



Royal University of Bhutan

Guidelines for International Staff and Students Visiting the Royal University of Bhutan

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF BHUTAN

January 2021



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Visiting the Royal University of Bhutan**

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PREFACE

It is crucial for a tertiary educational institution to network and collaborate with international institutions to enhance teaching-learning and research. Therefore, this Guidelines is prepared to assist the Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) in facilitating visit of international staff and students on different modalities. As RUB operates on a federated model with its colleges spread across Bhutan, it is hoped that the Guidelines will assist college(s) and the different divisions in the Office of the Vice Chancellor (OVC) to prepare visa and entry process effectively and efficiently across distance and on online platforms.

Prepared in joint consultation with relevant agencies like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Public Diplomacy Division and Department of Bilateral Affairs) and the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs (Department of Immigration), the Guidelines are in consistence with existing government policies, laws and regulations. It has also been endorsed through the University from the 482nd Senior Management Meeting (SMT) in July 2020 and the 15th University Strategic Response Committee (USRC) meeting in January 2021 for immediate implementation.

The Guidelines will serve as a tool to guide respective focal person(s) in the college(s) and the departments at OVC on specific requirements for each visa and entry category of international staff and students. The chapter 'The Application Process' identify expected processes of the college(s) and the OVC in preparing applications for different types of visits. It then outlines expected roles of the college(s) and the OVC in facilitating various types of visits and events at RUB. The checklist of requirements to fulfil the visa and entry process is provided as Annexures.

We hope the Guidelines is practical and useful in its implementation. The Guidelines will be amended in accordance to the changing government policies, rules and regulations, and according to the changes in the institutional management to facilitate mobility of international staff and students.

ACRONYMS

CRC	College Research Committee
DoI	Department of Immigration
DRER	Department of Research and External Relations
DRIL	Dean of Research and Industrial Linkages
ER	External Relations
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
OVC	Office of the Vice Chancellor
RUB	Royal University of Bhutan
VC	Vice Chancellor
OVC	Office of the Vice Chancellor
MoLHR	Ministry of Labour and Human Resources
RGoB	Royal Government of Bhutan

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1.0. Background

- 1.1. Guided by the Vision to be ‘an internationally recognized University steeped in GNH values,’ the Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) aspires to fulfil the Vision by helping brand the University as a unique learning destination.
- 1.2. In view of the Vision, the University has to internationalize its college campuses to allow cross- fertilization of innovative ideas in research and higher degree teaching-learning.
- 1.3. The University therefore should institute systems in place to facilitate international initiatives and create opportunities within our institutional set-up to learn and evolve.

2.0. Legality

- 2.1. Within the framework enshrined in Article 2.2 of the Royal Charter of the University, 2003, RUB is recommended ‘to promote and conduct research, to contribute to the creation of knowledge in an international context and to promote the transfer of knowledge of relevance to Bhutan.’
- 2.2. Similarly, RUB’s research policy, the Zhib-Tshol-RUB Research Policies, 2014, also envisions the University to be known internationally as a catalyst for sustainable development.
- 2.3. Guided by the framework enshrined in the Royal Charter and RUB’s Research Policies, the University therefore drafted entry guidelines

legally confirming the framework of its operation to facilitate international initiatives and services to the federated colleges campuses of the University.

- 2.4. This guidelines is endorsed for compliance by the 482nd Senior Management Team (SMT) meeting held on 2nd July 2020, and for immediate implementation by the 15th University Strategic Response Committee (USRC) meeting held on 21 and 23 January, 2021.
- 2.5. The guidelines set in here is in consistence with the existing government policies, laws and regulations.

3.0. Objective

- 3.1. The objective of the guidelines is to guide colleges and departments at the Office of the Vice Chancellor (OVC) with step-by-step information on operation and facilitation of services related to external relations.
- 3.2. The guidelines put in place will assist colleges of RUB and departments of OVC in its facilitation of international pursuits related to mobility through international staff,¹ international student² through study abroad programmes and exchange programmes.³

¹ International staff- International staff is used to refer to any individual who comes to the University in a capacity as an academic, researcher, administration and marketing staff, resource person/as expert, donors of projects, and for exploratory visits.

² International student- International student(s) is used to refer to students outside Bhutan who come to avail study opportunities at the Royal University of Bhutan. These types of students include the Short- Term Student, Semester Abroad Student, Visiting Research Student and Full-Time student enrolled in a complete RUB programme, or on exchange programmes.

³ Exchange programme- Exchange programme is understood as a programme that is reciprocal between two institutions and usually executed with mutual exchange of staff and students. Students can also come on exchange as Short-Term Study Abroad students, Semester Abroad students, and as Visiting Research students.

- 3.3. It will assist the colleges and departments at OVC in the conduct of events like conferences, seminars and meetings.
- 3.4. It will serve to guide the colleges and departments at OVC to seek approval and clearances from competent authority when entering into agreements with external institutions and entities.

4.0. Scope

- 4.1. The scope of the guidelines is to assist the colleges or departments at OVC in facilitating types of study abroad programmes at RUB, assisting recruitment of international staff, facilitating visits of staff from external institutions to RUB, and conduct of academic events like conferences, seminars, workshops and meetings.

5.0. The Application Process

- 5.1. All international applicants shall apply to the concerned college or department at OVC.
- 5.2. The college or the department at OVC will review the application.
- 5.3. The department at OVC will seek administrative approval from the respective heads at OVC.
- 5.4. The External Relations (ER) office at the Department of Research and External Relations (DRER), OVC, will seek clearance from relevant authority where necessary.

5.5. Upon obtaining administrative approval and necessary clearance:

5.5.1. For staff and international students requiring visa and regional students (India, Bangladesh and Maldives) requiring entry permit, the college or the Administration office at OVC will apply to the DoI.

5.5.2. For staff not requiring visa, the college or department at OVC will send an invitation to the applicant.

5.6. Approval of the DoI for all staff and students shall be communicated to the applicants with intimation to the ER office at DRER.

5.7. The applicant(s) will report to the respective Immigration port of entry for Immigration formalities.

6.0. Responsibility of the College or Department at OVC for incoming staff

6.1. The college or the department at OVC will verify the entry category of incoming staff.

6.2. The college or the department at OVC shall seek administrative approval from OVC:

6.2.1. Short term⁴ staff from the DRER's office,

⁴ Short term- refers to staff that come to RUB for a specified duration as reflected on their visa. A staff can visit RUB from a few days to a duration of more than thirty days from an external institution. Should the visit exceed 30 days, a permit from the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources has to be processed. Such staff visits are not to be mixed up with the short term students that come to RUB for a duration ranging from one to six weeks.

- 6.2.2. Long-term⁵ on fixed term appointment with the RUB from the Registrar's office.
- 6.3. The college or the administration office at OVC then shall apply for entry approval from the Dol with required documents:
- 6.3.1. For incoming staff for less than 30 days shall submit the documents as per the checklist (Annex 1).
- 6.3.2. For incoming staff for more than 30 days shall submit the documents as per the checklist (Annex 2).
- 6.4. The college or the department at OVC shall communicate the entry approval to the incoming staff.
- 6.5. Approval of the entry from Dol processed at the college and the administration office at OVC shall be communicated to the applicants with intimation to the ER office at DRER.

7.0. Responsibility of the College or Department at OVC for incoming students

- 7.1. The college or the department at OVC will verify the entry category of incoming students.
- 7.2. The college or the department at OVC will then seek administrative approval from the DRER, OVC.

⁵ Long term- refers to staff that come to RUB for a duration of more than thirty days and entail processes to be completed from the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources and are on paid services from RUB.

- 7.2.1. For student exchanges on Short-Term Study Abroad and Semester Abroad, evidence of formal MoU shall be attached
 - 7.2.2. For Full-time enrolled students, Offer Letter from the college or the department at OVC will be attached
 - 7.2.3. For visiting Research students, endorsement from the College Research Committee of the host institution shall be attached
- 7.3. The college or the administration office at OVC shall apply for entry approval from the DoI with required documents.
- 7.3.1. For exchange programmes on Short-Term Study Abroad, Semester Abroad, and Visiting Research, refer Annex 3/4/5/ depending on the incoming category.
 - 7.3.2. For others on Full-time programme, refer Annex 6.
- 7.4. The college or the department at OVC shall communicate the entry approval to the incoming students with intimation to the ER office at DRER.

8.0. Responsibility of the College or Department at OVC for events

- 8.1. The college or the department at OVC will apply for administrative approval from the DRER.
- 8.2. The DRER will seek administrative approval for event and participants from MFA.

- 8.3. Upon receiving political clearance from MFA, the DRER will communicate to the college or the administration office at OVC to seek entry approval from the DoI.
- 8.4. The college or the department at OVC will communicate the entry approval to the participants with intimation to the ER office at DRER.
- 8.5. The college or the department at OVC shall submit a copy of outcome document of the event in a month's time to the DRER, OVC, for further submission to the MFA.
- 8.6. During the event, the host institution shall abide by all existing policies, laws and regulations of the government.

9.0. Responsibility of the External Relations division

- 9.1. The ER office will verify documents for incoming staff, students, and events and process administrative approval.
- 9.2. The ER office shall seek political clearances from MFA to host bilateral, regional and multilateral meetings, conferences and seminars in the country as per Annex 11.
- 9.3. Administrative approval from OVC and clearance(s) from MFA shall be shared with concerned college or department at OVC, where relevant.
- 9.4. The ER office will submit the report of the event(s) to the MFA within the stipulated time frame.
- 9.5. The ER office will maintain a record of the events and mobility of staff and students.

Annex 1: Entry documentation for Incoming staff for less than 30 days⁶

Checklist

Sl.	Documentation to be arranged	Insert Yes/ No
1.	Approval from the competent authority	
2.	Duly filled in Visa Application Form (preferably typed and signed) (Annex 7)	
3.	Scanned copy of the Passport (passport should have validity of at least 6 months from the date of intended departure from the Kingdom)	
4.	Passport size picture in JPG format of less than 2 MB	
5.	Declaration letter from the sending institution	
6.	Notarized Certificate (as and when required and in English)	
7.	Detailed programme schedule/ itinerary	
8.	MoU copy/ Project Concept Agreement, if available	

⁶ For short term incoming staff from the region like Bangladesh, India and Maldives, please contact the nearest Immigration office.

Annex 2: Entry documentation for Incoming staff for more than 30 days⁷

Checklist

Sl.	Documentation to be arranged	Insert Yes/ No
1.	Approval from the competent authority	
2.	Duly filled in Visa Application Form (preferably typed and signed) (Annex 7)	
3.	Scanned copy of the Passport (passport should have validity of at least 6 months from the date of intended departure from the Kingdom)	
4.	Passport size picture in JPG format of less than 2 MB	
5.	Declaration letter from the sending institution	
6.	Notarized Certificate (as and when required and in English)	
7.	Detailed programme schedule/itinerary	
8.	MoU copy/ Project Concept Agreement, if available	
9.	Work permit approval from MoLHR	
10.	Invitation letter from host institution as and when required	

⁷ For long term incoming staff from the region like Bangladesh, India and Maldives, please contact the nearest Immigration office.

Annex 3: Entry documentation for Short-Term Study Abroad students

Checklist

Sl.	Documentation to be arranged	Insert Yes/No
1.	Approval from the competent authority	
2.	Duly filled in Visa Application Form (preferably typed and signed) (Annex 7)	
3.	Scanned copy of the Passport (passport should have validity of at least 6 months from the date of intended departure from the Kingdom)	
4.	Passport size picture in JPG format of less than 2 MB	
5.	Declaration letter from the sending institution	
6.	Detailed programme schedule/ itinerary	
7.	MoU copy/ Project Concept Agreement, if available	
8.	Student card from the parent University	
9.	Declaration of Compliance / Undertaking of the Institute (Annex 8)	
10.	Means of Subsistence form (Annex 9)	
11.	Statement of Purpose (Annex 10)	

Annex 4: Entry documentation for Semester Abroad students

Checklist

Sl.	Documentation to be arranged	Insert Yes/ No
1.	Approval from the competent authority	
2.	Duly filled in Visa Application Form (preferably typed and signed) (Annex 7)	
3.	Scanned copy of the Passport (passport should have validity of at least 6 months from the date of intended departure from the Kingdom)	
4.	Passport size picture in JPG format of less than 2 MB	
5.	Declaration letter from the sending institution	
6.	MoU copy/ Project Concept Agreement, if available	
7.	Student card from the parent University	
8.	Declaration of Compliance / Undertaking of the Institute (Annex 8)	
9.	Means of Subsistence form (Annex 9)	
10.	Statement of Purpose (Annex 10)	

Annex 5: Entry documentation for Visiting Research students

Checklist

Sl.	Documentation to be arranged	Insert Yes/No
1.	Approval from the competent authority	
2.	Duly filled in Visa Application Form (preferably typed and signed) (Annex 7)	
3.	Scanned copy of the Passport (passport should have validity of at least 6 months from the date of intended departure from the Kingdom)	
4.	Passport size picture in JPG format of less than 2 MB	
5.	Declaration letter from the sending institution	
6.	MoU copy/ Project Concept Agreement, if available	
7.	Student card from the parent University	
8.	Endorsement from the College Research Committee	
9.	Copy of the Research Proposal	
10.	Declaration of Compliance / Undertaking of the Institute (Annex 8)	
11.	Means of Subsistence form (Annex 9)	
12.	Statement of Purpose (Annex 10)	

Annex 6: Entry documentation for Full-time enrolled RUB student

Checklist

Sl.	Documentation to be arranged	Insert Yes/No
1.	Approval from the competent authority	
2.	Duly filled in Visa Application Form (preferably typed and signed) (Annex 7)	
3.	Scanned copy of the Passport (passport should have validity of at least 6 months from the date of intended departure from the Kingdom)	
4.	Passport size picture in JPG format of less than 2 MB	
5.	Declaration letter from the sending institution	
6.	MoU copy/ Project Concept Agreement, if available	
7.	Student card from the parent University	
8.	Offer letter from the degree awarding RUB college	
9.	Declaration of Compliance / Undertaking of the Institute (Annex 8)	
10.	Means of Subsistence form (Annex 9)	
11.	Statement of Purpose (Annex 10)	

Annex 7: Visa Application Form



VISA APPLICATION FORM FOR THE KINGDOM OF BHUTAN (PLEASE TYPE OR WRITE IN CAPITAL LETTERS IN BLUE OR BLACK INK)

1. Name as in passport:				Recent passport size photo
2. Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)	3. Place and country of birth	4. Current nationality	5. Nationality at birth	
6. Sex: Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>		7. Marital status: Married <input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/>		
8. Detail of passport				
Passport no.	Place of issue	Date of issue	Valid until	
9. Type of passport: Diplomatic <input type="checkbox"/> Official <input type="checkbox"/> UN Laissez Passer <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinary <input type="checkbox"/>				
10. Permanent address:			11. Telephone no.	
12. Current occupation:				
13. Period for which visa required: From: (dd/mm/yyyy)			To: (dd/mm/yyyy)	
14. Port of entry/exit: Entry port :			Exit port:	
15. Purpose of visit:				
16: Are you accompanying or accompanied by your spouse/parents/children? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide name of the spouse/parents/children:				
17: Is this your first visit to Bhutan? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If No, please provide detail of previous visit:				
Declaration: I hereby affirm that all particulars furnished by me are complete and correct. I understand that providing incomplete, false or misleading information will result in rejection of my visa application/cancellation of my visa/deportation, as may be applicable. Furthermore, I also understand that I will be liable for prosecution by a court of law and/or any penalties/fines under the Immigration Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan and any other laws, rules and regulations as may be applicable, for submission of false, fabricated or misleading information or for indulging in any other activities other than the stated.				
Place and date		Signature (if minor, to be signed by either of the parents or legal guardian)		
Approved/Rejected/others _____ Signature of approving officer: _____				For official use only

Revised 01/02/2019

Source: <https://www.doi.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/visaapplication-form.pdf>

Annex 8: Declaration of Compliance / Undertaking of the Institute form

I.....on behalf of..... (Complete address of the institute), would like to apply for Visa/ Entry Permit for the following Student(s):

Sl. no	Name	Nationality	Passport/ Voter ID no.

(Use additional sheets if required)

The Institute agrees to abide by the following terms and conditions during the stay of the foreign student(s):

- 1) The student(s) shall abide by all laws, rules and regulations of the kingdom.
- 2) The student(s) shall be engaged solely in the exchange program on the basis of which Visa/ Entry Permit was applied for and granted.
- 3) The student(s) shall reside in the locality of the academic institute's establishment/ within the municipal area of the Dzongkhag in which the institute is registered.
- 4) That the student(s) shall exit the kingdom before the expiry of the immigration permit.
- 5) That the Institute shall have no objection if the Department revokes an immigration permit of a student at any point in time.

6) That the student(s) shall respect local norms and customs, and not engage in any act against the *Tsa-wa-sum*.

The Institute affirms that all information furnished to the Department is complete and correct. The Institute understands that providing incomplete, false or misleading information will result in the rejection of the institute's request for Visa/ Entry Permit. Furthermore, the Institute understands that it will be liable for prosecution in a court of law and/or any penalties/ fines under the immigration Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan and any other laws, rules and regulations as may be applicable, for submission of false, fabricated or misleading information.

Legal Stamp & Signature

Name of the Institute:

Address of Institute:

Contact Number:

Witness

Name and Signature:

CID no. (Attach copy):

.....

Contact Number:.....

Annex 9: Means of Subsistence form

I. Details of the students:		
1. Name:		
2. Source of Income	1. Annual income in USD (please tick): Less than 10,000 <input type="checkbox"/> 10,000-50,000 <input type="checkbox"/> 50,000-100,000 <input type="checkbox"/> more than 100,000 <input type="checkbox"/>	
II. Details of Father		
1. Name:		
2. Date of Birth: (dd/mm/yyyy)	3. Place and country of birth:	4. Nationality:
5. Source of Income:		
6. Annual income in USD: Less than 10,000 <input type="checkbox"/> 10,000-50,000 <input type="checkbox"/> 50,000-100,000 <input type="checkbox"/> more than 100,000 <input type="checkbox"/>	7. Permanent address:	8. Contact details:
III. Details of Mother:		
1. Name:		
2. Date of birth: (dd/mm/yyyy)	3. Place and country of birth	4. Nationality:
5. Source of Income:		
6. Annual income in USD: Less than 10,000 <input type="checkbox"/> 10,000-50,000 <input type="checkbox"/> 50,000-100,000 <input type="checkbox"/> more than 100,000 <input type="checkbox"/>	7. Permanent address:	8. Contact details:

NOTE: a. Attach copy of photo identification (e.g. passport/ driving license) of parents.

b. Attach proof of income.

Annex 10: Statement of Purpose

The Statement of Purpose should include the following:

- 1) Your background in your home country. (At least 300 words)
- 2) The course of study and why you intend to study this particular course? (At least 200 words)
- 3) The reason you have chosen to study in Bhutan. (At least 300 words)
- 4) The reasons you chosen the particular university/ college/ institute in Bhutan. (At least 300 words)
- 5) How would this benefit to you in terms of career opportunities/ pathway? (At least 200 words)
- 6) Any other information supporting your student visa application for study in Bhutan.

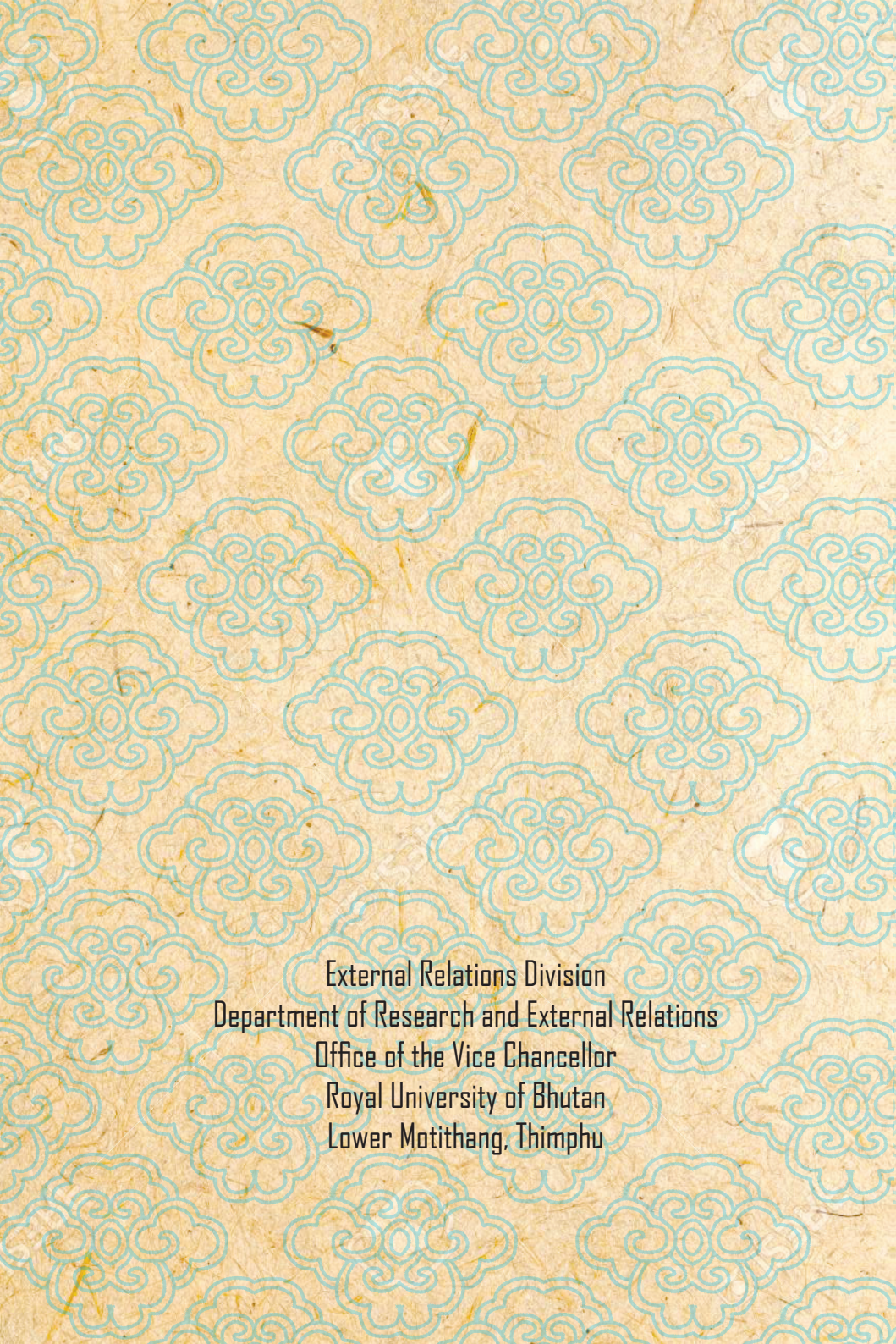
Note:

The Statement of Purposes must be written by the individual student and not by an agent or a family member or any other person. If the Statement of Purpose is written by anyone other than the student or has been plagiarized, the student Visa/ Entry Permit shall be rejected.

Annex 11: Political Clearance from MFA

A formal request letter from OVC to MFA indicating the following:

1. Benefits of organizing such events in Bhutan for RGoB and relevant stakeholders.
2. Funding modality
3. Agenda of the event
4. List of participants with other details (specify nationality)
5. Concurrence of the Tourism Council of Bhutan if the event has more than 30 participants and cannot be rescheduled out of the peak tourist season months (March - April - May and September - October - November).



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