



PhD PROGRAMME

With a Focus on Development Studies

CONDUCTED IN COLLABORATION WITH
TELANGANA UNIVERSITY, NIZAMABAD

PROSPECTUS

Academic Year 2026–27

DIVISION FOR GRADUATE STUDIES
CENTRE FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STUDIES

(Planning Department, Government of Telangana & ICSSR, Ministry of Education, Government of India)

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This Prospectus is issued by the Division for Graduate Studies, CESS, and is to be read together with the Admission Notification for the relevant academic year. The Programme is governed by the Rules and Regulations set out in Annexure A to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between CESS and Telangana University, framed in conformity with the UGC (Minimum Standards and Procedures for the Award of Ph.D. Degree) Regulations, 2022. In the event of any inconsistency, the applicable UGC requirements and the provisions of the MoU shall prevail.

The Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS) was established in 1980 as an autonomous institution registered under the Andhra Pradesh (Telangana Area) Public Societies Registration Act, 1350 Fasli. Research and advanced training in the social sciences constitute the Centre's principal mandate, with a sustained emphasis on problem-oriented, empirically grounded and policy-relevant inquiry. In recognition of its significant contribution to social science research and training, the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) admitted CESS to its network of national research institutes in 1986.

The Centre receives maintenance grants from the Government of Telangana and the ICSSR and has, over the years, emerged as an established research partner of state and central government ministries and agencies, multilateral and bilateral institutions, philanthropic foundations and international organisations. CESS undertakes commissioned research, policy analysis, evaluation studies and other project-based assignments for a wide range of institutions. These have included, among others, the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, FCDO, ILO, IOM, GIZ, BMZ, the European Union, SSHRC, the Volkswagen Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Jamsetji Tata Trust, the International Foundation for Science, the Rockefeller Foundation, ODI, GDN, the ICSSR, and various ministries, departments and agencies of the Government of India and state governments. The Centre also collaborates extensively with universities, research institutions and academic networks in India and abroad.

A distinctive feature of the Centre's research is its interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary orientation. Its faculty brings expertise in economics, sociology, political science, geography, public administration, anthropology, statistics, and allied social sciences, and frequently collaborate with specialists from outside the social sciences, including hydrologists, hydrogeologists, chemists, ecologists, medical practitioners, and public health specialists. The Centre's research broadly covers agriculture and rural development; development economics, poverty and financial inclusion; education, skill development and human development; labour, migration and livelihoods; industry, services and the global economy; environment, natural resources and climate change; health and well-being; gender, tribal studies and social inclusion; growth and inequality; inclusive growth and development; science, technology, society and public policy; and international relations and the political economy of the Global South. This breadth of expertise enables CESS to undertake integrated, policy-relevant research on complex development challenges and provides doctoral scholars with a strong academic environment for disciplinary, interdisciplinary, and multidisciplinary research.

The institutional structure of CESS comprises the Chairperson, the Director and the Governing Board, supported by its duly constituted academic and administrative bodies. Over the years, eminent scholars, policymakers, administrators, and public intellectuals have served as Chairpersons and Directors, as well as members of the Governing Board. Their association has contributed significantly to the Centre's academic standing, institutional development and engagement with public policy.

The Ph.D. degree is conferred by Telangana University, Nizamabad, with which CESS has maintained an academic collaboration since 2016 for the conduct of a regular, full-time Ph.D. Programme in Social Sciences and Commerce disciplines, with a focus on Development Studies. The Division for Graduate Studies (DGS) is the specialised academic unit within CESS responsible for the academic and administrative conduct of the Programme.

■ Highlights of the Programme

- The Programme functions under the overall supervision and guidance of the Research Programme Committee (RPC), constituted by the Director, CESS, and comprising members from Telangana University, CESS, and subject experts.

- Admission is based on the prescribed academic eligibility, the UGC-NET category under which the candidate qualifies, and an interview, in accordance with the applicable merit and reservation policies. There is no separate written entrance test.
- A maximum of 12 scholars may be admitted in an academic year across all disciplines; the actual number of seats offered is determined by the RPC and specified in the Admission Notification.
- The Programme follows a credit-based system comprising 20 credits of coursework over two semesters, each of about five months, followed by supervised doctoral research.
- The Programme is ordinarily pursued on a full-time basis and is not offered in a distance or fully online mode. Conversion to part-time status may be permitted in exceptional circumstances.
- A Research Advisory Committee, also known as the Doctoral Committee, is constituted for each scholar to guide the research and review progress each semester.
- The thesis is evaluated by three external examiners appointed by Telangana University, of whom two are from outside the State, followed by an open viva voce examination.
- The Ph.D. degree is conferred by Telangana University; the degree certificate and related records state that the Programme was pursued at CESS, Hyderabad, in collaboration with Telangana University.

3 RESEARCH FOCUS AREAS

Scholars are encouraged to situate their doctoral research within the Centre's ongoing programme of policy-relevant work, which spans:

- **Agriculture and rural development:** agrarian structures, tenancy, land and lease markets, dryland and sustainable agriculture, agricultural marketing and rural transformation; food security
- **Education and Employment:** employment, education, skill development and human development
- **Growth and inequality:** pro-poor growth, inclusive growth, and pro-poor and inclusive development
- **Public Finance**
- **Labour, migration and livelihoods:** rural labour markets, migration, the unorganised sector and marginalised livelihoods
- **Industry, services and the global economy:** industrial development, services-sector economics, international trade and trade policy, trade in services, foreign direct investment, international finance, global value chains, trade networks and applied econometrics, financial inclusion
- **Environment, natural resources and climate:** environmental and resource economics, groundwater and watershed governance, water and sanitation, energy, sustainable development and climate action
- **Fisheries and coastal development:** fisheries, coastal and water resources, value chains and livelihoods
- **Health and well-being:** health economics, public health, healthcare-seeking behaviour and pluralistic healthcare systems
- **Gender, tribal studies and social inclusion:** gender relations, tribal development, marginalisation and inclusive development
- **Science, technology, society and public policy**
- **International relations and the political economy of the Global South**

4 GOVERNING REGULATIONS

The Programme, including matters relating to eligibility, admission, coursework, research supervision, thesis evaluation and award of degree, is governed by the Rules and Regulations for the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Programme set out in Annexure A to the Memorandum of Understanding between CESS and Telangana University. Those Rules and Regulations have been framed in conformity with the University Grants Commission (Minimum

Standards and Procedures for the Award of Ph.D. Degree) Regulations, 2022, dated 7 November 2022, and are subject to any amendments thereto and to any new or superseding UGC regulations, guidelines, public notices or directions issued from time to time, together with the applicable ordinances, rules and regulations of Telangana University.

In the event of any inconsistency, the applicable UGC requirements and the provisions of the MoU shall prevail. Matters not expressly provided for are decided jointly by CESS and Telangana University through the institutional mechanisms prescribed under the Programme. CESS shall periodically review the operational aspects of the Ph.D. programme and formulate such rules, procedures, and guidelines as may be necessary for its day-to-day administration, management and smooth conduct of the programme.

PART II

Admission

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PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

■ 5.1 Disciplines Offered

The Ph.D. Programme, with a focus on Development Studies, is offered in the following disciplines or areas of specialisation:

Discipline	Allied / Equivalent Subjects Considered
Economics	Applied Economics, Agricultural Economics
Sociology, Anthropology, or Social Work	—
Political Science or Public Administration	—
Commerce and Business Management	MBA, Master of Business Management

A discipline or area of specialisation may not be offered in a particular academic year, depending on the number and suitability of applicants and the availability of eligible Research Supervisors and other qualified faculty members.

■ 5.2 Course Structure

The Programme comprises (i) coursework conducted over two semesters and (ii) thesis research work. The coursework is conducted under the credit-based system prescribed by the applicable UGC regulations and carries a total of 20 credits, distributed equally across the two semesters, with 10 credits in each semester.

Semester I

Paper	Title of the Paper	Credits
1	Research Methodology	3
2	Perspectives and Paradigms of Development	2
3	Fundamentals of Econometrics / Fundamentals of Statistics	3
4	Research and Publication Ethics	2
	Total	10

Semester II

Paper	Title of the Paper	Credits
	India's Development Debates: Historical Foundations and Contemporary Issues	3
6	Theoretical and Methodological Disciplinary Paradigms on Development	2
	Specialisation Paper in the Relevant Discipline or Area of Research	2
8	Applied Econometrics / Applied Statistics	3
	Total	10

Paper 1: Research Methodology - the philosophical foundations of research, research design, qualitative and quantitative methods, methods of data collection and analysis, and preparation of research proposals.

Paper 2: Perspectives and Paradigms of Development - major theories, perspectives, paradigms and interdisciplinary approaches relating to development.

Paper 3: Fundamentals of Econometrics / Fundamentals of Statistics - the foundational quantitative knowledge required for empirical research. The appropriate paper is prescribed according to the scholar's discipline and research requirements.

Paper 4: Research and Publication Ethics - research integrity, ethical conduct of research, plagiarism, responsible authorship, publication ethics, data management, and other matters prescribed under the applicable UGC regulations and guidelines.

Paper 5: India's Development Debates: Historical Foundations and Contemporary Issues - competing perspectives and major debates concerning India's development trajectory, situating contemporary development issues within their historical, institutional, political-economic, social and environmental contexts.

Paper 6: Theoretical and Methodological Disciplinary Paradigms on Development - discipline-specific; the principal theories, concepts, methodologies, analytical approaches and contemporary debates through which development is understood within the scholar's discipline.

Paper 7: Specialisation Paper in the Relevant Discipline or Area of Research - advanced knowledge relating to the scholar's proposed area of specialisation or doctoral research. Its title and content are determined with reference to the scholar's discipline, area of specialisation and proposed research topic.

Paper 8: Applied Econometrics / Applied Statistics - the application of econometric or statistical methods to empirical research, including selection and use of appropriate analytical techniques, statistical software, model estimation, diagnostic procedures and interpretation of results.

The titles, content, credit allocation, sequencing and structure of the papers may be modified, revised, substituted or updated from time to time, as academically required, with the approval of the RPC, provided that the total credit requirement and all applicable UGC requirements are complied with.

■ 5.3 Teaching and Learning

The coursework is conducted at CESS, Hyderabad, over two semesters, ordinarily of five months each. The academic calendar, timetable and schedule of teaching and evaluation are communicated sufficiently in advance.

Teaching and learning include classroom instruction, lectures, tutorials, guided reading and supervised self-study, seminars and presentations, assignments and book reviews, laboratory- or computer-based practical sessions, field-based learning where relevant, and other appropriate modes of academic engagement.

All scholars also undergo appropriate training in teaching, education, pedagogy, academic writing or related areas relevant to their discipline. Scholars may, where appropriate, be assigned tutorial, laboratory, research-assistance or evaluation-related academic work in accordance with the applicable UGC regulations. Attendance and participation in prescribed academic activities are compulsory, subject to the minimum attendance requirements approved for the Programme.

■ 5.4 Coursework Examinations and Evaluation

Item	Requirement
Timing	End of each semester, in accordance with the approved academic calendar
Marks per paper	100 marks : end-semester examination 60 marks; continuous internal assessment 40 marks
Continuous internal assessment	Tests, assignments, term papers, book reviews, seminars, presentations, practical exercises, laboratory- or computer-based work, and other appropriate forms of assessment
Minimum to pass	At least 50 per cent separately in the end-semester examination and in the continuous internal assessment of each paper, and an overall minimum of 55 per cent marks or its equivalent grade in the coursework
Consequence	Required to be eligible to continue in the Programme and proceed to thesis research
Supplementary / backlog	A maximum of two opportunities, including the regular examination, may ordinarily be allowed, subject to any relaxation approved in exceptional circumstances
Approval of results	Results are placed before the RPC and approved in accordance with the prescribed procedures

Each paper has a Course Coordinator or Paper Coordinator responsible for coordinating teaching, internal assessment, examination-related work and other academic requirements. The appointment of paper setters and examiners, conduct of examinations, moderation where required, valuation, declaration of results and related procedures are governed by the approved examination procedures of the Programme and the applicable UGC requirements.

■ 5.5 Duration

Stage	Duration
Coursework	Two semesters, ordinarily of five months each
Minimum duration (including coursework)	3 years from the date of admission
Maximum duration	6 years from the date of admission
Extension through re-registration	Up to 2 additional years; total not exceeding 8 years
Additional relaxation for women scholars and persons with disability (more than 40 per cent)	Up to 2 further years; total not exceeding 10 years
Maternity and/or child-care leave	Up to 240 days cumulatively during the entire duration of the Programme

A scholar may be granted leave or temporary absence from the Programme on medical, academic, family or other genuine grounds in accordance with the procedures prescribed by CESS. The grant of leave does not automatically extend the maximum duration of the Programme unless such extension is expressly permitted under the applicable UGC regulations or approved under the Rules and Regulations governing the Programme.

■ 5.6 Mode of the Programme and Conversion to Part-Time Status

The Programme is ordinarily pursued on a full-time basis and is not conducted through distance or fully online mode.

A scholar may, after successful completion of the prescribed coursework and registration of the research proposal, apply for conversion from full-time to part-time status in exceptional circumstances. The application is submitted to the Dean, Division for Graduate Studies, stating the reasons and enclosing relevant documentary evidence and the written recommendation of the Research Supervisor. An employed scholar must also submit a No Objection Certificate from the employer confirming that the scholar is permitted sufficient time to undertake research and will be relieved from duties whenever attendance is required for prescribed academic or research activities.

The request is examined by the Research Advisory Committee with reference to the nature and stage of the research, the feasibility of continued supervision, access to research facilities, and the scholar's ability to fulfil the requirements of the Programme. The recommendation is placed before the appropriate authority for approval and communicated to Telangana University.

Conversion to part-time status does not exempt a scholar from any progress review, seminar, research, attendance, submission, residency or other academic requirement. Any fellowship or financial assistance restricted to full-time research ceases or is regulated in accordance with the conditions of the funding agency.

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ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION

■ 6.1 Academic Eligibility

Candidates who fulfil any of the following requirements are eligible to apply for admission:

- A one-year/two-semester master's degree programme after a four-year/eight-semester bachelor's degree programme; or a two-year/four-semester master's degree programme after a three-year bachelor's degree programme; or a qualification declared equivalent to the master's degree by the corresponding statutory regulatory body - with at least 55 per cent marks in aggregate or its equivalent grade.
- An equivalent qualification from a foreign educational institution accredited by an assessment and accreditation agency approved, recognised or authorised under the law of the country concerned to assess, accredit or assure the quality and standards of educational institutions.
- A four-year/eight-semester bachelor's degree programme with a minimum of 75 per cent marks in aggregate or its equivalent grade, where admission directly after such degree is permitted under the applicable UGC regulations.

A relaxation of 5 per cent marks or its equivalent grade is allowed to candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes (Non-Creamy Layer), Persons with Disabilities, Economically Weaker Sections, and such other categories as may be prescribed by the UGC from time to time.

■ 6.2 UGC-NET Categories

Where admission is based on UGC-NET, candidates are considered under the categories notified by the UGC:

Category	Description
Category 1	Candidates eligible for the Junior Research Fellowship, appointment as Assistant Professor, and admission to the Ph.D. Programme
Category 2	Candidates eligible for appointment as Assistant Professor and admission to the Ph.D. Programme, but not for the Junior Research Fellowship
Category 3	Candidates eligible for admission to the Ph.D. Programme only

The validity of the NET score for Ph.D. admission is as prescribed by the UGC from time to time, and is specified afresh in each year's Admission Notification.

■ 6.3 Selection Process

Admission is made in accordance with the applicable UGC regulations, public notices, guidelines and directions issued from time to time, together with the merit and reservation policies applicable to the Programme. Applications are first screened to verify eligibility and completeness, and eligible candidates are shortlisted for an interview held at CESS, Hyderabad. There is no separate written entrance test.

Category	Basis of Selection
Category 1	Performance in the interview
Categories 2 and 3	70 per cent weightage to the UGC-NET score and 30 per cent weightage to performance in the interview

The number of candidates called for interview may be determined with reference to the number of notified seats, the availability of eligible Research Supervisors, and institutional capacity. Admissions are made on merit, subject to the applicable reservation policy and the availability of seats and Research Supervisors in the relevant discipline or area of specialisation.

■ 6.4 Seats and Reservation

A maximum of 12 scholars, across all disciplines taken together, may be admitted to the Programme in an academic year. The actual number of seats offered in a particular year is determined by the Research Programme Committee, taking into account the availability of eligible Research Supervisors, institutional capacity and other relevant academic considerations, and is specified in the Admission Notification together with the discipline-wise distribution of seats. The Reservation Policy of the Government of Telangana is followed.

■ 6.5 Statement of Purpose and Research Proposal

Every application must be accompanied by two documents: a statement of purpose and a research proposal. The statement of purpose, in about 500 words, should set out the candidate's motivation for pursuing doctoral research, their academic and professional background, and their reasons for choosing the Ph.D. Programme at CESS. The research proposal, of not more than 1,000 words, should reflect the candidate's understanding of the proposed research area, the research objectives and a tentative methodology. Applications not accompanied by both documents will not be considered. At the interview, the candidate's competence and preparedness for independent research are assessed with reference to these submissions.

■ 6.6 Accessibility and Reasonable Accommodation

Scholars with disabilities are provided appropriate and reasonable support in admission, coursework, examinations, research activities, seminars, residential facilities and administrative procedures, in accordance with applicable law and institutional policy. Such support may include accessible facilities, assistive technology, additional examination time, scribes, accessible study materials, or other necessary arrangements, while maintaining the prescribed academic requirements of the Programme.

■ 7.1 Fee Structure

Component	Amount (₹)	Sharing / Payable To	Frequency
Admission Fee	5,000	10 per cent to Telangana University; balance retained by CESS	One-time
Tuition Fee	25,000	10 per cent to Telangana University; balance retained by CESS	Annual
Coursework Examination Fee	500	Telangana University	Per paper, per attempt, as applicable
Research Proposal Registration Fee	5,000	CESS	One-time
Re-Registration Fee	As prescribed	As prescribed under the approved financial arrangement	When re-registration is granted
Thesis Adjudication Fee	15,000	Telangana University	One-time

The fee structure may be revised from time to time on the recommendation of the Research Programme Committee and is notified afresh in each year's Admission Notification and Prospectus. Any revision is consistent with the financial arrangements agreed between CESS and Telangana University. A separate, non-refundable online application fee applies at the time of applying and is specified in the Admission Notification.

■ 7.2 Refund of Fees

The refund of fees upon voluntary withdrawal or cancellation of registration is governed by the applicable fee-refund policy of CESS, Telangana University and the University Grants Commission, as in force at the relevant time. In particular:

- The Admission Fee and other one-time administrative fees are ordinarily non-refundable after confirmation of admission.
- Where Tuition Fee has been paid in advance, the fee relating to a semester that has already commenced is ordinarily non-refundable. Where the fee has been collected for the entire academic year, any refundable amount is calculated on a semester-wise basis, and the Tuition Fee paid for a subsequent semester that has not commenced may be refunded after adjustment of outstanding dues and applicable administrative charges.
- No refund is ordinarily admissible for a semester in which the scholar has attended coursework, availed research supervision or institutional facilities, or otherwise continued registration.
- Fees paid for coursework examinations, research-proposal registration, re-registration, thesis adjudication, or any other academic or administrative service already availed are ordinarily non-refundable.
- Where registration is cancelled on account of false information, research misconduct, prolonged unauthorised absence, non-payment of fees, or serious violation of the Rules and Regulations, the scholar is ordinarily not entitled to a refund of fees already paid.
- Where admission or registration is cancelled for reasons not attributable to the scholar, the refund of fees is considered by CESS and Telangana University in accordance with the applicable rules and the circumstances of the case.

- Any refundable caution deposit or other refundable deposit is returned after adjustment of outstanding dues, damage charges or other liabilities.

PART III

The Doctoral Journey

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RESEARCH SUPERVISION

■ 8.1 Allocation of Research Supervisor

Upon successful completion of the prescribed coursework, or at such earlier stage as may be considered academically appropriate, a Research Supervisor is allocated to each scholar. The allocation is made by the Division for Graduate Studies, CESS, in consultation with the Director, CESS, and placed before the Research Programme Committee for approval, taking into account the availability and eligibility of supervisors, supervisory load, area of specialisation, research expertise, the research interests of the scholar, and interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary requirements.

■ 8.2 Eligibility and Recognition of Research Supervisors

Eligible permanent faculty members or scientists of CESS, Telangana University, or other eligible institutions, where permitted under the applicable UGC regulations and approved collaborative arrangements, may be recognised as Research Supervisors or Co-Supervisors, as applicable.

- A Professor or Associate Professor possessing a Ph.D. degree and at least five research publications in peer-reviewed or refereed journals may be recognised as a Research Supervisor.
- An Assistant Professor possessing a Ph.D. degree and at least three research publications in peer-reviewed or refereed journals may be recognised as a Research Supervisor.
- In disciplines where peer-reviewed or refereed journals are limited, the publication requirement may be relaxed in accordance with the applicable UGC regulations, with reasons recorded in writing.
- Adjunct faculty members shall not act as principal Research Supervisors, but may be appointed as Co-Supervisors, subject to the applicable UGC regulations.

■ 8.3 Appointment of a Co-Supervisor

A Co-Supervisor may be appointed where the research is interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary, or where additional subject, methodological, technical or field-specific expertise is required. The appointment is made in accordance with the applicable UGC regulations and approved by the Research Programme Committee or such authority as may be prescribed.

■ 8.4 Maximum Number of Scholars

Supervisor Category	Maximum Number of Ph.D. Scholars
Professor	8
Associate Professor	6
Assistant Professor	4

The applicable UGC provisions concerning total supervisory load, including supervision and co-supervision, are followed. Faculty members having less than three years of service remaining before superannuation are not ordinarily

allotted new scholars; they may continue with scholars already registered and may thereafter continue as Co-Supervisors, subject to the conditions prescribed by the UGC.

■ 8.5 Change of Research Supervisor

A change of Research Supervisor may be permitted where necessary because of retirement, resignation, transfer, prolonged absence, conflict of interest, inability to continue supervision, serious incompatibility affecting the research, or another valid academic or administrative reason.

A request may be submitted by the scholar, the Research Supervisor, or both. The Chairperson of the Research Programme Committee constitutes a committee to examine the matter and provide an opportunity to the concerned parties to present their views. The RPC takes the final decision on the recommendation of that committee, ensuring continuity of the scholar's research.

■ 8.6 Responsibilities of Research Supervisors

A Research Supervisor is expected to:

- provide regular academic guidance in the formulation, conduct, analysis and presentation of the research;
- assist the scholar in preparing a feasible research plan and monitor progress against the approved schedule;
- provide timely and constructive comments on proposals, progress reports, chapter drafts and other academic work;
- guide the scholar in complying with ethical, academic-integrity, plagiarism, data-management and publication requirements;
- convene meetings of the Research Advisory Committee, provide minutes of those meetings, and facilitate semester-wise progress reviews;
- maintain appropriate records of supervision and academic progress;
- disclose and avoid conflicts of interest affecting the supervisory relationship;
- support the scholar in completing the research within the prescribed period; and
- certify the thesis or any compliance statement only after satisfying themselves that the relevant academic requirements have been fulfilled.

A Co-Supervisor discharges such responsibilities as may be assigned in consultation with the Research Supervisor and the Research Advisory Committee.

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RESEARCH PROPOSAL, ETHICS AND REGISTRATION

■ 9.1 Preparation of the Research Proposal

After allocation of the Research Supervisor, the scholar identifies the proposed area and topic of research and prepares a research proposal under the guidance of the Research Supervisor and, where appointed, the Co-Supervisor. The proposal ordinarily includes the background and rationale, research problem, objectives or research questions, review of literature, conceptual or theoretical framework, methodology, proposed data sources, ethical considerations, tentative chapter plan and schedule of research.

■ 9.2 Research Ethics and Ethical Approval

Where the proposed research involves human participants, personal or sensitive data, vulnerable groups, biological material, environmental interventions, or any other matter requiring ethical oversight, the scholar must obtain approval from the appropriate Institutional Ethics Committee or other authorised body before commencing the relevant part of the research.

The scholar must comply with all conditions imposed by the approving body and with applicable requirements relating to informed consent, confidentiality, privacy, data protection, safety and responsible conduct of research. Any material modification affecting ethical considerations requires prior approval.

■ 9.3 Approval and Registration of the Research Proposal

The scholar presents the proposal before the Research Advisory Committee in an open seminar. The Committee may approve it, approve it subject to specified modifications, or require revision and resubmission.

Upon approval of the proposal and fulfilment of the prescribed academic, ethical, plagiarism-related and administrative requirements, the Division for Graduate Studies forwards the approved proposal and prescribed documents to Telangana University for completion of registration formalities. The registration order indicates the approved title and the names of the Research Supervisor and Co-Supervisor, where applicable.

■ 9.4 Modification of the Approved Research Proposal

A minor modification to the title that does not alter the essential scope of the research may be approved by the Research Advisory Committee and reported to the Division for Graduate Studies. Any substantial change in the title, objectives, scope, methodology, discipline or area of specialisation requires the recommendation of the Committee and approval through the prescribed Programme and University procedures. No substantial modification may be implemented before approval.

10 RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND PROGRESS MONITORING

■ 10.1 Constitution of the Committee

A Research Advisory Committee (RAC), which may also be referred to as the Doctoral Committee, is constituted for each scholar to guide, review and monitor the research from proposal development until completion of the thesis.

The Research Supervisor is the Convener. The Committee ordinarily comprises the Research Supervisor, the Co-Supervisor where appointed, and at least two experts relevant to the research area, including at least one external expert. The Dean, Division for Graduate Studies, the Director, CESS, or their nominees may participate in or oversee the proceedings in accordance with the approved procedures of the Programme.

The Committee is constituted by the Division for Graduate Studies in consultation with the Research Supervisor and the Chairperson of the Research Programme Committee. An additional expert may be invited for specialised academic or technical advice, without voting or decision-making authority.

■ 10.2 Functions of the Committee

The Research Advisory Committee is required to:

- review the research proposal and finalise the topic of research;
- guide the scholar in developing the research design and methodology;
- identify any additional coursework, training or academic requirement;
- periodically review and assist the scholar in the progress of the research;
- examine progress reports, chapter drafts, seminar presentations and other research outputs;
- advise the scholar on conceptual, methodological, ethical and analytical matters;
- recommend corrective measures where progress is unsatisfactory;
- check plagiarism and artificial-intelligence content reports; and
- determine whether the thesis is ready for pre-submission presentation and submission.

■ 10.3 Progress Review and Research Seminars

The scholar appears before the Research Advisory Committee once in every semester, presents the progress of the research, and submits a brief written progress report. The Committee's observations and recommendations are recorded, communicated to the scholar, and placed before the appropriate authority under the Programme.

In addition to the proposal seminar, the scholar ordinarily makes three research seminars relating to the principal objectives, themes or core chapters of the thesis, and one pre-submission seminar presenting the thesis. The Committee may require additional presentations where academically necessary.

■ 10.4 Unsatisfactory Progress

Where progress is unsatisfactory, the Committee records the reasons and prescribes corrective measures within a specified period. Where the scholar fails to implement such measures or continues to make unsatisfactory progress, the Committee may recommend appropriate action, including cancellation of registration, after giving the scholar a reasonable opportunity to be heard.

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THESIS SUBMISSION AND EVALUATION

■ 11.1 Pre-Submission Requirements

Before submitting the thesis for evaluation, the scholar must complete the coursework and all other academic requirements, satisfactorily complete the semester-wise progress reviews and required research seminars, make an open pre-submission presentation before the Research Advisory Committee, address the comments received, undergo the prescribed plagiarism and similarity check, and obtain the recommendation of the Committee for submission.

The scholar must submit a statement indicating how the comments and suggestions made during the pre-submission seminar have been addressed, and the Research Supervisor must certify that the required changes have been satisfactorily incorporated.

■ 11.2 Submission of the Thesis

The thesis must embody original research carried out by the scholar under the guidance of the Research Supervisor and must make a contribution to knowledge in the relevant discipline or area of research. The scholar submits the thesis through the Division for Graduate Studies, CESS, to the Controller of Examinations of Telangana University, or to such other University authority as may be designated. At the stage of submission for evaluation, the scholar ordinarily submits:

- an electronic copy of the thesis in the prescribed format;
- the prescribed number of hard-bound examination copies;
- an electronic copy of the abstract and synopsis;
- an undertaking affirming originality, compliance with plagiarism regulations, and non-submission for another degree or diploma;
- a certificate from the Research Supervisor attesting to originality and non-submission elsewhere;
- the receipt for payment of the prescribed thesis-adjudication fee;
- a 'No Dues' certificate from the Library and other concerned sections;
- copies of the coursework marks memoranda and the Coursework Completion Certificate;
- a copy of the approved research-registration order;
- the plagiarism or similarity-check report and prescribed research-integrity certificates;
- the recommendation of the Research Advisory Committee permitting submission; and

- such other documents as may be prescribed.

The Division for Graduate Studies verifies compliance with the prescribed academic and administrative requirements and forwards the thesis and accompanying documents to Telangana University.

■ 11.3 Panel and Appointment of External Examiners

The Research Supervisor recommends, in the prescribed manner, a panel of suitably qualified persons for appointment as external examiners. The proposed examiners must possess relevant academic and research expertise and a good record of scholarly publications in the field of the thesis or an appropriate interdisciplinary area.

The panel shall not include the Research Supervisor or Co-Supervisor; persons employed by CESS or Telangana University; persons employed in the institution in which the scholar works, where applicable; persons having a conflict of interest; or any other person disqualified under the applicable rules.

The panel is scrutinised and approved by the Chairperson of the Research Programme Committee, or such other authority as may be prescribed, and forwarded to Telangana University. The Vice-Chancellor of Telangana University, or an authorised authority, appoints the external examiners from the approved panel.

■ 11.4 Evaluation of the Thesis

The thesis is evaluated by three external examiners appointed by Telangana University, with two external examiners from outside the State. Each evaluator submits a detailed confidential report in the prescribed format directly to the Controller of Examinations of Telangana University, or to such other designated University authority. Reports are not submitted through the Research Supervisor or the scholar. An evaluator may recommend acceptance for viva voce, acceptance subject to specified corrections, substantial revision and resubmission, or rejection, and must state the reasons for the recommendation.

The adjudication outcomes are as follows:

Outcome of Evaluation	Consequence
All three examiners recommend award of the degree	A viva voce is conducted and the thesis may be passed for the award of the degree
Two recommend award; one recommends revision or rejection	The candidate may be given an opportunity to defend the work at the viva voce, and the thesis may be passed for the award of the degree
One recommends award; two recommend revision	The candidate revises and resubmits the thesis; it is sent to the same two examiners for re-adjudication
One recommends award; one recommends revision; one recommends rejection	The candidate revises and resubmits the thesis; it is sent to the same two examiners for re-adjudication
All three examiners recommend rejection	The thesis is rejected

Following resubmission and re-adjudication:

Outcome of Re-Adjudication	Consequence
Both examiners recommend award of the degree	A viva voce is conducted and the thesis may be passed for the award of the degree
One recommends award; the other recommends revision or rejection	The candidate may be given an opportunity to defend the work at the viva voce, and the thesis may be passed for the award of the degree
Both examiners recommend revision or rejection	The thesis may be rejected

Where all examiners recommend acceptance, either unconditionally or subject to corrections, the scholar is permitted to proceed to the viva voce after incorporating the required corrections and submitting a point-by-point compliance statement together with a certificate from the Research Supervisor. Where one examiner recommends rejection, the thesis is referred to an alternate external examiner appointed from the approved panel; the viva voce is conducted only if the alternate examiner recommends acceptance, and if the alternate examiner also recommends rejection, the thesis is rejected. Where an examiner recommends substantial revision without rejection, the matter is dealt with in accordance with the approved examination procedures of Telangana University and the Programme, and the scholar is formally informed of the required revisions and the time allowed.

■ 11.5 Viva Voce Examination

Upon receipt of satisfactory evaluation reports and completion of the required corrections, the scholar defends the thesis at an open viva voce examination ordinarily conducted at CESS, Hyderabad. The viva voce is presided over by the Chairperson of the Research Programme Committee or a person duly authorised in accordance with the approved procedures of the Programme. The viva voce board comprises:

- the Chairperson of the Research Programme Committee or authorised presiding officer;
- the Research Supervisor;
- at least one of the external examiners who evaluated the thesis; and
- a nominee of Telangana University, where required under the agreed procedures of the collaborative Programme.

The Co-Supervisor, where appointed, may participate. The viva voce may be held in physical, hybrid or online mode, as permitted under the applicable regulations and approved procedures, and is open to members of the Research Advisory Committee, faculty members, research scholars, students and such other persons as may be permitted. The board may recommend award of the Ph.D. degree, award subject to minor corrections being incorporated and certified, or such further action as may be permissible. Its proceedings and recommendations are recorded and authenticated by the members.

■ 11.6 Approval and Declaration of the Result

The report of the viva voce board, the thesis-evaluation reports, the final compliance documents, and confirmation of fulfilment of all prescribed requirements are forwarded to Telangana University through the prescribed channel. The result is placed before the appropriate authority of Telangana University for approval and formal declaration.

■ 11.7 Time Limit for Completion of Evaluation

The entire process of evaluating the thesis, including receipt of external reports, conduct of the viva voce and declaration of the viva voce result, is ordinarily completed within six months from the date of submission of the thesis. Where substantial revision and resubmission are required, the period taken by the scholar for revision may be excluded, subject to the applicable rules.

■ 11.8 Deposit with INFLIBNET and Institutional Repositories

Following successful completion of the evaluation process, Telangana University submits an electronic copy of the final thesis to INFLIBNET for hosting in the prescribed repository. The final thesis may also be deposited in the institutional repositories of Telangana University and CESS.

Upon successful completion of all prescribed requirements of the Programme, Telangana University awards the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) to the eligible scholar.

The coursework marks memoranda, the Coursework Completion Certificate, the Provisional Certificate, the Ph.D. Degree Certificate, and the official notification relating to the award shall, in the standardised format mutually approved by CESS and Telangana University, indicate that the scholar pursued the Ph.D. Programme at the Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS), Hyderabad, in collaboration with Telangana University, Nizamabad. These records bear the following endorsement:

“Ph.D. Programme in [Name of Discipline], with a focus on Development Studies, pursued at the Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS), Hyderabad, in collaboration with Telangana University.”

The Provisional Certificate also states that the Ph.D. degree has been awarded in accordance with the applicable UGC regulations.

PART IV

Academic Conduct and Scholar Obligations

13 RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOLARS

Every scholar admitted to the Programme is required to:

- maintain regular academic contact with the Research Supervisor and the Co-Supervisor, where appointed;
- attend coursework, meetings of the Research Advisory Committee, seminars, presentations and other prescribed academic activities;
- submit progress reports, chapter drafts and other required academic work within the stipulated time, submit the minutes of proposal and progress seminars to the Division for Graduate Studies, and demonstrate how comments received at earlier seminars have been addressed;
- comply with research ethics, academic-integrity, plagiarism, data-management, confidentiality and safety requirements;
- maintain accurate and secure records of data, field notes, consent documents, analysis and other research materials;
- obtain all required ethical, institutional, governmental or other approvals before undertaking the relevant research activity;
- promptly inform the Division for Graduate Studies of any change in address, employment, fellowship status or other matter affecting registration;
- pay the prescribed fees and comply with the academic and administrative requirements of the Programme; and
- acknowledge the support of CESS, Telangana University, the Research Supervisors and funding agencies, as applicable, in publications and other outputs arising from the doctoral research.

14 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

All scholars, Research Supervisors, Co-Supervisors and other persons associated with the Programme are required to observe the highest standards of academic integrity and responsible conduct of research.

Plagiarism, fabrication or falsification of data, suppression or manipulation of findings, duplicate submission or publication, improper authorship, unauthorised disclosure of confidential information, misrepresentation of academic work, and other forms of research misconduct are prohibited.

The use of artificial intelligence or other technological tools in research, writing, analysis or presentation must be transparent, academically responsible, and consistent with applicable institutional and publication policies. Such tools must not be used to fabricate data, sources, citations, findings or authorship.

Any allegation of research misconduct is examined in accordance with the applicable UGC regulations and approved institutional procedures. No adverse action is taken without written notice and a reasonable opportunity to respond.

15 PUBLICATIONS, AUTHORSHIP, INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND RESEARCH DATA

Publications and other outputs arising from doctoral research must comply with accepted principles of authorship, acknowledgment, research ethics, confidentiality and disclosure of funding support.

Authorship is based on substantial academic contribution and is not conferred or withheld merely on the basis of institutional position or supervisory status.

The ownership, custody, storage, sharing and future use of research data, instruments, software, databases, reports and other outputs are governed by the applicable policies of CESS, Telangana University and the funding agency concerned.

A scholar must not disclose confidential, restricted, personal or proprietary information obtained during the research except as authorised under the approved research protocol and applicable law.

16 WITHDRAWAL, DISCONTINUATION AND CANCELLATION OF REGISTRATION

■ 16.1 Voluntary Withdrawal

A scholar may voluntarily withdraw from the Programme by submitting a written request through the Research Supervisor to the Dean, Division for Graduate Studies. Withdrawal takes effect only upon formal acceptance of the request and communication of the decision to the scholar.

■ 16.2 Grounds for Cancellation of Registration

The registration of a scholar may be cancelled on any of the following grounds:

- continued unsatisfactory academic progress;
- failure to fulfil the prescribed coursework, progress-review, seminar, examination or submission requirements;
- prolonged unauthorised absence or failure to maintain academic contact with the Research Supervisor or the Division for Graduate Studies;
- non-payment of prescribed fees after due notice;
- submission of false, forged or materially misleading information or documents;
- research misconduct or a serious breach of academic integrity; or
- any other serious violation of the Rules and Regulations or the applicable institutional policies.

■ 16.3 Procedure

No registration is cancelled without issuing a written notice to the scholar specifying the grounds for the proposed action and providing a reasonable opportunity to submit an explanation or representation. The decision is taken after considering the scholar's response and is supported by reasons recorded in writing. The decision is formally communicated to the scholar and is subject to the grievance-redressal and appeal procedure prescribed under the Rules and Regulations.

17 GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL AND APPEAL

A scholar aggrieved by an academic or administrative decision concerning admission, coursework, supervision, progress review, registration, fees, examination, thesis evaluation, residential facilities, financial support, or any other matter relating to the Programme may submit a written representation to the Dean, Division for Graduate Studies, within the period prescribed for the purpose.

The representation is examined by an appropriate committee constituted for the purpose. A person directly involved in the disputed decision does not participate in the grievance decision. The scholar is given a reasonable opportunity to present the relevant facts and documents, and the decision, together with brief reasons, is communicated in writing.

An appeal may be submitted to the Director, CESS. Where the matter concerns the statutory, examination, registration or degree-awarding functions of Telangana University, a further appeal or representation may be made to the appropriate University authority in accordance with its applicable procedures.

18 COMPLIANCE WITH INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

Scholars must comply with the applicable institutional policies and rules relating to academic conduct, prevention of sexual harassment, anti-ragging, equality and non-discrimination, workplace and field safety, use of information technology and institutional facilities, library use, hostel residence, data protection, confidentiality, and other matters relevant to participation in the Programme.

Violation of such policies may attract action under the respective policy and, where appropriate, under the Rules and Regulations governing the Programme.

PART V

Governance and Support

19 RESEARCH PROGRAMME COMMITTEE (RPC)

An academic body known as the Research Programme Committee (RPC) is constituted by the Director, CESS, to provide academic governance and to manage, coordinate and oversee the Ph.D. Programme conducted by CESS in collaboration with Telangana University. The RPC functions as the Academic Council in academic matters relating to the Programme and as the Managing Committee in administrative matters.

■ 19.1 Composition

#	Member
1	Director, CESS - Chairperson
2	Three representatives of Telangana University, nominated by the Vice-Chancellor
3	Six subject experts, nominated by the Vice-Chancellor on the recommendation of the Director, CESS
4	Three faculty members of CESS, nominated by the Director, CESS
5	Dean, Division for Graduate Studies, CESS - Convener

The Committee consists of 14 members. Its tenure is three years, and it is reconstituted in accordance with the MoU and the Rules and Regulations governing the Programme.

■ 19.2 Functions

The RPC serves as the principal academic and administrative oversight body for the collaborative Ph.D. Programme. Its functions include:

- overseeing and approving the admission process in accordance with the applicable regulations and reservation policy;
- acting as the Board of Studies for the Programme and approving the structure, syllabus and content of the coursework;
- considering and approving or ratifying matters relating to coursework examinations, including panels of paper setters and examiners, results and related matters;
- approving the allocation and recognition of Research Supervisors in accordance with the applicable UGC regulations;
- considering the introduction of new disciplines, subjects or specialisations in accordance with the applicable rules and procedures;
- recommending the fee structure and revisions thereto;
- recommending to Telangana University the award of the Ph.D. degree to scholars who have fulfilled all prescribed requirements; and
- considering such other academic or administrative matters relating to the Programme as may be entrusted to it by Telangana University or placed before it by CESS.

■ 19.3 Programme Records

CESS and Telangana University maintain, through the prescribed institutional arrangements, appropriate records relating to admissions, recognised Research Supervisors, allocation of scholars, coursework, examinations, registration, proceedings of the Research Advisory Committee, progress reports, thesis evaluation, viva voce, final submission and award of degrees.

The Programme publishes and updates such information concerning recognised Research Supervisors, areas of research, available supervisory vacancies, admitted scholars and other matters as may be required under the applicable UGC regulations. Confidential records, including thesis-evaluation reports and personal information, are protected and disclosed only to authorised persons.

- Scholars who have qualified for the Junior Research Fellowship or another fellowship awarded by the UGC, CSIR, ICSSR, government agencies or other recognised funding bodies may avail themselves of such fellowship, subject to activation or sanction by the funding agency and compliance with its eligibility conditions, tenure and other terms.
- Eligible scholars may apply, on a competitive basis, for doctoral fellowships, research grants, fieldwork support or other financial assistance offered by the ICSSR and other recognised funding agencies. CESS provides the institutional endorsement, certification or administrative support required for such applications.
- Scholars who do not receive any fellowship and are in need of financial assistance may be provided limited financial support by CESS during the coursework period, subject to availability of funds and the criteria and procedures prescribed by CESS from time to time. Such assistance is not treated as an assured fellowship or a continuing entitlement.
- Subject to availability of funds and prior approval, CESS may provide limited financial assistance for presenting research papers or participating in important conferences, seminars, workshops, training programmes or other academic activities directly relevant to the doctoral research.

- Unless expressly sanctioned under a fellowship, grant or institutional scheme, expenditure associated with conducting and completing the research is borne by the scholar.

Admission to or registration under the Programme does not, by itself, confer an entitlement to financial support from CESS or Telangana University.

21 ACADEMIC AND ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

- **SPSS / STATA Workshop** - a six-day workshop each May for scholars in the early or middle phase of research, covering SPSS and STATA for quantitative analysis.
- **Writing Skills Workshop** - a six-day workshop each June covering research proposal writing, literature review, analytical writing, referencing, and preparing papers for publication.
- **Special Lectures** - lectures by eminent academics organised by the Division for Graduate Studies for the benefit of research scholars.
- **Mélange Newsletter** - a scholar-run newsletter showcasing scholars' academic activities, publications and research progress.

22 INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAMPUS FACILITIES

■ 22.1 Residential Facilities

Subject to availability, residential accommodation may be provided to full-time scholars in the CESS hostel or other designated facilities from admission until the submission of the thesis. Allotment, charges, duration and continued use of such accommodation are governed by the applicable hostel rules and other conditions prescribed by CESS from time to time. Temporary accommodation may be provided to other scholars for approved academic purposes, subject to availability and prior approval. No mess facility is provided; scholars may use the common cooking space or the CESS canteen.

■ 22.2 Library

The CESS library is among the richest social science libraries in Telangana, with a collection of nearly 50,000 volumes, 3,450 bound journal volumes, and access to databases such as JSTOR, EBSCO-EconLit, EPWRF ITS and IndiaStat, and nationwide access to a wide range of scholarly journals through the Government of India's One Nation One Subscription (ONOS) initiative. It is the only World Bank Depository Library in the region and offers document delivery, interlibrary loan and current-awareness services.

■ 22.3 Reading Rooms and Computer Laboratory

A dedicated study hall, accessible 24 hours, provides a quiet environment for research and academic work. As scholars progress through the Programme, cabins are allotted, providing workspaces for focused research. A computer laboratory equipped with SPSS and STATA software, printers, and campus-wide Wi-Fi further supports scholars' research activities.

■ 22.4 Auditorium and Canteen

The BPR Vithal Auditorium serves as the institute's primary venue for national and international conferences, seminars, workshops and academic events. The campus also includes a canteen adjacent to the library, offering a range of South and North Indian cuisine for scholars, faculty and staff.

23 LIFE AFTER THE Ph.D

A Ph.D. from CESS equips scholars for research-oriented careers. CESS alumni and scholars have gone on to positions in academia and teaching, policy research institutions, and development organisations. The Centre's ongoing engagement with policy-oriented research, and scholars' exposure to live projects, workshops and seminars during the Programme, is intended to prepare them for this range of career paths.

PART VI

How to Apply

24 HOW TO APPLY

Applications are invited through an Admission Notification released each year on the CESS website (www.cess.ac.in). The Notification specifies the number and discipline-wise distribution of seats, the eligibility criteria, the admission procedure, the reservation policy, the fee structure, the important dates and the list of documents required, and is to be read together with this Prospectus.

Candidates complete and submit the online application through the Ph.D. application portal available on the CESS website, uploading self-attested copies of the documents specified in the online application to establish eligibility, together with the statement of purpose and the research proposal referred to in Section 6.5. A non-refundable online application fee is payable at the time of applying, as specified in the Admission Notification. Incomplete applications and applications submitted after the closing date are liable to be rejected.

25 CONTACT INFORMATION

The Dean, Division for Graduate Studies, Centre for Economic and Social Studies Nizamiah Observatory Campus, Begumpet, Hyderabad - 500016, Telangana Phone: 040-23416610 / 23402789 / 23416780 Email: admissionsdgs@cess.ac.in; Website: www.cess.ac.in