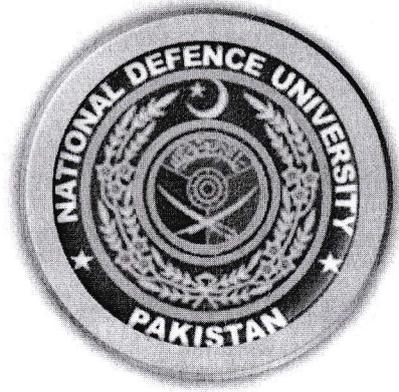


**Standard Operating Procedure**  
**Supervision of MS/ MPhil/ PhD Dissertation at**  
**NDU**



Version: 3.0

**NATIONAL DEFENCE UNIVERSITY ISLAMABAD**

This SOP contains 05 pages and it has been prepared in line with the provisions of NDU Academic Regulations/ NDU Statutes & HEC guidelines, and will remain enforced till amended, cancelled or suspended. It shall be revised / amended after approval of any changes in the NDU Academic Regulations/ Statutes, HEC guidelines, after the statutory bodies' decision or as and when considered necessary by the Competent Authority. No provision of this document shall supersede information / direction contained in the NDU Academic Regulations/ NDU Statutes, HEC guidelines or other superior documents on the subject.





## List of Abbreviations

DAI	Degree Awarding Institutes
Fol	Following
FCS	Faculty of Contemporary Studies
FSS	Faculty of Security Studies
GEP	Graduate Education Policy
HEC	Higher Education Commission
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HOD	Head of Department
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
NAHE	National Academy of Higher Education
NDU	National Defence University
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure



## Supervision of MS/ MPhil/ PhD Dissertation at NDU

1. **Gen.** The supervision of MS/ MPhil/ PhD dissertations involves a collaborative partnership between supervisors and scholar, focusing on guidance, feedback, and scholarly exchange. Supervisors offer expertise and support, while scholars contribute innovative research efforts. Through regular interaction and rigorous assessment, this process fosters a dynamic learning environment and produces the high-quality scholarly work.

2. **Aim.** The aim of this SOP is to establish clear guidelines and procedures for the supervision of MS/ MPhil/ PhD dissertations at NDU, with the overarching goal of ensuring academic integrity, fostering productive mentorship relationships, and facilitating the successful completion of high-quality research projects by scholars.

3. **Criteria to Be a MS/ MPhil/ Equivalent Research Theses Supervisor at FCS<sup>1</sup>:**  
The fol general guidelines shall be observed while allocating a MS/ MPhil/ Equivalent Research Theses Supervisor at FCS. At the time of supervisory role allocation, the faculty member(s) must:-

- a. Have MS/ MPhil or equivalent qualifications (**with thesis**)
- b. Have minimum of 4 years relevant teaching/ research/ professional experience in a HEC recognized university or research/ professional organization, after getting MS/ MPhil or equivalent degree and this relevant teaching/ research/ professional experience is to be evaluated by the concerned HOD.
- c. Co-supervise at least two MS/ MPhil/ Equivalent level thesis along with a senior/ HEC approved supervisor, while gaining 4 years' experience.
- d. Fulfil the criteria mentioned above at *paras 3 (a. to c.)* of subj SOP and he/she can supervise the research of up to 5 MS/ MPhil or Equivalent Theses.

4. **Criteria to Be a MS/ MPhil/ Equivalent Research Theses Supervisor at FSS<sup>1</sup>:**  
The fol general guidelines shall be observed while allocating a MS/ MPhil/ Equivalent Research Theses Supervisor at FSS. At the time of supervisory role allocation, the faculty member(s) must:-

- a. Have MS/ MPhil or equivalent qualifications (**with or without thesis**)
- b. Have minimum of 4 years relevant teaching/ research/ professional experience in a HEC recognized university or research/ professional organization, after getting MS/

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<sup>1</sup> HEC letter No. (1-1 (NQF)/QAD/2017/HEC/501 Date: July 21, 2017).



MPhil or equivalent degree and this relevant teaching/ research/ professional experience is to be evaluated by the concerned HOD.

- c. Co-supervise at least two MS/ MPhil/ Equivalent level thesis along with a senior/ HEC approved supervisor, while gaining 4 years' experience.
- d. Fulfil the criteria mentioned above at *paras 4 (a. to c.)* of subj SOP and he/she can supervise the research of up to 5 MS/ MPhil or Equivalent Theses.

5. **General Conditions to Supervise Doctoral Research:** The fol general guidelines shall, at least, be observed while allocating a PhD supervisor. At the time of supervisor allocation, the supervisors:

- a. Shall be a PhD degree holder complying with the criteria and standards provided in this policy.
- b. Must be relevant to the field of research in which the scholar intends to conduct research.
- c. Should not have CONFLICT OF INTEREST in personal, financial, or professional stakes.
- d. Should have the time and availability to supervise PhD dissertation and to give clear and constructive feedback.
- e. Should be capable of conducting themselves in a professional and respectful manner throughout the supervision process.
- f. Should be capable of maintaining confidentiality and protecting the intellectual property of the dissertation.
- g. Should, primarily, be a regular/adjunct faculty member of the University/DAI.

**In addition to the aforementioned guidelines:**

- h. The supervisor shall be allocated to a scholar from the date of enrollment.
- i. The supervisory workload of research supervisors should be determined based on the nature of the availability of teaching and research facilities, and the academic standing of supervisor. However, it is mandated that the maximum supervisory load shall not exceed five PhD students, simultaneously. Further, fresh PhDs can supervise MS/ MPhil and co-supervise PhD students, while a PhD faculty member, after two years of obtaining a PhD degree, can supervise one PhD student in 3<sup>rd</sup> year, two PhD students in 4<sup>th</sup> year and maximum up to 5 PhD students from 5<sup>th</sup> year onward, subject to fulfillment of other conditions provided in this policy.



- j. PhD research work completed under supervision is a shared property of supervisor and scholar. All publications resulting from such research shall reflect the authorship of both parties and shall be subject to mutual consent.
6. **Criteria to Be a PhD Supervisor**<sup>2</sup>: To be a PhD research supervisor, an individual shall meet the following requirements:
- a. **General Requirements**<sup>3</sup>:
- (1) A PhD degree from an HEC recognized national/international university/degree awarding institute (DAI).
  - (2) The research supervisor shall be given opportunities to attend and qualify course(s) on MS/MPhil/PhD Supervision which should also have contents on research ethics, publications, patents, etc. Such courses may include certified self-paced MOOCS, or a course designed/ offered by National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE) or by a university in the following manner:
    - (a) Basic level course: to supervise students of MS/MPhil/equivalent degrees.
    - (b) Advance level course: to supervise PhD researchers.
  - (3) A regular/adjunct faculty member or researcher at NDU, or position of researcher or scientist at any R&D or public/private sector organization. However, in the case of a non-faculty PhD supervisor, who otherwise meets the criteria of being a PhD supervisor, shall be taken as an adjunct faculty member, for a period not less than the minimum time required to complete the student's PhD research, prior to assigning a PhD supervision. Such a person shall also provide an NOC from the parent organization.
  - (4) The maximum supervisory load shall not exceed five PhD students, simultaneously. Further, fresh PhDs can supervise MS/MPhil and co-supervise PhD students, while a PhD faculty member, after two years of obtaining a PhD degree, can supervise one PhD student in 3<sup>rd</sup> year, two PhD students in 4<sup>th</sup> year and maximum up to 5 PhD students from 5<sup>th</sup> year onward, subject to fulfillment of other conditions provided in this policy.

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<sup>2</sup> The Higher Education Commission Graduate Education Policy 2023

(<https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/services/faculty/Plagiarism/Documents/Graduate-Education-Policy.pdf>)

<sup>3</sup> The "General Conditions to Supervise Doctoral Research" along with the "Criteria to be a PhD Supervisor" are applicable on fresh PhDs intending to supervise PhD research and effective from the date of enactment of this policy. All the previously approved supervisor shall remain approved until the date mentioned on their award letter.



(5) Supervisory process is included in QEC UERC SOPs “SOP - PhD UERC & SOP - M.Phil UERC” for monitoring the complete PhD and M.Phil. process including supervisor & supervisee role.

b. **Publication Requirements:** In addition to fulfilling the General Requirements, a PhD supervisor must publish research articles in the HEC’s recognized research journals, as described under: -

**(1) Specific Requirements for Social Science, Arts and Humanities and Business Education:**

For indigenous and foreign PhDs:

- (a) Within the last 3 years after PhD: at least one research publication in “W” category journal. **Or**
- (b) Within the last 5 years after PhD: at least five research publications in “X” and “Y” category journal.

c. The title of ‘PhD Approved Supervisor’ will be valid for **‘three years’**. After three years, the supervisor will be required to update the profile.

7. **Composition:** Fol will be the composition of NDU Approved PhD Supervisor committee:-

- |    |               |   |             |
|----|---------------|---|-------------|
| a. | Dean FCS      | : | Chairperson |
| b. | Concerned HoD | : | Member      |
| c. | Registrar     | : | Member      |
| d. | Dir QEC       | : | Member      |

8. **Responsibilities of Committee:** Fol will be the responsibilities of NDU Approved PhD Supervisor committee: -

- a. The committee shall recommend for **“Approved PhD Supervisor”** as per HEC GEP guidelines.
- b. Registrar shall issue **“Approved PhD Supervisor letter”** and shall be responsible to monitor the granted tenure.
- c. HoDs shall ensure the timely process a case file of his/her respective faculty for awarding the PhD approved supervisor status after expiry of their granted tenure.
- d. HoDs shall ensure timely up gradation of each supervisor research profile on annual basis.
- e. The committee will meet on case-to-case basis.



9. **Penalty**<sup>4</sup>: Fol penalties will be applicable:-

- a. **Supervision of dissertation:** Disciplinary action may be taken against the Department Chair (HoD) if a person who does not fulfill the minimum criteria for a PhD supervisor, supervises a PhD thesis.
- b. **Maximum number of Supervisee:** The supervisor shall be banned from supervising new PhD researchers for a maximum of five (5) years and disciplinary action against the Department Chair (HoD) may be taken if a supervisor, supervise PhD students beyond the maximum number specified by the HEC.

10. **Conclusion:** The policy contained in this paper is formed on the basis of HEC GEP 2023 guidelines and best practices of reputed universities. It aims at supporting and advancing research culture at the NDU for ultimate benefit of the faculty, scholars, institution and the nation.

11. Contents of this SOP are subject to change as and when deemed appropriate by the university. This SOP will be implemented with immediate effect after its circulation.



Director QEC  
(Dr Farrukh Idrees)

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<sup>4</sup> Part-III: Quality Assurance of the Higher Education Commission Graduate Education Policy, 2023  
(<https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/services/faculty/Plagiarism/Documents/Graduate-Education-Policy.pdf>)

