

No: SUK-IBA/Rgr/MC/18/2026

Date 05-01-2026

NOTIFICATION

Consequent upon the approval of the Syndicate, Sukkur IBA University in its 23rd meeting held on **December 24, 2025**, through **resolution No.23.15**, the Vice Chancellor, Sukkur IBA University is pleased to adapt the following HEC Policies in toto at Sukkur IBA University.

- i) Framework for Appointment of Meritorious Professor in the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)
- ii) Policy Guidelines for Appointment of Professor of Practice by the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Pakistan
- iii) Policy on Protection Against Harassment in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) (Revised 2025)

Copies of HEC Policies are attached at Annexure-A

*9/1/26
05/01/26*
Registrar (Acting)
Sukkur IBA University

Cc to:

1. ES to Vice Chancellor
2. All Concerned
3. Office File



HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

Coordination Division

H-9, Islamabad (Pakistan)

15-54/Coord/2019/HEC/(R&AA)/809

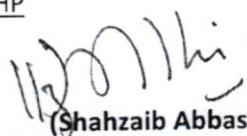
October 15, 2025

Notification

In pursuance of the decision of the Commission taken in its 45th Meeting held on July 12-13, 2025, the '**Policy on Protection Against Harassment in Higher Education Institutions (Revised 2025)**' is hereby notified for implementation with immediate effect.

02. This revised policy supersedes the earlier "Policy on Protection Against Sexual Harassment in Higher Education Institutions (Revised 2024)", and incorporates necessary updates and improvements to further strengthen the framework for ensuring a safe and respectful environment in Higher Education Institutions.

03. The revised policy is available at www.hec.gov.pk/Site/HP



(Shahzaib Abbasi)
Director (Coordination)

Distribution:

- i. Vice Chancellors/Rectors/Heads of all Public and Private Sector HEIs
- ii. Offices of the Chancellors of Public Sector HEIs
- iii. The Secretary, Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training, Govt. of Pakistan
- iv. The Secretary, Higher Education Department, Govt. of the Punjab
- v. The Secretary, Colleges, Higher & Technical Education Department, Govt. of Balochistan
- vi. The Secretary, Higher Education, Archives & Libraries Department, Govt. of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
- vii. The Secretary, Universities & Boards Department, Govt. of Sindh
- viii. The Secretary, Higher Education Department, Govt. of Azad Jammu & Kashmir
- ix. ES to the Chairman, HEC
- x. ES to the Executive Director, HEC
- xi. All Divisions and Regional Centers of HEC



**THE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
POLICY ON PROTECTION AGAINST HARASSMENT IN HIGHER
EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS [Revised 2025]**

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HEC	Higher Education Commission
VC	Vice Chancellor/Rector/Director
CBA	Collective Bargaining Agent as provided in the Industrial Relations Act, 2008 (IV of 2008) or any other law for the time being in force.
Competent Authority	The authority as may be designated by the management for the purposes of this Act, i.e. Vice Chancellor/Rector/Head of Institution and Syndicate/Board of Governors/Chancellor in case of complaint is against the Vice Chancellor/Rector/Head of Institution.
Appellate Body	As mentioned in the Section 6 (1) & Section 6 (2) of The Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010 (as amended in 2022).

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1. PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSES OF THE POLICY

1.1. Higher Education Institutions ("HEIs") are highly consequential institutions in society that are dedicated to the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. Members of the HEI community have several important rights and privileges, central among which is the right to pursue inquiry and search for knowledge without hinderance from unlawful or otherwise unacceptable constraints. The Higher Education Commission (the "HEC"), which has been mandated by law to prescribe conditions under which HEIs in the country may be opened and operated, takes very seriously the freedom of teachers, researchers, scholars, students and other members of the HEI community to live and work in a safe environment in which their dignity is protected.

1.2. Protection against harassment is important not only because it threatens the freedom and conduciveness of the environment at institutions of higher learning, but at a more fundamental level, such conduct is unacceptable because it violates personal dignity and shall not be tolerated, under any circumstance, at HEIs in Pakistan

1.3. In accordance with the terms of this policy, harassment shall be prohibited at HEIs in Pakistan and shall constitute a punishable offence under the policy. The HEC affirms the right of every member of the HEI community to live, study and work in an environment that is free from harassment. The goal of this policy is to prevent harassment from taking place, and where necessary to act upon complaints of harassment promptly, fairly, judiciously and with due regard to the confidentiality of all parties concerned.

1.4. All administrators, deans, managers, faculty, department chairs, directors of schools or programs and others in supervisory or leadership positions have an obligation to be familiar with and to uphold this policy and its procedures along with informing members of their staff about its existence. HEIs are encouraged to formulate internal policies that further strengthen or expand the protections available under the HEC's policy on harassment.

1.5. This policy has been made pursuant to the powers granted to the HEC under the Higher Education Commission Ordinance, 2002, and is binding on all higher education institutions in the country, whether operating in the public or private sectors. Violations or failure to comply with the HEC's policies may lead to regulatory action being taken against non-compliant HEIs.

1.6. This policy is consistent with and has been made in light of the provisions of The Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010 (as amended in 2022). It extends the protection against harassment to all members of the HEI community and provides the option to aggrieved persons to seek resources within the HEI or to seek redressal through the provisions of the Harassment Act 2010.

2. PROHIBITED CONDUCT

2.1. "Harassment" means any unwelcome advance, request for favors or other verbal or written communication or physical conduct of a nature, or demeaning attitudes, where:

- a) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual participation in any activity at the HEI;
- b) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for academic or employment decision affecting that individual; or
- c) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's academic or work performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or working environment.

2.2. Harassment may be overt or subtle and can range from visual signals or gestures to verbal abuse to physical contact along with hand or sign language to denote activity, persistent and unwelcome flirting (see Annex 1 for examples of various manifestations).

2.3. The following behaviors are specifically prohibited under this policy. The following are meant to provide specificity to the definition provided in clause 2.1. However, it is not an exhaustive list, and other behaviors that fall within the scope of the definition above shall also be prohibited.

- a) ***Especially Egregious Non-Consensual Acts:*** Acts that would be included in the category of attempted rape. While such situations will be covered under the laws of the country, and law enforcement institutions and the courts will investigate and adjudicate accordingly, the HEI administration has a special obligation to take preventative measures, offer immediate assistance and take interim measures when required.
- b) ***Non-Consensual Contact:*** Includes contact with another person without consent.
- c) ***Exploitation:*** Taking of actions that violate the sexual privacy of others or taking sexual advantage of another without their consent. For example, taking pictures, videotaping, viewing or distributing explicit images or sexual information of another person without their consent.
- d) ***Other Pervasive or Severe Behaviors:*** It is not necessary that there be actual contact for a behavior to be categorized as harassment. Other unwelcome behaviors are also prohibited if (i) they are based on an individual's sex or gender (ii) are persistent or highly serious and (iii) create an atmosphere which is intimidating or hostile. These include but are not limited to lewd remarks or gestures, highly offensive jokes of a sexual nature, commenting inappropriately about another's body, and stalking.
- e) ***Gender Discrimination:*** Adverse treatment of individuals based on their gender rather than on merit. This would include instances such as the singling out (for such adverse treatment as lower salary or grades, or more severe punishment) of person(s) on the basis of sex or gender.

2.4. All the actions categorized as harassment when done physically or verbally would also be considered as harassment when done electronically such as through the internet, e-mails, social media, texting, telephone, voicemail etc.

2.5. All actions of harassment or discrimination may be taken by a person of any gender against a person of the same or another gender and would need to be considered by the HEI if the act qualifies as prohibited conduct under the policy.

2.6. Harassment is especially offensive when perpetrated by people in authority, and when submission is made a condition toward any HEI activity or benefit (for example, when submission is made the basis of the evaluation of an individual).

2.7. Harassment will be considered especially egregious when the accused knew or reasonably should have known that the victim was in an impaired or incapacitated state. However, impairment of the accused, such as a result of the use of any illegal substances, shall not diminish their responsibility for harassment under this policy.

3. JURISDICTION

3.1. This policy applies to actions by students, faculty, staff, other members of the HEI community (such as interns, residents etc.), or third parties (such as service providers, visitors etc.), who may be male, female or transgender persons, when the misconduct occurs:

- a) on the HEI property (i.e. on campus) or in its immediate vicinity;
- b) off the HEI property, if (i) the conduct occurs in connection with an HEI recognized program or activity or (ii) the conduct may create an intimidating and offensive environment or pose a safety risk on campus; and
- c) using the university's computing or network resources accessed from an off-campus location, which shall be deemed to have occurred on campus.

4. DESIGNATED RESOURCES

4.1. The HEI to provide immediate assistance to those who have experienced harassment. Contact information of such individuals shall be easily available, on students' noticeboards, hostels and including on the HEIs website.

4.2. The HEI shall also constitute an Inquiry Committee to investigate and adjudicate any allegations of prohibited conduct (the "Inquiry Committee") in accordance with the provisions of Section 7 below. Those who have experienced harassment may also contact members of the Inquiry Committee for support and advice.

5. COMPLAINTS AND REPORTING

5.1. A complaint may be lodged by any person who has experienced harassment as defined in Section 2 (Prohibited Conduct) read with Section 3 (Jurisdiction) of this policy, with any member of the Inquiry Committee.

5.2. In cases in which the conduct in question falls within the scope of The Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010 (as amended in 2022), the affected person shall also have an option to submit a complaint to the Ombudsperson in accordance with the provisions of the 2010 Harassment ACT (as amended in 2022).

5.3. In the event that a complainant is reluctant to contact any member of the Inquiry Committee, the complainant may contact a colleague, instructor, the employment supervisor,

manager, department chair, dean or VC. It will be the responsibility of the individual contacted to report the case to the Inquiry Committee without identifying either the complainant or the alleged offender and to ask for advice on the procedure and policy from them to affect a solution, if a solution is necessary.

5.4. A complainant does not necessarily have to make a complaint of harassment through the informal channel. They can launch a formal complaint at any time. The complainant may make formal complaints through her in-charge, supervisor, CBA nominee or worker's representative or directly to any member of the Inquiry Committee. The Committee member approached is obligated to initiate the process of investigation. The supervisor shall facilitate the process and is obligated not to cover up or obstruct the inquiry (as mentioned in Clause 2-vii & viii of The Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010 (as amended in 2022).

5.5. All members of the HEI community are encouraged to report any instances of harassment that they may have observed to Inquiry Committee. For the purposes of safeguarding the campus community, HEIs have an obligation to investigate material violations of this policy even in the event that a formal complaint has not been filed.

5.6. As soon as a complaint or report is received by one of the designated resources, it shall be shared by him or her (within a period of 24 hours) with members of the Inquiry Committee for further action.

5.7. For minor violations, complainants may opt to make an informal complaint to the Inquiry Committee. The primary objective of informal resolution mechanism is to take preventative action, so that minor violations are detected early and an appropriate warning is given to the accused to stop offending behavior before it reaches a higher degree of seriousness. If the incident reported through this mechanism constitutes prohibited conduct under Section 2 of this policy, the Inquiry Committee shall deal with the complaint accordingly.

6. INTERIM MEASURES AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

6.1. As soon as a complaint or report is received by designated resources or any member of the HEI administration, depending on the nature and seriousness of the offence, the Inquiry Committee shall take appropriate steps to provide interim measures that may be requested by the affected persons or otherwise may be deemed appropriate. If the person affected is not satisfied with the measures taken, he or she may contact the Competent Authority for necessary action. Interim measures include but are not limited to:

- a) adjustment in class or examination schedules, including for the purposes of attending hearings;
- b) access to counselling services or other appropriate medical assistance;
- c) change in the work assignments;
- d) arrangement for any assessments or evaluations to be made by a neutral person;

- e) adjustment in class schedule, including withdrawal from a course or changing the section;
- f) notifying the campus security officials (or law enforcement in case of serious violations) regarding the violation;
- g) impositions of a HEI wide order designed to prohibit contact or communication between certain persons;
- h) change of the housing arrangement of certain persons; or
- i) any other measures that may be deemed appropriate.

7. INQUIRY COMMITTEE

7.1. The Inquiry Committee shall be responsible for the investigation and adjudication of any complaint received in connection with the violation of this policy.

7.2. The Inquiry Committee shall be constituted in the following manner:

- a) The committee shall consist of three members, at least one of whom shall be a woman and one of the members shall be a member of the senior management of the HEI.
- b) All members of the committee shall be employees of HEI and will be appointed by the Vice Chancellor after the VC has taken nominations from senior members of the HEI administration. The VC can co-opt one or more members from outside the HEI if it is otherwise not possible to designate three members as described above.
- c) Members of the Committee shall be individuals who are known for being principled, credible, fair, gender-sensitive and have a strong character (someone who will not change their decision due to pressure from friends, colleagues or seniors). They shall not have a conflict of interest in particular cases and shall be impartial and unbiased.
- d) Members of the Committee shall be appointed for a term of two years (shorter terms may be required occasionally to fill vacancies). No member shall serve for more than two consecutive terms. Former members will be eligible for reappointment after a lapse of two years.
- e) One of the members of the committee shall be appointed as the Chair by the VC, whose duties shall include, but are not limited to: maintaining order during hearings, answering procedural questions, granting or denying adjournments, maintaining proper documentation of the proceedings, which shall constitute the official record and reporting recommendations of the Committee to the VC. All these duties shall be undertaken in consultation with the Committee members.
- f) If the facts of the complaints are established against a member of the committee, he / she shall immediately be replaced with another member, and he / she will not be part of any inquiry.

7.3. The HEI shall endeavor to provide training to members of the Inquiry Committee in investigation and adjudication of conduct prohibited under this policy.

8. INVESTIGATION AND ADJUDICATION

8.1. All complaints alleging harassment received by the Inquiry Committee will be processed within 24 hours.

8.2. As soon as is reasonably practicable after receiving a complaint, the Inquiry Committee shall determine whether the alleged conduct in the complaint meets the criteria set forth in Sections 2 (Prohibited Conduct) and Section 3 (Jurisdiction) of this policy. If it is determined by a majority of the members of the Inquiry Committee that the alleged conduct meets the aforementioned criteria, a formal investigation shall be initiated.

8.3. In the absence of a formal complaint, if a serious violation of this policy is reported to the Inquiry Committee, or a series of allegations against the same person are received, the Inquiry Committee may determine by majority vote to initiate proceedings after notifying the VC.

8.4. After initiating the investigation, and not later than three days after receiving a written complaint, the Inquiry Committee shall:

- a) communicate to the accused the charges and statement of allegations leveled against him/her, the formal written receipt of which will be given;
- b) require the accused within seven days from the day the charge is communicated to him/her to submit a written defense and on his/her failure to do so without reasonable cause, the Committee shall proceed ex parte; and
- c) enquire into the charge and may acquire and examine such oral or documentary evidence in support of the charge or in defense of the accused as the Committee may consider necessary (including by summoning potential witnesses) and each party shall be entitled to cross-examine the witnesses against him/her.

8.5. The following rules shall be applicable to the hearings conducted by the Inquiry Committee:

- a) All hearings shall be closed hearings;
- b) The Inquiry Committee will hear statements from the complainant(s)/accused, and the witnesses if any (as required) and examine any other documents and/or evidence as presented by the relevant parties or collected in the process of conducting the inquiry;
- c) The Inquiry Committee shall have discretion to limit testimony and questioning of witnesses to those matters it considers relevant to the disposition of the case. The Inquiry Committee shall be bound to reach facts while exercising discretion.
- d) The Chair of the Inquiry Committee shall have the power to compel a witness to attend, and the complainant(s) and/or accused may request the Chair's aid in this regard;
- e) The complainant and the accused may at any stage of any of the proceedings be represented and/or accompanied by another person of her/his choice.

- f) The Committee shall have the right to acquire any relevant piece of evidence to further their understanding of the case, and the relevant parties, witnesses and administration are required to provide them with this documentation and/or