

Preliminary Guidelines of Research Management Cell (RMC)



Submitted to:

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Submitted By:

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Preliminary Guidelines

01. PURPOSE:

(a) The purpose of this guidelines is to provide direction to manage the Research Management Cell (RMC) of School of Health and Allied Sciences (SHAS).

(b) The objective of the RMC is:

- 1) Promote and facilitate to carry out the faculty research, collaborative research, interdisciplinary research.
- 2) Enhance research networking capacity of the faculty and students.
- 3) Increase and effectively manage the resources and research support for its faculties, students and the wider university community.
- 4) Provide education and training in research and related skills, especially for young faculties, graduate and undergraduate students and thereby enhance the academic programs of their constituent academic units.

02. DEFINITIONS:

(a) "Research Management Cell (RMC)" is defined as body formed by the School of Health and Allied Sciences.

(b) "School of Health and Allied Sciences" is a constituent school of Pokhara University under Faculty of Health Sciences.

03. SCOPE:

This guidelines applies to the establishment and governance of Research Management Cell at the SHAS.

04. GUIDELINES:

(a) School of Health and Allied Sciences establishes the Research Management Cell to enhance and facilitate disciplinary and interdisciplinary research collaboration, knowledge transfer and training. Faculty may be involved in one or more of the projects and use the Research Management Cell.

(b) The SHAS is committed to developing and maintaining high-quality Research Management Cell. The Cell provides facilities to researchers to conduct the research.

(c) Research Management Cell is responsible to maintain the cell neat and clean, effective, and workable condition.

(d) The cell shall be used by Faculty of Health Sciences, School of Health and Allied Sciences in every session.

05. Purposes and Objectives of Cell:

The purposes of establishing a Research Management Centre are to: (a) Promote and facilitate collaborative and/or interdisciplinary research and enhancement of research networking capacity.

(b) Increase and effectively manage the resources and research support for faculty and students in university.

(c) Provide education and training in research and related skills, especially for graduate and undergraduate students and there by enhance the academic programs.

(d) Contribute to the university strategic educational and research missions and to support synergies between research, teaching and learning.

(e) Transfer and mobilize knowledge gained through research for the benefit of society, via a variety of mechanisms as appropriate.

(f) Enhance the reputation of its members, the constituent academic units, and the university through the quality of its work.

1. Introduction to Research Management Cell

In identifying the complexity and multi-disciplinary nature of issues confronting society, the University is committed to supporting research activities within the school. It is important that teaching learning without research is incomplete in the higher education institutions. In line with this approach, the University has established a center (PURC) for research activities within the University.

Research Management Cell will be a Centre under Pokhara University Research Center. It will be established under the funding of University Grants Commission (UGC), Nepal. The cell will be an autonomous center of Faculty of Health Sciences committed to excellence in research, supporting mini research projects for faculty members annually. Many of faculty members will receive research funding from the cell and upon completion of the research, findings will be published in the journal of health and allied sciences, the journal published by School of Health and Allied Sciences. Besides, the cell will also be responsible for undertaking competitive research and research training at the faculty.

The cell will invest its resources in areas of potential strength, significant to the faculty's mission. Such areas provide particular depth of academic and research capability to offer quality research training opportunities to faculty members and students. For that purpose, the cell will frequently conduct seminars/ workshops for the faculty members and students.

The cell will operate from a separate well-furnished office. Studies Academic complex. The cell will possess an office with desktop computers and laptops, and a printer (multi-functional) and a mini library for faculty and students to consult on their research based activities. This cell will establish as a center to serve the faculty members and students to enhance their academic and research capabilities and to provide resources for conducting research activities. In addition, the cell will co-ordinate, supervise and evaluate research activities of the faculty members and students.

It is equally important for the researchers (Faculty and students) that the findings of their research should be disseminated more widely to the public in order to bring changes in the society. The cell will undertake the responsibility of publishing journal regularly incorporating the research papers produced through research projects conducted by research grantees in collaboration with the cell.

The *Research Management Cell* (RMC) will be established to oversee the research activities of the faculties and students, drive the faculty's research agenda and implementation plan, foster a research culture including the development of a research strategy to increase the organization's research skills and, importantly to review and monitor internal and external research proposals and applications.

The RMC will aim to ensure that all research and evaluation proposals/ applications are aligned to the University's Strategic Plans and in accordance with legislative requirements of the University.

The RMC will provide a 'first point of approval' for all research proposals ensuring there is appropriate engagement of faculties and students, identifying any ethical considerations as well as potential impacts or implications resulting from the proposed research.

It is intended that the RMC will be guided by the principles set out by Pokhara University Research Center (PURC), relevant legislation, policies and codes and, that it undertakes initial ethics review prior to any formal ethics processes via a university or other endorsed body i.e. Research Ethics Committee.

2. Purpose of Research Management Cell

- To enable excellence in multidisciplinary research at Faculty of Health Sciences and Pokhara University
- Improve the faculty members' and students research capability and their professional development with their research output and create an environment and infrastructure that fosters and supports high quality research across the full range of disciplines in the university.
- Support multidisciplinary research by building research teams and encourage cooperation.
- Conduct or facilitate to conduct interdisciplinary faculty and student research.
- Arrange the facilities, academic human resources and financial aid to develop the culture of different research activity.
- Provide the professional consultancy services.
- Regular publication and sale of research outputs through journals.
- Facilitate partnerships and collaborative activity with internal / external stakeholders, including universities, research institutions, and government agencies and so on.

- Guide and supervise graduate and undergraduate research projects carried out by the students.
- To prepare research guidelines and code of ethics for the researchers.

2.1 Terms of Reference

- Provide advice and recommendations on research and evaluation priorities.
- Ensure that research undertaken by researchers are of high quality and that processes are open, transparent and accountable.
- Ensure that resources dedicated to research activities are increasingly focused on identified and agreed areas of strategic priority to University.
- Ensure a research in priority areas is shared and used in policy decision-making and practice development.
- Build the research capacity of researchers and student researchers.
- Review all research and evaluation applications and consider the merit of each on a case by case basis for the benefit of all parties involved.

2.2 Research management Cell's Obligations to the researcher

When considering research applications, Faculty will take into consideration the:

- Safety of the researcher
- Management of the range and extent of research to ensure research activities are not jeopardized and research topics are not duplicated
- Appropriateness of research methodologies from an operational perspective.
- Cost of providing research assistance and supervision/monitoring.

2.3 Reporting

The RMC Chairperson will report regularly (at least quarterly) to the school director.

2.4 Membership

Membership of the RMC will include:

A Chairperson and at least five senior faculties with PhD or more than 5 years of research experience in the related field including executive officer from among the staff.

In addition to the above, the RMC will have an advisory board who can be called upon as needed to provide advice related to any research under review.

2.5 Appointments

The Advisory board will be appointed as per the rules of Pokhara University.

2.6 Chairperson

The Chairperson of the RMC is the appointed faculty.

The role and responsibilities of the Chairperson are:

- To chair the meetings of the RMC
- To ensure matters referred to the RMC are addressed and that outcomes and decisions are accurately recorded
- To ensure the guidelines for the operation of the RMC are adhered to
- To ensure research and evaluation proposals are considered in an effective and timely manner.
- To oversee procedures and monitoring of approved research

2.7 Tenure

Members including the chairperson will be appointed for a period of two (2) years with the possibility of re-appointment for another tenure.

2.8 Lapse of membership

Membership will lapse if a member fails to attend three (3) consecutive meetings of the RMC without an apology, unless exceptional circumstances exist. The member will be notified in writing of a membership lapse.

2.9 Confidentiality

Members of the RMC will treat and keep confidential all information and documents. Members will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

2.10 Legal indemnity

The Faculty of Health Sciences indemnifies members when they are acting in good faith for the purposes of discharging their roles as members of the RMC.

2.11 Administrative support

Executive and administrative task will be carried out by the executive officer and further support to the RMC will be provided by the school authority.

3. Operation of Research Management Cell (RMC)

RMC will perform its functions according to the procedures outlined in this document.

The procedures will be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary.

All RMC members will be provided with copies of the RMC TOR and Committee Operations.

The RMC will conduct its regular meetings. On some occasions, as determined by the Chairperson, the RMC may attend out of session via email or phone.

3.1 Meetings

3.1.1 Frequency

RMC will meet bimonthly (once every two months). In the case of emergency the meetings can be called by the executive officer on problematic issues.

3.1.2 Attendance at meetings

A schedule of meetings will be prepared yearly and circulated to members in advance to facilitate attendance.

Where a member cannot attend a meeting he/she should advise the Chairperson or the executive officer before the meeting that they cannot attend and also of their views on the items listed for consideration.

A quorum required for a RMC meeting is the physical presence or written feedback of one member more than fifty percent of the total membership.

Where there is less than full attendance of the minimum membership, the Chairperson must be satisfied that, before a decision is reached, the views of those absent who belong to the minimum membership have been received and considered.

3.1.3 Distribution of Committee papers

The agenda and papers will be distributed to all members of the RMC at least five working days prior to the meeting.

Additional or urgent agenda may be put before the meeting at the discretion of the Chairperson.

3.1.4 Conflict of interest

Members of the RMC should disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest that bears on any research or evaluation coming before the RMC.

Conflicts might include:

- personal involvement or participation in the research
- financial or other interest or affiliation
- involvement in competing research

Members with a conflict of interest should absent themselves from discussion of the application. The conflict of interest and absence of the members concerned will be recorded in the minutes.

4.1.5 Decision making

The RMC will seek to reach a decision through an exchange of opinions which may involve seeking input from non-RMC members with specialist expertise.

After review of the proposal, the RMC may choose to delegate to the Chair and nominated members the authority to approve the proposal between meetings.

This review may result in the following decisions:

- Approved
- Conditional approval (approval granted subject to specific amendments to the proposal, additional information being provided, or in-principle approval).
- Deferred (where applicant is required to provide additional information or make amendments to the proposal)
- Not approved

The final decision will be as follows:

- Approved
- Not approved

3.1.6 Considering amendments to approved research protocols

Researchers are required to seek approval for any significant modifications to their research protocol. Depending on the nature of the proposed amendment/s, these may be:

- considered by the Chairperson/nominee between the meetings and the RMC notified of the decision at the next meeting,
- sent to the full RMC for consideration out of session, or
- Considered at the next meeting of the RMC.

The Chairperson will decide on a case by case basis which process will be used, taking into account the nature of changes and associated risks, the impact of the changes on participants and potential risk, and the impact of any delays on the conduct of the project.

3.1.7 Monitoring of projects

Responsibility for monitoring research lies with the institution under which the research is conducted and with the researchers responsible for research conduct.

The RMC, as a reviewing body, may request researchers to provide information relating to the conduct of the project. Specifically, the RMC will require applicants to provide a report at least annually and at completion of the study, outlining progress to date (or outcomes for completed research), maintenance and security of records, compliance with the approved proposal and compliance with any conditions of approval.

The RMC will, as a condition of approval, require that researchers immediately report anything that might warrant review of ethical approval of the project. This includes reporting of:

- Adverse events
- Early termination of a research
- Modifications to the research protocol

In such a circumstance the Chairperson may refer the matter to the responsible institution and request an investigation.

3.1.8 Suspension or withdrawal of research approval

The RMC may suspend or withdraw approval if it has reason to believe that the project may compromise participants' welfare.

The RMC will take whatever steps necessary to ensure researchers, institutions and other stakeholders are informed of this decision.

3.1.9 Records

The Executive Officer will prepare and maintain written records of the RMC's activities, including agenda and minutes of all meetings of the RMC.

A file will be created for each application received and will include a copy of the application, and any relevant correspondence. Files will be kept securely, with their retention and disposal consistent with guidelines.

A register of all the applications received and reviewed will be maintained.

3.1.10 Review of guidelines

These Operational Guidelines will be reviewed as required but at a minimum once every two years.