



HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

Coordination Division

H-9, Islamabad (Pakistan)

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October 2, 2024

NOTIFICATION

In pursuance of the decision taken by the Commission in its 43rd Meeting, held on June 29, 2024 – in view of the scarcity of PhD faculty members in Basic Medical Sciences and Clinical Health Sciences – the minimum faculty requirement to launch MS/MPhil or equivalent, and PhD programs as laid out in Section 7.1 of Graduate Education Policy, 2023, is hereby partially relaxed for a period of five years to the extent of launching such programs in the said fields, as per details at **Annex-I**.

(Shahzaib Abbasi)
Director (Coordination)

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- i. Vice Chancellors/Rectors/Heads of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)
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- vi. The Secretary, Higher Education, Libraries & Archives Department, Govt. of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
- vii. The Secretary, Universities & Boards Department, Govt. of Sindh
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- x. ES to the Executive Director, HEC
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Partial Relaxation in Requirement of Full-Time PhD Faculty Members to Launch MS/MPhil or Equivalent and PhD Programs in Clinical Health Sciences and Basic Medical Sciences.

In the 43rd Meeting of the Commission, held on June 29, 2023, the following decision has been made regarding the Requirement of Full Time PhD Faculty Members to Launch MS/MPhil or Equivalent and PhD Programs in Clinical Health Sciences and Basic Medical Sciences.

1. Requirement of faculty members for launching MS/MPhil/Equivalent Programs in Clinical Health Sciences and Basic Medical Sciences:

There should be at least 2 relevant full-time MS/MPhil or Equivalent faculty members with at least 5 years of relevant experience after MS/MPhil or equivalent in a department to launch the MS/MPhil or Equivalent program. (Note: Already Approved by the Commission in October 18-19, 2018 on the recommendation of the National Quality Assurance Committee)

2. Requirement of faculty members for launching PhD Programs in Clinical Health Sciences and Basic Medical Sciences:

i. There should be at least 3 relevant full-time PhD faculty members to launch a PhD program in **Basic Medical Science** disciplines (**Annexure-A**) with the following categories:

- a) One full-time PhD faculty member in a core discipline in a university department.
- b) One relevant full-time PhD faculty member in a department.
- c) One relevant PhD faculty member from another university. An eligible PhD faculty member from another university may contribute to three PhD programs, including a main supervisor at their institution and a co-supervisor at two additional universities. The faculty member's student load will be limited to three at two additional universities.

ii. There should be at least 3 relevant full-time PhD faculty members to launch a PhD program in **Clinical Health Sciences** disciplines (**Annexure-B**) with arrangements similar to the above (i.e. as per the categories provided for in the case of Basic Medical Sciences disciplines), but with the following added requirements:

- a) A PhD program will be offered in Clinical Health Sciences disciplines in only universities with their own tertiary care hospital.
- b) PhD admissions in Clinical Health Sciences disciplines shall only be allowed based on FCPS/FRCS/FRCP/MD/MDS/MS or equivalent qualifications. Further, the university may consider course exemption, a maximum of up to 6 credit hours, by formulating a policy approved by the relevant statutory bodies.
- c) A supervisor must have a PhD degree in the relevant discipline. However, if the same is not available, an FCPS/FRCS/FRCP/MD/MDS/MS or equivalent, with the following qualifications, may supervise a PhD student:

- i. Minimum 10 years of post-fellowship/qualification experience in a university.
- ii. At least 10 research publications in HEC-recognized research journals, preferably with 2 publications in Impact Factor Journal.
- iii. In line with the provisions of GEP-2023, there shall be a supervisory committee for a PhD student. However, one additional member with a PhD degree in Medical or Allied Health Sciences shall be co-opted in case all the available supervisory committee members are FCPS/FRCS/FRCP/MD/MS/MDS or equivalent.

3. It may kindly be noted that the above relaxation in the requirements of PhD Faculty members for MS/MPhil/Equivalent and PhD programs (Basic Medical Sciences & Clinical Sciences) is allowed for five (05) years. Except for the said relaxation in the faculty requirement other minimum requirements as prescribed in HEC's Graduate Education Policy, 2023 (GEP-2023) will be observed in true letter and spirit.

Basic Medical Sciences

Sr#	Major Field of PhD	Major Subject for Supervision	Related Sub-Discipline for Collaboration/Supervision	Discipline
1	Public Health	Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Community Medicine ❖ Epidemiology ❖ Environmental Sciences ❖ Anthropology ❖ Nutrition 	Basic Sciences /Basic Medical Sciences
2	Human Physiology	Human Physiology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Biochemistry ❖ Molecular Biology 	Basic Sciences /Basic Medical Sciences
3	Hematology	Hematology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Blood Banking ❖ Molecular Biology ❖ Clinical Hematology ❖ Pharmacology 	Clinical Diagnostic Sciences
4	Human Anatomy	Morbid Anatomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Human Genetics ❖ Forensic Pathology ❖ Histology ❖ Histopathology 	Basic Sciences /Basic Medical Sciences
5	Molecular Biology	Molecular Biology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Human Genetics ❖ Biochemistry ❖ Infectious Diseases ❖ Clinical Chemistry ❖ Histopathology ❖ Microbiology ❖ Nano Medicine ❖ Biological Sciences ❖ Oncology ❖ Virology ❖ Immunology 	Basic Medical Sciences
6	Forensic Medicine	Forensic Medicine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Histopathology ❖ Forensic Pathology ❖ Morbid Anatomy ❖ Jurisprudence ❖ Toxicology 	Basic Sciences /Basic Medical Sciences
7	Biochemistry	Biochemistry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Molecular Biology ❖ Human Physiology ❖ Immunology 	Basic Sciences /Basic Medical Sciences
8	Microbiology	Microbiology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Molecular Biology ❖ Infectious Diseases ❖ Immunology ❖ Parasitology ❖ Virology 	Clinical Diagnostic Sciences
9	Pharmacology	Pharmacology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Pharmacy ❖ Biochemistry ❖ Pharmaceutical Sciences ❖ Toxicology ❖ Nano Medicine 	Basic Sciences /Basic Medical Sciences
10	Histopathology	Histopathology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Forensic Pathology ❖ Histology ❖ Morbid Anatomy 	Clinical Diagnostic Sciences

11	Chemical Pathology	Chemical Pathology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Clinical Chemistry ❖ Molecular Biology ❖ Molecular Medicine ❖ Nano Medicine ❖ Nutrition & Dietetics ❖ Hematology ❖ Microbiology ❖ Gastroenterology ❖ Bioinformatics ❖ Epidemiology 	Clinical Diagnostic Sciences
12	Immunology	Immunology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Biochemistry ❖ Molecular Biology 	Basic Sciences /Basic Medical Sciences
13	Basic Dental Sciences	Basic Dental Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Oral Biology ❖ Oral & Maxillofacial Pathology ❖ Community Dentistry ❖ Dental Material ❖ Oral Maxillofacial Radiology ❖ Forensics Odontology 	Basic Dental Sciences

Clinical Health Science Disciplines with major and sub-fields

Sr#	Disciplines	Clinical PhD programs
1	Surgical & Allied Specialties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ General Surgery ❖ Cardiac Surgery ❖ Anaesthesiology ❖ Critical Care ❖ Cardiac Anaesthesiology ❖ Peds Anaesthesiology ❖ Neuro Anaesthesiology ❖ Neurosurgery ❖ Ophthalmology ❖ Oculoplastic Surgery ❖ Retino-vitrous Ophthalmology ❖ Peds ophthalmology ❖ Orthopaedic Surgery ❖ Orthoplasty ❖ Otorhinolaryngology ❖ Head and Neck Surgery ❖ Paedriatic Surgery ❖ Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery ❖ Spine Surgery ❖ Thoracic Surgery ❖ Vasular Surgery and Endovascular Surgery ❖ Surgical Oncology ❖ Urology ❖ Paedriatic Urology ❖ Urogynaecology Urology ❖ Breast Surgery ❖ Colorectal Surgery ❖ Hepatobiliary and Transplant Surgery ❖ Briatric /Metabolic Surgery ❖ Cardiothoracic Anaesthesia ❖ Critical care Medicine ❖ Hand surgery ❖ vestibular disorders ❖ Otosclerosis ❖ Degenerative Spine Disease ❖ Neuro Oncology ❖ Endocrine Surgery ❖ Breast Cancer Research ❖ Hepato- Pancreato- Biliary (HPB) Surgery Research. ❖ Colorectal Surgery ❖ Otology & Otopathology Balance ❖ Facial Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery ❖ Rhinology ❖ Laryngopharyngology ❖ Transplant Ophthalmology ❖ Transplant Hepatology
2	Medical & Allied Specialties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Internal Medicine ❖ Medical Oncology ❖ Radiation Oncology ❖ Neurology ❖ Paedriatic Neurology ❖ Stroke Medicine ❖ Neuro-muscular Disease

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Nuclear Medicine ❖ Paeds Critical Care ❖ Neonatal Critical Care ❖ Palliative Care Medicine ❖ Geriatric Medicine and Elderly Care ❖ Rheumatology ❖ Paeds Dermatology ❖ Neonatal Paediatric ❖ Allergiology and Clinical Immunology ❖ Family Medicine ❖ Emergency Medicine ❖ Sports Medicine ❖ Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Medicine ❖ Cardiology ❖ Clinical Haematology ❖ Paediatrics ❖ Clinical Pharmacy ❖ Psychiatry ❖ Paediatric Cardiology ❖ Paediatric Endocrinology and Diabetes ❖ Paediatric Haematology Oncology ❖ Paediatric Infectious Diseases ❖ Paediatric Nephrology ❖ Pulmonology ❖ Paeds and Congenial Pulmonology ❖ Clinical Virology ❖ Child and Adolescent Psychiatry ❖ Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiology ❖ Community and Preventive Paediatrics ❖ Forensic Psychiatry ❖ Developmental and Behavioral Paediatrics ❖ Endocrinology ❖ Gastroenteriology ❖ Paediatric Gastroenterology & Hepatology ❖ Infectious Diseases ❖ Epidemiology ❖ Inherited Metabolic Disorders ❖ Rehnoplasty
3	Gynea/ Obs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility ❖ Urogynecology ❖ Gynecological Oncology ❖ Clinical Embryology ❖ Maternal and Fetal Medicine
4	Dental Clinical Specialties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Child Dentistry ❖ Oral Medicine ❖ Orthodontics ❖ Operative Dentistry ❖ Endodontics ❖ Prosthodontic ❖ Maxillofacial Surgery ❖ Periodontic
	Diagnostics and Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Interventional Neuro Radiology ❖ Interventional Cardiology ❖ Interventional Radiology
	Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Audiology ❖ NTD (Neural tube defects)

FAQs on Partial Relaxation for PhD Faculty Requirements to launch MS/MPhil and PhD Programs in Basic Medical Sciences and Clinical Health Sciences.

1. What is the rationale behind the partial relaxation of faculty requirements for MS/MPhil and PhD programs?

Due to scarcity of PhD faculty *with medical background* in Basic Medical Sciences and Clinical Health Sciences, the minimum faculty requirement to launch Graduate programs, as laid out in Section 7.1 of the Graduate Education Policy 2023, is partially relaxed for a period of five years, effective from October 2, 2024.

2. Who is eligible for the partial relaxation?

The partial relaxation is applicable only to PMDC approved Medical/Health Institutions offering graduate programs.

3. Is the partial relaxation also applicable to fields not listed in the notification?

No, the partial relaxation applies only to the fields specified in the notification.

4. What is the minimum faculty requirement to launch an MS/MPhil program under the partial relaxation?

A department must have at least two relevant full-time faculty members with MS/MPhil or equivalent qualification with at least five years of relevant post-qualification experience.

5. What is the minimum PhD faculty requirement to launch a PhD program under partial relaxation?

A minimum of three relevant full-time PhD faculty members i.e., one in core discipline, one in the relevant discipline and one in the relevant discipline in same or other department/university located in the metropolitan area, is required to launch a PhD program.

6. What is the minimum number of full-time PhD faculty members that must be from the department to launch a PhD program?

At least two full-time PhD faculty members one in the core discipline and one in relevant discipline must be from the department offering the program.

7. How is the relevancy of faculty members determined for a PhD program?

As per Clause 7.1.2 of the HEC Graduate Education Policy (GEP) 2023, the faculty relevance to the program is ascertained through Relevance Assessment Committee (RAC) of the University.

8. Can a relevant PhD faculty member from a different university or a different department within the same university be included?

- Yes, one relevant PhD faculty member from another department or university can participate as a co-supervisor.
- Such an external faculty member may contribute to a maximum of three programs i.e., one as a main/primary supervisor in their department and two as a co-supervisor in other departments or universities.