


PH.D. PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

(Academic, Administrative, and Conduct Policies for
Ph.D. Scholars)



Office of Academic Affairs
BRIC-Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology
Biotechnology Research and Innovation Council
Department of Biotechnology
Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India,
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Ph.D. Program Guidelines and Regulations – BRIC-RGCB

(Academic, Administrative, and Conduct Policies for PhD Scholars)

BRIC-Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology (BRIC-RGCB) trains individuals passionate about discovery science to advance biotechnology for a knowledge economy and future innovations. The Ph.D. program, previously linked to the University of Kerala and Manipal Academy of Higher Education, is now exclusively affiliated with the Regional Centre for Biotechnology (RCB), an “Institution of National Importance” under the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India, and UNESCO. Admission, registration, and program management will adhere to RGCB guidelines.

The RGCB Ph.D. program is a full-time research program. Each student will remain enrolled as a doctoral candidate at RGCB for a maximum period of six years from the date of admission. During this period, students are discouraged from taking on any external assignments or employment. If a student wishes to pursue an external assignment, they must discontinue the program and cancel their registration in RGCB and the matter will be formally reported to the RCB.

1. ADMINISTRATION FEES

RGCB Administration Fee:

Every Ph.D. student is required to pay an administration fee to the RGCB upon joining the program, as per the following structure:

- ❖ ₹5,000 per semester for the first ten semesters
- ❖ ₹10,000 per semester from the eleventh semester onwards

RCB Administration Fee:

In addition to the RGCB fee, students must pay an administration fee of ₹5,000 per semester to the RCB until the completion of the open defense.

Payment, Schedule:

Semester fee payments (both RGCB and RCB fees) must be completed within 15th of July (Monsoon) and the 15th of January (Autumn) every year. A late fee of ₹1,000 will be charged for each administrative fee payments made after the deadline.

Thesis Submission Fee

At the end of PhD, the thesis submission charge of Rs.10,000/- is also payable to RCB.

Hostel Facility:

Hostel accommodation is available to all Ph.D. students from the day they formally join the institute. The hostel utilization fee is ₹1,200 per month (double occupancy). A six-month advance payment of ₹7,200 must be made at the beginning of each semester-within the first week of January and the first week of June.

In addition, a one-time refundable hostel caution deposit of ₹10,000/- must be paid at the time of availing hostel accommodation. This deposit will be refunded at the time of vacating the hostel, subject to clearance of all dues and damages, if any.

2. Ph.D. COURSEWORK

All Ph.D. students at RGCB must complete a mandatory six-month coursework within one year of enrollment.

To pass the coursework, the students must secure:

- ❖ At least 60% in each subject.
- ❖ An overall CGPA of atleast 7.0 out of 10 point scale.

If a Ph.D. student fails to achieve the minimum required CGPA in the coursework examinations, they will have a second opportunity to retake the exam within one year from the date of registration at RGCB. Such students shall be granted two months of study leave after the declaration of results and may be officially relieved from laboratory work during this period to prepare for the retest. If the student does not qualify in the retest, they will be required to discontinue from the RGCB Ph.D. program.

3. Ph.D. COURSEWORK STRUCTURE & CURRICULUM

The coursework curriculum consists of two components:

(a) Compulsory Courses:

- ❖ Five mandatory modules.

Course Code	Course Title	Credits
RGC 431	Research Methodology	2
RGC 430	Biostatistics and Data Analysis	2
RGC 432	Scientific Communication (Research and Publication Ethics)	2
RGC 601	Biochemical and Biophysical Techniques	4
RGC 602	Seminar Presentations (Two Seminars)	Non-credit

(b) Optional Courses:

- ❖ Ten elective modules from which students can choose.
- ❖ Each student must select two elective courses relevant to their specific research area. However, RGC 712 is compulsory for all.

Course Code	Course Title	Credits
RGC 701	Infection Biology	2
RGC 702	Pathophysiology and Disease Biology	2
RGC 703	Applied Neurobiology	2
RGC 705	Advanced Immunology	2
RGC 706	Advances in Plant Biotechnology	2
RGC 707	Advances in Molecular Genetics	2
RGC 708	Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine	2
RGC 709	Cardiovascular System Disorders and Diabetes	2
RGC 710	Advances in Chemical Biology	2
RGC 711	Advances in Cancer Biology	2
RGC 712	Animal Handling and Safe Use of Radioactivity (<i>Compulsory Certification Course</i>)	2

3. PARTICIPATION IN SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

All Ph.D. students must attend scientific events organized by the institute, such as invited talks, open defences, seminars, workshops, and other academic events Journal clubs. Participation is essential to the Ph.D. program, and attendance will be formally recorded, contributing to the overall attendance requirement for thesis submission.

4. STUDENT SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

RGCB offers a wide range of resources and initiatives to support the overall well-being and development of its Ph.D. students.

Various student-led initiatives and extracurricular activities are encouraged. The Sports Club organizes physical activities and events to promote health and fitness. The Bodhi Science Club provides a platform for scientific exploration and informal learning, while KIRANAM, an association for social work, enables students to engage in meaningful community service. In addition, the Gym and Yoga Club forms part of the campus wellness program and remains open to all students.

To address student-related concerns, RGCB has dedicated committees for Grievance Redressal as well as for Anti-Ragging measures. For mental health and emotional well-being, RGCB offers confidential counselling support through the “Your DOST” platform. Medical support is also available to ensure timely access to healthcare services on campus or through affiliated providers. Furthermore, students are provided with an annual medical insurance coverage of ₹1,00,000 during their Ph.D. tenure.

5. POLICY ON CHANGING ASSIGNED FACULTY MENTOR

Admissions to the BRIC - RGCB Ph.D. program are granted based on a careful assessment of compatibility between the student and the assigned faculty mentor. Accordingly, once a student has joined under a specific mentor, requests for a change of guide will not be permitted under any circumstances.

If a student insists on changing their guide, they may find opportunities at other institutions rather than seeking a guide change within RGCB. The RGCB will facilitate such a transfer, and all academic transcripts and completed coursework credits will be transferred to the new institution according to their policies.

6. LEAVE POLICY

Each Ph.D. student is entitled to 30 days of casual leave per academic year, in addition to public holidays, and is not eligible for other vacations. Female students are entitled to 180 days of maternity leave, while male students are entitled to 15 days of paternity leave, in accordance with the norms set by the Government of India or the related funding agency where the students are availing fellowship.

- a) The 30 days leave will be credited in two equal halves of 15 days each, with one half between January and June and the other between July and December; any unused leave from one half of the year may be carried forward and used in the next half of the year.
- b) (b) All leave types, including casual, short-term, and study leave, must be applied for in advance through the Leave Management System (LMS), along with supporting documents and approval from the student's supervisor is required before taking leave.
- c) For long-term (more than 5 days on single term) or extended leave, prior approval from the Director is required. Students must submit a formal letter or email request with supporting documents, which should be forwarded by their supervisor (PI) to the Director. This applies to all Ph. D students, including those beyond the initial five years of their fellowship. Additionally, students receiving fellowships must notify their funding agencies when applying for extended leave.
- d) Non-compliance with the above procedures may lead to suspension of fellowship payments and potential disciplinary action.

7. ATTENDANCE POLICY AND REPORTING

- a) Each laboratory must maintain a daily attendance register for all PhD students, with the supervisor responsible for overseeing and monitoring these attendance records.
- b) Supervisors are required to submit a monthly attendance report to the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) in soft copy by the 25th of each month, or on the next working day if the 25th falls on a holiday. The report must include the number of days present, leave taken (approved via LMS), and any unauthorized absences.
- c) Students wishing to attend conferences, workshops, or conduct experiments at other institutions must obtain prior approval from the Director. The approved period will be recorded as study leave, which will not affect the student's regular attendance record, and must also be noted in the monthly attendance report submitted by the supervisor. The Requests for Study Leave must:
 - ❖ Be submitted in writing to the Director
 - ❖ Be forwarded by the student's supervisor (PI)
 - ❖ Clearly state the purpose and duration of the leave
 - ❖ Be applied for through the Leave Management System (LMS)

8. RULE ON DOCTORAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DAC) / STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC) STRUCTURE:

The Doctoral Advisory Committee (DAC) / Student Advisory Committee (SAC), plays a vital role in monitoring the academic and research progress of Ph. D students throughout their tenure at BRIC–RGCB. Students must successfully complete the Ph.D. coursework before the DAC/SAC meetings can be conducted.

a) Composition of the DAC/SAC

Each student's supervisor must constitute the DAC/SAC immediately after the student joins the RGCB Ph.D. program. The Committee Composition is given below:

- ❖ Chairperson: Director or a nominee appointed by the Director
- ❖ Research Coordinator: Dean (Academic)
- ❖ Supervisor
- ❖ Co-Supervisor (if applicable)
- ❖ Internal Expert(s): RGCB scientific faculty member holding the position of Scientist E-II or above
- ❖ External Expert: Must be an Associate Professor or above (Scientist E-II or above)

External Expert Nomination Process:

- ❖ An external expert may serve on the DAC for up to two RGCB students, with only one student per research group assigned to the same expert.
- ❖ The supervisor must submit the expert's details to the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) in the prescribed DAC/SAC nomination form available on the RGCB website.
- ❖ After the Director's approval, the Dean (Academic) will send an official invitation to the external expert.
- ❖ Honorarium for external members may be paid from either the student's contingency fund or the supervisor's project fund (LRF/SPDF).

b) DAC/SAC Meetings

- ❖ The first DAC/SAC meeting will be convened six months after enrolment, with the purpose of introducing the research topic, presenting background knowledge, objectives, and

methodology, and familiarizing the student with the committee members.

- ❖ Subsequent meetings will be held every six months to review progress. These meetings will be organized by the Supervisor in coordination with the Director's office, ensuring the availability of the Chairperson and the External Expert.
- ❖ Extensions of research beyond five years require a recommendation from the DAC/SAC and must be approved by the Director.
- ❖ Ph.D. Registration will be terminated automatically if the student fails to conduct the pre-synopsis seminar within twelve semesters.
- ❖ The DAC/SAC meetings must be conducted every six months regardless of the time taken/ progress achieved, failure to which the documents submitted by such students will not be forwarded for the signature of the Competent Authorities.

c) JRF to SRF Evaluation

The third or fourth DAC/SAC meeting formally evaluates the upgrade from JRF to SRF.

Assessment Criteria:

- ❖ Presentation of research progress over two years.
- ❖ Documentation of conferences attended and publications.
- ❖ Specific topics (in the area of the PhD Thesis subject chosen) from the Ph.D. coursework, pre-approved with the supervisor.

d) Meeting Preparation and Reporting

- ❖ Before the DAC/SAC meeting, students must submit a soft copy of their work report to all DAC/SAC members and the OAA at least one week in advance of the scheduled meeting.

- ❖ After the meeting, submit the DAC/SAC report in the prescribed format to the OAA within two days. The report must include detailed responses to feedback and questions from the meeting and be signed by all committee members (a digital signature from the external expert is acceptable).
- ❖ For delayed submissions, must be accompanied by a written justification; only reports with valid justifications will be forwarded to the Director's office.

8. DOCUMENT SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

To submit documents requiring higher authority signatures or approvals, follow these steps:

- (i) Cover Letter: Include a formal cover letter, signed by the student, clearly stating the request's purpose.
- (ii) Supervisor Endorsement: The document and cover letter must be signed by the student's supervisor.
- (iii) OAA Verification: After supervisor endorsement, submit the documents to the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) for verification. OAA will then forward them to the appropriate authority for approval.
- (iv) Non-Compliance: Documents without supervisor endorsement or submitted directly to higher authorities without OAA verification will not be processed.

9. WORK PRESENTATION AND M.R. DAS PHD STUDENT MERIT AWARD

All PhD students at RGCBS must present their research progress after 36 months of study to the RGCBS Academic Committee. This mandatory presentation will be held in the M.R. Das Auditorium and is also considered for the M.R. Das Ph.D. Student Merit Award.

a) **Submission Guidelines:** Submit a soft copy of the application and abstract via email to Dean (Academics) and the hard copy of the signed application and abstract to the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) by the first week of November.

b) **Presentation Details:**

(i) Each participant has 15 minutes to present, followed by a 5-minute Q&A session. Strict adherence to the time limit is essential.

(ii) Presentations should focus on key findings rather than the entire thesis.

(c) **Evaluation Criteria:**

(i) Depth of Scientific Content: Significance and quality of research.

(ii) Clarity of Presentation: Effectiveness in communicating the research.

(iii) Ability to Address Questions: Responsiveness during Q&A.

Note:

1. *The Merit Award evaluation is based solely on presentation content and delivery.*
2. *Mentioning individuals during the presentation is discouraged; focus should remain on research findings.*
3. *Enlisting published papers, conference presentations, or awards will not provide an advantage in the competition.*
4. *Students should refrain from acknowledging individuals at the end.*
5. *The focus must be solely on the research content and findings.*

10. PRE-SUBMISSION VIVA AND THESIS SUBMISSION

I. Eligibility for Pre-submission Viva: A Ph.D. student may conduct a pre-submission viva with mentor consultation only if the following conditions are met:

- a) **Completion of Six Semesters:** The student must have completed six semesters of research work.
- b) **First-author Publication:** The student must have at least one first-author research publication based on their Ph.D. research in a SCOPUS or PUBMED-indexed peer-reviewed journal, with RGCB and the registered university affiliations correctly listed.
- c) **Draft Thesis Submission:** The student must submit a draft Ph.D. thesis to the Doctoral Advisory Committee (DAC) for approval.
- d) **Submission of DAC Recommendations and Documents:** The following documents must be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) for the Director's approval:
 - ❖ DAC recommendations
 - ❖ DAC-approved draft thesis
 - ❖ Published research papers and relevant articles
 - ❖ Certificates of conferences attended
 - ❖ Any awards received

II. Thesis Submission

- ❖ After the pre-submission seminar, students must submit the final PhD thesis to the Office of Academic Affairs within 60 days.

- ❖ Students are encouraged to utilize institute resources, such as the library, for thesis writing.
- ❖ RGCB does not grant leave specifically for thesis writing.

III. Forwarding Thesis to University for Evaluation

- ❖ The student must submit all relevant documents as per the registered university's guidelines along with the thesis.
- ❖ The thesis will be forwarded to the affiliated university for evaluation by the Director only if all submission conditions are met.

11. COMPLETION OF Ph.D. TENURE

The Ph.D. studentship officially concludes when the student submits their thesis to the Office of Academic Affairs for the Director's signature, which starts the evaluation process. At the time of thesis submission, the following items must be surrendered to the OAA:

- ❖ Institutional ID card
- ❖ Hostel key (if applicable)
- ❖ Completed 'No Dues Certificate'
- ❖ Request letter for the Relieving Order and Experience Certificate

The institutional email ID will be deactivated; therefore, all important data must be transferred from the institutional email account to the user's personal email ID before deactivation.

12. EXTENSION OF LABORATORY WORK AFTER THESIS SUBMISSION

Ph.D. students may continue laboratory work for up to three months after thesis submission with the Director's permission. To request this extension, the student must submit a letter to the Director, stating the reason for the extension, which should also be forwarded by the Supervisor.

If granted, the student may remain in the hostel and keep their institutional ID card. At the end of the extension period, the student must return:

- ❖ Institutional ID card
- ❖ Hostel key
- ❖ Completed 'No Dues Certificate'

The Relieving Order and Experience Certificate will be issued after this period.

13. FURTHER EXTENSION BEYOND THREE MONTHS

In exceptional cases, a supervisor may request an additional extension of up to three months for laboratory work beyond the initial three-month extension. The supervisor must submit a formal request letter to the Director, explaining the need for the extension. Upon receiving approval from the Director, the student must obtain a temporary RGCB ID card from the appropriate administrative department. The student may then continue their laboratory work during the extended period.

After availing a total extension period of six months, no further extensions will be granted to the student under the existing academic arrangement.

Note: Students under this additional extension period are not allowed to remain on campus beyond regular working hours.

14. HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION POLICY

a) Hostel Fee and Advance Payment

- ❖ The hostel utilization fee for PhD students is Rs.1200/- per month.
- ❖ Students are required to pay the hostel fee for six months in advance, amounting to Rs.7200/-.
- ❖ A one-time refundable hostel caution deposit of ₹10,000/-

b) Vacating the Hostel after Thesis Submission

- ❖ Students residing in the institute hostel must vacate the hostel within one week after thesis submission, upon completion of all necessary formalities.

(c) Accommodation during Thesis Writing

- ❖ PhD scholars are eligible for a single room for a period of six months for the purpose of thesis writing.
- ❖ The hostel utilization fee during this period is Rs.1800/- per month.

(d) Hostel Stay during Extension Period

- ❖ If a student is granted a research extension by the Director, they may continue to stay in the hostel for the duration of the first 3 months extension, subject to compliance with all hostel rules.

(e) Further Three-Month Extension (Beyond Six Months)

- ❖ If a further three-month extension is approved upon specific request by the PI, the student will be permitted to stay in the hostel.
- ❖ The hostel utilization fee during this period will be Rs. 5400/- per month, and all applicable hostel rules and conditions must be strictly followed.

(f) Post-Thesis Submission Extended Stay (Double Occupancy)

- ❖ If a student wishes to extend their hostel stay after thesis submission with double occupancy, the following fee structure applies:
- ❖ First three months: Rs. 1200/- per month
- ❖ Next three months: Rs.3600/- per month
- ❖ The total duration of stay after thesis submission shall not exceed six months under any circumstance.

All Ph.D. students are required to strictly adhere to RGCB's rules and regulations at all times. Any violation of these rules may result in disciplinary action, including the cancellation of Ph.D. registration with RGCB.

Any modifications to the above guidelines shall be permitted solely upon the formal recommendation of the RGCB-Academic Committee.

DECLARATION

I,, son/aughter of
....., residing at
....., and currently enrolled in
the Ph.D. program of BRIC-RGCB, do
hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under:

1. That I have read and understood all the rules and regulations provided by BRIC-RGCB and am fully aware of the consequences of non-compliance.
2. That I hereby undertake to abide by and comply with all rules and regulations of the Institute, including any amendments made from time to time.
3. I understand any violation of the rules and regulations may result in disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, as deemed appropriate by the Institute authorities.
4. That I shall uphold academic integrity and refrain from plagiarism, data fabrication, or any form of academic misconduct in all aspects of my research work.
5. That I will ensure ethical compliance in all research activities, including obtaining necessary approvals from relevant ethics or biosafety committees before commencing research involving human/animal subjects or hazardous materials.
6. That I will regularly update my progress with my supervisor and comply with all academic and administrative requirements of the Ph.D. program.
7. That I shall respect the intellectual property rights of the Institute and acknowledge all contributions appropriately in my research and publications.
8. I acknowledge and agree that any intellectual property (IP), whether registered or unregistered, that is conceived, developed, or generated by me during the course of my research activities at RGCB, either independently or in collaboration with others, shall be considered the property of RGCB. I further acknowledge that, while I may be recognized as a joint inventor or contributor to such IP, the full ownership and all associated rights to the said IP shall vest solely with RGCB, in accordance with institutional policies and applicable laws.

9. I authorize RGCBS to act as the exclusive Signing Authority for all matters pertaining to intellectual property (IP) arising from my research conducted at RGCBS. This authorization includes, but is not limited to, executing and submitting documents, responding to official communications, fulfilling procedural and legal requirements with relevant intellectual property offices, and handling the transfer, licensing, or assignment of such IP. This authorization is irrevocable and shall remain valid in perpetuity.
10. I shall take all reasonable measures to protect the confidentiality of, and prevent unauthorized access to, use of, or disclosure of, any Confidential Information belonging to RGCBS, including any Intellectual Property (IP) that the Researcher has worked on, is currently working on, or will work on during the course of their engagement with RGCBS. I shall not make copies, reproduce, or share any such confidential information without prior written approval from RGCBS.
11. That I will not engage in, directly or indirectly support, or remain silent about any act of ragging in any form—verbal, physical, emotional, or psychological—within the RGCBS premises, including academic departments, classrooms, libraries, laboratories, or hostel premises. I fully understand that ragging is strictly prohibited as per the University Grants Commission (UGC) regulations and is a criminal offense under Indian law. I also commit to immediately report any incident or suspicion of ragging to the anti-ragging committee or hostel warden. I understand that any involvement in ragging may lead to disciplinary action including expulsion. I also understand that any complaint regarding ragging shall be made in writing to the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA), duly signed and dated.
12. I understand that failure to comply with any of the above commitments may lead to disciplinary action, including termination of my Ph.D. registration at BRIC-RGCBS.

Signature of the Student:

Name of the Student:

Registration Number/Roll No.:

Date:

