



NAVIGATING PHD PROCESS: ENTRY, PROGRESSION AND COMPLETION

Part A: Registration (Entrance Examination → Registration)			
Sl. No.	Activities / Description	Responsibility	Timeline
1	Call for Expression of Interest (EOI): <ul style="list-style-type: none">Invite departments to submit available supervisor and research area information.Collect and organize vacancy and expertise data.Share the consolidated list for PhD admission planning.	DoR (Directorate of Research)	As per PhD Admission Cycle – May- Nov every year, EOI called in March and Sept.
2	PhD Admission Notification: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide entrance examination details (Vacancy, Date of Entrance Examination, Syllabus, Department etc.) on the University portal (SMU Admission Portal).	DoR / University Administration	Immediately after EOI review (Mid-March / Mid-Sept)
3	Admission Portal Opens: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Receive and consolidate applications from candidates.	DoR Office / Team Admission SMU	End March- Sept
4	Entrance Examination Conduction: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Administer online test in research methodology and subject specific (100 marks, scaled to 70%).Exempt NET qualified candidates from the entrance examination.	COE Office/ Examination Cell / DoR / Admission Team	As per PhD Admission Calendar: May / Nov every year
5.	Result Announcement: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Publish list of qualified candidates on website.Notify candidates individually by email.	COE Office/ Examination Cell	Within Maximum 6 working days
6	Interview and Selection Notification: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Announce interview (viva) for all qualified and NET candidates.Conduct viva for 30% of total qualifying marks.	DoR / Departments	Mid-June/ Dec



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7	Final Selection and Recommendation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verify documents, conduct interviews, and select scholars with candidature type. Forward fellowship recommendations to the AD(R) office. 	Departments / IRC Representative / DoR Representative (optional)	As scheduled by Departments, within 15 days of announcement of entrance results
8	Final List and Supervisor Allotment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidate selected candidates' results (70% entrance, 30% viva) and department-wise lists. Provisionally allot supervisors based on research interest. Recommend for fellowship. 	Department (DRC) / Institute (IRC)	Within 2 weeks after URC meeting
9	Provisional Registration Certificate (PRC) Notification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify each selected candidate, institute, and department via email. Issue Provisional Registration Certificate (PRC) upon allotment. 	DoR	Within 30 days of receipt of qualified candidate list from all the units of the University (July/ Jan)

Template of PRC: Selected Candidate name/ Registration / candidature type/ Dept, Institute, Supervisors, fee details, Last date of Fee payment details and reporting to the department (Annexure A)

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10	Coursework and Fee Notification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departments inform scholars about coursework start (January/July sessions). Communicate registration fee payment requirements. 	Respective Department / Institute	To commence and complete the coursework and protocol presentation tasks within one year from the date of PRC issuance.
10 (a)	Department Research Committee (DRC) Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct PhD coursework, form Research Advisory Committees (RAC), and organize protocol presentations. Review and finalize thesis titles, ensure supervisor alignment, prepare protocols, and recommend fellowships. Forward selected candidates and recommendations to the Institute Research Committee (IRC) 	Department (DRC/ RAC)	Between January to December & August to July of Next Year
10 (b)	Institute Research Committee (IRC) Protocol Review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IRC conducts protocol presentations, evaluates research proposals, suggests improvements, and assesses fellowship eligibility. IRC forwards approved topics and fellowship recommendations to the Directorate of Research (DoR) after satisfactory review. 	Institute Research Committee (IRC)	Within 1 year of Provisional Registration



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11	University Research Committee (URC) Review and Registration <ul style="list-style-type: none">DoR compiles and submits all candidate documentation to URC for review and final approval.URC confirms PhD registration, approves research topics, and fellowship recommendations; converts provisional registration to confirmed status after approval.	URC/ DoR	Within 1 year of Provisional Registration
12	Final Registration Confirmation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">University issues final registration number to candidates after URC approval.Confirms official entry into PhD research phase.	DoR	Upon URC approval and completion of required documents

Components of the Ph.D. Registration Certificate: (Details Annexure B), Annexure b (Individual RAC)

I. Scholar Identification, II. Academic Supervision and Research Committee, III. Coursework and Academic Requirements, IV. Research Progress and Milestones, V. Financial Records and Fellowship Details, VI. Final Confirmation and Certification

Part B – Life Cycle of PhD Progression (Registration → Pre-Submission)

Sl. No.	Activities / Description	Responsibility	Timeline
1	<p>Initial Research Phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the coursework of at least 14 credits (Research Methodology, Ethics, Subject-Specific), pay fees, and select thesis topic. Obtain proposal approval, RAC formation, and present the synopsis. 	Scholar / Supervisor / DRC / IRC / DoR	To be completed Within 1 year of registration
2	<p>Research Progress Phase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit 6-monthly progress reports and undergo DRC/IRC reviews. Renew registration, pay fees, and apply for scholarship extension if applicable. 	Scholar / Supervisor / DRC/ RAC / IRC / DoR	Every 6 months: Progress Presentation, annually: Fee payment (Annual Registration)
2 (a)	<p>For All Ph.D. Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every scholar must present research progress before the DRC/IRC every six months, with at least six satisfactory presentations required to continue registration. Missing two consecutive presentations without approved maternity leave (which grants a six-month grace period for female candidates) leads to termination or re-registration as per university norms. 		
2 (b)	<p>For Fellowship Scholars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fellowship renewal occurs annually based on satisfactory six-monthly progress and the quality of research output, including publications and presentations. The fellowship is granted for a maximum of three years from the date of registration, after which the scholar continues as a full-time Ph.D. candidate without fellowship support. If the candidate status changes from full-time to part-time before completing three years and six satisfactory six-monthly presentations, the scholar's status is converted to part-time. 		

Part B – Life Cycle of PhD Progression (Registration → Pre-Submission)

Sl. No.	Activities / Description	Responsibility	Timeline
2.1	<p>Case 1 – Year 3 of Registration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular completion of research work, data collection and other research related activities 	Scholar / Supervisor / DRC	End of Year 3
2.2	<p>Case 2 – Extended beyond 3 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extension recommended by DRC/ IRC and approved by URC if satisfactory progress (+2 years maximum) 	Scholar / Supervisor / DoR	Years 4–5
2.3	<p>Case 3 – Exceptional Extension:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> URC (Chairman URC) approval for re-registration after maximum duration; annual fee payable 	Scholar / RAC/ IRC / DoR / URC	Beyond Year 5
3	<p>Pre-Submission Phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a minimum of six satisfactory six-monthly progress presentations. Deliver a pre-submission presentation before the DRC/IRC. 	Scholar / Supervisor / DRC / IRC /	Before submission

Part C – Thesis Evaluation (Pre-submission → Award of PhD Degree)		
Sl. No.	Activities / Description	Responsibility / Timeline
1	<p>Pre-Submission Phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete at least six satisfactory six-monthly progress presentations and deliver a pre-submission presentation before the DRC/IRC. The DRC/IRC recommends the thesis for submission and forwards approval along with all supporting documents to the DoR/CoE. 	Scholar / Supervisor / DRC / IRC / DoR/ COE
2	<p>Criteria for Pre-Submission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet all eligibility criteria: at least two publications (Scopus/WoS indexed, including one in a ranked journal), two conference presentations (minimum one national or international), and a minimum duration of three years with six satisfactory progress presentations. Submit all required documents, including progress reports, publications, and plagiarism report ($\leq 10\%$), complete pre-submission presentation before the DRC/IRC, and ensure document verification by the Research Unit before submission to the DoR/CoE. 	Scholar / Supervisor / DRC / IRC / Research Unit / DoR / CoE – Before Pre- Submission approval (Annexure C)
3	<p>Submission of Thesis to University:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IRC forwards the recommended thesis to the DoR/CoE for further processing. The DoR verifies all required documents and, after satisfactory review, submits the thesis to the CoE for adjudication by external examiners. 	IRC/ DoR/ COE/

Part C – Thesis Evaluation (Pre-submission → Award of PhD Degree)		
Sl. No.	Activities / Description	Responsibility / Timeline
4	<p>Thesis Evaluation, Viva-Voce & PDC Issuance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Hon'ble Vice Chancellor of SMU nominates two external examiners (one national and one international) from the approved panel. The Controller of Examinations (CoE) dispatches the thesis for evaluation and adjudication to the nominated external examiners. Based on favourable examiner reports, an open defence (viva-voce) is conducted before the external examiner, supervisor, and relevant committee members. After implementing the recommended corrections(if any), the University Research Committee (URC) and Academic Council approve the thesis, following which the scholar receives a Provisional Degree Certificate (PDC), and the award is officially announced. 	<p>HVC/ DoR / CoE / URC / Academic Council, within maximum 3 to 6 months of thesis submission</p>
5	<p>Award of Ph.D. Degree at Convocation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the issuance of the PDC and formal approval by the URC and Academic Council, the scholar qualifies for degree conferment. After successful Ph.D. Defence viva, the Thesis is uploaded on Shodhganga Platform The Ph.D. Degree is officially awarded during the next University Convocation. 	<p>CoE/DoR/ University Administration/ Senate / HVC.</p> <p>Timeline: At the immediate Convocation</p>