



**PART VI: RESEARCH WORK
RULES**

21. RESEARCH WORK

- 21.1. A student pursuing a programme that requires research work must prepare a research proposal that provides the outline of the research, the research methodology and major references.
- 21.2. A student pursuing a programme in which research work is optional must inform the department by the end of his first (1) regular semester of his choice to do research work. Once a student declares that he wishes to do research work, he shall not be allowed to change his decision, unless granted permission by the UCPS.
- 21.3. A student may register for his dissertation / thesis only if the following conditions have been fulfilled:
- a. His CGPA is 3.0 or above
 - b. He has completed at least 60% of the required coursework
 - c. He has passed the comprehensive examination (for specific programmes only)
 - d. He has successfully defended his proposal in the proposal defence
 - e. His research proposal has been approved by the KPGC
 - f. He has been assigned a supervisor by the KPGC
 - g. He has fulfilled all language requirements as stipulated in Rules No 21.4 to 21.6
 - h. He is within the maximum study period, or the approved extended study period.

Rules 21.3 (a) and (b) shall not be applicable to students pursuing programmes by research only.

- 21.4. A student undertaking research for a programme with Arabic as the only medium of instruction is required to attain a minimum score in English as stipulated in Rule 1.4.1 before being allowed to register for his research
- 21.5. If deemed necessary by the department, a student pursuing a programme with English as a medium of instruction may be required to attain a minimum score in Arabic as stipulated in Rule 1.4.2 before being allowed to register for his research
- 21.6. If deemed necessary by the department, a student may be required to achieve a satisfactory level of proficiency in any other language that is relevant to his research work before being allowed to register for his research
- 21.7. A research work must be written in English or Arabic, depending on the programme's medium of instruction. Any research work, regardless of the language in which it has been written, must be preceded by an abstract in English, Arabic or optionally in Bahasa Melayu
- 21.8. A student shall not submit a research work for which a degree has already been conferred in this or any other institution. However, he shall not be precluded from incorporating any part of such work provided that the part of the work that has been so incorporated is clearly indicated. A student may, in addition, submit such other published work as he desires provided it has not already been submitted for a degree in any institution of higher learning
- 21.9. A student may produce for his postgraduate programme the findings of research conducted prior to his admission to the IIUM or as part of his job requirement, provided that the research work is related to the area of his study and is the result of his own efforts
- 21.10. A student who wishes to delay public access to his research findings may apply to maintain the temporary confidentiality of his research. The maximum period for which public access may be denied is until such time the research work is permissible for disclosure.

22. OWNERSHIP OF THE STUDENT'S THESIS / DISSERTATION

- 22.1. The guidelines on the ownership of student's thesis/dissertation are as stipulated in Article 6.
- 22.2. A student may, with the consent of his supervisor, present and publish papers on his research work during the course of his studies provided that in all such papers, he acknowledges that the work is being done at the IIUM or an approved institution.
- 22.3. All thesis / dissertation submitted shall be accompanied by a signed declaration of Copyright and Affirmation of fair use of Unpublished research as specified in the 'The IIUM Thesis / Dissertation Manual' issued by the CPS.
- 22.4. In the course of writing the research, a student is required to refer to and follow the 'The IIUM Thesis / Dissertation manual' and/or follow the specific rules and regulations that might be issued by the Senate

23. WRITING THESIS / DISSERTATION IN ARABIC

- 23.1. A student in an English-based programme may apply to write the research / thesis / dissertation in Arabic on condition that:
 - a. The research work is in specific areas where most of the sources / references are in Arabic.
 - b. The applicant must have an advanced level of proficiency in Arabic or his mother tongue is Arabic language and he has done his first degree in a programme where Arabic is the language of instruction or he has passed Arabic Placement Test with a minimum of band 7.0.
 - c. The supervisor is well-versed in the area of specialization and has a reasonable knowledge of Arabic.

- d. The approval is granted by the Senate Sub-committee comprising the Deans of the Centre for Postgraduate Studies, Centre of Studies of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, and the Head of the Department of Arabic Language and Literature and Deans of the relevant Centre of Studies.

24. MASTER THESIS

24.1. Research Proposal

- 24.1.1. A full-time student pursuing a Master programme that requires research and coursework must register for the research proposal latest by the second (2) regular semester of his studies. A part-time Master student must register for the research proposal latest by the third (3) regular semester of his studies. A Master student pursuing a 'research only' programme must register the research proposal in the first (1) semester of his study.
- 24.1.2. The research proposal shall carry no credit hours and shall not be included in the student's workload.
- 24.1.3. The research proposal must be approved by the KPGC within the semester stipulated in Rules 24.1.1. In case of failure to submit an acceptable proposal, a student will not be allowed to register.
- 24.1.4. Registration of the research proposal must be done using the prescribed form by the CPS.
- 24.1.5. A Master's research proposal must be successfully defended not more than two (2) semesters after being registered. If the student fails in the defence, his result is graded as 'UP'. He is given one (1) additional semester to improve on his proposal and defend it successfully. Should he fail in the second defence, he shall be dismissed.

- 24.1.6. For students pursuing Clinical Specialist Training programme, the research proposal must be registered during the subsequent semester upon passing his / her Part I examination.
- 24.1.7. A Master student who wishes to write a research work exceeding the specified maximum word limit may write an application to the Centre of Studies at least one (1) month before making the first submission of the research / thesis / dissertation
- 24.1.8. A Master thesis / dissertation shall not exceed 50,000 words. A research paper shall not exceed 25,000 words. The total number of words includes the main text only and does not include footnotes, exhibits, figures, tables, graphs, appendices, bibliographies, etc. However, it depends on the discretion of the Centre of Studies on the minimum number of word limit.

24.2. Submission of Master Thesis / Dissertation

- 24.2.1. The following procedure shall be observed in sequence for the submission and approval of a Master thesis / dissertation:
 - a. A student intending to submit his research work shall notify the Deputy Dean / Coordinator (postgraduate studies) and the CPS at least three (3) months (by Research Only) or one (1) month (by Coursework and Research) before the intended date of submission. The KPGC shall appoint an examiner(s) for the research work upon such notification.
 - b. Once the research is deemed to be ready for submission by the supervisor, he shall certify that it is of acceptable standard in content, quality, presentation and style. A 'similarity check' report must be generated and validated by the supervisor.

- c. The student shall submit to the department as many copies of the research in the temporary binding as the number of appointed examiners. The department shall send a copy of the research to each of the examiners.

24.3. Thesis Examination (TE) Grace Period

24.3.1. A student who has completed and submitted his thesis / dissertation to the Centre of Studies for the evaluation of the examiner, will be given a Thesis Examination (TE) status, upon submission of duly completed certification form to the CPS through respective Centre of Studies / Institute.

24.3.2. The maximum period allowed for ‘TE’ status is as follows:

| Mode of Programme | Period of ‘TE’ Status |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Master’s by Research only | Eight (8) months and two (2) weeks |
| Master’s by Coursework and Research | Five (5) months |

24.3.3. In the event that the student fails to submit the bound Thesis/Dissertation in the stipulated time, the CPS may terminate the student with the recommendation of the KPGC.

24.3.4. A student on ‘TE’ status is not required to register as he is deemed to have completed their studies.

24.3.5. A student on ‘TE’ status will be required to pay recurring and hostel fees (if he stays in the hostel) with the exclusion of tuition fees and examination fees until he is declared as ‘GR’ or graduated.

24.4. Examiners for Master Thesis and Dissertation

Appointment of Examiners for Master's thesis / dissertation

- 24.4.1. Examiners shall be appointed for each student from the relevant department. If deemed necessary, additional examiners from within or outside the department / Centre of Studies may be appointed based on their fields of expertise.
- 24.4.2. The Centre of Studies should submit the proposed list of examiners to the CPS for Senate endorsement three (3) months prior to the submission of the thesis / dissertation for examination.
- 24.4.3. A student pursuing his Master's programme 'by research only' shall be assigned a minimum of two examiners, one of whom must be an external examiner. An internal examiner shall be appointed from the relevant department / Centre of Studies, whereas an external examiner shall be an individual from outside the Centre of Studies with adequate qualifications and experience. The supervisor shall not be one of the examiners.
- 24.4.4. The appointment of external examiners for Master 'by research only' shall be recommended by the departments and the KPGC after obtaining consent from the examiners. It must be approved by the Senate through the CPS.
- 24.4.5. The appointment of all examiners for Master 'by coursework and research' shall be recommended by the departments and the KPGC.
- 24.4.6. If deemed necessary, the KPGC may recommend the formation of a Master Examination Committee (MEC) to carry out the examination procedure of a Master's thesis / dissertation.

24.5. Responsibilities of Examiners

The functions of the examiners shall be as follows: -

- a. Examiners shall be required to examine and evaluate the thesis / dissertation.
- b. Examiners shall be required to prepare reports indicating areas in the thesis / dissertation that need corrections or revisions to improve its quality.
- c. Examiners shall be required to assign appropriate grade/marks for the thesis / dissertation.
- d. If deemed necessary, examiners shall also be required to conduct a viva voce or a public seminar for the students.

24.6. Evaluation of Master Thesis / Dissertation

24.6.1. A student shall have to defend his research in a viva voce and / or a public seminar, if required by any of the examiners or the department.

24.6.2. Each examiner shall evaluate and prepare a report indicating areas in the research that need revisions and submit it to the department not later than one (1) month after he has received the thesis / dissertation from the department. The report shall also grade the thesis / dissertation into one of the following categories:

- a. Pass
- b. Pass with minor revisions to be completed in one (1) month
- c. Pass with major revisions to be completed in three (3) months
- d. Re-submission with or without viva-voce in six (6) months

e. Failure

- 24.6.3. The department shall forward the report of each examiner to the Deputy Dean / Coordinator (postgraduate studies) and thereafter table it at the KPGC.
- 24.6.4. Should the thesis / dissertation fall under category (a) of the Rule 24.6.2 steps according to Rules 24.6.10 to 24.6.16 should be followed
- 24.6.5. Should the thesis / dissertation fall under (b) or (c) of Rule 24.6.2 the KPGC shall appoint a supervisor(s) for revision purposes and determine a period which shall not exceed three (3) months, within which the student must submit the revised thesis / dissertation
- 24.6.6. Once the student has made all revisions in accordance with the examiners reports, the main supervisor for revision shall certify that the thesis / dissertation is of acceptable standard in terms of content, quality and presentation style, and the steps according to Rules 24.6.10 to 24.6.16 should be followed
- 24.6.7. Should the thesis / dissertation fall under category (d), the KPGC shall appoint a supervisor(s) for the resubmission and determine the period, not exceeding six (6) months, within which the student must re-submit the thesis / dissertation certified by the appointed supervisor(s). Accordingly, the same examiner(s) should evaluate and prepare a report as stipulated in Rule 24.6.2
- 24.6.8. The KPGC may require the student to defend his thesis / dissertation in a re-viva-voce / public seminar. The KPGC accordingly shall have the prerogative to determine the category (a) / (b) / (c) / (e), not (d) of Rule 24.6.2 under which the research should fall, subject to Rules 24.6.4 to 24.6.6 or 24.6.9.

- 24.6.9. Should the thesis / dissertation fall under category (e) of Rule 24.6.2 the student would be deemed to have made unsatisfactory progress in the preparation of his thesis / dissertation, and hence, shall be dismissed from the programme.
- 24.6.10. One copy of the thesis / dissertation should be submitted to the Kulliyah to be checked for conformity to the format stipulated in 'The IIUM Thesis / dissertation Manual'. Accordingly approval for permanent binding should be obtained.
- 24.6.11. The Centre of Studies postgraduate office shall notify each examiner to assign specific numerical marks to the dissertation where applicable, based on the postgraduate grading system.
- 24.6.12. The KPGC shall determine the final grade to be awarded for the dissertation after taking the marks awarded by the examiners into consideration.
- 24.6.13. The Centre of Studies Postgraduate Office shall send to the CPS the grades awarded by the KPGC for the thesis / dissertation.
- 24.6.14. Once a student obtains approval for permanent binding, he shall submit to the CPS a copy of the thesis / dissertation in permanent hardcover binding and one electronic copy saved in an appropriate storage device / medium.
- 24.6.15. The CPS will forward one hardcover copy to the Centre of Studies, supervisor and send one hardcover as well as the electronic copy to the library.
- 24.6.16. The CPS shall table the grade awarded for the research to the Senate for final endorsement.

24.7. Master Examination Committee (MEC)

- 24.7.1. Members of the MEC shall be as follows:
- a. Dean of CoS or a representative as Chairperson;
 - b. All appointed examiners;
 - c. Supervisor (if deemed necessary by the chairperson).
- 24.7.2. The attendance of all appointed examiners in the viva voce is essential unless otherwise agreed by the Dean of CoS.
- 24.7.3. The functions of the MEC shall be as follows:
- a. The MEC shall function as the highest examining body for master research work and shall determine whether the research work is of an acceptable standard or not.
 - b. The MEC shall conduct the viva voce of the master candidate.
 - c. The MEC shall prepare a report containing the assessment of the MEC members and indicate areas in the research work that need revisions or corrections.
 - d. In cases of plagiarism, the MEC as the highest examining body for Master research shall convene to deliver the final decision on the thesis or dissertation after receiving the advice from the University's Committee for Academic Integrity.

25. PHD THESIS / DISSERTATION

25.1. Research Proposal

- 25.1.1. A full-time PhD student pursuing a programme that requires research and coursework must register for the research proposal before the end of the third (3) regular semester of his studies. A part-time Ph.D. student pursuing a programme that requires research and coursework must register for the research proposal before the end of the fifth (5) regular semesters of his studies. However, student who chooses a 'research only' programme must register for the research proposal in the first (1) semester of his study.
- 25.1.2. The research proposal shall carry no credit hours and shall not be included in the student's workload.
- 25.1.3. The research proposal must be approved by the KPGC within the semester stipulated in Rule 25.1.1. In case of failure to submit an acceptable proposal, a student will not be allowed to register.
- 25.1.4. Registration of the research proposal must be done using the prescribed form by the CPS.
- 25.1.5. A PhD research proposal must be successfully defended not more than three (3) semesters after being registered. If the student fails in the defence, his result is graded as 'UP'. He is given one (1) additional semester to improve on his proposal and defend it successfully. Should he fail in the second defence, he shall be dismissed.
- 25.1.6. A doctoral candidate is required to prepare and submit a research work that constitutes an original contribution to his area of research.

- 25.1.7. A PhD thesis / dissertation shall not exceed 100,000 words. The total number of words includes the main text only and does not include foot notes, exhibits, figures, tables, graphs, appendices, bibliographies, etc. However, in an exception to this rule, it depends on the discretion of the Centre of Studies / Institutes on the minimum of words limit.
- 25.1.8. A Doctoral candidate who wishes to write a research work exceeding the specified maximum word limit may write an application to the Centre of Studies at least three (3) months before making the first submission of the research.

25.2. Submission of PhD Thesis / Dissertation

- 25.2.1. The following procedure shall be observed in sequence for the submission and approval of a Ph.D. thesis / dissertation:
- a. A Doctoral candidate intending to submit his research shall notify the Deputy Dean / Coordinator (postgraduate studies) and the CPS at least four (4) months before the intended date of submission. The KPGC shall initiate the process of appointing examiners for the research upon such notification.
 - b. Once the research is deemed ready for submission by the (major) supervisor, he shall certify that it is of acceptable standard in terms of content, quality, presentation and style. A 'similarity check' report must be generated and validated by the supervisor.
 - c. The Doctoral candidate shall be required to submit as many copies of the research work in temporary binding to the Centre of Studies Postgraduate Office as there are appointed examiners. The CPS shall send one (1) of the research work to each of the appointed examiners.

25.3. Thesis Examination (TE) Grace Period

25.3.1. A student who has completed and submitted his thesis / dissertation to the Centre of Studies for the evaluation of the examiner, will be given a Thesis Examination (TE) status, upon submission of both the temporary bound thesis and the duly completed certification form to the CPS.

25.3.2. The maximum period allowed for 'TE' status is as follows:

| Programme | Period of 'TE' Status |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PhD | An additional of two (2) months after the thesis correction period. |

25.3.3. In the event that the student fails to submit the bound Thesis / Dissertation in the stipulated time, the CPS may terminate the student with the recommendation of the KPGC.

25.3.4. A student on 'TE' status is not required to register as he is deemed to have completed their studies.

25.3.5. A student on 'TE' status will be required to pay recurring and hostel fees (if he stays in the hostel) with the exclusion of tuition fees and examination fees until he is declared as 'GR' or graduated.

25.4. Examiner's for PhD Thesis / Dissertation

25.4.1. Appointment of Examiners for PhD research

- a. A DEC shall have a minimum of three (3) examiners, at least two (2) of whom must be external examiners.
- b. The Centre of Studies should submit the proposed list of examiners to the CPS for Senate endorsement four (4) months prior to the submission of the thesis / dissertation for examination.

- c. An internal examiner of whom must be either a full Professor or of Associate Professor rank (or equivalent) shall be appointed from the relevant department / Centre of Studies, whereas an external examiner shall be an individual from outside the University with adequate qualifications and experience.
- d. The appointment of all examiners for doctoral candidates shall be recommended by the KPGC one (1) month after receiving intention to submit thesis form from the student. The form with the names of examiners should be submitted to CPS for Senate endorsement.
- e. The appointment of the external examiners shall be made in accordance with the criteria approved by the Senate.
- f. A former staff of the University may be appointed as the external examiner after a minimum period of three (3) years from the date he left the University.

25.4.2. Nomination Procedure

- a. For a PhD programme, the Centre of Studies Postgraduate Committee shall nominate an External Examiner and request his consent to serve. However, the appointment is subject to the Senate endorsement.
- b. The External Examiner shall submit the report to the Dean, CPS. He should attend the viva voce or the oral examination (in the case of local External Examiners).

25.4.3. Criteria for Nomination of External Examiners for PhD Thesis / Dissertations

- a. The External Examiner should be a well-qualified (level-wise and subject-wise), objective, experienced individual who is not associated or affiliated with the Centre of Studies or the University.
- b. The External Examiner should have an established reputation, standing and expertise in the area of research work and should be able to judge whether the research work is acceptable according to the approved structure, content and regulations of the University.
- c. The External Examiner must not be or have been closely associated with the doctoral candidate as a colleague, research collaborator, co-author, employer, teacher, supervisor, or the like. Nor should he be a former student research supervisor or current or recent research collaborator of the supervisor / supervisory committee members.
- d. The External Examiner should be either a full Professor or of Associate Professor rank (or equivalent) if he is at a department of a University that offers doctoral degrees or of comparable expertise, and broad knowledge with a sufficiently well-established research reputation and standing in the area of research.
- e. The External Examiner could also be an expert in the area of research from the industry who is not an academic member.
- f. The External Examiner must not be a close relative of the candidate or members of the supervisory committee.

25.5. Responsibilities of Examiners

The functions of the examiners shall be as follows: -

- a. Examiners shall be required to examine and evaluate the thesis / dissertation.
- b. Examiners shall be required to prepare reports indicating areas in the thesis / dissertation that need corrections or revisions to improve its quality.
- c. Examiners shall be required to assign appropriate grade / marks for the thesis / dissertation.
- d. If deemed necessary, examiners shall also be required to conduct a viva voce or a public seminar for the students.

25.6. Evaluation of PhD Thesis / Dissertation

25.6.1. Each examiner shall be required to prepare a report on the research and submit it to the Dean of the CPS within a maximum period of three (3) months from the date they receive the research. The report shall indicate areas in the research that need revision (if any) and the evaluation of the research according to the following categories:

- a. Pass;
- b. Pass with minor revisions to be completed in Six (6) months;
- c. Pass with major revisions to be completed within the minimum period of six (6) to maximum period of twelve (12) months;
- d. Re-submission with or without viva to be completed within the minimum period of twelve (12) to maximum period of Eighteen (18) months;
- e. Failure.

- 25.6.2. The doctoral candidate shall defend his thesis/dissertation in a viva voce and / or a public seminar conducted by the DEC
- 25.6.3. Only the DEC, in the event of a discrepancy between the evaluations of the examiners, or otherwise, shall have the prerogative to determine the specific category of Rule 25.5.1 under which the research should fall
- 25.6.4. Should the thesis / dissertation fall under category (a) of Rule 25.5.1, the Doctoral candidate is required to follow steps according to Rules 25.5.8 to 25.5.10
- 25.6.5. Should the thesis / dissertation fall under category (b) or (c) of Rule 25.5.1, the following procedure shall be observed in sequence:
 - a. The DEC shall prepare a report indicating areas where the thesis / dissertation needs revision (if any);
 - b. The DEC shall appoint a supervisor(s) for the revision and determine the period, not exceeding twelve (12) months, within which the Doctoral candidate must submit the revised thesis / dissertation certified by the appointed supervisor(s);
 - c. The Doctoral candidate shall make revisions, corrections or amendments to the thesis / dissertation in accordance with the report of the DEC;
 - d. Once the student has made all the revisions in accordance with the DEC's report, the supervisor for the revision shall certify that the thesis / dissertation is of an acceptable standard and ready for final submission for graduation purposes;
 - e. Upon completing all the steps according to Rules 25.5.5 (a) to 25.5.5 (d), the Doctoral candidate is required to follow steps according to Rules 25.5.8 to 25.5.10;

- 25.6.6. Should the thesis / dissertation fall under category (d) of Rule 25.5.1, the following procedure shall be observed in sequence:
- a. The DEC shall appoint a supervisor(s) for the resubmission and determine the period, not exceeding eighteen (18) months, within which the Doctoral candidate must resubmit the revised thesis / dissertation work certified by the appointed supervisor(s).
 - b. Once the work is ready for resubmission, the supervisor for the resubmission shall certify that the research is of an acceptable standards and ready for final submission for graduation purposes. Accordingly, the same examiner(s) should evaluate and prepare a report as stipulated in 25.5.1
 - c. Accordingly the Doctoral candidate may be required to defend his thesis / dissertation in a re-viva-voce and / or public seminar conducted by the DEC. The DEC shall have the prerogative to determine the category (a) / (b) / (c) / (e), not (d) of Rules 25.5.1 under which the research should fall, subject to Rules 25.5.4 to 25.5.5 or 25.5.6.
- 25.6.7. Should the research fall under category (e) of Rule 25.5.1, the doctoral candidate would be deemed to have made unsatisfactory progress in the preparation of his thesis / dissertation, and hence, shall be dismissed from the programme
- 25.6.8. One copy of the temporary bound Thesis / Dissertation should be submitted to the CPS to be checked for conformity to the format stipulated in 'The IIUM Thesis / Dissertation Manual'. Once approval for permanent binding is obtained, student should submit to the CPS three (3) copies of his research work in permanent hardcover binding and one electronic copy saved in an appropriate storage device / medium

25.6.9. The CPS will forward one hardcover copy to the Centre of Studies / Institute, supervisor and send one hardcover as well as the electronic copy to the library.

25.6.10. The CPS shall table the grade awarded for the research work to the Senate for final endorsement.

25.7. Doctoral Examination Committee (DEC)

25.7.1. Members of the DEC shall be as follows:

- a. Deputy Rector (Academic and Planning) or a representative as Chairperson;
- b. All appointed examiners;
- c. Supervisor (if deemed necessary by the chairperson);
- d. Chairperson of the KPGC or representative;
- e. Dean of the CPS or representative from the CPS as Secretariat;

25.7.2 The attendance of all appointed examiners in the viva voce is essential unless otherwise agreed by the Dean of the CPS

25.7.3. The functions of the DEC shall be as follows:

- a. The DEC shall function as the highest examining body for Ph.D research work and shall determine whether the research work is of an acceptable standard or not.
- b. The DEC shall conduct the viva voce or public seminar of a doctoral candidate.
- c. The DEC shall prepare a report containing the assessment of the DEC members and indicate areas in the research work that need revisions or corrections.

- d. In cases of plagiarism, the DEC as the highest examining body for Ph.D research shall convene to deliver the final decision on the thesis or dissertation after receiving the advice from the University's Committee for Academic Integrity.

