Conclusions
 - § Specific Conclusions /Contributions of the research

§ Further Scope of Research

5. The presentation should concentrate on the candidate's work/contribution predominately.
6. The suggestions/corrections given during the seminar shall be discussed with supervisor and incorporated in thesis.

13. Synopsis of Thesis/Dissertation

1. On satisfactory completion of the research work carried out after successful completion of all prescribed courses and seminars, the candidate shall submit to the Doctoral Monitoring Committee through the Research Supervisor, fifteen copies of the synopsis of the Ph.D. work carried out.
2. The earliest date on which synopsis submission shall be three months before the date of submission of thesis as per norms.
3. The synopsis shall be accepted only when the Research Scholar has at least one paper either published or accepted for publication in a refereed journal.
4. The synopsis viva-voce/ synopsis meeting shall be conducted by the Doctoral Monitoring Committee. After satisfactory presentation of the research work reported in the synopsis, the Doctoral Monitoring Committee shall forward fifteen copies of the revised synopsis including the feed back from the Synopsis viva to the Controller of Examinations along with panel of examiners.

There shall be three different panels of five examiners each.

§ One from outside India

§ One from within the State

§ One from outside the state

14. Submission of Thesis/Dissertation

Each Candidate, after completing the due formalities is required to submit his/her thesis along with the prescribed application form and enclosed with a Demand Draft for evaluation fee (which may be fixed URC from time to time) in favor of the Registrar. A candidate may submit the thesis any time during the stipulated duration/ extended duration of research, as the case may be.

15. Preparation of the Ph.D Thesis/Dissertation

1. The thesis shall be prepared in an organized and scholarly fashion with an account of the original research work of the candidate leading to the discovery of new facts or techniques or correlation of facts already known (analytical, experimental etc.) and demonstrating a quality as to make a definite contribution to the advancement of knowledge and the candidate's ability to undertake independent research and present the findings in an appropriate manner with actual accomplishments of the work, plainly stated and honestly appraised.
2. Eight copies of the thesis shall be prepared and submitted to the Controller of Examinations in accordance with the format and specification prescribed. Thesis shall be submitted within six months of the approval of the Synopsis by the DMC. The research scholar also shall submit three copies of the abstract of the thesis to Director (Research).

3. The thesis shall include a certificate from the concerned Supervisor (and Co-Supervisor if any) to the effect that the thesis is a record of the bonafide research work carried out by the candidate under his/her/their supervision and guidance and that the work reported in the thesis has not been submitted elsewhere for a degree or diploma.
4. Instructions to candidates for preparing synopsis and thesis shall be laid down by the Controller of Examinations.

Fees shall be paid by the candidates on six monthly basis, till the submission of the thesis; the candidate will submit a no dues certificate from all concerned to the Controller of Examination.

16. Thesis Evaluation

1. The thesis shall be referred to the three examiners nominated by the Chairperson, URC from the panel of names recommended by the DMC.
2. The Director (Research) shall take such steps through the Controller of Examinations as deemed necessary to enable the reports of the Examiners to be received as quickly as possible.
The examiners are expected to send, in the prescribed form, their reports within two months from the date of receipt of the thesis.
3. The examiner shall include in his / her report an overall assessment, placing the thesis in one of the following categories:
 - § Recommended for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy: Highly commended / commended.
 - § Revision required (need not be resubmitted)
 - § Revised thesis be resubmitted
 - § Rejected
4. If all the examiners recommended the award of the degree, thesis shall be provisionally accepted. Any minor revision, modification etc., suggested by the examiners shall be carried out before the oral examination is arranged.
5. If all the examiners recommended rejection, the thesis shall be rejected and the registration of the research scholar stands cancelled.
6. If one examiner recommends the award of the degree while the others recommends rejection, then the scholar be given an additional time of not less than one year to resubmit the thesis by incorporating the justification to the comments given by the rejected-mentioned examiners and this will purely depend upon the URC. If the scholar is unable to resubmit within the stipulated time the thesis shall be rejected and the registration of the research scholar stands cancelled. If two of three examiners recommended the award, the thesis shall be provisionally accepted.
 - § If any examiner recommends revision of the thesis the candidate shall be permitted only once to revise and resubmit the thesis within 6 months.
7. Individual cases not covered by the above clauses shall be referred to the Chairperson, URC. On deemed fit reasons, the Vice-Chancellor shall refer to the Director (Research) which in turn shall refer to the DMC, if necessary.

17. Oral Examination

1. The Board of ODE shall be
 - § HOD/Dean of the School - Chairman
 - § One of the Indian examiners who valued the thesis to be nominated by Chairperson, URC

- § Supervisor (Guide)
- § DMC members are invitees

2. The decision of the Board of Examiners shall be final.

18. Award of Ph.D Degree

If the Board of ODE recommends, the candidate will be awarded Ph.D. Degree with the approval of the Board of Management.

19. Publication of Thesis/Dissertation

1. Papers arising out of the thesis may be published by the candidate.
2. The thesis as a whole shall not be published by the candidate without the specific approval of the Board of Research and Consultancy of the University.
3. The abstract of the thesis will be uploaded on to the internet by the Director (Research).
4. The same copy of the thesis in CD-ROM, shall also be submitted to Director (Research) immediately for depository with UGC and uploading in INFLIBNET.

20. The Act of Plagiarism

In the case of research scholars who have copied a dissertation / thesis / book for Ph.D. degree his / her thesis shall be forfeited and his / her research registration shall be terminated in this university and also he / she shall be debarred to register for any other programme in this University.

Also, the recognition of his / her supervisor shall be withdrawn for a period of 5 years and he / she shall be debarred from guiding the research scholars for any research programme in this University till such period.

21. Power to Modify

Notwithstanding anything contained in the above said regulations, the University Research Committee reserves the right to modify any of the above said regulations from time to time.