

## University of Peradeniya

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| <b>Policy name :</b>                   | Policy on Postgraduate Studies and Research                                       |
| <b>Policy number :</b>                 | UoP-P 017   |
| <b>Date of Approval :</b>              | 30.07.2022 (Approved at the 518 <sup>th</sup> meeting of the Council)             |
| <b>Supersedes :</b>                    | Not relevant  |
| <b>Approving Authority :</b>           | The Council, University of Peradeniya   |
| <b>Administrative Responsibility :</b> | Vice-Chancellor, Directors of PGIs, Deans of Faculties                            |
| <b>Monitoring responsibility :</b>     | Boards of Management/Faculty Boards, Senate, Council,<br>University of Peradeniya |

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### Overview

The Policy on Postgraduate Studies and Research shall be the overarching policy governing postgraduate studies and research of the University of Peradeniya (hereinafter referred to as "the University"). The University recognizes postgraduate studies and research as a responsibility and core function of the University in delivering its vision and mission as a centre of excellence in higher studies and research in Sri Lanka.

The objective of this policy is to create an overall policy framework that would promote and facilitate producing globally recognized professionals, scholars, and researchers by offering knowledge and skill development oriented professional postgraduate programmes and research degrees that generate innovations and inventions required for catering to the needs of industry, national development, and the progress of society in general.

The Policy on Postgraduate Studies and Research of the University is made by the Council of the University under Section 135, read with Section 29 of the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978 and its subsequent amendments and the ordinances of Postgraduate Institutes of the University. The University shall review and revise this policy every five years or as and when required to maintain the relevance and suitability of the policy.

### Scope and Application

This Policy on Postgraduate Studies and Research sets the policy framework for the conduct and governance of postgraduate degree programmes at the University. The postgraduate programmes of Postgraduate Institutes and Faculties of the University should be offered under the by-laws and regulations prepared by Postgraduate Institutes and Faculties and approved by the Senate and the Council of the University under this policy framework, the ordinances of Postgraduate Institutes and the Universities Act and subsequent amendments.

## **Key Policy Principles/Policy Statements:**

### ***Institutional Responsibility***

- 1 Subject to the academic control of the Senate and the Council, the postgraduate programmes of the University should be developed, conducted, and administered by the following entities of the University:
  - (a) Postgraduate Institutes,
  - (b) Faculties of the University for which dedicated Postgraduate Institutes are not established (hereinafter referred to as 'relevant Faculties'), and
  - (c) Any other higher educational institutes established by the University and the relevant authorities for postgraduate education and research.
- 2 The Director of a Postgraduate Institute, under the recommendation of the relevant Board of Study and the Board of Management of the Institute, will be responsible for the overall conduct and performance of postgraduate programmes of that Institute. The Dean of the relevant Faculty, under the recommendation of the Faculty Board, will be responsible for the overall conduct and performance of postgraduate programmes of that Faculty.

### ***Preparation of By-laws and Regulations, Codes of Conduct and Guidelines Governing Postgraduate Programmes***

- 3 The Postgraduate Institutes and relevant Faculties should administer and manage all postgraduate programmes under approved by-laws and regulations of the postgraduate programmes of the Institute or the Faculty. These by-laws and regulations should clearly indicate the conditions and requirements of the following areas of postgraduate programmes:
  - (a) Application and admission procedure
  - (b) Coursework and research requirements of programmes
  - (c) Fees and charges
  - (d) Student registration
  - (e) Student requests and grievances
  - (f) Coursework, research projects, and theses
  - (g) Ethical approval of research projects
  - (h) Assessment and evaluation
  - (i) Codes of conduct for students, teachers, and supervisors
  - (j) Examination procedure, offences, and punishment
  - (k) Conditions on Effective Date of Degrees
- 4 The Postgraduate Institutes and relevant Faculties should make all by-laws, regulations, and guidelines of postgraduate programmes readily available to students, teachers, supervisors, examiners, members of decision-making bodies, administrative staff, and any other person for the smooth operation of postgraduate programmes.
- 5 The Postgraduate Institutes and relevant Faculties should prepare codes of conduct for students, teachers, supervisors, and administrative staff members to enhance the efficiency of operation and avoid conflicts of interest. The University also encourages its Postgraduate Institutes and Faculties to provide clear guidelines for students, teachers, supervisors, and administrative staff on their engagements.

### ***Postgraduate Programmes of the University***

6 The University offers the following postgraduate qualifications:

|      | Degree /Diploma/Certificate   | Coursework/ Research  | SLQF L |
|------|---|-----------------------|--------|
| i.   | Doctor of Philosophy/Doctor of Medicine/<br>Doctor of Science/ Doctor of Business<br>Administration                   | Research              | 12     |
| ii.  | Master of Philosophy  | Research              | 11     |
| iii. | Master of Arts/ Master of Science/Master of<br>the Science of Engineering / Master of<br>Business Administration etc. | Coursework + Research | 10     |
| iv.  | Masters degree (subject/ thematic degree)   | Coursework            | 09     |
| v.   | Postgraduate Diploma  | Coursework            | 08     |
| vi.  | Postgraduate Certificate  | Coursework            | 07     |

7 The University also awards the degrees of Doctor of Science (DSc) and Doctor of Literature (DLitt) upon application for qualified persons on a merit basis in the fields of study within the purview of a Postgraduate Institute or Faculty.

8 The University recognizes that all postgraduate programmes of the University should be prepared with the following information: Background, Objectives, Learning Outcomes, Target Groups, Graduate Profile, Eligibility Criteria, Course Structure and Detailed Syllabi, Assessment Methods, and Lists of Resource Persons.

9 The University evaluates and monitors the performance and conduct of its postgraduate programmes as recognized in the institution's strategic plans by reporting and analyzing annual enrolment and outcome, research outcomes and innovations, commercialization, and contribution to national development.

### ***Admission and Selection of Students***

10 The University encourages the expansion of access and admission to its postgraduate programmes by promoting existing programmes, suitably adjusting eligibility criteria and developing new demand-driven professional degree programmes.

11 The University also encourages its Postgraduate Institutes and relevant Faculties to create a structure that enables well experienced employed persons without the basic degree to pursue postgraduate education and training by following appropriate credit accumulating programmes in line with the Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework (SLQF).

12 The University admits students to follow postgraduate taught programmes on annual /semester basis through open advertisements depending on the academic calendar of the programmes of the Postgraduate Institutes and relevant Faculties. The University entertains applications for admission to postgraduate degrees by research at any time.

- 13 The University maintains a fair, transparent, and merit-based selection process to admit students to postgraduate programmes and recognizes the right of applicants to appeal against selection decisions.
- 14 The University does not permit concurrent registration in two postgraduate programmes at the same Postgraduate Institute or relevant Faculty.

### ***Financing of Postgraduate Programmes***

- 15 The University offers postgraduate programmes through Postgraduate Institutes and relevant Faculties on a fee-levying basis. The programme fees and charges should be determined by the relevant Postgraduate Institute/Faculty based on programme requirements and the capacity development required for the programme conducted under the guidelines provided by the University Grants Commission.
- 16 The University recognizes that Postgraduate Institutes and Faculties should maintain the continuity of degree programmes in which the student turnout is low and programme income falls short of expenditure by diverting part of surplus funds of the programmes with high demand with reasonable justification on the relevance of the existence and continuity of such endangered programmes for social progress and development.

### ***Conducive Environment for Postgraduate Studies and Research***

- 17 The University ensures a conducive academic, social, and research environment for postgraduate studies and research through the provision of a unified and integrated policy framework and guidelines on postgraduate studies and research programmes, the provision of facilities and resources, and the establishment of scholarships and research grants for postgraduate studies and research.
- 18 The University makes arrangements to revise degree programmes at regular intervals, adjusting the curriculum and assessment methods of the programmes to suit the market and industry needs and professional requirements. The University encourages its Postgraduate Institutes and relevant Faculties to explore the possibility of introducing new professional and research-oriented degrees and training programmes through the consultation of government and private institutions and the workforce.
- 19 The University creates an environment for the exchange of ideas and networking through the provision of facilities and opportunities for interaction between and among students, academics, industry experts, freelance consultants, and community representatives by means of conducting interactive sessions, seminars, conferences and creating opportunities under agreements and MoUs with local and foreign universities and research institutions.

### ***Maintenance of Academic Standards***

- 20 The University recognizes the standards and requirements specified in the Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF) as the minimum standards and requirements for its postgraduate programmes. It also promotes adjustments to its postgraduate programmes to be consistent with relevant international standards and obtaining

membership/licentiates/concurrence of academic licensing requirements of national and international professional bodies.

- 21 The University appoints persons with suitable/appropriate qualifications to teach in postgraduate programmes or supervise a research degree student. The Postgraduate Institutes and relevant Faculties conduct evaluations of teaching and supervision based on student feedback, peer review reports, reports of examiners, etc., and periodically arrange workshops and training sessions for teachers and supervisors to enhance their knowledge and skills in teaching and supervising.
- 22 The University maintains a policy of fair and equal treatment for students in all components of continuous assessments, end-semester examinations, reports and theses examinations, oral examinations, etc. and ensures the maintenance of academic requirements and standards as indicated in the by-laws and regulations for the completion of programmes.
- 23 The University emphasizes the maintenance of quality theses of research degrees in terms of adequacy of research content; suitability of the methodology followed; accuracy of data and information presented; suitability and relevance of results, findings, conclusions, and policy implications; ready availability of data used for analysis; absence of language and editorial errors; and consistency and accuracy of formatting and chapter arrangement. The University ensures that a thesis accepted for the award of a degree is of acceptable quality to place it in the library for reference.
- 24 The University encourages its postgraduate students to complete their degree programmes within the stipulated time-period from registration. Extensions of registration beyond the stipulated period should be considered only on exceptional grounds and can be granted as specified in the programme by-laws.

#### ***Incentive and Rewarding Schemes***

- 25 The University promotes postgraduate studies and a research culture through incentives and a rewarding system implemented with the support of generated funds, support from government ministries and departments, private institutions and donor agencies and resources and opportunities available under agreements and MoUs with international universities, research institutes, industry and professional bodies.
- 26 The University and its Postgraduate Institutes/relevant Faculties establish and maintain scholarships and research grants schemes through generated funds and under partnership programmes for postgraduate studies and research, which are offered on a merit basis to students who excel in the pursuit of knowledge, research, and innovations.
- 27 The University and its Postgraduate Institutes/relevant Faculties encourage the establishment of schemes of prizes, awards, and medals for academic excellence to reward high performing postgraduate students.
- 28 The University and its Postgraduate Institutes/relevant Faculties encourage research degree students and supervisors by providing travel grants for reading outstanding papers at reputed academic forums representing the Institute/University locally or abroad and facilitating publications of outstanding research papers in accredited/refereed national and international

journals, publications of outstanding theses as books by way of providing expertise, funds, and/or institutional support.

### ***Examination Offences, Plagiarism, and Academic Misconduct***

- 29 The University ensures that all postgraduate students strictly follow the guidelines and procedures stated in the Rules and Regulations regarding Examination Procedures, Offences, and Punishments of the University, and the offences at postgraduate examinations are investigated, and punishments are made under the said rules and regulations.
- 30 The University recognizes that plagiarism at the postgraduate level could occur in (i) in-course assessments and project reports; (ii) research process and thesis writing; and (iii) publications and presentations and will take measures to detect and prevent such occurrences. The University maintains zero tolerance for actions of fabrication and falsification of information and research outcomes and deception in research and implements stern actions against such practices in accordance with rules and regulations of examinations and guidelines/codes on academic conduct.
- 31 The University/relevant postgraduate Institute/relevant Faculty will a) conduct awareness-raising sessions for students at the orientation on the relevant policies and by-laws, including sexual and gender-based harassment and violence (SGBHV); b) appoint a member of staff or a committee to handle student grievances including harassment and discrimination; c) have an International Student Office/Centre or an Office to cater to the special requirements and needs of international students; d) include a reference to the Policy and By-laws on SGBHV in the appointment letters of all teachers in postgraduate programmes; and where necessary conduct awareness-raising sessions on the Policy and By-laws to teachers of postgraduate courses.
- 32 The University will investigate and punish acts of academic misconduct, sexual harassment and violence, and violation of codes of conduct and practices under the relevant rules and regulations and codes of conduct of the University and the general legal provisions of the country.

### ***Addressing Student Requests, Appeals and Complaints***

- 33 The University recognizes the right of its postgraduate students to appeal against any decision or outcome related to their registration, programme attendance, in-course and end-semester assessments, final results, examination offences and punishments and make complaints against teachers, supervisors, coordinators, examiners, administrative staff, and fellow students.
- 34 The University ensures that its Postgraduate Institutes and relevant Faculties implement a system that provides a fair, transparent, accountable, and consistent framework for addressing student requests, appeals, and grievances.

### ***Conflict of Interests Related to Postgraduate Work***

- 35 The University recognizes the need for teaching, supervising, assessment and administrative matters of postgraduate programmes to be free from conflicts of interest as declared in its Policy on Conflict of Interest.

- 36 The University requires its supervisors, examiners, sponsors, administrators, and any other relevant person, including teachers, to declare actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest in supervising, assessing, sponsoring, teaching (if relevant), administering a student with present or past roles and relationships in the nature of personal (such as but not limited to the spouse, partners), familial, commercial or any other nature, and manage the conflict as per the University Policy & Procedure on Conflicts of Interest.
- 37 The University encourages its postgraduate students, teachers, supervisors, officers and any other relevant parties to provide details of or make complaints against cases of actual or perceived conflicts of interests related to postgraduate programmes. In such cases, the University ensures the confidentiality of the information and shall manage it as per its Policy and Procedure on Conflict of Interest.

### ***Ethical Review of Postgraduate Research Projects***

- 38 The University recognizes that all research projects of research students should be screened and, where appropriate, be reviewed for meeting ethical standards of research by an ethics review committee before the students undertake the projects.
- 39 The University recommends the Postgraduate Institutes and relevant Faculties establish ethics review committees, prepare standard operating procedures for those committees, and implement a mechanism to screen/review all postgraduate research projects and grant ethical clearance.

### ***Dissemination of Knowledge and Publication***

- 40 The University encourages research students to present their research outcomes at nationally/internationally recognized academic forums and conferences and publish papers based on their postgraduate work in accredited/refereed journals.
- 41 The University encourages its Postgraduate institute and relevant Faculties to facilitate the dissemination of knowledge by research students and supervisors by providing them with facilities such as registration, membership and review fees and travelling expenses.

### ***Ownership, Patents and Intellectual Property Rights and Authorship of Postgraduate Work***

- 42 The University shall have the ownership and intellectual property rights of work related to postgraduate research such as theses/ dissertations, research project reports and outcome; abstracts and papers from postgraduate research; any technology, equipment, models, tools and trademarks/service-marks developed; aesthetic and artistic work and creation; any tool of data collection and data analysis; any databases created, etc. Any matter related to intellectual property rights of postgraduate work of the University will be determined and decided as indicated in the Intellectual Property Policy of the University and relevant rules and regulations and guidelines of the Postgraduate Institutes/University.
- 43 A postgraduate student of the University who engages in work that may lead to generating an outcome of intellectual property rights is required to enter into an agreement with the Director of the relevant Postgraduate Institute, or the Dean of the relevant Faculty, on the ownership and intellectual property rights of the outcome.

- 44 The University encourages its postgraduate students and supervisors to present and publish a part/parts of a research study in academic forums and journals/books as joint authors and provide due recognition to the relevant Postgraduate Institute and the University by referring affiliation to the relevant Postgraduate Institute and the University, and acknowledging the work presented or published as a part of his/her research project/thesis/dissertation submitted/to be submitted to the University of Peradeniya.
- 45 In the case of joint authorship of a work emanating from postgraduate research, the University encourages its postgraduate students and supervisors to determine the authorship of the work conforming to ethical considerations of academic work and international guidelines such as the Vancouver Convention recommendations.

#### ***Collaborations and Partnerships with Local and Foreign Institutions***

- 46 The University recognizes collaborations and partnerships with local, national, regional, and global universities, institutions, and organizations to enhance the quality and relevance of its postgraduate programmes through the sharing of knowledge, expertise, experiences and resources. Through this process the University seeks to enhance the domestic relevance and international standing of the University and, where appropriate, commercialize outcomes. The University, therefore, encourages postgraduate programme partnerships and collaborations through Agreements and Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs).
- 47 The University encourages its Postgraduate Institutes and relevant Faculties to provide facilities to initiate and implement partnerships and collaborations for the enhancement of postgraduate programmes through scholarships, joint degree programmes, grants for postgraduate research, staff exchange, physical capacity development such as labs, research incubators, libraries, etc., and the dissemination of knowledge, publications, outreach activities, and community engagement.

#### ***Data Recording and Maintenance of Records***

- 48 The University encourages its Postgraduate Institutes and relevant Faculties to prepare policies and guidelines on the types of data gathered, the recording and storing of data, the types of confidential data, the maintenance of confidentiality of data, the release of data under normal circumstances, the release of data on requests made under the Right to Information Act and requests on verification of degree certificates and results.
- 49 The University, its Postgraduate Institutes and relevant Faculties may publish data and information on applications received, students selected, students enrolled, programme completion, theses completed by programmes, and other general information related to the operations of programmes, regularly in printed and/or electronic media for the reference of the public.



**Definitions:**

**Postgraduate Studies:** A stand-alone, officially approved curriculum (which may include coursework and/or research) followed by a student, which leads to a qualification beyond the first/basic degree, awarded by a higher educational establishment.

**Related policies if any:**

- Policy on Conflict of Interest
- Policy on Assessment and Award of Qualifications
- Policy on Curriculum Planning, Development and Revision
- Policy on Research, Invention, Innovation, Development and Commercialization
- Policy on Teaching and Learning
- Intellectual Property Policy
- Policy on Quality Assurance
- Policy on Sexual or Gender-based Harassment and Sexual Violence
- Policy on Requirement to Align with National Policies and Frameworks

**Related Acts, Rules, Regulations, Key Circulars (if any available):** (List in different groups)

- Universities Act, No 16 of 1978
- Ordinances made in establishing Postgraduate Institutes
- Sri Lanka Qualification Framework

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