

Press Release

HEC Advises Universities to Conduct Exams based on their Capacity and Need for Fair Assessment

Islamabad, January 27, 2021: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has taken note of the concerns raised by students of some universities that their examinations should be conducted online. The apprehensions of students were reviewed carefully in consultation with the Vice Chancellors of all the provinces and regions, keeping in view the difficulties brought about by the pandemic and opening of universities from February 01, 2021.

HEC Guidance on Assessment and Examinations is available at the link <https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/HECAnnouncements/Documents/nCoVirus/Assessment-s-Examinations.pdf>. In this policy, HEC already allowed universities to use their discretion to conduct exams, either on-campus or online as long as the chosen mode provides a fair assessment of students' performance. Universities should take stock of their "exam readiness", i.e., technological readiness, managerial capacity, and the announced policy, and choose the best possible mode of assessment.

Online exams either can be used if the universities administer 'Open Book Exams' or establish an invigilation system in a supervised environment. In this mode, universities will also have to use Turnitin to check similarity index with Web and the answers of other students. Further, viva/oral exam may be integrated in the assessment where necessary.

On-campus exams can be used only under strict compliance with all Covid-19 health and safety protocols. Universities may also have to organize make-up classes for two weeks in case students consider the course coverage to be deficient. Assessment of all courses requiring psychomotor skills, such as medicine, engineering, subjects involving lab/studio work must be held on campus.

All students in a single course will be examined in the same mode i.e., either on-line or on-campus.

Since March 2020, HEC has been continuously monitoring the pandemic situation and coordinated with the universities to minimize academic disruption and continue online education with quality safeguards. The HEC Guidance on Online Readiness (#5) and Assessments and Examinations (#6) are available on HEC website and provide the requirements and minimum standards to be observed by universities.