



PAKISTAN COUNCIL OF
ARCHITECTS AND TOWN PLANNERS
(Ordinance IX of 1983)

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NOTIFICATION-II
(Dated: June 22, 2020)

SUPPLEMENTARY DETAILS FOR NOTIFICATION FOR FINAL YEAR THESIS JURY EXAMINATION FOR ARCHITECTURE AND TOWN PLANNING PROGRAMS

In continuation of earlier PCATP Policy Guidelines for Online Teaching-Learning and Assessment Implementation during COVID-19 Pandemic, dated: 28 May 2020, further elaboration is provided as under in light of various guidelines from HEC related to the subject.

Seven Guidelines have been issued by HEC. These are available on HEC website.

The 4th Guideline dated 28 March 2020 is the first largely directional and operational guideline. In Item No. 3 the Guideline details out the three possible scenarios that HEC is looking at:

3. **Scenarios: In this regard, the universities are requested to prepare themselves for all probable scenarios (Annex 3). A separate Guidance Note will be issued to support planning for multiple scenarios.**
 - a. **In Scenario A, all restrictions are lifted as scheduled on 1st June, allowing subsequent instruction to revert to normal face-to-face mode.**
 - b. **In Scenario B, if restrictions are extended into the summer months, all instruction will continue to be in the online mode. Other changes (e.g., in admissions) will also be needed.**
 - c. **In the pessimistic Scenario C, if the restrictions have to be extended even beyond August, significant additional changes will be needed.**

Currently the country is passing through the condition described in 3(b) above and online instructions are continuing. The same document further defines the steps that will be required to be taken:

- a. **Under Scenario A the attempt should be made to adhere to the agreed calendar, i.e., complete the admissions in early September, and start classes by 15 September.**
- b. **Under Scenario B, if the exams get delayed, in order to save the Fall Semester, universities will need to provide provisional admissions. HEC is analyzing past admissions data in order to develop Admissions Guidelines aimed at utilizing past data for the formulation of transparent and merit-based admissions policies.**
- c. **Under Scenario C, i.e., where the crisis extends beyond the summer months, universities will have to continue in the online mode, and also adapt their admissions processes as mentioned above (to be sketched out in the HEC Admissions Guidelines).**



Under Scenario B it is possible that the examinations may get delayed. Further clarifications mentioned by HEC about Admissions Guidelines are awaited.

According to 5th Guidelines from HEC (Item No. 16), detailed guidelines are to be issued in consultation with respective Councils (see extract below) for such courses that may require direct supervision by or interaction with the instructors.

- 16. *Laboratory and Practical Instruction: by definition, practical instruction, including laboratory work, research projects, or internships requires the physical presence of the student and direct supervision by or interaction with their instructors. Such interaction has to be ruled out during the lock down phase. Detailed guidelines will be issued in consultation with professional councils on permissible alternative modes of engagement in this regard. As on other issues, the OACs (or equivalent bodies) at universities will be asked to certify that the guidelines are being implemented.***

For Science and Technology courses, It is also important to refer to 6th Guideline from HEC (dated 21 May 2020) where Item No. 5b(i) reads as follows and clearly gives the first option of completion of lab requirements **after** easing of lock-down and to be fulfilled under conditions of social distancing. This is exactly what PCATP has suggested.

- 5b. *Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) Students: There are certain special challenges with respect to assessment for STEM subjects, as follows:***

- i. *Certain courses have lab requirements which cannot be fulfilled at this time. The university leadership shall work with the departments in coming up with sophisticated policy in this regard. For introductory-level courses, it may be possible to assign written work in lieu of the lab requirement. For higher-level courses where this would not be advisable, the university should explore options such as (a) completion of lab requirements after easing of lock-down and to be fulfilled under conditions of social distancing, (b) shifting the lab requirement, if possible, to the next semester, or (c) other options depending on type of course.***

It merits special clarification that Guideline No. 6a from HEC does not relate to Undergraduate Courses and very clearly states in Item No. 1.3 its relationship only to Graduate Courses (see excerpt below) and proceeds to detail steps of PhD, M.Phil and MS Courses.

- 1.3 *This guidance pertains only to selected steps in graduate degree programs (please see diagram below), namely the thesis submission, evaluation, and oral defense, and final juries. All other activities in the process are governed by separate guidelines, including the requirement of online readiness of universities.***

Detailed Input from the Schools was taken about the level of distant learning facility available with them and their programme and schedules. Information about the preparedness of teachers as well as quality, reliability and level of availability of internet access and supporting devices available to the students was requested and studied.

The advice already provided to all the schools has been based on HEC documents, on-ground situation in the institutions, facilities available with the students etc. Moreover, PCATP's guidelines have been made keeping in mind the feedback obtained from the schools all over Pakistan. Conditions of schools all over the region and the world, status of student admissions and



possibility of personal presence of students, availability of time for possible delay of examinations and impact on schedule, etc. were looked into.

It is also important to note that all PCATP guidelines are to be followed while adhering to relevant provincial/regional SOPs, guidelines and social distancing procedures.

The current pandemic is not yet over and there is a very clear possibility that we will be passing through Scenario C where the crisis extends beyond the summer months (beyond August) and universities will have to continue in the online mode, adapt their admissions processes as mentioned above (to be sketched out in the HEC Admissions Guidelines). Significant additional changes will be needed. Under such conditions HEC is expected to provide additional guidelines for continuation of education, evaluation etc. Under such circumstances current guidelines from PCATP to the schools may also get modified and revised. We are copying this letter to HEC to expedite communication of their advisory and guidance under the current and developing situation of the country.

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