



Kabul University

Vice Chancellor's Office for Academic Research

Department of Research Affairs

Academic Research Policy

1447/1404



الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلاة والسلام على سيد المرسلين، وعلى آله
وأصحابه اجمعين.

Scope

This document has been prepared in accordance with the Islamic principles, rules, regulations, and guidelines of the Ministry of Higher Education of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, to improve and better organize the research affairs of Kabul University.

1. Introduction

Academic research is recognized as the backbone of sustainable development, academic research growth, and an effective response to society's needs within educational systems. This policy aims to define a supportive, executive, and ethical structure for research and provides a practical framework for guiding, promoting, and monitoring research initiatives within this institution.

2. Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives of this research policy are as follows:

2.1. Policy Goals

- To promote and encourage active participation in academic research among students (Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD) and instructors.
- To ensure the academic and ethical quality of research projects.
- To support the publication of academic research articles and achievements.
- To establish a formal basis for academic cooperation with national and international institutions

2.2. Policy Objectives

- To institutionalize a culture of research-oriented learning in the educational system.
- To create an open and supportive environment for the generation of new knowledge.
- To strengthen the connection between education and research.
- To enhance Kabul University's national and international standing in the field of research.

3. Promoting and Supporting Academic Research

Kabul University is committed to supporting research activities such as:

- Allocating a dedicated budget for research projects conducted by faculty and students at all levels, from undergraduate to doctoral studies.
- Providing access to informational resources, research facilities, and equipping laboratories.
- Organizing workshops and academic conferences.

- Introducing and appreciating outstanding research works at the national and international levels.
- Rewarding active researchers through financial and moral means.

3.1. Research Budget Allocation Procedure

The Budget Allocation Committee consists of the Chancellor of Kabul University, the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Research, the Vice-Chancellor for Administrative and Finance Affairs, and the Head of the Academic Research Department as permanent members, along with three representatives from the relevant faculties serving as substitute members.

3.1.1 . Budget Allocation Criteria

- National research priorities
- Originality and practical applicability of the research
- Transparent and credible research methodology
- The implementing faculty and department capacity for research

3.1.2. Financial Transparency of Research Projects

- Research projects should have a transparent, unambiguous financial framework.
- Announcement of accessible budgets in the university's publishing outlets.
- Submission of quarterly reports to the Ministry of Higher Education and supervisory authorities.
- Submission of annual reports to relevant authorities.

4. Fundamental Research Principles

Fundamental principles constitute the ethical and academic core of all research activities and must be observed by all researchers. These principles include the following:

- **Academic Integrity and Honesty:** Preventing forgery, plagiarism, and data manipulation, and maintaining the authenticity of research findings.
- **Respect for Human and Environmental Ethics:** Obtaining informed consent from participants, honoring human dignity, and protecting natural resources.
- **Intellectual and Moral Property Rights:** Clearly defining the rights of the researcher and Kabul University regarding the generation, ownership, and use of research outcomes.

- **Intellectual Independence and Innovation:** Encouraging the formulation of new issues and themes, the use of innovative methodologies, and the practice of critical thinking in research.

5. Executive and Supervisory Structure

To effectively implement this policy, Kabul University requires an organized, transparent, and accountable organizational structure. The components of this structure include the following:

- **Academic Research Committee:** A regulatory body responsible for the approval, evaluation, and guidance of research projects, composed of senior faculty members.
- **Researchers' Support Office:** An executive unit that provides resources, consultation, facilities, and academic communication for researchers.
- **Research Data Bank:** A central database for documenting, classifying, and sharing findings and outcomes.
- **Project Registration and Approval System:** Establishing an official registration system with academic and ethical standards.
- **Role of Supervisors:** Supervisors play a crucial role in teaching academic research, providing academic supervision, and ensuring the quality of research projects. Each project must be carried out under the direct academic supervision of a qualified and reliable supervisor.

6. Research Resources and Facilities

- **Reliable sources:** databases, academic journals, specialized books, and analytical software.
- Laboratories and technical equipment required for projects.
- Budget and direct or collaborative financial support.
- Training in academic research, academic writing, and data analysis.
- Creating research groups.

7. Research Ethics and Academic Integrity

7.1 Ethics Committee

7.1.1. Committee Members: The committee consists of seven members: The Vice Chancellor for Academic Research, the Head of Academic Research Department, the Head of Guidance and the Promotion of Virtue Department, and the Head of Academic Journals Department, serving as permanent members, and three faculty members from the relevant field with an academic rank higher than Assistant Professor (Pohandoi), serving as substitute members.

7.2.1. Duties of the Research Ethics Committee

- Investigate academic violations.
- Monitor ethical standards in academic research, ensuring compliance with guidelines, and obtaining informed consent.
- Review and approve research proposals, especially those involving human participants.
- Ensure research does not compromise national interests, complies with Islamic principles, and avoids environmental damage.
- Address complaints related to academic research.
- Organize training programs on research ethics and academic integrity.

7.2 Academic Misconduct

- Plagiarism
- Failure to comply with copyright regulations
- Data fabrication and result distortion
- Conflict of interest
- Violation of participants' privacy and rights
- Violation of animal rights involved in research
- Unauthorized use of existing tools or research resources
- Simultaneous submission of a research paper or article to multiple publishers or journals
- Incorrect attribution of authorship, or the addition or removal of authors without a valid justification

7.2.1 Plagiarism

- **Direct plagiarism:** Copying sentences or paragraphs without proper citation. Similarity in articles or academic works should be less than 25%.
- **Structural plagiarism:** Copying the logical structure of another work by changing words without proper referencing.

- **Idea plagiarism:** Using others' original ideas without crediting the writer.
- **Self-plagiarism:** Republishing one's previous work without citing the original source.
- **Unauthorized translation:** Translating the work of others without having general agreement of University and the Ministry of Higher Education.

7.2.2 Copyright

- Transparency of authorship and contributions: In group projects, the role and contribution of each author are documented, and written agreements should be used to define positions.
- Researchers must respect intellectual property rights. For example, the owner of a new invention retains rights over the discovery, and the author of a book retains rights over their work.
- Published works at Kabul University are the property of the university, unless otherwise specified in research contracts.
- When using copyrighted materials, including text, images, data, or software, the source must be clearly cited.
- If the rights of the original author are not violated, the utilization of copyrighted materials to a limited extent is permitted.
- Official permission must be obtained from Kabul University to use research results published under its name.
- Research data of Kabul University faculty members must be securely stored and shared only in accordance with executed research contracts and with the university's permission.
- Sensitive research must be submitted for publication under the supervision of the University Ethics Committee and with permission from the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.

7.2.3 Falsification (Fraud)

- Data manipulation: Altering or omitting figures inconsistent with hypotheses.
- Biased reporting: Publishing only positive results while concealing negative results.
- Hidden conflict of interest: Receiving money or other benefits from interested parties for disclosure or non-disclosure of results.
- Irreproducibility: Results cannot be replicated by other researchers.
- Fabricated references: Citing non-existent, inaccurate, or unreliable sources.

- **Incorrect attribution:** Attributing a topic or result to an author who is not responsible for it.

7.2.4 Conflict of Interest

Any situation in which personal, financial, professional, or other interests outside the research framework may influence a researcher's activities in the design, implementation, analysis, publication, or presentation of research results constitutes a conflict of interest. Therefore, researchers are obligated to disclose any existing conflicts of interest honestly and prior to conducting research to the university. The University Ethics Committee reviews conflicts of interest, and any existing conflicts must be clearly and transparently reported.

7.2.5. Privacy and Rights of Participants

- **Respect for human dignity:** Researchers must ensure that their work does not cause psychological, physical, social, or legal harm to participants.
- **Informed consent:** Before conducting research, participants must be provided with complete information regarding the purpose, methods, duration, benefits, and potential risks of the study, and written consent must be obtained.
- **Withdrawal rights:** Participants must be allowed to withdraw from the research at any stage without penalty or negative consequences.

Privacy

All personal information of participants, including contact details, employment records, addresses, and other data, must be securely stored. Disclosure of personal information should be done with the participant's written consent.

Vulnerable Groups

Children, the elderly, patients, individuals with disabilities, or other particularly vulnerable groups must be specially protected. In addition to obtaining consent from the participants themselves, consent must also be obtained from their legal guardians.

All research involving human participants must be reviewed and approved by the University Research Ethics Committee before it is conducted.

Preparation of Informed Consent Letter:

- A consent letter must be prepared and provided clearly in Dari, Pashto and English languages.

- The consent letter must include sections ensuring participants' right to withdraw at any stage without penalty.
- Research must ensure that participation does not negatively affect national interests, complies with Islamic Sharia law, and respects the country's cultural norms.
- Sensitive groups must be considered and appropriately classified, including children, prisoners, refugees, patients with mental illnesses, and other vulnerable populations.

7.2.6 Use of Animals in Research

The use of animals in research is permitted only under the following conditions:

- No valid academic alternative exists.
- Their use is necessary and justified for achieving the research objectives.
- The smallest possible number of animals should be used in research, and the least amount of pain, suffering, or cruelty should be inflicted on them.
- All aspects of health, nutrition, and living conditions must be ensured.
- Permission must be obtained from the University Research Ethics Committee before exploiting animals in research.
- The type of animals, their number, and the methods of use must be clearly described in the research plan.

7.2.7 Refraining from Unauthorized Use of Research Tools and Resources

Responsible use: All researchers are required to use tools, equipment, resources, and data only within the framework of authorized research objectives and in accordance with the provided instructions.

Examples of unauthorized use include:

- Personal or commercial use of laboratory equipment or university resources without permission.
- Violation of copyright laws.
- Unauthorized access to existing data, statistics, or research results.
- Use of research tools in projects without official coordination and approval.
- Any observed cases of unauthorized use must be reported to the University Research Ethics Committee for review and investigation.

8. Collaborative Research between Universities

Kabul University welcomes academic collaborations with other universities, higher education institutions, research institutes, and national and international academic centers. The university provides the necessary facilities and support for implementing joint projects, including:

- Facilitating the exchange of faculty members and students.
- Implementing joint research projects.
- Establishing academic consortia to address common challenges.
- Participating in joint conferences and publications.

9. Evaluation and Quality Assurance

Quality assurance in academic research underpins the credibility of research results and data-driven decision-making. In this regard, Kabul University considers itself responsible for designing and implementing specific procedures for the regular evaluation of researchers and research projects, ensuring that all research activities comply with academic and ethical standards.

Key measures to achieve this goal and strengthen research quality at the university include:

- Developing research performance evaluation frameworks based on qualitative and quantitative indicators.
- Conducting periodic audits of research activities and related documentation.
- Establishing an effective feedback system involving stakeholders, reviewers, and the academic community.
- Providing regular evaluation reports and analyses of the achievement of research objectives.
- Implementing corrective mechanisms based on evaluation results for continuous improvement.
- Assessing the effectiveness of research projects based on results, publications, and social impact.
- Creating a database for recording, analyzing, and monitoring the quality of academic activities.
- Continuous updating of guidelines and procedures.

10. Prevention and Investigation of Academic Misconduct

10.1. Preventive Measures

- Organizing training and awareness programs to prevent academic misconduct.

- Using plagiarism detection software such as Turnitin.
- Preparing comprehensive and clear guidelines for citation and referencing.
- Preliminary review of works, theses, and dissertations before defense and publication.
- Mandatory registration of proposals and research works, including academic articles, in the university's academic research database.

10.2. Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct

- Initial registration or reporting: The misconduct is registered with the Vice Chancollor's Office for Academic Research at Kabul University.
- Preliminary review: investigation of available evidence.
- Referral to the University Research Ethics Committee.
- Granting the right of defense to the accused individual.
- Issuance of a decision by the Research Ethics Committee and determination of penalties.

10.3. Classification of Misconducts

- **Minor Misconducts:** Unintentional or unknowing misconduct.
- **Moderate Misconducts:** Submitting an article to two or more publishers simultaneously, failure to cite or incorrect citation, improper use of animals.
- **Major Misconducts:** Forgery and plagiarism, violation of participants' rights, conflict of interest, misuse of tools and equipment.

11. Prosecution of Academic Misconduct

In case of violation of policies, Kabul University will take the following actions:

- Official warning and suspension of the project.
- Deprivation from research facilities.
- Referral to the academic discipline committee or legal authorities.
- Recording the violation in the researcher's official records.

12. Needs Assessments

12.1. Needs Assessment for Policy-Oriented and Applied Research and Its Follow-up

At the beginning of each year, through the Chancollor's Office at Kabul University, letters are sent to various government departments requesting submissions on existing problems and challenges, research priorities, and an evaluation of current policies. The received topics are categorized according to the

university's research fields, recorded in an MS Excel database, and shared with the relevant faculties so that, in line with the relevant disciplines, topics can be selected for instructors, master's and doctoral students, and reported to the Deputy for Academic Research.

In accordance with the existing format, each faculty member coordinates at least one research topic, signs a research contract, and shares a copy of the contract with the Office of the Deputy for Academic Research.

The process of conducting contracted research is monitored quarterly until completion. Upon completion, in accordance with the contract, the research results are published and shared, both in writing and orally, with the relevant department for practical use.

12.2. Needs Assessment for Training Programs and Capacity Building

At the beginning of the year, faculties are requested, through official letters, to identify areas where they need learning and capacity enhancement. The collected proposals are consolidated, and training programs are organized accordingly. In addition, needs assessments are conducted online through Google Forms.

12.3. Needs Assessment of Research Needs

Research needs assessment is also conducted through an official letter and online via Google Forms, similar to capacity-building programs.

13. Selection of Outstanding Researcher, Outstanding Faculty, and Outstanding Research Work of the Year

13.1. Outstanding Researcher

Information on the number of national and international research articles published by faculty members of each faculty is extracted from the database of academic and research activities of Kabul University.

In the first step, researchers with the highest number of international and national research articles are identified. Scores are then assigned as follows:

International articles:

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| 1. First author: | 3 points |
| 2. Corresponding author: | 2 points |
| 3. Co-author: | 1 point |

For each research article, only the highest score is counted once.

For national articles, one point is given per article.

Table 1 shows the evaluation of researchers.

Table 1. Scoring System for Outstanding Researcher

Name of Researcher: Relevant Faculty:

Criterion	Related Indicator	Scoring Method	Score Obtained
International article	International article and First Author	3 points	
	National article	1 point	
	Corresponding author in the Research article	2 points	
	Co-author in a Research article	1 point	
National article	Number of research articles	1 point per article	
Total			

Note: The impact factor of the journal in which the article is published is considered as a coefficient.

13.2. Outstanding Faculty

In selecting the outstanding faculty of Kabul University, the number of articles and academic conferences of academic staff in each faculty, proportionate to the number of staff members (obtained from the university's articles and conferences database), as well as applied and policy-oriented research considering implementation status, signed agreements, and planning, are taken into account (Table 2).

Table 2. Scoring Method for Outstanding Faculty of the Year

Faculty Name: Number of Current Faculty Instructors:

Indicators	Scoring Method	Score Obtained
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Number of articles and conferences	Articles and conferences divided by number of faculty members: International article 3x, National article 2x, Conference 1x	
Implemented applied research	3 points	
Signed applied research	2 points	
Planned applied research	1 point	
Total Score		

13.3. Outstanding Research Work

The criteria for selecting the outstanding research work include:

- Importance of the topic and its practical applicability.
- Academic richness of the work.
- Writing quality and fluency.
- Formal compliance with the guidelines of the Ministry of Higher Education of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.

13.4. Outstanding Article

- Clarity and fluency of the article.
- Academic richness of the article.
- Compliance with the criteria set in the guidelines of Kabul University journals.
- Review of reviewers' comments.

14. Memoranda of Understanding and Research Contracts

All memoranda of understanding and research contracts with domestic and foreign institutions must be signed and implemented in accordance with the principles of Islamic Sharia, the laws of the country, and Afghan traditions and culture.

14.1. Memoranda of Understanding

After initial meetings and coordination, the MoU text is jointly prepared with the agreement of both parties and signed in an official meeting by the leadership of Kabul University and the leadership of the counterpart institution.

Memoranda of Understanding must include the following sections:

- Introduction: Scope of the MoU, objectives, and areas of cooperation.
- Joint agreements and commitments of the parties: Joint agreements, obligations of the parties, financial matters, dispute resolution, review, amendment and modification, language and duration of validity, extension and termination, and implementation.

14.2. Research Contracts

After reviewing the proposed research topics submitted by various government departments based on the needs assessment conducted by the relevant faculty and initial preparations, and after coordination with the relevant authority, the research contract is signed by the faculty and the concerned department.

The research contract must include the following:

- Identification of the parties and standard terms.
- Research introduction: Title, introduction, problem statement, objectives, methodology, and expected results.
- Obligations of the parties.
- Project timeline.
- Project budget and expenditures.
- Intellectual property and confidentiality.
- Publication rights of results.
- Compliance with laws, signing, and enforcement of the contract.

The Academic Research Policy of Kabul University shall be reviewed based on proposals received from stakeholders.

The Research Policy of Kabul University was approved in the meeting dated 1404 / / , recorded under Protocol No. _____ of the Academic Council of Kabul University.