College of Language Sciences
Department of English

Academic Supervision System on Theses

PhD Program in Applied Linguistics
English Department – College of Language Sciences
King Saud University

1. Introduction

The PhD Program in Applied Linguistics implements a structured academic supervision system governed by the King Saud University Graduate Studies Regulations (2024) and administered through the Deanship of Graduate Studies. The system ensures that supervision is assigned, monitored, and evaluated according to transparent academic standards that support the timely completion of high-quality doctoral research. لائحة الدراسات العليا بجامعة الملك سعود.pdf

2. Objectives of the Academic Supervision System

- Support independent and original doctoral research in applied linguistics.
- Provide sustained academic guidance throughout the thesis stages.
- Ensure compliance with research ethics and academic integrity.
- Monitor student progress and support timely completion.
- Enhance scholarly writing and publication outcomes.

3. Appointment of Thesis Supervisor

Supervisors are appointed after the student successfully passes the comprehensive examination. The primary supervisor must be an Associate Professor or Professor with relevant research expertise. Co-supervision may be approved when specialized or interdisciplinary expertise is required. Supervisor workload is regulated by the department.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Supervisor Responsibilities:
- Guide topic selection, research design, and methodology.
- Provide feedback on drafts and research progress.
- Ensure ethical approval prior to data collection.
- Monitor progress and prepare the student for defense.

Student Responsibilities:
- Demonstrate academic independence and initiative.
- Adhere to approved timelines and research plans.
- Attend supervision meetings and submit required reports.
- Maintain ethical and academic integrity.

5. Registering the research proposal

Students register the Research Proposal course after successfully completing at least 50% of the program coursework with a cumulative GPA of at least Very Good. During this stage, students prepare and finalize their research proposal under the guidance of a qualified faculty member. Following departmental review and approval, the proposal is submitted to the Deanship of Graduate Studies for approval, after which the supervisory committee is formally appointed and the student becomes eligible to register the thesis.

6. Research Ethics and Academic Integrity

All research involving human participants or personal data requires prior ethical approval. The supervision system ensures full compliance with King Saud University research ethics policies. Supervisors verify ethical clearance before data collection begins. نماذج اللجنة الفرعية الدائمة لأخلاقيات البحوث الإنسانية والإجتماعية |وكالة الجامعة للدراسات العليا والبحث العلمي

7. Supervision Process and Progress Monitoring

Thesis supervision is undertaken by qualified faculty members in accordance with university regulations. Professors and Associate Professors are eligible to supervise doctoral theses, while Assistant Professors may supervise or co-supervise doctoral students after meeting the prescribed qualification requirements. Where appropriate, external supervisors or co-supervisors with relevant expertise may also be appointed, subject to university approval.

Throughout the research period, supervisors provide continuous academic guidance on research design, methodology, data collection, analysis, academic writing, publication, and research ethics. At the end of each academic semester, supervisors submit formal progress reports evaluating the student's research performance and advancement toward thesis completion. Students whose research progress is unsatisfactory receive academic warnings in accordance with university regulations, ensuring continuous monitoring and timely intervention.

To maintain supervision quality and equitable faculty workload, the regulations limit the number of theses supervised by a faculty member, unless an exception is approved by the Graduate Studies Council.

Before the thesis is submitted for examination, the principal supervisor certifies that the dissertation is complete and submits a report confirming its readiness together with the originality report and similarity index on the graduate portal.

The supervision system is complemented by rigorous examination procedures. Doctoral students are required to publish at least one research article derived from the approved dissertation in a recognized peer-reviewed journal before the final oral defense. The dissertation is then examined by a committee that includes internal and external examiners, ensuring fairness, objectivity, academic integrity, and the quality of doctoral research.

8. Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

The supervision system is evaluated using student feedback, completion rates, time-to-degree indicators, and research outputs. Findings are used for continuous improvement of supervision practices.

9. Conflict Resolution and Change of Supervisor

Formal procedures exist to resolve supervision-related issues through academic advisors and the graduate committee. Requests for supervisor change are reviewed by the department based on academic justification, ensuring continuity and minimal impact on student progress.

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