PAK UK Education Gateway Programme



Jointly funded and implemented by the British Council in Pakistan and the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan between 2019 and 2024, the programme aimed to enhance the partnership between the higher education sectors of Pakistan and the UK.

Key impact:

Successfully catalysed partnerships between UK and Pakistani institutions through targeted grants leading to enhanced research capacity and sustainable academic collaborations between the two countries.

Strengthened institutional governance and academic quality in Pakistani higher education through structured capacity building initiatives, leading to improved teaching practices, enhanced research supervision capabilities, and strengthened leadership and management skills across participating institutions.

Strengthened Pakistan's higher education policy framework through collaborative development of comprehensive guidelines and standards, leading to enhanced quality assurance mechanisms, improved transnational education pathways, and more effective distance learning delivery across the sector.

Grants facilitated:

8 large-scale **research partnership** grants

21 **research travel** grants for 21 academics

8 **faculty mobility** grants enabling exchanges for 69 Pakistani and 52 UK faculty members

4 **student mobility** grants facilitating mobility for 27 Pakistani and 21 UK students

Capacity building:

Trained **140 PhD supervisors** from Pakistani universities, with supervisors reporting significant improvements in their ability to guide PhD students, implementing structured documentation practices and enhanced student support systems.

Facilitated UK visit for **40 Vice Chancellors and HEC officials** for leadership development; the impact of this initiative extended beyond individual development, with some leaders implementing systematic changes such as comprehensive faculty evaluations and formal academic audits.

Awarded **189 UK Advance HE Associate Fellowships** with training provided to approximately 700 academics. At the individual level, respondents reported substantial professional development in their teaching approaches and methodologies.

Delivered research capacity building training to **1,029 researchers and reviewers** across Pakistan, with participants noting skill acquisition in grant writing, project management, and research methodologies.

51 universities received Office of Research, Innovation & Commercialization (ORIC) certification, allowing them to strengthen their research infrastructure, foster innovation, and enhance the commercialization of academic research for societal and economic impact.

Policy development:

Developed a comprehensive Open and Distance Learning (ODL) policy framework. This informed the development of HEC's ODL policy launched in 2024, which establishes minimum quality standards for universities offering online and distance education.

Developed a comprehensive Transnational Education (TNE) Handbook on the Foreign Collaboration Policy of HEC. This informed the development of HEC's Transnational Education Policy launched in 2024, which enhances academic quality and governance by providing detailed guidelines for collaborations between local and foreign higher education institutions.

Quality assurance:

The programme has established foundational quality assurance standards for Pakistani higher education through the development of 5 fundamental quality assurance documents in collaboration with UK partners which collectively provide a comprehensive structure for enhancing transparency, fostering continuous quality improvement, and aligning Pakistan's higher education sector with international standards while addressing local challenges.

- Pakistan Precepts & Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
- Framework for Reviewing Effectiveness of Quality Accreditation Bodies
- Guidelines for Reviewing Effectiveness of QAA's External Quality Assurance Methods
- Self-assessment Manual
- Internal QA manual

Academic publications:

Research partnership grants facilitated **70 different articles, book chapters, and conference proceedings**, 54 of which have already been published, with an additional 16 in stages of review.

Faculty mobility grants facilitated **14 journal articles, chapters, or conference reports**, of which 6 have been fully published and 8 are currently in stages of review.

The journals in which articles have been published include IEEE, ACS journals, Materials Letters, the International Journal of Advanced Manufacturing Technology, the International Journal of Environment and Sustainable Development, the Journal of Electronic Materials among other peer reviewed journals.

4 of which have already been published, with an additional 16 in stages of review.

Joint laboratories to facilitate research:

Research partnership grants facilitated the establishment of **2 joint labs**, with lab research equipment **donated by Leicester University** to the Department of Archaeology at Hazara University Mansehra.

Faculty mobility grants facilitated the establishment of **4 joint labs**, with lab research equipment **donated by Durham University and by London Southbank University** to Government College University Faisalabad, and **by Coventry University** to the National University of Sciences & Technology, NED University of Engineering and Technology, Air University, Institute of Business Administration, and Pak-Austria Fachhochschule Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology.