

ZIAUDDIN UNIVERSITY
POLICIES

Policy Title	Independent Research Study
Policy Number	ZU/IRS/001
Date of Original Approval	November 11, 2024
Approved By	Academic Council (339 th Meeting of the Academic Council)
Date of Revisions	
Prepared By	Postgraduate Review Committee
Revision No.	

PURPOSE:

To define policies and procedures for Independent Research Study course (IRS)

SCOPE:

Applicable to all Masters, M. Phil and PhD programs of ZU

BASIC REQUIREMENTS:

(Documents and other necessities)

HEC Semester System Guidelines

HEC Graduate Education policy 2023

ZU Postgraduate Policy 2023

Any other regulator(s) guidelines

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Deans, Directors Postgraduate programs, Executive Director Research FHS, Principals, Chairpersons, HODs, Controller of Examination concerned, Registrar office, Director QEC, Vice Chancellor and faculty.

ZIAUDDIN UNIVERSITY

IRS POLICY 2024

Policy / Rules regarding the Scheme of IRS Studies in Postgraduate program of the University.

1. SHORT TITLE. These regulations may be called the IRS Policy 2024, repealing such regulations framed by the University authorities (if any).

2. COMMENCEMENT. These Regulations shall be deemed to have come into force within the period of 2024-2025 applicable to all newly admitted and existing postgraduate Batches.

- i. "University" means the Ziauddin University.
- ii. (HEC) means Higher Education Commission, (HEIs) means Higher education institutions, (DAI) means Degree Awarding Institute.
- iii. "Academic Year" means the Academic Year of the University.
- iv. "Spring / Fall Semester" means a period of 18-20 weeks out of an academic year for Teaching, evaluation/ guidance of the students of the University.
- v. "Summer Semester" means a period of 08 weeks out of an academic year for teaching & evaluation and /or guidance of the students of the University.
- vi. "Pro chancellor", "Vice-Chancellor", "Dean", "Principal / Chairperson" "Teacher" and "Controller of Examinations" means Pro chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, of ZU Dean of the Faculty, Principal / Chairperson of the College / the Department "Teacher" and "Controller of Examinations" of the University.
- vii. "College /Departmental wise Committee" means each College/ Department /Institute will have a Departmental Committee consisting of three senior most teachers of the College / Institute including Principal/Chairperson/HOD/ Director/Executive Director Research FHS and the controller of examinations.
- viii. "Credit Hours (C.H.)" has been defined in section 6.
- ix. (Q. P.) means "Quality Point, (G. P. A.) means Grade Point Average, and (C.G. P.A.) means "Cumulative Grade Point Average. mean or definition
- x. (BASR) means "Board of Advanced Studies and Research", (ERC) means "Ethical Research Committee", AEC means "Animal Ethics Committee".
- xi. (PG) means "Post Graduate", (RC) means "Research Committee" for each Faculty/College, (GEC) means "Guidance And Examination Committee.
- xii. (NOCs) means "No Objection Certificates".
- xiii. (CMS) means " Campus Management System".
- xiv. (GRE) means "Graduate Record Examination", (HAT) means "Higher Education Aptitude Test", (CAT) means "Continuous Assessment Test".
- xv. (HJRS) means "HEC Journal Recognition System", (DOI) means "Digital Object Identifier",
- xvi. H Index: Measured by Web of Science.
- xvii. Intra-disciplinary Qualifications: Refers to sub-disciplines occurring within one of the ten

broad disciplines defined by UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-F-2013).

- xviii. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): A framework of seventeen goals established by United Nations in 2015 addressing various social, economic, and environmental challenges to be met by 2030.
- xix. (RAC) means Relevance Assessment Committee
- xx. (PDEC) means Postgraduate duration evaluation committee means a university committee for evaluation of cases in extension in duration of postgraduate degree program
- xxi. (PGC) mean Postgraduate Grievance Committee

3. PREAMBLE

ZU quests for the quality standards par excellence in all its academic research endeavors. The quality of research and research supervision go hand in hand. The IRS faculty advisors have to ensure that the scholars' work is up to the mark and that they have gone through the details and are satisfied with the entire report (i.e. the topic, its significance, the review of the extant literature, the methodology, the statistical tools used, the results and the analysis followed by sufficient discussion, and the contribution to the body of knowledge on the subject). The overall objective remains to steer the work done toward publishing in peer-reviewed journals or National / International conferences.

4. CRITERIA FOR OPTING A IRS COURSE IN A SEMESTER

4.1 Masters / M. Phil program

- i. A student may opt for up-to two IRS of (3+0) credit hours each in the entire program of studies as elective courses.
- ii. A student may opt maximum of one IRS of (3+0) credit hour in a semester as an elective course.

4.2 PhD program

- i. A student may opt for up-to two IRS of (3+0) credit hours in the entire program of studies as elective courses.
- ii. A student may opt maximum of one IRS of (3+0) credit hour in a semester as an elective course.
- iii. The IRS courses opted during the PhD coursework will be evaluated in the PhD comprehensive examination as per ZU postgraduate policy

5. OFFERING OF IRS IN REGULAR (FALL/SPRING) SEMESTER

5.1 IRS will only be offered in regular semesters (i.e. Fall, Spring) in an academic year.

5.2 Pre-Semester Offering & registrations Activities and Post-Semester Closing of Student's status and Results will be done before and after each of the regular semesters:

- | | | |
|------|----------------------------------|---|
| i. | Registration of an IRS course | along with regular course offering |
| ii. | IRS meeting with faculty advisor | Bi-weekly |
| iii. | IRS Proposal defense | within the first month of commencement of classes |
| iv. | IRS mid-progress evaluation | After 8 weeks of commencement of classes |
| v. | IRS final presentation | After 16 weeks of commencement of classes |

6. SUMMER SEMESTERS

6.1 IRS course will not be offered in the Summer semester

7. WITHDRAWAL FROM IRS COURSES

7.1 Students may be allowed to withdraw from an IRS course during the first 6 weeks of the semester. In such a case the transcript shall record that the student enrolled in the course "and withdraw. Consequently, a grade 'W' will be awarded to the student which shall have no impact on the calculation of the CGPA of the student.

- 7.2 A student withdrawing after the 6th week shall be automatically awarded "F" grade which shall count in the GPA and stay on the transcript.
- 7.3 The student may opt for any regular course or IRS course in the next semester.
- 7.4 At the time of re-registration of the withdrawal course, full course fees will be charged.

8. ATTENDANCE

- 8.1 A minimum of 08 weekly meetings are mandatory between the faculty advisor and the research student. The record of these meetings is a pre-requisite for submission of the IRS. These meetings are recorded on IRS meeting recording forms.
- 8.2 If a student fails to meet regularly or remains absent for three consecutive meetings, the supervisor should immediately inform Director PG.
- 8.3 Despite written (email) reminders to the students by the respective advisor, if the student does not attend such meetings, or shows a casual response toward research work, the supervisor has the option to recommend F grade to the student giving the detailed account of his/her behavior to the Director PG
- 8.4 In case of official engagements/ resignation of the Faculty supervisor from the university or long-term vacations, the Director PG in consultation with the HoD / Chairperson assigns a new faculty advisor to student.
- 8.5 Attendance will be marked on CMS and eligibility will be generated accordingly from the CMS.

9. EXAMINATION

- 11.1 IRS will be evaluated in three steps. Each step carries a different weightage contributing towards the overall assessment in percent marks.

Table 1: IRS course Marks Distribution

Sr. No.	Description	Max. 100 Marks
		Marks Distribution
i.	IRS Final Evaluation	50
ii.	IRS Mid-progress evaluation	30
iii.	IRS Proposal evaluation	20
	Total Marks	100

- 11.2 ZU postgraduate policy defined grades and grade points will be followed to convert percent marks in to course GPA.
- 11.3 The results will be prepared based on Grade Point Average (C. G.P.A).
- 11.4 No incomplete grade (represented by "I") will be awarded in IRS course.

12. IRS PROPOSAL EVALUATION

- 12.1 A written IRS proposal must be well structured with all the minimum required ingredients like the title must be well elaborated and specific to the scope of work. Motivation, Problem identification Literature Review, proposed methodology, measurable objectives, timeline and a tentative budget. Any other component may be added in the proposal if recommended by Faculty advisor.

- 12.2 A proposal with missing details shall not be accepted and the candidate may be asked to resubmit the proposal either with the same or a different title. However in case of minor deficiencies, with the consent of HoD and Director PG, the candidate may qualify for oral defense.
- 12.3 The proposal must be submitted within the first month after the commencement of semester classes.
- 12.4 The candidate and Faculty advisor will be intimated by Director PG for qualification for oral defense via official email.
- 12.5 For the oral defense, the date may be proposed by the Faculty advisor (in consultation with the student) to Director PG.
- 12.6 Respective HoD and faculty advisor will assess the proceedings. The outcomes may be Pass, Conditional Pass, Retake or Failure.

Outcome	Qualitative Comments	Evaluation Category	Status/Action	Maximum Marks (20)
Pass	Satisfied	Approved	Proposal Approved	16- 20
Conditional Pass	Needs Improvement	Approved with minor changes	Proposal approved but with a condition e.g., extra work in the perceived area of weakness etc.	10 – 15
Re-take	Major problem in the proposed methodology or feasibility issue	Approved with major changes	Proposal neither approved nor rejected till the re-exam. The revised presentation in compliance to the given observations is required for the re-exam.	-
Failure	Unsatisfactory/Weak problem definition /exhausted area of study/conventional solution with known results	Rejected	Proposal rejected	0

- 12.7 The Faculty advisors and students are strongly recommended to link their IRS courses with SDGs.

13. IRS MID PROGRESS EVALUATION

- 13.1 For the Pass candidate after the approval of the IRS research proposal, the Mid-progress evaluation will be scheduled 8 weeks after the commencement of the semester classes.
- 13.2 The Faculty advisor should request from the Director PG for the date of mid-review.
- 13.3 The respective HoD and faculty advisor will assess the proceedings. Preferably, an external evaluator should be added in the mid-progress evaluation

14. PUBLICATION POLICY -

- 14.1 For IRS Final evaluation, it is mandatory that 01 research paper must be submitted/ published/ accepted for publication before submission of the final draft, preferably presented in peer-reviewed national/international conference or preferably HEC-approved journals.

- 14.2 Only those publications related to IRS will be counted in which the student name appears as 1st author and Faculty advisor as 2nd author and the Student affiliation is with Ziauddin University and the Email address submitted is of Ziauddin Official email domain i.e., at the time of this policy is @zu.edu.pk. Also, the Corresponding author in publication should be the faculty advisor.
- 14.3 The research article submitted/accepted for IRS evaluation shall not be counted as a publication requirement for MS, M. Phil and PhD as specified in ZU postgraduate policy. The student has to separately publish 01 article from his/her MS / M. Phil research work (if s/he opts dissertation) or 02 articles from his/her PhD research work as per ZU postgraduate policy.
- 14.4 The W, X and Y category of HJRS will be considered at the time of acceptance of the research article.

15. IRS REPORT SUBMISSION AND DEFENSE

- 15.1 The student should submit the IRS report in specified format to the office of Director PG with the proper approval of the assigned faculty advisor by 15th week of the semester commencement.
- 15.2 Submission of a research paper is mandatory for the students before the final IRS presentation.
- 15.3 Before submission of the report, the student must have a plagiarism test report of the submission with a certificate that similarity index is within allowable limits defined by HEC.
- 15.4 The maximum permissible time limit for IRS course final defense is the 19th week of the semester commencement.
- 15.5 At the end of the semester, the student to present his work and presentation/seminar to the committee and the committee will assign a grade to the student using the following rubrics:

English & communication skill	20%
Literature Survey	20%
Research work done	20%
Publication (submitted/accepted) – Submission mandatory	20%
Report	20%

- 15.6 The evaluation committee will comprise of the faculty advisor, HoD / Principal, and an external evaluator appointed by the Director PG in consultation with the HoD / Principal.