

PhD *in* Public Policy

Handbook 2026–2027



Ashank Desai
Centre *for* Policy Studies
Indian Institute of Technology Bombay

Insight



Dialogue



Impact

Contents

Introduction	1
1.1. Message from the Head	1
1.2. Vision	2
1.3. Mission	2
1.4. Public Policy at IIT Bombay	2
1.5. Cohort Profile	2
Governance Structure	4
2.1. Advisory Board	4
2.2. Faculty Members	5
2.3. Office Staff	7
PhD Programme at a Glance	8
3.1. PhD Coursework	8
3.2. Types of Courses	9
3.3. Courses Offered	10
3.4. Minimum Course Credit Requirements	11
3.5. Confirmation of PhD Registration	11
3.6. Annual Progress Seminar	12
Information on Financial Support	13
4.1. Fellowships & Assistantships	13
4.2. Financial Support for International Conferences	13
4.3. TA/DA Rates for Fieldwork/Conferences within India	13
Leave Policy	14
Ethics Clearance for Fieldwork	15
Student Wellness	15
Important Links	15
Events	16
Office Bearers	17

Introduction

1.1. Message from the Head



Welcome to IIT Bombay and the Ashank Desai Centre for Policy Studies (ADCPS).

As you may be aware, Policy Studies is a relatively nascent discipline in India. Given the increasing complexities of the economy, international relations, technology, and governance, it is imperative for the discipline to take firm roots in our polity and society. Realising the academic community's important role in this regard, the Centre was set up in 2016 to provide a fillip to the study of Public Policy, with insightful and actionable thought leadership.

We focus on fostering a robust academic environment that nurtures scholarly inquiry and innovation. Our PhD programme started in 2017 and you are now (as the 10th PhD cohort) part of this vibrant and growing community of scholars dedicated to critically engaging with the complex world of public policy. At the Centre, we value interdisciplinarity, rigour, and real-world relevance— principles that shape our teaching, research, and student culture.

On behalf of all faculty members and the wider ADCPS community, I extend a hearty welcome. Over the duration of your programme, you will be challenged to think analytically, act ethically, and contribute meaningfully. Our faculty, staff, and the student cohort are here to support your academic journey and professional aspirations. We look forward to learning from your unique experiences and perspectives as you help us shape policy thinking in India and beyond.

Wishing you a fulfilling and transformative time at the Centre.

Vinish Kathuria

Professor and Head

Ashank Desai Centre for Policy Studies

Indian Institute of Technology Bombay

1.2. Vision

To become a centre of excellence that facilitates evidence informed and inclusive public policy.

1.3. Mission

To encourage a sustained dialogue between academia and other policy stakeholders in order to promote evidence informed and inclusive policy making and analysis; and create capacity for policy studies in the country.

1.4. Public Policy at IIT Bombay

The Ashank Desai Centre for Policy Studies (ADCPS, previously Centre for Policy Studies) at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay was established in 2016 to advance rigorous research, interdisciplinary teaching, and public engagement in the field of public policy. The Centre began its academic journey with the launch of its PhD in Public Policy programme in 2017, followed by the Master of Public Policy (MPP) programme in 2019. In 2021, it was renamed in honour of Mr Ashank Desai, an IIT Bombay alumnus and philanthropist, whose generous support has helped strengthen the Centre's vision and capacity. As ADCPS welcomes the 10th cohort of its PhD programme in 2026, it continues to grow as a platform where academic rigour meets public relevance, committed to nurturing scholars rooted in democratic values and attentive to structural realities and global transformations.

The Centre engages with complex policy problems by drawing on integrated perspectives from the fields of Social Science, Science & Technology, Law, and Medicine. Research at ADCPS is organised around six core thematic areas:

• Digital Society & Governance

A broad political economy and political philosophy engagement with issues such as privacy, data localisation and ownership, e-commerce, etc.

• Industrial and Economic Policy

Analysing the impact of economic reforms, foreign direct investment, and regulatory governance on industrial productivity, technology transfer, and sustainable manufacturing.

• Social Policy (Education, Ageing, Identity)

Responding to a lack of policy analysis through the lenses of gender, caste and age; in the context of economic growth and increased precarity.

• Technology & Policy

Closely examining the evolving and dynamic relationships between science,

technology and society, in the context of policy making.

• Urban Policy

Faculty at ADCPS focus on various aspects of India's urban policy, including residential segregation, services, ageing, labour, and housing. India has seen significant growth in its urban population over the past few decades, resulting in both challenges and opportunities.

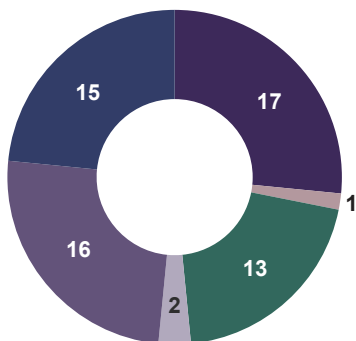
• Water, Sanitation, Energy, Climate Change

The staggering challenges of protecting the ecology from climate changes seem to grow bigger as market-centric solutions have primacy in setting the policy agendas. ADCPS re-imagines the concerns of the 'environment' as a trigger for holistic attention to cross-cutting policy issues such as water, health, energy, migration & urbanisation.

Please see for more details: <https://www.cps.iitb.ac.in/research>

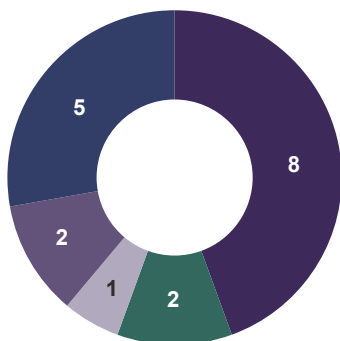
We have ongoing research projects on the various themes undertaken by our faculty members at ADCPS. Please see: <https://www.cps.iitb.ac.in/projects>

1.5. Cohort Profile



On Roll

- Digital Society and Governance
- Industrial and Economic Policy
- Social Policy (Education, Ageing, Identity)
- Technology and Policy
- Urban Policy
- Water, Sanitation, Energy, Climate Change



Degree Awarded

- Digital Society and Governance
- Social Policy (Education, Ageing, Identity)
- Technology and Policy
- Urban Policy
- Water, Sanitation, Energy, Climate Change

Governance Structure

2.1. Advisory Board



Ashank Desai

Principal Founder and Chairman
Mastek, Mumbai



Arun Maira

Former India Head
BCG



Harish Hande

Co-founder
Solar Electric Light Company (SELCO)
Bangalore



Kaushik Basu

(Padma Bhushan)
Professor of Economics
Cornell University, USA



N. S. Nappinai

Advocate, Supreme Court of India
Founder, Cyber Saathi



Pradeep Kumar Kapur

Former Ambassador
and Secretary
Government of India



Rentala Chandrasekhar

Former President
NASSCOM



Yamini Aiyar

President and Chief Executive
Centre for Policy Research
New Delhi

2.2. Faculty Members

Core Faculty



Vinish Kumar Kathuria

Professor and Head

*Productivity
Technology Transfer
Renewable Energy
Solid Waste Management
Industrial Policy*



Anupam Guha

Assistant Professor

*Artificial Intelligence (AI)
Political Economy of AI
Technology and Society
Digital Societies
Digital Platforms*



Himanshu Burté

Associate Professor

*Urban Policy and Planning
Infrastructural Space
Urban Informality
Urban Public Space
Housing*



Malish C. M.

Assistant Professor

*Higher Education
Equity and Governance
Intermediary Organisations
EdTech Platforms*



N. C. Narayanan

Professor

*Water Policy & Sanitation
Local Governance
Energy
Climate Change
Environmental Services*



Naveen Bharathi

Assistant Professor

*Urban Policy
Spatial Segregation
Political Economy of Identity
Ethnic Diversity and Development*



Prabhir Vishnu Poruthiyil

Associate Professor

*Privatisation of Policymaking
Ageing and Society
Ethics
Policy History*



Rahul Suresh Sapkal

Assistant Professor

*Gig and Platform Economy
Caste
Labour and Technology
Social and Welfare Policies
Law and Economics*



Shishir K. Jha

Professor

*Digital Public Goods & Infrastructure
Digital Governance
Data Centres
Digital Platforms
Data Monetisation*

Adjunct Faculty



Ajay Deshpande

Adjunct Professor

*Circular Economy
Environmental Protection
Environmental Governance
Natural Resources Management*



Malini Krishnankutty

Adjunct Associate Professor

*Sustainable Urban Planning
Peri-urban Development
History of Urban Planning*



Sundeeep Oberoi

Adjunct Professor

*Digital Societies
Technology and Society
Data Governance and Management
Standards and Policy Cybersecurity*

Distinguished and Honorary Visiting Faculty



N. V. Varghese

Former Vice-chancellor
National Institute of
Educational Planning and Administration



Sekhar Bonu

Former Director General
Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office
NITI Aayog

Visiting Faculty



Ashish Desai

Associate Professor
S. P. Jain Institute of
Management &
Research



Himanshu Kulkarni

Managing Director
Advanced Center for Water
Resources Development and
Management



Ishani Mukherjee

Associate Professor
Public Policy
Singapore Management
University



Nitin Kareer

Former Chief
Secretary
Government of
Maharashtra

2.3. Office Staff



Vandana Pagare (Dube)

Administrative Officer
(PS to the Head)



Jagruti Rajendra Yadav

Junior Administrative Assistant



Bindu S. Kaleskar

Project Manager



Sarika Vijay Shivsharan

Senior Project Technical Assistant



Pramod P. Ghanekar

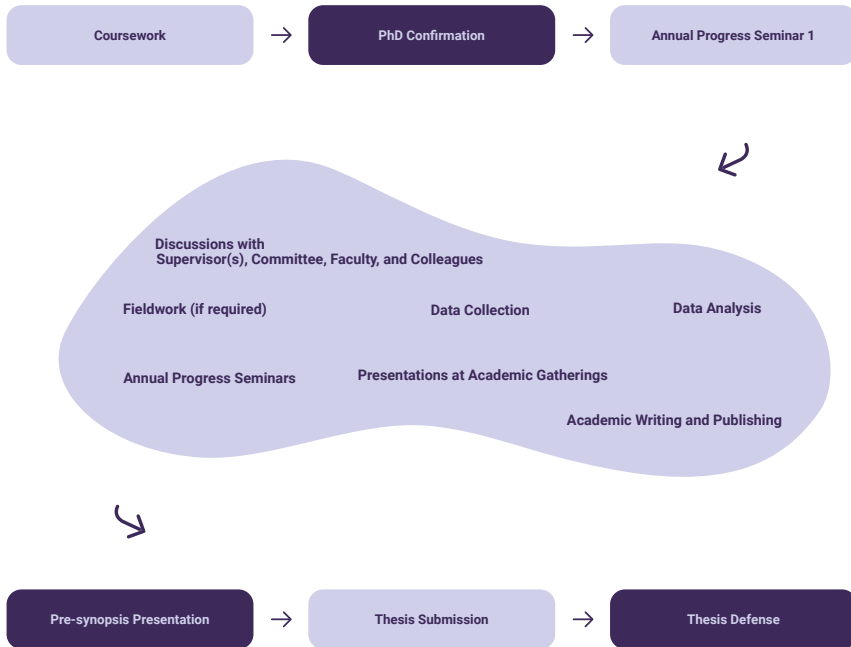
Office Attendant



Jay Vijay Navgire

Office Attendant

PhD Programme at a Glance



3.1. PhD Coursework

Coursework is mandatory in the first year of the PhD programme, which is divided into Autumn (Odd) and Spring (Even) semesters, respectively running from July to November and January to April. Both the semesters emphasise theoretical grounding through core courses in public policy theory and research methods. PhD students could choose from the wide variety of Department and Institute Elective Courses offered at ADCPS and the Institute-level, respectively, apart from the mandatory Core Courses. Additionally, PhD students are expected to prepare and present Credit Seminars in each of the semesters in the first year, in consultation with the guide. The expected outcome of the seminars could be to conduct literature reviews on the topic of choice or whichever project the PhD student and the guide decide to pursue in consultation with each other.

3.2. Types of Courses

Mandatory Credit Courses	
Core Courses	Foundational courses required by the Centre, covering theoretical, methodological, and contextual bases of public policy.
Credit Seminars	Student-led exploration of a policy topic in consultation with guide, potentially contributing to the PhD thesis.

Elective Courses	
Department Electives	Courses offered by the Centre that allow students to explore specialised policy areas aligned with their interests. They are typically 6-Credit courses but also include three-credit Skill-based Courses offered by the Centre.
Institute Electives	Interdisciplinary courses offered by various academic units across IIT Bombay, open to all students, subject to the condition that they should be opted from outside the list of courses offered by ADCPS.

Mandatory Non-Credit Courses (Pass/Not Pass)	
Communication Skills (PS 899)	The Communication Skills course is a Pass (PP)/Not Pass (NP) requirement to be completed within the first two semesters. It does not count toward minimum credit requirements, but clearing it (with a PP grade) is mandatory for degree award.
Gender in the Workplace (GC 101)	A compulsory core non-credit course sensitising students to gender issues and workplace ethics, administered by the Gender Cell.
TASET (TA 101)	TASET program is an orientation and skill-building program to prepare Teaching Assistants.

Audit Courses	
Audit Course	Audited courses allow exposure to a subject without formal grading and appear on the transcript with an 'AU' grade if minimum participation requirements are met, and if unmet, it is considered as dropped and does not appear on the transcript. They do not count toward credit or CPI/SPI calculations. Students may opt to Audit up to two courses per semester with prior instructor approval.

Additional Learning Courses	
Additional Learning	Students may take extra courses as Additional Learning beyond credit requirements. These do not affect SPI/CPI but appear on the transcript with actual grades.

3.3. Courses Offered

Core Courses	PS 601	Public Policy Theory - I
	PS 602	Public Policy in Practice
	PS 605	Social Science Perspectives in Public Policy
	PS 606	Public Policy in India: History, Institutions and Practice
	PS 609	Research Methodology and Design
	PS 610	Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods
	PS 633	Writing Policy
	PSS 801	Credit Seminar 1
	PSS 802	Credit Seminar 2
	PS 899	Communication Skills
	GC 101	Gender in the Workplace
	TA 101	Teaching Assistant Skill Enhancement & Training (TASET)

Note: All core courses are of 6 credits except the Seminars and 1 credit implies 7 contact hours.

Elective Courses	PS 619	Health Policy
	PS 625	Environmental Governance & Development
	PS 630	Technology and the Future of Workers
	PS 632	Contemporary Issues in Data Policy and Management
	PS 635	Economic Analysis for Public Policy
	PS 636	Information Economy, Platforms and Governance
	PS 637	Circular Economy: Policy and Practices
	PS 642	Policy and Practice of Education
	PS 643	Introduction to AI, Data and Policy
	PS 644	Advanced Topics in AI, Data and Policy
	PS 651	Mobility, Policy and Infrastructure
	PS 657	Cybersecurity Governance and Management - Policy Considerations
	PS 658	Environmental Services in a Climate-Changing World
	PS 660	Documentaries for Policy Change
	PS 661	Data Science for Policy Studies
	PS 663	Urban Planning in India: Policy Implications, Challenges and Approaches
	PS 701	Energy Transition
	PS 801	State, Markets and Public Policy
	Skill-based Courses (3 Credits)	
	PS 646	Public Finance and Budget Analysis
	PS 647	Data Analytics for Public Policy
	PS 648	Data Visualisation for Public Policy
	PS 650	GIS for Policy Analysis
	PS 652	Crafting Narratives to Shape Policy

Note: Above list of elective courses is indicative. Not all electives are offered every year, they are offered depending upon the availability of faculty.

3.4. Minimum Course Credit Requirements

Semester 1			
Course Code	Course Title	Type	Credits
PS 601	Public Policy Theory I	CORE	6
PS 605	Social Science Perspectives in Public Policy	CORE	6
PS 606	Public Policy in India: History, Institutions, and Practices	CORE	6
PS 610	Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods	CORE	6
PSS 801	Credit Seminar 1	CORE	4
GC 101	Gender in the Workplace	CORE	PP/NP
TA 101	Teaching Assistant Skill Enhancement & Training (TASET)	CORE	PP/NP
Total			28

Semester 2			
Course Code	Course Title	Type	Credits
PS 602	Public Policy in Practice	CORE	6
PS 609	Research Methodology and Design	CORE	6
PS 633	Writing Policy	CORE	6
PSS 802	Credit Seminar 2	CORE	4
PS 899	Communication Skills	CORE	PP/NP
PS XXX	Department Elective	DE	6
	Institute Elective	IE	6
Total			34

Total Coursework Credits	62
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Note: 1. Institute Elective (IE) should be opted from outside the list of courses offered by ADCPS. In other words, courses with code PS XXX cannot be opted to fulfil the Institute Elective credit requirements. Department Electives are the courses offered by ADCPS. It is suggested that the Elective Courses be opted in consultation with potential research guides. Elective courses could be pursued in any of the two semesters during the duration of course work in the first year since joining.

2. Admitted PhD students with MA in Public Policy have to fulfil a minimum of 42 credits. It includes the following as mandatory courses: PS 609, PSS 801, PS 633, PSS 802, two Department Electives and one Institute Elective.

3. PP/NP means Pass/Not Pass course.

3.5. Confirmation of PhD Registration

For confirmation of PhD registration, students are required to complete the required course work, as per the applicable requirement mentioned in the rules. Students are required to submit the PhD confirmation form within 15 days from the date of registration of the semester following the completion requirement of course work.

The date of confirmation to PhD will be the date of registration of the following semester after successful completion of the required course work. Confirmation to PhD is necessary for: (i) Temporary break during the programme, (ii) Pre- synopsis report submission and presentation, (iii) Synopsis and Thesis Submission, and (iv) Availing Exit option from PhD programme.

Registration dates of all students shall be decided by the Postgraduate Academic Performance Evaluation Committee (PGAPEC). The final approval to the registration shall be granted by the Senate.

The procedure for confirmation of registration shall be as follows: i) Each student, on completion of the course requirements shall apply for the confirmation of registration. ii) The completed application form shall be forwarded to the PGAPEC, which will consider and confirm the date of registration according to the PhD rules (R.6.1 to R.6.8, as applicable).

3.6. Annual Progress Seminar

All PhD students are required to submit a report (APR – Annual Progress Report) and present a seminar (APS – Annual Progress Seminar), every year from the date of joining, to the Research Progress Committee (RPC) in consultation with supervisor and co-supervisor (if applicable) till successful completion of pre-synopsis. The APR should be submitted prior to the APS presentation.

Following are the schedules of APS presentations:

For students joining in Autumn semester: July to September of the year.

For students joining in Spring semester: December to February of the year.

Refer Institute Academic Calendar for specific dates of presentation.

Students are required to present a Biannual Progress Seminar (BPS), after completion of 6 yrs (for students in PhD programme)/7 yrs (for students in Dual Degree (Masters + PhD programme) till the successful completion of the pre-synopsis.

Extension of APS may be considered in exceptional cases only with prior permission. Application for extension must be submitted by the student using appropriate form through proper channel at least TWO WEEKS prior to the expiry of the APS schedule. Late fine of Rs. 750/- per week will be applicable for delay in APS presentation.

Information on Financial Support

4.1. Fellowships & Assistantships

- PhD students admitted in the Teaching Assistantship (TA) category will receive a monthly fellowship. The eligibility criteria for awarding TA positions for PhDs are according to the guidelines determined by IIT Bombay.
- PhD students admitted in the Financial Award (FA) category, national-level scholarships and sponsorships can be availed from the central and state governments, subject to fulfilling the required eligibility criteria.
- PhD students are also admitted for the Teaching/Research Assistantships through Project (TAP/RAP) depending upon project availability.

4.2. Financial Support for International Conferences

Two types of financial support are offered:

1) Financial Assistance and 2) Refundable Advance

The financial support is inclusive of the following:

- **Travel**
- **Registration fees**
- **DA (including local travel, food bills and local stay as given below)**

For more information: <https://acad.iitb.ac.in/academics/financial-assistance-refundable-advance>

4.3. TA/DA Rates for Fieldwork/Conferences within India

The Board of Governors vide Resolution No. 42/2024|8/271, as its 271st meeting (Circular No. C&A/TA/2024, dated 10.01.2025) approved the revision of TA/DA rates for students towards Fieldwork, Seminar/Conference participation and Gymkhana Activities within India as detailed below:

TA/DA Component	Revised Rate (for PG/PhD)
TA	AC 2nd/Chair Car (including Premium/Tatkal/Suvidha Trains)
Accommodation	₹1200 per day
Local Travel	₹300 per day
Food Bills	₹1000 per day

For more details, please see: <https://bighome.iitb.ac.in/index.php/s/X2GDKKaJfPbcjw>

Leave Policy

According to the PhD Rules at IIT Bombay (Please see Section 11, pp. 45-46):

- All Research Scholars under Teaching Assistantship (TA)/Research Assistantship (RA)/Self-Finance (SF) categories are entitled for leave for a maximum of 30 days per year in addition to public holidays. Also 10 days leave on medical reasons is permitted. The leave due can be carried over to the next year and accumulated upto 90 days.
- Women Scholars are entitled for maternity leave at the full rate for a period of not exceeding 180 days, once during the tenure of their studentship. This should be supported by a medical certificate.
- Male Scholars are entitled for 15 days paternity leave once during the tenure of their studentship. This should be supported by a medical certificate.
- The Head of Department/ Academic unit/ Convener of the Interdisciplinary Programme is authorised to sanction the above leaves.
- No vacation in Summer/Winter is admissible.
- Special Leave to attend Seminars/Conferences in India/abroad to present research papers is admissible as follows:

Event	Duration	Stipend	Sanctioning Authority
Conference/Seminar	5 working days per semester	Yes	Head of the Academic Unit
Internship	Upto 6 months during the entire tenure of the PhD programme.	No	Convener, DPGC (in consultation with DPGC)

Note: Academic leave in excess of above shall be considered by the Dean (AP) on the recommendation of the Convener, DPGC.

- Research Scholars under CSIR/UGC and other categories are governed by the rules of the bodies which provide financial support. In absence of specific rules of the funding agencies the students shall be governed by the Institute leave rules.

Ethics Clearance for Fieldwork

Students whose research work involves human participation (either directly or indirectly), should obtain IIT Bombay Institute Ethics Committee (IEC) approval prior to start of the study or the component of the study involving human participation. IEC approval is mandatory for all such projects. In fact, this is mandated by several funding agencies also e.g. DST, DBT, CSIR and ICMR. IEC approval is also a pre-requisite for such research work to be published in peer reviewed journals of repute. IEC approval cannot be taken retrospectively (Please see: R 8.6, p. 37, PhD Rules).

Note: This aspect in usual cases is not applicable to the type of fieldwork done by PhD students at ADCPS. Yet, it is recommended that the possibilities be consulted with the Research Guide, Faculty Advisor and Head of Department.

Student Wellness

After securing admission at the Institute and starting your stay here, you may feel that a lot of parameters around you are different. You would have more responsibilities to handle at the hostel and at the academic level. Take heart, you will not be the only one. There are a few issues that almost everyone in the Institute faces initially, like academic concerns, social (family and peer) pressure, etc, leading to feelings of loneliness, low confidence, anxiety, stress, anger and sadness, to name a few. It is important to understand that students often lose their focus and give in to these pressures. If not attended to at the right time, this could lead to poor performance, both academically and personally. To help you refrain from losing focus and being unhappy, Counsellors at the Institute-level Student Wellness Centre encourage you to approach them for any problem that you are facing - be it academic, emotional, social or financial- without hesitation.

For more details, please visit the website: <https://www.iitb.ac.in/swc/en/about-student-wellness-centre>

Important Links

Rules and Regulations for PG/PhD: <https://acad.iitb.ac.in/academics/rules/pg>

PhD Rules: <https://www.iitb.ac.in/newacadhome/phdRules.pdf>

Events

Department Level



Policy Talks
Seminars
Workshops

Policy Dialogues
Roundtables
Conferences



Institute Level



Mood Indigo
TechFest
Insight

E-Summit
Abhyuday
PG Cult Events



Office Bearers

Faculty Advisor (PhD 2026–27) :	Prof. Shishir K. Jha
Gender & SC/ST Cell Co-ordinator :	Dr Malish C. M.
PhD Students' Representative :	Ms Shruti Sinha
Gender Cell (Institute Level) :	Prof. Aparna Singh (Convener) Prof. Preeti Raman (Co-convener) https://www.iitb.ac.in/resources/gendercell
SC/ST Cell (Institute Level) :	Prof. Sandip Kumar Saha (Convener) Prof. Nagendra Rao Velaga (Co-convener) Prof. Parmeshwar Udmale (Co-convener) https://www.scstcell.iitb.ac.in

Disclaimer: This handbook aims to serve as a ready reckoner for students by pooling in and simplifying key rules and guidelines at one place. While great care has been taken in its compilation and presentation, it is not exhaustive. In the event of any discrepancy, the official rules and regulations of IIT Bombay shall prevail.

Last Updated: 21 July 2026

