



THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRILANKA

By -Law for the Award of
Masters Degrees with a Research Component

By-Law No: 25
July 2019

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA

BY-LAW FOR THE AWARD OF MASTERS DEGREES WITH A RESEARCH COMPONENT

This By-Law was prepared under Section 135 of the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978 read in conjunction with The Open University Ordinance No. 1 of 1990 (as amended).

Part I - General

- 1.1. This By – Law shall be cited as the By-Laws No. 25 of 2019 approved by the Council of The Open University of Sri Lanka at its 458th meeting held on 26th July 2019 shall be deemed to be the consolidated By-Law for the award of the Masters Degrees with a research component which amends all the Regulations and Rules approved by the Council of the Open University of Sri Lanka for award of various Masters degrees with a research component.
- 1.2. This By-Law for the Award of the Masters Degrees with a research component shall be made by the Council.
- 1.3. This By-Law shall be read in conjunction with “The General By-law for the Award of Certificates, Advanced Certificates, Diplomas, Higher Diplomas, Degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas and Higher Degrees” as amended, referred to hereinafter as the General By-Law.
- 1.4. This By-Law shall come into effect from 26th July 2019 .
- 1.5. A Masters Degree with a research component shall be awarded to a candidate who has fulfilled all the requirements for an award as specified in the General By-Law, and in particular has,
 - 1.5.1 fulfilled all the requirements for admission to the Programme of Study leading to the award of the relevant Masters Degree with a research component as set out in Part II this By-Law, and,
 - 1.5.2 completed the prescribed Programme of Study, as set out in Part IV of this By-Law and Part VI of the relevant Regulation to the satisfaction of the Senate of the University, and,
 - 1.5.3 paid the fees prescribed by the University in accordance with Part IX of this By-Law.
- 1.6. A student who has successfully completed the prescribed Programme of Study shall be awarded the relevant Masters Degree with a research component in accordance with this By-Law and the relevant Regulation for the award of the Masters Degree with a research component.
- 1.7. A student may be awarded a Masters Degree by course work and/or Postgraduate Diploma as an exit or interim qualification in accordance with the relevant By-Law and Regulation for such award. Such student shall make an application to the Deputy Registrar/ Senior Assistant Registrar/ Assistant Registrar of Examinations before the prescribed date on the prescribed form.

Part II - Eligibility for Admission to the Programme of Study

- 2.1. A person seeking admission to the Programme of Study leading to the award of the Masters Degree with a research component shall be required to have fulfilled the requirements specified in Part II of the relevant Regulation for the award of such Masters Degree with a Research component.
- 2.2. The University may select candidates for admission to the Programme of Study from among those deemed to be eligible for admission under Section 2.1 of this By-Law on the basis of their performance at a test and/or an interview conducted for the purpose of admission.

Part III – Admission to the Programme of Study and Registration for the Courses

- 3.1. A person shall be eligible for admission and be so admitted to the Programme of Study leading to the award of a Masters Degree with a research component in accordance with the General By-law, Part II of this By-Law for the award of Masters Degrees with a research component and the relevant Regulation before he/she can register for any of the courses in the Programme of Study.
- 3.2. A person may register for courses in the Programme of Study subject to limits on the course credit ratings and any other conditions as laid down in the General By-law and the relevant Regulation, provided that Section 3.3 of this By-law is satisfied.
- 3.3. To be eligible to register for each Level of the Programme of Study, a person shall have satisfied the prerequisites for each Level and/or course as specified in the relevant Regulation.

Part IV - Programme of Study

- 4.1. A Programme of Study leading to the award of Masters Degree with a Research Component shall consist of a combination of courses and other requirements as determined by the Senate and as specified by the relevant Regulation for the award of the relevant Masters Degree with a research component. The Regulations shall specify the category, the level and the credit rating of each course in the Programme of Study as appropriate.
- 4.2. The Programme of Study leading to the award of the Masters Degree with a research component shall consist of specified course credits, comprising a minimum of sixty (60) course credits after the Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework (SLQF) Level 5 or SLQF Level 6, including a research component of minimum of Fifteen (15) course credits and such other specified criteria as required for the award, as specified in Schedule 1 of the relevant Regulation.
- 4.3. A student shall acquire the course credits specified in Sections 4.2 above of this By-Law within a maximum period of three (03) times the minimum duration of the

Programme of Study, including the first year of registration provided he/she maintains his/her registration as a student as per Section 4.9 of the General By-Law.

- 4.4. Registration for courses at any given level shall be in accordance with Schedule 1 of the relevant Regulation.
- 4.5. The medium of instruction of a Masters Degree with a research component shall be as specified in Part IV of the relevant Regulation.

Part V - Scheme of Assessment

- 5.1. The assessment of students shall consist of Continuous Assessment, Final Examination and a research project.
- 5.2. The content, nature and weightage of each of the above components shall be determined by the relevant Faculty Board.
- 5.3. A student may appear for the Final Examination of any course provided that he/she has obtained the minimum Overall Continuous Assessment Mark (OCAM) for such course as specified by the relevant Faculty Board and approved by the Senate.
- 5.4. The Overall Assessment Mark (Z%) of a student in respect of any course shall be based on the Overall Continuous Assessment Mark (X%) and the mark obtained at the Final Examination (Y%) and shall be computed as prescribed in Part V of the relevant Regulation.
- 5.5. Each student who sits for the Final Examination of a course shall be awarded a grade in respect of such course based on the Overall Assessment Mark (Z%) as specified in Schedule 2 of the relevant Regulation and a Grade Point Value (GPV), as follows, in respect of such course based on the grade obtained.

Grade and Grade Point Value

Grade	A ⁺	A	A ⁻	B ⁺	B	B ⁻	C ⁺	C	C ⁻	D ⁺	D	E
GPV	4.00	4.00	3.70	3.30	3.00	2.70	2.30	2.00	1.70	1.30	1.00	0

Grades A⁺, A, A⁻, B⁺, B, B⁻, C⁺ and C shall constitute pass grades.

- 5.6. A student who is awarded a grade C⁻, D⁺, D, or E based on the overall assessment mark [Z%] for a particular course shall be deemed to have failed that course and cannot count that course towards his/her course credit requirement for the completion of the Programme of Study, unless otherwise specified in the Part VI of the relevant Regulation.
- 5.7. A student, who has obtained the minimum mark for OCAM according to the Section 5.3 of this By-Law and does not sit for the Final Examination for a course shall be awarded the grade RX. Such student cannot count that course towards his/her course credit requirement for the completion of the Programme of Study and shall be allowed to postpone sitting the Final examination of the course, for a period stipulated by the Senate being considered as a re-sit student.

- 5.8. A student who fails to obtain the minimum OCAM specified by the relevant Faculty Board for a particular course shall be awarded a grade F for such course. Such student shall be deemed to have failed that course and cannot count that course towards his/her course credit requirement for the completion of the Programme of Study. Such student shall be considered as a repeat student and shall repeat such course by re-registering for such course subjected to the Part III and Part IV of this By-Law.
- 5.9. A student who is awarded a grade C-, D+, D or E as the overall assessment grade for a course in a particular year, may carry forward the OCAM of that course to the immediate subsequent academic year and re-sit the Final Examination of that particular course in that academic year. Such student shall be awarded a grade not higher than C.
- 5.10. A student who is awarded a grade RX as the overall assessment grade for a course in a particular year, may carry forward the OCAM of that course to the immediate subsequent academic year and sit the Final Examination of that particular course in that academic year, without being considered as a re-sit student. Such student may be awarded a grade higher than C.
- 5.11. A student who is awarded a grade C-, D+, D, E and/or RX as the overall assessment grade for a particular course in consecutive two (02) academic years including the first year of registration for the particular course, shall be considered as a repeat student. Unless otherwise specified in the Part VI of the relevant Regulation, such student, who is considered as a repeat student, cannot count that course towards his/her course credit requirement for the completion of the Programme of Study unless he/she registers for the course and repeats the Continuous Assessment Component and the Final Examination of the particular course and obtains a C grade.
- 5.12. A student who either repeats a course or re-sits a Final Examination or is exempted from a course shall be deemed to have obtained a mark which is not higher than the minimum pass mark specified by the relevant Faculty and a grade not higher than C.
- 5.13. A student who withdraws from a course by a written communication addressed to the Registrar within a period of two (02) months from the commencement of the course or before a date stipulated by the relevant Faculty may be allowed to re-register for that course in the subsequent academic year without being considered a repeat student. The date of commencement of the Programme of Study for the purpose of this By-Law shall be as determined by the Senate.
- 5.14. The assessment of each individual student in a course, in accordance with this By-Law, shall be carried out by a Panel of Examiners constituted as follows:
 - Dean of the Faculty offering the course (Chairperson),
 - Deans of other relevant Faculties
 - Head of the relevant Department(s) offering the Course,

Chief Examiner of the course,
Setting Examiner(s) of the course,
Marking Examiner(s) of the course, and
Course Coordinator/Programme Coordinator

The Deputy Registrar / Senior Assistant Registrar / Assistant Registrar of Examinations shall function as the Secretary to the Panel of Examiners.

Part VI - Award of the Masters Degree with a Research Component

- 6.1. A candidate who satisfies the requirements specified in Part VI of the relevant Regulation for the award of a Masters Degree, with a research component shall be awarded such Masters Degree with a research component.
- 6.2. The Grade Point Average (GPA) of a student, when awarded, shall be computed as specified in the Part VI of the relevant Regulation, in line with the procedure set out therein.
- 6.3. The award in respect of each candidate shall be recommended to the Senate by a Board of Examiners constituted as follows:
 - Vice Chancellor (Chairperson)
 - Dean of the Faculty offering the Programme of Study,
 - Deans of other relevant Faculties,
 - Heads of the relevant Department(s) offering the Programme of Study, and
 - Chief Examiner(s) of all courses in the Programme of Study,The Deputy Registrar / Senior Assistant Registrar/ Assistant Registrar of Examinations shall function as the Secretary to the Board of Examiners.
- 6.4. In making its recommendations to the Senate, the Board of Examiners shall take into consideration the relevant Regulation, but may use its discretion in appropriate situations.
- 6.5. The Board of Examiners shall also recommend the award of medals and prizes, if any, to the Senate.

Part VII – Exemptions*

- 7.1. For certain Programmes, the Senate may grant exemptions to a student in recognition of previously obtained qualifications, experience or other achievements.
- 7.2. When exemptions are granted, they shall be as specified in Part VII of the relevant Regulation. Exemptions, other than those given in the Regulation, may be granted with the approval of the relevant Faculty Board and the Senate.
- 7.3. Exemptions granted may be from specified courses (specific course credit exemptions) or from the requirement of obtaining a specified number of course credits at given levels (general course credit exemptions).
- 7.4. Any prior qualification, experience or other achievement shall be considered for exemption only up to a specified period of time, from the date of obtaining the same, as specified in the relevant Regulation.
- 7.5. The total course credit exemptions and/or course credit transfers so granted, if any, shall not exceed 50% of the total course credit requirement of a Programme of Study.
- 7.6. Notwithstanding any exemptions so granted for the award, the students shall acquire 50% of the minimum course credit requirement by successful completion in accordance with the Part V of this By-Law and as specified in Part VII of the relevant Regulation.

Part VIII - Course Credit Transfers**

- 8.1. For certain Programmes, the Senate may grant course credit transfers to a student in recognition of previously obtained qualifications or other achievements.
- 8.2. When course credit transfers are granted, they shall be as specified in Part VIII of the relevant Regulation. Course credit transfers other than those given in the Regulation may be granted with the approval of the Faculty Board and the Senate.
- 8.3. Credit transfers may be granted from specified courses or from the requirement of obtaining a specified number of course credits at given levels.
- 8.4. The total course credit exemptions and/or course credit transfers so granted, if any, shall not exceed 50% of the total course credit requirement of the Programme of Study.
- 8.5. Notwithstanding any course credit transfers so granted for the award, a student shall acquire the 50% of the minimum course credit requirement by successful completion in accordance with the Part V of this By-law and as specified in Part VIII of the relevant Regulation.

Part IX – Fees

- 9.1. Fees payable for the Programme of Study will comprise the Registration fee, Tuition fee, Supplementary fee, Facilities Fee, Exemption Fee (if applicable), Transfer Fee (if applicable) and any other fee as determined by the Council.
- 9.2. Fees to be paid shall be determined by the Council.
- 9.3. The tuition fee shall be charged from each candidate on the basis of the total number of course credits each student is required to offer for an academic year and at the rate applicable per course credit for such academic year.
- 9.4. The tuition fee for each year of the programme shall be payable in two instalments as determined by the Council.
- 9.5. The other fees shall be payable at registration or as determined by the Council.

Part X - Revisions

- 10.1. This By-Law may be revised, amended or repealed as and when deemed necessary by the Senate .
- 10.2. Such revisions, amendments or repeals shall come into effect as determined by the Senate and approved by the Council.

Definitions of Terms:

****Specific Course Credit Exemption*** : A student is exempted from following a course (or courses) within a Programme of Study due to knowledge, skills or competencies gained by following equivalent course/courses within or outside the OUSL which are not considered for credit transfer.

****General Course Credit Exemption*** : A student is granted exemption from a specified number of credits indicating the Level and the Category (if applicable) in recognition of prior learning that is not explicitly equivalent to the content and learning outcomes of any of the courses offered by the OUSL.

*****Course Credit transfer:*** The student is deemed to have successfully completed the courses of a study Programme based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes of a matched course/courses of another study Programme, within or outside OUSL. This should be possible only if the courses and the identified equivalence follow the same credit system or where mapping between the two credits systems is possible. The grades for such courses shall be determined by considering the two systems of credits, grading, and the nature of matching

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of courses (1 – 1, 1 – many, many – 1, many – many) according to an approved mechanism of the relevant Faculty Board.