

# **Guidelines for UGC Postgraduate Grants Scheme**

## **(Common for all UGC Postgraduate Grants Schemes)**

### **1. Purpose of the Scheme**

The purpose of the UGC Postgraduate Grants Scheme is to strengthen the research capacity of state universities under the purview of the University Grants Commission by way of financially supporting permanent members in the teacher category in all disciplines to acquire required postgraduate qualifications for their career advancement.

### **2. Eligibility**

#### **General Requirements**

2.1 The applicant shall be a permanent member of the academic staff of a Higher Educational Institution/ Higher Educational Institute operating under the purview of the University Grants Commission.

2.2 Grants under UGC Postgraduate Grants Scheme shall be available only for Local/Foreign PhDs and MPhils Leading to PhDs and equivalents.

2.3 The maximum age limit of applicants to apply for the UGC Postgraduate Grants Scheme for PhDs, and MPhils leading to PhDs and equivalents as at the closing date of applying is 45 Years.

In the case of grants offered under Griffith University (GU), Australia – UGC and Queensland University of Technology (QUT), Australia - UGC scholarship schemes, the age limit for a Master's degree is 35 Years.

2.4 Grants are not awarded for applicants who register at the same University where they are employed presently to avoid inbreeding.

2.5 Applicants are not eligible for funding from UGC for their postgraduate studies if they receive financial support from the postgraduate funding scheme operated by the University in which the grantee is employed, NCAS, a Government project (i.e. World Bank, Asian Development Bank-sponsored projects), or a recipient of foreign/local scholarship through the Government or a related institution for the same purpose.

However, a candidate who has received partial funding support for their PhD/MPhil from any other source less than the maximum permissible level of funding per candidate under the UGC grants scheme can seek additional funding support from the UGC for the same study. All applicants need to declare any form of foreign and local funding (scholarships, tuition waivers, partial funding, research support, living stipend, etc.) available for their intended postgraduate studies with the application for funding. If such funding is available the amount/s has/have to be disclosed with the source/s.

- 2.6 Applicants shall also be required to declare any subsequent funding from other local & foreign sources (scholarships, tuition waivers, partial funding, research support, living stipend, etc...) that would be available for their postgraduate studies after the UGC has awarded the grant to pursue his or her postgraduate studies and when grantee make a request for the release of the 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Installments of the grant. UGC is compelled to terminate & recover the grant if the information provided by the grantee is found to be false or inaccurate.
- 2.7 The UGC reserves the right to revise the already approved grant amount in the event of revealing alternative source/s of funding for the same purpose in the form of a grant, scholarship, tuition/ fee waiver, etc.

### **IELTS & TOEFL**

- 2.8 All applicants are required to achieve the following minimum overall band score of IELTS (Academic) in order to qualify for a grant under any UGC Postgraduate Grants scheme.
  - i At least an overall score of 6.5 for IELTS (Academic) with no band less than 6.0, or its equivalent is required for both Masters and PhDs conducted in English medium
  - ii If the IELTS requirement is specified by the University and it differs from the above, UGC will consider such applications on a case- by-case basis taking into account the factors such as recognition, research excellence, and world ranking of the university considered.

- iii If No IELTS requirement is imposed by the University concerned, the default IELTS requirement as mentioned in (i) above is to be fulfilled by the candidate.
- iv The IELTS requirement for applicants of Ayurveda discipline is at least an overall score of 6.5 for IELTS (Academic) with no band less than 6.0.
- v The validity period of the IELTS results should be 2 years from the test date of the IELTS at the closing date of application.
- vi Equivalence of TOEFL ( Test of English as a Foreign Language) internet-based test and IELTS ( Academic) Band Scores

<b>IELTS(Academic) Score - Minimum</b>		<b>TOFEL iBT® Score - Minimum</b>	
Overall	6.5	Overall	79
Reading	6.0	Reading	13
Listening	6.0	Listening	12
Writing	6.0	Writing	21
Speaking	6.0	Speaking	18

### **Other Conditions**

- 2.9 All applicants for the UGC Postgraduate Grants scheme are expected to register in reputed universities for their postgraduate studies. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the applicant to check the credentials of the intuitions and the prospective supervisor/s prior to registration for the intended postgraduate programme. The UGC may request the candidate to provide the credentials of the prospective supervisor in terms of their qualifications and research publications
- 2.10 All applicants for the UGC Postgraduate Grants Scheme are expected to verify the UGC recognition of the foreign or local Higher Educational Institution/ Higher Educational Institute before registering for a postgraduate degree.
- 2.11 All the applicants are required to submit a copy of the letter of registration or the letter of acceptance for the intended postgraduate programme issued by the HEI at which they intend to start or have already started their postgraduate studies.

### 3. Key Features of the Grant

- 3.1 The UGC Postgraduate Grants Scheme provides a maximum of only 03 years of funding for PhD/Doctoral studies and a maximum of only 02 years of funding for MPhil/Masters. The overall grant limit of the UGC Postgraduate Grants Scheme is LKR 2.0 million per year per candidate for both institutional and living expenses. The maximum limit for living expenses is LKR 1.5 million per annum per candidate for their postgraduate studies overseas. The limit applicable to an individual candidate under living expenses will vary depending on the country within the maximum limit specified above..
- 3.2 In the case of candidates registering with foreign universities/HEIs for their postgraduate studies, the amount of the grant will be determined based on the academic fees payable to the respective University/HEI by the candidate and the country-specific living allowance / Living Stipend. UGC determines living allowance / Living Stipend from time to time and the maximum limit depends on the country. However, the living stipend could be proportionately reduced for the period that the candidate lives in Sri Lanka within their study period.
- 3.3 In the case of candidates registering with local HEIs for their postgraduate studies, the amount of grant will be determined based on the academic fees payable to the respective University/HEI by the candidate and research expenses for the intended study.
- 3.4 A candidate applying for the UGC funding after registration for his or her postgraduate studies might not be eligible for funding for the full period as indicated below.
- i. A candidate who applied within six months of registration could be considered for funding for the full period of his or her studies subject to a maximum of 03 years for PhD or equivalent and 02 years for an MPhil/Master.
  - ii. A candidate applied within the second six months of registration could be considered for funding for 02 years and 6 months or 01 year and 06 months of his or her PhD or equivalent or MPhil / Masters respectively.

- iii. A candidate who applied within the third six months of registration could be considered for funding for 02 years or 01-year funding for his or her PhD or equivalent or MPhil/Masters respectively.
- iv. A candidate who applied within the fourth six months of registration could be considered for funding for 01 year and 6 months of his or her PhD or equivalent.
- v. A candidate who applied within the fifth six months of registration could be considered for funding for 01 years of his or her PhD or equivalent.
- vi. In the case of PhD/Doctoral studies, a candidate applied within the sixth six months of registration or after could not be considered for funding under the UGC Postgraduate Grants Scheme. Similarly, in the case of MPhil/Master's, a candidate applied within the fourth six months of registration or after could not be considered for funding under the UGC Postgraduate Grants Scheme.

3.5 The candidates who register with foreign universities/HEIs are supposed to fully spend their intended period of studies in their respective foreign countries. If they wish to visit Sri Lanka during the intended period of studies they shall inform the UGC of such visits with justifications and the dates of travel.

3.6 A selected candidate under the UGC Postgraduate Grants Scheme should fulfill all the requirements and make a formal request for the release of the first installment of the grant within a period of two months from the date of award of the grant. If any candidate fails to fulfill this requirement his or her grant will automatically be terminated after two months from the date of award of the grant. Failure by the candidate to secure the grant shall result in the transfer of the scholarship to the next eligible candidate.

3.7 A selected candidate under the UGC Postgraduate Grants Scheme should commence their postgraduate studies for which the grant was awarded within six months from the date of award of the grant. If any candidate fails to fulfill this requirement their grant will automatically be terminated after six months from the date of award of the grant. Failure by the candidate to secure the grant shall result in the transfer of the scholarship to the next eligible candidate.

- 3.8 Partial payment of any installment will not be made to the grantees under UGC Postgraduate Grants Scheme. Grant will be paid to the candidates in 03 installments with one year gap between two installments. The Maximum Grant limit is LKR 2 Mn per Installment.
- 3.10 If the applicant is a probationary lecturer, not confirmed in service they should show evidence that they could complete the intended postgraduate programme at least six months prior to the expiry of their probationary period, i.e., in case of a candidate who wishes to use the grant for 3 year PhD programme, their probationary lecturer status should be valid to a minimum of another 03 years and 6 months from the time of commencement of his planned studies.
- 3.11 Candidates who are awarded the UGC grant should submit a certified copy of the degree certificate to the UGC through the proper channel on completion of the degree.

#### **4. Decision of the Grant**

- 4.1 Every decision of the grant with regard to each applicant will be taken by the University Grants Commission. A panel appointed by the UGC will carry out the selection based on the Selection Criteria approved by the UGC. The panel will peruse all the documents submitted by each eligible candidates including the research proposal and will call the candidate for an interview before making its recommendation to the UGC.

#### **5. Documents to be submitted with the Application**

- i. Registration letter /Placement letter/ Offer letter ensuring that the applicant has secured the placement for the intended postgraduate programme.
- ii. A well-written research proposal. (Approximately 2500 words)
- iii. A letter certifying the approval of the study leave for intended postgraduate studies by the University at which the applicant is employed.
- iv. Details of two referees as specified in the application who can provide academic references in English.

- v. Candidates applying after six months of registration shall submit a progress report of their studies with the comments of the supervisor through the proper channel.
- vi. Documentary evidence for the relevant Course fees payable to the intended postgraduate programme.
- vii. A declaration of other sources of funding available for the intended study programme by way of scholarships partial funding, tuition waivers, living stipend, etc. by the applicant. (Any subsequent funding secured by the candidate should be declared to the UGC immediately by the candidate)
- viii. A record of research and publication by the candidate.
- ix. Certified copies of IELTS/TOEFL results sheet.
- x. The total estimated budget of the research certified by the supervisor (only for the locally registered candidates).
- xi. Credentials of his/her prospective supervisors in terms of qualifications and Research Publications. Locally registered candidates should provide a letter from the Registrar of the university certifying the name of the supervisor appointed by the Senate with his/her institutional affiliation.
- xii. Letter of Recognition issued by the UGC on the recognition of a particular Higher Educational Institution / Higher Educational Institute in which the applicant is intended to follow their postgraduate studies.
- xiii. A copy of the National Identity Card
- xiv. A letter issued by the Vice Chancellor of the University / HEI which the applicant is currently employed stating whether the intended postgraduate degree is relevant for the confirmation and promotion of the candidate.

**6. Documents to be submitted prior to the release of the first /other installments of the grant**

- i. Candidates who are awarded the grant should request for the release of 1st installment within 2 months from the date of award of the grant and subsequent installments of the grant (2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> installments) within the period of 03 years from the date of award of the grant. Failing which remaining installments will be canceled. The grant will automatically terminate after 03 years from the date of award of the

- grant. The interval between two installments should be at least 01 years. The grantee should declare the availability of other funding sources at each request.
- ii. Certificate from the Vice Chancellor of the University / HEI where the applicant is currently employed whether the applicant has secured any funding in the form of scholarships, tuition waivers, partial funding, research support, living stipend, etc. from the university/HIE at which applicant is employed or any other local or foreign organization. If such funding is available the amount/s has/have to be disclosed with the source/s.
  - iii. Every grant recipient should submit an Inception Report approved by the Supervisor including an intended plan of activities (Work Plan) in relation to his or her study programme including the date of commencement and the intended date of completion within two months from the date of award of the grant. In this plan, intended activities shall be divided into six monthly periods from the date of commencement. In the case of a candidate who is going to start or already started their postgraduate studies in foreign universities, and intends to spend a part of the study period locally (Split Programmes), should indicate the period/s planned to spend locally within his intended study programme with justifications.
  - iv. A Personal Health Report endorsed by the University Medical Officer of the University in which the applicant is employed.
  - v. A certified copy of the Surety Bond and the Agreement signed between the Grantee and the University / HEI in which the grantee is employed.  
(The candidate should sign an Agreement and Bond with the University/HEI in which the grantee is employed as per the UGC Circular No 920 dated 5<sup>th</sup> February 2010 on “Agreements and Bonds to be signed by Teachers/Officers/Other Employees in the University System who are on Study Leave Locally and Abroad”.)
  - vi. A copy of the breakdown of bond calculation certified by the Registrar of the University in which the grantee is employed.
  - vii. In the case of the grantees who register in foreign universities/ HEIs, they should commence their academic programme (PhD/MPhil) physically at the particular foreign

university and send the evidence to the UGC in order to release the first installment of the grant.

- viii. A letter certifying the approval of the study leave for the intended postgraduate studies by the university/HEI at which the applicant is employed.

## **7. Progress Monitoring and Reporting of the Grant**

- i. PhDs should be followed on a full-time basis and grant recipients should complete the programme within the stipulated time period as mentioned in the offer letter / letter of registration.
- ii. All candidates who are qualified to receive financial support under any scheme under UGC shall report the periodic progress of their studies every six months to the UGC through proper channels with the comments of the Academic supervisor. In addition, grantees should submit the expenditure report to the UGC with copies of evidence of payment (for both Institutional & Living expenses) certified by the Bursar of the University which the grantee has employed annually through proper channels.
- iii. Subsequent installments of the Grant will be released only upon the successful submission of Progress Reports and Expenditure Reports to the UGC.

**8<sup>th</sup> September 2022**

**Chairman,**

**University Grants Commission**

### **Note:**

- These Guidelines are valid for all UGC coordinated Postgraduate Grants Schemes in addition to the specific conditions stipulated in signed MoUs between UGC & Griffith University, Australia, UGC & Queensland University of Technology, Australia, UGC & International University of Japan, Japan , and other collaborations)
- Above Guidelines can be revised subject to decisions of the Commission in the future.

## Budgetary Components considered under UGC Postgraduate Grants schemes

<b>Eligible Payments</b>	
1.	Tuition Fees / Course Fees / Institutional Fees ( Programme Registration Fees)
2.	Examination Fees ( for Local PhDs)
3.	Overseas Students Health Coverage( OSHC)
4.	Visa Fees
5.	Living Allowance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Food &amp; Accommodation</li> </ul>
6.	Research Expenses For PhDs/MPhils leading to PhDs (Local) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cost for purchasing consumables (equipment that only have limited use &amp; then have to be disposed - Beakers, Funnels, Conical Flask, Test Tubes, Burettes and Pipettes, Disposable gloves, Volumetric flasks, Lab funnels etc.)</li> <li>- Cost of reagents , chemicals</li> <li>- Cost for laboratory tests &amp; analysis</li> </ul> <p>(Research Expenses will not be covered if it is included in the Course Fees/Tuition Fees/Institutional Fees of Local / Foreign PhDs/MPhils leading to PhD s.)</p>

<b>Ineligible Payments</b>	
1.	Postage and Courier Charges
2.	Expenses for Police Report
3.	Publications cost
4.	Purchase of capital equipment/laptops/machines / Cameras etc.
5.	Salaries/wages for Data Entry Operators / Research Assistants
6.	Purchase of software
7.	Transportation costs
8.	Communication costs
9.	Expenses for participation in conferences , workshops , Panel discussions , trainings and similar programmes

10.	Research costs – Already Included in the Course Fees/Tuition Fees
11.	Stationery
12.	Purchase of books
13.	Warm Clothes
14.	Airfare
15.	Student Security fee & Student Union fee /Student levies/ Assistance Levy
16.	Thesis preparation cost
17.	Research reading materials
18.	Printing & Photocopying costs
19.	Cost for Pre-requisite language programs
20.	Membership Fees / Annual Fees / Studentship renewal costs

**Note:**

Please note that the payments will be made only for the above identified approved eligible budgetary components subject to submit the evidences of payment.