



INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
IoBM

MS/MPhil
Policy Manual

OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES (OGS)



Preface

The purpose of the MS/MPhil Manual is to provide comprehensive guidance to students and relevant departments, enabling them to navigate the procedural requirements necessary for the successful completion of the MS/MPhil degree. Its aim is to streamline the process and ensure clarity for all stakeholders involved. At IoBM, our MS/MPhil research program is designed with the objective of fostering cutting-edge research, facilitating the development of innovative ideas, and improving analytical skills. We strive to cultivate an environment that encourages both faculty and students to be independent and creative thinkers.

By participating in our research programs, students gain a valuable opportunity to acquire skills comparable to those pursued in a PhD degree. These programs are instrumental in enhancing students' knowledge of research methods and equipping them with the necessary tools to excel in their chosen fields. We believe that by offering a robust research program, we provide students with a solid foundation to become accomplished professionals and contribute meaningfully to their respective disciplines.



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1. Admission to an MS/MPhil Degree Program

- **Basic Academic Qualification:** Sixteen years of schooling or 4 year education after HSSC/F.A./F.Sc/Grade 12 or Equivalent shall be required for admission in the MPhil/MS/Equivalent program.
- **Minimum CGPA/Division:** 2.5 CGPA in the last degree (if under semester system) or high Second Division (Minimum 50 % marks) if under an annual system. And a minimum 50 % marks in overall Academic career.
- **Admission Test:** Minimum 50% cumulative Score in General Assessment Test (GAT).
- Successfully pass an interview conducted by the IoBM Interview/Admission Committee.
- **Intra-Disciplinary¹ Qualifications:**
 - The intra-disciplinary admissions may only be allowed, if:
 - a) The university/HEI policy allows, and
 - b) The applicant has a strong interest in pursuing a MS/MPhil/Equivalent degree in a different discipline.
 - c) The applicant has passed GRE-Subject/equivalent test² with minimum 70% marks in the discipline of admission and has taken 6-9 CH of deficiency courses of level 6.
 - d) The admissions committee is satisfied that the applicant's knowledge of primary area (level 6) has sufficiently prepared him or her to undertake the course of studies of the MS/MPhil/Equivalent program (or, in the opinion of the admissions committee, the preparation can be deemed satisfactory by taking a few additional courses after starting the program).

2. Coursework Requirement for Award of MS/MPhil Degree:

- MS/MPhil requires completion of a minimum of total 30/33 credit hours consisting of: 8/9 courses (08*03=24/ 09*03=27 credit hours and a Thesis of 06 credit hours).
- There shall be two regular semesters, namely Fall and Spring semesters, and a summer semester will be allowed only for remedial courses (if any) and for minimum research as per HEC criteria.
- Registration will only be allowed in a subject if the prerequisites/deficiency course/s (if any) of this subject has been completed successfully.
- In each semester a 03 credit hours options will be offered on SMARTZ for the registration of thesis and the student is supposed to register each semester and will pay the fees accordingly.
- A student has the option to temporarily freeze their studies for a maximum period of two semesters, provided there is a genuine problem. To initiate this process, the student must submit an application for freeze of semesters, which should be recommended by the relevant program Coordinator/HoD and subsequently approved by the relevant HoD/Dean. It is important to note that a record of this approval application will be maintained in the student's file for future reference. These two semesters shall be counted in the program life cycle (Max 04 Years).
- For the degree of MS/MPhil, a minimum CGPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale is required. Additionally, a minimum passing grade of C+ must be achieved in all relevant courses.

¹ According to HEC Graduate Education Policy 2023, Intradisciplinary refers to sub-disciplines occurring within one of the ten broad disciplines defined by UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-F-2013).

² In case the GRE-Subject test for a specific field/discipline is not available/conducted in Pakistan.



3. MS/MPhil Degree Completion Timeline:

- The MS/MPhil degree shall be awarded by the universities not before the completion of 1.5 years or three (03) regular semesters and not after completion of four (04) years or eight (08) regular semesters, save exceptions mentioned in the following clause.
- However, the students who are unable to complete the program within four (4) years, the institute will determine through a competent authority whether the delay was caused by circumstances beyond the student's control (e.g., unnecessary delays/governance issues at the part of university or catastrophes - natural or human caused - and if so, the institute will grant an extension in such exceptional circumstances and also fix responsibility in case the delay was caused by the poor governance.

4. Re-admission and Credit Transfer for MS/MPhil:

- If the student exceeds the maximum duration of the program then he/she will have to apply for the readmission as per IoBM Readmission Policy.
- Readmission is contingent upon the Institute's discretion, which is determined based on the recommendation of the Credit Equivalent and Transfer Committee (CETF) of IoBM. While students may express their interest in readmission, the final decision lies with the University/Institute, considering various factors evaluated by the committee.
- In case of credit transfer from another university, IoBM's Credit Equivalent and Transfer Committee (CETC) will assess and evaluate the transfer of credits between educational institutes and programs.

5. MS/MPhil Thesis Requirements:

- Successfully complete the prescribed coursework, each with a credit hour value of 03
- Select a supervisor from within the university in accordance with HEC requirements.
- Write an MS/MPhil proposal following the IoBM MS/MPhil Template under the guidance of a supervisor.
- Successfully defend the MS/MPhil proposal in an open defense.
- BASR Approval of MS/MPhil Proposal.
- Satisfactory semester-wise research progress report will be maintained by the supervisor.
- Complete a six credit hours MS/MPhil thesis coursework.
- Two external evaluators (relevant subject expert), and one defense examiner will be approved by Board of Advanced and Research (BASR).
- Following is the formula to assign grades to MS/MPhil thesis:

Evaluator-1	Evaluator-2	Examiner	Total	Grade
Merit =33	Merit =33	Merit =33	99	A+
Minor =29	Minor =29	Minor =29	87	A-
Major =25	Major =25	Major =25	75	B-

- If the thesis is rejected by one of the evaluators, it will be sent for a third opinion.
- Finalize the thesis based on the comments/changes provided by the evaluator/s.
- Present a thesis defense in the presence of an external examiner and a committee consisting of a supervisor (as an observer), relevant MS/PhD/HoD/program coordinator, Dean, one subject expert, and OGS/R.



- The Final Thesis Submission involves presenting the thesis to the Board of Advanced Studies Research (BASR) for approval.
- The process of Thesis Finalization entails carefully considering and incorporating any comments/changes provided by the examiners while ensuring compliance with the designated IoBM format.
- Submit soft copies in two CDs and a minimum of four hard copies including; Library, concerned Dean's office/Research HoD, Supervisor, and Student, according to the IoBM MS/MPhil Template.
- Complete the student's file along with all required forms/documents signed by the relevant authorities.
- The MS/MPhil Thesis should be in the “Burgundy” color.
- The Degree Award Letter is issued after the completion of all HEC and IoBM requirements (Form 4.8 - Checklist).

6. Guideline for Proposal Writing and Defense:

Each MS/MPhil researcher shall write a thesis reflecting relevance, credibility, effectiveness, and legitimacy of the research. The thesis must be an original and innovative contribution to knowledge that contributes to solving socio-economic problems. To improve quality of a MS/MPhil thesis, some regulations are suggested for the students in the following areas:

i. Selection of Research Area

The research area of the MS/MPhil researcher must:

- Corresponds to the community needs at regional and local levels and comply with the priority.
- National research agenda.
- Reflects the basic and pure research.
- Signifies emerging areas of research that coincide with Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs).

ii. Quality of Reporting

The quality of presentation and reporting in dissertation shall reflect following characteristics:

- The document is well written.
- The contents are balanced, well organized, appropriately styled; clearly structured, and well cohered.
- The document is free from grammatical and spelling errors and flawed terminology.
- Minor shortcomings such as inaccurate use of acronyms and clumsy looking sentence structure has been cared for.
- Quantitative research proposals are required to include a valid statistical design for analysis of data.
- The formatting shall be compatible to international standards.

iii. Methodology Quality

To produce MS/MPhil thesis capable of conducting research independently, ensuring technical soundness of their MS/MPhil thesis is integral. Following guidelines shall be useful to make the MS/MPhil research methodologically sound:

- **Guidelines ensuring the quality of Qualitative Research:**

An MS/MPhil research thesis, based on the Qualitative Research methods should satisfy, at least, the following questions.



- a. Does the research, as reported, illuminate the subjective meaning, actions and contexts of those being researched?
- b. Is there evidence of the adaption and responsiveness of the research design to the circumstances and issues of real-life social settings met during the course of the study?
- c. Does the sample produce the type of knowledge necessary to understand the structures and processes within which the individuals or situations are located?
- d. Is the description provided detailed enough to allow the researcher or reader to interpret the meaning and context of what is being researched?
- e. How are the different sources of knowledge about the same issue compared and contrasted?
- f. Are subjective perceptions and experiences treated as knowledge in their own right?
- g. How does the research move from a description of the data through quotation or examples, to an analysis and interpretation of the meaning and significance of it?

- **Guidelines Ensuring the Quality of Quantitative Research:**

An MS/MPhil thesis with Quantitative Research methods should satisfy, at least, the following questions:

- a. Reliability – are the results repeatable?
- b. Validity – does it measure what it says it does?
- c. Internal validity – do the research results mean what they appear to?
- d. External validity – can the results be generalized to other settings (ecological validity)
- e. and to other populations (population validity)?
- f. Replicability – are the results of the study reproducible?

iv. *Appropriateness of the Methods to the Aims of the Study*

To achieve research objectives, alignment of research approach-methods is necessary. Therefore, an MS/MPhil thesis at least:

- a. Reflect a fair proportion of latest knowledge of contemporary techniques and methods in relation to study objectives.
- b. Contain detailed and easily comprehensible discussions regarding the applied methods and techniques.
- c. Justify the use of methods and techniques to achieve study objectives.
- d. Show evaluation of obtained results in relation with study objectives.
- e. The methods and techniques used should justify the results obtained.
- f. The obtained results should support the study objectives.

v. *Relevance to the Policy and Practice*

The research should have significantly answered the questions related to policy and practice in that area establishing its usefulness and usability. Accordingly, an MS/MPhil thesis at least:

- a. Reflect judicious evaluation of study results in relation with policy related aims and goals undertaken while starting the research.
- b. Discuss the practical implications of the study results in association with the developing practices in that area.
- c. Establish usefulness of the study results for devising policy as stated in the beginning.
- d. discuss that how would the resulting policy be useful for organization/society.
- e. The study output should be significant enough to be published or to be patented.



f. The assessment of the results performed by the author must not be superficial and lacks substance.

- The student will use the proposal template provided on website to write the proposal.
- After the proposal has undergone a Turnitin check, the supervisor will forward the proposal to the MS/MPhil Coordinator/HoD using the Form 3.1 MS/MPhil Proposal Defense Requisition Form in both hard and soft copies of the proposal.
- Once the MS/MPhil proposal has been reviewed and deemed compliant with the general guidelines, including permissible limits for similarity index, format, and other requirements, the announcement of the proposal defense date will be made by the respective MS/MPhil program Coordinator/HoD. This date will be mutually agreed upon by the relevant expert/panel.
- The composition of the review committee will be determined based on the relevance of the research area, with the consent of the supervisor, HoD/Dean.
- At least one week prior to the proposal defense, an official notification will be issued by the MS/MPhil Program Coordinator/HoD to inform the students, supervisor, review committee, Dean, and OGS-Office.
- The Proposal defense sessions are scheduled exclusively on Saturdays, with a suitable time slot from 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM.
- In the event that changes are recommended by the defense committee during the Proposal defense, the candidate is responsible for incorporating these changes into their research work.
- After making the necessary revisions, the candidate must obtain approval from the relevant HoD/Dean. This approval process requires certifying the changes from the relevant supervisor before submitting the revised proposal to the OGS-Office.
- Once the proposal has received approval from the committee, it will be forwarded to the Board of Advanced Studies Research (BASR) for further consideration. (Form 3.2 BASR Proposal sample).

7. MS/MPhil Thesis Template and General Guidelines:

i. MS/MPhil Thesis Guidelines

- The word limit for MS/MPhil thesis should be a minimum of **25000** with **1.5 space**. Footnotes, references and text within tables are not counted within the word limit. (*Appendices and Bibliographies are also excluded*).
- APA (Business Management and Social Sciences) and IEEE (IT and Engineering)
- Reference/Citation style to be followed.
- Font Style: Times New Roman
- Font Size: 12
- Spacing: 1.5
- Running Head: Left
- Paragraphs (Fist Line) Indented
- Page Number: Bottom Centre
- Short Title: Upper right
- Page Format: 1" (Bottom) 1" (Top) 1.5" left and 1.0" Right
- Upto 5 Levels of Heading (i.e. 1, 1a, 1b, 1c, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3)
- Alignment: (Justified)
- Spine: Last name of the author with the first name initial and year
- Cover Color for MS/M.Phil. Thesis: Burgundy



ii.

The Ordering of Items for the Thesis

- Title Page [MS/MPhil & PhD Thesis/Dissertation Template]
- Dedication (optional)
- Acknowledgment (any special assistance given should be stated)
- Author's Declaration
- Plagiarism Undertaking
- Forwarding Sheet
- Certificate of Approval
- Notification
- Examination Report
- Table of Content
- List of Tables
- List of figures
- List of terms, symbols or abbreviations (if any)
- Abstracts
- The body of Text [chapter 1 to Chapter 5/6]
- Endnote (if any)
- References
- Bibliography (if required)
- Annexures/Appendices (if any)

iii.

Font and Font Size:

- Times New Roman font to be used
- Font size 12 for the text of the Thesis
- Font size for title page 18-22
- Font size 14 for Heading 1, for Heading 2 "12" and for text "12"
- Condensed type is not acceptable

iv.

Line spacing in the Text:

- The space between rows of text should be 1.5 lines.

v.

Citation /Reference Style:

- Reference should be made to the publication manual of the American Psychological (APA), 6th Edition and later, and for IT and Engineering Departments IEEE referencing style is required.

vi.

References:

- The references list should cite all the literature referred to in the text of the Thesis.

vii.

Chapters Title heading and Subheading:

- Headings should be single line spaced.
- Each chapter should begin on a new page.



viii. Margins, Physical Layout and Pagination:

- For the purpose of Binding, a minimum of “1” inch margin is required for all sides of page. This is applicable for all pages.
- The page number should be printed at the bottom of the page and centered and should be approximately three-quarter of an inch from the page’s edge.
- All pages shall be numbered in sequence. There should be no blank or duplicated pages.
- All sections before the main text, including the preface are numbered in small Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, etc.).
- The main text onwards including Abstract, Chapter pages, Illustration, Figures, Tables, Reference and Appendices/Annexures should be numbered in consecutive order in Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3)

ix. Declaration:

- The declaration should include if any material contained in the Thesis has been used before and that the main text of the Thesis is an original work. The declaration immediately follows the acknowledgment and must be signed by the candidate.

x. Thesis Binding Template:

- Burgundy color with embossed gold lettering IoBM logo to be printed on the Thesis.

xi. Electronic Version:

- The Institute of Business Management (IoBM) requires electronic submission of the thesis in 2 CD’s, to be kept by the relevant department/Library and for the copyright. The document should be in PDF format. No compression or password protection should be employed. It is the author’s responsibilities to ensure that the PDF version of the thesis matches for the completeness and fidelity with the print version of the Thesis.

xii. Plagiarism Check:

- The thesis will be checked through the Turnitin twice. First at the time of sending it for the evaluation, and second after the open defense before sending the case to BASR for the approval of Degree by the IoBM Focal Person.

xiii. Selection of External Evaluations and Defense Examiner by BASR:

- The supervisor and the HoD are supposed to propose the names of at least 6 PhD experts - Four Evaluators and 2 Defense Examiners (as per HEC Policy) on the subject area to be submitted to BASR for the Approval. (Form 2.6 Examiners/Evaluators form).

xiv. Evaluation of MS/MPhil Thesis:

- The evaluation expected time is 4 weeks. The remainders are supposed to go to the evaluators after 4 weeks.
- If the evaluators are not responding within the given time, in that case OGS is authorized by the BASR to send the thesis to the other evaluator for review from the provided list for approval.



xv.

Open Defense of MS/MPhil Thesis:

- A student shall proceed for an open defense after submitting the changes (if any) suggested by the evaluators. These changes are supposed to be verified and certified by the relevant supervisor, HoD, Dean and submitted to OGS-Office for further process.
- After receiving the changes certificate and thesis (if any), OGS-Office then officially will send the thesis to the Defense Examiner for review and the invitation for the defense.
- The MS/MPhil thesis defense date has to be decided with the availability of the defense examiner by communicating the IoBM defense conduct scheduled policy.
- The existing students of the relevant MS/MPhil & PhD programs must attend the defense and attendance should be maintained by the coordinators.
- MS/MPhil thesis open defense evaluation form (Form Open Defense Form) to be submitted to the Defense examiner by the relevant MS/MPhil Coordinator.
- The sealed defense examiner report will then be presented to the BASR members for Degree approval, In-case of changes suggested by the defense examiner, the student must incorporate the changes and take the approval from a relevant supervisor, HoD, Dean and submit to OGS-Office for resending the case to BASR for Degree Approval.
- Final thesis will be sent to IoBM Turnitin Focal Person for the official check of similarity.

xvi.

Open Defense of MS/MPhil Thesis Protocol:

- In accordance with HEC Policy, the defense is required to be conducted in an open manner.
- Advance notice should be provided to ensure timely communication of the defense schedule.
- Supervision of the proceedings shall be maintained by either the HOD/relevant Dean/Coordinator or OGS/Rep.
- Attendance at the defense is mandatory for both pertinent research students and faculty members.
- Questioning will take place subsequent to the presentation's conclusion.
- Initial inquiries may arise from the audience, succeeded by faculty members, and ultimately, the examiner, with no set limit on the number of queries.
- During the defense, the supervisor's role is solely that of an observer.
- The defense proforma must be completed, signed by the relevant committee members, and submitted to the MS/PhD Coordinator/HoD/OGS.

