# Postgraduate Student Handbook
## 2023/2024

جامعة صحار
Sohar University

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## Message from the Vice Chancellor

**Dr Hamdan bin Sulaiman Al Fazari**

**Vice Chancellor**

Dear Postgraduate Students,

We are delighted to welcome you to Sohar University (SU). I am certain that you will benefit from your time here at SU –as this is a place where you will continue to grow your experience and develop your leadership skills. I hope you have a great learning experience with us.

Sohar University has a huge and modern Learning Resources Centre which plays a vital role in learning and academic student support services.

With the importance of technology and resources in the learning process, the University is required to meet our students' educational needs. Other services can be requested by visiting the Student Portal on the SU website or by visiting the concerned departments on campus.

Please keep this handbook as a future reference as it is designed to guide you throughout your course of study.
My best wishes for a productive and enjoyable year!

## Message from PG Dean

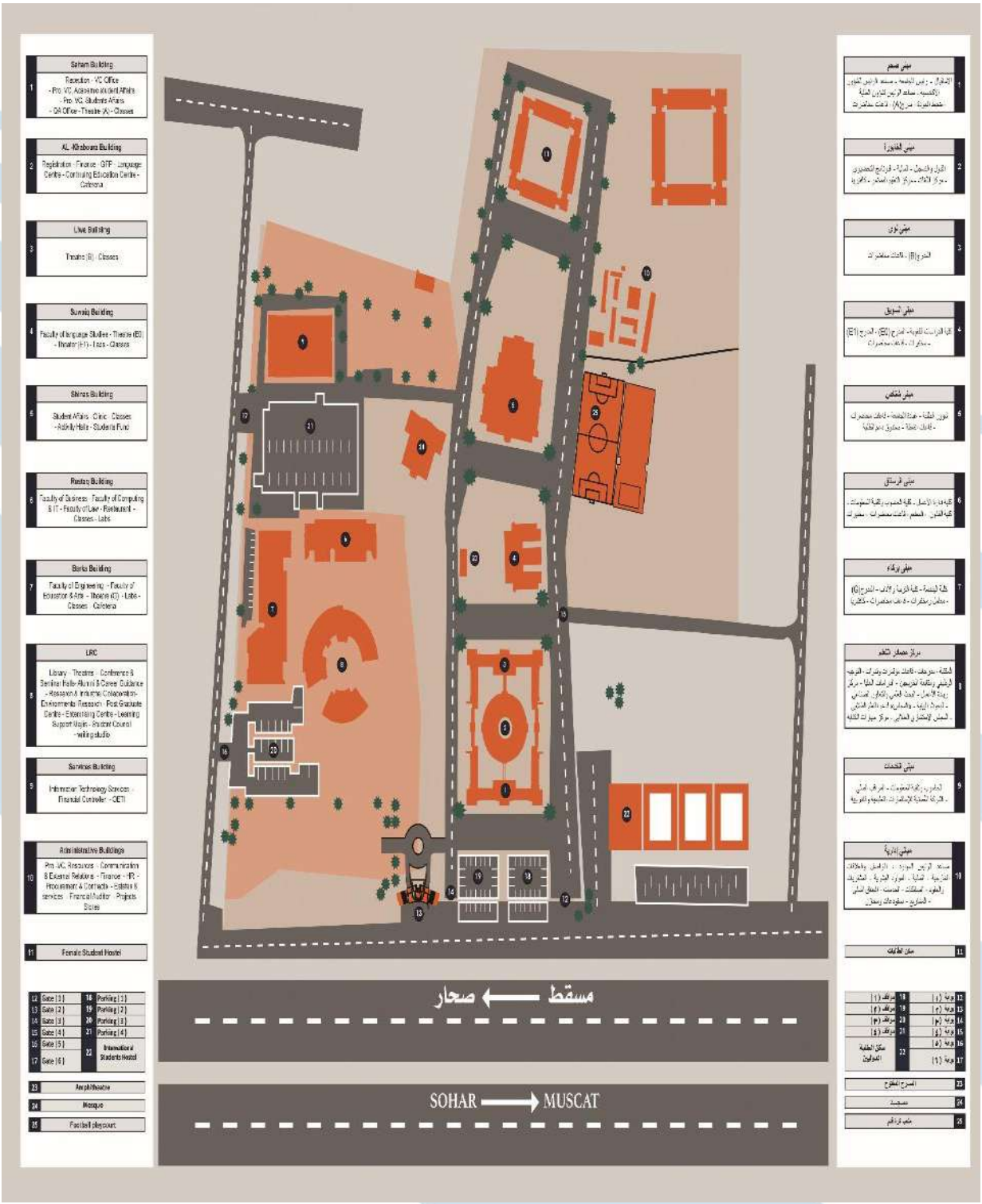
**Dr. Dawood Al-Hamdani**

**PG Dean**

Dear new postgraduate students,

it is with great pleasure that I welcome you all to this prestigious institution, Sohar University. You have chosen to pursue your postgraduate studies, and we are proud to have you as part of our Sohar University community. You will be joining a vibrant and dynamic group of scholars, who come from all corners of the world, and who share a passion for knowledge and innovation.
You are about to embark on a transformative journey, one that will challenge you, push you to your limits, and ultimately shape your future. Pursuing postgraduate studies is not just about acquiring knowledge, but also about developing critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and a deep understanding of your chosen field.
As postgraduate students, you will have the opportunity to engage with leading academics, work on cutting-edge research projects, and collaborate with peers from diverse backgrounds. You will also sharpen your skills in communication, project management, and teamwork, which are vital in today's competitive job market.
We are committed to supporting your academic and personal growth during your time here. Our team of academic advisors, administrators, and support staff are here to assist you in every step of your journey, from orientation to graduation.
I encourage you to take advantage of the resources available to you, to seek out opportunities for research and academic collaboration, and to embrace the challenges and opportunities that come with postgraduate studies.
I want to wish you all the best in your studies, and I hope that your time here will be fulfilling, challenging, and rewarding. Thank you for choosing to join Sohar University, and I look forward to seeing all that you will achieve in the years ahead.
Sincerely,

# University Map



## Postgraduate Centre

The aim of the Postgraduate Centre is to enhance and sustain a culture of academic and research excellence by providing support to the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for personal fulfilment and successful careers. It provides the postgraduate students a wide range of supports that are needed to develop their dissertations/projects such as developing research skills, data analysis, communication and leadership skills. Also, the Postgraduate Centre works to support postgraduate students in getting fund for their postgraduate outputs and in getting national and international internships.

### Postgraduate Hall

A designated PG Hall is located on the 3rd Floor of the LRC. The hall contains:

- 17 PCs with quantitate and qualitative data analysis software (SPSS and Atlas)
- A heavy-duty photocopier
- Free printing of 500 pages for each student.
- LCD-monitors for group discussion
- Presentation equipment (LCD monitor, Data Show )
- Tea, coffee and water facilities.

All registered postgraduate students can access these resources from Saturdays to Thursdays from 8am to 6pm.

### Postgraduate Training and Workshops

The Postgraduate Centre offers several PG training workshops during each academic year to PG students to develop their academic skills, research skills and interpersonal skills.
The table below shows some of the workshops offered in the previous academic years.

| Workshop Title |
|---|
| How to Prepare and Submit a Research Proposal at Sohar University |
| Literature Reviewing for PG students |
| Plagiarism (TURNITIN) |
| Research Conduct: Ethics |
| Microsoft Word for Thesis Writing |
| Research Methods for FE and FCIT Students |
| Online Questionnaire Workshop |
| EndNote Workshop |
| APA Style Referencing and Citation |
| Abstract Writing |

| |
|---|
| Stress Management for PG students |
| PG Publishing Workshop |
| Excel for MBA |
| Workshop to Using Atlas |
| SPSS for PG students |
| Critical Thinking Skills Workshop |
| Dissertation examination: VIVA/Oral Defence for PG students |
| Google Scholar |
| Research Gate |

## Introduction

This handbook includes advice and guidance for postgraduate research students. In the next pages you will find a range of information related to faculties; campus facilities, academic support, student support, progression and assessment, general University rules and regulations in addition to some key student forms you may require during your tenure at SU.

At SU, the following is the list of all post graduate programs offered across 6 faculties:

- PhD in Education
- PhD in Engineering
- PhD in Computer Science
- Master in Business Administration (MBA)
- Master in Computer Science in the following two streams:
  - ✓ Data Science
  - ✓ Computer Security
- Master in Education in the following streams:
  - ✓ Master of Education in Foundation and Education Administration
  - ✓ Master of Curriculum and Teaching Methods (Arabic)
  - ✓ Master of Curriculum and Teaching Methods (Science)
  - ✓ Master of Curriculum and Teaching Methods (General)
  - ✓ Master of Curriculum and Teaching Methods (Islamic Studies)
  - ✓ Master of Curriculum and Teaching Methods (Social Studies)
  - ✓ Master of Curriculum and Teaching Methods (Maths)
- Master of Engineering in Environmental Engineering (MEng)
- Master in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (MA TESOL)
- Master of Arts in Translation and Interpreting
- Master in Public Law

# Part 1

# SU Mission, Vision and Values

Sohar University (SU) was established by Ministerial Decree on 11 September 2001 as the first private University in the Sultanate of Oman. It was granted degree awarding powers, with the authority to provide programs and courses whose successful completion leads to the academic awards of the University. This authority is, of course, subject to the rulings of the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MOHERI) and Oman Authority for Academic Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Education (OAAAQA).

## 1.1 SU Mission, Vision and Values

### 1.1.1 OUR VISION

A distinguished Omani university, harmonizing national aspirations and global prominence through excellence and innovation

### 1.1.2 OUR MISSION

Engaging minds, prospering lives and serving the community through outstanding education, research opportunities and partnerships

### 1.1.3 OUR VALUES

Ethics

Foster the highest academic and professional standards in the spirit of open and critical thought, enquiry, fairness and integrity.

Inclusivity

Work together with stakeholders for shared success in an inclusive environment that promotes and encourages a culture of respect for people and ideas

Commitment

Optimize stakeholder contributions to drive excellence and enhance academic, professional and personal growth and lifelong learning.

Innovation

Support intellectual freedom and creativity, encouraging stakeholders to explore and innovate to become independent thinkers and successful entrepreneurs

Sustainability

Integrate and balance the economic, social and environmental spheres to meet current and future needs.

# Part 2

# Academic Calendar

## 2.1 Academic Calendar

| Academic Calendar2023/2024 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Semester 1 | | Semester 2 | |
| Classes begin | 10 September 2023 | Classes begin | 14 January 2024 |
| Orientation Day[1] | 16 September 2023 | Orientation Day | 22 January, 2024 |
| Add/drop period | 21 September 2023 | Add/drop period | 25 January 2024 |
| Classes End | 7 December 2023 | Classes End | 11 Abril 2024 |
| Exam period | 17 December 2023 | Exam period | 21 Abril 2024 |

[1] **Orientation Day**: Each semester there is an orientation day for newly joined students. On that day, research students will have a chance to meet the registration, ITS, the faculty dean and PG dean, and a tour of LRC, PG hall and open PG area.

# Part 3

# Academic Programs and Units

## 3.1 Master of Business

The Faculty of Business offers its flagship Masters in Business Administration (MBA) to business executives in Oman. Since its inception in 2011, the MBA program has delivered quality business education to executives for managing their place of work utilising the latest techniques, innovations, abilities, and creativity.

The MBA is a leading program with regard to content and learning methodology, which aims to provide educational opportunities at the highest international standards to provide the Arab and global markets with top tier business leaders in a variety of fields. The Faculty's MBA program implements unique and modern academic and professional courses that were developed based upon current market needs and benchmarked with the best MBA programs taught worldwide. All MBA courses have been designed to bolster the advancement of knowledge with practical real-world applications facilitating graduates' progression and career development.

Market research worldwide revealed that the majority of organizations (Inside and outside Oman) require applicants that can fill business administration job vacancies, such as Branding Managers, Human Resource Directors, Economic Development Directors etc. Looking for non-traditional "practical" MBA graduates who are internationally aware and have the ability to participate and compete across different cultures around the globe. When organizations compared between MBA and non-MBA holders, it was obvious that MBA holders possessed the required qualities and maturity, they are autonomous, self-sufficient and able to work assignments independently.

The Sohar University MBA alumni occupy senior positions in their professions and provide invaluable services to their companies and communities. They are recruited by distinguished national and international organizations in a variety of business sectors due to the highly quality and standards of the Sohar University MBA.

Possible MBA positions:

- Management Consultant
- Financial Manager
- Human Resources Manager
- Information Technology Manager
- Marketing Manager
- Business Operations Manager
- Medical and Health Services Manager
- Entrepreneur
- Industry Specialist Manager
- Product Manager

Contact: Extension 509 or 724

## 3.2 Master of Computing and IT

The Master of Computer Science program combines comprehensive academic and theoretical knowledge in the development, technology, and management of large computer science systems. It also focuses on practical knowledge from industries that are using these new technologies shedding light on business development and entrepreneurship, i.e. applied and practical knowledge, focus on innovation, feasibility analysis, cost evaluation, and

entrepreneurial skills, as well as analytical and reflective thinking. Graduates of the program will be able to take over responsible technical and management positions in industries employing large computer systems. The degree offered/awarded in this program is:

- M.Sc. in Computer Science (Data Science), or
- M.Sc. in Computer Science (Computer Security)

A student with a Master in Computer Science could work in the following fields:

- Lecturer
- Software Developer
- Applications Architect
- Computer Systems Analyst
- Computer Network Architect
- Information Security Analyst
- Cloud Engineer
- Computer and Information Research Scientists
- Computer and Information Systems Managers
- Mobile Applications Developer
- Systems Security Administrator
- Network Security Administrator
- ERP Technical Developer

To keep pace with the development in the field of computers and information technology and to achieve the vision of Oman 2040, the need to establish a PhD program came to meet the increasing demand for computer experts. The Doctor of Philosophy program in Computer Science combines comprehensive academic and theoretical knowledge in designing, developing, and managing large computer systems with practical industry experience. The program provides resources and opportunities for students to conduct research in areas related to computer science to find solid solutions to problems in academic and practical fields. This will help in the economic expansion of the country and the region and graduates' academic and professional advancement.

Contact: Extension 312 or 161

## 3.3 Master of Education and Arts

The college offers a number of postgraduate programs, and provides fantastic learning opportunities to enhance competitive employment prospects and lifelong learning. The Master's Program in Educational Fundamentals and Administration is designed to provide applicants with advanced knowledge in education management and its relationship to public administration. The program focuses on educational concepts and theories, philosophical foundations, and educational policies. A holder of a Master's degree in Fundamentals and Educational Administration can work in many areas such as:

- School manager
- Educational supervisor
- Member of school performance development
- Head of the Department

- Director of the Department, and other positions related to educational administration.

They can also demonstrate and disseminate their research knowledge in the field of education and society alike.

The MA program Curriculum and Teaching Methods (General, Islamic Studies, Arabic, Science, Social Studies, Mathematics) is designed to provide applicants with an advanced knowledge of the principles of curriculum, teaching, and research strategies in the field of education. It also provides them with comprehensive knowledge of learning resources, planning for teaching, and applying modern teaching methods. A holder of a Master's degree in Curriculum and Teaching Methods can get a job in many fields in the educational sectors such as:

- Teacher
- Senior teacher
- Article supervisor
- Educational curricula specialist
- Orthodontics specialist
- Head of the Department
- A department manager.

They can also demonstrate and disseminate their research knowledge in the field of education and society alike.

The PhD program in Education in Educational Administration has been designed to prepare students for advanced leadership and research roles in the field of educational administration, It aims to provide them with a conscious understanding of the theoretical foundations of educational administration, to improve their capabilities and research skills to interact with local and global changes, and to find innovative solutions to the challenges and problems facing educational work. The holder of a doctorate
degree in education in educational administration can obtain a job in n many fields in the educational sectors such as school administration, educational supervision, developing school performance, and working in advanced administrative and supervisory positions. They can also demonstrate and disseminate their research knowledge in the field of education and society alike.

The PhD program in Education in Curricula and Teaching Methods has been designed to prepare students for leadership and advanced research roles in the field of curricula and teaching methods, and to provide them with a conscious understanding of the theoretical foundations of curricula and teaching methods. It aims also to improve their capabilities and research skills to interact with local and global changes, and to find innovative solutions to the challenges and problems facing educational work. in the field of specialization. A holder of a doctorate in education in curricula and teaching methods can obtain a job in many areas in the educational sectors, such as developing curricula, supervising teachers in the subject of specialization, training teachers, and working in advanced administrative and technical positions. They can also demonstrate and disseminate their research knowledge in the field of education and society alike.

Contact: Extension 189 or 538

## 3.4 Master of Engineering

The Master of Engineering in Environmental Engineering program provides an applied Environmental Engineering education in a multi-cultural learning background. The program improves the decision-making, design and research capabilities of our students by providing advanced applications in Environmental Engineering fields. It also improves a student's ability to conduct experiments and perform analytical work, as well as their communication and professional skills.

The Master program encompasses a variety of learning modules, highly tailored courses, project-based experience, and leadership and professional development initiatives.

A Master of Engineering in Environmental Engineering degree graduate can be recruited in many fields including: industries, consultancies and education sectors related to Environmental Engineering.

The Master graduate can work as Senior Engineer, Senior Environmental Engineer, Academic Staff in Environmental Engineering, Safety Engineer, Quality Control Engineer and Senior Environmental Engineering Researcher.

Find below the career opportunities related to the MA Engineering program:

- Senior Engineer
- Senior Environmental Engineer
- Academic Staff in Environmental Engineering
- Safety Engineer
- Quality Control Engineer
- Senior Environmental Engineering Researcher

The Faculty of Engineering, Sohar University, is also proud to offer the prestigious doctoral degree, PhD (Engineering) covering the major specializations and latest fields in Engineering research. The Ph.D. in Engineering, offered by Sohar University, is a research-based degree. State-of-the-art research facilities available in the University including Intaj Suhar, Sohar University-Grace Labs, and Sohar University Green House facilities are supplemented by well-established research labs in the Faculty of Engineering. In addition, the doctoral students will have the opportunity to access the facilities and expertise available with our international collaborators.

Contact: Extension 237 or 142

## 3.5 Master in Public Law

Sohar University provides an Arabic-taught master's program in public law. The program is designed with the aim of equipping students with a variety of information and skills that enable them to lead in a variety of legal professions. Students will be heavily active in research, study and inquiry in order to add new ones to their legal field.

Students are to be involved in evaluating real-world cases as well as collaborating with law professionals on the ground. Students will be able to spend time with the bodies responsible for creating and enforcing legislation in the Sultanate of Oman through university relations.

Career options for Law graduates are:

- University education (lecturer)

- Judicial positions (judge - member of the Public Prosecution)
- Practicing the legal profession and legal advice (lawyer)
- Legal positions in various government and private institutions (legal researcher - legal adviser)

Contact: Extension (642) or (241)

## 3.6 Master of Language Studies

Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) is a rigorous postgraduate programme that stands out with promising career opportunities by preparing MA TESOL graduates to make powerful difference in the teaching and research communities.
Students gain in-depth knowledge of the eclectic approaches to successfully teach and do research in EFL, grasp the implications of linguistic and psychological theories for classroom language learning practice, design, develop and evaluate curricula and assessment portfolios in EAP and ESP courses and programmes. The programme is thriving in integrating direct experience with Omani school students and teachers by offering opportunities of hands-on observations in schools to reflect on their learning, teaching and research.
Research methodology is another strong asset of the MA TESOL programme providing well-structured research methodology courses overviewing quantitative, qualitative and mixed research methods that prepare students for the writing-up of their research proposal before engaging them in an independent research project for their MA thesis under expert supervision to optimize their research output.
Find below the career opportunities related to the MA TESOL program.

Career opportunities:

- TESOL expert
- Higher Education TESOL Positions
- TESOL Teaching Material Writer/Editor (books, software, apps)
- ESL/TESOL Curriculum Designer
- ESL/TESOL Program Director
- CELTA Trainer

Contact: Extension 492 or 382

# Part 4

# Academic Information

## 4.1 The Academic Year

The academic year consists of two semesters; each semester is 15 weeks

## 4.2 Number of Units

A student in a taught master program may only register 6 units in a semester, (i.e., 3 courses).

## 4.3 Period of study

The duration of PhD study programs takes between 3 and 6 years to complete. PG students need to register each semester as a full-time student. This duration includes coursework, research, and writing the dissertation. Therefore, PG students to complete their PhD program in a timely manner should start planning early, set their realistic goals and be more organized. The minimum period of study for a Master is 4 semesters and the maximum is 8 semesters.

## 4.4 Attendance Requirements

If a student fails to attend at least 70% of classes in a course, then he/she may be deemed to have not satisfactorily participated in the course and may fail[2].

If, because of special or mitigating circumstances, a student knows in advance that he/she will be absent and these absences are likely to cause him/her to be unable to attend at least 70% of classes then:

- He/she must meet with the academic advisor, Course Coordinator and the Dean.
- A plan can be developed so that learning experiences can be adequately compensated for. This plan must be submitted to the DVC Academic Affairs for approval early in the semester.

## 4.5 Definition of Awards

Programs are delivered to a specific award level and duration. Variations may occur between Faculties and among programs in a Faculty.

### 4.5.1 Requirements for Completion of an Award

The students should meet the following requirements:

- For master's and PhD students:
  - ➢ Successful completion of a minimum of 2 academic years for PhD and end of semester 2 for Masters.
  - ➢ Successful completion with all required courses with GPA not less than 2.00.
  - ➢ Pass a preliminary oral research proposal examination.
- For PhD students only:
  - ➢ Submit a Progress Report on work achievement in the semester and the work plan for the coming semester by the end of every semester.
  - ➢ Present two seminars during the period of PHD program before the submission for the viva

[2] *Note:* A student cannot assume that a satisfactory plan will always be possible. In this case, it will be the responsibility of the student either to make sure that attendance is above the required level or withdraw from the course.

- At least one paper should be published (or accepted for publication) as required by PhD program in the faculties.
- Present at least one paper at an international conference.

## 4.6 Grading System

The grading scale is standardized across all University courses. It also applies equally to grading for individual assignments and is aggregated according to the weightings of assessments, to courses as a whole. The grading system is based on a 0 to 4 scale and it is used as set out in the following table.

*Note: SU uses criterion-based assessment, thus, descriptors should be established so that students are clear about what is expected of them.*

Table 20: Sohar University Grading Scale

| Classification | Range (%) | Grade |
|---|---|---|
| **Exceptional performance:** The student provided an exceptionally high quality of performance and through this demonstrated an exceptionally high standard of learning achievement in relation to the course learning outcomes. | 85 - 100 | 4.0 |
| **Excellent Performance:** The student provided a high quality of performance and through this demonstrated a high standard of learning achievement in relation to the course learning outcomes. | 75 - <85 | 3.5 - <4.0 |
| **Very good Performance:** The student provided a very good quality of performance and through this demonstrated a sound standard of learning achievement in relation to the course learning outcomes. | 65 - <75 | 3.0 - <3.5 |
| **Good Performance:** The student provided good quality of performance and through this demonstrated an acceptable standard of learning achievement in relation to the course learning outcomes. | 57.5 - <65 | 2.5 - <3.0 |
| **Satisfactory Performance:** The student provided an acceptable quality of performance and through this demonstrated an acceptable standard of learning achievement in relation to the course learning outcomes. | 50 - <57.5 | 2.0 - <2.5 |
| **Fail:** The student did not provide a quality of performance that demonstrated an acceptable | 0 - <50 | 0 - <2 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| standard of learning achievement in relation to the course learning outcomes. | | |

## 4.7 Admission and Registration

SU has established clear and explicit admission requirements for entry to postgraduate programmes.

Admission to the University is open to all nationality's resident in Oman, and others wishing to come to Oman. Enrolment for foreign students will not be valid until all immigration procedures for staying in Oman as a student are finalized.

Admission and entry requirements may vary according to the academic programme offered, language of delivery and competency required etc.

Admission to any postgraduate program is based on the reasonable expectation that a student will be able to fulfil the objectives of the program and achieve the standard required for the award.

The number of students admitted to postgraduate programs is controlled by directives issued by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research & Innovation.

All entry qualifications must be authenticated, so students are required to provide proof of qualifications gained. Any student not complying with such a request, or falsifying evidence, is liable to exclusion from the University.

All entry requirements to postgraduate programs must comply with MoHERI requirements and regulations, and must be reviewed annually in line with SU regulations and updated in the Student Admission Policy.

Admission requirements are reviewed annually in accordance with national standards and approved by the Academic Board.

## 4.8 Entry Requirements – Master Programmes

To be eligible to apply for entry to postgraduate programmes offered at Sohar University, prospective students must have:

- Completed a Bachelor degree, or
- A postgraduate qualification, or
- A qualification recognised as equivalent to the above
- Met specified language requirements for programmes taught in English. This is will differ from program to another and full details are outlined per programme on the following pages
- Passed an interview with the admission committee (if required)

Further specifications may be required in addition, on a course by course basis, such as:

- The subject of the qualification (depending on whether the subject is an extension or conversion programme)
- The level or grade of the qualification (e.g. honours or ordinary degree; any specified classification or grade)
- Other requirements.

For admission to postgraduate programs, the general admission regulations, as above, will apply together with any admission requirements specific to a particular postgraduate programme. This may include a Bachelors qualification at a particular level of achievement, related work experience, and language proficiency.

## 4.9 Entry Requirements – PhD Programmes

- Completed a Master degree, or
- A postgraduate qualification, or
- A qualification recognised as equivalent to the above
- Met specified language requirements for each program. This is will differ from program to another and full details are outlined per programme on the following pages
- Submitted research proposal.
- Passed an interview with the admission committee (if required)

## 4.10 Application Requirements – All PG Programs

Applicants intending to enter SU postgraduate programs, have to complete and submit the following documents:

- A completed online form.
- General Diploma Certificate- Secondary School Certificate/master certificate.
- 2 Copies of National ID and passport.
- 2 Attested copies of former/relevant transcripts and academic certificates.
- 5 passport-size photographs
- A copy of language proficiency certificate, where applicable.
- A copy of experience certificate, if relevant.
- Equation letter from Ministry of Higher Education Research & Innovation for degrees from outside Sultanate of Oman
- The admission of a student is based on the reasonable expectation that he/she will be able to fulfil the objectives of the program and achieve the standard required for the award.

Numbers of students admitted may be controlled by directives issued by the Ministry of Higher Education Research & Innovation as well as by internal recruitment targets of the University.
All entry qualifications must be authenticated, so students must provide proof of qualifications gained. Any student not complying with such a request or falsifying evidence is liable to exclusion from the University.

## 4.11 Registration New Student

All new and continuing students of the University must register at the beginning of each semester. Instructions on how to register will normally be available for new students at the time they are made an offer of admission at the University, and to continuing students with their examination results.

Students who do not register at the beginning of the semester will no longer be considered

students of the University, and will not be able to use any of the University facilities. See the Academic Calendar for important registration dates: www.soharuni.edu.om.

Registration is not completed until all fees due have been paid or other arrangements made to the satisfaction of the University.

### 4.11.1 New PG Applications Process

- **Programs Announcement with the requirements:**
  Normally the announcement of the new admission to the PG programs starts in April of each Academic year through the University Website and its social media.
- **Online Program Registration**:
  Applications for the postgraduate study should be made through the online web-based application process, and it is possible for a student to begin their studies at the first semester of next Academic year.
- **Applications Filtration**
  The admission committees in the faculties may use to filter postgraduate applications:
    - Academic qualifications: GPA requirements or expect a certain level of academic performance relevant undergraduate degrees.
    - Relevant experience: Some programs may require prior work experience in the field or related discipline. Applicants may need to provide evidence of their work experience through resumes, cover letters, and recommendation letters.
    - Letters of recommendation: some programs may request a certain number of letters of recommendation from academic or professional referees to support the applicant's suitability for the program.
    - Research interests (proposal): some programs may require research proposals. The committees evaluate applicants based on research interests, publications, and prior research experience.
    - Language proficiency: some programs may require specific language proficiency scores for non-native English speakers.
    - Personal statement (Interview): Applicants are invited to appear to outline their motivation for applying to the program, career aspirations, and how it aligns with their interests and skills.
- Developing Applicants' Profiles
  Applicants must upload documents such as academic transcripts, certificates, language proficiency IELTs, and research proposals to be evaluated by the faculties.
- Evaluation Committee
  The dean of faculty upon the request from PG dean, form an ad hoc. The ad hoc committee typically consists of faculty members who are experts in the applicant's field of study. The committee reviews the applicant's academic record, research experience, letters of recommendation, and personal statement. The committee then discusses the applicant's qualifications and makes a recommendation to the Postgraduate Centre.

- Communicating the results to prospective students
  The communication of application results to prospective PG students is an important part of the admissions process. Applicants are informed of the status of their applications in a timely, clear, concise, and professional manner, whether they are accepted, placed on a waiting list, or denied
- Registration
  Before they can register for postgraduate study, students must accept the terms of the University's offer of admission and make payment arrangements with the Finance Officer.
  Higher CGPA are given priority. Successful candidates to the postgraduate programs will be notified to submit the original of their requirement documents for attestation, as per Ministry of Higher Education rules and regulations. A notification of admission is to be in writing and should include:
  - Student's name and personal identity number,
  - Information concerning the type of PG Program the student has chosen to pursue.
  - The study period to obtain the attended PG degree.

## 4.12 Student ID card

The Student ID Card is issued by the Admission and Registration Department at the time a student completes registration. In the case of loss of the ID card, the student has to fill in an application for replacement and pay 3 OMR

## 4.13 Admission with 'Advanced Standing'

Recognition of prior learning may be considered where appropriate, and credit of the University granted for prior studies. Students who have undertaken postgraduate studies at other higher education institutions may apply for advanced entry on this basis, where a candidate can demonstrate (by means of evidence) that particular assessment or progression requirements of the planned program have been met. The candidate must be able, by completion of the remaining requirements, to demonstrate that all outcomes of the programme can be met.

A candidate may therefore be admitted to any appropriate point in the program on the basis of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) where the completion of relevant courses or programmes is certified.

Application of the above can result in exemption from particular courses in a program which the student will not therefore be required to take (nor the assessments). However, a precise match between prior learning outcomes and skills must be securely demonstrated, with evidence in the form of certification or a portfolio of work provided. Currency of either type of prior learning must be carefully considered (periods of currency of prior learning may vary between subjects, for example in languages compared with computing or science subjects). Prior learning of either type must be rigorously considered and assessed within the University by those with the appropriate subject expertise to do so. The evidence must be retained (i.e. the mapping against the verified certificated learning, or the portfolio of experiential work).

For Master programs only, no more than 30% RPL will be permitted, subject to approval by the Dean and will depend on the rules and regulations of the relevant postgraduate program.
Credit will not be given for any learning which has already been submitted and credited towards an award.
Assessment of a foreign degree will be based upon the characteristics of the national system of education in Oman, the type of institution attended, its accreditation, and the level of studies completed.

## 4.14 Recognition of International and Overseas Qualifications

In determining the equivalence of overseas qualifications (for initial or advanced standing), the University will be guiding by the advice provided by the Ministry of Higher Education Research & Innovation.

## 4.15 Admission of Students with Disabilities

Candidates with physical, emotional or learning disabilities must be carefully counselled before they register. Care must be taken to ensure conformity with any relevant legislation.
There are currently no formal requirements but from an ethical point of view, institutions should be able to accommodate these types of students and offer them suitable assistance and support. The University will not prevent any student from continuing his/her education because of a disability, where all other entry requirements have been met. Reasonable adjustments may be made.

## 4.16 Study Deferral

PG Students may apply for a study deferral until the end of the second week of a semester. If a student decides to defer after the second week, fees will not be refunded for that semester.
Student are entitled to a full refund of their tuition which has been paid during or prior to registration in the following cases:

| Refund % | Description |
|---|---|
| 100% | Postpone or withdrawal during two weeks from the beginning of the semester |
| 50% | Postpone or withdrawal during third week from the beginning of the semester |
| 25% | Postpone or withdrawal during fourth week from the beginning of the semester |
| 0% | Postpone or withdrawal during after fourth week from the beginning of the semester |

Students should complete the release form in order to make sure that there is no accommodation, transportation and/or library financial obligations. Refunds of credit balances to student accounts will only be made after completion of all required forms and document, and on receipt of a written request from the student. The payment will be made either by bank cheque or wire transfer to the student's account.

## 4.17 Students Withdrawal

A student must submit a request to withdraw from the University. Students will be liable for that semester's course fees unless they withdraw in the first two weeks of the semester. Before

withdrawal a student must complete the release form in order to make sure that there are no financial obligations outstanding such as accommodation, transportation and/or library fees.

### 4.17.1 Voluntary suspension of Research

Voluntary suspension in the context of a research program refers to a temporary halt or cessation of a research project or study initiated by the PG students. It is a conscious decision made by the PG student or the principal investigator to pause the project for a specific period, usually for several reasons such as further evaluation, restructuring, or addressing certain concerns. During the voluntary suspension, students typically do not engage in academic activities such as coursework, research, or attending classes. PG students are allowed to voluntary suspension after completing one semester and the suspension period should not exceed three semesters in total, whether taken continuously or separately from the period of study, after getting the University approval (The PG Centre and the student faculty).

## 4.18 Termination of Study

The enrolment (registration) of any student may be cancelled if that student:

- Exceeds the maximum study completion period (see section Period of Study)
- In Master program CGPA continued to be <2.00 in the third semester. Students whose GPA is 1.90 and above are to be given one additional semester to register a normal load.
- Suspended from the University

## 4.19 Medium of instruction

The medium of instruction for the majority of University programs is English, with the exception of the Faculty of Education and Arts, and Faculty of Law where the medium of instruction is Arabic.

## 4.20 Entry Requirements for each PG Program

### 4.20.1 Faculty of Business

#### 4.20.1.1 Master of Business Administration (MBA)

Applicants to Sohar University MBA program must:

- Hold a Bachelor degree or equivalent in any field of specialization* with:
  - Minimum CGPA 2.5 out of 4.0 for candidates with minimum 2 years of relevant professional experience; or
  - Minimum CGPA 2.0 out of 4.0 for candidates with minimum 4 years of relevant professional experience.

*Based on the Faculty's Admission and Selection Committee recommendations, applicant from non-business specialization may be required to complete up to 8 units (4 courses) of bridging courses before being considered for admission. This requirement will stand unless waiver for some or all of these courses are granted. The bridging courses will not count towards the overall CGPA required for the MBA program. Bridging Courses are:

- Principles of Accounting
- Principles of Management
- Introduction to Microeconomics
- Principles of Marketing
- Satisfy the English proficiency requirements: an IELTS score of ≥ 6[3], or TOEFL score of 500 or above in paper-based exam, or score of 173 or above in the computer-based exam, or 61 in internet-based exam (not older than 2 years).
- All MBA candidates will be interviewed by the 'Admission and Selection Committee' at Faculty of Business to assess their motivation, professional experience, communication and leadership skills.
- Candidates who meet SU admission criteria and successfully pass the interviews will be granted admission based on availability of seats.

All admissions are subject to the approval of the Ministry of Higher Education Research & Innovation in the Sultanate of Oman.

### 4.20.2 Faculty of Computing and IT

4.20.2.1 Applicants to in the PhD of Philosophy program in Computer Science must have the following:

- Hold a Master degree in Master's degree in Computer Science or equivalent with CGPA of:
  - CGPA 3.00 out of 4.00 for fresh graduates.
  - CGPA ≥ 2.5 (with two or more years of appropriate professional experience as a computer science specialist).
- Satisfy the English proficiency requirements. IELTS score of ≥ 6, or equitant (not more than two years old).
- Pass the interview in the faculty.
- Submit a research proposal.

#### 4.20.2.2 Master of Science in Computer Science (Data Science & Computer Security)

Normally, applicants to Master of Computer Science must have

- CGPA 2.75 out of 4.00 for fresh graduates (Bachelor degree in Computing or equivalent).
- CGPA ≥ 2.5 (with two or more year's appropriate professional experience in the specialist of computer science).
- IELTS score of ≥ 6, or equitant (e.g., TOFEL score of 550 or above in paper-based exam or score of 173 or above in the computer-based exam or 61 in the internet-based exam (not more than 2 years old).

[3] The University offers IELTS training supports for those who have an IELTS score less than 6. Need more information, please contact the PG Centre.

A student with a Bachelor's degree in computer engineering, electronics engineering, and communication may be considered for admission with bridging courses. The additional courses will be chosen by the faculty from the following: (Object-Oriented Programming, System Analysis, and Design, Computer Architecture, Computer Networks, Database Management Systems, Operating System).

### 4.20.3 Faculty of Education and Arts

#### 4.20.3.1 Applicants to PhD Programme in Education must:

- Hold a master degree (or equivalent) in education.
- Very Good Grade or an equivalent CGPA of SU grading system.
- Submit Research Proposal
- Satisfy the English proficiency requirements: an IELTS score of ≥ 4, or IBT TOEFL (30-31) (not more than 2 years old).
- Pass the interview and competence exam with the addition of some conditions.

#### 4.20.3.2 Applicants to Masters Programmes in Education must:

- Hold a bachelor degree (or equivalent) in education.
- Good Grade or an equivalent CGPA of SU grading system for fresh graduate.
- Satisfactory grade or an equivalent CGPA of SU grading system may be considered for admission with the addition of some conditions
- A Bachelor degree in other majors may be considered for admission with the addition of some conditions.

### 4.20.4 Faculty of Engineering

#### 4.20.4.1 PhD of Engineering

Candidates must meet the following requirements:

- Hold a Master degree in Mechanical, Electrical, Chemical, Civil, Environmental, Process, Process Operation and Maintenance engineering, or any other relevant engineering field.
- Satisfy the English proficiency requirements: an IELTS score of ≥ 6[4], or TOEFL score of 500 or above in paper-based exam or score of 173 or above in the computer-based exam or 61 in internet-based exam (not more than 2 years old).
- Successfully passed the Ph.D. Qualifying Examination scheduled within the first semester of enrolment.
- Admission will be dependent on an assessment of the research topic proposed by the student, to ensure that Sohar University is able to provide appropriate supervision and facilities to support that research. Assessment will be the responsibility of the Ph.D. Programme Coordinator and it will be carried out in discussion with the student, Research Degree Committee and the faculty management team to support that research prior to approval of the topic.
- Admission is subject to the ratifications of the MoHERI, Sultanate of Oman

[4] The University offers IELTS training supports for those who have an IELTS score less than 6. Need more information, please contact the PG Centre

#### 4.20.4.2 Master of Engineering in Environmental Engineering

Candidates who are eligible to apply for entry to the Master of Engineering in Environmental Engineering currently offered at the Faculty of Engineering, Sohar University, must meet the following requirements:

- Hold a Bachelor degree (or equivalent) in an Engineering field (Civil Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Process Metallurgy and Materials Engineering or other related Engineering specialisation form Sohar and other reputed universities/colleges) with:
  - CGPA of at least2.5 out of 4.00 for new graduates or
  - CGPA 2.25 out of 4.00 for candidates with 2 or more years of relevant professional experience
- Satisfy the English proficiency requirements: an IELTS score of ≥ 6[5], or TOFEL score of 500 or above in paper-based exam or score of 173 or above in the computer-based exam or 61 in internet-based exam (not more than 2 years old).
- Pass marks in an interview with the Admission Committee at Faculty of Engineering (FoE).

### 4.20.5 Faculty of Language Studies

#### 4.20.5.1 Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)

Candidates to the MA (TESOL) programme must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Hold a Bachelor's degree in a relevant discipline, such as English Language, Linguistics, or Education with a substantial English component with:
  - CGPA of at least 2.5 out of 4.00 (or equivalent) for fresh graduates or
  - 2.25 out of 4.00 (or equivalent) for candidates with 2 or more years of relevant professional experience.
- Have a Certificate of English Language Teaching for Adults (CELTA) (for holders of non-education programme).
- Have an IELTS band score of 6.5[6] or TOEFL score of 87 (iBT) / 580 (iPT).
- Have successful pass marks in an interview with the Admission Committee at the Faculty of Language Studies (FLS).

#### 4.20.5.2 Master of Arts in Translation and Interpreting

Candidates to the Master of Arts Translation and Interpreting must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. Hold a bachelor's degree in any discipline from a recognized HEI with:
   a) a cumulative GPA of ≥2.5 out of 4.00 or equivalent for fresh graduates, **OR**
   b) a cumulative GPA of ≥2.00 out of 4.00 or equivalent for candidates with at least two years of professional experience as translators, interpreters, revisers, translation

[5] The University offers IELTS training supports for those who have an IELTS score less than 6. Need more information, please contact the PG Centre

[6] The University offers IELTS training supports for those who have an IELTS score less than 6. Need more information, please contact the PG Centre

project managers, communication specialists, public/external/international/client relations officers, or any relevant career in the language industry.

2. Have an IELTS band score of 6 or TOEFL score of 60-78 (iBT) or equivalent.
3. Pass an admission interview at the Faculty of Language Studies.
4. Pass three bridging courses if the bachelor's degree is obtained in a non-language or non-translation discipline.

### 4.20.6 Faculty of Law

#### 4.20.6.1 Master in Public Law

The applicant is required to be accepted into the Master's Program in Public Law at Sohar University:

- To have a bachelor's degree in law or in Islamic law in one of the following disciplines: jurisprudence and its principles, the principles of religion, judiciary, from a recognized university, college, or institute, or its equivalent, with a grade of no less than 2.75, or its equivalent.
- Students who obtain an acceptable grade may be accepted, in case they have practical experience of not less than two years in the field of law
- The selection takes place between the applicants according to the required numbers, and academic averages. In the event of equality, a comparison is made between them based on the accumulative average in common law courses
- The applicant shall Submit a no-objection letter from the employer to complete the study
- Transferred students from outside the university can be accepted according to the following controls:
    - ➢Fulfilling the condition for obtaining the GPA referred to in item No. (1) or (2) of the admission requirements for the master's program.
    - ➢A maximum of 30% of the courses studied by the student are equalized to the program courses.
- The following conditions are required for admission to holders of a Bachelor's degree in Islamic Sharia:
    - ➢To pass the following remedial courses successfully: 1. Introduction to Law. 2 Penal Law (general section). 3. Penal Law (special section) 4. Constitutional Law. 5 Administrative Law 6. Criminal Procedures Law. 7. Administrative Judiciary. 8 Sources of Obligation. 9. Civil and Commercial Procedures.
    - ➢The student must succeed in all courses Before entering a master's programme In the event that the description of any of the previous remedial courses matches the description of the courses that the student previously studied by a rate of no less than 70%, then they are equalized, and the student will not study them again.
    - ➢The process of registering catch-up courses and study units (or credit hours) is subject to the university system, and these courses are not counted within the

student's cumulative average or the period specified in the master's stage, and appear in the list without grades)

## 4.21 Academic Advising

All new postgraduate students joining a Faculty will be assigned to an academic advisor, and will usually continue with the same advisor through to graduation.

Academic advising provides supportive and informative services that assist students make informed decisions regarding their educational, career, and life goals, understand academic program requirements, program options, university rules and regulations, and campus services.

Each member of academic staff serves as an Academic Advisor, and will help students:

- Transition to university life.
- Complete their studies and development of skills and know how to take responsibility for their education by setting goals and objectives and finding ways to achieve them.
- Develop graduate attributes.
- Familiarize themselves with University academic policies, rules, regulations and procedures.
- Complete all program and graduation requirements in a timely manner.

## 4.22 Special Circumstances

There may be occasions when a student requires extra help or guidance. For example, he/she may be late to register with good reason, may feel they are taking the wrong courses, or may wish to improve their CGPA etc. On these occasions, there is an established procedure to follow.
A student cannot expect to see the Dean, DVC Academic Affairs or the Vice Chancellor unless the following procedures are met:

- Student has talked to his/her Academic Advisor or Program Coordinator. Most issues can be resolved at this stage.
- If the issue is not resolved, then a student must complete the Special Circumstances Form (available at the back of the Handbook, on the student portal, or from Faculty Admin Office). The Advisor of a Faculty student will endorse this and arrange for a meeting with the Dean.
- The Dean will not see any student without this completed form, endorsed by the advisor.
- If the Dean considers it appropriate, a meeting with the DVC Academic Affairs will be arranged. The DVC Academic Affairs may refer the issue to a Special Circumstances Committee. The DVC will not see any student without the completed form, endorsed by the Faculty Dean.
- If the DVC Academic Affairs or Special Circumstances Committee considers it appropriate, they will arrange for a meeting with the Vice Chancellor.

The Vice Chancellor will not see any student without the completed Special Circumstances form, endorsed by DVC Academic Affairs.

## 4.23 Students under Academic Probation

All students of the University are required to meet certain academic standards. The PG Student under Academic Probation policy outlines the conditions and regulations Faculty students under academic probation.

- A student will be under academic probation if his/her CGPA is <2.00.
- A student will be given a first warning notice in his/her first semester is his/her CGPA is >2.00.
- A final warning notice will be given to the student in his/her second semester in faculty if his/her CGPA is still <2.00. Students in the category will be allowed to register 4 units only.
- The student will be dismissed from the University if his/her CGPA continues to be <2.00 in the third semester. Students whose CGPA is 1.90 and above are to be given one
- additional semester to register a normal load.
- If the student's CGPA has increased after the warning notice to ≥ 2.00 but then returns back to <2.00 in the following semester, the under academic probation regulations will be re- implemented from the beginning.

Dismissed students can be readmitted in another program in another faculty. The chance for readmission after dismissal is to be given to the student one time only during his/her studies at Sohar University.

# Part 5

# Graduate Attributes

## 5.1 Graduate Attributes

To develop skilled, knowledgeable, articulate and enterprising graduates, Sohar University has identified a number of key postgraduate attributes to be embedded in the delivery of our programs to ensure our students contribute effectively to the changing world in which they live and work

| Master Level* | PhD Level* |
|---|---|
| Communication<br>Report effectively on complex issues and situations | Communication<br>Communicate and explain the results and significance of original research, or of advanced scholarship, to peers and community |
| Information Technology<br>Select and effectively use the most appropriate information technology | Information Technology<br>Select and use a range of appropriate information and communication technology incorporating media effectively |
| Numeracy<br>Use numeracy calculations in creative ways to solve problems | Numeracy<br>Identify and analyse problems including numeracy calculations, the resolution of which will result in new knowledge or significant development in professional practice |
| Creativity & Problem Solving<br>Apply relevant concepts, principles and research techniques, including critical analysis and evaluation, to new issues and problems | Creativity & Problem Solving<br>Apply relevant research techniques to significant new developments in professional practice<br>Apply relevant research to solve problems using disciplinary knowledge in new innovation and creative ways<br>Refine and extend existing research techniques to conduct original research that is evaluated by independent experts against international standards |
| Team-working<br>Work independently and/or lead teams to manage their own and group outcomes in complex and unpredictable situations with accountability for generating new knowledge | Team-working<br>Act with full autonomy to strategically lead and manage teams<br>Act with responsibility and full accountability in all aspects of work or research-based study |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Social & Ethic Responsibility**<br>Manage time effectively and to show dedication in their field<br>Strategically evaluate the operational effectiveness of others | **Social & Ethic Responsibility**<br>Encourage autonomy in work and/or study colleagues<br>Manage time of complex and prolonged tasks to ensure that they remain at the forefront of their field<br>Promote knowledge exchange<br>Demonstrate a deep and comprehensive understanding of values and ethics through leadership and promote these values to others |
| **Critical Judgement**<br>Accept responsibility for their own learning and professional development | **Critical Judgement**<br>Contribute to the advancement of the state of learning and/or scholarship in a field |

*These align with the Oman Qualifications Framework.

# Part 6

# Assessments

## 6.1 General Assessment Procedures

The composition and format of the overall assessment (not of the individual assessment items) of each course must be vetted and approved by the faculty board. This includes:

- types of assessment: quizzes, assignments, presentations, etc. as well as a final exam
- the relative weightage given to assessment components
- coursework assessments which will be between 40% - 60% of the total course assessment, with possible exceptions for "project" courses
- the final exam will cover the whole of the course and weigh between 40% - 60% of total course assessment, with possible exceptions for "project" courses

Details of assessment for each course, including the scheduling of assessment, will be provided to students within the Course Profile in the first week of classes, and will be available on the University Learning Management System (SULMS).

The weight of each assessment (% of final marks) item will be specified. For each individual assessment, the specific requirements and criteria for marking and grading will be stated.
This includes the learning outcomes that are to be assessed. There will be sufficient formative assessment early in the semester to support students alter their study behaviour to improve the likelihood of success.

### 6.2 On-Course Assessments

Coursework assessment will normally be returned to students with feedback within two weeks. Feedback to students, indicating errors, highlighting areas for improvement and showing how this may be achieved, is essential for learning. A copy of the official record of marks will be made available to students (identified by student ID number, not by student name) after the return of each major piece of assessment, both as an accuracy check and so that a student can monitor his/her level of performance during the semester.

## 6.3 Research Outputs Assessment

### 6.3.1 Research Project Assessment[7]

For taught master programs, after completing their first semester of the second academic year and fulfilling the requirement by each faculty, students need to register for their projects courses All masters' projects should be marked by an examination panel of two or more members. This should preferably take place with the second examiner unaware of grade awarded by the first marker. Two hard bound copies are to be distributed as follows:

- 1 copy to the Learning Resources Centre as well as a softcopy.
- 1 copy to the Postgraduate Centre as well as a softcopy.

[7] This assessment for taught-course master programs

#### 6.3.1.1 Submission of Research Project:

The normal submission deadline for research project is the end of second semester in the last year and can be extended one more semester without academic penalties

### 6.3.2 Research Proposal Oral Exam (Preliminary Oral Examination)[8]

The Preliminary Oral Exam is designed to assess students' knowledge of major and minor fields of study, research design, and fundamental research in the degree area. The exam will last at least one hour. Oral Preliminary Examination (OPE) are the first faculty-wide evaluation of a student's research ability in the research program, e.g., Ph.D. Students are encouraged to take Oral Preliminary Examination after completing the required courses with passing grade not less than 2.0.

The research student admitted must pass the Preliminary Oral exam, which is administered by the Faculty in cooperation to the PG Centre.

All PG research students writing a dissertation or a thesis must have their supervisors write letters stating that they have read the students' works and that the works are complete and ready for defense. Prior to the Preliminary Viva session, PG research student needs to filled in the Pre-Viva Readiness Form, provide plagiarism report and to show a completion of the required courses.

The faculty of the PG research student submits the required documents to the PG Centre and recommends Pre-Viva Panel members and dates. The Centre will evaluate the information provided and the process accordingly.

After careful consideration, the Pre-Viva Panel recommends one of the following:

Acceptance of the proposal as submitted and oral examination acceptance. The required form is signed by the Pre-Viva Panel.

Acceptance of the proposal on the condition that minor changes are made, as well as acceptance of the oral examination, in which case the Pre-Viva Panel withholds singing the required form until the student makes the recommended changes.

Rejection of the proposal and/or the oral examination, in which case the required form is not signed and the student is granted permission to submit a revised proposal and/or sit for a second oral defense based on the Pre-Viva Panel's recommendation. The Supervisor, in consultation with the student, the Pre-Viva Panel, and the PG Centre, determines the date for the second oral examination.

### 6.3.3 Final Research Submission for Oral Examination (Viva)

Master's dissertations are typically much shorter than PhD theses. This is because Master's degrees are designed to provide students with advanced knowledge in a particular field, while PhD degrees are designed to prepare students for a career in research.

Master's dissertations: The length of a Master's dissertation will vary depending on the specific requirements of the university and the field of study. However, most Master's dissertations are between 12,000 and 50,000 words long.

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[8] This assessment for PG Research Programs.

PhD theses: The length of a PhD thesis will vary depending on the specific requirements of the university and the field of study. However, most PhD theses are between 80,000 and 100,000 words long.

## 6.4 Research Assessment, Oral Examination (Viva) Process

### 6.4.1 Appointing Internal and External Examiners

The process of appointing examiners typically begins with the student's supervisor. The supervisor will recommend a list of potential examiners to the Postgraduate Centre. The Centre will then review the list of recommendations and make the final decision on who will be appointed. The main requirements of the University are that:

- The University requires that all research degrees be examined by an Examiner1 (internal examiner) and an Examiner2 (external examiner). The examiner1 (Internal examiner) is typically a member of the student's faculty who has expertise in the subject matter of the dissertation or thesis. Examiner2 (External examiner) is a specialist in the student's field who is not affiliated with the university
- Supervisors are responsible for arranging for the Board of Studies to nominate examiners for the student's Thesis/Dissertation at least three months before the student is due to submit.

1. Examiners must:
   - Have completed their probationary period.
   - Must have practice and experience on viva examination.
   - Have gained doctoral degrees or have equivalent experience of research.
   - Have appropriate subject expertise.
   - Have demonstrably research active.

In addition to the above, external examiners must have a standing within their own academic community.

2. Examiners must not:
   - Have acted in a supervisory capacity.
   - Be former members of Sohar University or former postgraduates unless more than five years have elapsed since leaving the University.
   - have a close relationship with the candidate e.g., have published with or worked directly with them to a significant degree within the last five years;
   - Be the authors of work that forms the primary focus of the research project.
3. Between them, the examiners should normally have:
   - Experience of supervising at least three students to successful completion.
   - Examined three students at postgraduate research degree level.
4. Examiners are nominated by the PG Centre in coordination with faculties.
5. Supervisors are responsible for supporting the student's preparation for the oral examination and, if necessary, arranging practice in oral examination techniques. The students should submit a copy to examiner 1 (internal examiner) and a copy to examiner 2 (external examiner). After passing the viva the student must submit 3 hard bound copies with required program color code. Once students have made a

formal notice of their intention to submit, this will trigger the procedures for examination, starting with advice on the appointment of examiners and including preparation for the viva and, where appropriate, post-viva support.

### 6.4.2 Chairing a viva voce panel

The chair is designed to ensure that integrity and fairness are maintained by all parties during the Viva Voce Examination. The chair, being an independent member of the panel, ensures a protection mechanism for both the student and the examiners in the event of consequent claims of misconduct or bias on behalf of the examiners.

### 6.4.3 Repeating Thesis/Dissertation Examination

The student is entitled to amend and resubmit the Thesis/Dissertation for re-examination if the result is not passed (Re-Viva). The Thesis/Dissertation examination committee must provide a detailed report on the additional work or changes required and the reasons for the rejection. Furthermore, a schedule for the student to resubmit the Thesis/Dissertation for examination must be specified. Re-submission must take place within one year of the student's notification date and will follow the same procedures. A third examination for the Thesis/Dissertation is not permitted.

### 6.4.4 Research Assessment Rubrics

A research assessment rubric is a tool used to evaluate the quality of a research paper or project. Rubrics are used to assess your research works using criteria such as Originality, Argument & understanding, Criticality & analysis and Use of sources and evidence. The Viva Voce Examination panel decides on the Thesis/Dissertation and oral presentation by majority vote at the end of the question session, placing the Thesis/Dissertation in one of four categories:

- Pass.
- Pass with minor corrections.
- Pass with major corrections.
- Fail/(Re-Viva).

### 6.4.5 Thesis/Dissertation Approval

- Upon successfully finishing all VIVA requirements, the Viva panel members approved the final thesis/dissertation version.
- The student should send the program coordinator an electronic copy of the thesis/dissertation.
- The final grade should follow the university grading system.
- The VIVA Panel assesses thesis/dissertation, and a decision will be made regarding whether the thesis/dissertation is defendable or needs corrections within a specific period. If the student is recommended to make corrections to the thesis/dissertation, the supervisor's consent should be taken to resubmit the dissertation.
- The student should resubmit the final thesis/dissertation upon finishing the VIVA and writing the final version of dissertation. The student is advised to proofread it and get final feedback from the supervisor. When the supervisor checks the thesis/dissertation

and makes sure that the whole work conforms to the university's requirement, you are permitted by the supervisor to submit the finalized version of the thesis/dissertation on the submission date to the PG Centre or related committees.

The final version of the thesis/dissertation is approved by the VIVA Panel and result is sent to the PG Centre.The PG Centre reports to Examination Board to award the PhD degree.

## 6. 5 Examinations Instructions for Students

Students must follow all instructions from the exam supervisors/invigilators:

- At the beginning of an exam, academic staff, normally those teaching the course, will be in attendance in order to consider queries from students. There should be few queries as all examination papers have been moderated. Academic staff will provide additional explanation in response to queries only if the instructions or examination questions are unclear.
- Students enter the examination room only after being instructed to do so by the supervisors/invigilators. This will normally be at least 15 minutes before the start of the examination so that preliminary activities can be completed.
- Students will sit where instructed by the supervisors.
- Normally, the following materials and equipment are classed as Standard Materials and are allowed in the student's possession during an exam: wristwatch, pens, pencils, sharpener, eraser, and ruler, and where relevant a non-scientific, non-programmable calculator with no data storage.
- If there are any Permissible Materials (materials in addition to the Standard Materials) which a student may have in a specific examination (e.g. drawing instruments, written material, scientific calculators, etc.), they will be listed on the front page of the exam paper. Students will have been notified of any Permissible Materials during class before the end of the scheduled lectures. Only Standard and Permissible Material may be in the student's possession or on his/her desk during the exam.
- Any other material or equipment that is not Standard or Permissible Material is Unauthorized Material (e.g. mobile phones, electronic dictionaries, MP3 players, study notes, etc.). Unauthorized Material must not be in the possession of the student or on his/her desk during an exam. If these are brought to the examination room, they must be left in a designated area of the examination room at the owner's risk. If Unauthorized Material is discovered in a student's possession or at his/her desk during the exam, the student will be charged with academic misconduct, whether the material has been accessed or not.
- No food or drink (except water or medication if needed) is permitted in the examination room.
- Students must place their official University Student Identity Card, picture side up, on the desk to be checked by a supervisor against the examination list. If a student forgets to bring their Student ID, they should notify a supervisor as soon as possible, and before

receiving the examination paper. The student must go to Admission and Registration to obtain a temporary ID.

- Students must not communicate with each other or exchange any materials while in the examination room (e.g. erasers, paper, calculators, etc.).
- Students may not leave the examination room in the first 30 minutes of the exam. Any student who arrives late (up to 30 minutes) may be admitted, but no extra time will be allocated. Those arriving later than 30 minutes from the start of the examination will not be admitted.
- After the first 30 minutes, any student wishing to leave the room, either to go to the rest room or having finished the examination, must turn all papers upside down on their desk and raise their hand

➢ If a student wishes to visit the restroom, he/she will be escorted by a same sex member of staff

➢ If he/she has finished with the examination, he/she can leave after the examination booklet has been collected by a supervisor.

➢ No student may leave the room during the last 10 minutes of the exam.

At the end of the exam, (corresponding actions will be appropriate for practical or computer examinations):

✓Students must stop writing immediately, put their pen down and turn their examination script face down.

✓All students must remain seated and silent until all scripts are collected and a supervisor tells them they can leave.

✓ Students may not remove any examination material from the examination room.

## 6.6 Passing a Course

In order to pass a course, a student must obtain a course grade greater than or equal to 2.0. A student who has a course grade of less than 2.0 will be deemed to have failed that course.

Failure in a Course

If a student fails a course, then the student can do one the following:

- Retake the course. If failed courses must be retaken (i.e. they are required courses) then these must have highest priority in the scheduling of a student's program and must be taken at the next offering of the course.
- If there is sufficient demand and appropriate resources available, the University may offer a re-sit exam within two/three weeks after the results have been announced. For more information on Re-Sit Examinations, please check the Resit Examination Policy which is regularly reviewed to ensure currency and alignment with University regulations.
- Where applicable, if an elective course is failed (i.e. one that is not specifically required for the Award), then the student may choose another eligible elective course if available

## 6.7 Re-sit Examinations

Sohar University introduced re-sit examinations to provide students with every opportunity to progress.

Each academic year, the re-sit examination period is set by the University's Examination Board and falls within the normal exam period outlined in the University calendar.

Re-sit examinations apply to both undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

A student is eligible to re-sit an examination if:

- He/she has failed a course in the semester immediately preceding the re-sit examination period.
- His/her grade for the failed course was (1.00 to 1.99)
  - ➢ Each student may attend a maximum of two re-sit examinations per semester.
  - ➢ The maximum grade awarded after a re-sit examination will be 2.00.
  - ➢ Students will carry forward all continuous assessment marks for that course.
  - ➢ There will be no special examination to replace a re-sit examination.
  - ➢ Individual faculties may choose to offer revision classes prior to the re-sit examination.
  - ➢ Students must register for a re-sit examination by filling in the appropriate form, which is available online.

## 6.8 Mitigating Circumstances

If a student feels that circumstances outside of his/her control have adversely affected his/her performance, then he/she may apply for the award of a Special Examination or other form(s) of special assessment, or for the ability to withdraw from the course without academic and/or financial penalty.

Examples of circumstances that would normally justify this special consideration include:

- an acute illness rendering the student unable to carry out the assessment task as required
- a serious personal injury, such as a broken limb or one with an incapacitating effect
- being the victim of a serious crime such as robbery, burglary or a violent assault during the period immediately preceding the assessment
- a serious illness or death of a close relative: normally a partner, parent, child, sibling or grandparent
- unforeseen and unavoidable and imposed work pressures serious enough to interfere with the student's study or ability to meet an assessment deadline or sit an examination

Circumstances that would not normally be acceptable include:

- any claim not supported by reliable evidence
- financial problems or difficulties with housing
- difficulties with child-minders or other domestic or work arrangements
- travel arrangements such as airline bookings that conflict with assessment or examination timetables

- failure to attend an examination or failure to submit an assessment because of confusion over time, date or location
- retrospective medical certificates, i.e. dated/issued after a student has recovered from the illness claimed

## 6.9 Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances

Mitigating Circumstances must be formally reported to the Course Coordinator by a student within one week of the affected assessment item (a special form is available in Faculty Admin office). Documented evidence is always essential.

The Course Coordinator granting an extension will normally deal with mitigating Circumstances which affect an individual item of coursework. In extreme circumstances, the student may be allowed to defer submission until a later date.

Mitigating Circumstances that affect a significant portion of the course assessment or the examination will be considered by the Course Coordinator with recommendations on action to the Program Coordinator and Dean.

A student whose claim for Mitigating Circumstances is approved will normally be reassessed with no academic penalty (i.e. mark not restricted to a threshold pass, e.g. a resit or special exam). If the student had taken the assessment and passed, then consideration may be given to upgrade the result. This will be formally approved by the University Examination Board.

A Special Examination can be awarded by the University Examination Board. The most common reason for a Special Examination is a medical condition that prevented the student from attending or preparing for a final examination.

## 6.10 A Special Examination

- Is set by the University Examination Board and falls within the normal exam period outlined on the University calendar.
- Replaces the final examination in the course assessment.
- Allows students to carry forward all continuous assessment marks for that course.
- is not available as a supplement to a student not presenting himself/herself for a Special Examination
- Can be executively awarded by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Affairs in special circumstances that are assessed after the meeting of the University Examination Board
- Must be coordinated by the Faculty before announcing the final examinations results of the next semester. Otherwise, Admission and Registration will transfer the course's status from "incomplete" to "enrolled" and therefore student will be awarded zero mark in the final examination in the course assessment

Sometimes legitimate mitigating circumstances may cause a student to miss too much of a course. For example, a car accident in week 5 puts the student in the hospital for more than three or four weeks. In such a case, special consideration cannot overcome the inability of the student to fully participate in all the learning activities. When this occurs, a student must retake the course, but should be allowed to withdraw without academic or financial penalty.

Students must register for a special examination by filling in the appropriate form which is available from the faculty secretary or Registration.

## 6.11 Queries and Appeals against Assessment Decisions

### 6.11.1 Assessment Queries and Appeals

The University will deal openly and fairly with students who wish to question or appeal against assessment decisions. Students will not be penalized for questioning or appealing assessment decisions. Appeals will not be recorded on the academic record of a student.

Queries and appeals against assessment decisions can only be made by the student concerned. Third party or anonymous appeals will not be considered.

The University will encourage an informal and local (at the course and program level) resolution of student queries about assessment.

Since all grades are subject to internal marking and moderation systems and are confirmed by an Examination Board, appeals based solely on disagreement with the academic judgment of the staff who marked the assessment will not be considered.

An appeal may result in confirmation or improvement of the original grade. A grade will not be reduced as the result of a review caused by an appeal.

### 6.11.2 Informal Process - Queries about Assessment Results and Grades

All queries about marks and grades (e.g. why the student had received a lower mark or grade than was expected on a piece of assessment or for the whole course) should be resolved locally and in a timely manner through the following procedure.

A student should:

- Initiate the process within one week after the release of the result of an individual assessment item or the release of course grades
- Discuss the issue with the member of academic staff who was in charge of the marking of the assignment or the course. If that does not resolve the problem, then
  - Discuss the issue with the Course Coordinator. If that does not resolve the problem, then
  - Discuss the issue with the Program Coordinator and/or Dean of the Faculty

If this informal process does not satisfactorily answer the query, then the student can submit a formal appeal.

## 6.12 Guidelines: Appeals against Assessment Decisions or Awards of Special Examinations

Appeals against marks for individual assessment items or against Examination Board decisions (e.g. course grades or awards of special examinations) will not be considered if based solely on disagreement with the judgment of the examiner or the Board.

Appeals can only be upheld where:

- an administrative error has occurred

- examiners did not follow University, faculty, program or course policies, procedures or regulations
- decisions were not in accordance with natural justice and fairness

### 6.12.1 Stage I Appeal against Assessment Grade

Before making an appeal, the student first must have followed the informal resolution process outlined above.

To appeal marks on an individual on-course assessment, the Stage I Appeal form (Acad Form 16) which states the case and provides evidence must be submitted to the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic Affairs Office within one week after the release of the results of an individual assessment item or the release of course grades.

As a first step, the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic Affairs will either rule that the appeal has no basis and dismiss it, or that a hearing will be held at which the student will attend to present his/her case and at which other witnesses may be called.

The student must be available for an interview to discuss the case with the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic Affairs, who will attempt to resolve the issue. The student may be accompanied by a fellow student, a member of the staff of the University, or a family member.

If the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic Affairs is unable to resolve the case to the satisfaction of the student, then the student may:

- make a formal complaint if they believe that the University's procedures are not adequate or have not been followed in the case of an individual assessment item
- take the appeal to Stage II in the case of a course grade or non-award of a special exam

### 6.12.2 Stage I Appeal against Non-awarding of a Special Examination

For appeals against the non-awarding of a special examination, the student must complete the Stage I Appeal form and submit it to the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic Affairs Office. The student must be available for interview within one week after the release of the result of an individual assessment item or the release of course grades. The procedure to follow is as above.

### 6.12.3 Stage II Appeal

Only appeals of course grade or the non-award of special examinations can be taken to Stage II. These appeals must have gone through Stage I.

- The student must complete a Stage II appeal form (Acad Form 17) that is available from the Faculty Secretary or the Student Handbook and submit it with evidence to the VC Executive Assistant: In the third week of second semester for an appeal involving first semester courses
- Before the start of special exams for an appeal involving second semester courses

The Appeals Committee, composed of the Vice Chancellor (Chair), a Dean from a faculty other than that of the student, the Director, Quality Assurance & Accreditation (secretary) and a student who is unknown to the student making the appeal, will investigate and pass judgment.

As a first step, the committee will either rule that the appeal has no basis (6.3) and dismiss it or that a hearing will be held at which the student will attend to present their case and at which other witnesses may be called.

If a hearing is to be held, then it will be held within two weeks after the student submits the Stage II Appeal form. The student may be accompanied by a fellow-student or a member of the staff of the University or by a family member.
The decision of the Appeal Committee will be final. After the decision, the Vice Chancellor is empowered to have the authority of the University Examination Board in order to make any necessary decisions resulting from the decision of the committee.

## 6.13 Academic Misconduct - Principles

Sohar University aims to have an education climate in which learning and assessment are conducted with high levels of ethics and integrity. Sohar University will not tolerate academic misconduct and will strive to eliminate it from the University.
In the SU Academic Misconduct Policy, misconduct is defined as any action, or attempted action, that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage for oneself, or an unfair academic advantage, or disadvantage, for any other member, or members, of the academic community. This includes a broad array of activities such as cheating, plagiarising, altering academic documents or transcripts, gaining access to materials before they are universally available, helping a friend to gain an unfair academic advantage, infringing the rules of intellectual property, amongst many others.

## 6.14 Classification of Misconduct

While the list of academic misconduct is by no means definitive, and it is recognised that acts of academic misconduct may vary in degree of seriousness, a rigidly defined set of penalties is neither desirable nor practical and should thus vary with the seriousness of the offence. Therefore, the determination of a verdict, and the resultant penalty, will require judgement either by a Faculty board or, where the offence is more serious, an academic Panel, depending on the individual case. However, to aid in determining the severity of an offence, the University has categorized academic offences into four broad principal categories; minor, significant, serious and grave.
Subsequently, penalties will vary from the following:

- Warning
- Loss of marks in an assessment
- Failure in the assessment (Marks of 0 in the assessment)
- Failure in the course (Marks of 0 in the course)
- Suspension from the University for a defined period
- Permanent expulsion from the University

A complete list of offences with a rigidly defined set of penalties is neither possible nor desirable. The determination of the verdict and the penalty will require the judgement of the panel hearing each individual case. The following are examples of offences in each category and the range of penalties that may apply.

These are for guidance and are not intended to list all possible offences and penalties.

**Where an offence is deemed Minor:**

There is no evidence of clear intention to gain unfair advantage.

A single minor offence is not considered to be an "Academic Offence" as covered by this policy and need not be reported to the Quality Assurance & Accreditation Department or the Registration department. These cases may be handled by Program/Course Coordinators. Often in these cases, the student requires training (e.g. instruction in proper referencing) to prevent future occurrences.

Penalty: Warning or loss of marks (50%) in the assessment

**Where an offence is deemed Significant:**

There is evidence of premeditation to gain unfair advantage. For example:

- Repeated minor offences
- First time caught in possession of or using unauthorized material (e.g. mobile phone or "cheat sheet" with test information) during a class test weighed at less than 40%.
- Copying portions of an assignment from other students, or
- Copying information from the web or elsewhere for projects without referencing or citations

Penalty: Failure in the assessment (0 marks)

**Where an offence is deemed Serious:**

There is evidence of repeated offences and/or a clear premeditated attempt to significantly affect a course grade in a final year project or exam or any assessment weighted 40% and above.

For example:

- A second conviction for any of the above-mentioned misconduct actions (as listed above)
- In possession of unauthorised materials or receiving / sending a text message, email or phone call during a final year assessment
- Lack of referencing or citation in a final year project where plagiarism is detected

Penalty: Failure in the course (0 Marks)

**Where an offence is deemed Grave:**

This indicates behaviour that compromises the educational integrity of Sohar University's academic programs. For example:

- Conviction of a second serious offence during the student's studies at SU
- Impersonating, or allowing someone to impersonate you, in an examination
- Using third parties to create final year projects or other assignments
- Stealing, destroying or hindering another student's assessment or assignment
- Unauthorised entry to University record systems, or a lecturer's computer
- Stealing or possessing a test or exam paper physically, or electronically

Penalty: Suspension from the University for a set period (e.g. one year); or Permanent expulsion from the University; both with 0 Marks in all courses in the semester of the offence

## 6.15 Detection and Reporting

If an academic offence is suspected, or detected, during an assessment, then:

- Any unauthorised material must be confiscated and the student suspected of the offences' answer booklet annotated with the alleged offence, the date, time and chief invigilators name.
- The student will be permitted to continue the assessment unless his/her behaviour is disrupting the exam for others.
- After the assessment, the student is informed by the chief invigilator of the process and the student's mobile phone number is obtained.
- The chief invigilator will complete the Examination Incident Report Form describing the evidence that cheating has occurred, noting the time, date and attaching the material (or evidence, e.g. photographic). The form should be signed by the student. If the student refuses to sign the form this must be noted in the form.
- The Examination Incident Report Form will be submitted to the Dean with the letter (attached to the incident report form). The completed letter will be sent by email to the students SU email account.

If an academic offence is suspected, or detected in course work (e.g. plagiarism, fabrication etc.):

- The matter should be brought to the attention of the Course Coordinator. The Coordinator will then write a report providing details and evidence of the alleged offence and submit this report to the program Coordinator and the Dean of Faculty Head or (Head of Department).
- The Dean of Faculty Head or (Head of Department) will consult with the Program Coordinator and other academic staff involved to decide if the student will be charged with academic misconduct.
- If the decision is "no" then the action ceases. If the answer is "yes" then the case proceeds.
- In both cases, records must be kept and a copy sent to the Quality Assurance & Accreditation Department.

If an academic offence is suspected, or detected in a final year project (e.g. plagiarism, lack of referencing and citation etc.):

- The matter should be brought to the attention of the Course Coordinator at the earliest. The Coordinator will then write a report providing details and evidence of the alleged offence and submit this report to the Program Coordinator and Dean of Faculty or (Head of Department).
- The Dean of Faculty or (Head of Department) will consult with the Program Coordinator and other academic staff involved to decide if the student will be charged with academic misconduct.
- If the decision is "no" then the action ceases. If the answer is "yes" then the case proceeds.
- In both cases, records must be kept and a copy sent to the Quality Assurance & Accreditation Department.

## 6.16 Student Attendance and Notification

The student is responsible for checking his/her SU email and presenting a current mobile phone number to allow notification of hearing dates and times.

The student is responsible for attending a hearing. If the student does not attend then the hearing can proceed without him/her.

At a hearing the student may bring a member of the SU community, or a member of his/her immediate family (e.g. father, mother, brother or sister).

The student will be notified of all appointments and actions by his/her SU email. Notification will also be attempted by SMS and by phone.

## 6.17 Faculty Hearing for Academic Misconduct

Where an incidence of academic misconduct has been established, the following procedures take place:

- A Faculty Hearing should take place within one week of the offence in the case of assignments, projects, course work etc.
- In the case of final examinations, the Faculty Hearing should take place by the end of the exam week to allow the decision to be discussed at the Faculty Exam Board.
- The Hearing will be chaired by the Dean or his/her nominee and at least two other members of Faculty that have been nominated to hear the case.
- A member of the Quality Assurance & Accreditation Department (QA and QE Officer) should also attend each hearing. The role of the member of the Quality Assurance & Accreditation Department is to ensure that the proceedings align with the University policy and regulations.
- Full minutes of the Hearing must be recorded.
- If the student admits the offence, then the Hearing will decide on the appropriate penalty, as per the policy. This will be recorded in the minutes and submitted to the Faculty Exam Board.
- The Office of the Dean of Faculty is responsible for notifying the student by his/her SU email address of the penalty.
- If, on the other hand, the student contests the charge. Then the Faculty Hearing will forward the case to a University Panel for Academic Misconduct with a recommendation.
- The Quality Assurance & Accreditation Department is responsible for convening the University Panel and acts as Secretary to the meeting of the Panel.

## 6.18 The Faculty Hearing Membership

The Faculty Hearing is comprised of:

- The Chair (Dean or a nominee).

- At least two other Academic members of Faculty nominated by the Dean.
- A member of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness (or one nominee from outside the faculty).
- Faculty Administrator as Secretary to the meeting.

Procedure

- If the student is requested to do so, he/she is responsible for attending the Faculty Hearing. If he/she does not attend, then the Hearing can proceed without him/her.
- The Faculty, will notify the student of all appointments and actions by email (to their SU email account), and, where possible, by phone.
- The Faculty Administrator will present the evidence and any witnesses.
- The student will be asked to answer the allegations and may present witnesses, where relevant.
- If the student is found guilty, then the Panel will impose a penalty.
- The student will be notified of the decision by the Admission and Registration Department. For all decisions taken related to Final Examinations, the Admission and Registration Department will notify the student with the decision after the University Examination Board.

Records

- The Secretary will inform all necessary SU academic and administrative units (Faculty Exam Board, Quality Assurance & Accreditation Department, University Exam Board and Admission and Registration) of the events related to any academic misconduct.
- Records of all academic offences, and minutes of all Faculty Academic Misconduct Hearings, will be filed and maintained by the Office of the Dean of Faculty. A copy is to be sent to the Quality Assurance & Accreditation Department and the Admission and Registration Department.
- Where applicable, the Admission and Registration Department will note convictions and penalties in the student's official University records.
- If acquitted of the charge, no record will be maintained in the student's file.

## 6.19 Appeals against Verdicts and/or Penalties by Faculty Hearing

Students may appeal against a decision regarding an academic offence within one week of notification of the verdict and penalty, but only on the following grounds:

- New evidence has emerged that was not previously available.
- University procedures were not correctly followed.

Appeals may not be made on the basis of continued denial of guilt or a challenge of the judgement of the Panel.

Appeals against academic misconduct must be made in writing (in English for English courses/ programs) on the form provided by the Faculty. Information or documents of any new evidence must be attached.

If the grounds for appeal are valid, the student may submit the Appeal Form and all the relevant documentation to the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (DVC-AA). The DVC-AA will submit his decision to the Quality Assurance & Accreditation Department, which in turn will make a recommendation to the Vice Chancellor.

The Vice Chancellor may, or may not, request a meeting with the student and/or the academics involved in the case. The decision of the Vice Chancellor is final.

The Director of Quality Assurance & Accreditation Department will inform the student, and Effectiveness of the decision on his/her appeal against academic misconduct through his/her SU email account within one week of submitting the appeal.

## 6.20 University Panel for Academic Misconduct

Where the Faculty Hearing has forwarded a case with a recommendation to the University Panel for Academic Misconduct, the following procedures should take place:

- The University Panel for Academic Misconduct is convened by the I Quality Assurance & Accreditation Department, and chaired by the Vice Chancellor (or nominee).
- The Secretary (a member of the Quality Assurance & Accreditation Department) will consult with the Chair and then notify the Panel members to be appointed (see Appendix B).
- The student involved in the incident will be notified of the University Panel for Academic Misconduct details by the secretary.
- The Panel must convene the hearing within one week of the Faculty Hearing, or as soon after the examination period as possible to allow the decision to be notified to the University Examination Board.
- Full minutes of the Hearing must be recorded.
- The University Panel for Academic Misconduct decision is final.
- The secretary of the University Panel for Misconduct will notify the student by his/her SU email address of the final decision.
- The secretary will send a copy of the minutes of the Panel meeting to the University Examination Board Secretary.

## 6.21 The University Panel for Academic Misconduct Membership

The Panel refers to the academic misconduct commission convened to assess and adjudicate the offence in question where the student in question has appealed the decision of the Faculty, following the Faculty Hearing. The Panel is comprised of:

- The Chair (Vice Chancellor or a nominee)

- The DVC Academic Affairs (or a Member of the Academic Board appointed by him)
- a Dean or Academic Head (not from either the Student's Faculty (or department), nor from the Faculty (or department) in which the alleged offence occurred)
- a SU Student Advisory Council Representative who has no conflict of interest with the student;
- a member of Quality Assurance & Accreditation Department who will act as Executive Secretary to the meeting

## Procedure

- If the student is requested to do so, he/she is responsible for attending the University Hearing for Academic Misconduct. If he/she does not attend, then the Hearing can proceed without him/her.
- The Secretary of the University Hearing for Academic Misconduct will notify the student of all appointments and actions by email (to their SU email account), and, where possible, by phone.
- The Executive Secretary to the meeting will present the evidence and any witnesses.
- The student will be asked to answer the allegations and may present witnesses.
- If the student is found guilty, then the University Hearing for Academic Misconduct will impose a penalty. The student will be notified of the decision after the University Examination Board.

## Records

- The Secretary will inform all necessary SU academic and administrative units (Faculties, Quality Assurance & Accreditation Department, University Exam Board Secretary, the Admission and Registration Department) of the events related to any academic misconduct.
- Records of all academic offences, and minutes of all University Hearings for Academic Misconduct will be filed and maintained by the Quality Assurance & Accreditation Department.
- The Admission and Registration Department will note convictions and penalties in the student's official University records. If acquitted of the charge, no record will be maintained in the student's file.

# Part 7

# Supervision Guidelines

To better manage the supervision process, the following points should be considered by supervisors and research students.

## 7.1 Assigning the supervisor

PG research student can have two supervisors: a main supervisor and co-supervisor as recommended by the programs and faculties. The main supervisor is typically the main point of contact for the student and is responsible for their overall progress. The co-supervisor supervisor may have expertise in a specific area of the student's research and can provide additional guidance and support.

At the commencement of the Thesis/Dissertations, supervisors and students should consider the following issues:

- Both should agree on the frequency of supervisory meetings and methods of communication such as face-to-face, emails, or and via the SULMS forum.
- Face-to-face meetings should be at least twice a month in a normal situation, but meetings can be more frequent when required.
- The supervisor is responsible for managing the Thesis/Dissertations progress according to the agreed timeframe for completion of the dissertation with the PG student. The Thesis/Dissertation timeframe must be agreed on from the start.
- Discuss ethical issues for consideration in the research dissertation. If the Thesis/Dissertation requires ethics approval before initiating the research, students must complete and submit the required Ethics Approval form to the Ethics and Biosafety Committee.

## 7.2. Progress Reviews

- The supervisor should minute the supervision session and
- Recommendations to measure postgraduate students' progress.
- At the beginning of each supervision session, postgraduate students should be reminded of the supervisors' previous recommendations and notes.
- The Progress Report Form is the most convenient way to record and keep track of supervision minutes. Copies of these forms should be sent to the PG Centre.

## 7.3 Responsibilities

### 7.3.1 Supervisors' Expectations of Students

Guiding and advising the student on the selection, development, and scope of a research topic suited to the degree level.

Discuss with students their preferred and relevant ways of working. Set clear boundaries for issues such as attendance, working hours and leave;

Maintain contact at regular meetings with the student, either individually or at a team, to support and monitor progress.

Ensure students are making progress with their development, have attended mandatory core training, and are maintaining proper records of their progress;

Inform students of any lengthy periods of absence during the vacation and periods of research leave.
Evaluate and manage applications, arranging and leading the formal interviews of all appropriately qualified students for relevant research projects.
Confirm during supervisory meetings that the student understands whether research is progressing at the appropriate level and speed for successful completion.
Advise on ethics, ensuring approval is in place when required and that the research. conforms to agreed principles, and check and sign off the student's application;
Ensure the student is aware of academic misconduct, plagiarism and the implications of any misconduct.
Advise on appropriate dissemination activities and encourage the student to publish findings and present their work, both internally and externally.
Be the initial point of contact for student issues and complaints.
Clarifying and defining supervisory roles, responsibilities, and expectations and encouraging the student to identify academic goals and career aspirations.
Ensuring that the student is meeting milestones and, in cases where delays threaten timely progress, developing a mutually agreeable strategy to address obstacles and remove barriers to progress.
Reviewing the student's submitted work and providing timely (normally within 2 weeks) and constructive written feedback to help the student learn, improve ongoing work, and achieve the standards for quality and style to which theses, conference presentations, and papers for publication must conform.
Discussing student's next steps and offering support and guidance as they transition to career or further study.

### 7.3.2 Students' Expectations of Supervisors

The research student should:
Maintain regular meetings with your supervisor to provide updates on your research progress, propose solutions to issues that may arise (e.g., unexpected findings, equipment problems), discuss funding opportunities (e.g., scholarships)
Keep regular formal contact with the supervisor
Keep copies of meetings and discussions on their research each time they meet with the supervisor.

- Make sure to turn up on time and have regular meetings with the supervisor
- Maintain the work's progress in accordance with the stages agreed with the supervisor, including completion and presentation of written material as required in time to allow for comments and discussion before proceeding to the next stages.

Be familiar with the policies, procedures and regulations of the department/program and the University (e.g., annual reports, registration, and format of thesis/dissertation) and ensure that you obtain all required training (e.g., lab safety, research ethics).

- Participate in PG training courses offered by the PG Centre.
- Be aware of the professional requirements and expectations of the University

in relation to the submitted Thesis/Dissertation

- Notify his/her supervisor of any problems that may interfere with his/her research.
- Request to meet the faculty's PG Coordinator for administrative or supervision issues after consent from the supervisor.

Conduct the research in compliance with the highest standard of ethical, scholarly, and scientific integrity. Ensuring that Research Ethics Board approval is in place, if required, data are stored and records are maintained as required, contributions of others are appropriately acknowledged, and a knowledge mobilization/dissemination plan has been discussed and agreed upon with your supervisor.

## 7.4 Changing Supervision

- A Supervisor may request that the student be removed from the list of supervisees maintained by the PG Coordinator of each faculty. The Faculty Dean and the PG Dean should be consulted about the request. No decision will be made until the supervisor presents a convincing written report justifying the supervisor's choice.
- A student may also request a change in supervisor if there is a convincing reason for doing so. No decision will be made unless the cases is approved by the Faculty Dean and Postgraduate Dean.
- Change in supervision take a place according to the availability of supervisors on each faculty.

## 7.5 Supervision Time

- At least one hour per week should be allocated for supervision for each research student provided.
- The weekly-one-hour supervision should be incorporated in the supervisor's workload model and deployment and should feature in his/her timetable.

## 7.6 Responsibilities of Postgraduate Centre

- Training and monitoring of supervisors to ensure best practice and quality supervision,
- Introducing to research students University premises and services,
- Providing access for students to the appropriate working space, facilities, equipment and resources, and
- Notifying students of the procedure and timelines on supervisory processes, including the requirements for making adequate progress with their studies.

# Part 8

# Research Support Services

## 8.1 Training and Interpersonal Development

The Postgraduate Centre offers several PG training workshops during each academic year to the PG students to develop their academic skills, research skills and interpersonal skills. See workshops list.

8.2 Postgraduate Centre seminars

A research seminar is an academic event where researchers, scholars, and students come together to present and discuss research findings, theories, and ideas in a particular field or topic. Research seminars can take place in various formats, including face-to-face meetings, webinars, or online conferences.

The primary purpose of a research seminar is to provide a platform for researchers to share their work with others in their field, receive feedback, and engage in scholarly discussions. Presenters typically deliver a presentation on their research, followed by a question-and-answer session where attendees can ask questions and offer feedback.

Attending a research seminar can be beneficial for research students. Research students can receive valuable feedback on their work, gain exposure to innovative ideas and approaches, and network with other researchers in their field. Research students can learn about the latest research findings, expand their knowledge in a particular topic, and connect with other scholars and researchers.

Sohar University research students are required to deliver seminars on their research topics or attend related seminars out the University. Student research interested in attending a seminar should consider applying for Seminar Support, see conference/seminar form.

8.3 Research Conference Support

The University provides funding and support for Research Conference Support that can be used to help research students attend and participate in conferences. Attending a research conference can be a valuable experience for research students. It can provide an opportunity to network with other researchers, share their research with a wider audience, learn about new research developments, get feedback on their work, and gain exposure for their research. Research students interested in attending a research conference should consider applying for Research Conference Support, see conference/seminar form.

## 8.4 Three-Minute Competition

The Three Minute Thesis/Dissertations (3MT) competition is an academic competition open to current graduate students enrolled in Sohar University with fostering effective presentation and communication skills. Participants have just three minutes to explain the breadth and significance of their research project to a non-specialist audience. The challenge is to present complex research information in an engaging, accessible, and compelling way.

## 8.5 Research Networking

The process of establishing professional relationships and collaborations with other researchers and scholars in your field of study is referred to as research networking. This can include attending conferences, workshops, and other academic events where you can meet and network

with other researchers and use online tools and social media to connect with colleagues and share information.

Here are some strategies for developing a strong research network:

- Attend conferences and workshops: Attending academic conferences and workshops is a wonderful way to meet other researchers and scholars in your field. These events allow you to present your research, learn about the latest developments in your field, and network with other attendees.
- Join professional organizations: Becoming a member of a professional organization in your field can provide you with access to a community of researchers who share your interests. Many organizations provide newsletters, online forums, and other resources to help you stay current on research and connect with other members.
- Use social media: Platforms such as Twitter, LinkedIn, WhatsApp and ResearchGate can be useful for expanding your research network. You can connect with colleagues and stay up to date on the latest developments in your field by sharing your research and engaging with other researchers online.
- Collaborate with other researchers: Working on projects with other researchers can help you build relationships and broaden your network. Seek out opportunities to co-author papers, organize workshops or conferences, or collaborate on research projects.
- Find mentors: Finding mentors who are further along in their careers can provide valuable guidance and support as you navigate your own research career. Seek out opportunities to meet with senior researchers who can offer advice and mentoring.

## 8.6 A Short-Term Exchange Visit Program

A short-term exchange visit is an exchange PG program in which the students are exposed to an intensive program that increases their understanding of their research themes and fields and as well, as might expose them to other cultures, communities, and languages in partners Universities or enterprises. Likewise, research students from partners Universities can join Sohar University for the same purposes. See Postgraduate Short-term Exchange Guideline.

## 8.7 ORCID accounts

ORCID is a free service that provides a persistent identifier for researchers. This identifier can be used to link your research outputs together, regardless of where they are published. ORCID also provides several other benefits for researchers, such as the ability to:

Share research outputs with others

Track students' research impact

Get credit for student's research

Protect student's research from plagiarism

Sohar University encourages research students to have an ORCID account. It is a free and easy way to improve the visibility and impact of their research activities. See Guidelines to Sign Up for ORCID accounts, please visit: https://orcid.org/register .

## 8.8 Intellectual Property Policy

As a research student, you typically own the copyright to your original works, such as research papers, theses, and dissertations, under "authorship" or "creator" rights. This means that you have the sole right to control and license the use, distribution, and reproduction of your work, subject to certain limitations under copyright law.

However, as a registered student at Sohar University, you must abide by the University's intellectual property policy, which states that the University owns the rights to your works as an SU student. As a result, you must sign the copyright form to transfer the right to Sohar University, and you may be required to obtain permission or rely on a fair use or other exception under copyright law.

## 8.9 Research Student Workspaces

Research student stations are a dedicated space where research students can work on their projects. These stations typically have all of the necessary equipment and resources that research students need, such as computers, printers, and access to databases. They may also have meeting rooms and other spaces where research students can collaborate with each other and with their supervisors.

## 8.10 Postgraduate Research Grand (GRG)

Postgraduate students are encouraged to apply for research grand to promote their research skills and knowledge. See Application and Guideline

## 8.11 Research Governance and Ethics

To achieve the vision and fulfill the mission, Sohar University expects all staff and students to behave with integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership in all actions and behavior. In addition, Sohar University also expects that all of its staff and students are committed to ensuring that the highest standards of health, safety, and environmental protection are achieved for all research activities and laboratory-based work.

All research activities at the University must be conducted appropriately to meet the cultural requirements of the country and to comply with the University's general ethics requirements

# Part 9

# Academic Support Services

## 9.1 Finance Department Services

### 9.1.1Tuition Fees

The University publishes an annual schedule of fees for tuition, registration, accommodation, transportation and other charges. The schedule is usually issued before the start of each academic year. Copy of the schedule is generally made available online through the SU website. Tuition, accommodation and transportation fees are payable before registering for each semester's courses. Other fees will be due at the time and manner specified in the schedule. The schedule is typically amended periodically.

If a student has registered and paid the tuition fees and discovers that they cannot continue with their studies, they may apply for a fee refund. Following the Refund Policy for Study Fees (see full policy on the Student Portal), the following fee refund is possible:

| Refund % | Description |
|---|---|
| 100% | Postpone or withdraw two weeks from the beginning of the semester |
| 50% | Postpone or withdraw during the third week from the beginning of the semester |
| 25% | Postpone or withdraw during the fourth week from the beginning of the semester |
| 0% | Postpone or withdraw after the fourth week from the beginning of the semester |

### 9.1.2 Payment of Tuition Fees

- All students who would like to register in any course for any given semester must pay the total tuition fees in advance before registration is approved.
- Students can pay
  - Online payment through SU portal Edugate
  - Direct bank transfer to the University account
    Beneficiary Name: Sohar University LLC
    Bank: Sohar International Bank (Sohar branch or any branch)
    Account number: 002020010636
    Please mention your Student ID number and Student Name
  - Bank Cards services –Debit card/ credit card
  - Cheque issued in the name of Sohar University
- Semester tuition fees should be paid in full in advance, either in cash or 50% in cash plus 50 % by post-dated cheque payable before the end of the semester. University terms and conditions shall apply for post-dated cheques and bounced cheques.
- Students are advised to check the balance of their accounts on the University's Edugate or E-Register. Students should then prepare their payment according to the University's instructions. They may visit the student accounting offices to pay the fees.

For more information, please contact

| | |
|---|---|
| Tel: (+968)26850100, Ext: 112<br>Email: accounts@su.edu.om<br>athari@su.edu.om | Tel: (+968)26850100, Ext: 309<br>Email: FidhaA@su.edu.om<br>AAFarsi@su.edu.om |

## 9.2 Career Guidance Services

Career Guidance Services (CGS) advises the university students on their transition from studying to profession and it offers guidance and support on their study choices besides responding to their career enquiries at the Diploma, Bachelor and Master levels.

The Career Counsellors and other related staff at the CGS support the students to achieve the below objectives:

Provide specific job-related tools.

Assist the students in finding appropriate ideas to their interests, values, and abilities.

Offer career assessment through testing and evaluating.

Provide proper guidance and advice for students and graduates on the existing career opportunities.

Provide a range of job or internship opportunities for students and graduates.

| Contact Us | للتواصل معنا |
|---|---|
| Direct: 26850150<br>Tel: 26850100 Ext: 258/572<br>E-mail: cgs@su.edu.om<br>Instagram: Career_Guidance_ Services | المباشر: 26850150<br>تلفون: 26850100 المحول: 258 /572<br>ايميل: cgs@su.edu.om<br>الإنستجرام: خدمات_التوجيه_المهني |

## 9.3 Learning Resources Centre

The Learning Resources Centre (LRC) is located in the heart of the campus and provides world class facilities to support students, academics and researchers to enable them to achieve success and academic excellence. The Centre provides high-quality resources for all users who can benefit from a large number of databases and search engines available to enhance their academic studies and research experiences.

The Centre also provides quiet study spaces for individual and/or groups. A number of trained and specialised library staff are on hand to provide assistance during opening hours.

### 9.3.1 LRC Resources

- Books.
- Printed journals/magazines & newspapers.
- DVDs & CDs.
- Theses.
- Special collections.
- E-Resources.

### 9.3.2 LRC Services:

- Orientations.
- Workshops.
- Borrowing.

- Renew a book.
- Liberty links application.
- Electronic Resources.
- A study rooms.
- Ask a Liberian.
- Reference desk.
- Recommend a Book.
- Computers and WiFi.

### 9.3.3 LRC Opening Hours

Sunday to Wednesday: 8 am to 8 pm
Thursday: 8 am to 6 pm
Saturday: 10 am to 3 pm

### 9.3.4 Locating Resources

Books in the LRC are classified according to the Library of Congress classification scheme. To locate a book, a student can use the Search LRC Catalogue and search by author, title or keyword. Alternatively, LRC staff are available to assist during opening hours.

### 9.3.5 Borrowing Resources

To borrow items, a student must register with the LRC and have a valid student card. Each student will be allocated a borrower registration barcode number. Students may select the items they wish to borrow and ask a member of the LRC staff to record each loan. students can borrow up to 8 items per two weeks. Fines are charged on all overdue items.

### 9.3.6 LRC Rules and Regulations

- Students are charged for overdue library items and fines must be paid promptly. For standard loan items, the charge is 100baisa per item per day. For overnight /short loans 1OMR per day.
- Food and drink are not allowed in the LRC with the exception of bottled water.
- Mobile phones must be switched off or on silent mode.
- Quiet discussion only is permitted.
- All furniture and equipment must be used with care.
- All damaged and missing items must be paid for.

Students are responsible for taking care of their personal laptops, notebooks or tablets. These cannot be stored in the LRC

To contact the Learning Resources Centre:

+968-92856767
asklrc@su.edu.om
@lrcsoharuni

## 9.4 Information Technology Services (ITS)

IT Services (ITS) works closely with all departments to provide a wide range of services that support students in all activities both on and off-campus.

### 9.4.1 Emails and Office 365

IT Services provides an individualised email service for students with unlimited storage space and downloadable office applications. These services can be accessed on and off campus. Students should check their SU email account daily.

### 9.4.2 IT Support Centre

Located in the LRC building on the 2nd floor and Mahatat AlTalaba. It is a first point of contact for all IT support needs.

IT Services offers training on a wide range of applications and software programs.

### 9.4.3 Technology and Training Centre

Located in the LRC building on the 2nd floor offers free workshops for all students on different technology related solutions and topics.

### 9.4.4 Network and Wi-Fi

All computers are connected to the University network and powered with fast internet connection. Wi-Fi covers all teaching areas and many open areas.

### 9.4.5 Printing / Copying Service

Authorized students can print using the distributed copiers across the campus from any computer or mobile device.

### 9.4.6 Security

IT Services acts to protect the university data from all potential threats and to maintain privacy.

### 9.4.7 Software & Databases

IT Service supplies, install, configure and prepare university computers with licensed and open source software applications. Students are authorized to use office 365 software applications on line and on their personal machines.

### 9.4.8 Storage, Backup & Hosting

IT Services provides storage, backup and hosting services that enable students to store and share data on hardware managed by the university. But students need to take their files backup on their One drive (provided by the university to each student) or on portable hard disk.

### 9.4.9 Teaching & Research

IT Service teams manage the university's lecture rooms and theatres, and the Sohar University E-Learning Management System (SULMS) and MS teams where students have access to all teaching and research materials and activities.

### 6.4.10 Usernames & Passwords

SU students are provided with a username and password to allow them access university computers, emails, SULMS and other online services.

### 9.4.11 Regulations for the Use of Information Technology Laboratories

- Computers and other equipment installed in the Information Technology (IT) Laboratories are for the use of students to familiarize themselves with computers and software applications usage, to develop keyboard skills, run software projects or to train themselves on new IT technologies

- Students using IT Laboratories must respect the right of other users to enjoy a quiet and productive work environment
- Students may be asked to present their ID card to the laboratory controller/academic staff or security
- Students who fail to present their ID card when requested can be asked to leave the IT Laboratories immediately. Disciplinary action will be taken against students who fail to leave when requested
- Students are not allowed to bring others who are not registered at the university to the IT Laboratories, disciplinary action will be taken
- No personal software or applications can be installed or used on university computers, without explicit permission from the ITS department
- Students must Logout of the university computer when leaving the IT laboratories
- Eating, drinking or smoking is not permitted in IT laboratories

# Part 10

# Student Support Services

## 10.1 Student Activities and Student Services

Mahatat Al Talaba, located in the Shinas Building, is the student hub on campus where students can access many services including the main restaurant, stationery store, SU Clinic, fitness room, fine arts studio, Student Majlis, the gym, and other designated social spaces.
Mahatat Al Talaba also has the office of the Pro Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Engagement, the department of Student Activities, the department of Student Services and the office of the Student Advisory Council.

### 10.1.1 Student Activities Department

Student Activities Department is the authorized body for organizing and supervising various activities for students in order to develop their skills in various fields including religious, cultural, scientific, artistic, sports and social. It also seeks to prepare students and motivate them to participate in internal and external competitions and events so that would help them to accomplish effective partnership with the local community.

#### 10.1.1.1 cultural activity

The Department of Student Activities seeks to prepare cultural programs that help the student develop intellectual and creative perceptions. These activities include public lectures, seminars, exhibitions, forums, open events, competitions, festivals, and others.
Where cultural activities include the following groups:

| Groups | For more information, contact with |
|---|---|
| Theatre, Cinema and Arts group<br>Media Centre | Mr. Ahmed Al-Owauni<br>Tel: (+968)26850100, Ext: 637<br>Email: AOwauni@su.edu.om |
| Sohar University Debates Club | Ms. Maryam Al-Balushi<br>Tel: (+968)26850100, Ext: 195<br>Email: MBalushi4@su.edu.om |
| Photography group<br>International Student group | Ms. Amal Al-Fedheili<br>Tel: (+968)26850100, Ext: 618<br>Email: AFedheili@su.edu.om |

#### 10.1.1.2 Sports activities

The Department of Student Activities enhances the student's capabilities physically and seeks to build a healthy university life culture, through various and varied sports programs. The department also seeks to open wider sporting domains such as external and internal partnerships, organizing tournaments and preparing quarterly and annual periodicals. On the other hand, sport activity oversees the Rovers clan at the university and enhances the importance of scout camps and excursions.
Sports activities includes the following sports:

| sports | For more information, contact with |
|---|---|
| Football<br>Volleyball<br>Basketball<br>Table tennis<br>Goal ball (for blind students)<br>Handball<br>Swimming<br>Athletics<br>Chess<br>Cavalry<br>Rovers | Mr. Taher Al Shukaili<br>Tel: (+968)26850100, Ext: 227<br>Email: TShukaili@su.edu.om<br>Mr. Sultan Al-Shibli<br>Tel: (+968)26850100, Ext: 720<br>Email: SShibli2@su.edu.om |

#### 10.1.1.3 Artistic activities

The Student Activities Department is aware of the importance of artistic activities to refine students 'talents and abilities. This is through a series of art programs, internal and external partnerships, and exhibitions of fine arts.
Where artistic activities include the following activities:

| Activities | For more information, contact with |
|---|---|
| Fine Arts<br>Calligraphy<br>Digital Art<br>Handcrafts | Ms. Fatma Al-Maqbali<br>Tel: (+968)26850100, Ext: 134<br>Email: Fmaqbali@su.edu.om |

#### 10.1.1.4 Voluntary activities

Voluntary activities are the contributor to building a link between students, as they contribute to developing self-abilities, personal refinement, setting goals and genuine orientation. It also aims to activate the role of people with special needs in society, and their importance in managing the wheel of development and creativity, through development workshops, annual forums and the participation of the external community.
Groups under this category are:

| Groups | For more information, contact with |
|---|---|
| INSIGHTS MINDS (dedicated to help students with sight problems) | Ms. Maryam Al-Balushi<br>Ext: 195<br>Email: MBalushi4@su.edu.om |

| | |
|---|---|
| Volunteer Life group | Ms. Muna Al-Jahwari<br>Ext: 313<br>Email: MJahwari@su.edu.om |

### 10.1.1.5 Faculty's activity

The department supervises the student activities groups within the colleges, where the colleges undertake technical supervision over them to link the specialization with the activity and enhance the capabilities of students in their specializations through workshops and open seminars, exhibitions, evenings and open days.

Faculty's activities include the following groups:

| Groups | For more information, contact with |
|---|---|
| Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Group | Dr. Hussein Kadhem<br>College: Engineering<br>Ext: 168<br>Email: H.Kazem@su.edu.om |
| English Club | Dr. Ahmad Al Afari<br>General Foundation Program<br>Ext: 552<br>Email: AAfri@su.edu.om |
| Entrepreneur Club | Ms. Fatma Al Qasmi<br>College: Business<br>Ext: 198<br>Email: FQasmi@su.edu.om |
| Computer and Information Technology Group | Ms. Maryam AL Jabri<br>College: Computing and IT<br>Ext: 536<br>Email: MJabri@su.edu.om |
| Law Group | Dr. Mohammed Al-Makhmari<br>College: Law<br>Ext: 552<br>Email: MMakhmari@su.edu.om |
| Al-Awtabi Literary Group | Dr. Hajer Harrathi<br>College: Education and Arts<br>Ext: 234<br>Email: hharrathi@su.edu.om |

| | |
|---|---|
| Music Group | Dr. Mohamed Dridi<br>College: Education and Arts<br>Ext: 379<br>Email: MDridi@su.edu.om |

#### 10.1.1.6 The Holy Quran Recitation Competition.

The Student Activities Department seeks to refine student talents in memorizing and reciting the Holy Qur'an, as it organizes an annual competition in this field supervised by specialists at the university.

| For more information, contact with |
|---|
| Dr. Mohamed Turki<br>General Foundation Program<br>Ext: 344<br>Email: Mzairi@su.edu.om |

### 10.1.2 Student Services

#### 10.1.2.1 Student Service Department at SU:

Student Service Department is one of the Student Affairs departments that plays a vital role in providing a wide range of student services including (accommodation, student counselling services, medical services, and catering services). It is located in Shinas Building, a centralized location for all students. The department aims to provide a high-quality service that are designed in a way to keeps pace with the rapid technological advancements. It also seeks on harnessing the potentials and capabilities to support students in all aspects.

**Department provide the following:**

providing hostel for female students
providing transportation for female hostel students
providing medical care for all students
Providing counselling help for all students
providing catering services for all students

#### 10.1.2.2 Medical care

Sohar University Clinic is located in Mahatat Al Talabah to provide primary and immediate health care to students and staff. Patients who require additional medical attention are referred to the nearest health Centre. Clinic is open from 8 am to 4 pm.in the clinic there are a medical doctor, nurse & two medical orderly. A nurse is also available in hostel at the night shift except Thursday and Friday. The ambulance service is on call 24/7.

In addition to the emergency service provided by the University's ambulances, a bus service is available to take students to and from SU Clinic to the nearest government health Centres.

#### 10.1.2.3 Important Information

All new students are required to complete a health history form which will be kept on record at the clinic.

All students are required to inform the clinic of any health issues they might have. This is to help the student if any health issue arises.
Students are advised to take a referral form from the clinic before visiting any health care service provider outside the University

For more information, please contact

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dr. Asna Anwar | Medical Doctor, SU clinic | 229 | AAnwar@su.edu.om<br>clinic@su.edu.om |
| Mashael Al-Shibli | Nurse ،SU clinic | 228 | MAShibli@su.edu.om<br>clinic@su.edu.om |
| Naeima AL-Mamari | Nurse ،SU clinic | 228 | NKMamari@su.edu.om |

### 10.1.2.3 Student Counselling Services

Help and guidance are provided to any student who needs social or psychological support. Experienced counsellors, including qualified psychologists, are available to provide services to all students. All issues dealt with remain confidential, and any student who feels the need for counselling should not hesitate to come to see the staff.
Students can also seek advice if they face difficulties with a fellow student, a lecturer, or a university staff member. Either students can visit Student Counselling offices, or they can complete and submit the electronic form. Again, everything that a student shares with us remains confidential, so no student should be afraid to come and ask for help. Student Counselling is here to help
For more information, please contact

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nawal Al-Marshoodi | Head, Counselling Services | 26850190 | 338 | NMarshoodi@su.edu.om |
| Fatma Al. Balushi | Psychologist | | 295 | FNBalushi@su.edu.om |

### 10.1.2.4 Catering Facilities

The University campus has a main restaurant located in Mahatat Al Talabah and several

cafeterias and coffee shops around the campus.

The main restaurant is open from 7 am to 9 pm (only evening times during Ramadan) and also offers a delivery service for students who live in the hostel. In addition, students can order from any local restaurant.
A nutritionist staff is available to follow up with any health issue. The nutritionist continuously checks the quality of food provided in all catering facilities.
For more information, please contact

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Naima Al-Belushi | Head, Student Services | 146 | nbelushi@su.edu.om |

### 10.1.2.5 Students Accommodation

A hostel for female students is located on the campus. It consists of four wings. Each wing has four floors; each one different number of rooms divided into single, double, or triple capacity rooms. In addition of several services like, washing area, a supermarket, a study hall, a TV hall, an entertainment hall and a sports hall. Also, daily cleaning and maintenance services are also available, in addition to the weekly shopping service, recreational trips within the city limits of Sohar, and other services related to the needs of female students residing in university housing. In addition to free Wi-Fi, and for ease of communication between students and parents, the residence was provided with a mobile phone with WhatsApp service. Registration and reservation of rooms can be made easily electronically.
For more information, please contact

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Raiya Al Mamari | Head of Student Housing | 93904545 | 336 | RMamari@su.edu.om |
| Fatma AL Farsi | Administrative officer | | 133 | ffarsi@su.edu.om |

### 10.1.2.6 Transportation

The University provide a weekly transportation for female hostel students.
Also, the University provide free transportation from Muscat port, Military airport & Shinas port for female hostel students in the beginning/ end of each semester or in the official vacations.
The female hostel students can book a seat on one of the University buses through the SU mobile application, phone, or visiting the Transport unit.
For more information, please contact

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fatma AL Farsi | Administrative officer | | 133 | ffarsi@su.edu.om |

# Part 11

# Student Advisory Council

## 11.1 Student Advisory Council

The Student Advisory Council started at Sohar University in 2007. The elected members represent the whole student body at SU. Students are represented across all committees of the University at all levels including the Academic Board.

The Student Advisory Council consists of the council's office, its secretariat, three committees, the chair of the academic committee, the activities and initiatives committee, and the services committee. The council has its own budget and can organize various events in coordination with the Student Activities Department.

• For more information about the University Student Advisory Council, you can view the Student Council Policy via this link Student Advisory Council Policy.

# Part 12

# Health Safety and Environment

## 12.1 Health Safety and Environment

Sohar University (SU) giving high priority for Health, safety and environment. Therefore, SU establish HSE Section occupied by trained, certified and authorized professional staff who provide awareness, services and support for efficient, effective and compliant work practices. The HSE team promotes a culture of shared responsibility by students, staff, contractors and visitors to ensure a healthy, safe, and environmentally sound educational and research community at the University.

To ensure a healthy, safe, and environmentally sound SU campus for all students, staff, contractors and visitors, the HSE Section has developed a comprehensive HSE Manual v3 that provides a number of policies, procedures and guideline.

You can contact HSE Section directly for assistance. All requests will be responded to within twenty-four hours. Requests received on the weekend will receive a response the next working day.

When requested, the HSE Section will keep your identity confidential.

You can also use the H.O.P.E (Hazard Observation Performance Enhancement) Card to report safe/unsafe concerns related to Health, Safety and Environment

In case of any Emergency or Fire, please contact Sohar University emergency number:
Tel: (+968) 91153055

For more information, please contact

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Mr. Mohammed Al-Breiki, Head<br>Tel: (+968)26850100, Ext: 139<br>Email: MBreiki@su.edu.om | Mr. Yahya Al-Zadjali<br>Tel: (+968)26850100, Ext: 537<br>Email: YZidjali@su.edu.om | Mr. Omar Al-Kaabi<br>Tel: (+968)26850100, Ext: 580<br>Email: OKaabi@su.edu.om |

# Part 13

# General Rules & Regulations

## 13.1 Student Code of Conduct

Students are required to familiarize themselves with the general regulations and assessment regulations to which they are subject. In addition, students shall be subject to the Code of Conduct for students, student disciplinary procedures (where necessary due to infringement of the Code), and other regulations as approved from time to time.

Following enrolment students must:

- sign an agreement that they are willing to conform to the regulations and Code of Conduct of SU
- notify the University of any change of address and/or telephone number
- notify the University of any of assessment results not received within two weeks
- notify the University of any additional employment undertaken, particularly any which might impact on their studies

All students at SU are expected to conduct themselves with due regard for their responsibilities as adults and members of the academic community, and with regard for the good name and reputation of the University. A student will be deemed in breach of the University's Code of Conduct if he or she has:

- engaged in any behaviour that prevents, obstructs or disrupts any teaching, learning or research; administrative activity of the University; sporting, recreational, and social activities; any meeting or activity approved by the University
- failed to adhere to rulings on Freedom of Speech
- acted in a way likely to cause injury to or impair the health of others
- obstructed or attempted to obstruct access to University premises
- assaulted, engaged in sexual or racial harassment, or otherwise insulted a student, member of staff, employee of or visitor to the University, or engaged in any other sexist or racist behaviour liable to give serious offence
- acted in a violent, indecent, or threatening manner, or insubordinate behaviour (such as the refusal to follow reasonable instructions)
- misused or caused damage to University premises or property, including damage to materials, furniture, equipment belonging to the University staff or students (and including misuse of the worldwide web, for example for pornographic purposes)
- misappropriated any funds or assets of the University
- committed a breach of the regulations, for example the assessment regulations, by committing an academic offence
- abused the privacy of any confidential files of material (for example, unauthorized access to student records)
- been found guilty of any criminal offence
- engaged in fraud, deceit, deception, or dishonesty (for example, forging a signature)
- failed to adhere to any additional Code of Practice, for example those relating to the usage of Library, learning resources and IT
- failed to comply with a previous sanction or penalty imposed
- behaved in a way that brings the University into disrepute

## 13.2 Harassment

Harassment is any unacceptable behaviour such as unwelcome attention, intimidation, humiliation, bullying, and ridicule which targets an individual or a group and makes the continuation of work or study for the individual or the group unpleasant or impossible. Harassment includes sexual, racial, and harassment targeting disability, social class, or religion (this list is not exhaustive).

Any unnecessary, unwanted, or unwelcome advances, attention or propositions; comments; persistent demeaning or offensive jokes; unwanted comments about appearance; and degrading text messages on computer screens or elsewhere is considered as harassment.

Harassment is taken seriously because it often occurs between people of unequal status and the harassed may face demands in exchange for favours, e.g., promises of better grades, or promotions.

The University will ensure that all the staff and students know the steps which will be taken to deal with such issues.

Anyone who believes that they are the subject of either harassment or bullying in any form should report their concerns to their Academic Advisor, or to a senior member of the student's Faculty or a senior officer of the University.

Formal action: If, despite the intervention of the Advisor, the harassment persists, or an incident is sufficiently serious, the individual should put a complaint in writing, and pursue the formal complaints procedure.

## 13.3 Student Disciplinary Procedures

Any breach of this Code of Conduct will be dealt with as appropriate under Student Disciplinary Procedures. This is a serious matter and any student subjected to it is advised to seek assistance from the concerned persons.

A Student Disciplinary Committee, composed of three members (academic and administrative staff) and a representative of the Faculty concerned, shall be established by the Vice Chancellor in order to investigate students' violations.

There are three stages in the student disciplinary process. For full details on this, please refer to the Student Code of Conduct Policy available on the website and student portals.

## 13.4 Students Complaints Policy and Procedures

The University aims to provide a high standard of service to all students. However, problems do occur and sometimes the service may not be up to student expectations. In such cases, a formal complaint may be made.

The University aims to deal openly, fairly and effectively with any comments and/or complaints, and to offer an appropriate remedy to any student who is adversely affected by a service.

The University seeks to continuously improve its services and regularly monitors any comments and/or complaints received from students to ensure the utmost effectiveness of its practices and procedures for addressing them.

If a student wants personal and specific redress on a particular issue, this is defined as a complaint. Wherever possible, efforts should be made to resolve a complaint at the local point where it arises, with the member(s) of staff concerned.

In general, all complaints can be lodged by the student through the SU mobile application, or through submission of a completed complaint form which is available on the University portal.
The University will not penalize anyone in any way for making a complaint about services provided. Complaints will be investigated as fairly, openly and as quickly as possible. However, some complaints are complicated and it may take some time to obtain the information needed to reach a fair decision.
Anonymous complaints cannot be dealt with because a response cannot be provided. However, the identity of a complainant will not be disclosed without permission. Complaints will not be recorded on the student's record.
The University recognises two types of complaints: Academic and Non- Academic Complaints.

### 13.4.1 Academic Complaints

The University recognises the following under the category of an academic complaint. Complaints in relation to:

- The Admission and Registration process and system
- The timetabling of lectures, tutorials and examinations
- A program or specific course (course content, documentation and materials, lecturer theatres, labs etc.)
- A member of the teaching staff (or Lab technicians)
- Academic advising
- Learning resources and the library
- Learner support
- Assessments
- Grades
- Absences
- Academic probation, and suspension
- Academic Integrity

### 13.4.2 Academic Complaint Procedures

If a student wants to comment or suggest about improving one of the University's academic-related services or a program of study, this can be done informally by raising it directly with either the Student Faculty Representative, the Student Advisory Council or the relative member of Faculty staff.
If there is a general complaint relating to a program of study, it may again first be addressed informally with those concerned, or through the Student Advisory Council or the Student Faculty Representative. Wherever possible, efforts should be made to resolve a complaint at the local point where it arises, with the member(s) of staff concerned.
If a student wishes to make a formal complaint, he/she can do so through the SU mobile app or by submitting a specific form for this purpose which is available from the Student Portal.

A student may bring along a friend or his/her Student Representative to any meeting to discuss a complaint. Permission however must be requested in advance to bring someone from outside the University to accompany the student (complainant).

### 13.4.3 Non-Academic Complaints

The University recognizes the following under the category of a non-academic complaint. These include complaints in relation to:

- Student activities
- Student healthcare services
- Student accommodation services
- Student transportation services
- University catering services
- IT services
- The campus

### 13.4.4 Non-Academic Complaint Procedures

If a student wants to comment or suggest regarding improvement of one of the University's services, it can be done informally by raising the issue directly with the relevant person(s) concerned.

However, if a student wants personal and specific redress on a particular issue, this is defined as a complaint. Wherever possible, efforts should be made to resolve a complaint at the local point where it arises, with the member(s) of staff concerned.

If a student wishes to make a formal complaint, a specific form for this purpose is available from the Student Portal. Alternatively, students may use the designated SU mobile application to lodge their complaint.

## 13.5 Additional Information

### 13.5.1 Personal Property

Students bringing personal property onto University premises do so at their own risk.

### 13.5.2 Cars

Care should be taken at all times when students bring their cars onto campus. The speed limits (20 km/h) and the rules of car parking (parking in the back, parking in student parking lots) must be strictly adhered to. Since parking is limited, only those with special permits from the Security Department are allowed to park in the campus parking lot.

The cars of students with special needs and health conditions are allowed to enter and after submitting a medical report to the university clinic showing the health status of the student for consideration of the cases. That report shall be presented to the committee that formed the permits that allow them to enter the university campus.

Note that the university does not bear any responsibility towards students' cars.

### 13.5.3 On Campus Dress Code

Clothing worn must be appropriate to the occasions on which it is worn, including clothing for laboratory, field work and other activities. The traditional Omani dishdasha for men and abaya with head covering for women should be worn, but is not required for non-Omanis, who should

wear other appropriate modest clothing. Female students must not veil their faces while on campus.

### 13.5.4 Smoking

The university strictly applies a “no smoking” policy inside all buildings on the campus, and a penalty will be imposed on violators in the event that a student is caught smoking on the campus, their order is referred to the head of the student guidance department to take the action followed in such cases.

### 13.5.5 Litter

Littering of University premises (including papers, chewing gum, etc.) is strictly prohibited and fines may be imposed on persons who throw or deposit litter.

### 13.5.6 Mobile Telephones

Mobile phones must be switched off during lectures and tutorials, in the Learning Resource Centre and during any official meetings. Staff are entitled to confiscate mobile phones used in class or in the LRC. Phones will normally be returned at the end of the day.

### 13.5.7 Visitors

He is allowed to enter the destination of the visit with an official document received from him, a visitor card and registered in the visitor's register and bears his responsibility during the period of his visit on the campus.

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