

Guidelines for Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)



Graduate School of Education
Office of the Dean
Faculty of Education
Tribhuvan University

2082



Preface

Faculty of Education (FoE), Tribhuvan University (TU), with its mission and vision of institutionalizing teacher education program in Nepal, aims at producing human resource in the education sector. FoE contributes to the nation building goal of the country as per the requirements of the 21st century marketplace. As FoE has a recorded history of running pre-service education programs since 1956 AD. It is the largest public institution devoted to teacher education in Nepal. Although this institution has a long history of serving the nation, it has been facing several challenges in area of curricular and institutional reforms. In that, there is a need for an update in the policies and programs focusing on producing qualified human resource for education sector. FoE has been running programs of Bachelor, Master, Master of Philosophy and Doctoral levels. The Master of Philosophy (M. Phil) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) are the research degree programs that involve students in carrying out high-impact research to develop their academic and professional knowledge, skills and attitude for the national and international employment market.

This PhD guideline has been prepared as a handy document targeting basically at the current and prospective students enrolled in the PhD program under FoE, TU. It was developed by a team comprising Prof. Dr. Bed Raj Acharya, Prof. Dr. Peshal Khanal, Prof. Dr. Kamal Kumar Poudel, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Buddha Raj Khaniya, and Assist. Prof. Dr. Prem Prasad Poudel. I would like to express my gratefulness to the team for their hard work in bringing this document in this shape.

In capacity of the Dean of FoE, I would like to express my commitment to continue to strive for enhancing the quality of education of all the programs offered by the Office of the Dean. This document comes up with the purpose of enhancing the quality of the PhD program. As the PhD students are still facing some confusions in different stages of the research process - from getting admission to the completion of their PhD - development of this Guidelines was deemed necessary. This Guidelines has been organized in three parts- Part I provides a brief overview of the program, Part II outlines the academic structures and programs and Part III details out the administrative and operational guidelines concerning the PhD program. After all, I hope that the contents advanced briefly in this Guidelines will facilitate the students, supervisors as well as those who take interest in this program offered by FoE, TU.

Together we can make a difference!

Prof. Bed Raj Acharya, PhD

Dean, Faculty of Education, Tribhuvan University.

May 2025



Acronyms/Abbreviations

BS:	Bikram Sambat
EDD:	Doctor of Education
FOE:	Faculty of Education
GPA:	Grade Point Average
GSE:	Graduate School of Education
ICT:	Information and Communication Technology
MPhil:	Master of Philosophy
PhD:	Doctor of Philosophy
PS:	Principal Supervisor
Co-S:	Co-supervisor
TU:	Tribhuvan University
UGC:	University Grants Commission



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Part I: Introduction

With a mission to contribute to the quality human resource development in the field of education, the Faculty of Education (FoE), Tribhuvan University (TU) began the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) program in education in 2052 BS (1995AD). While the doctoral program started in 1995 and was run directly by FoE on a regular basis, the Graduate School of Education (GSE) was established in 2062 BS (2005) for enhancing and systematizing the program aiming at meeting the international standards of research in higher education. The PhD program is a flagship program run at GSE under FoE, TU. In particular, GSE was established with the following goals.

- To produce globally competitive and qualified human resource in the field of education, especially in the areas of research and development.
- To support the government agencies to develop educational policies and programs by providing research-based input.
- To strengthen the quality of education in educational institutions, both at school level and higher education level, by producing human resource for teaching and education administrators to be needed for the education sector.
- To bring together scholars from the relevant field to produce knowledge and research skills for innovations in education, and disseminate them to the wider audience.
- To engage faculty and students in innovative research and development activities by collaborating with national and international organizations and donor agencies.
- To create a research forum aimed at supporting the research enrolled candidates for facilitating their academic growth and research work.

This Guidelines has been developed to provide the current and prospective PhD students with detailed regulations that they are required to follow during their research process, primarily including the program structure, registration requirements, research and progress reporting, supervision, and other program-related administrative requirements and activities leading to graduation.


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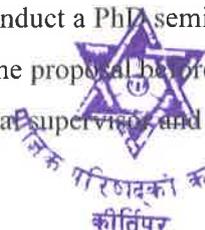
Vision and Mission

FoE has a tradition of engaging students in change-seeking participatory pedagogies that facilitate them to carry out experiential and critical reflective learning. The students are involved in plural epistemic traditions that arise from local and global wisdom. They are engaged in reflecting, critiquing, and envisioning the change in the educational and social milieu. The pedagogy operated through online and/or face-to-face or blended mode of learning maximizes students' choice and personalized engagement in the learning process.

GSE has long aimed to develop the curricula in line with the market trends. So, it aims to establish a stronger collaboration with local, provincial and federal level government agencies and non-governmental organizations towards the improvement of the quality of the program. Moreover, as an opportunity, GSE has a pool of experienced professors having graduated from world-class institutions so, capable of properly instructing the courses and supervising the candidates. Most of them have demonstrated their high-quality academic performance by publishing papers in globally reputed international journals. In this sense it will not be otherwise to claim that GSE is the best choice for the students and academics who would like to make a big difference in their professional career in the field of education.

GSE offers PhD program in subject areas such as Educational Studies, Mathematics Education, English Education, Nepali Education, and Health Education. The candidates can choose from a wide range of issues within the broader landscape of programs for their future research. GSE strives to develop academic programs to demonstrate a unique blend of needs expressed by the community and futuristic orientation offered by the local, regional, and international frameworks and the ongoing research of the scholarly communities. GSE collaborates with academic organizations, universities, research organizations, and funding agencies at the national and international level. Last but not the least, the GSE is committed to the growth and excellence driven by the ethos of lifelong learning.

GSE offers an eight-semester PhD program in the subject areas mentioned above. The candidates of the PhD program have to conduct a PhD seminar, submit a comprehensive literature review of the research area, and defend the proposal before permanent registration to the PhD program. They are guided by the principal supervisor and co-supervisor (as required) assigned by the


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Research Committee of the FoE considering the expertise of the potential supervisors and the nature of the study proposed by the candidate. During the PhD program period, the candidates have to make at least three progress presentations. On completion of the field research and analysis of the data, the candidates have to sit for the pre-viva voce, which is an internal defense of the research within the faculty. Upon incorporating the comments/feedback provided during the pre-viva, the candidates have to sit again for the final PhD viva voce. The dissertation will be evaluated by two examiners, one from Nepal and one from abroad as far as feasible and appropriate. The provision of an examiner from abroad is not mandatory for the candidates specializing in Nepali Education.

Part II: Academic Structure and Programs

The PhD program offered by FoE is a six-semester program (3 years) (for M. Phil Leading to PhD) and an eight-semester program (for direct enrollment to PhD).

Eligibility of Applicants for the PhD Program

The FoE shall call for admission to the PhD program two times a year. Applicants meeting the following criteria can apply for the PhD program.

- The applicant must have completed a two semester MPhil program with a GPA average B (3.0) or above (for the MPhil Leading to PhD program) from a recognized university in the relevant subject area.
- The applicant must submit a concept paper in the areas of interest for future research stating the problem and overall plan for the research work in the areas of specialization in at least 2000 words (excluding references) along with the application.
- The applicant is required to submit two academic papers, published or publishable, in the research areas. Preference shall be given to the peer-reviewed papers published in national and/or international journals.
- Applicants who have completed a doctor's degree from any other disciplinary area can also apply for the program. However, the subject-specific eligibility will be as per the decision of the respective Subject Committee.


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- All applicants must submit the fully completed form availed by the Office of the Dean, FoE or GSE, together with the concept paper and the academic papers.

Selection Process

The applicants must attend and pass an entrance examination (i.e., interview) conducted by the Office of the Dean FoE, TU. For this purpose, a five-member interview committee shall be formed by the GSE, consisting of two experts, Director of GSE, Deputy Director of GSE and the Dean.

Registration

The applicants who have passed the entrance examination (interview) conducted by FoE, TU will be eligible for enrollment to the program. Upon the payment of the designated fee, the selected applicants will be formally enrolled to the PhD program.

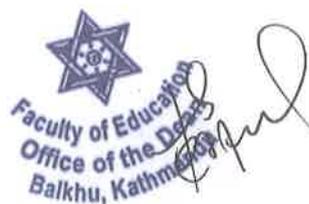
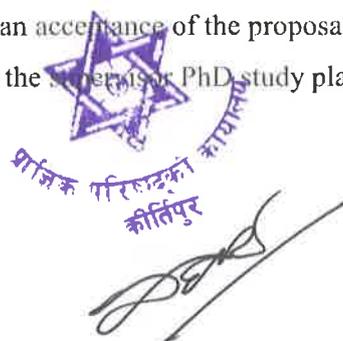
Temporary Registration

The students who register for the program shall be entitled to have been temporarily enrolled since then. Having had the temporary registration, the students must be involved in the research project as per the guidance of the supervisor, and prepare a detailed PhD proposal and review of the relevant literature in the area of the study. The temporary enrollment therefore applies to all the students prior to their proposal defense.

Permanent Registration

The students must be subjected to a permanent registration within 12 months of their temporary registration. For the permanent registration, the student must meet the following criteria.

- Completion of the requirement of two credit hour seminar work and paper presentation.
- Submission of a progress report including a theoretical and an empirical review of the relevant literature of at least 15000 words (excluding references).
- S/he must obtain an acceptance of the proposal and a PhD study plan prepared in close consultation with the supervisor PhD study plan.



The students who have got the proposal passed, and passed the defense examination conducted by FoE shall be entitled to receive a permanent registration for the PhD program. Figure 1 sums up the requirements the candidate must meet for permanent registration.

Figure 1: Activities to be accomplished as a PhD candidate and their detailed explanation

S.N.	Activities	Details of the Activities
1.	Presenting the seminar paper	Within six months of the temporary registration, students need to present a seminar paper relating to the area of their study based on the review of a few recent literature relevant to their study.
2.	Literature Review	Students need to submit a literature review related to the area of their study of at least 15,000 words to a maximum of 30,000 words.
3.	Proposal Submission	Submit the comprehensive Ph.D. proposal with the consultation of the respective supervisor within one year of the temporary registration of your Ph.D. project. The proposal needs to be around 50 pages with double line space without references.
4.	Proposal defense	The students need to defend their proposal and should be accepted by the Committee.

Academic Engagement of the Candidates

The GSE will keep record of all the academic activities conducted for the PhD candidates. The candidates must maintain at least 80% of their attendance in all these activities conducted by GSE/FoE TU.

Submission of Progress Report

The candidates will have to submit a detailed progress report in the format issued by the Office of the Dean along with the supervisor's remarks in the written form every semester (6 months) to GSE (See Appendix 3). In the case of the inability of the submission of the report, the candidates will have to submit an application detailing out a justification of the delay. In that case, the candidate shall be provided with one month extension of the deadline for submission of the progress report. While submitting the progress report, the candidate will have to pay the designated fee in the beginning of each semester.

Part III: Administrative and Operational Guidelines

Supervisory Structure and Supervision

The PhD candidate will be supervised primarily by a Principal Supervisor. However, if the Principal Supervisor (PS) recommends a potential supervisor based the supported needed realized by him/her, the research committee at the FoE will approve the co-supervisor (Co-S) for supervising the candidate.

Eligibility of the Principal Supervisor

The PS must meet the following criteria (also refer to UGC PhD Guidelines 2023)

- Having earned a doctoral degree (PhD/EDD) from a recognized university.
- Having a work experience of at least five years as a full-time lecturer at a university.
- Having published at least two research papers in indexed journals or five in those recognized by the University Grants Commission, Nepal. However, this provision shall not be applicable to the Associate Professors and Professors having a PhD degree.

Eligibility of Co-supervisor

The Co-S must meet the following criteria.

- Having earned a doctoral degree (PhD/EDD) from a recognized university.
- Having a work experience of at least three years as a full-time lecturer or of equivalent position (minimum) at a recognized university. The final decision on the selection of the Co-S will be made by the research committee.



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- Having a record of at least two research papers published in indexed journals or five in those recognized by the UGC Nepal.

Maximum Number of Supervisions

The following will be the conditions for agreeing to supervise a PhD student to be applied to the potential supervisors.

- Professor- maximum 5 candidates concurrently
- Associate Professor- 4 candidates concurrently
- Lecturer- 3 candidates concurrently

Role of the Supervisor(s)

The PS and the Co-S shall be entitled to accomplish the following responsibilities during the supervision period.

Role and Responsibilities of the PS

The PS must consider the following responsibilities while supervising a PhD candidate.

- The PS has to ensure that the candidates' proposed research study aligns with the scope of his/her expertise, and should commit to provide adequate time and support by the candidate and in line with the institutional requirement of TU.
- The PS should NOT explicitly impose his/her interest of supervising a candidate.

For any supervision decision, The PS has to make sure that the candidate expects him/her as the potential supervisor based on the professional expertise.

- The PS should keep record of the agreement with the candidate on his/her expectations as part of the first progress report.
- The PS should inform the candidate of the schedule of the events the candidate is required to undergo and provide a detailed list of the responsibilities to be discharged during the doctoral journey. The schedule can be made in such matters as the frequency of meetings, progress report, nature of feedback requirement of seminar presentations, scholarship provisions available in different organizations, expected outputs of the research including publication.


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- The PS has to oversee the progress of the candidate and recommend the progress to the Dean of the Faculty of Education as laid down by the guidelines for the doctoral program.
- The PS has to make sure that the students' progress and research work undertaken is genuine and relevant.
- The PS should keep record of all the data obtained by the candidate from the field as a part of the supervised research work.
- The PS should be responsible for ensuring that the candidate supervised has maintained the ethical considerations as per the university's research ethics regulations.
- The PS should ensure the quality and rigour of the research project undertaken by the candidate as per the requirement for the doctoral degree.
- The PS supervisor should support the student to explore relevant resources for the research work.
- PS should make a timely and effective cordial communication with the candidate, face-to-face or online.
- The supervisory support system should be developed considering the timely completion of the research work of the candidate.
- The PS will be responsible for coordination with other co-supervisor(s) as per the relevance of their expertise in relation to the research work of the candidate.

Roles and Responsibilities of Co-supervisors

- The co-supervisor(s) (Co-S/s) should carry out their supervisory role in close collaboration with the PS, thereby ensuring that it is not in conflict with the PS.

Role and Responsibilities of the Candidate

The roles and responsibilities of the candidate shall be as follows:

Change of Supervisor

Once the PS is assigned, s/he will not be changed unless there are genuine reasons for the supervisor not being able to supervise the research work. Such reasons may primarily include: too busy to provide sufficient time for the candidate, travelled abroad for a long time, having a


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serious health problem hampering the supervision process. Upon the written application tendered by the candidate stating the reason(s) for the change of the supervisor(s) with agreement from the PS to the Director of GSE, the Research Committee can consider the change of the PS or/and the Co-S/s if deemed appropriate. The candidate will be notified about the confirmation of the change of the supervisor(s) within 30 days from the date of submission of the application.

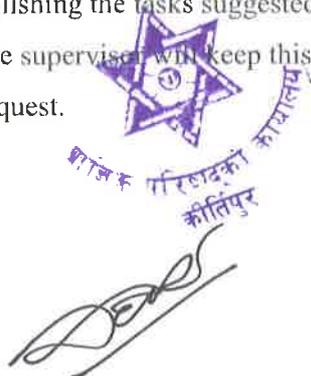
Anyone having a conflict of interest with the candidate shall not be appointed as a supervisor, drawing on the spirit of Tribhuvan University Teacher and Staff Regulation -2050 BS.

Period of Study and Discontinuation

The PhD program of GSE, TU is of 3 years. The candidates having an MPhil degree can complete PhD in 2 years. In the case of the candidate not being able to complete the research work within 3 years, the Research Committee will consider extension of the duration for two years - six months at a time but not exceeding 5 years in total. For this extension, the candidate must submit a written recommendation from the PS stating the valid justification for the delay. In the case of the candidate not being able to complete the work (i.e., submission of the final copy of the dissertation and/or any other relevant documents required) within five years from the date of registration, special decision will be made for an extension of one year in recommendation of the supervisor and the Head of the institution. The research committee shall make a decision accordingly. If the candidate cannot complete the research work within this period of the extension, his/her registration to the PhD program will automatically be considered terminated, with the effect that the candidate shall require re-registration to the program, if he/she wished so.

Late Submission of Requirements

The doctoral candidate must complete all the required tasks as suggested by the supervisor(s) in/on time. No late submission shall be entertained. However, if there is a valid reason for the delay or potential delay in accomplishing the tasks suggested, the candidate can submit a written request letter to the supervisor. The supervisor will keep this in record and might need to present to the research committee upon request.



Handwritten signature and a circular stamp of Tribhuvan University, Faculty of Education, Office of the Dean, Balkhu, Kathmandu.



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Graduation Requirements

The doctoral candidates are required to complete all the tasks as outlined in this guideline for the graduation. All fees must be settled and all the thesis-related academic tasks must be completed before graduation. Table 2 below outlines the major steps that the candidate has to go through before graduation.

Table 2: Tasks to be accomplished by the PhD candidates

SN	Tasks to be accomplished
1	Registration
2	Submission of seminar papers and their presentation
3	Submission of literature review (at least 15000 words) guided by the supervisor(s)
4	Presentation of a research proposal (proposal defense)
5	Submission of progress report (first)
6	Submission of progress report (second)
7	Ethical approval for research work to be undertaken
8	Field work
9	Submission of progress report (third)
10	Preparation of dissertation (pre-draft)
11	Submission of dissertation (draft)
12	Pre-viva defense (recommended by the supervision committee)
14	Revision of the dissertation addressing the feedback obtained from the supervision committee and prepare a revision matrix
16	Face final viva voce (dissertation defense as scheduled by the Office of the Dean)
17	Revision and submission of the dissertation (final) with matrix.
18.	Certification (provisional)

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Note: The candidate is supposed to prepare and submit at least three progress reports. Similarly, the candidate should submit proof of the publication of at least two papers published in peer-reviewed journals. The papers must be in the areas of their research issue.

Structure of Dissertation and Submission

The candidate shall prepare the dissertation as per the guidelines for dissertation provided by the Office of the Dean, FOE, TU. The following considerations are to be made to prepare the dissertation for submission.

- The abstract of the dissertation should not exceed 800 words. Among other things, the abstract should comprise the major contribution made in the field of the study in the abstract.
- In general, the preferred length of the different components (chapters) of the dissertation will be 10%, 25%, 15%, 30%, 15%, and 5% for introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion, and findings and implications respectively.
- The length of the dissertation will be a minimum of 50000 words and 70000 words in the case of quantitative and qualitative/mixed studies respectively.
- The submitted final dissertation needs to pass the plagiarism test criteria as outlined by the FOE, TU. The similarity index should be below 15% (Plagiarism check submission of the report will be the responsibility of the candidate).
- Three copies of the complete dissertation should be submitted to GSE along with the recommendation letter from the PS.
- All the fees laid down by Office of the Dean, FOE should be settled prior to the submission of the dissertation, and the payment receipt should be produced to the Office
- The dissertation must be printed on the A4 size (297 X 210) paper, on one side of the pages. The color of the dissertation outer cover should be either black or blue.
- The formatting style and other printing quality shall be as per the guidelines issued by the Office of the Dean, FOE, TU.

Dissertation Evaluation

The dissertation will undergo internal and external evaluation processes.



Internal Evaluation

- For the internal evaluation of the dissertation, the candidate will have to submit three hard copies of the dissertation with loose/spiral binding and a soft copy to GSE.
- GSE, upon the recommendation of the Research Committee, will nominate two experts having an expertise in the relevant area and get the dissertation evaluated by them. The internal examiners must submit their evaluation report (in written) within 6 weeks from the date of receiving the dissertation (e-copy or physical printed copy or both).
- Upon evaluation of the dissertation by the internal examiners, GSE will avail the comments or feedback obtained from the examiners to the candidate and his/her supervisor for further revision of the dissertation.
- The candidate has to revise the dissertation in line with the comments/feedback obtained from the evaluators and prepare a revision matrix, and submit them to GSE accompanied by a recommendation from PS.
- GSE will organize a pre-viva voce following the revised version submitted by the candidate based on the feedback obtained from the internal examiners.
- Upon receiving comments and feedback from the research committee members, evaluators and experts during the pre-viva presentation, the candidate has to address the comments in consultation with the supervisor(s). Once the comments are addressed sincerely (as relevant) and as suggested by the supervisors, the candidate should submit the final copy of the dissertation along with the recommendation of the PS to GSE.

External Evaluation

The Dean, upon the recommendation of the PS and approval from the Research Committee, will nominate two external examiners, one of them being a foreigner (for subjects other than Nepali) for the evaluation of the dissertation submitted by the candidate. For this purpose, the PS will recommend names of 4 potential examiners (2 from Nepal and 2 from foreign universities). The external examiners can be selected as provisioned by The Graduate School of Education Operation Guidelines 2075BS. The external examiners have to submit the evaluation of the thesis in written within 3 months from the date of receiving the thesis. However, an ideal time for the submission of the evaluation report would be expected between 6-8 weeks.


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Suspension of the Study

The candidates not meeting the university's ethical guidelines for research and professional conduct shall be suspended from the study.

Academic Honesty and Integrity

The candidate has to maintain optimum academic integrity and honesty while undertaking the PhD study. No instance of academic misconduct will be expected from the candidate. In all stages of the research journey, the candidate is required to maintain fairness, trust, respect and responsibility institutionally and personally.

Library Regulations

Generally, the candidates shall abide by the library regulations of TU. In addition, to use the resources at the GSE library, the candidate will have to follow the library rules issued by GSE.

- The candidate can borrow 2 books available at the GSE library at a time for a period of 2 months.
- Once the borrowed books are returned, s/he can borrow the same or any other books as per the availability.
- In case the candidate fails to return the book(s) within the due date, s/he will be subject to fines as per the rules issued by GSE.

Right to Appeal

For any cases emerging in relation to the candidates' professional conduct, ethical behaviour, grievances of any form and complaints, the candidate can make a written appeal to the Dean of FoE via the Director of the GSE.

Communication Channels

The GSE will post and upload the important notices/information related to the program to its website. The candidates are required to visit the GSE webpage frequently to be updated on the activities and events conducted by GSE. When it comes to communication for the personal academic purposes, the candidate shall be expected to write an official email or directly telephone the GSE director/Deputy Director/VC/SS as appropriate. On top of that, the candidate can also approach GSE/FOE in person as appropriate.

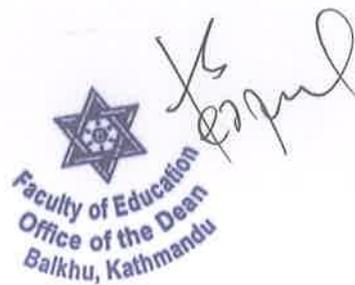


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FOE (2018). *The operational Guidelines of Graduate School of Education, Faculty of Education-2018* Tribhuvan University.

Tribhuvan University. (2050BS). *Tribhuvan University Teacher and Staff Service Regulation 2050 BS*.

UGC. (2023). UGC PhD Guidelines.



Appendix 1

Consent Form to be Signed by the Principal Supervisor

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Faculty of Education, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Nepal.

Ref: Consent for Supervising Doctoral Candidate

Mr/Ms.....as
consulted me along with his/her concept note for undertaking his/her PhD degree from Graduate School of Education, Tribhuvan University. I would like to inform you that I agree to supervise him/her to pursue his/her PhD. I will comply with the rules and regulations as per the University's program guidelines.

Thank you.

Name:
Position:
Address:
Contact no: Mobile:

Email:

Principal Supervisor's remarks in relation to this agreement, (if any).

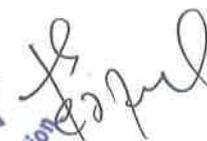
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Signature:

Date:



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Appendix 2

Supervision Request Form

The Director,

Graduate School of Education, Faculty of Education, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur

Ref.: Request for Assigning Supervisor

Dear sir/madam,

As you know, I have registered myself as a PhD candidate in(subject area) at Graduate School of Education, Tribhuvan University in the academic year... Therefore, I would like to request you to assign me a supervisor as per the GSE rule.

I propose the following experts for your consideration to be selected as my supervisor.

Names of proposed supervisors ¹	Institution (currently working or retired from)	Mobile no.	Email
1.			
2.			
3.			

Thank you for your cooperation.

Name of the candidate:.....

Email:.....

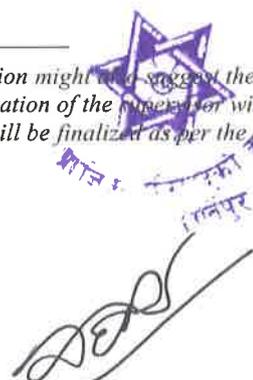
Mobile no.:

Proposed title/area/theme of study:

Signature.....

Date:

¹ Graduate School of Education might also suggest the candidate to consider a supervisor other than the one proposed by him/her. Finalization of the supervisor will be made after obtaining consent from the student and the supervisor. The supervisor will be finalized as per the provision stated in the MPhil/PhD guidelines approved by the FOE, TU.



Appendix 3

Progress Report Submission Guidelines.

The candidate has to consider the following while making a progress report presentation.

- The candidate has to submit a written application (through email or in a physical form) for progress report presentation at least a week before the expected date of presentation.
- The candidate has to submit the Presentation (PPT slides) illustrating the progress made in relation to the proposed research (e.g., what progress was made since the candidate successfully defended the PhD proposal).
- After receiving the progress report presentation application from the candidate, the GSE will confirm the presentation date and inform the candidate for the same. The presentation can be virtual or face-to-face decided in consultation with the supervisor and the candidate.
- This progress report presentation shall be open to all the PhD candidates.
- The supervisor(s), and Director/Deputy Director of GSE have to be present at the proposal presentation.
- The candidate will make a 30 minutes presentation followed by comments and feedback from the peers, supervisor(s), and the Director/Deputy Director.
- The candidate will have to collect the attendance of all the people present in the presentation, make a list of the comments/feedback obtained along with the reflection. The reflection is a brief report prepared by the candidate based on the comments and suggestion obtained during the presentation.


प्रज्ञाकर परिषद्को कार्यालय
कीर्तिपुर


Faculty of Education
Office of the Dean
Balkhu, Kathmandu

Appendix 4

PhD Candidate's Commitment Form



राजकु परिवर्तकी कायालय
कीर्तिपुर

[Handwritten Signature]



Faculty of Education
Office of the Dean
Balkhu, Kathmandu

[Handwritten Signature]