



Title: Conduct of Research Procedures

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to describe the procedures to be followed by all researchers and students at Gulf University, to ensure effectiveness and consistency in implementation of Research Policy across all Colleges, Departments, and programs.

2. Scope

The document applies to all researchers and students at Gulf University.

3. Acronyms

BQA	Education and Training Quality Authority
HEC	Higher Education Council
HOD	Head of Department

4. Definitions

Academic Publication:

An academic publication is the subfield that distributes academic research and scholarship. Most academic works are published in the form of academic journal articles, books or theses.

Co-Researcher:

A Co-Researcher is a researcher, who engages in research with another researcher as joint contributor to the finding of the research project. Students cannot be designated as Co-Researcher.

Evaluator:

An evaluator is the researcher from the team of main area of research, who evaluates research/project proposals and their achievements of other researchers within the relevant main area.

Lead Researcher:

Lead researcher is the researcher, who leads a research team, takes responsibility for management and completion of the research project, supervises funding and expenditures on the research project, and reports to Gulf University and funding organization (if any).

Researcher:

A researcher is an academic staff member or a visiting academic at Gulf University undertaking research at the University.

Research Team:

A research Team is a group of researchers with interdisciplinary, diversity, integrated competencies, and potential research expertise composed at the University to conduct a specific research project and ensure its quality.

Scientific Research:

Scientific research is a methodology for investigating and acquiring both new and existing knowledge in systematical way. Scientific research can either be pure or applied.

Student:

A student is any individual who is formally registered in a program offered by Gulf University.

Visiting Academic:

A visiting academic is an academic invited by Gulf University (upon approval from HEC) for a specific period, such as for a semester or an academic year to undertake teaching and/or research in the offered programs.

5. Procedure Details

5.1 Preamble

- 5.1.1 Research Council, Colleges, Departments and Researchers shall ensure full compliance with “HEC Regulations of Scientific Research in HE Institutions”, of all research activities conducted at the University through dissemination of all information related to these regulations on Research webpage (within university website) and conduct of workshops and induction sessions.
- 5.1.2 Research Council, in collaboration with colleges, shall identify the main areas of scientific research activities and compose areas’ research-teams at the beginning of each academic year, shall take into consideration its alignment with the priority areas of research as described in “National Research Strategy 2014-2024” for the Kingdom of Bahrain, and with “Gulf University Strategic Plan: Research Objectives”.
- 5.1.3 The Research Council, in collaboration with colleges, shall propose the annual “University Research Plan” with the necessary budget, shall seek University Council and Board of Trustees for approval of the plan and its budget.
- 5.1.4 The Dean of the Colleges shall review the research directions of the college at the end of the academic year and set priorities for the next academic year.

5.2 Research Budget and Expenditure

- 5.2.1 In compliance with HEC regulations, research budget at Gulf University shall consist of:
 - i. at least 3% of the University total annual income,
 - ii. any additional amount the University may add for research purposes,

- iii. any other payments made by third parties, subject to the prior approval of the Higher Education Council and are consistent with laws in the Kingdom of Bahrain.
- 5.2.2 The Research Council, in collaboration with Colleges, Departments and Researchers shall coordinate, supervise and follow-up on research funded from other sectors outside the University.
- 5.2.3 The Research Council, in collaboration with Colleges, Departments and Researchers shall apply a clear and transparent mechanism for the expenditure of “University Research Budget”, based on the principle of competitiveness.
- 5.2.4 All expenditure shall be spent on the purposes set for exclusively as stated in Article (10) of “HEC Regulations of Scientific Research in HE Institutions”. This includes:
- i. Purchasing devices, equipment, kits, and tools, including computers and software, which are needed for the research project.
 - ii. Purchasing biological, chemical, and physical materials, glassware, and other materials, needed to conduct the research project.
 - iii. Purchasing specialized books or scientific journals necessary to support a specific project, provided that these books and journals handed over to the library in the library after completion of the project.
 - iv. Purchasing necessary databases for conducting research projects or paying their subscription fees.
 - v. Purchasing specialized scientific tests and measurement devices or renting equipment necessary for conducting all or part of a specific research project.
 - vi. Contracting with suppliers for maintenance and repair of equipment and devices purchased for research projects’ purposes.
 - vii. Modifying existing facilities for the purpose of accommodating a specific research project or group of projects, such as a laboratory for biosafety, a low-vibration room, or a research facility for animal welfare.
 - viii. Scientific publishing expenses arising from publication of research submitted by a faculty member in scientific journals or conference proceedings (volumes).
 - ix. Expenses for the preparation of referred scientific conferences and seminars, with related academic matters.
 - x. Travel expenses of a faculty member, if he is obliged to visit some institution(s)/organization(s) outside the Kingdom of Bahrain for the purpose of conducting specific research, such as collecting data, using specialized equipment(s) available only in those institution(s)/organization(s).
 - xi. Expenses of external practical consultancy and services if required for the research project.

- xii. Any other expenses of similar nature to the items mentioned above intended to accomplish the research project. These expenses shall be subject to financial auditing by the General Secretariat of HEC.

5.3 Research Ethics

5.3.1 Researchers/Research Teams, students and their supervisors shall consider the following fundamental principles:

- ensuring credibility through carrying out their research with full respect of honesty and integrity, objectivity, self-criticism, and self-discipline.
- strict observation of confidentiality and respect of the traditions and values of the Kingdom of Bahrain.
- Probable risks related to social, physical, psychological, financial shall be identified and conscious effort to mitigate such risks shall be made.
- Validity of the research design and methodology shall be appropriate to the study and subject to ethical review.
- Participants or any subject to the research shall be selected fairly without giving excessive burden to specific individuals or participants.
- Privacy, dignity, and anonymity of the participants of the research shall be maintained.
- No confidential information at personal or organizational context shall be disclosed without the formal consent of the concerned persons.
- Participants are fully aware of the involvement in the research process and shall give consent without coercion. Participants are free to withdraw at any point of time during the process, which shall not allow the researcher to retaliate in any manner.
- Research process shall not lead to violation of legal norms and regulations, harming humans, animals, and environment intentionally.
- Research outcome or result shall not instigate cultural sensitivity, ethnic problem, discrimination, embarrass or distress participants.
- Research shall be conducted in a fair and transparent manner and reveal relevant disclosure in the ethical approval of research form.
- Research results shall include facts and figures derived from the research only and interpretation of the results shall not be misleading.
- respect of international policies and protocols defined for research, such as: “European Commission Ethics for Researchers”, “Rio de Janeiro declaration on research on environment”, and “Dublin declaration for water resources”.
- respect of intellectual property and recognition of the achievements of other researchers.
- avoiding plagiarism and misuse of results of others.

- 5.3.2 Researchers, Research Teams, Students, Colleges, and Departments shall apply a clear and transparent mechanism for avoiding plagiarism based on examination of their research manuscripts for any existence of plagiarism using the approved “software” at the University.

Section (1): Academic Staff Research

5.4 Research Teams

- 5.4.1 Colleges and Departments shall encourage faculty members to compose interdisciplinary research teams and submit their proposals for collaborative research projects that are in line with the University's research plan.
- 5.4.2 Research Teams(s) shall be created collaboratively within each Department in the College, between Departments within the College, or between different Departments from Colleges based on needs of the research project(s).
- 5.4.3 Research Teams may include external members from different community institutions.
- 5.4.4 Aims of Research Team(s) are:
- i. supporting inter-disciplinary research work,
 - ii. strengthening links between researchers,
 - iii. supporting an inspiring and attractive environment for research.
 - iv. supporting research partnership with community institutions,
 - v. improving the capacity of researchers and students and direct their research interests to serve community development.
- 5.4.5 The following criteria shall be followed for composing Research Team(s):
- i. Team members (whether or not the Team includes external members) shall be at least two. Team Leader (Lead Researcher) shall be from Gulf University.
 - ii. Team members (or at least Team Leaders) shall be active in scientific research and have good research records.
 - iii. Team members shall be from one or more of the approved areas of research at the University.
- 5.4.6 The criteria for evaluation of research proposals are:
- alignment with National Priorities as stipulated in National Research Strategy 2014-2024,
 - impact on industry/economy,
 - impact on community,
 - impact on program development, teaching, learning and assessment,
 - relevance to technology in education,
 - relevance to governance, management, leadership, and quality assurance,
 - relevance to contemporary issues and emerging trends.
 - interdisciplinary and reflection on co-researchers or research team members.

- quality of targeted journal or conference for publishing the research paper.
- 5.4.7 The research team shall apply for ethical approval of the research to the College Research Committee through completing the above-mentioned (Form GU-PR17CR-F03) form which shows explicit criteria and declaration of the research team. All the applications within the scope of the college shall be critically reviewed by the College Research Committee for necessary approval including interdisciplinary research provided the disciplines are covered within the scope of the college. Inter disciplinary research and any research involving co-researchers from another institution within the scope of the college shall be reviewed for ethical approval by the College Research Committee.
- 5.4.8 Any application for ethical research approval for interdisciplinary research outside the scope of the college or any proposal involving complex and critical matters including cross disciplinary areas shall be referred to University Research Council for necessary ethical approval. A sub-committee shall be formed within the council to review the ethical issues of the particular research and a decision shall be taken accordingly. Research conducted jointly with official external bodies shall receive ethical approval from the sub-committee formed within the council. Any application rejected by the College Research Committee shall be permitted to appeal to the University Research Council against the decision.
- 5.4.9 If the research team comprises more than one researcher who is also members of the College Research Committee, the ethical approval shall be referred to the University Research Council for necessary action.
- 5.4.10 The college's research Committee shall meet every last week of the month to review the ethical aspect of the research.

5.5 Financial Support for Publishing in Journals and Participation at Conferences

- 5.5.1 Research Teams/Researchers shall commit to publishing/presenting their research articles (papers) in journals/conferences indexed in well-known International Arab/Databases as recognized annually by GU.
- 5.5.2 Research Leader(s)/Researcher(s) shall examine any existence of plagiarism in their manuscript(s) using the approved "software" at GU.
- 5.5.3 Research Leader(s)/Researcher(s) shall submit "Publishing in Journals Support Request", (Form GU-PR17CR-F01) for the manuscript of publishable paper to relevant College's research Committee for recommending the financial support, with the followings:
- The manuscript with the Turnitin report
 - Letter of acceptance from refereed and recognized journal
 - Publication fees

- 5.5.4 The college's research Committee shall comment on similarity result, (re-examine the manuscript if necessary), and shall send it to Dean for final decision.
- 5.5.5 The Dean shall comment on examination results, (re-examine the manuscript, if necessary), shall approve or reject the manuscript, shall return all documents to College's Research Committee.
- 5.5.6 The college's research Committee shall either send the approved document to the Research Council or shall send the rejected documents to the relevant Research Leader/Researcher.
- 5.5.7 The Research Council shall consider the recommendation received and shall take the decision for approval and funding of the publishable paper within the University's allocated research budget.
- 5.5.8 Research Council shall seek the University President for endorsement of the decision, followed informing relevant Researcher/Lead Researcher, student and supervisor, College's Research Committee, and University Finance Department for processing funding.
- 5.5.9 The Research Council shall retain all original documents related to publishable paper in the research file.
- 5.5.10 Only 'participation in conferences with publishable papers' shall be considered for financial support within the University's allocated research budget.
- 5.5.11 Research Teams/Researchers shall commit to publishing their research articles (papers) in International, Regional, and local Conferences recognized annually by GU.
- 5.5.12 Research Leaders/Researchers shall examine any existence of plagiarism in their manuscripts of publishable paper using the approved "software" at GU.
- 5.5.13 Research Leaders/Researchers shall submit "Participation in Conferences Support Request Form", (Form GU- PR17CR-F02) for the manuscript of publishable paper to relevant College's research Committee for recommending the financial support, with the followings:
- The manuscript with the Turnitin report
 - Letter of acceptance from the Conference
 - Registration fees
- 5.5.14 Team Research Leaders shall nominate who shall represent the team at the conference.
- 5.5.15 The College's Research Committee shall comment on similarity result, (re-examine the manuscript if necessary), and shall send it to the Dean for final decision.
- 5.5.16 The Dean shall comment on nominee(s) to participate in the conference and on examination results, (re-examine the manuscript, if necessary), shall approve or reject the manuscript, and shall return all documents to the College's Research Committee.
- 5.5.17 The college's research Committee shall either send the approved document to the Research Council or shall send the rejected documents to the relevant Research Leader/Researcher.

- 5.5.18 Research Council shall consider the recommendation received and shall take the decision for approval and funding within the University's allocated research budget for the following:
- Attendee(s) to the conference.
 - Conference registration fees.
 - Travel (economy class tickets) and accommodation/hotel fees for the duration of the conference (outside Bahrain only) for approved attendee(s).
 - Daily expenses for approved attendee(s) as per the University's Regulations for the period of the conference including travel days.
- 5.5.19 Research Council shall seek the University President for endorsement of the decision, followed by informing relevant Researcher/Lead Researcher, student and supervisor, College's Research Committee, and University Finance Department for processing funding.
- 5.5.20 The Research Council shall retain all original documents related to publishable paper in the research file.
- 5.5.21 The Research Council shall regularly update the "Research e-Database" and the Research webpage on the University website with all information related to the scholarly achievements by Research Team(s)/researcher(s) at the University.

Section (2): Undergraduate Students Research

5.6 Research Proposal

- 5.6.1 Students shall propose research topics relevant to their courses and shall discuss it with their Instructors.
- 5.6.2 Instructors shall evaluate the proposal and ensure the followings:
- clear objectives,
 - significance, importance, and contribution to the course,
 - methodology and time frame,
 - not repeating previous work.
- 5.6.3 Instructors (in collaboration with their students) shall submit to relevant HODs their research proposals that include the following:
- Overview,
 - Aim(s),
 - Expected Outcomes,
 - Requirements (material, tools, software, stationeries etc.),
 - Estimated budget.
- 5.6.4 Students shall also have the opportunity to submit to their relevant HODs their research proposals that are relevant to their programs.
- 5.6.5 HODs shall review and evaluate the proposal and if approved, shall appoint a Supervisor from the faculty members at the department, who shall supervise and guide the student in conducting the proposed research.
- 5.6.6 Supervisors/Course Instructors shall communicate proper research principles and methodologies to their students, shall play a leadership role to ensure compliance of students with research ethics and integrity.

- 5.6.7 College's Research Committee shall review the proposals, evaluate their aims and objectives, shall decide on whether or not, the proposals within Department/College research areas and meet University research goals, shall request for dully filled 'Ethical Research Approval' form (Form GU- PR17CR-F03).
- 5.6.8 For the graduation project, department council shall conduct the initial review of the research topic, profile of the academic supervisor and whether the theme relates to industry and in the specialization of the student, consistent with research direction of the college and the expected outcome of the research project.
- 5.6.9 After the initial review, students enrolled in the graduation project shall participate in the Graduation Project seminar conducted in the department. After the graduation project theme and methodology discussed in the seminar, the student shall submit the relevant dully filled 'Ethical Research Approval' form (Form GU- PR17CR-F03). The College Research Committee shall review the ethical issues of the research and approve the proposal if there are no recommendations. In case there are recommendations or rejection, the student shall resubmit the application form after incorporating required enhancements with 10 working days.
- 5.6.10 College deans shall get updates about the status of the graduation project from the department council.

5.7 Financial Support for Publishing in Journals and Participation at Conferences

- 5.7.1 Students (in collaboration with their Course Instructors/Supervisors) shall commit to publishing/presenting their research articles (papers) in indexed journals/conferences recognized by GU.
- 5.7.2 Student (in collaboration with the Course Instructor/the Supervisor) shall examine any existence of plagiarism in his/her manuscript using the approved "software".
- 5.7.3 Student (in collaboration with the Course Instructor/the Supervisor) shall submit the "Publishing in Journals Support Request" form, (Form GU-PR17CR-F01), to relevant College's Research Committee for recommending the financial support, along with the following:
- The manuscript of publishable paper with the Turnitin report.
 - Letter of acceptance from refereed and recognized journal.
 - Publication fees.

- 5.7.4 The College's Research Committee shall comment on similarity result, (re-examine the manuscript if necessary), and shall send it to the Dean for final decision.
- 5.7.5 The Dean shall comment on examination results, (re-examine the manuscript, if necessary), shall approve or reject the manuscript, shall return all documents to the College's Research Committee.
- 5.7.6 The College's Research Committee shall either send the approved document to the Research Council or shall send the rejected documents to relevant supervisor and student.
- 5.7.7 The Research Council shall consider the recommendation received and shall take the decision for approval and funding of the publishable paper within the University's allocated research budget.
- 5.7.8 Research Council shall seek the University President for endorsement of the decision, followed informing relevant supervisor and student, College's Research Committee, and University Finance Department for processing funding.
- 5.7.9 The Research Council shall retain all original documents related to publishable paper in the research file.
- 5.7.10 Only 'participation in conferences with publishable papers' shall be considered for financial support within the University's allocated research budget.
- 5.7.11 Students shall commit to publishing their research articles (papers) in International, Regional, and local Conferences recognized by GU.
- 5.7.12 Student (in collaboration with the Course Instructor/the Supervisor) shall examine any existence of plagiarism in his/her manuscript using the approved "software".
- 5.7.13 Supervisors and their research's students shall apply for HEC approval of their participation in conferences by submitting their manuscripts of publishable paper with the letter of acceptance from the Conference and the Turnitin report, to relevant College's research Committee, who shall process the application with the Research Council.
- 5.7.14 Supervisors (in collaboration with their research's students) shall submit "Participation in Conferences Support Request Form", (Form GU-PR17-F02), for the manuscript of publishable paper to relevant College's Research Committee for recommending the financial support, with the followings:
- The manuscript with the Turnitin report,
 - Letter of acceptance from the Conference,
 - Registration fees.
- 5.7.15 The College's Research Committee shall comment on similarity result, (re-examine the manuscript if necessary), and shall send it to the Dean for final decision.
- 5.7.16 The Dean shall comment on nominee(s) to participate in the conference and on examination results, (re-examine the manuscript, if necessary), shall approve or

reject the manuscript, and shall return all documents to the College's Research Committee.

- 5.7.17 The College's Research Committee shall either send the approved document to the Research Council or shall send the rejected documents to relevant Student and Supervisor.
- 5.7.18 Research Council shall consider the recommendation received and shall take the decision for approval and funding within the University's allocated research budget for the following:
- *Attendance of the supervisor to the conference. Attendance of students should be covered from university's academic budget.*
 - *Conference registration fees.*
 - *Travel (economy class tickets) and accommodation/hotel fees for the duration of the conference (outside Bahrain only) for approved attendee (i.e supervisor).*
 - *Daily expenses for approved attendees as per the University's Regulations for the period of the conference including travel days.*
- 5.7.19 *Research Council shall seek the University President for endorsement of the decision, followed by informing relevant Researcher/Lead Researcher, student and supervisor, College's Research Committee, and University Finance Department for processing funding.*
- 5.7.20 *The Research Council shall retain all original documents related to publishable paper in the research file.*
- 5.7.21 The Research Council shall regularly update the "Research e-Database" and the Research webpage on the University website with all information related to the scholarly achievements by students at the University.

Section (3): Research Commercialization:

- 5.8 Research Council, Colleges and Departments shall promote and encourage researchers and students at the University to consider the following aspects of research commercialization:
- i. industry-funded research that could contribute more directly to technology transfer, industrial and economic development.
 - ii. utilization of research outcomes through entrepreneurship and innovators schemes at the University.
 - iii. patenting and granted patents.
 - iv. links with industry and other community organizations to facilitate patents licensing deals and applications.
 - v. provision of quality ideas from research outcomes to industry and other community organizations.
 - vi. Co-authorship of publications between researchers at GU and Industry.

Section (4): Research Quality, Incentives and Awards

5.9 Elements of Quality of Research Output

5.9.1 The elements of quality of research output are:

- i. **Originality:** means a new way of thinking or distinguishing in a topic or a comparison in changing past works in the academic field.
- ii. **Importance** means the extent to which the work has a great impact on the academic field or practical applications.
- iii. **Reliability (precision)** means the extent to which the purpose of the work is clearly achieved by adopting an appropriate research methodology.

5.9.2 Gulf University classifies research into four categories (A, B, C and D), in alignment with the UK Research Excellence Framework which classifies research into five categories (see Table 1), as follows:

	Research Categories				
GU	A		B	C	D
UKREF	4*	3*	2*	1*	Unclassified

Table (1) The UK Research Excellence Framework classifies research into:

Rating	Description
4*	Quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigor.
3*	Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigor but which nonetheless falls short of the highest standards of excellence.
2*	Quality that is recognized internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigor.
1*	Quality that is recognized nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigor.
Unclassified	Quality that falls below the standard of nationally recognized work, or work which does not meet the published definition of research for the purposes of this assessment.

5.10 Quality Indicators of Published Articles

Gulf University shall consider the following indicators for quality of researchers' published articles:

5.10.1 Journal Impact Factor (JIF):

JIF is a measure of the average impact of original articles, and review articles appeared in the same journal, i.e.

$$\text{Year Impact Factor} = \frac{\text{number of citations to all articles published in previous 2 years}}{\text{number of articles published in previous 2 years}}$$

As core factor in JIF is the citations of the articles published in a journal. This indicates that the journal attracts manuscripts from authors whose work is of interest to the wider scientific community in the area. Currently, JIFs are provided annually by Clarivate (<https://clarivate.com/>).

5.10.2 Citations:

Citation of a publication is the most important indicator of research quality. It represents peer recognition of the publication. Non-citation shall indicate that the research work is of low quality such that peers did not consider worth citing. Google Scholar gives an easy way to know citations of a researcher, simply by entering the name of the author followed by one key word of the title of the publication or the name of journal.

5.10.3 Journal impact factor combined with citations shall provide an effective means of performance assessment of research work.

5.11 Incentives for Research Activities

5.11.1 Gulf University, in compliance with HEC Research Regulations, shall not spend any amounts allocated for the completion of scientific research to pay any part of the salaries, wages or contractual advantages of the employees of the University or its students, or any administrative or service requirements that contradict the specific purpose of the allocation.

5.11.2 Gulf University, upon recommendations by Research Council, shall pay incentives to researchers for their scholarly achievements in case they receive grants for their research projects from outside GU. The incentive value shall not exceed the basic salary that the researcher receives from Gulf University.

5.12 Awards for Distinguished Researchers

- 5.12.1 At the end of each academic year, Research Council shall review and evaluate the quality of all scholarly achievements of faculty members and students at the University, shall nominate distinguished researcher(s) and recommend awarding them during the University annual conference on research.
- 5.12.2 Research Council shall seek University President approval of their nominations and recommendations, followed by informing University Public Relations Department for preparing the certificates and awards.

Section (4): Gulf University Journals

5.13 Introduction:

- 5.13.1 Gulf University shall issue five international scientific e-journals covering the following current disciplines at the University:
- Media and Mass Communications,
 - Human Resources Management,
 - Accounting and Finance,
 - Architecture and Interior Design,
- 5.13.2 Initially, the International Journals of Gulf University shall be published on bi-annual basis, and this may change based on how the journals evolve.
- 5.13.3 The International Journals of Gulf University shall provide a further platform for researchers/students at the University to publish their research articles covering all aspects of pure and applied research in the main areas of scientific research at the University, provided that the articles shall not have been published/currently under publication else.
- 5.13.4 All submitted articles shall be evaluated through a double-blind process.

5.14 Journals' Organizational Structure :

Editor-in-Chief, Managing Editor and Editorial Board for each journal shall be appointed in accordance with "Guidelines Governing Scientific Journals of Gulf University". The Guidelines also describe their responsibilities.

6. Responsibilities

Researchers are responsible for:

- following this document appropriately.

Students are responsible for:

- following this document appropriately.

Heads of Departments

- appropriate implementation of this document.

Deans are responsible for:

- appropriate implementation of this document.

Research Council is responsible for:

- ensure all academic staff and students are fully informed of this document.
- appropriate implementation of this document.

The Finance Department is responsible for:

- appropriate implementation of this document.

University Policy Development and Review Committee is responsible for:

- systematic review of the effectiveness of this document.

7. Related Policies

- Research Policy

8. Related Procedures

- No related procedures

9. Related References and Standards

BQA	Institutional Review Handbook
BQA	Programs-within-College Reviews Handbook
HEC	National Research Strategy 2014-2024
HEC	Regulations of Scientific Research at HE Institutions
REF	U.K Research Excellence Framework