

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE
EDUCATION AND RESEARCH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

*An autonomous institution under the
Ministry of Education, Government of India*



GUIDE BOOK OF REGULATIONS FOR
THE Ph. D. PROGRAMME

2022-23

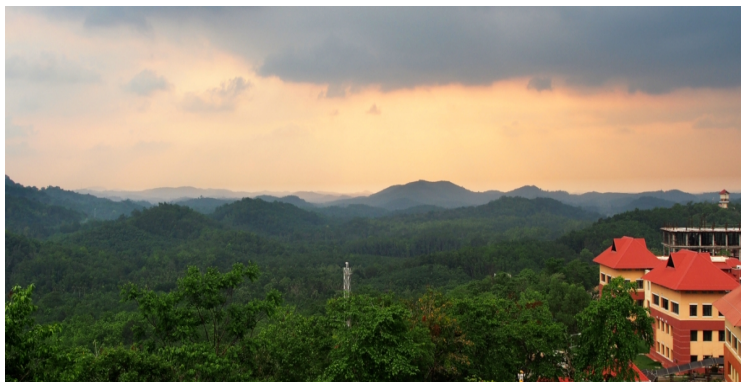
www.iisertvm.ac.in

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Thiruvananthapuram (IISER TVM) is an autonomous institution under the Ministry of Education, Government of India established in 2008. IISER TVM is dedicated to scientific research and science education of international standards. Traditionally, teaching has been segregated from research in undergraduate science curricula in our country. IISER TVM aims to provide high quality education in modern science, integrating research at the very undergraduate level, and to develop a spirit of enquiry amongst its students cutting across disciplines by promoting interdisciplinary research.

Currently IISER TVM offers a five-year BS-MS programme in four basic sciences, namely *Biological Sciences*, *Chemical Sciences*, *Mathematical Sciences* and *Physical Sciences*, Integrated and Interdisciplinary (i^2 Sciences) BS-MS programs in Biological Sciences, Chemical Sciences, Mathematical Sciences, Physical Sciences and Data Sciences. In addition it offers MSc, Integrated Ph.D (IPhD) and Ph.D programmes in basic sciences.

About The Institute



The campus of IISER TVM is situated at Vithura, at the foothills of the Ponmudi Hills, about 40 km from Thiruvananthapuram. The campus is blessed with rich greenery, three streams, a river running through it and a spectacular mountain backdrop.

The fully residential institute provides hostel facilities and dining facilities to all the students. Apart from the mess facilities available to the residents, the students have the options to explore various multi cuisine eateries located inside the campus. The well-equipped computer laboratories and resourceful library are available for all students. The Institute Health Center is staffed with doctors and nurses, providing round the clock medical services. On campus sports facilities like football, volleyball, basketball courts and indoor stadium help to keep-up the physical and mental well being of the students. Various student clubs like science club, cultural club, music club host programmes throughout the year making campus life vibrant and jovial.

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Regulations

About the Programme

Eligibility

1. A Master's degree in Science, Bachelor's degree in Engineering or Medicine with a First Class or equivalent.
2. The candidate must have a valid score in at least one of the following National Level Examinations: CSIR-UGC-JRF, DBT-JRF, DST-INSPIRE for Ph.D., ICAR-JRF ICMR JRF, GATE, JGEEBILS, JEST, NBHM etc.¹

Selection Procedure

Twice every year, students are admitted to the Ph.D. Program, at the beginning of the Varsha (August) and Vasanth (January) semesters of the Institute. Applications will be invited through Press advertisement and announcement at the Institute website : www.iisertvm.ac.in. Shortlisted candidates will be called for an interview, either in person or online, at IISER Thiruvananthapuram. The names of the selected candidates will be announced at our website.

Enrollment

A candidate, selected for the programme, has to register by producing originals of the required certificates and a payment receipt of the registration fees on the day of Registration.

¹ as specified in the press advertisement inviting PhD applications

Duration of the Programme

The minimum and maximum duration of the Ph.D. Programme are 5 semesters and 10 semesters respectively. At the end of 10 semesters, the registration would be cancelled and any re-registration must have the approval of the Senate.

Registration

- Every student must register for the courses of a semester on the first day (registration day) of the semester. The third semester onwards the course code assigned is MAT/BIO/CHY/PHY 799–*Graduate Research*.
- Registration involves payment of the prescribed fees for the semester.
- Late semester registration fee of Rs. 250/- per day to a maximum of Rs. 1750/- for a week will be levied from the first day of the commencement of the class.
- Late registration after the first week of the semester can only be done with the permission of the Dean (Academics) or the Director of the institute.
- After 10 semesters, continuation of the course registration must have approval of the senate.

Fellowship

The following National Research Fellowships are tenable at IISER-TVM: CSIR-JRF/UGC-JRF/DBT-JRF/UGC/NBHM/INSPIRE.

In addition, if the fellowship is not available in the eligible national level examinations, institute fellowship will be provided.

Continuation of the Fellowship in a subsequent semester is dependent on the satisfactory progress of the student's work as reported by the Doctoral Committee (refer page no. 5) at the end of every semester. Fellowship stands automatically terminated at the end of 10 semesters for which the student registered.

It is mandatory that every Fellowship holder takes part in Teaching Assistant duties as assigned by the respective School. Such duties include

help in teaching laboratories, tutorial sessions in courses, grading assignments, library duties, supervision of computational labs and duties associated with the conduct of Institute interviews and examinations. Such assignments are made by the Chairman of the concerned School.

Leave

Application for leave of absence should be submitted in the format available from the Academic Office along with necessary supporting documents e.g. medical certificate, if applicable. Leave should not usually be availed without prior permission of the Dean (Academics)/PhD Coordinator.

Semester Leave

A student can avail semester leave up to a maximum of two semesters during the entire duration of the programme, on bona fide grounds. The period of semester leave will not be counted in the prescribed time limit for completion of the Programme. Students will lose financial assistantship during the period of such extended leave. The leave request is to be forwarded by the research guide and Chairperson of the school (or DC) to the Dean(Academics) and is to be approved by the Director. Applications must be submitted well in advance of the date of commencement of the leave requested.

Research work

Research Guide

After Registration, the Institute will assign a research guide(s)* to the student depending on mutual research interests. The guide is primarily responsible for the work and well being of the student.

An MoU has to be signed between the faculty/scientists from external institutions for joint co-guidance. This MoU is applicable only in those cases where the co-guidance of the student does not lead to any additional financial implications to the institute apart from regular student fellowships. Any intellectual property sharing arrangement will require a supplementary MoU signed by authorized representatives of the institute.

Doctoral Committee

Each student will have a Doctoral Committee (DC)* appointed by the Institute. The Doctoral Committee consists of Head of the School or his nominee (Chairperson), guide and two members of which one may be from another school or an external expert who are working in the research areas related to the proposed work of the student. The major role of the Committee is to monitor the progress of the work, both course work and research, of the student up to the point of the award of the Degree.

The Doctoral Committee meets at least once every semester. At the first meeting of the first semester of the student's Programme, the Committee identifies the courses to be credited/audited by the student. At every subsequent meeting, the student presents the progress of his/her work. The semester-wise report of the Committee on the student's progress is mandatory at the time of the registration of the student in each semester.

***Note:**

1. For the School of Mathematics the Research Guide and Doctoral Committee will be allotted after the successful completion of the comprehensive examination.
2. For the School of Physics, the Research Guide and Doctoral Committee will be allotted at the end of the first semester.

Course work

The student should complete, within the first two years of enrolling, course work as follows:

1. Courses as prescribed by the Doctoral Committee/School, for a minimum of 12 Credits. Increase in the course requirement if needed will be decided by the Doctoral Committee/School.
2. BS-MS students of IISERs will do a minimum of 6 credits.
3. The CGPA of the completed courses must not be below 7.
4. The Committee may, at any time, prescribe additional courses.
5. Courses of the MS Programme, if prescribed, must be of the 300 level or higher (see BS-MS Guide Book for details of courses).
6. All the PhD students should take at least two 600 level three credit course out of four required courses as part of their course work and all the schools must offer the same.
7. In addition to the course requirement of PhD programme, all the students must take a non-credit course on Research Methodology before two years of completion of their PhD programme. They will be awarded satisfactory/non-satisfactory grade based on evaluation

Note: Additional minimum credit/grade point requirements may be placed by individual Schools.

Comprehensive examination

1. On successful completion of the course work, the student must take a comprehensive examination (as specified by individual Schools) in the relevant area of study.
2. In case of failure, a repeat Comprehensive Examination may be given within 6 months.
3. A second failure in the comprehensive examination will result in the cancellation of the registration of the student and removal from the rolls.
4. The Comprehensive examination must be cleared by the student in a maximum of 5 semesters from joining the Institute, failing which the registration will be cancelled.
5. Pattern of the Comprehensive examination is the following:

- a. Presentation of a critique on a recent work of the proposed research area, given two weeks in advance.
- b. Followed by presentation on proposed research.
- c. Followed by questions by the Oral Exam Committee on the topics of the presentations and the basics of the subject matter of the course work done.
- d. For School of Mathematics:
 - (a) & (b) refereed above to be replaced by a seminar.
 - (c) As mentioned above
- e. Weightage:
 - (a) & (b) will have 20% weightage and (c) will have 80% weightage for all schools.

Removal from the rolls

A student will be removed from the rolls under any of the following circumstances.

1. Failure to maintain a minimum CGPA of 7 at the end of the first academic year, will lead to removal of the student from the rolls.
2. A second failure in the comprehensive examination will lead to exit from the PhD programme of the student from the rolls.
3. A student may also be removed from the rolls as a result of disciplinary action for serious misconduct and/or violation(s) of the Code of Conduct of the Institute.
4. If a student does not register for two consecutive semesters without due intimation and approved leave, the student will automatically be removed from the rolls.

In exceptional cases the Director may at his discretion override any of the above provisions.

Monitoring Research Progress

1. The Doctoral Committee will make semester-wise assessment of the progress of the research work of the student and report to the Dean (Academics).
2. The DC may advise the student in case of unsatisfactory performance in course work or research.
3. In case of continued lack of progress or initiative on the part of the student, the DC may recommend the cancellation of Fellowship or termination of the Registration.
4. The DC is also empowered to recommend to the Dean (Academics) any disciplinary action in case of misconduct or unethical practices.
5. In case of any dispute between the student and the guide, the DC may consider it and recommend suitable remedy.
6. On completion of two years as *JRF* and successful completion of comprehensive examination, the fellowship will be upgraded to *SRF* on the basis of assessment of Scholar's research progress/achievements through a presentation before a Committee consisting of the Supervisor, Head of the School or his nominee, DC Members and external examiner, if any, as per the rule of the funding agencies. *JRF* to *SRF* evaluation should not be clubbed with comprehensive examination.
7. The minimum credit requirement for graduating with a PhD degree from IISER TVM will be 90 credits out of which at least 75 credits must be from MAT/BIO/CHY/PHY 799.

Research seminars

The student has to give at least two research seminars to the department:

The first one, to be given before the end of the fourth semester, will essentially concern with the formulation of the research problem and survey of existing literature.

The second seminar, called the synopsis seminar, will discuss the major findings of the student that will go into the thesis. The synopsis seminar will be given just prior to the submission of the Thesis Synopsis to the Dean (Academics) (see below) and with the approval of the Doctoral Committee.

Both the seminars will be assessed by the Doctoral Committee and will be graded as *satisfactory* or *unsatisfactory* with remarks, if any. In the latter case, a suitable course of action will be suggested by the DC.

Thesis submission

Publication requirement for the Ph.D thesis submission

1. The student should have at least one published/accepted paper, with student as a major contributor or the lead author, in a recognized research journal before he/she can submit the thesis synopsis. The paper(s) should cover atleast 1/3rd of the work reported in the thesis. In School of Chemistry for a Ph.D student to submit a thesis, one of the following criteria should be fulfilled:
 - One first-authored paper with an impact factor above 7.0.
 - One first-authored paper + two co-authored papers with a cumulative impact factor above 9.0 (approximately).
 - One patent (primary student inventor) + two co-authored papers with a cumulative impact factor above 5.0 (approximately).
 - Review articles will not be counted for calculating the above impact factors.
 - In special and rare circumstances, the doctoral committee along with a departmental level committee with Head and all the professors and emeritus professors of the School can evaluate the merit of the student and the content of the thesis to forward the thesis if none of the above criteria are fulfilled.
2. “Recognized Journal” means it should be one of the journals in the list of journals prepared and dynamically edited by the concerned School, for this purpose taking due care to avoid all predatory journals.
3. A certificate from the Chairman, Doctoral Committee, stating that the points 1 and 2 above have been complied and should accompany with the submitted synopsis.

Thesis Synopsis

The thesis synopsis is a Chapter-wise summary of the thesis. This is prepared after the go ahead from the DC. Each school will specify the publication requirements the student must satisfy before submission of the

synopsis. The Synopsis is presented by the student to the Committee consisting of the Dean (Academics) and the DC members. The synopsis is evaluated by this committee. The committee may propose revisions to the synopsis, in which case, it must be revised and resubmitted.

The accepted synopsis is further processed by the office of the Dean (Academics).

Thesis Examination

SELECTION OF EXAMINERS

The following steps are followed by the Dean (Academics) in processing the accepted synopsis.

1. A panel of two external examiners will be confidentially selected by the Director from a list of a minimum of eight possible examiners (four Indian and four Foreign examiners) suggested by the DC, at the synopsis evaluation meeting. The list should contain their contact details.
2. A brief profile of the panel members on their professional expertise should accompany the list of suggested examiners submitted by the thesis supervisor to office of the Dean (Academic Affairs).
3. The panel of examiners for thesis evaluation should be experts, with at least one expert within the country, working in the relevant field of research and should be at the level of Associate Professor or Professor or at equivalent level. Any relaxation if necessary on any specific reasons, be permitted by Chairman Senate on case to case basis after reviewing the merit.
4. The synopsis is sent to the selected examiners by email and their willingness to examine the thesis is ascertained. If any examiner is unwilling to accept the examinership, or no response is received within a fortnight, another from the list is contacted.
5. The research guide(s) will serve as the third examiner.

If Dean (Academic Affairs) is the research supervisor, the Director or his nominee will act on behalf of Dean (Academic Affairs).

THESIS SUBMISSION

Electronic copy of the thesis produced in the prescribed format are to be submitted to the Dean (Academic)'s office within two months of the submission of the synopsis. The thesis is to be forwarded to the Dean (Academics) by the thesis Guide(s) and the Chairperson of the School with due certifications. In case one or more of the reviewers ask for hard-copies the student will have to submit the required number of hardcopies within seven working days. Required number of hard copies must be submitted at the final stage after all corrections and changes, if any, as required by the reviewers and viva-voce examination committee have been applied.

PhD students who submit their theses within three weeks of the date of registration of any given semester be allowed to register without fees for that semester provided they do not stay back in the institute after submission. Such students may be allowed 'Leave-Till-Defense (LTD)' along with registration without fees in subsequent semesters, if any, till their final PhD defense.

THESIS EXAMINERS' REPORT

The thesis is sent to all the examiners for evaluation and for their comments on the originality and scientific merit of the findings of the author and to judge whether the work deserves the award of the PhD Degree of IISER-TVM. Specifically they will be asked to give *one* of the following verdicts:

1. The thesis is acceptable as such without any revision. I recommend the award of the Ph.D. degree of IISER-TVM to the candidate.
2. The thesis is acceptable as such without any revision. I recommend the award of the Ph.D. degree to the candidate subject to his/her satisfying the Viva Voce board about the questions/clarifications I have raised in my report.
3. The thesis needs revisions along the lines I have suggested in my report. The Ph.D. degree can be awarded to the candidate after the revisions are made to the satisfaction of the Doctoral Committee. The revised thesis need not be sent to me.
4. The thesis needs revisions along the lines I have suggested in my report. I wish to see the revised thesis.

5. The thesis is not acceptable for reasons I have given in detail in my report. I do not recommend the award of the Ph.D. degree of IISER-TVM to the candidate.

OBTAINING THESIS REPORTS

The following steps are taken by the Dean (Academics)'s office after sending the thesis to the examiners.

- The examiners are reminded of the report every fortnight, after an initial period of 3 weeks.
- Monthly status report of the progress of reviewing is sent to the Head of the School/Department.
- If no report is received within 3 months of sending the thesis, a new examiner may be appointed by the Director.

FURTHER PROCESSING OF THESIS REPORTS

On receipt of both the reports, the Dean (Academics) convenes the DC to discuss the reports and to take further action. The following guide lines may be observed by the DC in arriving at their decision:

- If the verdicts from the two external examiners are either (1) or (2) , the DC may recommend holding the open Viva Voce Examination.
- If the verdicts from the external examiners are both (5), the Dean (Academics) may constitute a committee of experts from the institute to recommend further action.
- If one of the verdicts alone is (5), a third examiner may be appointed. If the third report in this case is also (5), the Dean (Academics) may constitute a committee of experts from the institute to recommend further action with the approval of the competent authority.
- Viva Voce examination can be held only when two final reports are positive.

Viva Voce Examination

Once two external positive reports are received, the Dean (Academics) approves the holding of the Viva Voce Examination and appoints the Viva

Board. The composition of the Board is as follows: Chairman of the Board is one of the external thesis examiners.

Members consist of : (a) Guide(s) and (b) two members of the IISER faculty with research interest in related areas.

The examiners may seek answers to the questions raised in the thesis reports.

The Chairman reports the result of the Viva Voce examination to the Dean (Academics). If the Board declares the candidate to have performed satisfactorily and recommends that PhD Degree be awarded to the candidate, the Dean (Academics) forwards the recommendation to the Senate of the Institute. The Senate may then recommend the award of the Degree to the Board of Governors.

Copies of the thesis are to be deposited in the Central library and School or Departmental Libraries along with an abstract.

Conduct and Discipline

Code of Conduct

Every student is expected to evolve as a responsible citizen with a commitment to upholding the dignity and reputation of the Institute. Students are expected to be courteous and respectful in their interactions with all members of the IISER community and behave in a civilised and dignified manner.

- **Hostel Regulations:** IISER-TVM being a residential Institute, all registered students are expected to reside in the Institute hostel throughout their course of study. There are separate hostels for boys and girls. Each room will usually be shared by two students and is furnished with basic furniture and electrical fittings. Residents of the hostels/hall of residences must abide by the hostel regulations detailed in Hostel Regulations booklet, a copy of which is available on the institute webpage.
- **Disciplinary Regulations:**
Any misconduct will invite a disciplinary action against the student. Misconduct refers to any unacceptable behaviour/act and failure to act on something that is unlawful and/or inappropriate. Misconduct has been categorised into following four types:
 1. Academic misconduct
 2. Non-academic misconduct
 3. Media and Social Media-related misconduct
 4. Criminal Offence

Based on the nature of an offence a disciplinary committee will be formed which will decide the further course of action. The detailed information on code of conduct and disciplinary procedure of the institute is available on the institute webpage in the booklet titled Code of Conduct; which is binding for all students of the institute.

- **Internal Committee:** Institute upholds the equal opportunity and gender equality as per the constitute. The objective of the Internal Committee is to investigate complaints and recommend action against any kind of sexual harassment. Further information regarding the same is available on the institute webpage.

Honour Pledge

1. The student must sign and submit to the Institute the following Honour Pledge at the time of registration in the Varsha semester. The pledge must be counter-signed by the parent/guardian.

IISER TVM STUDENT HONOUR PLEDGE

- a. I promise, on my honour, that I will conduct myself in the Institute and outside, with decorum and decency befitting the high moral and ethical standards expected of the members of the National Institute, IISER TVM and follow its rules and regulations
- b. I will not engage in ragging. I understand that ragging is unlawful and liable to prosecution by law enforcement authorities of the State besides any disciplinary action the Institute may take which may include dismissal from the Institute.
- c. I will not engage in overt/covert sexual harassment.
- d. I will not resort to any dishonest practice in examinations/assignments.
- e. I will not engage in plagiarism in my writings and will acknowledge the work of other authors according to international practices.
- f. I will follow the Library and Hostel regulations of the Institute.
- g. I understand that violation of this pledge makes me liable to disciplinary action by the Institute.

Sd/-
Student

Sd/-
Parent/Guardian

2. The student and his/her parent/guardian should also sign, at the time of admission, the prescribed anti-ragging forms (visit <http://iisertvm.ac.in/anti-ragging-initiatives>) as per the stipulation of the MoE, Govt. of India.

Violation of any of the above rules shall make the student liable to disciplinary action by the Institute.

Library Regulations

1. Library hours:
 - a. Monday to Friday: 9:00 AM to 10.00 PM (Break 8.00 PM - 8:30 PM)
Weekends and Holidays: 9:00 AM to 5.30 PM (Break 1:00 PM - 1.30 PM)
 - b. Library remains open on all holidays except on January 26, August 15 & October 2.
2. All registered Ph.D. students are eligible for membership in the institute library.
3. During the first year, Ph.D. students can borrow a maximum of 4 books at a time for 15 days, provided they do not have any overdue book. After completion of the first year, Ph.D. students can borrow 10 books for 60 days. (Some books may have a shorter loan period depending on its demand). Users can borrow/return the books using the self-service kiosk installed in the library.
4. Users must leave their bags and other belongings outside the Library. Only notebooks and papers are allowed inside the library. Borrowed books are allowed to be taken to the library for return/renewal only.
5. Students must carry their identity cards, and it must be produced whenever asked for. Institute identity card, which serves as the library card, is mandatory for borrowing books from the library either through the self-service-kiosk or otherwise.
6. Strict silence to be maintained in the library.
7. Mobile phone conversation, Consumption of food and drinks are strictly prohibited inside the library. Use of mobile phone is permitted for mobile based library services only.
8. Users are encouraged to use the computers kept inside the library for accessing the library catalogue, e-journals, e-books, and academic databases. Laptop can only be used in the designated place in the library.
9. Return of the borrowed book is mandatory on or before the due date. A fine of Rs.1.00 per day per book for the first week of delayed return and Rs.10.00 per day per book thereafter will be levied. Books can be renewed once, on or before the due date, if there is no pending reservation against it. A book may be recalled any time before the due date

- if it is urgently required by another user. A late fee of Rs.10.00 per day per book will be imposed for the noncompliance with the requirement.
10. Reference textbook and borrowable books can be borrowed for overnight reference, half an hour before the closing time of the library and to be returned before 9.30 AM on the next working day. Only one book can be borrowed for overnight reference. A late fee of Rs. 50.00 per day per book for the delayed return of such item will be charged. All library payment will be accepted online only, at periodic intervals.
 11. Mutilation of books in any form (e.g., underlining, writing on pages, tearing off pages, damaging the binding, etc.) will lead to a hefty fine or even replacement of the book. Before borrowing a book, users should ensure the condition of the book and bring to the notice of the library staff, if any mutilation is found.
 12. Users who lose/mutilate library books are liable to replace it with its latest edition along with a penalty of 20% of the total cost of the book. If the book is part of a set or series, they may be called upon to replace the whole set or series. In case the lost book is untraceable in the market or out of print, Institute reserves the right to decide appropriate penalty.
 13. Users must return all the books they borrowed before they go on vacation.
 14. Users should create an user ID and password in the library portal (<https://librarycatalog.iisertvm.ac.in/>), to reserve, renew, and to check details of books borrowed by them. This password is required for borrowing books through the Self Service Kiosk. Up to three books can be reserved (hold) at a time. Once the reserved book is available in the library, users will be notified by an auto-generated email.
 15. Users should obey copyright regulations while accessing online resources (e-books, e-journals, databases, etc.). Details of the e-resources subscribed by the institute are available at https://www.iisertvm.ac.in/pages/iiser_tvm_library, which can be accessed from any computer, laptop, smartphone, etc., connected to the IISER TVM network.
 16. For accessing the online resources from off campus, during vacation, lockdown, or while undertaking the research project in other organisations etc. users may contact the library, for obtaining remote login facility. Remote login facility will be provided subject to availability of slots.

17. Users should obey the library rules and regulations. Violation of rules and any act of misbehavior will be brought to the notice of the institute authority and will lead to intense disciplinary action.

Deans, Heads and Coordinators

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