

Standard Operating Procedure

Enhancement of Quality Standards at NDU



RESEARCH VALIDATION COMMITTEE

Version: 4.0

NATIONAL DEFENCE UNIVERSITY ISLAMABAD

This SOP contains 07 pages and it has been prepared in line with the provisions of NDU Academic Regulations/ NDU Statutes / HEC guidelines, and will remain enforced till amended, cancelled or suspended. It shall be revised / amended after approval of any changes in the Academic Regulations or HEC guidelines or after the statutory bodies' decision or as and when considered necessary by the Competent Authority. No provision of this document shall supersede information / direction contained in the Academic Regulations / NDU Statutes/ HEC guidelines or other superior documents on the subject.

Record of Approvals/Revisions

Ver	Approval Date	Effective Date	Approving Authority	Revision Details
1.0	31 May 2021	01 June 2021	President NDU	New devised
2.0	19 Apr 2023	13 Sep, 2023	President NDU	Major revisions
	8 Sep 2023		34 th ASRB Endorsement President NDU dated 16 Aug 2023	Minor revisions
3.0	01 Feb 2024	13 Mar 2024	35 th ASRB Endorsement by President NDU dated 15 th Feb, 2024	Major revisions
4.0	21 Oct 2024	23 Oct 2024	President NDU	Major revisions

List of Abbreviations

CQI	Continuous Quality Improvement
DTRC	Departmental Tenure Review Committee
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
RVC	Research Validation Committee
TTS	Tenure Track System

SOP – Enhancement of Quality Standards at NDU

1. **Aim.** The aim of this SOP is to streamline and improve the quality of teaching and research standards in the light of HEC guidelines, and the best practices of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

2. **Gen.** Quality of teaching and research are considered the hallmark of any university. HEC always provides minimum standards and guidelines for improvement of quality in HEIs. For continuous quality improvement (CQI), university needs to enhance the minimum standards set by the HEC, and the same is also supported by HEC. Besides teaching, research output is also contributing towards university’s repute, ranking, research award competitions, university funding by HEC, as well as career progression of individual faculty members.

3. **Teaching Evaluation Criteria.** On the basis of following teaching evaluation parameters, performance of all visiting and permanent faculty members of NDU will be assessed after completion of each semester and calendar year (Jan-Dec) respectively: -

a. **Identification of Unusual Feedback (<60%).**

(1) **Permanent Faculty.** If any faculty member secured less than 60% score (unsatisfactory) in Teacher Evaluation of any course, then he/she will be dealt as under (by the end of each specified semester):-

Identification of Unusual Feedback	Corrective Measure(s)
First Semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counseling by respective HoD. (HoD/Prof to be counseled by Dean FCS). • Respective HoD & Dean Comments on Feedback report, if required
Consecutive Second Semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caution letter by respective HoD. (Caution letter to HoD/Prof will be issued by Dean FCS) • Faculty with unusual feedback will not be given same course in the next semester. • Respective HoD & Dean Comments on Feedback report, if required
Consecutive Third Semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warning letter by Dean FCS. • Respective HoD & Dean Comments on Feedback report, if required Individual cases may be recommended to the President NDU for administrative actions.

(2) **Visiting Faculty.**

Identification of Unusual Feedback	Corrective Measure
First Semester	Counseling by respective HoD.
Consecutive Second Semester	Teaching course in next semester will not be altd to respective VF.

4. **Research Evaluation Criteria/ Parameters for Permanent Faculty.** HEC requires universities to ensure the quality of research produced (Ref No. 15-54/Coord/2019/hec/(QAD)/119 dated Feb 07, 2022). Every faculty member should publish research papers in the HEC recognized quality journals (minimum 'Y' category) as per timeline given below: -

- Lecturer : 01 Publication in 2 calendar years (Jan-Dec).
 - Asst Prof to Prof : 01 Publication in a calendar year (Jan-Dec).
- a. If faculty member publishes more than one publication in a calendar year then credit of his/her extra publication(s) will be considered in next year(s) publication requirement.
- b. The "Research Validation Committee (RVC)" is recommended to:-
- (1) Guide/mentor those faculty members, who are not publishing mandatory research article(s) as per the given timeline.
 - (2) Create awareness and provide necessary guidelines to faculty/research scholars comprising both M.Phil and Ph.D for conducting research with high ethical standards; publication of research articles in the reputed/recognized high quality research journals and publishers. Attention is also drawn to NDU SOP – Co-Authoring Research Articles available at https://ndu.edu.pk/qec/sop/2.SOP_Co_Authoring_Research_Articles_in_National_and_Internatio.pdf
 - (3) Assign category (Low, Medium, High) to research portfolio of researcher(s) as per quality publications clauses given in this SOP.
 - (4) To resolve the miscellaneous research quality related issues of the researchers (faculty, student & staff) arising from time to time.
 - (5) The composition of Research Validation Committee (RVC) is as under:-

Dean FCS	Chairperson
All HoDs	Member
All Professors	Member
Editor JCS	Member
Director Coord FCS	Member
One editor from ISSRA	Member
Director QEC	Member/Secy

- (6) The committee may invite, in person, the concerned researcher(s) (faculty, student & staff) for further clarification/hearing, if required.
- (7) In case if researchers (faculty, students & staff) does not agree with RVC findings/ recommendations, he/ she has the right to appeal (in writing) within 10 working days from the date of their approval, to the Appeal Committee through RVC Chairperson.
- (8) The composition of Appeal Committee is as under:-

Dy President NDU	Chairperson
Dean FCS	Member
Dir Admin FCS	Member
Director QEC	Member/Secy
- (9) After receiving the appeal request, Appeal Committee shall dispassionately re-examine the case/ recommendation(s). Such appeals will be disposed off within 30 working days of the receipt.
- (10) Final recommendation(s) of Special RVC shall be submitted to the Competent Authority for decision.

5. Faculty Contract Renewal.

- a. A faculty member may earn credit up to a six-year publication credit for contract renewal, if s/he publishes a '**book**¹' having word count of more than 70,000 with a well **reputed publisher**². However, for promotion and tenure grant purposes, for all cadres HEC TTS rules would apply.
- b. A faculty member may also earn a two-year publication credit for contract renewal; if s/he publishes a **Book Chapter and Monograph**² (Monograph having word count of more than 15000) with a well reputed publisher. However, for promotion and tenure grant purposes for all cadres HEC TTS rules would apply.
- c. A faculty member may receive a publication credit for three-years for contract renewal, if they publish an **article**³ in a credible journal⁴ of 'W'

1 The category of the book, book chapter, monograph/publisher will be determined by the RVC for consideration of grant of credit / otherwise.

3 Sense Ranking list of academic publishers may be referred for quality publishers. While the national publishers associated with credible think tanks and universities may be considered by the RVC.

3 As per the best practices in vogue in academia, generally journal articles' word count is 5000-8000. But in case of some Journals for instance International Security (Harvard University) the words count is 10,000-15,000. However, in some exceptional cases (reputed peer reviewed X and W category international journals) the word count may be considered from 3000-5000.

category. However, for promotion and tenure grant purposes for all cadres HEC TTS rules would apply.

- d. A faculty member may receive two-years of publication credit for contract renewal, if they publish an article in a credible journal⁴ of 'X' category. However, for promotion and tenure grant purposes, for all cadres HEC TTS rules would apply.
- e. A faculty member may receive one-year of publication credit, if they publish an article in a credible journal⁴ of 'Y' category (Only for ACR/DTRC/renewal of contract purposes). However, for promotion and tenure grant purposes, for all cadres HEC TTS rules would apply.

Corrective Measures for Faculty Contract Renewal.

- f. If any faculty member fails to publish req research publication in a given timeline, then he/she will be dealt as under: -

Identification of Req Research Publication(s)	Corrective Measure	
	Lecturer	AP to Assoc Prof
On completion of 1 st Year ⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intimation by HoD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Counselling by HoD Mentoring/guidance by RVC
On completion of 2 nd Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisory letter by HoD Monitoring/guidance by RVC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caution letter by HoD (Retrievable and unrecorded, if publication is subsequently published. This retrieval of caution letter should be recommended by HoD and duly approved by Dean) Mentoring/guidance by RVC
On completion of 3 rd Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caution letter by HoD on 30th June of 3rd year^{5a} Warning ltr by Dean FCS on 31st Dec of 3rd year Mentoring/guidance by RVC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warning ltr by Dean FCS on 30th June of 3rd year (Retrievable and unrecorded, if publication is subsequently published). Warning ltr by Dean FCS on 31st Dec of 3rd year (Non-retrievable and recorded and if article is not published.) Mentoring/guidance by RVC

4 National/ International Journals ensuring proper peer review process associated/ published by credible think tanks, universities or indexed by well-known databases e.g. Web of Science, Social Science Citation Index, ABDC, DOAJ, Science Direct etc.

⁵ Calendar year (Jan – Dec)

^{5a} On publishing of res article (W,X,Y cat) till 30th Jun of 3rd yr, caution ltr will be retrieved.

- g. After guidance/mentoring by RVC, if the faculty member(s) continuously fail to produce research output as per given timeline by the end of 3rd year, then on the recommendations of RVC, their case(s) shall be forwarded to President NDU for administrative / financial actions (stoppage of annual increment penalty along with time limit for publishing a research article).

6. For Promotions of Existing Permanent Faculty / Fresh Appointments.

- a. The SOP would be fully functional for the **Existing Permanent Faculty and Fresh Appointments** from the date of circulation. However, those research publications (published before the date of circulation of this SOP) if found to have any anomalies related to quality in the light of Para 6 b & 7 b of this SOP, then in that case the observations of the RVC/DTRC would be explicitly presented to the Selection Board for their consideration while evaluating the suitability of the candidate for promotion/eligibility for appointment or otherwise. This provision will be valid till **Dec 31, 2025**. Furthermore, a multi authored publication (published before the date of circulation of this SOP) in HEC recognized journals having more than **3 x authors**⁶ (Including principal author) would be considered till aforementioned period.
- b. At least, 2 articles for Associate Professorship, and 3 for Professorship (X & above Cat or Y pre July 2018) are required to be published as a **single author**⁷ by the applicant for promotion and fresh appointments. However, those research publications having any anomalies related to single authorship, then in that case, the observations of the RVC/DTRC would be explicitly presented before the Selection Board for their consideration while evaluating the suitability of the candidate for

⁶ As per the best practices in academia, the journal articles on average have up to 3 authors. The practice is witnessed in various high-quality journals, e.g., *International Security Journal*, *Survival*, *Current History*, *Washington Quarterly*, *Asian Survey*, *American Political Science Review*, *Academy of Management Journal*, *Management Science Journal*, *Journal of Consumer Research*, *The Journal of Finance*, *The Accounting Review*, *American Economic Review*, etc. Furthermore, HEC Best Research Awards considers only those publications as eligible for awards having max of 3 X authors.

⁷ Similar practice is being observed by other national/international universities' selection procedures, for instance PIDE – in their 31st Meeting of Senior Management Committee/Selection Committee held on 11th April 2023. (Reported by Member of Selection Board/Committee). Moreover, internationally Thompson Rivers University, Canada; Arizona State University, USA also encourage single authored publications for promotion purposes. Furthermore, HEC TTS Technical Review Report of a faculty at NDU also encouraged this practice for demonstration of individual scholarship on the subject.

promotion/eligibility of applicant for fresh appointment or otherwise. This provision will be valid till **Dec 31, 2025**. In case the applicant possessed all publications in multiple authorship, then the applicant may be given a conditional employment contract to meet the eligibility criteria within a stipulated timeframe (for Fresh Appointments Only).

7. Quality of Publications.

- a. Only publications in the **relevant field**⁸ (relevancy to be checked by respective HoD) will be considered for any kind of research benefits at NDU.
- b. A multi authored publication in HEC recognized journals having maximum 3x authors (Including principal author) would be considered for any kind of research benefits at NDU.
- c. Scopus/ WoS⁹ active coverage is mandatory for international journals listed with Scopus/ WoS. Articles published in international journals and delisted from Scopus would not be considered for any kind of research benefits at NDU (from the date of delisting). Furthermore, at the time of paper publication, NDU will consider a journal as derecognized even if it is visible in HJRS and discontinued from Scopus.
- d. The university will have the right to discard any Research publications published in bogus/dubious/cloned/quality compromised journals. The university may issue the advisories to faculty/researchers on afore said journals from time to time for compliance.
- e. Any duplicated articles, whether published in the same or different journals, will be considered as plagiarism. As per NDU/ HEC Anti-Plagiarism Policy, authors who are found engaged in such practices will be dealt as per the said SOP.

8. Responsibility Mechanism.

Responsibility	Action By
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and guide faculty members/researchers to publish research articles in high quality HEC recognized Journals which will enhance the 	Dean FCS

⁸ In case of controversy about the relevant content of published paper and research journal, RVC will determine the eligibility/acceptability of publication. The committee may invite the concerned the researcher(s) (faculty, student & staff) for further clarification, if required.

⁹ Scopus indexed journals are considered for QS Ranking. However, journals indexed with other credible indexing bodies e.g. Web of Science, Social Science Citation Index, ABDC, DOAJ, Science Direct etc. may be considered by RVC to determine the acceptance regarding quality of the published articles for any benefit, on case to case basis.

Responsibility	Action By
research quality of NDU. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue Advisories to faculty/researchers in consultation with QEC for dealing with emerging quality of research related issues at NDU. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm that published article is not in a bogus/dubious journal before sending it to QEC for necessary vetting. • Check the relevancy and quality of research article(s)¹⁰ and journal(s) with the field of research. 	Respective HoD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verify the category of Journal and confirm that the Journal is HEC recognized or Not. • Verify that the submitted research article is readily available on journal's official website as per claimed credentials e.g Vol #, Issue # & Year. • Verify the date of publication. • Check the impact factor of 'W' category intl journals. • Check that at the time of paper publication, Scopus/ WoS¹¹ coverage is mandatory for international journals. 	QEC

9. Contents of this SOP are subject to change as and when deemed appropriate by the university. The SOP will be reviewed, as and when deemed appropriate.

10. This SOP will be implemented with immediate effect after its circulation.

Director QEC
(Dr Farrukh Idrees)

¹⁰ If research verification anomalies are not resolved by QEC & HOD, then these may be referred to "RVC"

¹¹As described by HEC Journals and Publications Policy in vogue
(<https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/services/faculty/journals/Pages/default.aspx>)