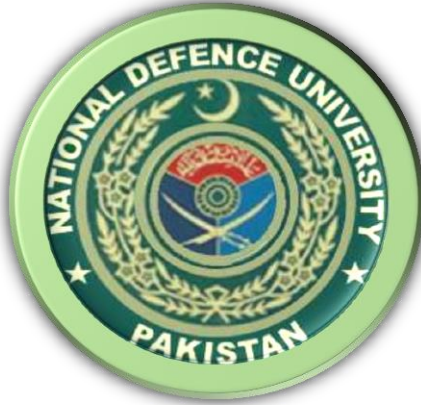


Standard Operating Procedure

Enhancement of Quality Standards at NDU



RESEARCH VALIDATION COMMITTEE

Version: 5.0

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.

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 (51%-60%).**

- (1) **Permanent Faculty.** If any faculty member secures **51%-60%** score (unsatisfactory) in Teacher Evaluation of any course, then he/she will be dealt as under (by the end of each specified semester):-

Ser	Identification of Unusual Feedback	Corrective Measure(s)
(a)	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
(b)	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
(c)	Consecutive Third Semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warning letter by Dean FCS. • Respective HoD & Dean Comments on Feedback report, if required <p>Individual cases may be recommended to the President NDU for administrative actions.</p>

(2) **Visiting Faculty.**

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

b. **Identification of Unusual Feedback (<50%).**

- (1) If any faculty member (visiting/ permanent) secured less than **50%** score in Teacher Evaluation of any course, he/she will not be assigned any course in subsequent terms as visiting faculty.
- (2) If the students' course feedback is less than 50%, than course will undergo academic review and updation

4. **Research Evaluation Criteria/ Parameters for Permanent Faculty**

- a. 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: -
 - (1) Lecturer: 01 Publication (minimum 'Y' category) in 2 calendar years (Jan-Dec).
 - (2) Asst Prof to Prof : **01 Y Cat** Publication in each calendar year (Jan-Dec).
- b. 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.
- c. 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:-

Ser	Designation / Appointment	Remarks
(a)	Dean FCS	Chairperson
(b)	All HoDs	Member
(c)	All Professors	Member
(d)	Editor JCS	Member
(e)	Director Coord FCS	Member
(f)	One editor from ISSRA	Member
(g)	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:-

Ser	Designation / Appointment	Remarks
(a)	Dy President NDU	Chairperson
(b)	Dean FCS	Member
(c)	Dir Admin FCS	Member
(d)	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. Research requirement for Contract Renewal, and PhD Supervision Compliance. To ensure continuous quality improvement in research and to uphold

NDU's academic standards, all faculty members are required to meet defined research publication targets. These targets are linked to contract renewal, promotion, and eligibility for PhD supervision.

a. **Faculty Contract Renewal Publication Credit**

- (1) **W category:** 3 years of publication credit for contract renewal
- (2) **X category:** 2 years of publication credit for contract renewal
- (3) **Y category:** 1 year of publication credit for contract renewal (for **ACR/DTRC/renewal**; NDU OG/HEC TTS rules apply for promotion)

b. **Research Publication Requirements for NDU PhD Supervision Eligibility as per HEC Graduate Education Policy 2023**

Ser	Timeframe	Requirement
(a)	Option A (Within 3 years after PhD)	At least 1 research publication in a W category journal.
(b)	Option B (Within 5 years after PhD)	At least 5 research publications in X and Y category journals.

- c. The following framework establishes clear timelines, mentoring support by the Research Validation Committee (RVC), and progressive corrective measures for non-compliance. This integrated approach ensures transparency, accountability, and institutional support while maintaining alignment with HEC guidelines and the university's quality objectives:

Corrective Measures for Non-Compliance					
Ser	Faculty Cadre	Required Publication & Contract Renewal Credit	Timeline / Target	Mentoring / Monitoring	Corrective Measures (Non-Compliance)
(1)	Lecturer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 publication (minimum 'Y' category) • Contract Renewal Credit: Y = 1 year, X = 2 years, W = 3 years 	Within 2 calendar years (Jan–Dec)	Guidance & mentoring by RVC	<p>1st Year: Intimation by HoD</p> <p>2nd Year: Advisory letter by HoD + RVC guidance</p> <p>3rd Year: Caution letter by HoD (30 June) + Warning letter by Dean (31 Dec) + continued mentoring</p>

Corrective Measures for Non-Compliance					
Ser	Faculty Cadre	Required Publication & Contract Renewal Credit	Timeline / Target	Mentoring / Monitoring	Corrective Measures (Non-Compliance)
(2)	Assistant Professor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 publication (minimum 'Y' category) per calendar year • Contract Renewal Credit: Y = 1 year, X = 2 years, W = 3 years 	Jan-Dec	Guidance & mentoring by RVC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Year: Counseling by HoD + RVC guidance • 2nd Year: Caution letter by HoD (retrievable if publication later achieved) + mentoring • 3rd Year: Warning letters by Dean (30 June retrievable; 31 Dec non-retrievable if not published) + mentoring
(3)	Associate Professor / Professor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 publication (minimum 'Y' category) per calendar year • Contract Renewal Credit: Y = 1 year, X = 2 years, W = 3 years 	Jan-Dec	Guidance & mentoring by RVC	Same as Assistant Professor; mentoring + caution/warning letters by Dean.
(4)	PhD Supervision Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option A: 1 publication in W category within 3 years OR • Option B: 5 publications in X and Y category within 5 years 	From Date of Eligibility for Supervision	Guidance & mentoring by RVC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Year: Advisory / intimation by HoD / Dean • 2nd Year: Caution letter by Dean (retrievable if publication later achieved) • Subsequent Compliance: Eligibility restored; caution letter withdrawn

6. 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.

7. **Quality of Publications.**

- a. Only publications in the **relevant field**¹ (relevancy to be checked by respective HoD) will be considered for any kind of research benefits at NDU.
- b. Scopus/ WoS/other indexing agencies'² active coverage, where applicable, is mandatory for international journals listed with Scopus/ WoS as per HEC Journal Recognition Policy in vogue.
- c. **Recognition of Publications.** For research recognition at NDU:
 - (1) Publications on or after 1 October 2024 must comply with the HEC Journals and Publication Policy 2024. Journals must be recognized under Category W, X, or Y as defined in the policy.
 - (2) Publications between 1 July 2020 and 30 September 2024 shall be assessed based on the HJRS 2023-24 listing.
 - (3) Active indexing in Web of Science (WoS), Scopus, or other HEC recognized international indexing agencies (e.g., MEDLINE, CNKI, DOAJ) is mandatory for journals.
 - (4) Articles published in journals delisted from Scopus, WoS, or other HEC recognized indexing agencies shall not be eligible for research benefits from the date of delisting.
 - (5) A journal shall be considered derecognized at the time of publication if it is discontinued from Scopus or other recognized indexing platforms, even if still visible in HJRS.
 - (6) Journals identified in the CABELLS list of predatory journals will not be recognized, in accordance with HEC policy.
- 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,

¹ 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.

² 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.

authors who are found engaged in such practices will be dealt as per the said SOP.

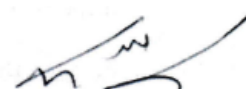
- f. NDU Guidelines for Ethical and Credible Research Publishing by NDU QEC Letter No. 800/823/NDU/QEC Research date 29 Jan 2026 (**Anx-A**).

8. **Responsibility Mechanism.**

Ser	Responsibility	Action By
a.	(1) Encourage and guide faculty members/ researchers to publish research articles in high quality HEC recognized Journals which will enhance the research quality of NDU. (2) Issue Advisories to faculty/ researchers in consultation with QEC for dealing with emerging quality of research related issues at NDU.	Dean FCS
b.	(1) Confirm that published article is not in a bogus/ dubious journal before sending it to QEC for necessary vetting. (2) Check the relevancy and quality of research article(s) ³ and journal(s) with the field of research.	Respective HoD
c.	(1) Verify the category of Journal and confirm that the Journal is HEC recognized or Not. (2) Verify that the submitted research article is readily available on journal's official website as per claimed credentials e.g Vol #, Issue # & Year. (3) Verify the date of publication. (4) Check the impact factor of 'W' category intl journals. (5) Check that at the time of paper publication, Scopus/ WoS ⁴ 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)

³ If research verification anomalies are not resolved by QEC & HOD, then these may be referred to "RVC"

⁴ As described by HEC Journals and Publications Policy in vogue
(<https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/services/faculty/journals/Pages/default.aspx>)



Quality Enhancement Cell
National Defence University
Sector E – 9 , Islamabad, Pakistan
Tel: +092- 051-9260955
Fax: +092- 051-9262822
dirqec@ndu.edu.pk
No. 800/823/NDU/QEC/Research
29 January 2026

To: Academic and Research Community of NDU
Commandant Pakistan Navy War College (PNWC), Lahore
Commandant Command and Staff College (C&SC), Quetta
Commandant School of Artillery (SoA), Nowshera
Commandant School of Army Air Defence (SAAD), Karachi

Info: Dean FSS
Dean FCS
Dir Coord FCS
Coord offr Dy President NDU

Subject: **NDU Guidelines for Ethical and Credible Research Publishing**

اسلام علیکم ورحمۃ اللہ وبرکاتہ

Dear Sir/ Madam,

1. In line with the recommendations of the Research Validation Committee (RVC), approved by the President of NDU on 10 December 2025, all research work must be published exclusively in credible and reputable journals. Ensuring the quality and integrity of scholarly publications is essential not only for safeguarding individual academic standing but also for protecting and enhancing the institutional reputation of NDU.
2. Authors must exercise due diligence before submitting manuscripts to any journal or research publishing outlet. This includes reviewing the quality and consistency of previously published issues, confirming transparent and credible peer-review and editorial policies, verifying the academic standing of editorial board members, and ensuring that the journal is not under suspension, delisting, or withholding status.
3. It has been observed that some journals and publishers engage in questionable practices that undermine academic standards. These practices include, but are not limited to, unrealistically rapid peer-review processes; unclear or non-transparent editorial policies; inadequate or superficial peer review; guaranteed or unusually rapid acceptance; ghost publishing practices, including uncredited


authorship or misattributed contributions; false, misleading, or unverifiable indexing claims; and fictitious or misrepresented editorial boards. In addition, hijacked or cloned journals—which falsely present themselves as legitimate publications—pose a serious threat to research integrity. Publications appearing in such outlets, or in journals making deceptive claims regarding indexing status or impact metrics, may not be recognized for academic evaluation, promotion, research assessment, or institutional reporting.

4. For internationally indexed journals, authors may verify journal status through Scopus and Web of Science using the free limited-access logins provided, including checks for any withholding, suppression, or coverage changes. Journal Citation Reports (JCR) may also be consulted to assess impact factors and citation data. The HEC Journal Recognition Policy 2024 not only governs national journals but also provides categorization of international journals, which should be taken into account when selecting publication outlets. Additional guidance is available through the QEC NDU Checklist for Quality Journals, accessible on the NDU website

5. Authors are strongly encouraged to consult resources such as Retraction Watch, Cabells' List, and Beall's List to avoid publishing in or citing retracted, predatory, or otherwise dubious journals. Staying informed through reputable publishers and organizations—such as Elsevier, the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA), which promotes transparency and ethical standards in open-access publishing, and the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)—and participating in Web of Science e-training, made available to universities through the HEC website, is also recommended.

6. By adhering to these guidelines, researchers can ensure that their work meets ethical standards, gains appropriate academic recognition, and contributes meaningfully to their discipline. Publications appearing in journals later found to be compromised, delisted status may not be recognized for official academic purposes. Compliance with this guideline is mandatory to uphold academic integrity and research excellence at NDU.

7. This guideline is issued with the approval of the Competent Authority.


Dir QEC
(Dr Farrukh Idrees)