Office of the Directorate of Research

Gangtok – 737102, Sikkim

Ref. No.: SMU/DoR/PhD/2025/157 **Date: 30.10.2025**

OFFICIAL DISCLOSURE

Subject: Admission to SMU Ph.D. Programme: Policy & Procedure

(In accordance with UGC (Minimum Standards and Procedures for the Award of Ph.D. Degree) Regulations, 2022)

In compliance with the provisions of the *University Grants Commission (Minimum Standards and Procedures for the Award of Ph.D. Degree) Regulations, 2022* and the *UGC Guidelines on Public Self-Disclosure by Higher Education Institutions, 2024*, the following procedure is hereby disclosed for admission to the Ph.D. Programme of Sikkim Manipal University (SMU). This Ph.D. Admission Policy and Procedure is derived from the *Sikkim Manipal University Regulations for Research Programme Leading to the Award of Ph.D. Degree (2019 and 2024 editions)

- ✓ This disclosure is in accordance with Sections 3 to 6 (Eligibility for Admission, Entrance Test, Categories of Ph.D. Candidates, and Admission Procedure), as published on the official University website (www.smu.edu.in). These regulations are framed in accordance with the *UGC (Minimum Standards and Procedures for the Award of Ph.D. Degree) Regulations*, and this policy shall remain subject to revision as per future UGC or University directives.

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2. Objective

The objective of this policy is to provide a uniform framework for the admission of eligible candidates to the Ph.D. Programme at Sikkim Manipal University, ensuring adherence to UGC standards and the University's commitment to research excellence and integrity.

3. Admission Frequency

Ph.D. admissions at SMU shall normally be conducted twice a year, during the May and November sessions, or as otherwise notified by the University.

4. Categories of Admission

The Ph.D. admissions shall be offered under the following categories:
1. Full-Time Ph.D. Candidates – Candidates pursuing research on a full-time basis at SMU. Eligible for University fellowships as per availability and merit.
2. Part-Time (Internal) Candidates – Faculty and staff members of SMU who wish to pursue doctoral research while continuing in service within the University.
3. Part-Time (External) Candidates – Candidates employed in recognized institutions, industries, or government organizations, sponsored by their employers to undertake research at SMU

All categories of candidates shall be governed by uniform academic standards and research quality requirements.

5. Eligibility for Admission

A candidate seeking admission to the Ph.D. Programme shall meet one of the following criteria:

(a) Master's Degree Holders
Possess a Master's degree in a relevant discipline with at least 55% marks or an equivalent grade (or 50% for SC/ST/OBC (non-creamy layer)/EWS/differently abled candidates).

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• Acceptable formats include: (i) 1-year Master's after a 4-year Bachelor's programme, or (ii) 2-year Master's after a 3-year Bachelor's programme.

(b) Bachelor's Degree Holders

• Possess a 4-year Bachelor's degree (8 semesters) in a relevant field with 75% marks or equivalent grade (70% for SC/ST/OBC (non-creamy layer)/EWS/differently abled).

(c) M.Phil. Degree Holders

• Completed an M.Phil. programme with at least 55% marks or equivalent grade (50% for reserved categories).

(d) Foreign Nationals

• Must hold a valid research visa and obtain necessary clearance from the Government of India/relevant authorities.

Note: These eligibility conditions represent the minimum standards as per UGC norms and SMU regulations.

6. Admission Policy and Selection Criteria

1. Merit-Based Admission: Admission shall be based on overall merit determined through an entrance test and interview/viva-voce conducted by the University.
2. Weightage for Selection: Entrance Test: 70%; Interview/Viva-Voce: 30%
3. Exemption from Entrance Test: Candidates who have qualified UGC-NET (Category 2 or 3), CSIR-NET, ICAR-NET, SET/SLET, GATE, or CEED shall be exempted from SMU's Ph.D. Entrance Test but must appear for the interview/viva-voce.
4. Interview Assessment: The interview/viva-voce will assess research aptitude, clarity of research objectives, and alignment with departmental expertise.
5. Publication of Seats: The University shall publish, on its website, the list of available supervisors, research areas, and number of vacancies prior to each admission cycle.

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7. Admission Procedure

1. Advertisement: The University shall issue an admission notification specifying available seats and research areas, derived out of the inputs received from the departments/ units offering Ph.D. seats during that particular session (May or November).
2. Online Application: Candidates shall apply online through the University's Research Portal.
3. Eligibility Screening: The Office of the Controller of Examinations shall verify applications and publish the list of eligible candidates.
4. Entrance Test: The test shall consist of two papers – Research Methodology and Subject/Specialization Specific – each of 50 marks.
5. Interview/Viva-Voce: Shortlisted candidates shall appear before the Department Research Committee (DRC) for the interview.
6. Provisional Selection: The DRC shall recommend selected candidates to the Institute Research Committee (IRC).
7. Research Proposal & Supervisor Allotment: Selected candidates shall identify a Supervisor and present a research proposal before the DRC/IRC.
8. Provisional Registration: The Directorate of Research (DoR) shall issue provisional registration number.
9. Confirmation of Registration: Granted by the University Research Committee (URC) within one year upon completion of coursework.
10. Residential Requirement: All candidates must fulfill a minimum six-month residential requirement at the campus of registration.

Flow charts (figure 1, 2 &3) below, depicting the Ph.D. admission process at Sikkim Manipal University, as per Section 7 of this Policy and the SMU Ph.D. Regulations (2019 and 2024 editions),are provided below for quick reference.

Figuer 1(a) : overll Ph.D. stages

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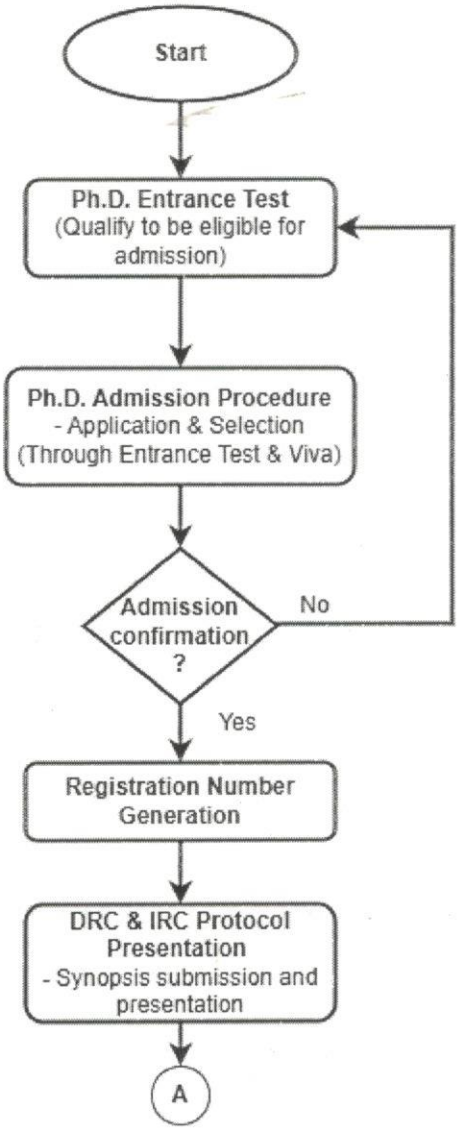

Figure 1: Steps in Stage 1

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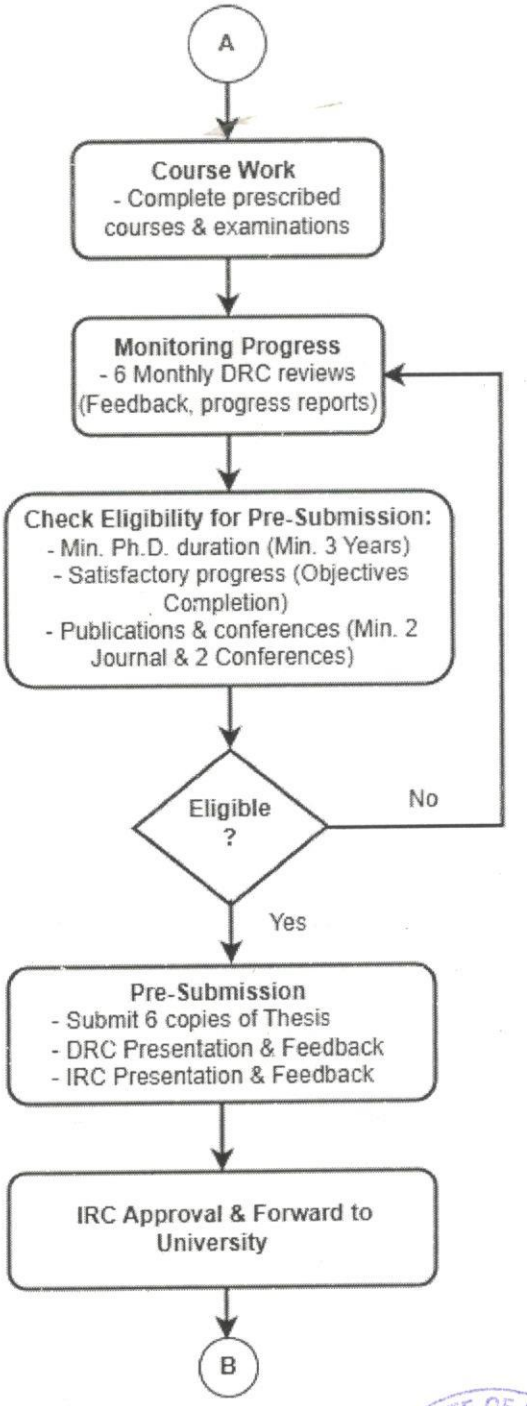

Figure 2: Steps in Stage 2

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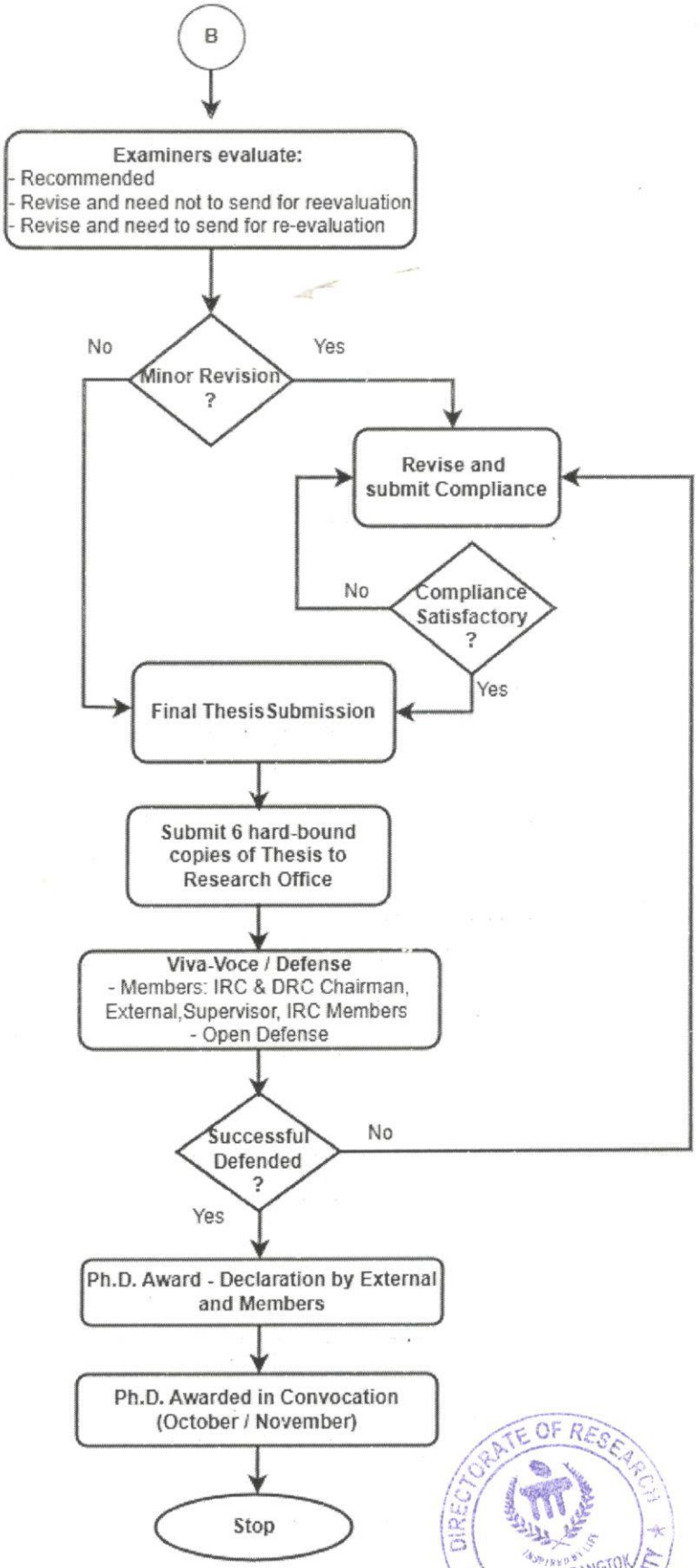

Figure 3: Steps in Stage 3

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8. Equity and Inclusion Policy

SMU ensures equal opportunity in admission through:

- A 5% relaxation in qualifying marks for SC/ST/OBC (non-creamy layer)/EWS/differently abled candidates.
- Fair representation and support measures for women, economically weaker, and underrepresented groups as per national norms.

9. Governance and Implementation

The Directorate of Research (DoR) shall administer the Ph.D. admission process. The Department Research Committee (DRC), Institute Research Committee (IRC), and University Research Committee (URC) shall ensure compliance.

The Vice Chancellor is the final approving authority on all matters pertaining to Ph.D. admissions.

10. Policy Validity and Amendment Clause

This policy is issued under the authority of the Sikkim Manipal University Ph.D. Regulations (2024 and 2019 editions), both aligned with the University Grants Commission (UGC) Regulations on Minimum Standards and Procedures for the Award of Ph.D. Degree.

This Ph.D. Admission Policy & Procedure is subject to periodic revision and amendment as per future notifications, circulars, or clarifications issued by the UGC, Ministry of Education, or the competent authorities of Sikkim Manipal University.

11. Approval and Authentication

a) This *Ph.D. Admission Policy and Procedure* has been **reviewed and approved by the University Research Committee (URC)** in its **URC meetings of CY-2018 / 2019**, and **CY 2023/ 2024, chaired by the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Sikkim Manipal University (SMU).**

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b) This policy continues to remain in force under the authority of the **Directorate of Research (DoR), SMU**, and shall be applicable to all Existing/ current and forthcoming Ph.D. admission cycles until revised by the competent authority.

Sd/-

Director, (Directorate of Research (DoR)
Sikkim Manipal University

Date: 30.10.2025
Place: Gangtok, Sikkim

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