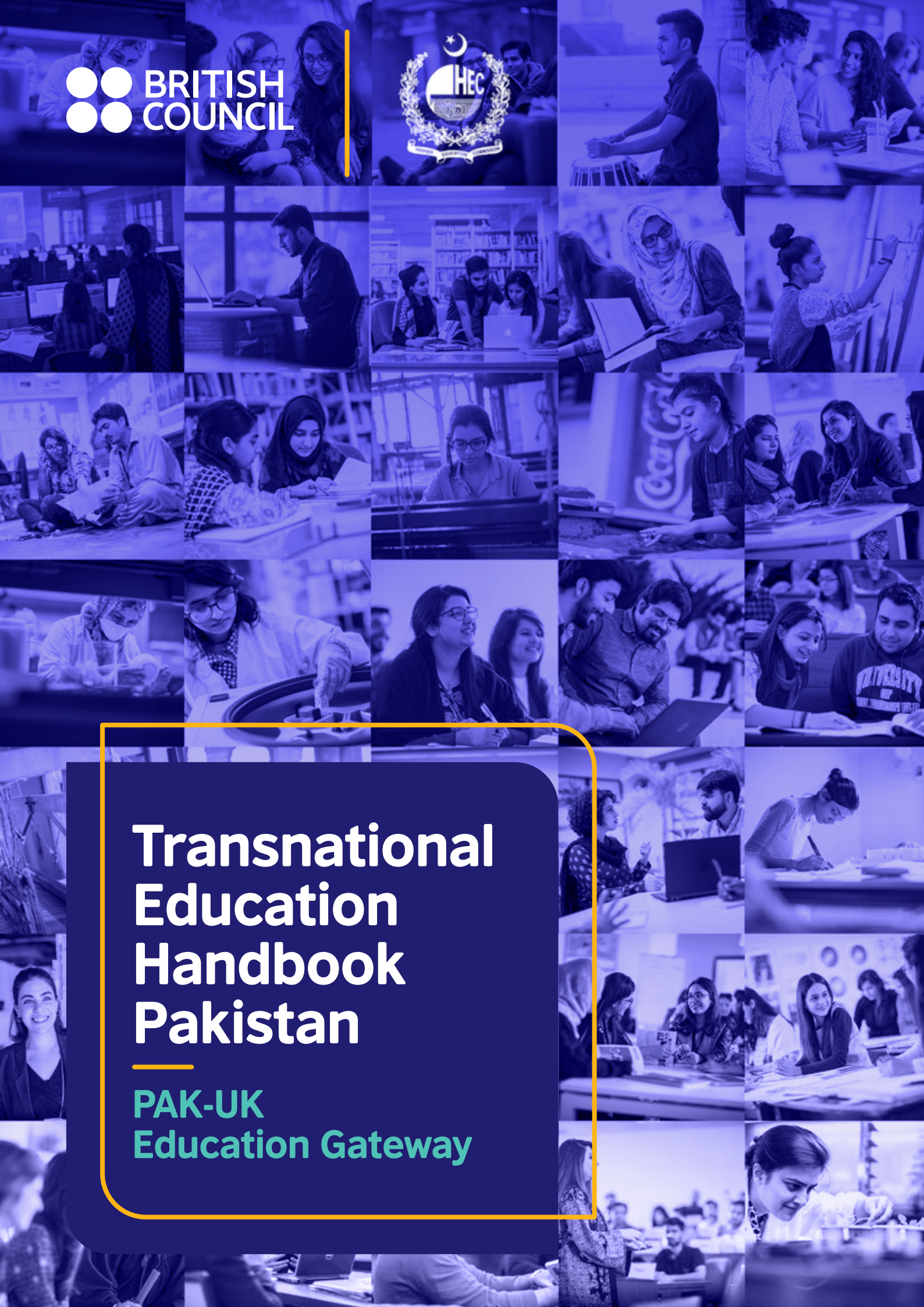




**BRITISH  
COUNCIL**



# Transnational Education Handbook Pakistan

**PAK-UK  
Education Gateway**



# Transnational education in Pakistan

## Introduction

There is an increasing mobility of students, academic staff as a result of internalization of higher education and globalization process. As a result a rapid increase in cross border higher education is being witnessed with intense competition among universities/institutions of the developed world for seeking collaboration/operation of campus at overseas locations. Despite rapid expansion of higher education, the government is unable to cope with the escalating demand of burgeoning student population. Thus, there is a pressure on the government to increase access to higher education. Cross border education provides yet another avenue to meet the challenge. Many of the foreign universities are keen to operate in Pakistan. Therefore there is a need to regulate this emerging sector and ensure quality in the provision of higher education.

The purpose of this document is to provide policy guidelines and set out criteria, procedures for collaboration with foreign institutions/universities and opening up campuses of reputable foreign universities. It identifies various related requirements, which need to be fulfilled and adhered to while negotiating collaborative arrangements or for operation of offshore campuses of foreign universities in Pakistan.

## Potential for growth

The latest national census data estimated the total population of Pakistan at around 208 million people, in 2017. Within that population, the proportion of young people under 30 years stood at nearly 64%. More importantly, approximately 29% of the population, at the time of the last census, was under 10 years old<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, the youth bulge of Pakistan, as we know it, is only going to increase in the coming years. Add to that the fact that within the total population of Pakistan over 10 years old,



the proportion of degree holders (bachelors and above) was only 6% signifies that access to quality tertiary education is still low<sup>2</sup>. However, that also represents a massive opportunity for education service providers to cater to the higher educational needs and demands of an ever increasing young population.

Meanwhile, as the world advances rapidly in technological innovation, the onus falls on educational institutions to ensure that students are equipped with the knowledge and skills that are relevant for a rapidly evolving and technologically intensive workplace. Transnational education can therefore play a crucial role in ensuring access to quality higher education that can, in turn, enable Pakistan to truly harness the potential of its young population.



# Types of collaborative arrangements supported by the HEC

**The collaborative arrangement models being encouraged by the commission may be either of the following:**

## Type 1 - Delivery Partnership

External degree programme for which tuition/facilitation is provided by a local institution, while course of study, study materials, question paper and assessment is done by foreign universities/institutions under supervision of 3rd party like British Council. The local institutions in this type of collaboration would be required to fulfill all the pre-requisites of HEC criteria for an affiliated college.

**(Schedule 1)**

## Type 2 - Franchise Agreement

Local institution franchised by a foreign university for award of a foreign degree where students are assessed and evaluated locally and degree is awarded by a foreign university; The local institutions desirous of operating under this mode would be required to fulfill all the pre-requisites as specified for a degree awarding institution in the Guidelines/Criteria for establishment of a university/degree awarding institution approved by the Federal Cabinet.

**(Schedule 2)**

## Type 3 - Overseas Campus

A campus entirely administered, managed and operated by a foreign university in Pakistan and award of degree by a foreign university identical to degrees given to on-campus students at principal seat. The foreign Universities which want to operate in Pakistan through their offshore campus in Pakistan, such institutions would be required to get approval of Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Interior, respective Provincial Government and apply to HEC for NOC. Such universities would be required to fulfill all the pre-requisites of HEC approved campus criteria.

**(Schedule 3)**



**Type 1:  
Delivery  
Partnership**

**Type 2:  
Franchise  
Agreement**

**Type 3:  
Overseas  
Campus**



# Standard operating procedure for approval of foreign collaboration







## Requirements for local institutions

### Completion of Legal Formalities

Local institutions located in provincial territorial jurisdictions would be required to get themselves registered with the provincial government and provide proof of registration to the HEC. After the registration with provincial government the local institution would be required to apply to HEC for a formal No Objection Certificate (NOC).

No local institution shall be allowed to conduct course of studies in anticipation of NOC from HEC and execution of formal agreement.

Permission to run the collaborative degree programme will be granted separately for each physical location where the programme is to be conducted.

The ownership of the local institutions collaborating with foreign university/institution shall vest in a body corporate and not in individual(s) or family. It shall be registered under the relevant laws of companies ordinance/societies registration act/trust act as a foundation/society/trust. This shall not be required in case the institution is in the Government sector.

All those local institutions, which do not have their own Charter/degree awarding status, desiring to have a foreign collaborative arrangement shall not be allowed to use the word "University" in their name.

As per the Government regulations, local institutions would be required to get their sponsoring society/trust evaluated and certified by an independent certification agency approved by the Federal Board of Revenue.



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## Application for a collaborative arrangement

After completion of legal requirements, the sponsors of the local institution have to submit an inclusive proposal, accompanying prescribed fee in favour of Higher Education Commission as evaluation fee.

For a successful application, the overseas partner has to certify, after satisfying itself from HEC, that the Pakistani institution fulfills the required physical, human, financial resources and that due regard has been given to assure quality and standards of degree programme.

The Commission shall scrutinize the proposal submitted by sponsors to ascertain as to whether it fulfills the specified basic requirements or not.

If the Commission finds that there is a prima facie case for further consideration, the feasibility report shall be thoroughly scrutinized by the HEC. It may ask for additional information or recommend an inspection of the institution by a panel of experts.

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## Site inspection

Following the proposal and upon fulfillment of the mandatory academic, physical and financial requirements, a physical inspection of the local institution will be carried out by an inspection committee nominated by the HEC to determine whether the institution has the potential to run collaborative programmes.

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## Approval of NOC

Upon a satisfactory report by the Inspection Committee, the sponsor shall submit the negotiated draft agreement with the foreign partner to the HEC for approval. The HEC may call for additional information about the collaboration. A draft MOU/agreement between the local and foreign institution needs to be submitted to Commission for approval.

Once the HEC is satisfied with the arrangement, the local institution concerned will be allowed to enter into an agreement with a foreign institution and for this purpose the NOC/recommendation letter will be issued to offer foreign degree programmes.

The validity period of permission will initially be for three years and subsequently would be extended to the next term after a positive report from the Inspection Committee.









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## Requirements for foreign institutions

### Completion of legal formalities

No foreign university, other than accredited/chartered in its country and recognized by the HEC, would be allowed to operate through any mode as specified in the policy document.

The franchising university must carry specific provision/permission for its operation overseas through any of the above modes and sponsors of local institutions would be required to submit proof of such a legal provision.

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### Application for a collaborative arrangement

At the time of the application submission, the partnering foreign institution has to certify, after satisfying itself from HEC that the local institution fulfills the required physical, human, financial resources and that due regard has been given to assure quality and standards of degree programme.

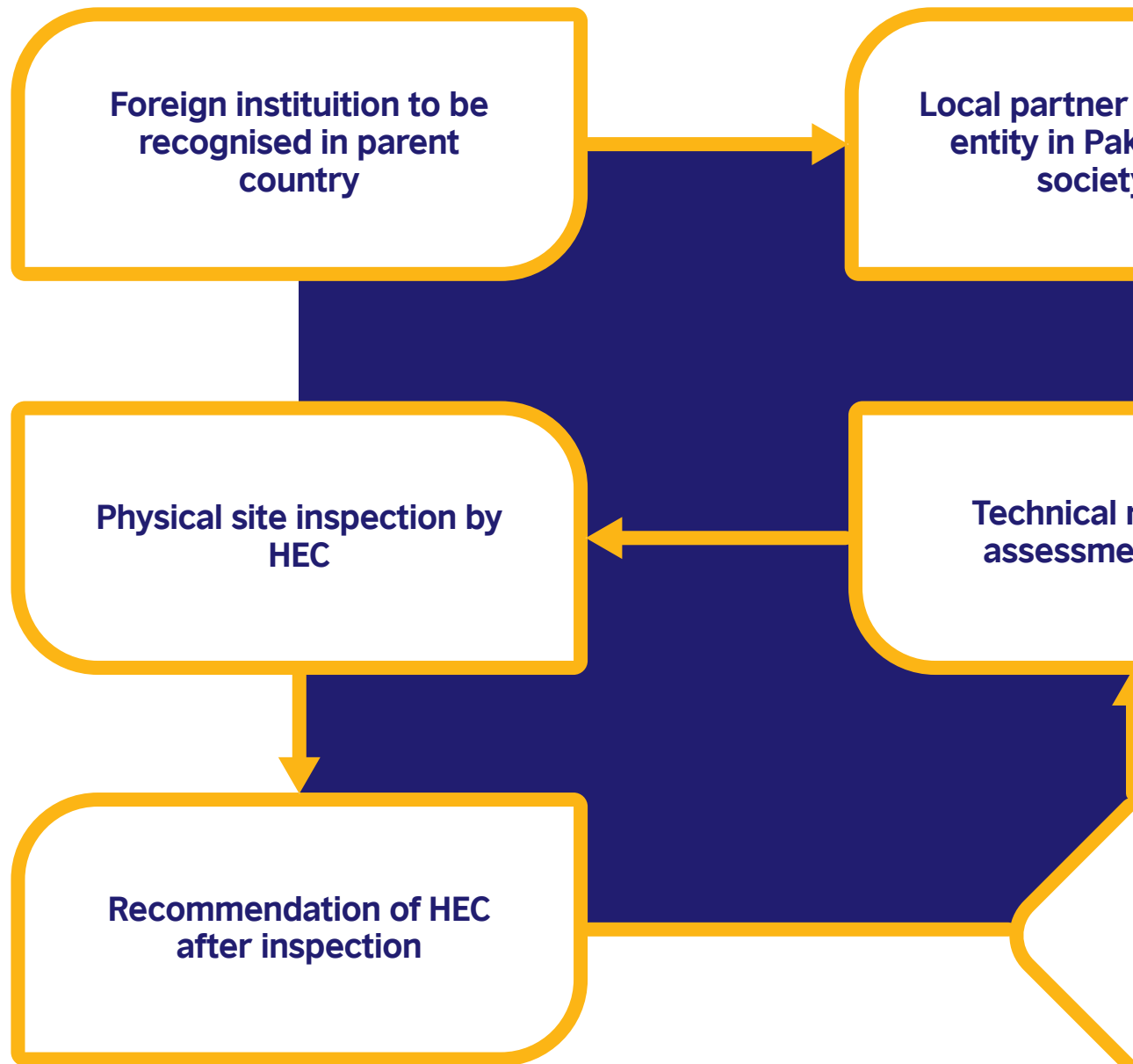
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### Approval of NOC

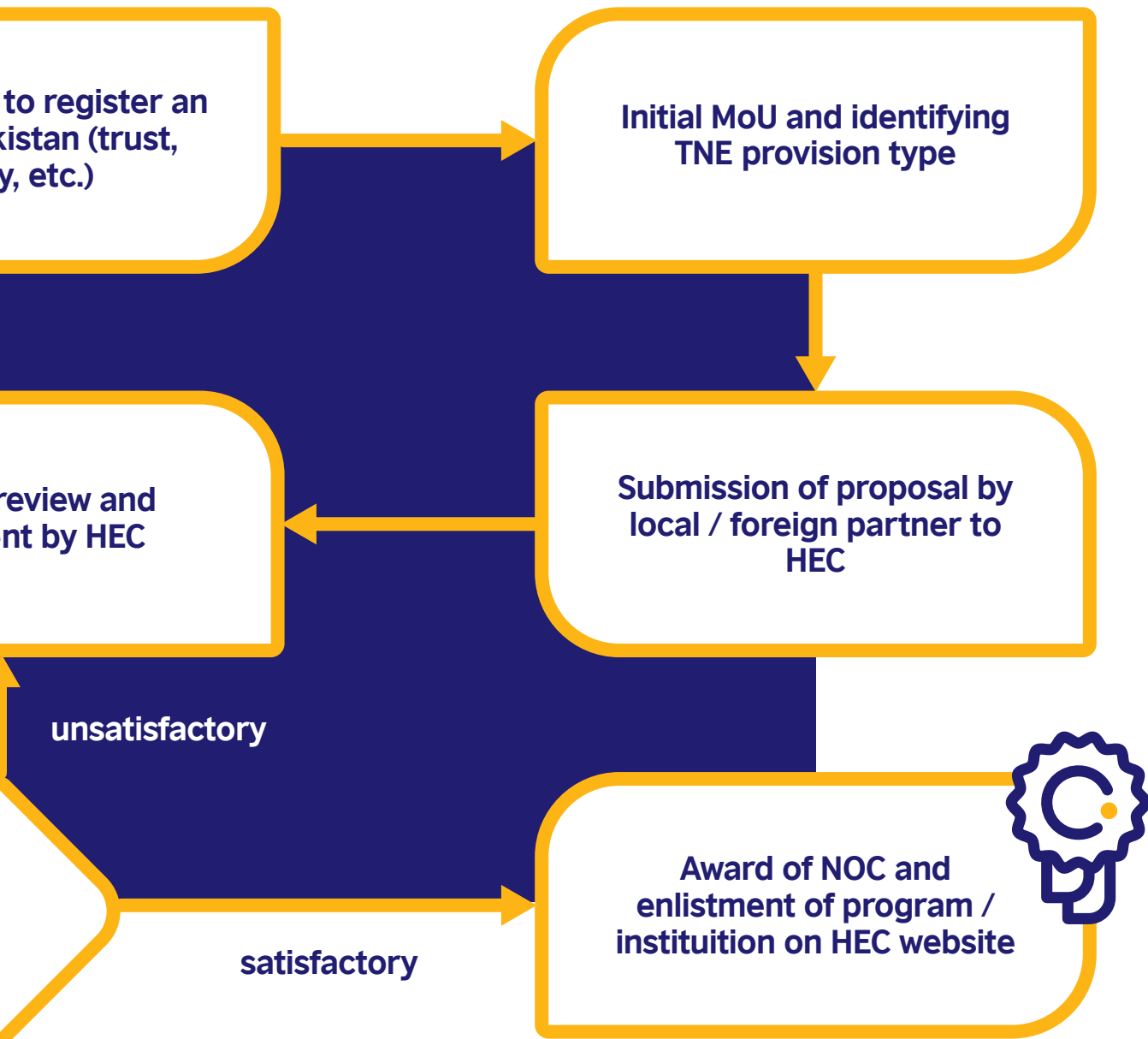
The foreign Institution has to enter into an MOU/ draft agreement with the local institution which has to be submitted to the HEC for approval along with the application. The HEC reserves the right to call upon the local and foreign partnering institutions to furnish additional information about their collaboration.



# Standard operating system for approval of foreign collaboration







# Conditions governing foreign collaboration

## The provisions for any collaborative arrangement shall be governed by the following conditions

### Formal agreement/ MOU

The agreement shall be executed in Pakistan in accordance with Pakistani laws. No arbitration clause shall be included in the agreement, and in case of any litigation, the jurisdiction shall be a court in Pakistan. An up-to-date and authoritative record of the collaborative arrangements should be publically available.

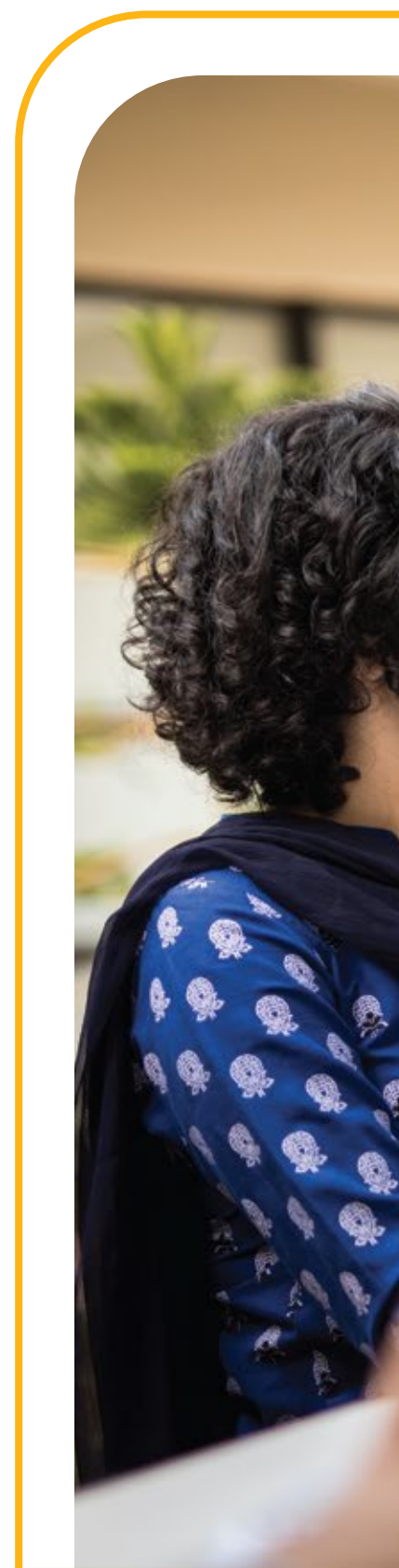
All arrangements of collaboration between institutions should be agreed upon and formally written down as approved legal agreements and signed by a senior authorized representative of the institutions. Detailed arrangements for partnership should be set out clearly in the agreement and memorandum of understanding.

The agreements should consider the scope of the arrangements, responsibilities, financial arrangements, quality control mechanisms, mode and means of payment, validity period, procedure for resolution of differences and termination of agreement etc.

The agreements should clearly spell out the provisions for quality control mechanisms including monitoring, assessment procedures, reviews and visitations. Provisions for ensuring the availability of student support services, library, computer and laboratory facilities, qualified faculty and financial resources and proper system of student's assessment and examination should be included.

The agreement should ensure a creditable system of student evaluation and its integrity. It is advisable that external examiners for franchised programmes are involved in the assessment of students. Foreign partners should preferably involve their own examiners in the assessment of students.

Agreements should include provisions for termination in case of breach of the terms by the foreign or local partner and should include responsibilities of the partners.





The validity period of the agreements should be clearly agreed upon by the parties. Any provision or extension should specify the requirements for review.

Termination of collaborative link should safeguard the interests of the students and should be duly notified to the general public and the HEC well ahead of the termination of such arrangement.



## Institutional and academic

Local institution and foreign university shall have joint responsibilities to safeguard the interests of students and provisions for quality assurance and maintenance of standards of quality education. The awarding institution is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the academic standards and quality of learning opportunities offered through a collaborative arrangement are adequate to enable a student to achieve the academic standard required for its award.

The local and foreign institutions shall work together to develop a mechanism that enables verification of published information before it is released, and no misleading information shall be published.

The degree awarded to students at the local institution will be identical to the degrees awarded to on-campus students.

Students at the local institution will be enrolled in the principal seat of franchising university. They would be eligible to all rights and privileges including right of transfer to main campus abroad upon closure of local institutions for any reason and to all other rights as are admissible to students at principal seat.



The institution shall be governed by the rules and regulations framed by the franchising university from time to time regarding general scheme of studies, duration of courses, medium of instruction, detailed curricula, examination and assessment pattern, the conditions under which students shall be admitted to the examination of university etc.

Admission of students for a course of study, examination and assessment of requirements should be equivalent to comparable programmes delivered by the awarding institution.

Degree awarded in a professional field should be accredited/recognized by the relevant professional bodies of both countries.

At least 10% of students be granted fee exemptions and need-based scholarships.  
In case student/s at local institution are unable to continue with degree programme due to any reason, they will have right of transfer to the main campus.

The local and foreign institutions should provide career counselling and job search services to students.

That the policies for appeals and complaints shall be brought to the attention of students at the start of each academic year.





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## Constitutional and cultural

The institutions entering into a collaborative arrangement shall be required to strictly comply with and respect the constitutional provisions of Pakistan as well as the local cultural, linguistic, and religious sensitivities.

The local institution shall not undertake any political or other activities detrimental to national, religious, social or local culture.

The institute shall have to work within law or policy framed/amended by HEC/Government of Pakistan or the concerned provincial government from time to time.

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## Co-curricular and healthcare facilities

The institution may initiate and promote the extra-curricular and recreational activities for students and make due arrangements for promoting their health and general welfare.

Indoor and outdoor facilities for games should be ensured to provide a healthy outlet for young people. The students should be encouraged to participate at least in one of the games.





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## Monitoring and visitation

The franchised institution shall furnish such reports, returns and other information as the HEC/provincial government may require, enabling it to judge the efficiency and effectiveness of the institution.

The institution shall also be subject to monitoring and visitation as determined by the HEC.

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## Disciplinary measures and conditions for withdrawal

If either of the local and foreign partnering institutions fail to comply with any of the conditions as contained in the above regulations and/or consistently refrain from taking corrective actions contrary to the advice of the HEC, the HEC may, after giving reasonable opportunity to the concerned franchising Institution, withdraw its permission and forbid the institution from entering any future collaborative arrangement with a local institution.

The HEC may impose a financial penalty to the Foreign Institution in such cases, including returning the entire fee collected from students. If any question arises as to the interpretation of these regulations, the same shall be decided by the HEC.

The HEC shall have power to issue any clarifications to remove any doubt, which may arise regarding the implementation of these regulations.







## Annex

### List of Foreign Collaboration Institutes established after the Approval of HEC Foreign Collaboration Policy

S.No	Name of Local Institutes / Colleges	Name of Foreign Universities
1	The Millennium Universal College (TMUC), Islamabad	1. University for Creative Arts, UK 2. University of Hertfordshire, UK 3. University of London, UK
2	The Millennium Universal College (TMUC), Rawalpindi	1. University for Creative Arts, UK 2. University of Hertfordshire, UK 3. University of London, UK
3	The Millennium Universal College (TMUC), Lahore	1. University for Creative Arts, UK 2. University of Hertfordshire, UK 3. University of London, UK
4	The Millennium Universal College (TMUC), Karachi	1. University for Creative Arts, UK 2. University of Hertfordshire, UK 3. University of London, UK
5	Roots IVY, DHA, Islamabad.	1. University of London, UK 2. University of Bedfordshire, UK 3. BPP University, UK
6	IVY College of Management Sciences, Lahore	1. University of Bedfordshire, UK 2. Arden University, UK
7	SZABIST, Karachi (Foreign Collaboration Program)	University of London, UK
8	Pakistan Institute of Management (PIM), Karachi	University of Warwick, UK
9	Management Development Institute (MDI)	1. University of London 2. University of Southern Queensland, Australia
10	The Institute of Legal Studies (TILS), Islamabad	University of London, UK
11	The Institute of Legal Studies (TILS), Lahore	University of London, UK
12	Metropolitan Education Foundation (MEF)/ MIUC	University of London, UK
13	Pakistan College of Law, Lahore	University of London, UK
14	Universal College Islamabad (UCI), Islamabad	University of London, UK
15	Lahore Grammar School, Lahore	University of London, UK
16	Beaconhouse International College, Islamabad	1. Liverpool John Moores University, UK 2. University of London, UK
17	Beaconhouse International College, Faisalabad	University of London, UK
18	Imperial Tutorial College, Karachi	Nisantasi University, Turkey

\*This list is frequently updated. For the latest list please visit HEC website:

<https://hec.gov.pk/english/universities/Pages/Foreign-Collaboration-Institutions.aspx>

Last Updated: May 2021



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## References

[1] Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (2018) Provisional Summary Results of 6th Population and Housing Census 2017. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan. Retrieved from

<http://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/provisional-summary-results-6th-population-and-housing-census-2017-0>

[2] Government of Pakistan (2018). Labour Force Survey 2017-18. Islamabad. Retrieved from

<http://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/labour-force-statistics>

[3] Higher Education Commission Pakistan (2020). Foreign Collaboration Policy.

<https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/services/universities/Documents/HEC-Foreign-Collaboration-Policy.pdf>

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