



# Guidelines for the Ph.D. Programme at Ashoka University

**October 2024**

**Research and Development Office**

## **A. Ph.D. Programme at Ashoka University**

Ashoka University admits full-time Ph.D. candidates in the following departments in the sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Computer Science, Mathematics, Psychology) as well as in the humanities & social sciences (Economics, History, English, Environmental Studies, Sociology & Anthropology). The Ph.D. guidelines described here have been formulated in accordance with the rules and regulations of the University Grants Commission (UGC).

What follows are basic guidelines for Ph.D. programmes at Ashoka University, consistent with the UGC's requirements. Departments at Ashoka may impose requirements additional to those described here.

### **A.1. Eligibility**

- Applicants with 55% marks or more in aggregate after an M.Sc./M.A./M.Com/M.Phil./M.Tech./L.L.M. degree or equivalent, are eligible to apply for admission to a Ph.D. degree (**Category I**).
- Applicants with a 4-year bachelor's degree with 75% or more marks in aggregate (**Category II**), are also eligible to apply for admission to a Ph.D. degree.
- Applicants with Master's degrees or equivalent from foreign universities require a certificate of recognition/equivalency provided by the Association of Indian Universities (<https://www.aiu.ac.in/evaluation.php>), to demonstrate the equivalence of their degrees to the corresponding Indian degrees.
- Applicants who are awaiting the declaration of their final results in a Master's programme or its equivalent are eligible to apply. If selected, the offer extended to these applicants will only be provisional. Admission to the programme will be contingent on the applicant meeting the criteria described above.

## **A.2. Admission process**

Admissions to the programme can happen in either or both of the Monsoon Cycle (August) or the Spring Cycle (January). Details regarding Ph.D. opportunities, specifying eligibility and application deadlines, should be advertised in prominent web spaces (such as the Ashoka website, LinkedIn, India Bioscience, Twitter etc.), in addition to, at least two leading newspapers, with one in a prominent regional language. The Ashoka media team will help with this. Additionally, posters can also be circulated directly to major institutions in the country and abroad to increase the visibility of the Ashoka Ph.D. programme.

The advertisement should contain information about the department, subject areas within it, criteria for selection and the procedure for admission. The number of available Ph.D. positions changes from year to year.

Departments may choose to advertise separately or in combination with others whose requirements are similar.

## **A.3. Selection Process**

The selection process is a 2-step process, involving a test followed by personal interviews.

Applications for admission into Ashoka Ph.D. programme must be submitted online via the Ashoka University Application portal. It is the responsibility of the department to:

1. Conduct an admissions test (the papers must contain 50% methodology and 50% subject-specific questions).

And/ or

alternatively, select candidates based on a national-level exam specified by the Department with explicitly described cut-offs.

2. Organize interviews for the applicants who have been shortlisted. These can be held in-person or online.

#### **A.4. Relaxation**

A relaxation of 5% marks must be allowed for candidates belonging to SC/ST/OBC/differently-abled category and economically weaker section (EWS). Apart from this, departments should explicitly encourage diversity in their Ph.D. candidates' profiles. If required, a policy of affirmative action should be followed to ensure this.

- The list of the final selected (and waitlisted candidates) should be prepared in order of merit. Offers to be made will be approved at the university level by the Dean (Research) in consultation with the HoD's of the departments.
- The deadlines for completing the entire admissions process is July 31 (monsoon cycle), and November 30 (spring cycle). Specific deadlines for admission may vary across departments each year and will be announced during the admission cycle.

#### **A.5. Fellowship**

Ashoka provides a Junior Research Fellowship with a stipend of INR 50,000 and a Senior Research Fellowship with a stipend of INR 55,000, along with an additional House Rent Allowance (HRA) of INR 10,000. This allowance is applicable to both Junior Research Fellows (JRF) and Senior Research Fellows (SRF). Ashoka will provide an annual contingency grant of INR 20,000. Additionally, Ashoka Ph.D. candidates will be eligible for travel support of total value up to INR 2,00,000 to be used to attend Research and Development Office (RDO) meetings/ workshops/ training programs, whether in India or abroad, during the duration of their Ph.D. tenure.

All Ph.D. candidates are covered by medical insurance as specified in their offer letters.

Ph.D. candidates may also be self-funded as described below, or supported from research project grants.

❖ **Ph.D. candidates with Government fellowships**- Such Ph.D. candidates hold UGC, CSIR, DBT or other equivalent external fellowships activated at Ashoka. The Ashoka Ph.D. semester fee is waived for self-funded Ph.D. candidates.

❖ **Externally funded Ph.D. candidates**

- **Grant-supported Ph.D. candidates** - Grant-supported Ph.D. candidates are those who are paid through an external (extramural) grant whether national or international. RDO approval is mandatory for such support.

- The required qualifications remain the same as for the regular candidates.

- **Industry-sponsored Ph.D. candidates** - Candidates sponsored by industry should initiate contact with the concerned Department and secure prior approval. The Research and Development Office (RDO) must be kept informed of this process. Following approval, such candidates must follow the standard admission process. The sponsoring organization is required to support the candidate financially throughout their tenure at Ashoka, providing a No Objection Certificate (NOC) for enrollment. Sponsored candidates must fulfill coursework requirements.

❖ **Unfunded Ph.D. candidates** - A candidate can also join a Ph.D. programme at Ashoka without any financial support from Ashoka or an external funding, if they qualify following the standard admission process. Ashoka will not be responsible for providing any financial assistance to such candidates at any later point.

### **A.6. Duration of Fellowship**

A Ph.D. candidate with an M.Phil./M.Tech. is offered a fellowship for up to 4 years, whereas a candidate with an M.Sc./M.A./B.Tech./B.S. can be funded through a fellowship for up to 5 years.

Ph.D. candidates will be reviewed twice a year by the Student Research Committee (SRC). Their fellowships will be extended subject to satisfactory performance.

### **A.7. Ph.D. Fee Structure**

Ph.D. Tuition Fee structure (INR per semester): **12,500**

Ph.D. Thesis submission Fee (INR): **15,000**

### **A.8. Accommodation**

Sharing accommodation on or near the campus will be offered based on availability. The HRA component of the fellowship will be adjusted against accommodation costs if the accommodation is provided by the University.

### **A.9. Other important points**

- 1. Termination of Ph.D. admission:** In any phase of the admission process or throughout the Ph.D. programme at Ashoka University, should it come to light that a candidate misrepresented, falsified, or concealed pertinent information, their candidature/admission will be revoked immediately. If the candidate has already joined the programme, they will be required to leave and any deposited fees will not be refunded.

2. If a Ph.D. candidate is judged incapable of completing a Ph.D. at any point after enrollment, they may be discontinued from the programme. For this, a documented recommendation from the Student Research Committee (SRC) or Ph.D. coordinator will be required to show that all efforts to address this situation have failed. This recommendation must also be approved by the Ph.D. coordinator and the HoD. The Dean (Research) will take a final decision.
3. Once Ph.D. candidates are enrolled in a full-time Ph.D. programme at Ashoka University, they cannot register for any other full-time programme at any other University or Institution, including at Ashoka.
4. **Lateral Entry** : A candidate registered elsewhere can be accepted into the Ph.D. programme at Ashoka provided these criteria are fulfilled: (a) A detailed recommendation of the HoD concerned, stating the need for the transfer and (b) A verification that appropriate procedures consistent with UGC guidelines have been followed for their acceptance into their previous institution, as assessed by the RDO. An SRC should be constituted that will monitor the progress of their thesis. The conditions of their fellowship support will be decided by the RDO.
5. **Exit Process** - Ph.D. candidates who decide to withdraw from a Ph.D. programme should take approval from Ph.D. coordinator/SRC as appropriate, and the department's head (HoD). Candidates will need to apply for exit clearance at the *myashoka* portal after their resignation is approved by the department. The RDO will assist in this process.
6. **Conflict Resolution** - If any conflict arises, attempts at resolutions should begin with the Ph.D. coordinator/ SRC committee. If the committee is unable to reach a resolution, the case should be referred to the Department Chair or HoD who may appoint a separate committee to reach a solution and make a recommendation to the Dean (Research). The Dean (Research) will make the final decision.

## **B. Administration of the Ph.D. Programme at Ashoka**

It is the responsibility of the Department to smoothly administer the Ph.D. programme, aided by the RDO. Each Department is required to appoint a coordinator of the Ph.D. programme. The department should also establish a Ph.D. advisory committee drawn from faculty members within the department, to oversee the formation of the Student Research Committee (SRC) for enrolled Ph.D. candidates, and to manage other activities essential for the smooth operation of the Ph.D. programme.

The Ph.D. programme coordinator will function as the chair of the Ph.D. advisory committee. Once the Ph.D. advisory committee forms the SRC, the responsibility for mentoring and monitoring the student's progress shifts to the SRC.

### **B.1. Faculty supervisor(s)**

- Regular Ashoka university Faculty members with Ph.D. degree and track record of peer reviewed publications including journal articles and/or book chapters (3 for assistant professors and 5 for associate/full professors) will be eligible to supervise Ph.D. candidates.
- A department can recommend a faculty member with fewer publications to be a Supervisor. This recommendation will be made to the Dean (Research) who will take the final decision.
- Faculty fellows/ non-tenure track faculty members on long term (5 years or more) contracts can take Ph.D. students within the first three years of their tenure, provided a regular faculty member is a co-supervisor.
- Regular faculty members elsewhere can be co-supervisors of Ashoka Ph.D. students. At least one Primary supervisor should be from the same department in



which the candidate is admitted, while the co-supervisor may be from any department within or outside Ashoka University.

- In the event that a co-supervisor is affiliated with an institution outside Ashoka University, a formal document indicating that institution's approval of this arrangement and outlining the responsibilities of the co-supervisor must be submitted to the RDO. In cases where IP issues may be involved, a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with that institution is advised. The HoD and Dean (Research) will coordinate on that point.
- **Guiding PhD students at other institutions :** A full-time faculty member at Ashoka can be a co-guide for a student at another institution, provided this is consistent with the rules of that institution. The RDO should be informed prior to any arrangement being concluded.
- Regular faculty members up to 3 years before the normal age of retirement can take new Ph.D. candidates under their supervision. After that, they can continue to supervise already enrolled candidates until their completion and can also take on co-supervisory roles.
- Generally, up to two primary supervisors may jointly supervise a Ph.D. candidate.
  - ❖ **Joint supervision-** To ensure continuous guidance for Ph.D. candidates in unforeseen circumstances such as extended periods of leave of more than 12 months, resignation, change of institutions, retirement, or death; a joint supervisor or ad-hoc supervisor may be appointed for the Ph.D. candidate.
  - ❖ Appointment of joint supervisors and ad-hoc supervisors must be approved by SRC, HoD and the Dean (Research). The views of the Ph.D. candidate should also be taken into consideration.

A faculty member who is about to retire within the next two years can still be appointed as a Joint-Supervisor.

- The supervisor (or co-supervisor) will be nominated by HoD based on the (a) match between the supervisor's (specialization and area of proposed research, (b) candidate preference(s), and (c) the number of candidates being supervised by individual faculty members. An eligible Professor/ Associate Professor/ Assistant Professor can guide up to a total of 8/6/4 candidates respectively, including as co-supervisor, accounting for parts of responsibility.
- One additional research scholar can be allotted to each supervisor over and above the allotted number provided the research supervisor is implementing a major sponsored research project. Further, each research supervisor/co-Supervisor can guide two international candidates on a supernumerary basis. This will require approval from the Dean (Research).
- If a research supervisor resigns from Ashoka University, they can continue primary supervision of their PhD students provided there is less than a year till the student's thesis submission. The HoD will advise the RDO accordingly. It is preferred that the primary supervisor should be a faculty member at Ashoka University.
- At any point of time the total number of candidates under a research supervisor shall not exceed the number as prescribed above, including the candidates under co-supervision.

## **B.2. Student Research Committee (SRC)**

The SRC for each Ph.D. candidate will be constituted by the Ph.D. coordinator and the Ph.D. advisory committee. The composition of the SRC will be;

- a) Ph.D. supervisor (SRC Chair & primary supervisor),
- b) co-supervisor, if any, and
- c) a minimum of two faculty members who specialize in the related area, one of whom should preferably be from outside the University.

- The primary role of the SRC is to monitor the progress of the candidate periodically, provide mentorship and technical inputs where required; to help overcome constraints and bottlenecks in the course of the student's Ph.D.; to act as an independent body of first appeal in case of a conflict between advisor and student and to assess the Ph.D. thesis before it is sent for evaluation by external examiners.
- The SRC must must assess a Ph.D. candidate's progress twice a year and provide a written report. Ph.D. candidates are required to make a presentation of the research work during the elapsed period. Two such assessments are to be held each year, but the mid-year assessment can be confined to a detailed written progress report, provided this meets with the approval of the SRC. The SRC can also recommend more meetings to monitor the candidate's progress more closely if it feels that this is required.
- SRC meetings should preferably be held in person. External members can attend online.
- The composition of the SRC should be such that conflicts of interest are avoided.
- Requests to change an advisor must be routed through the existing SRC via a recommendation to the HoD. The HoD can dissolve and re-constitute an SRC if the need should arise.

### **B.3. Formal admission to “candidacy”**

The programme mandates the successful completion of coursework and an **Oral Qualifying Examination (OQE)** within two years (a maximum of three years under special circumstances, with this requiring special permission from the Dean (Research), from the date of admission). If a candidate has passed his/ her/ their candidacy in a recognized institution elsewhere, this requirement can be waived by the Dean (Research) on the recommendation of the Head of the Department (HoD). For students who have

undergone coursework in a recognized institute but have not taken a candidacy exam, the HoD, in consultation with the Dean (Research), may decide on appropriate waivers of the coursework requirements.

The Department can set up additional criteria for candidacy. It may set its own guidelines on how it is decided as well as the number of attempts allowed to clear the candidacy exam. This should not exceed one additional attempt apart from the initial one.

The coursework must include a module focusing on Research Methodology and Ethics pertinent to their broader research domain. Each department has the autonomy to determine the distribution of course credits among various components such as courses, workshops (ensuring careful consideration of workshop hours), seminars, and writing assignments. Moreover, the department decides the evaluation methods for each module.

To fulfill the academic requirements, a candidate must finish at least 12 credits of coursework, for candidates joining after a masters degree. For candidates with a four year degree, 18 credits of coursework are mandatory. The minimum passing cutoff for coursework is set at a CGPA of 2.5 out of 4. Departments may impose further requirements.

Ph.D. candidates may take courses or attend workshops offered by other Universities. If the department determines that the external courses or workshops meet the necessary criteria, they may be considered as fulfilling part of the credit requirements for the Ph.D. programme.

A candidate will be formally admitted to the Ph.D. candidature status upon fulfilling the following criteria:

- Must have completed course work with minimum credit requirements described above
- Must satisfy all course requirements and have completed two GAs before the OQE .
- Must have cleared an Oral Qualifying Examination (OQE), defending the research proposal.

The OQE aims to assess the candidate's specific knowledge of the research field and the proposed dissertation project.

The **Oral Qualifying Examination (OQE)** will consist of two components;

1. A thesis proposal report that clearly provides comprehensive background literature, the aim(s) of the dissertation research, and planned methodologies to indicate the feasibility of the proposed research and future directions to be taken. The report must be submitted to the SRC at least 2 weeks before the oral qualifying examination.
2. The candidate should present and defend their thesis research proposal before the SRC to qualify for candidacy. This oral presentation will be open to the Ashoka community. This presentation will be followed by a closed-door discussion between the candidate and the SRC.

The Student Research Committee (SRC) will prioritize the candidate's comprehension and learning within the field, but will also examine their broad-based understanding. The candidate is required to exhibit a thorough understanding of the various methodologies to be employed throughout their Ph.D. If the candidate has cleared the oral examination and is eligible to register officially for the Ph.D. programme, the SRC will recommend this to the RDO via the HoD. The RDO should receive both the thesis proposal as well as the SRC report before it can confirm the registration.

In the event that the SRC feels that the candidate has failed to demonstrate satisfactory performance in the qualifying examination and/or the coursework, the SRC will communicate the deficiencies to the candidate and provide recommendations. These may include taking additional courses and/or revising research questions and reappearing for the qualifying examination. The candidate must comply with these recommendations

within 6 months of the OQE, failing which the Ph.D. candidature/admission may be terminated.

After candidacy confirmation, a candidate is expected to spend a minimum of 2 years in research before the Ph.D. thesis can be submitted. The progress reports and the SRC reports of the Ph.D. candidate will be maintained by the department and communicated to the RDO on a regular basis. These detailed records of the candidates (annual progress report, SRC report, record of oral presentations) will also be kept by the supervisor.

SRC reports are due on November 1 & May 1 at the RDO.

#### **B.4. Graduate Assistantship (GAs)**

All Ph.D. candidates are expected to work as Teaching Assistants. Ph.D. candidates working as Teaching Assistants shall be addressed as ‘Graduate Assistants (GAs)’ to distinguish them from the regular Teaching Assistants/Teaching Fellows of the University. Assistance in teaching will include (among others) supervision of candidates’ lab-work, grading assignments, quizzes, or lab reports, data collection and/or analysis, conducting tutorial or laboratory work and evaluations and maintenance of AMS (Academic Management System). GAs will be assigned courses (or other academic activities as above) by the Ph.D. Programme Coordinator of the Department. GAs are not graded in final CGPA calculation.

- A minimum of 2 courses and a maximum of 6 courses as GA, with the exact number left to individual departments to specify, must be completed across a span of 10 semesters for Ph.D. candidate. Before the Oral Qualifying Examination (OQE), it is mandatory to complete at least two of these requirements.
- The supervisor and the department, in consultation with the Ph.D. candidate, can decide when the Ph.D. candidate of that department will undertake the required GA during Ph.D. tenure. The GAs are solely decided by the respective department.

### **B.5. Continuation in Ph.D. programme after candidacy**

- The progress of a Ph.D. candidate will be reviewed by the SRC in its regular 6-monthly meetings. The SRC's recommendations regarding the continuance of the candidate in the Ph.D. programme will be conveyed to the RDO through the HoD or Ph.D. coordinator for approval by the Dean (Research).
- Regular submission of the SRC reports is a requirement for Ph.D. thesis submission.
- The approval of the SRC is necessary for the open pre-submission presentation by the Ph.D. candidate before the final submission of the thesis.
- Ph.D. candidates should submit their Ph.D. thesis within 5 years from the date of admission to the programme and within 3 years after the OQE.
- In exceptional cases, an extension of up to an additional year may be recommended by the SRC, and approved by the Dean (Research) in consultation with the HoD. This is particularly applicable to candidates with disabilities, those who require breaks for medical reasons, or female candidates who have taken maternity leave. The total time taken by a candidate for submission of the Ph.D. thesis should not exceed 6 years from the date of admission.
- The candidates will be deregistered after 6 years and will be re-registered only 3 months before Ph.D. thesis submission. Overall, a candidate has to submit the thesis within 8 years from the date of admission.
- The candidate also has to pay the Ph.D. re-registration fee of INR. 12,500.

- The extension of fellowship is handled separately from the extension given to a candidate for submission of the thesis after 5 years. Requests for extension should be forwarded through the Head of Department (HoD) to the Dean of Research, who will evaluate and approve fellowship extensions on a case-by-case basis.

## **B.6. Leave Policy**

All enrolled Ph.D. candidates are eligible for leave in accordance with the recommendations outlined by the UGC and the University. Female Ph.D. candidates can avail maternity leave for up to 240 calendar days and male Ph.D. candidates can avail paternity leave for up to 30 working days once during the entire Ph.D. duration.

- a) Full-time Ph.D. candidates are entitled to a leave period of **30** calendar days, exclusive of medical leave, per academic year. All Ph.D. candidates are covered by medical insurance as specified in their offer letters.
- b) Under special conditions, approval for leave beyond 30 days is contingent upon the recommendation of the Supervisor and subject to the consent of the Ph.D. Coordinator/HoD with proper justification. Such extended leave may or may not include the payment of the fellowship. The Dean (Research) will be advised by the HoD in this regard.

Such extended leave will be permitted only once during the candidate's programme.

The Ph.D. Supervisor will be responsible for maintaining a record of each candidate's leave and attendance.

## **B.7. Attendance**

During their coursework, Ph.D. candidates are required to maintain departmental attendance requirements. Failure to meet this attendance criterion in any month may result in the non-payment of fellowship for that month.



Once their coursework is completed, Ph.D. candidates must maintain regular attendance during research work on all working days, except during sanctioned leave periods. In cases where a Ph.D. candidate is required to be away on archival, field, or related academic work, the Ph.D. advisor should be kept informed of the duration in which the student will be away. This will be counted as regular duty.

### **B.8. Ph.D. Thesis Pre-submission seminar**

The department is required to organize a pre-submission seminar for Ph.D. candidates, in which they present their thesis work. This should be scheduled only once the SRC assesses that the student can submit his/her/their thesis within three months. A Ph.D. candidate has to present the thesis work in an open seminar which should be attended by the SRC. During this seminar, the candidate must present the observations and analyses intended for inclusion in the thesis. The approval of the SRC is a prerequisite for a candidate to write and submit Ph.D. thesis. Following the pre-submission seminar, if the SRC recommends, the Ph.D. candidate should submit the thesis within 3 months. Any extension is at the discretion of the Dean (Research) who will decide, based on the SRCs recommendation forwarded by the HoD.

The thesis title as communicated during the PhD pre-submission seminar will be taken to be final.

The SRC recommendations should be communicated to the Dean (Research).

### **B.9. Preparation of Ph.D. thesis**

The candidate documents the outcome of research in the form of a draft Ph.D. thesis. The Ph.D. thesis should follow a common format/outline laid down by the University. Additional guidelines may be suggested by individual departments and should be approved by the Dean (Research). The suggested basic format of the Ph.D. thesis is as follows:

1. Title page
2. Dedicated to.... (optional)
3. Certificate (refer to annexures)
4. Declaration (refer to annexures)
5. Acknowledgments (optional)
6. Table of Contents (This will have chapters and page numbers)
7. List of tables, figures, illustrations etc.
8. List of abbreviations (if applicable)
9. Summary of the thesis (1-3 pages)
10. List of publications and contributions to authorship  
(for example- refer to the **CrediT** format (<https://casrai.org/credit/>) for assistance)
11. Chapter 1- Introduction (including objectives of the thesis)
12. Individual Chapters with subsections, if required.
13. Appendices (if applicable)
14. References
15. Copies of published papers (optional)
16. Conference abstracts (optional)

The following rules will apply to the reproduction of published figures:

1. If the journal copyright agreement allows reproduction, then the figure can be reproduced without any alterations. However, figures from other published sources can be reproduced in the thesis provided a proper acknowledgment has been given.
2. If the journal does not allow reproductions, the candidate must apply for permission from the journal to reproduce it in the thesis.
- 3.** In case of (1) and (2), a certificate or permission has to be submitted along with the thesis.

## **B.10. Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the unethical act of presenting someone else's original ideas, words, research, discovery or creative works as one's own without giving proper credit. It undermines academic and intellectual integrity, eroding trust and hindering genuine learning.

Ashoka University's Ph.D. programme aims for exceptional research and upholds high standards of research ethics and integrity in Ph.D. theses. It ensures students are well-prepared for academic careers and emphasizes understanding plagiarism and self-plagiarism to prevent questionable research practices and scientific misconduct.

At Ashoka University, allowable similarity in a Ph.D. thesis with work by others is capped at 15%. Direct similarity with other texts in terms of consecutive words must be judged by reasonable criteria.

## **B.11. Submission of Ph.D. thesis for evaluation**

Candidates will be allowed to submit their thesis provided they have completed other requirements, such as completing GAsip, delivering a pre-submission seminar, and being recommended by the SRC. Ph.D. candidates shall submit a soft copy of the thesis to the Dean (Research).

## **B.12. Thesis Examination by the external reviewers**

The Ph.D. thesis will be examined by two external reviewers. The names of eight potential reviewers will be suggested by the SRC and approved by the HoD (or Departmental Ph.D. Advisory Committee). The list of potential external reviewers is confidential and should not be disclosed to the Ph.D. candidate. The department is encouraged to suggest potential reviewers from outside India in addition to those from inside.

The external reviewers should be academics with a good record of scholarly publications in the field, holding or having held a regular position in an institution of repute. The Dean (Research), in consultation with the HoD, will select two external reviewers out of the list of eight potential reviewers. In addition to the external examiners, the Ph.D. supervisor will also examine the thesis as an internal examiner. External reviewers should not have any conflicts of interest as conventionally understood or be under any administrative investigation when the thesis is examined.

Each external examiner and Ph.D. Supervisor (and co-supervisor) will independently make either of the following recommendations:

1. the dissertation is accepted without any revision,
2. the dissertation is accepted subject to suggested changes/clarifications being discussed/incorporated in the dissertation and presented at time of viva-voce,
3. the dissertation is to be revised and submitted for re-examination, or
4. the dissertation is rejected outright.

Upon acceptance of the dissertation, either without any revision or with suggested changes/clarifications to be incorporated by both external and internal examiners, the Dean (Research) will extend an invitation to the supervisor to formally conduct a viva voce examination. This examination will take place in the presence of at least one, preferably both, external examiners.

Thesis Reviewers who review the thesis and/or attend the viva voce examination will be provided an honorarium.

### **B.13. Handling the Ph.D. reports**

When reports from the external examiners are received, the Dean (Research) will first ensure that the examiners have accepted the thesis without any modifications. Following this, the Dean (Research) will write to the supervisor to arrange a viva voce examination along with the reports. The supervisor will share the report with the student, redacting the examiner name if this is considered necessary.

- a. If the examiners recommend modifications and waive the re-examination, the supervisor will ensure the thesis has been modified before the viva voce examination.
- b. If the examiners want to see the thesis again after modifications, the student will submit it again, and the modified thesis will be shared with the examiner by the Dean (Research).
- c. In case of rejection (by both examiners), the Dean (Research) will send the reports to the supervisor. The report can be shared with SRC, and their suggestions regarding improvement of the thesis may be considered. In such cases, if the student decides to modify and resubmit again, the student must deregister and submit within 2 years of joining Ashoka after re-registration. If one examiner accepts and the other rejects, the thesis may be sent to the third examiner.

### **B.14. Viva-voce examination and Award of Ph.D. Degree**

The Dean (Research) will communicate the recommendations of the external thesis reviewers to the HoD and Ph.D. supervisor. The Department will then schedule a viva voce for Ph.D. defense. While the viva voce should normally be an in-person examination, it can also be conducted online.

The viva voce board will comprise of Ph.D. Supervisor, SRC and at least one of the two external examiners. In very rare circumstances, upon request by the HoD and approval by

the Dean (Research), an additional examiner may be invited to conduct the viva-voce examination.

The examination will be open to all faculty members and students from Ashoka University. The report of the viva-voce board will be sent to the Dean (Research) for an official declaration of the result.

After successfully completing the viva-voce, the duly filled and signed report of the Ph.D. viva-voce examination, the final e-version of the thesis, and two hard-bound copies should be submitted to the RDO. The RDO will retain one copy and provide the other to the Ashoka Library.

The Ashoka library will upload the e-version of the Ph.D. thesis on the INFLIBNET portal (Shodhganga), subject to potential embargo as discussed below.

The formats for Ph.D. thesis report and viva voce report are attached at the end of the document.

### **B.15. Intellectual Property**

- 1. Ownership** - Ph.D. students disseminate their academic and creative output, such as journal articles, conference papers, newspaper articles, and books. While the author(s) generally hold ownership rights for works created using University resources, including books, articles, candidate projects, dissertations, theses, lecture notes, and audio/visual aids, the University retains a non-exclusive, perpetual, royalty-free license for global use, primarily for academic and teaching purposes.
- 2.** A Ph.D. student may request an embargo on the upload of their thesis under special circumstances. This should be routed through the SRC who should recommend accordingly and will require approval by the HoD and the Dean (Research). Normally, such an embargo should not exceed a period of two years from the date of thesis submission. The student may request a further extension, accompanied by a recommendation from the advisor and HoD, citing appropriate reasons.

3. Thesis and thesis copyright are owned by the Ph.D. candidate. However, the University owns the rights to any invention or development described in the thesis.
4. Ownership of lecture videos, massive open online course (MOOCs), films, plays, musical works, and institutional materials, including course syllabi and exam-related content, lies with the University.
5. The University reserves the right to modify or update specific criteria as deemed necessary.

## **C. General guidelines for the preparation of the Ph.D. thesis**

### **Design**

- **Document.** A4 size paper; 2.5 cm (1.0”) margins on all four sides; 1.25 spacing between lines and single spacing for references
- **Font.** Times New Roman or Arial; 12-point font size for main text and 10 points for footnotes.
- **Figures, Tables, Photographs.** Graphs, images, and tables should be inserted in the text close to where they have been referred. Videos if present should have hyperlinks at the relevant place.
- **Pagination.** Page numbers are to be added for all the sections (including bibliographies and appendices). The title, certificate, declaration, table of contents, and acknowledgments should be numbered in lowercase Roman letters. The title page will be considered as page (i) but the number is not printed.
- **Title page.** The title page should follow the format provided.
- **Thesis summary/ abstract.** This should not exceed 3 pages.
- **Table of contents.** The table of contents should list all material that follows it. Chapter titles, sections, figures, tables, etc. must be listed.
- **Appendices.** Supplementary text, figures, or tables which are not critical for the chapters can be included as an appendix and listed in the table of contents.
- **References.** Any of the standard style manuals may be used in formatting references to works cited in the thesis.
- **Thesis length.** For readability, the thesis length should ideally be restricted to 200-300 pages (from Introduction to Discussion sections) without counting tables and figures. Each department can decide what is most appropriate.



### **D. Ashoka Ph.D. thesis submission guidelines**

It is important to note that before submitting their Ph.D. thesis, Ph.D. candidates are required to have their thesis checked and verified for plagiarism or similarity index by the Ashoka Library. Ph.D. candidates are expected to include a plagiarism report, provided by the Ashoka Library, in their thesis and submit the final Ph.D. thesis (in pdf format) to the Dean (Research).

Ph.D. candidates will be required to subject the draft Ph.D. thesis to a check for plagiarism using standard software by the University Library and will be responsible for any plagiarism found after submission. Under no circumstances there should be more than 15% textual overlap between any two theses. The maximum allowable similarity index is 15%.

#### **D.1. Instructions for Ph.D. candidates**

During the thesis submission:

- Please note that Ph.D. thesis should not be a literal reproduction of the candidate's published article.
- Please follow Ashoka Ph.D. thesis preparation guidelines (refers to section C).
- Prepare and insert the declaration/certificates within the thesis as per UGC guidelines.
- Pay Ph.D. thesis submission fee **INR 15,000/-**.

Ashoka fee desk will assist in the fee submission process. We request you to keep the Research and Development office informed to facilitate follow-up processes.

After paying the fee, the thesis should be submitted within 120 days.

**D.2.** If a Ph.D. candidate has failed to submit the Ph.D. thesis within the stipulated time, their Ph.D. registration may be canceled.

## **E. Guidelines for the final thesis submission**

### **(post viva-voce examination)**

One hardcopy of the final thesis should be submitted to the library. The department should ensure that the final version of the Ph.D. thesis in soft copy and hard copy are shared with RDO and the library.

**For Shodhganga portal (recommendation by UGC):** The Ph.D. candidate should also prepare a copy of the thesis as described below.

Please arrange the Ph.D. thesis files in the following sequence and in the pdf format for final submission on the Shodhganga portal and share with the library.

- 01 title.pdf
- 02 declaration.pdf
- 03 certificate. pdf
- 04 acknowledgment.pdf
- 05 contents.pdf
- 06 list of tables, figures.pdf
- 07 chapter 1.pdf
- 08 chapter 2.pdf
- 09 chapter 3.pdf
- 10 chapter 4.pdf
- 11 chapter 5.pdf
- 12 chapter 6.pdf
- 13 bibliography.pdf
- 14 appendix.pdf

## **Templates & Formats**

**-----Institutional Letterhead-----**

**DECLARATION**

I declare that the thesis entitled [Thesis title] has been prepared by me under the guidance of [Name of the Ph.D. supervisor], Professor of [Department Name], [University Name]. No part of this thesis has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

[Name of the Ph.D. candidate & Signature]

[Department Name], [University Name]

[University Address].

Date:

-----**Institutional Letterhead**-----

**CERTIFICATE (For Ph.D. Supervisor)**

I certify that [Name of the Ph.D. candidate] has prepared the thesis entitled [TYPE THESIS TITLE HERE], for the award of Ph.D. degree of the [University Name], under my guidance. [Name of the Ph.D. candidate] has carried out the work at the Department of [Department Name], [University Name]

[Ph.D. Supervisor's Name & Signature]

[Department Name], [University Name]

[University Address]

Date:

**For Ph.D. Co-Supervisor, if applicable**

I certify that [Name of the Ph.D. candidate] has prepared the thesis entitled [TYPE THESIS TITLE HERE], for the award of Ph.D. degree of the [University Name], under my guidance. [Name of the Ph.D. candidate] has carried out the work at the Department of [Department Name], [University Name]

[Ph.D. Co-Supervisor's Name]

[Department Name], [University Name]

[University Address]

Date:

**-----Institutional Letterhead-----**

**Declaration of originality**

I have not committed plagiarism in any of the forms described in the 'UGC or Ashoka University policy'. I have documented all methods, data and processes truthfully and I have not manipulated any data. I have mentioned all persons who were significant facilitators of the work. The work has been screened electronically for plagiarism.

Signature

Name of the Ph.D. candidate

Registration Number

Place

Date

I, [Name of the Guide] certify and attest that the work done by my Ph.D. candidate --Name----- is original and vouch that there is no plagiarism. The work has not been submitted for the award of any other degree/diploma of the same University where the work was carried out, or to any other University / Institution.

Signature

Name of the Ph.D. supervisor

Designation

Department

Institution

Place

Date

-----Institutional Letterhead-----

DDMMYYYY

To,  
The Dean (Research)  
Ashoka University

**Plagiarism Analysis Report**

Please find the plagiarism analysis report for .....[Name of the Ph.D. candidate]....

<b>Name of the Ph.D. candidate</b>	
<b>Department Name</b>	
<b>Enrollment No.</b>	
<b>Name of the thesis supervisor</b>	
<b>Title of the thesis</b>	

<b>Plagiarism Report</b>	
<b>Name of the Software:</b>	
<b>Submission ID:</b>	
<b>Date of Plagiarism check:</b>	
<b>Similarity Index:</b>	
<b>Word Count:</b>	

[Detailed plagiarism report is attached herewith]

**Name**  
**Executive Authority of the Library**  
**Ashoka University**  
**& seal**

**Copy to:**

- Head of the Department
- Ph.D. supervisor
- Research & Development Office

Acceptable range of similarity index at Ashoka University is 15% for all the departments

## **PUBLICATION DETAILS**

Name of the Ph.D. Candidate:

Enrollment number:

Title of the Thesis:

<b>S.N o.</b>	<b>Title of the publicati on</b>	<b>Book/Jour nal Name</b>	<b>Year of publica tion</b>	<b>Volume; issue; page number</b>	<b>Indicate first author/co- author/corresp onding author</b>

This template can be modified by the departments, especially in humanities, to meet the criteria



## **Template for Thesis Cover Page**

[TYPE THESIS TITLE HERE]

A Thesis submitted to

[Ashoka University]

[Logo]

For the Award of

[Doctor of Philosophy]

BY

[Your Name]

[Department Name],

[University Name]

[Year with Month]

\* Only the University's approved logo is allowed on the cover page of Ph.D. thesis.

## **Annexure – Report Formats**



**ASHOKA**  
UNIVERSITY

## **Recommendation Report Format for Formal Candidacy for Ph.D. candidate**

Name of the Ph.D. candidate:

Enrollment Number:

Department:

Enrollment Year:

Date of examination:

### **Proposed Title of the Thesis (In block letters):**

### **Observations and Comments of the Committee:**

[The candidate is expected to demonstrate that he/she possesses the required depth of knowledge to undertake proposed research and adequate knowledge in one or more areas within the discipline but in areas that are distinct from his/her proposed area of research]

Each member of the SRC should give separate comments.

### **Details of the Course work completed by the candidate**

Name of the Courses, Credit, Grades

\*\* Please attach transcripts/other documents in support.

Details of any qualifying examination(s) conducted by the department as a requirement

Details of any other process conducted by the department as requirement

### **Recommendations for formal admission to the Ph.D. Programme**

[The candidate is recommended / not recommended for Formal Admission to Candidacy for the departmental Ph.D. programme.]

### **Recommendations for award of Senior Research Fellowship**

The candidate is recommended/not recommended for Senior Research Fellowship (SRF). The candidate will continue to get JRF if “not recommended” and the committee will examine it again after six months.

[Signature]

Ph.D. supervisor

Signature

Name:

Date:

External member:

[Signature]

Name and Designation:

Affiliation:

Date:

Internal Members:

[Signature]

1. Name and Designation:

Date:

[Signature]

2. Name and Designation:

Date:

(Please attach email communication/ or digital signature in case the physical signature isn't available)



## Ashoka University

Plot No.2, Rajiv Gandhi Education City,  
Sonapat, Haryana – 131029

### Certificate of Formal Candidacy

*This is to certify that ..... has completed the requirements including Ph.D Coursework with a CGPA of.....and has been granted Formal Candidacy for the Ph.D. Programme in the Department of ..... of Ashoka University as per the University Ph.D. Guidelines.*

*Enrolment Number: .....*

*Date of Admission: DDMMYYYY*

*Date of the Viva-voce: DDMMYYYY*

*Title of the Thesis: "....."*

The Ph.D. programme must be completed within 5 years from date of admission to the programme. In exceptional cases, an extension of upto 1 year may be provided.

Dean (Research),  
Ashoka University

## **Format for Progress Reports**

Name of the Ph.D. candidate:

Enrollment Number:

Department:

Enrollment Year:

Duration of Progress Report:

**Proposed Title of the Thesis (In block letters):**

**Detailed Progress report**

[Signature]

Ph.D. candidate

Name:

Date:

[Signature]

Ph.D. supervisor

Name:

Date:

## **Report Format for Pre-submission presentation**



Name of the Ph.D. candidate:

Enrollment Number:

Department:

Enrollment Year:

Date of the meeting:

### **Proposed Title of the Thesis (In block letters):**

### **Recommendations of the Committee:**

The candidate has completed the work as proposed in the synopsis and is ready to submit the thesis.

Or

The candidate has not yet completed the work as proposed in the synopsis and will require 3 months additional time. Pre-submission presentation may be held again ...[DDMMYYYY]..

### **Detailed suggestions and comments:**

[Signature]

Ph.D. supervisor

Name:

Date:

External member:

[Signature]

Name and Designation:

Date:

Internal Member:

[Signature]

1. Name and Designation:

Date:

[Signature]

2. Name and Designation:

Date:



-----Institutional Letterhead-----

**Ashoka University Ph.D. Viva -Voce Examination Report**

We, the undersigned, have examined Mr./ Ms. [...Name of the Ph.D. candidate..... In viva voce examination conducted on (DDMMYYYY)...on the basis of the report of the examiners on their thesis entitled .....[Thesis title].....and are satisfied:

\*(i) that the thesis submitted by the candidate is their own work, and

\*(ii) that the grasp of the candidate on the broad field of their study is satisfactory

We would also like to make the following observations, if any.....

We recommend:

- i. that the Ph.D. thesis is accepted and candidate be awarded the Ph.D. Degree\*
- ii. that the thesis be referred back to the candidate for revision in the light of comments made at the viva-voce, following which it may be accepted given the concurrence of the SRC and the candidate can be awarded the Ph.D. Degree\*
- iii. that the thesis be rejected.\*

\*Please strike-off whichever is not applicable.

1. Signature with Date.....  
(External Examiner)  
Name:.....  
Designation:.....
2. Signature with Date .....  
(External Examiner)  
Name:.....  
Designation:.....
3. Signature with Date .....  
(Supervisor)  
Name:.....  
Designation:.....
4. Signature with Date .....  
(SRC, if available)  
Name:.....  
Designation:.....

(A detailed recommendation report from each external reviewer is attached separately)



**Ashoka University,**