

GUIDELINES FOR ENGAGEMENT OF VISITING FACULTY IN HEIs



HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

2026

1.0 Preamble and Authority

1.1 The Higher Education Commission (HEC) acknowledges the critical contribution of Visiting Faculty in enhancing the academic rigor and practical relevance of programs offered by Pakistani universities. They provide indispensable industry expertise, specialized skills, and contemporary knowledge that complement the permanent faculty.

1.2 However, unregulated or excessive reliance on Visiting Faculty, particularly in public sector institutions, poses significant risks to academic quality, the sustainability of research culture, and long-term institutional development. These guidelines are established to standardize the engagement, roles, and management of Visiting Faculty across HEC-recognized public and private sector HEIs. The objective is to leverage their expertise while safeguarding educational standards, institutional integrity, and student welfare.

1.3 These guidelines are issued under the powers vested in the HEC by its Ordinance No. LIII of 2002, Section 10(1)(q) & (r). All HEIs are required to develop their own policy guidelines for hiring Visiting Faculty, which must be fully aligned with these guidelines and contemporary best practices. The institutional policy must be reviewed by the Institutional Quality Circle (IQC) or equivalent body and receive formal ratification from the relevant statutory forum.

2.0 Definition and Scope

2.1 A **Visiting Faculty** member is an individual engaged on a temporary basis, typically part-time, to deliver specific courses or provide instructional support that addresses academic needs. Such an engagement does not confer any implicit or automatic right to a permanent, regular position within the HEI.

3.0 Eligibility Criteria

3.1 The minimum qualification for any Visiting Faculty position must be equivalent to the HEC's prescribed criteria for the corresponding regular faculty rank, as specified for general and professional disciplines. The current criteria are available at the official HEC website: <https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/services/universities/qa/Pages/faculty-appointmentcriteria.aspx>

3.2 HEIs are encouraged to establish and apply more stringent criteria than the HEC minimums, commensurate with the specific requirements and strategic objectives of their academic programs.

4.0 Permissible Limits

To maintain academic quality and ensure the primacy of a strong core faculty, the following limits are mandated:

4.1 Overall Limit at Department Level: The total number of Visiting Faculty members within an academic department must not exceed 25% of the department's total full-time regular faculty strength.

4.2 Overall Limit at Program Level: For any degree program, the core and major courses taught by Visiting Faculty must not constitute more than 25% of the total core/major credit hours required for degree completion.

4.3 Student-Teacher Ratio Calculation: Visiting Faculty shall not be counted in the calculation of the student-teacher ratio, which shall be determined exclusively based on the number of full-time regular faculty.

5.0 Recruitment and Selection Procedure

5.1 Advertisement: Vacancies for Visiting Faculty positions must be publicly advertised on the HEI's official website and prominent institutional notice boards. Wider circulation through local or national newspapers may be employed if deemed necessary.

5.2 Advertisement Content: The advertisement must explicitly state:

- i. The minimum eligibility criteria, aligned with HEC standards.
- ii. The intended duration of the appointment (e.g., semester, academic year).
- iii. The approved remuneration structure (e.g., per credit hour, fixed honorarium).

5.3 Selection Committee for Visiting Faculty: A Selection Committee, constituted by the Vice Chancellor/Rector upon the recommendation of the relevant Dean, shall be responsible for the hiring process. The respective Dean shall oversee the recruitment and subsequent performance of the Visiting Faculty.

5.4 Documentation: The entire selection process—including application screening, interviews, and teaching demonstrations—must be formally documented. A standardized scorecard with evaluation criteria must be used and the records duly approved by the competent authority.

5.5 Formal Document of Engagement: A comprehensive, standardized agreement must be executed with each Visiting Faculty member. **The engagement shall, at a minimum, stipulate:**

- i. The specific course title(s) and code(s) assigned.
- ii. The duration of the engagement (not to exceed one academic year without a formal performance review).

- iii. Detailed remuneration and payment terms.
- iv. A clear outline of roles, responsibilities, and the institution's code of conduct.
- v. Intellectual Property (IP) rights and confidentiality clauses.

5.6 Conflict of Interest Declaration: Prior to engagement, the candidate must submit a formal declaration disclosing any potential conflicts of interest and confirming their current professional affiliations with any other institution or organization.

6.0 Roles, Responsibilities, and Institutional Integration

6.1 Primary Responsibilities: The primary role of Visiting Faculty is confined to course delivery, student assessment and evaluation, and contributing to course design and development as requested.

6.2 Governance and Administrative Roles: Visiting Faculty are expressly prohibited from holding substantive administrative positions (e.g., Head of Department, Dean) or exercising voting rights in statutory bodies such as the Syndicate, Senate, or Academic Council. Their advisory participation in academic bodies is however, encouraged.

6.3 Mandatory Orientation: The HEI must conduct a comprehensive orientation program for all new Visiting Faculty. This program shall cover university policies, academic regulations, the use of the Learning Management System (LMS), examination procedures, and pedagogical guidelines. Orientation materials must explicitly communicate expected ethical, moral, and professional conduct.

7.0 Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

7.1 Student Feedback: Mandatory, anonymous student feedback must be collected for every course at the conclusion of each semester. The summarized results must be formally communicated to the relevant Head of Department and Dean.

7.2 Performance Dossier: The concerned academic department is responsible for maintaining a continuous performance dossier for each Visiting Faculty member, which shall include student feedback, peer observation reports (if any), and other relevant performance metrics.

7.3 Agreement Renewal and Termination:

- i. **Renewal:** Any agreement renewal is strictly contingent upon a documented record of satisfactory performance.
- ii. **Termination:** The HEI reserves the right to terminate the agreement by providing due notice in cases of unsatisfactory performance, violation of university policies, or professional misconduct.
