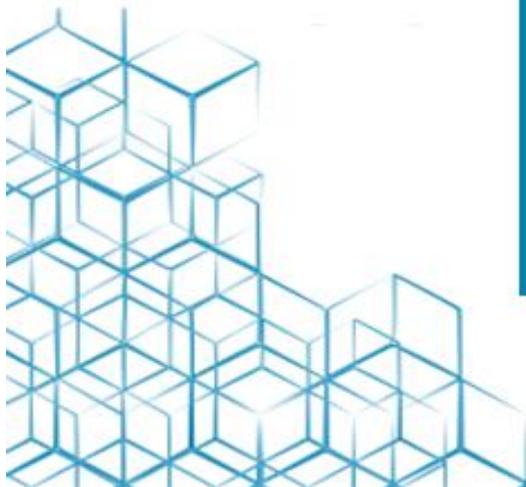




Academic Advisement & Student Orientation Guidelines

To facilitate the implementation of
Undergraduate Education Policy 2020 (UEP)
requirements.



**Higher Education
Commission**



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This document provides the framework to guide universities in implementing an academic advisement program and is not to be read as a directive. That is, universities have the flexibility to make adjustments in the implementation of the advisement services per institutional ground realities; but in accordance with this framework, as well as the overall framework and objectives of the Undergraduate Education Policy 2020 (UEP).

1 Why Academic Advisement?

The HEC Undergraduate Education Policy 2020 (UEP) has brought about significant changes in undergraduate education. Therefore, the provision of academic advice to students is essential to guide them in navigating their academic journeys under UEP.

COMPARISON OF KEY RELEVANT CHANGES

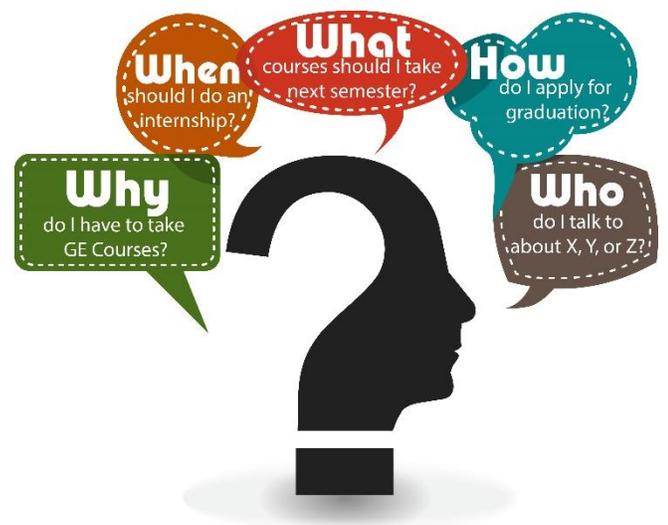
OLD POLICY	UEP-NEW POLICY
a) Undergraduate students were admitted to departments.	a) Students will be admitted to the university and not to any department.
b) Their area of specialisation, or subject of study, was determined from day one.	b) Up to the third semester they will primarily be taking Gen Ed Courses .
c) A vast majority of the courses studied were within a single subject area.	c) In the third semester students will declare the discipline or subject they want to study in depth, the Major . Thus, students will have flexibility in choosing the Major. <u>Note:</u> Universities may develop policies for change of Major in later semesters.
d) Once admitted to the department students had no option, or a very onerous one, of changing their area of specialisation or subject.	d) In the earlier semesters there will be a broad range of areas of study, primarily in the Gen Ed courses, with increasing concentration in later semesters.
	e) Besides having to complete the required courses in General Education and the chosen Major , they will also have to fulfil Distribution as well as Practical Learning requirements.

- a) As this is a new approach with which most of the incoming students are unlikely to be familiar, it is necessary to advise students in managing their undergraduate studies.
- b) A few universities in Pakistan, largely in the private sector, already have a student advisory system, but the vast majority don't. These Guidelines have been developed to help establish student advisory systems in universities where none exist, and to strengthen those that already exist.
- c) To achieve that the establishment of a Student Academic Advisement system in every university is mandated in the 2020 policy, which reads: *Universities will establish an effective student advisory system to ensure that academic advice is available to every student. Key issues to be addressed include advice on: Selection of major(s)/minor(s), fulfilling distribution requirements, sequencing of courses, fulfilling practical/experiential learning requirements, freedom of speech, academic honesty, and other academic issues that may arise.*

NOTE: The HEC will provide financial and technical support to universities for establishing the academic advisement services.

2 Conceptualising Academic Advisement

- a) Academic advisement was first introduced in the United States in the 1820s (Cook, 2001), and with the increase in the breadth and complexity of curricula, it is now a central and necessary feature of most universities.
- b) Theorizing on academic advising gave seven organizational models of academic advisement, which were further classified into Centralized, Decentralized, and Shared approaches (Habley, 1983; Pardee, 2000). However, universities adopt the model or approach that best meets their requirements.



- c) Appreciative Advising (Bloom, Huston & He, 2008) is an emerging trend and seems to facilitate advisees' educational experience holistically. This model has six phases: Disarm, Discover, Dream, Design, Deliver, and Don't Settle (Barron & Powell, 2014). Details on these are widely available online.
- d) Academic advising is a dynamic process in which a student and advisor jointly address the difficulties and concerns that a student may face over the course of university education.
- e) In the starting phase of an advisee's academic experience, probably until a Major is declared, the primary responsibility lies with the Advisor. Once a Major is declared, the advisor and advisee can collaboratively work on the advisee's academic and professional plan. In the later years of the undergraduate education, an advisee should take responsibility in this process.

3 | Objectives

The broad objectives of an effective advisory system include:



a. Provision of academic advice in a timely manner.



b. Facilitation of student learning.



c. Increased student satisfaction and retention.



d. Helping students in making the most of their university experience and in making informed decisions in pursuing their academic and professional goals (Miller, 2012).

4 Academic Advisement System

The following are key features of an academic advisory system:

4.1 Academic Advisement Office

(Exact nomenclature may vary):

Establishment



- a) Each university will establish an Academic Advisement Office per (b) and (c) below.
- b) The Academic Advisement Office will be under the umbrella of the Undergraduate Student Office (USO).

NOTE: The HEC will provide financial and other support to public sector universities in the establishment of an Undergraduate Student Office (USO), which will have three sub-offices or sections, each dealing with **Academic Advisement**, Internships, and Practical Learning Labs.

- c) The USO may be associated with the office of the Registrar or Director Academics or any other administrative office that the university deems fit.

Role and Responsibilities

The Academic Advisement Office will:

- a) Provide overall administrative support for provision of academic advisement to all undergraduate students from the time of admission to the time of graduation.
- b) Develop the university Academic Advisement Policy per HEC guidelines and best practices.
- c) Develop a Faculty Advisor Handbook.

- d) Develop and conduct student and parent orientation at the time of admissions (See para 6).
- e) Assign every undergraduate student to a faculty advisor for academic advisement.

NOTE: The number of students assigned to a faculty will be a function of the ratio of faculty-undergraduate students in a particular university.

HINT: *The same individual faculty may be assigned the same group of students whose Internship are being supervised by him or her.*

- f) Operationally, student assignment to faculty advisors should be as follows.
 - i) Assignment to faculty advisors should happen at the time of orientation.
 - ii) In the third semester students should be re-assigned to relevant faculty advisors in accordance with the Major chosen by the student.
- g) Establish an anonymous system of student feedback on the Academic Advisement Office and Faculty Advisors.
- h) Develop transparent rules and mechanisms to address student complaints about a faculty advisor or the Academic Advisement Office.
- i) Organize brief refreshers for office personnel and faculty advisors.
- j) Maintain complete records.

4.2 Faculty Advisors

An individual faculty will have a group of advisees as assigned by the Academic Advisement Office.

Abilities

- a) Facilitate student decision-making on their academic journeys *without imposing personal preferences*.
- b) Remain mindful of the diverse backgrounds of students and tailor advice accordingly.
- c) Practice empathy and a helping attitude.
- d) Be knowledgeable about the latest university policies, rules, and regulations.

- e) Maintain familiarity with international best practices for Academic Advisement.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Meet regularly with advisees.
- Educate and advise students about the degree requirements under the UEP.
- Facilitate students in making informed decisions in choosing Major/s (and Minor/s, if any), and help them explore probable outcomes of different combinations.
- Advise students how best to fulfil the Distribution course requirements.
- Advise students how best to fulfil the Practical Learning requirements.
- Advise and supervise students in the Internship requirement.
- Mediate between students and administration.
- Inform students about learning opportunities related to their fields both inside and outside the university.
- Facilitate students in career development by staying up-to-date with the latest opportunities.
- Refer students at risk of any mental health problems in a timely manner to the concerned university or other facility.
- Maintain full records of advisory activities.
- Follow reporting protocols to the Academic Advisement Office in a timely manner.

(Annex I,II,III)

Universities should consider including Academic Advisement (and Internship Supervision) duties in the workload of individual faculty members.

Rules

- Student participation in ***Group Advisory Meetings*** with the Faculty Advisor will be mandatory. (Annex I)

Waiver: A student may obtain a waiver from group advisement for a semester. Waiver applications will be sent through the Faculty Advisor to the Academic Advisement Office for decision.

- b) Student participation in ***Individual Advisory Meetings*** with the Faculty Advisor at least three times a semester will be mandatory. Students will get appointments for individual advisory

meetings. Evidence of the Advisement with the Faculty Advisement will be required. **(Annex II)**

c) Advisement will be mandatory for students on probation, transfer students, and international students.

d) Students wanting to take more or less credits in a semester will apply in writing to the Faculty Advisor who will adjudicate and record the reasons for the decision in writing.

e) Students wanting to change their Faculty Advisor will have to apply to the Academic Advisement Office.

f) A Faculty Advisor may refer a student to another Advisor if he or she finds the advisee a better fit with them. However, this change has to be done through the Academic Advisement Office.

h) A Faculty Advisor may refer an advisee to a particular medical/counselling facility when necessary.

5 Operationalising Academic Advisement

The process of advisement starts as soon as admissions are completed. Following are foreseeable implementation steps:



Step 1: Students get *ADMISSION* in a university.



Step 2: Students receive a communication (email, letter, or other) to attend the *ORIENTATION* on a specified date and time.



Step 3: Students attend the orientation session during which they are informed of the *FACULTY ADVISOR* to whom they have been assigned.



Step 4: Each faculty advisor meets with their assigned students **as a group** and briefs them about the following:

- How to register on the LMS and get an ID.
- Location of his or her office and their advisory/office hours.
- Contact details of the faculty advisor (email/office phone) for scheduling future appointments.



Step 5: Students make individual appointments with their assigned advisor indicating, for each meeting, the issues that they want to discuss.

6 Student Orientation

Objective:

The overall objective of student orientation is to provide individuals with a holistic view of the university learning experience, as well as outlining the expectations and responsibilities of students during their stay in the university.

TIPS: Planning & Rollout:

Assign responsibility to a team (3-5 members) to design and plan the rollout of the orientation. Ideally orientation/s should be facilitated by the same individuals. Best practice indicates that an orientation should have two facilitators.

The following are suggested tips in planning and rolling out orientation:



Communicate the *date, time, and venue* for the orientation in advance to upcoming students by emails, text messages, or posting the information on the university website.

NOTE: It is recommended that parents are also invited to the orientation.



If orientation is to be on-campus, include a map to guide students on how to reach the campus and where to go for the orientation.



If orientation is to be virtual, include guidance information and hyperlinks to facilitate attendance.



If student numbers are large, divide them into manageable groups per the human and infrastructural resources of the university. Further, orientation may be spread across different days (for different groups).



Design and plan the orientation carefully to ensure that:

- It is engaging.
- Time is efficiently managed, but with breaks.
- There is adequate time for Q&A.
- Students receive an information package.
- Students benefit maximally.



Identify and prepare individuals (faculty or staff) who will facilitate the orientation

Possible Content Areas:

(Given in no particular order)

a) Transition from secondary to university education:

Going to a university after secondary school is challenging for most students. So, they need guidance in shifting from rote memorization and reproduction of information to acquiring learning higher order skills and behaviours like critical thinking, reflection, communication (oral and written), self-learning, motivation, and the like; some of which are listed below:

- i. Self-learning: University students are expected to learning independently, which can be challenging even for the brightest and most motivated students. Independent or self-directed learning can include: Discovering new information, designing one's learning path, and using resources, guides and information.
- ii. Creative and Critical Thinking: Use of the 5 W's and 1 H rule (Who, What, When, Where, Why, How) when learning.

- iii. Use of Resources: Orient students about the various resources they can use including the library, online help, use of technologies like ICT, and other available resources.
- iv. Setting Learning Goals and Self-Monitoring: Highlight the importance of students' setting own learning goals and assessing themselves against those goals to monitor their own progress.
- v. Motivation: Motivation is critical to learning and success. For example, students who are motivated tend to be engaged, persist longer, have better learning outcomes, and perform better than other students.

- b) **Overview of the scheme of studies per UEP**
- c) **General Education courses**
- d) **Academic Advisement.**
- e) **Internships and Practical Learning Labs.**
- f) **Studying in the Semester system.**
- g) **Available student services.**
- h) **Fee structure and scholarships**

Orientation Tools:



Useful Resources

(The following resources were used to develop this guide, which you may also find useful)

- Gordon, V. N., & In Habley, W. R. (2000). *Academic advising: A comprehensive handbook*.
- Resources from National Academic Advising Association:
<https://nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles.aspx>
- Advisors' Handbook:
<https://www.fccollege.edu.pk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Advisor-Handbook.pdf>

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- Cook, S. (2001, October 15). A chronology of academic advising in America. *The Mentor: An Academic Advising Journal*. Retrieved from <https://journals.psu.edu/mentor/article/view/61722/61367>
- Habley, W. R. (1983). Organizational structures for academic advising: Models and implications. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 24, 535-540.
- McGillin, V. A. (2003). The role of evaluation and reward in faculty advising. In G. Kramer (Ed.), *Faculty advising examined: Enhancing the potential of college faculty as advisors* (pp. 88 – 124). Bolton, MA: Anker.
- Miller, M.A. (2012). *Structuring our conversations: Shifting to four dimensional advising models*. Retrieved from <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Structuring-Our-Conversations-Shifting-to-Four-Dimensional-Advising-Models.aspx>
- Pardee, C. F. (2000). Organizational models for academic advising. In V. N. Gordon, W. R. Habley, & Associates (Eds.), *Academic Advising: A Comprehensive Handbook* (pp. 192-209). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Annex II

Individual Advisement Report

Student Name: _____ Roll/Registration Number: _____

Advisor Name: _____

Date: _____ Time Duration: _____

	Issue(s)	Way Forward
1.		
2.		
3.		
	(if needed, additional rows may be added)	

Signature of Student:

Signature of Advisor:

NOTE: Copy MUST be given to the student

