



RESEARCH HANDBOOK

Post Graduate Certificate in Research (PGCertR)

School of Advanced Studies

The Highland Institute
Kohima, Nagaland
2025

Section 1. Introduction & Institutional Background.....	4
1.1 Welcome to the Highland Institute.....	4
1.2 Our Story.....	5
1.2.1 A Research-Centered Institute.....	5
1.2.2. A Hub for Academic Engagement.....	5
1.3 Our Areas of Expertise.....	6
1.3.1 Societies and Cultures of Highland Asia.....	6
1.3.2 Environmental Knowledge and Climate Resilience.....	6
1.3.3 Religion, Healing, and Medical Pluralism.....	7
1.3.4 Political Economy, Borders, and Mobility.....	7
1.3.5 Visual, Material, and Museum Anthropology.....	7
1.3.6 Philosophy, Ethics, and Knowledge Systems.....	8
Link to the PG Cert R Programme.....	8
1.4 Our Academic and Research Partnerships.....	8
1.5 Our Staff and Fellows.....	9
1.6 Why the PG Cert R Programme?.....	10
Section 2: Programme Overview.....	11
2.1 Structure of the PG Cert R Programme.....	11
2.2 Key Phases of the Programme.....	11
2.3 Learning Outcomes.....	12
2.4 Supervision and Mentorship.....	13
2.5 Research Themes and Specializations.....	13
2.5.1 Indigenous Knowledge & Climate Change.....	13
2.5.2 Religious Practices and Healing Traditions.....	14
2.5.3 Political Economies of Borderlands and Mobility.....	14
2.5.4 Histories and Material Cultures of the Highlands.....	14
2.6 Programme Logistics and Key Policies.....	14
2.6.1 Attendance and Participation.....	14
2.6.2 Research Ethics and Fieldwork Approval.....	14
2.6.3 Programme Costs and Financial Support.....	15
2.7 Assessment and Certification.....	15
Section 3: Application Process.....	16
3.1 Eligibility Criteria.....	16
3.1.1 Academic Qualifications.....	16
3.1.2 Research Experience & Proposal Requirements.....	16
3.1.3 Personal Qualities & Commitment.....	16
3.1.4 Language Requirements.....	17
3.2 Application Components & Submission Guidelines.....	17

3.2.1 Required Documents.....	17
3.3 Application Deadlines & Selection Process.....	18
3.3.1 Application Timeline.....	18
3.4 Selection Process.....	18
3.4.1 Evaluation Criteria.....	19
3.5 Admission & Enrollment.....	19
3.5.1 Offer Acceptance.....	19
3.5.2 Pre-Programme Requirements.....	19
3.6 Financial Information.....	19
3.6.1 Scholarship Coverage.....	19
3.6.2 Student Expenses.....	20
3.7 Support for International Students.....	20
3.8 Deferral & Withdrawal Policy.....	20
Section 4: Programme Curriculum.....	21
4.1 Programme Structure and Timeline.....	21
4.1.1 Programme Timeline and Phases.....	21
4.2 Phase 1: Research Foundations (June–September) – Summer School.....	22
4.2.1 Key Themes Covered.....	22
4.3 Phase 2: Fieldwork & Data Collection (October–November).....	23
4.3.1 Fieldwork Guidelines & Expectations.....	23
4.4 Phase 3: Data Analysis & Presentation (December) – Winter Colloquium.....	24
4.4.1 Purpose of the Winter Colloquium.....	24
4.4.2 Presentation Format.....	24
4.5 Phase 4: Writing & Thesis Completion (January–May).....	24
4.5.1 Research Paper & Final Submission.....	24
4.6 Programme Assessment and Certification.....	25
4.6.1 Grading and Assessment Components.....	25
4.6.2 Certification & Graduation.....	25
Section 5: Student Support and Resources.....	26
5.1 Mentorship and Supervision.....	26
5.1.1 Highland Fellowship Supervision.....	26
5.1.2 Additional Academic Support.....	26
5.2 Digital and Library Resources.....	27
5.2.1 Library Access.....	27
5.2.2 Digital Infrastructure.....	27
5.3 Student Well-being and Support.....	28
5.3.1 Student Well-being & Mental Health.....	28
5.3.2 Inclusivity & Accessibility.....	28

5.4 Financial Considerations and Student Responsibilities.....	28
5.4.1 Scholarship Coverage.....	29
5.4.2 Costs Not Covered.....	29
5.5 Career Development & Future Opportunities.....	29
5.6 Summary & Key Takeaways.....	30
Section 6: Assessment & Certification.....	31
6.1 Overview of Assessment Structure.....	31
Key Assessment Components.....	31
6.2 Research Proposal Assessment (15%).....	31
Proposal Structure.....	32
6.3 Fieldwork Portfolio Assessment (20%).....	32
Portfolio Components.....	32
6.4 Preliminary Research Findings Presentation (20%).....	32
Presentation Structure.....	33
6.5 Final Research Dissertation Assessment (45%).....	33
Dissertation Structure.....	33
6.6 Grading Scale & Evaluation Standards.....	34
6.7 Certification & Graduation.....	34
Diploma & Transcript.....	35
Honors & Distinctions.....	35
6.7.1. Internship Certificate in Research Training.....	35
6.8 Summary of Key Deadlines.....	35
Section 7: Programme Policies & Code of Conduct.....	36
7.1 Academic Integrity & Plagiarism Policy.....	36
7.2 Research Ethics & Responsible Conduct.....	37
7.3 Professional Conduct & Student Responsibilities.....	38
7.4 Attendance & Participation Requirements.....	38
7.5 Grievance & Appeals Procedures.....	39
7.6 Health, Safety & Well-Being.....	39
7.7 Financial Responsibilities & Scholarship Terms.....	40
7.8 Summary of Key Policies.....	40
Section 8: Contacts and Key Personnel.....	41
Institutional Information.....	41
Academic Advisory Committee & Faculty.....	41
Administrative and Operations Team.....	42



Section 1. Introduction & Institutional Background

1.1 Welcome to the Highland Institute

The Postgraduate Certificate in Research (PGCertR) at The Highland Institute is a unique, 12-month programme designed to provide structured research training for emerging scholars in the social sciences and humanities. The programme begins with the Summer School, an intensive training phase that introduces key research methodologies, theoretical foundations, and ethical considerations. Successful completion of the Summer School is required to continue into the full PGCertR, which includes fieldwork, data analysis, and a final research thesis. For those who complete the Summer School but choose not to continue, the Institute offers an Internship Certificate in Research Training to formally recognize their participation.

The Highland Institute (HI) is an independent research organization dedicated to the study of highland societies, with a particular focus on the Eastern Himalayas and other mountainous regions across Asia. Established in 2013, the Institute has played a pioneering role in conducting ethnographic and policy-driven research while fostering collaborations between scholars, practitioners, and local communities.

The Institute's School of Advanced Studies (SAS) serves as its primary academic arm, offering training opportunities for postgraduate researchers and early-career scholars. The PGCertR programme builds on the Institute's legacy of interdisciplinary research, capacity-building, and knowledge exchange, ensuring that candidates receive advanced methodological training, independent research experience, and mentorship from leading scholars in the field.

1.2 Our Story

The Highland Institute was founded in response to a growing need for regionally rooted research in the highland societies of Asia, particularly in areas historically underrepresented in mainstream academic discourse. 2025 marks 12 years of commitment to interdisciplinary, field-based research, and direct engagement with communities, institutions, and scholars worldwide.

At its core, the Institute fosters research, academic training, and knowledge exchange across multiple disciplines, including anthropology, history, environmental studies, museum studies, and indigenous knowledge systems. Through extensive fieldwork, data collection, and archival research, the Institute has developed a dynamic research ecosystem that connects scholars with pressing socio-political, ecological, and cultural issues.

1.2.1 A Research-Centered Institute

The Highland Institute is home to a number of **major research projects**, exploring topics such as:

- **Climate Change and Sustainability** – Studying how indigenous ecological knowledge informs adaptive responses to environmental challenges.
- **Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Oral Traditions** – Archiving endangered oral traditions and exploring the philosophical foundations of highland worldviews.
- **Political Economy and Borderlands** – Investigating migration, trade networks, and governance in highland and borderland regions.
- **Health and Medical Pluralism** – Examining the interplay of biomedical and traditional healing systems in highland communities.

The Institute's **everyday research activities** include:

- **Fieldwork and Ethnographic Studies** – Engaging with communities, documenting oral histories, and studying local governance structures.
- **Collaborations with Museums and Archives** – Contributing to heritage preservation projects and digitizing indigenous knowledge.
- **International Academic Conferences and Workshops** – Facilitating discussions between researchers, policymakers, and community leaders.

1.2.2. A Hub for Academic Engagement

Beyond its research agenda, the Highland Institute is an important center for academic training and mentoring. Prior to this year's launch of the Postgraduate Certificate in Research

The Highland Institute, Meluri Road, Ziekezou Colony, Kohima 797003 Nagaland, India +91 70056 05596
info@highlandinstitute.org highlandinstitute.org [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#)

(PG CertR), the Annual Summer School, and the Winter Research Colloquium provided structured training in research methodologies, ethics, and interdisciplinary scholarship. These academic initiatives are now integrated, and further supported by the Ursula Graham Bower Lectures (formerly 'Hutton Lectures'), which bring together leading scholars from around the world to discuss emerging debates in anthropology, history, and environmental studies.

Through its research, publications, and academic programmes, the Highland Institute continues to push the boundaries of knowledge while supporting scholars who work at the intersection of indigenous knowledge, global challenges, and transformative scholarship.

1.3 Our Areas of Expertise

As briefly discussed above, the Highland Institute has built an internationally recognized research portfolio, focusing on six key thematic areas. Our research is highly interdisciplinary and draws upon anthropology, religious studies, indigenous studies, political economy, environmental studies, health sciences, development studies, museum studies, history, geography, literature and literary theory, theology and philosophy.

We work with a broad network of scholars and institutions, integrating high-quality ethnographic and historical research with cutting-edge theoretical frameworks. The PG CertR programme is directly linked to these core research areas, ensuring that students engage in topics that align with pressing global challenges, policy concerns, and community needs.

1.3.1 Societies and Cultures of Highland Asia

The Institute's foundational research explores the societies of Highland Asia, particularly in the Eastern Himalayas, Northeast India, and adjacent regions in Myanmar, Bhutan, and Tibet. Our research addresses:

- The complex social structures, customary law, and governance mechanisms of highland indigenous communities.
- Religious syncretism and cosmological worldviews.
- Migration and displacement in the context of shifting political landscapes.
- The persistence of oral traditions, storytelling, and folk narratives.
- Indigenous responses to state-making, globalization, and regional geopolitics.

1.3.2 Environmental Knowledge and Climate Resilience

Our environmental research investigates the intersection of climate change, sustainability, and indigenous ecological knowledge. Through major multi-year projects like MyClimate (DIIS,

Denmark), Earthkeepers (IDRC, Canada), and Ekologos (Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills), we explore:

- Traditional climate knowledge and adaptation strategies among highland communities.
- Community-based conservation, land tenure, and natural resource management.
- The role of ritual landscapes and sacred geography in ecological sustainability.
- The impact of climate change on food systems, biodiversity, and indigenous livelihoods.
- Policy-oriented research on climate resilience and environmental governance.

1.3.3 Religion, Healing, and Medical Pluralism

Religious belief and medical practices intersect in profound ways among highland communities, influencing healing systems, mental well-being, and epistemologies of health. Our work explores:

- Shamanic traditions, ritual healing, and indigenous health systems.
- The coexistence of biomedical and indigenous health practices (medical pluralism).
- Religious responses to health crises, including pandemics and epidemics.
- The spiritual dimensions of caregiving, palliative care, and end-of-life practices.
- Gender and reproductive health in indigenous medical traditions.

1.3.4 Political Economy, Borders, and Mobility

Our research examines the socio-political dynamics shaping highland communities, with a focus on borders, mobility, and economic transformations. Key areas of investigation include:

- Migration and forced displacement, particularly in response to conflict, climate change, and state-building efforts.
- Cross-border trade, informal economies, and indigenous economic networks.
- The impact of state policies on indigenous governance and autonomy.
- The role of kinship and clan networks in economic resilience.
- Resource extraction, indigenous land rights, and the geopolitics of infrastructure development.

1.3.5 Visual, Material, and Museum Anthropology

The Highland Institute collaborates with museums and cultural institutions to document, curate, and engage with indigenous material culture. We have worked on:

- The Ancestral Voices exhibition in partnership with the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.
- Collaborative curations with the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (MAA), Cambridge and the Humboldt Museum, Berlin.

- Research partnerships with the Indian Museum and the Asiatic Society, Kolkata.
- Archival research on indigenous art, material heritage, and visual ethnography.
- Museum repatriation efforts, indigenous heritage activism, and decolonial curatorial practices.

1.3.6 Philosophy, Ethics, and Knowledge Systems

We are committed to advancing philosophical inquiry and critical theory within highland research. Our work includes:

- Epistemologies of indigenous knowledge and oral traditions.
- The philosophy of nature, ecology, and environmental ethics.
- Studies of infrastructure, policy, and how it interacts with (non-)human living.
- Questions of identity, personhood, and belonging in highland societies.
- Ethical dimensions of research and fieldwork methodologies.
- Comparative studies in non-Western and indigenous ontologies.

Link to the PG CertR Programme

The new Postgraduate Certificate in Research (PG CertR) is designed to immerse students in these six thematic areas, allowing them to develop research projects that contribute to ongoing debates and applied research within The Highland Institute. Students will have opportunities to:

- Conduct original fieldwork with mentorship from established scholars.
- Engage in interdisciplinary workshops and academic training.
- Present findings at the Annual U.G. Bower Lectures (formerly Highlander Lectures).
- Work with museum collections, archival materials, and oral histories.
- Contribute to international research networks and publications.

The Highland Institute's expertise ensures that students in the PG CertR programme gain rigorous training in research methodologies while addressing real-world challenges facing highland communities.

1.4 Our Academic and Research Partnerships

The Highland Institute collaborates closely with leading universities, research centers, and civil society organizations across the world. These partnerships ensure that our research remains rigorous, interdisciplinary, and policy-relevant. Some of our key partners include:

- **Royal Thimphu College (Bhutan)** – Joint research on environmental knowledge, sustainability, and indigenous governance systems.

- **UiT The Arctic University of Norway** – Institutional collaborations in religious studies, visual anthropology, and environmental humanities.
- **Doctors For You (India)** – Collaborative work on public health, indigenous healing systems, and medical pluralism.
- **Danish Institute for International Studies (Denmark)** – Joint research on climate change adaptation, conflict studies, and peacebuilding.
- **International Development Research Centre (Canada)** – Funded projects on climate change, sustainability, and community resilience.
- **RV University Bangalore** - Collaborative work in film studies, especially documentary filmmaking, and ethnographic film.
- **State University of Campinas, Brazil (UNICAMP)** - Collaborative work in environmental humanities through staff and student exchange, and collaboration in indigenous ecological knowledge between Himalaya and Amazonia regions.

These partnerships enrich the PG CertR programme, providing students with access to a global network of scholars, field sites, and research collaborations.

1.5 Our Staff and Fellows

The Highland Fellowship consists of scholars from anthropology, history, religious studies, environmental studies, and political science, among other disciplines. Fellows are responsible for mentoring PG CertR candidates, ensuring that each student receives personalized guidance and supervision.

Our academic team includes:

- **Core Research Faculty** (who oversee research projects, supervise students, and contribute to academic programming).
- **Visiting Scholars & Collaborators** (who bring diverse expertise and regional insights).
- **Research Associates & Postdoctoral Fellows** (who contribute to institutional projects and mentorship).

The School of Advanced Studies (SAS), under which the PG CertR programme is administered, ensures that students receive comprehensive academic support, training, and networking opportunities.

1.6 Why the PGCertR Programme?

The PGCertR programme was established to address the growing need for structured research training in the social sciences and humanities, particularly for early-career scholars interested in field-based research, interdisciplinary collaboration, and innovative methodologies.

What makes the PGCertR unique?

- **Fully funded** – The programme is covered by a full scholarship that includes tuition, library access, and research supervision. For more, see [section 2.6.3](#) below.
- **Fieldwork-centered** – Students gain first-hand research experience in highland communities, working on projects that align with their academic interests.
- **Mentorship-driven** – Candidates receive **one-on-one supervision** from Highland Fellows, ensuring strong, personalised, academic guidance.
- **Interdisciplinary approach** – The programme integrates anthropology, religious studies, environmental studies, and regional studies to foster holistic research training.
- **Global recognition** – Research conducted under this programme is showcased at international conferences, published in peer-reviewed journals, and contributes to public engagement efforts.

By the end of the 12-month programme, students will have developed:

- **A high-quality research thesis** suitable for publication or PhD applications.
- **Strong methodological and analytical skills** in qualitative and interdisciplinary research.
- **A professional academic network** through the Highland Fellowship and research partners.
- **Experience in public engagement** and open-access knowledge sharing.

Section 2: Programme Overview

2.1 Structure of the PG CertR Programme

The Postgraduate Certificate in Research (PG CertR) at the Highland Institute’s School of Advanced Studies (SAS) is a 12-month, research-intensive programme designed to provide early-career scholars with advanced methodological training, hands-on fieldwork experience, and interdisciplinary academic mentorship. The programme begins with the Summer School, an intensive research training phase that serves as the entry point to the PG CertR.

Students who successfully complete the Summer School may continue into the full PG CertR, progressing through fieldwork, data analysis, and final thesis submission. Alternatively, those who complete the Summer School but choose not to continue will receive an Internship Certificate in Research Training, formally recognizing their participation in this phase.

The programme follows a carefully structured timeline to ensure that students develop robust research projects, engage with high-level academic discussions, and receive mentorship from leading scholars in their respective fields.

2.2 Key Phases of the Programme

The PG CertR is designed to be immersive and intensive, with structured phases that guide students through their research process, from proposal development to thesis submission.

Phase	Timeframe	Key Activities
Phase 1: Summer School & Research Design	June - September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intensive methodological training during the Annual Summer School - Research design, proposal development, and theoretical foundations - Introduction to ethical considerations and fieldwork preparation - Assignment of mentors from the Highland Fellowship

Phase 2: Fieldwork & Data Collection	October – November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Immersive field-based research in the student’s chosen area - Engagement with communities, stakeholders, and archival sources - Regular check-ins with mentors - Preliminary data analysis
Phase 3: Winter Colloquium & Preliminary Findings Presentation	December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation of preliminary findings at the Annual Research Colloquium (aligned with the Ursula Graham Bower Lectures) - Peer feedback and discussion on emerging research insights - Advanced theoretical workshops and writing strategies
Phase 4: Writing & Final Submission	January – May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focused writing period under the guidance of mentors - Submission of a final research thesis (12,000–15,000 words) - Optional peer-reviewed publication submission - Completion of programme requirements and certification

This structure ensures that students progress systematically, integrating training, field research, mentorship, and academic presentations to produce high-caliber scholarly work.

2.3 Learning Outcomes

The **PGCertR programme** is designed to develop independent, critically engaged, and methodologically skilled researchers. By the end of the programme, participants will:

- **Develop expertise in qualitative and interdisciplinary research methodologies**, particularly those relevant to highland and indigenous studies.
- **Gain practical experience in field research**, including participant observation, ethnographic interviewing, archival work, and digital research techniques.
- **Demonstrate strong analytical and writing skills**, producing a high-quality thesis suitable for publication or further academic research.

- **Engage in academic discourse and peer-review processes**, particularly through presenting research at the Winter Research Colloquium.
- **Develop networks with scholars and institutions globally**, particularly through collaboration with Highland Fellows, visiting scholars, and partner institutions.
- **Acquire advanced knowledge of ethical research practices**, especially regarding working with indigenous communities and sensitive socio-political issues.

This comprehensive skill set prepares candidates for PhD programmes, policy research roles, NGO work, and academic publishing.

2.4 Supervision and Mentorship

Each PG CertR candidate will be assigned a dedicated mentor from the Highland Fellowship, who will provide intellectual guidance, research feedback, and professional development support. Mentorship will be:

- **One-on-one** – Fellows will meet regularly with students (online or in-person) to discuss research progress.
- **Interdisciplinary** – Mentors will guide students in integrating multiple disciplines into their research frameworks.
- **Project-focused** – Supervisors will help students refine their research questions, improve methodology, and strengthen analytical rigor.
- **Collaborative** – Students may also receive input from guest scholars, research associates, and field-based practitioners.

Mentorship is a cornerstone of the PG CertR, ensuring that students receive personalized support and critical engagement throughout the research process.

2.5 Research Themes and Specializations

The programme aligns with The Highland Institute's core research priorities (listed above in [Section 1.3](#)), ensuring that students' projects contribute to ongoing academic and policy discussions. Candidates are encouraged to develop research projects within the institute's core priority areas, or be guided by these broad themes:

2.5.1 Indigenous Knowledge & Climate Change

- Traditional ecological knowledge and climate resilience
- Indigenous responses to environmental change
- Sacred landscapes and sustainability practices

2.5.2 Religious Practices and Healing Traditions

- Medical pluralism and indigenous healing systems
- Intersections of religion, ritual, and health
- Cosmologies, dreams, and spiritual authority in highland societies

2.5.3 Political Economies of Borderlands and Mobility

- Migration, trade, and identity in highland borderlands
- Sovereignty and governance in contested regions
- Indigenous political movements and resistance

2.5.4 Histories and Material Cultures of the Highlands

- Oral traditions and indigenous historiographies
- The role of material culture in identity formation
- Post-colonial transformations in highland societies

Students may also propose original research topics that align with the Institute's expertise, but should be agreed upon with the student's supervisor.

2.6 Programme Logistics and Key Policies

2.6.1 Attendance and Participation

- The Summer School (June-September) and Winter Colloquium (December) are mandatory components of the programme.
- Regular mentor meetings are expected during fieldwork and the writing phase.
- Candidates must engage in peer discussions, feedback sessions, and professional development activities throughout the programme.

2.6.2 Research Ethics and Fieldwork Approval

- All students must submit a detailed research plan before fieldwork begins.
- Ethical considerations, including informed consent and indigenous knowledge protection, must be explicitly addressed.
- The Institute's Research Ethics Committee will review proposals before approval.

2.6.3 Programme Costs and Financial Support

The PG CertR is fully funded, covering:

- Tuition and administrative fees
- Research training and access to the Institute's academic resources
- Supervision and mentorship by Highland Fellows

However, students must cover their own:

- Travel and accommodation expenses for in-person events (Summer School, Winter Colloquium)
- Any fieldwork-related costs not included in external funding

Scholarship funding details will be provided to each admitted student, ensuring full transparency about financial commitments.

2.7 Assessment and Certification

To successfully complete the full programme and receive the Postgraduate Certificate in Research (PG CertR), candidates must:

- Attend and actively participate in the Summer School
- Successfully complete field research and submit periodic progress reports
- Present preliminary findings at the Winter Research Colloquium
- Submit a final thesis (12,000–15,000 words)
- Engage in peer feedback and research discussions

Participants who complete the Summer School but do not continue into the full PG CertR may receive an Internship Certificate in Research Training, recognizing their successful participation in this first phase of the programme.

Section 3: Application Process

The Postgraduate Certificate in Research (PG Cert R) at The Highland Institute’s School of Advanced Studies is a highly competitive, fully funded programme designed to provide outstanding early-career researchers with advanced methodological training and interdisciplinary mentorship. This section outlines the eligibility criteria, application requirements, selection process, and key deadlines for prospective applicants.

3.1 Eligibility Criteria

To ensure that candidates possess the necessary background and research skills to excel in the PG Cert R, the following eligibility criteria must be met:

3.1.1 Academic Qualifications

- Applicants must have completed a Master’s degree (or be in the final stages of completion) in a relevant discipline, including but not limited to:
 - Anthropology, Sociology, Religious Studies, Environmental Studies, History, Political Science, Indigenous Studies, Geography, or Cultural Studies.
- Exceptional undergraduate students with significant research experience and a strong academic record may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

3.1.2 Research Experience & Proposal Requirements

- Candidates must demonstrate prior research experience, such as a Master’s thesis, independent research project, or significant fieldwork experience.
- A well-developed research proposal (1,500–2,000 words) is required, outlining:
 - ☑ **Research question(s)** and objectives
 - ☑ **Theoretical framework** and literature review
 - ☑ **Proposed methodology** (qualitative, ethnographic, historical, etc.)
 - ☑ **Expected outcomes and contribution** to existing knowledge
 - ☑ **Ethical considerations** and community engagement

3.1.3 Personal Qualities & Commitment

- The programme seeks applicants who demonstrate:
 - ☑ **A strong commitment** to academic research and intellectual curiosity
 - ☑ **The ability to work independently** and manage research timelines effectively
 - ☑ **Willingness to engage in interdisciplinary** discussions and peer collaboration

- Interest in contributing to scholarly** networks and academic publications

3.1.4 Language Requirements

- The primary language of instruction and research is English. Applicants must have a strong command of academic English.
- If English is not the applicant's first language, they must provide evidence of proficiency through prior academic work or standardized tests (IELTS/TOEFL – optional but encouraged).

3.2 Application Components & Submission Guidelines

Applicants must submit a complete application package by the deadline to be considered for the programme. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

3.2.1 Required Documents

- Online Application Form**
 - All candidates must complete the official online application form, which includes personal details, academic background, and research interests.
- Statement of Purpose (1,000 words max.)**
 - A compelling essay that articulates:
 - Why the applicant wishes to enroll in the PG Cert R programme.
 - Their academic background, research interests, and professional goals.
 - How the programme aligns with their future research and career aspirations.
 - Any relevant experience (fieldwork, teaching, publications).
- Research Proposal (1,500–2,000 words, see 3.1.2 above)**
 - A detailed and structured proposal that reflects the candidate's ability to conduct rigorous independent research.
- Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
 - A **2–3 page CV** highlighting:
 - Educational background
 - Research experience (including fieldwork and publications)
 - Relevant work experience (if any)
 - Conferences, workshops, or academic presentations attended
- Two Academic Reference Letters**

- Letters from professors, thesis supervisors, or research mentors who can assess the candidate's:
 - Research potential and academic ability
 - Analytical and critical thinking skills
 - Commitment to independent study
 - Letters should be written on official letterhead and sent directly by referees to the admissions office.
- Academic Transcripts & Certificates**
- Copies of official transcripts from previous degrees.
 - Degree certificates (or proof of anticipated graduation for current Master's students).
- Writing Sample (Optional but Encouraged)**
- A sample of previous academic work (e.g., Master's thesis chapter, published article, or research paper).

3.3 Application Deadlines & Selection Process

3.3.1 Application Timeline

Stage	Date
Applications Open	March 18
Application Deadline	April 30
Shortlisting & Interviews	May 1-5
Final Selection Announcement	May 6
Programme Start (Summer School)	June 20

3.4 Selection Process

Applications are rigorously reviewed by a selection committee composed of Highland Institute faculty, Highland Fellows, and invited experts.

3.4.1 Evaluation Criteria

Each application is assessed based on the following criteria:

Criterion	Weight (%)
Quality & Originality of Research Proposal	40%
Academic Excellence & Research Experience	30%
Statement of Purpose & Fit with Programme	20%
Letters of Recommendation	10%

- Shortlisted candidates will be invited for an interview (virtual or in person) with faculty members.
- Final selections will be based on intellectual potential, research promise, and overall fit with the programme.

3.5 Admission & Enrollment

3.5.1 Offer Acceptance

- Successful candidates will receive an official offer letter.
- They must confirm acceptance within two weeks.

3.5.2 Pre-Programme Requirements

Upon acceptance, students will receive:

- Pre-programme reading list
- Guidelines on fieldwork ethics & methodology
- Access to The Highland Institute's digital research platforms

3.6 Financial Information

3.6.1 Scholarship Coverage

The PG CertR is fully funded, covering:

- Tuition and administrative fees
- Library and research infrastructure access
- Mentorship and academic supervision

3.6.2 Student Expenses

Students must cover their own:

- Travel to and from in-person events (Summer School, Winter Colloquium, etc.)
- Accommodation and living costs during fieldwork
- Any additional costs related to their research (unless covered by external grants)

A detailed cost breakdown will be provided upon admission, ensuring that students fully understand financial responsibilities.

3.7 Support for International Students

For non-Indian nationals or students conducting research outside their home country, the Institute provides:

- Advice on visa processes and travel requirements
- Letters of support for research permits
- Guidance on local accommodations and logistics

International applicants should plan research timelines accordingly to accommodate any necessary permits or institutional approvals.

3.8 Deferral & Withdrawal Policy

- Deferrals will be considered only in exceptional cases (e.g., medical emergencies, personal crises).
- Withdrawals must be communicated in writing and may affect future eligibility for other Highland Institute programmes.

Section 4: Programme Curriculum

The Postgraduate Certificate in Research (PGCertR) at The Highland Institute’s School of Advanced Studies is a rigorous 12-month interdisciplinary programme designed to provide early-career researchers with a strong foundation in research methodologies, fieldwork experience, and academic writing. The curriculum is structured to progressively develop key skills in theory, methods, data collection, analysis, and dissemination, culminating in an independent research project.

4.1 Programme Structure and Timeline

The PGCertR follows a structured progression, allowing students to integrate theoretical training with practical research. Each phase builds upon the previous, ensuring that students gain both conceptual and applied research competencies.

4.1.1 Programme Timeline and Phases

Phase	Month	Key Activities	Credits
Phase 1: Research Foundations	June–September	Summer School (Intensive Training in Research Methods, Ethics, and Writing)	15 ECTS
Phase 2: Fieldwork & Data Collection	October–November	Independent Field Research (Supervised by Highland Fellowship Members)	20 ECTS
Phase 3: Data Analysis & Presentation	December	Winter Colloquium – Presentation of Preliminary Findings	10 ECTS
Phase 4: Writing & Thesis Completion	January–May	Research Paper Development, Writing Workshops, Submission of Thesis	15 ECTS
Total	12 months	Completion and Certification	60 ECTS

Note: The total programme is equivalent to 60 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System), aligning with global academic standards for postgraduate qualifications.

4.2 Phase 1: Research Foundations (June–September) – Summer School

The Summer School is the first phase of the PG CertR and provides students with essential research tools, conceptual frameworks, and methodological training. Successful completion of the Summer School is required for progression into the next phases of the PG CertR, including fieldwork, analysis, and thesis writing. However, participants who complete the Summer School but do not wish to continue with the full programme may receive an Internship Certificate in Research Training, recognizing their participation in this intensive research training phase.

4.2.1 Key Themes Covered

The Summer School covers:

- Research Design & Theoretical Foundations**
 - Conceptualizing research questions
 - Developing a strong literature review
 - Engaging with indigenous methodologies and decolonial research frameworks
- Methodological Approaches**
 - Qualitative (ethnography, interviews, oral histories, archival work)
 - Quantitative (survey design, basic statistics, digital humanities)
 - Mixed Methods
- Fieldwork Ethics & Researcher Responsibility**
 - Navigating ethics in indigenous and community-based research
 - Institutional approvals, informed consent, and decolonial ethics
- Academic Writing & Communication**
 - Writing grant proposals, abstracts, and journal articles
 - Open-access publishing and knowledge dissemination strategies
- Research Technology & Digital Methods**
 - Introduction to digital tools (e.g., Atlas.ti, NVivo, R for qualitative coding)
 - Mapping tools (GIS, remote sensing) for environmental and geographical research
- Students are assessed through:**
 - Short research proposals

- Ethics and methodology reflections
- Participation in seminars and discussions

4.3 Phase 2: Fieldwork & Data Collection (October–November)

Following the Summer School, students conduct independent fieldwork, supported by mentorship and regular virtual check-ins with their assigned Highland Fellow supervisor.

4.3.1 Fieldwork Guidelines & Expectations

Length & Location

- 8–12 weeks of independent field research in their chosen region (aligned with research proposal).
- Students may conduct research in India, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar, or another approved site, in coordination with Highland Institute’s regional partners.

Supervision & Support

- Each student is paired with a Highland Fellow who provides guidance on fieldwork strategies, ethics, and analysis.
- Monthly virtual mentorship sessions for progress tracking.

Data Collection Methods

Students will apply different methods, including:

- Ethnographic participant observation
- Interviews and oral history documentation
- Archival research and material culture analysis
- Environmental and ecological data gathering (for interdisciplinary projects)

Challenges & Adaptive Strategies

Students are trained to navigate:

- Cultural sensitivities and ethical dilemmas
- Community engagement and trust-building
- Data security, digital archiving, and note-keeping best practices

Fieldwork Deliverables:

1. Field Notes and Data Logs (submitted biweekly)
2. Midway Check-in Report (October)
3. Preliminary Analysis Report (November)

4.4 Phase 3: Data Analysis & Presentation (December) – Winter Colloquium

Returning from fieldwork, students will present preliminary findings at the Annual U.G. Bower Lectures (formerly the Hutton Lectures).

4.4.1 Purpose of the Winter Colloquium

- Refining research focus through peer and faculty feedback
- Developing analysis and interpretations
- Engaging with broader academic networks

4.4.2 Presentation Format

- 20-minute conference-style research presentation
- Engagement in interdisciplinary panel discussions
- Workshop with Highland Fellows on refining thesis structure

Deliverables:

- Conference-style research paper (5,000 words)
- Public engagement session (optional for those interested in outreach and impact)

4.5 Phase 4: Writing & Thesis Completion (January–May)

In the final phase, students analyze, write, and refine their thesis while working closely with their supervisor and peers.

4.5.1 Research Paper & Final Submission

- Format: A 15,000–20,000-word research paper, structured as:**
 - Abstract and Introduction (1,500 words)
 - Literature Review and Theoretical Framework (3,000 words)
 - Methodology and Research Context (3,000 words)
 - Findings and Analysis (6,000–8,000 words)
 - Conclusion and Future Research Implications (2,000 words)
- Writing Support**
 - Monthly writing workshops and peer-review sessions

- Guest lectures from journal editors on publishing strategies
- ☑ **Final Submission & Certification**
 - Students must submit final research papers in May.
 - Successful candidates receive the PGCertR qualification from The Highland Institute School of Advanced Studies.

4.6 Programme Assessment and Certification

4.6.1 Grading and Assessment Components

Component	Weight (%)
Summer School Participation & Assignments	20%
Fieldwork Report & Data Analysis	30%
Winter Colloquium Presentation	20%
Final Research Paper (Thesis Submission)	30%

Students must achieve a passing grade (minimum 50%) in all components to receive the certificate.

4.6.2 Certification & Graduation

- Upon completion, students receive a formal PGCertR diploma.
- Outstanding research projects may be published in The Highlander Journal or other peer-reviewed outlets.
- Graduates are encouraged to apply for PhDs and pursue academic careers with Highland Fellowship recommendations.

Section 5: Student Support and Resources

The Postgraduate Certificate in Research (PG CertR) at The Highland Institute's School of Advanced Studies is designed to provide students with comprehensive academic, logistical, and pastoral support throughout the 12-month programme. This section outlines the mentorship structure, access to digital and physical research resources, student well-being initiatives, and additional professional development opportunities.

5.1 Mentorship and Supervision

5.1.1 Highland Fellowship Supervision

Each student is paired with a Highland Fellow, who serves as their primary mentor and academic supervisor. The mentor:

- Guides students in research design, fieldwork, and academic writing.
- Provides monthly virtual check-ins to assess progress and address challenges.
- Reviews and gives feedback on research proposals, field notes, and the final thesis.
- Supports professional development, advising students on PhD applications, grants, and publication strategies.

Mentor-Student Matching:

- Students will be assigned mentors based on research interests and expertise.
- Mentor assignments are finalized during the Summer School following preliminary research proposal discussions.

Expectations of Students:

- Students must actively engage with their mentors, submit updates on progress, and attend scheduled meetings.
- While mentorship primarily occurs virtually, in-person meetings may be arranged if feasible.

5.1.2 Additional Academic Support

Beyond the primary mentor, students benefit from:

- Faculty and Guest Lectures:**

- Regular online and in-person lectures by leading scholars in anthropology, history, political science, religious studies, and environmental humanities.
- ☑ **Research Writing Support:**
 - Dedicated writing workshops to improve academic argumentation, structure, and clarity.
 - Peer-review sessions to refine research papers before submission.
- ☑ **Group Study and Discussion Forums:**
 - Monthly thematic discussion groups where students and faculty explore current research debates.
 - Opportunities for students to collaborate on interdisciplinary projects.

5.2 Digital and Library Resources

To ensure students have access to high-quality research materials and digital tools, the Highland Institute provides:

5.2.1 Library Access

- ☑ **The Highland Institute Research Library:**
 - Extensive collections of books, academic journals, and digital archives.
 - Specialized resources on indigenous knowledge systems, environmental humanities, Himalayan studies, and anthropology.
 - On-site and remote access to electronic resources.
- ☑ **Partner Library Access:**
 - Collaborations with Royal Thimphu College (Bhutan), Nagaland University (India), and UiT The Arctic University of Norway for additional journal and book access.

 **Students can request inter-library loans for specialized research materials.**

5.2.2 Digital Infrastructure

- ☑ **E-Learning Platform:**
 - All coursework, assignments, and supplementary materials are available on the Highland Institute's online platform.
- ☑ **Software Access:**
 - Qualitative data analysis tools: NVivo, Atlas.ti
 - Quantitative data analysis: SPSS, R, Python for humanities research
 - Mapping and visualization: ArcGIS, QGIS

- Referencing software: Zotero, EndNote

Research Databases:

- JSTOR, Project MUSE, Google Scholar access for key readings and sources.
- Institute-hosted digital archives for historical and ethnographic material.

5.3 Student Well-being and Support

Recognizing the demands of research, the PG CertR programme integrates well-being initiatives to support students emotionally and professionally.

5.3.1 Student Well-being & Mental Health

Fieldwork Support

- Training on navigating ethical dilemmas, cultural sensitivity, and safety protocols.
- Access to emergency contacts and mental health check-ins during fieldwork.

Counseling Services

- Students can request virtual counseling sessions with trained professionals.

Community & Peer Support

- Students are assigned peer mentors (alumni or senior researchers) for informal support and guidance.

5.3.2 Inclusivity & Accessibility

The Highland Institute is committed to diversity and accessibility in research education.

Accessibility Considerations:

- Students with disabilities are encouraged to request reasonable accommodations.
- Alternative assessment formats are available for students with learning needs.

Code of Conduct & Anti-Harassment Policy

- The Institute maintains a zero-tolerance policy on discrimination and harassment.
- Training sessions on creating inclusive research environments are included in the Summer School.

5.4 Financial Considerations and Student Responsibilities

5.4.1 Scholarship Coverage

The PGCertR is fully funded through a scholarship programme, which covers:



- Tuition Fees
- Library and Digital Resources Access
- Mentorship and Supervision
- Participation in Summer School and Winter Colloquium

5.4.2 Costs Not Covered

Students must cover the following expenses themselves:

- Accommodation and Living Costs during Summer School and Winter Colloquium.
- Travel Expenses (to and from research sites, and to in-person training sessions).


Estimated Costs:

-  Accommodation arranged in coordination with Highland Institute hospitality may be available at subsidized rates.
-  Students are encouraged to seek external grants or sponsorship for fieldwork-related travel.

5.5 Career Development & Future Opportunities

Graduates of the PGCertR programme are well-positioned for academic and professional careers in research, development, and policy.

- PhD Pathways & Graduate Studies**
 - The Institute supports students in applying for PhD programmes at leading institutions.
 - Recommendation letters and mentorship on proposal writing are provided.
- Publication & Conference Opportunities**
 - Outstanding research papers may be published in The Highlander Journal.
 - Students are encouraged to present at international conferences.
- Networking with Experts**
 - Access to the Highland Fellowship network, connecting students with leading scholars and professionals.

 Alumni remain part of The Highland Institute's academic community and may continue to contribute to research collaborations.

5.6 Summary & Key Takeaways

- Dedicated mentorship through the Highland Fellowship.
- Access to top-tier research libraries, journals, and digital tools.
- Fieldwork safety measures, well-being support, and counseling services.
- Scholarship covering tuition, but students must arrange accommodation and travel.
- Pathways to PhD, publication, and professional research opportunities.

Section 6: Assessment & Certification

The Postgraduate Certificate in Research (PGCertR) at The Highland Institute's School of Advanced Studies is a rigorous 12-month programme designed to cultivate independent research skills, critical thinking, and professional academic writing. This section details the assessment criteria, submission guidelines, grading policies, and certification requirements to ensure clarity and transparency for students.



6.1 Overview of Assessment Structure

The PGCertR is assessed through a combination of coursework, fieldwork documentation, research presentations, and a final dissertation.

Key Assessment Components

- 1. Research Proposal (June - Summer School) – 15%**
 - A structured written proposal outlining research aims, methodology, ethical considerations, and expected outcomes.
 - Assessed by faculty mentors and the Academic Committee.
 - Feedback is provided before commencing fieldwork.
- 2. Fieldwork Portfolio (October - November) – 20%**
 - Includes field notes, interview transcripts, photographic evidence, and observational reports.
 - Assessed based on depth of engagement, documentation quality, and methodological rigor.
- 3. Preliminary Research Findings Presentation (December Colloquium) – 20%**
 - Oral presentation at the Annual U.G. Bower Lectures.
 - Evaluated on clarity, engagement, coherence, and responsiveness to feedback.
- 4. Final Research Dissertation (May Submission) – 45%**
 - A 6,000–8,000 word dissertation based on independent research.
 - Must follow academic writing conventions and demonstrate analytical depth.
 - Assessed by external examiners and the Highland Fellowship.

6.2 Research Proposal Assessment (15%)

-  **Submission Deadline: End of Summer School (June 30th)**
-  **Word Limit: 1,500–2,000 words**

Proposal Structure

- **Title & Abstract (200 words)** – A concise summary of the research topic and objectives.
- **Research Questions & Objectives (300 words)** – Clearly defined research aims.
- **Literature Review (500 words)** – A critical review of existing studies.
- **Methodology (500 words)** – Fieldwork approach, data collection, and ethical considerations.
- **Expected Contribution (200 words)** – How the study advances knowledge.
- **Work Plan & Timeline (300 words)** – Phases of research and deliverables.

Evaluation Criteria

- Feasibility & Originality** – Research must be achievable and contribute new insights.
- Methodological Rigor** – Clarity and justification of research methods.
- Engagement with Literature** – Use of relevant academic sources.

6.3 Fieldwork Portfolio Assessment (20%)

- Submission Deadline:** December 1st
- Format:** Digital Portfolio Submission (PDF + Appendices)




Portfolio Components

- Daily Field Notes** – Detailed observations and reflections from research sites.
- Data Documentation** – Transcribed interviews, focus group discussions, photographs.
- Self-Assessment Report (1,000 words)** – Reflections on challenges, ethical considerations, and key findings.

Evaluation Criteria

- Depth of Data Collection** – Quality of interviews, observations, and recordings.
- Analytical Reflections** – Critical engagement with field experiences.
- Research Ethics** – Sensitivity to ethical challenges and participant well-being.

6.4 Preliminary Research Findings Presentation (20%)

-  **Presentation Date:** During the U.G. Bower Lectures (December Colloquium)
-  **Duration:** 15-minute presentation + 10-minute Q&A
-  **Format:** PowerPoint / Visual Presentation




Presentation Structure

- Introduction** – Context, research questions, and objectives.
- Methodology** – Summary of fieldwork approach.
- Key Findings** – Data analysis and preliminary insights.
- Challenges & Ethical Considerations** – Research limitations.
- Next Steps** – Plans for dissertation completion.

Evaluation Criteria

- Clarity & Coherence** – Logical flow of ideas and presentation structure.
- Analytical Depth** – Ability to interpret and contextualize findings.
- Engagement & Response** – Interaction with audience questions and feedback.

6.5 Final Research Dissertation Assessment (45%)

-  **Submission Deadline:** May 1st
-  **Word Limit:** 6,000–8,000 words
-  **Assessment Committee:**

- Primary Examiner (Highland Fellow)
- External Examiner (Affiliated Academic)

Dissertation Structure

- Abstract (250 words)** – Summary of findings and significance.
- Introduction (750 words)** – Research background, objectives, and justification.
- Literature Review (1,500 words)** – Academic context and theoretical framework.
- Methodology (1,000 words)** – Research methods, fieldwork description.
- Findings & Analysis (2,000–3,000 words)** – Presentation of data and critical discussion.
- Conclusion & Future Research (750 words)** – Summary and possible next steps.

Evaluation Criteria

- Academic Quality** – Writing clarity, structure, and originality.
- Research Rigour** – Depth of engagement with field data and literature.
- Theoretical Contribution** – Advancement of knowledge in the discipline.

6.6 Grading Scale & Evaluation Standards

Grade	Percentage Range	Descriptor	Criteria
A	85–100%	Distinction	Exceptional research, significant contribution to knowledge, advanced analytical depth.
B	70–84%	Merit	Strong critical analysis, well-supported arguments, high methodological standards.
C	55–69%	Pass	Satisfactory research and analysis, minor weaknesses in depth and organization.
D	40–54%	Marginal Pass	Basic understanding, lacks depth or methodological clarity.
F	Below 40%	Fail	Inadequate research, weak argumentation, lack of coherence.

Resubmission Policy:

- Students scoring below 50% on any component may request one resubmission (final dissertation excluded).

Late Submission Penalties:

- 5% deduction per day, up to one week. Beyond this, work will not be accepted.

6.7 Certification & Graduation

 **Awarded by: The Highland Institute – School of Advanced Studies**

 **Certification Criteria:**

- Successful completion of all assessment components.
- Minimum grade of 55% (C) across all elements.

- Active participation in Summer School, Fieldwork, and the December Colloquium.

Diploma & Transcript

 Upon completion, students receive:

- Postgraduate Certificate in Research (PGCertR) diploma
- Academic transcript with grades and faculty remarks
- Letter of Completion from The Highland Institute

Honors & Distinctions

Top 10% of graduates may receive:

- "Distinction" honour on their diploma.
- Nomination for Highland Fellowship membership.
- Publication opportunities in The Highlander Journal.

6.7.1. Internship Certificate in Research Training

Students who successfully complete the Summer School but do not continue with the full PG CertR may receive an **Internship Certificate in Research Training**, issued by The Highland Institute's School of Advanced Studies. This certificate formally recognizes the research training, methodology, and theoretical foundations acquired during the Summer School.

6.8 Summary of Key Deadlines

Component	Deadline
Research Proposal	July 30th
Fieldwork Portfolio	December 1st
Research Presentation	December (Colloquium)
Final Dissertation	May 1st
Graduation & Certification	June

Section 7: Programme Policies & Code of Conduct

The Postgraduate Certificate in Research (PGCertR) at The Highland Institute's School of Advanced Studies is committed to fostering an environment of academic integrity, professional conduct, and ethical research practice. This section outlines key policies on research ethics, plagiarism, academic integrity, professional behavior, student responsibilities, grievance procedures, and appeals processes to ensure a fair, respectful, and intellectually rigorous academic community.

7.1 Academic Integrity & Plagiarism Policy





Definition of Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the foundation of scholarly work, requiring all students to engage honestly, ethically, and responsibly in their research and coursework. The PGCertR programme expects students to:

- Submit original work that reflects their independent thought and effort.
- Acknowledge all sources of ideas, data, and arguments.
- Avoid unauthorized collaboration on individual assignments.
- Comply with research ethics when working with human participants.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism—defined as using another person's words, ideas, or data without proper attribution—is a serious offense. Forms of plagiarism include:

-  **Direct Plagiarism** – Copying text word-for-word without citation.
-  **Mosaic Plagiarism** – Paraphrasing content without proper acknowledgment.
-  **Self-Plagiarism** – Submitting one's previous work for multiple assignments.
-  **Accidental Plagiarism** – Failing to cite sources correctly due to oversight.

Consequences of Plagiarism

If plagiarism is detected, the following actions will be taken:

- Minor offenses (accidental citation errors) → Written warning and mandatory academic writing session.
- Moderate offenses (small portions of unreferenced material) → Grade deduction and resubmission required.

- Severe offenses (deliberate plagiarism, including full sections of copied text) → Automatic failure of the assignment and potential expulsion from the programme.

Plagiarism Detection

All submissions undergo plagiarism screening using Turnitin or equivalent software. Students must also complete a statement of originality with their dissertation submission.

7.2 Research Ethics & Responsible Conduct

Core Ethical Principles

All students must conduct research in accordance with:

- Respect for Persons** – Protecting the dignity, autonomy, and privacy of research participants.
- Beneficence** – Ensuring no harm comes to research participants.
- Justice** – Avoiding exploitation and ensuring fair representation.

Ethical Approval Process

- Students conducting research with human participants must obtain ethical clearance from the Highland Institute Ethics Committee before commencing fieldwork.**
- Ethical approval is mandatory for research involving:**
 - Interviews, focus groups, or ethnographic observations.
 - Sensitive cultural or political topics.
 - Vulnerable populations (e.g., minors, elderly, displaced groups).

Informed Consent

- Participants must voluntarily agree to take part in research.
- Consent forms should outline the purpose, risks, confidentiality, and voluntary participation.
- Participants must be able to withdraw at any time without consequences.

Data Protection & Confidentiality

Students must:

- Anonymize sensitive data to protect participant identity.
- Store research data securely and only share it with approved personnel.

- Comply with GDPR and international data protection regulations if working with digital data.

7.3 Professional Conduct & Student Responsibilities

General Expectations

Students are expected to:

- Maintain respectful communication with faculty, peers, and research participants.
- Meet deadlines and uphold academic standards.
- Engage actively in Summer School, fieldwork, and colloquium presentations.
- Uphold the reputation of The Highland Institute in all professional and research engagements.

Expected Conduct in Academic Spaces

- Maintain professional email etiquette when contacting faculty or research participants.
- Avoid disruptive behavior in online discussions, workshops, and seminars.
- Respect diverse perspectives in academic debates and discussions.

Harassment & Discrimination Policy

The Institute maintains a zero-tolerance policy on harassment, discrimination, or bullying based on:

- Gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, disability, or political views.
- Sexual harassment or inappropriate professional behavior.

Reporting Violations

- Students can report any incidents to the Human Resource Manager.
- A formal investigation will be conducted, and appropriate action will be taken.

7.4 Attendance & Participation Requirements

Mandatory Programme Components

Students must fully participate in:

- Summer School (June)** – Attendance required at all core sessions.
- Fieldwork (October - November)** – Submission of periodic progress reports.

- Colloquium & U.G. Bower Lectures (December)** – Presentation of findings.
- Dissertation Submission (May)** – Meeting deadlines for research completion.

Absence Policy

- Excused absences require prior notification and valid justification (medical, personal emergencies).
- Unexcused absences exceeding 10% of programme activities may result in withdrawal from the certificate.

7.5 Grievance & Appeals Procedures

Academic Grievances

Students may appeal decisions on grades, ethical approval, or disciplinary actions through the following steps:

Step 1: Informal Resolution

- Discuss the issue directly with the faculty mentor or the programme coordinator.

Step 2: Formal Written Appeal

- If unresolved, submit a formal appeal letter within 10 working days of receiving a decision.
- Appeals must include supporting evidence and a detailed explanation.

Step 3: Review by the Appeals Committee

- The Committee will review the case and respond within 20 working days.
- Their decision is final and binding.

Non-Academic Grievances

- Issues related to discrimination, harassment, or misconduct should be reported to the Human Resource Manager.
- Investigations will be confidential and impartial.

7.6 Health, Safety & Well-Being

Fieldwork Safety Protocols

- Students must complete safety training before fieldwork.
- Emergency contacts must be provided before travel.
- If conducting research in politically sensitive areas, students must have approval from the Highland Institute Ethics Committee.

Mental Health & Well-Being

- Mentorship & Pastoral Support is available.
- Online mental health check-ins will be provided during intensive research periods.

7.7 Financial Responsibilities & Scholarship Terms

What is Covered?

The full PG CertR Scholarship covers:

- Tuition & administrative fees
- Library & digital resources
- Research ethics approval & supervision

What is NOT Covered?

Students must independently finance:

- Accommodation & living costs
- Travel to in-person sessions (Summer School, Winter Colloquium)
- Visa & insurance (if required)

Withdrawal & Refund Policy

- If a student withdraws before September, they may defer their place.
- If withdrawal occurs after September, scholarship funds cannot be refunded.

7.8 Summary of Key Policies




Policy Area	Key Guidelines
Academic Integrity	No plagiarism, maintain originality in research.
Research Ethics	Obtain consent, protect participant privacy.
Professional Conduct	Maintain respect, avoid discrimination.

Attendance	Full participation is required.
Grievances	Appeals must follow formal procedures.
Fieldwork Safety	Adhere to research safety protocols.
Scholarship Terms	Covers tuition but not accommodation/travel.

Section 8: Contacts and Key Personnel

The PG CertR Programme is supported by a committed team of academic advisors, research mentors, and administrative staff. Below are the key personnel responsible for the programme, along with their contact details.

Institutional Information

-  The Highland Institute
-  Address: Meluri Road, Ziekezou Colony, Kohima, Nagaland, India
-  Phone: +91 70056 05596
-  Email: info@highlandinstitute.org
-  Website: <https://highlandinstitute.org>

Facebook: [facebook.com/highlandinstitute](https://www.facebook.com/highlandinstitute)

Instagram: [instagram.com/highlandinstitute](https://www.instagram.com/highlandinstitute)

Academic Advisory Committee & Faculty

These faculty members provide academic guidance, mentorship, and research oversight.

Name	Role	Affiliation	Email
Mr. Akumjung Pongen	Director, School of Advanced Studies, THI	University of Oxford	akumjung@highlandinstitute.org

Dr. Ruokuonuo Rose Yhome	Academic Advisory Committee	Fulbright Scholar, University of Arkansas	rose@highlandinstitute.org
Dr. Michael T. Heneise	Academic Advisory Committee	Associate Professor, UiT The Arctic University of Norway	michael.t.heneise@uit.no
Dr. Edward Moon-Little	Academic Advisory Committee	University of Cambridge	emoonlittle@gmail.com
Ms. Catriona G. Child	Academic Advisory Committee	Executive Director, The Highland Institute	catriona@highlandinstitute.org
Roderick Wijunamai	Academic Advisory Committee	Cornell University, USA	rdck.wjnm@gmail.com

Administrative and Operations Team

For general inquiries, programme administration, and logistics, please contact the relevant personnel.

Name	Role	Affiliation	Email
Mr. Lanuakum Aier	Operations Manager	The Highland Institute	lanu@highlandinstitute.org
Mr. Akumtong Imchen	Hospitality Manager	The Highland Institute	akumtong@highlandinstitute.org
Ms. Rovithono Yhome	Human Resource Manager	The Highland Institute	rovi@highlandinstitute.org
Ms. Khrieletuonuo Yhome	Librarian	The Highland Institute	yaya@highlandinstitute.org