



ہائیر ایجوکیشن کمیشن HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

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SUBJECT: Discontinuation of HEC Approved Supervisor Post Promulgation GEP-2023

This is to bring to your kind attention that the Higher Education Commission has discontinued awarding HEC Approved Supervisor, post promulgation of the Graduate Education Policy 2023 i.e., July 10, 2023.

II. This policy shift provides Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) increased authority in approving PhD supervisors, thereby enhancing their capacity to elevate the quality of doctoral research. The HEIs are required to assign supervision of doctoral research to their PhD faculty adhering to the conditions delineated in its Clause 4.2. In this regard an extract of the relevant clause of the policy along with a sample checklist is enclosed for assistance of the HEIs.

III. Accordingly, HEC encourages the HEIs to adopt the Graduate Education Policy 2023 and authorize qualified faculty for doctoral research supervision strictly in accordance with the policy regulations. HEC is developing a mechanism to synchronize supervisor's data with the Higher Education Data Repository. Subsequently, periodic evaluations of authorized supervisor's data will be conducted in accordance with the criteria outlined in the policy for a PhD Supervisor. For any inquiries, please do not hesitate to contact us via email at aanwar@hec.gov.pk.

Your support in this regard is highly appreciated.

(Nasir Shah)

Director General (Quality Assurance)
Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan

All Vice Chancellors/Rectors/Heads of Institutions

No. DD-II/QAD/PhD-Policy-2021/2022/119

Dated: December 22, 2023

Copy for information:

- i. ES to the Chairman, Higher Education Commission, Islamabad
- ii. ES to the Executive Director, Higher Education Commission, Islamabad
- iii. All Divisional & Regional Heads of HEC, Islamabad
- iv. Office Copy

SAMPLE

PhD Supervisor: Eligibility Assessment Checklist

Name of Directorate of Advance Studies or Equivalent Body

Name of the University

Contacts of the Focal Person: focalperson@hei.edu.pk; Landline: 000 00 000 000

Guidelines:

- a. Eligibility of a PhD supervisor should be determined based on the nature of the institution, availability of teaching and research facilities, and the academic standing of a faculty member.
- b. The GEP-2023 provides broader guidelines and minimum standards. The HEIs are expected to set their standards above the minimum criteria provided by HEC.
- c. The sample checklist may be used by HEIs to evaluate eligibility and authorize PhD supervision that need not be shared with HEC unless requested.

Date of Submission: dd-mm-yyyy

To be filled by the Departmental Head/Chair/Dean:

Sr.	GEP's Clause	Minium Criteria to a PhD Supervisor:	Evidence Required to Validate	Yes / No
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The evaluator must ensure that the faculty member, under consideration to be a PhD supervisor:

1	4.2.1.i	holds Ph.D. or equivalent terminal degree	PCD Number/Attested copy of PhD degree	
2	4.2.1.ii	is relevant to the student's PhD research field	As determined by following principle and procedure given at clause 7.1.2 of GEP-2023	
3	4.2.1.iii	does not have CONFLICT OF INTEREST with student in personal, financial, or professional	Undertaking from the faculty member and judgement of the evaluator	
4	4.2.1.iv	have the time and availability to supervise PhD dissertation and give clear and constructive feedback.	Students' Feedback Survey and supervisory and teaching workload of undergrad & graduate level	
5	4.2.1.v	is capable of conducting themselves in a professional and respectful manner throughout the supervision process.	Professional judgement of the evaluator supported by Students' Feedback Survey	
6	4.2.1.vi	is capable of maintaining confidentiality and protecting the intellectual property of the dissertation.	Professional judgement of the evaluator supported by Students' Feedback Survey	
7	4.2.1.vii	is a regular/adjunct faculty member of the supervisee's University/HEI/DAI	Notification from the Registrar/HR Department	
8	4.2.1.ix OR	does not have more than 1 PhD student in 3rd year from obtaining PhD degree.	To be calculated from the date of PhD notification	
9	4.2.1.ix OR	does not have more than 2 PhD student in 4th year from obtaining PhD degree.	To be calculated from the date of PhD notification	
10	4.2.1.ix	does not have more than 5 PhD student in 5th year from obtaining PhD degree.	To be calculated from the date of PhD notification	

Sr.	GEP's Clause	Minium Criteria to a PhD Supervisor:	Evidence Required to Validate	Yes / No
11	4.2.2.i-a	holds a PhD degree from a recognized national/international university/degree awarding institute (DAI)	Copy of PhD degree attested by HEC	
12	4.2.2.i-b	has qualified courses containing content on research ethics, publications, patents, etc.	Certificate by the HEI/NAHE or recognized MOOCs	
13	4.2.2.i-b.i	has qualified basic level courses to supervise students of MS/MPhil/equivalent degrees	Certificate by the HEI/NAHE or recognized MOOCs	
14	4.2.2.i-b.ii	has qualified advanced level courses to supervise students of doctoral level degrees	Certificate by the HEI/NAHE or recognized MOOCs	
15	4.2.2.ii	is an active researcher.	Publishing in reputed journal and participating conferences/research events regularly.	
16	4.2.2.ii-A	fulfills the specific publication requirements for Science and Technology:	Check and verify research publications	
17	4.2.2.ii-A.i	has published at least one research publications in W category journal within 3 years after PhD. OR	Check and verify research publications	
18	4.2.2.ii-A.ii	has published at least five research publications in X category journal within last 5 years after PhD	Check and verify research publications	
19	4.2.2.ii-B OR	fulfills the specific publication requirements for Social Science, Arts and Humanities and Business	Check and verify research publications	
20	4.2.2.ii-B.i OR	has published at least one research publications in W category journal within 3 years after PhD. OR	Check and verify research publications	
21	4.2.2.ii-B.ii	has published at least five research publications in X and Y category journal within last 5 years after PhD	Check and verify research publications	
22	4.2.2.ii-C OR	fulfills the specific publication requirements for Regional and National Languages i.e.,	Check and verify research publications	
23	4.2.2.ii-C.i OR	has published at least one research publications in X category journal within 3 years after PhD. OR	Check and verify research publications	
24	4.2.2.ii-C.ii	has published at least five research publications in X or Y category journal within last 5 years after PhD	Check and verify research publications	

Chair/DEAN

Director Advance Studies/
Equivalent Body

DIRECTOR QUALITY

VC/RECTOR/HEAD of HEI

PART-II: GOVERNING THE SYSTEMS OF DOCTORAL RESEARCH

4. GOVERNING THE RESEARCH SUPERVISION

4.1 Principles and Purposes

To inculcate a research culture to produce high-quality research, policies and procedures governing the overall system of research in a university/DAI/HEI must be in place. The HEC guidelines for improvements are as follows.

4.2 Supervision of Doctoral Dissertation

4.2.1. General Conditions to Supervise Doctoral Research¹⁴

The following general guidelines shall, at least, be observed while allocating a PhD supervisor. At the time of supervisor allocation, the supervisors:

- i. Shall be a PhD degree holder complying with the criteria and standards provided in this policy.
- ii. Must be relevant to the field of research in which the student intends to conduct research.
- iii. Should have NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST in personal, financial, or professional stakes.
- iv. Should have the time and availability to supervise PhD dissertation and give clear and constructive feedback.
- v. Should be capable of conducting themselves in a professional and respectful manner throughout the supervision process.
- vi. Should be capable of maintaining confidentiality and protecting the intellectual property of the dissertation.
- vii. Should, primarily, be a regular/adjunct faculty member of the supervisee's University/HEI/DAI

In addition to the aforementioned guidelines:

- viii. The research supervisor shall be allocated to a doctoral student from the date of enrollment.
- ix. The supervisory workload of research supervisors should be determined based on the nature of the institution, availability of teaching and research facilities, and the academic standing of supervisors. However, it is mandated that the maximum supervisory load shall not exceed five PhD students, simultaneously. Further, fresh PhDs can supervise MS/MPhil and co-supervise PhD students, while a PhD faculty member, after two years of obtaining a PhD degree, can supervise one PhD student in 3rd year, two PhD students in 4th year and maximum up to 5 PhD students from 5th year onward, subject to fulfillment of other conditions provided in this policy.

¹⁴ The “General Conditions to Supervise Doctoral Research” along with the “Criteria to be a PhD Supervisor” are applicable on fresh PhDs intending to supervise PhD research and effective from the date of enactment of this policy. All the previously approved supervisor shall remain approved until the date mentioned on their award letter.

- x. The university/DAI/HEI shall allocate supervision/research space to the doctoral students.
- xi. PhD research work completed under supervision is a shared property of supervisor and supervisee. All publications resulting from such research shall reflect the authorship of both parties and shall be subject to mutual consent.
- xii. The guidelines for PhD supervision should be followed in letter and spirit, as prescribed in this policy.

4.2.2. Criteria to Be a PhD Supervisor

To be a PhD research supervisor, an individual shall meet the following requirements:

i. General Requirements:

- a) A PhD degree from an HEC recognized national/international university/degree awarding institute (DAI).
- b) The research supervisor shall be given opportunities to attend and qualify course(s) on MS/MPhil/PhD Supervision which should also have contents on research ethics, publications, patents, etc. Such courses may include certified self-paced MOOCS, or a course designed/offered by National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE) or by a university in the following manner:
 - i. Basic level course: to supervise students of MS/MPhil/equivalent degrees.
 - ii. Advance level course: to supervise PhD researchers.
- c) A regular/adjunct faculty member or researcher at a public or private university or DAI, or position of researcher or scientist at any R&D or public/private sector organization. However, in the case of a non-faculty PhD supervisor, who otherwise meets the criteria of being a PhD supervisor, shall be taken as an adjunct faculty member, for a period not less than the minimum time required to complete the student's PhD research, prior to assigning a PhD supervision. Such a person shall also provide an NOC from the parent organization.

ii. Publication Requirements:

In addition to fulfilling the General Requirements, a PhD supervisor must publish research articles in the HEC's recognized research journals and the category specified in the HJRS for the publication year. These conditions are different for different disciplines and aim to ensure that the potential PhD supervisor is an active researcher:

A. Specific Requirements for Science and Technology:

For indigenous and foreign PhDs:

- i. Within the last 3 years after PhD: at least one research publications in W category journal. OR
- ii. Within last 5 years after PhD: at least five research publications in X category journal.

B. Specific Requirements for Social Science, Arts and Humanities and Business Education:

For indigenous and foreign PhDs:

- i. Within the last 3 years after PhD: at least one research publication in W category journal. OR

Within the last 5 years after PhD: at least five research publications in X and Y category journal.

C. Specific Requirements for Regional and National Languages:

For indigenous and foreign PhDs:

- i. Within the last 3 years after PhD: at least one research publication in X category journal. OR
- ii. Within the last 5 years after PhD: at least five research publications in X or Y category journal.

4.2.3. Supervisory Process

To guide the supervisory process of doctoral dissertation towards the desired goals, the universities/DAIs/HEIs shall: i) devise a supervision manual and ensure its implementation, and ii) Constitute a Supervisory Committee for each individual doctoral student.

- i. The research supervision manual shall elaborate the following areas to guide the supervisory process:
 - a. Description of roles of supervisor & supervisee
 - b. Prescription of supervision timespan
 - c. Guidance about preparation for best supervision
 - d. Guidance to discuss questions and problems with constructive comments by observing the elements of mutual respect.
 - e. Guidance on setting reasonable amount of work and receiving constructive feedback.
 - f. Directions for supervision as per the social norms
 - g. Provision of tentative timetable and schedule of meetings
 - h. Provision of proformas/registers showing meetings and research records etc.
 - i. Provision of grievances policy
- ii. HEC recommends the following composition to constitute a Supervisory Committee, for each doctoral researcher, to supervise the doctoral research:
 - a. Supervisor¹⁵ Convener
 - b. Co-supervisor (if any) Member
 - c. Expert(s) from the field of research Member

4.3 University Directorate of Advance Studies and Research or Equivalent Department

- i. The head of the Directorate of Advance Studies and Research (DASR) or equivalent department shall not be less than a Dean or equivalent position.
- ii. The Directorate shall serve as the secretariate of the Board of Advance Studies/Equivalent Body. Such a board/body shall be responsible for the quality of all the graduate degree programs being offered by the university/DAI/HEI, as well as the research that shall be conducted under these programs.
- iii. The DASR/Equivalent Department shall prepare a graduate Studies Prospectus, describing the complete process for award of a graduate degree and ensuring that the booklet shall be available for guidance of all graduate students.

¹⁵ “Supervisor” means the research supervisor of the PhD researcher.