Guidelines for Submission and Approval Processes of Research Grants’ Progress and Final Reports

1. Rationale

Sultan Qaboos University has various sources of research funding which facilitate its objective of conducting basic and applied research that benefit the society. The funding sources could be internal (e.g. Deanship of Research Fund, Internal Grants (IG), Collaborative Grants (CL), His Majesty’s Trust Fund Grants (HM)) or external (e.g. The Research Council Grants (TRC), External Grants (EG), Consultancy Services, Omantel grant, BP grant). Funding is granted for research projects that are expected to lead to original findings, has an impact on society and can generate innovative discoveries which in turn lead to generating of new knowledge.

Any research team which is awarded a grant is responsible to meet all the project requirements including the submission of progress and final reports. Recently, several issues were raised by different colleges/centers regarding the submission process and the quality of the progress and final reports. These can be summarized as follows:

- Some reports submitted by the principal investigators (PIs) are incomplete and/or of low quality.
- Some researchers do not submit the final reports especially in IG & CL projects.
- Some researchers change the objectives of the projects without notifying the College/unit research committee (CRC) and/or the Deanship of Research.

In response to the above issues, the Deanship of Research prepared the guidelines below for better management of progress and final reports submission and evaluation processes.
2. Terms, Conditions and Procedures

- When preparing the progress/final reports, the PI must adhere to the format set by the Deanship of Research and outlined in the Progress Report Form (F5) and the Final Reports Forms (F7A) and (F7B) for granted and sponsored projects, respectively.
- It is the PI’s responsibility to submit both soft and hard copies of complete and good quality progress and final reports to the CRC/research centre committee (RCC).
- The CRC/RCC shall evaluate the submitted reports using F6A for progress reports and F6B for final reports and shall submit its recommendations to the Deanship of Research.
- The CRC/RCC has the right to:
  - Come up with internal guidelines to evaluate the submitted reports.
  - Approve the submitted report or request for a revision.
- The Deanship of Research has the right to:
  - Approve the submitted report or request for a revision.
  - Ask the PI to present the project’s outcomes to the relevant beneficiaries.
  - Send the final report for external evaluation –if needed- along with the project’s approved proposal submitted by the PI.
- The Deanship of Research shall submit a summary of progress/final reports to the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Postgraduate Studies and Research (DVCPSR) to take appropriate action.
- The Deanship of Research shall submit a summary of the final reports to the relevant beneficiaries.

Figure (1) shows the progress and final reports submission and approval procedures:
PI to Submit Report (F5 or F7A or F7B) → AD- PSR/RC Director → College Research Committee (CRC) / Research Center Committee (RCC) (F6A or F6B)

− Revise the Report

Approval

Approved

Deanship of Research

Approve /or Request for Revision /or Send to External Reviewers

Approved

Summary for DVCPSR

Summary for Beneficiaries

Figure (1): Progress and Final Reports Submission and Approval Procedures
3. Consequences of Unsatisfactory Reports Quality

Failure to obtain the approvals of CRC/ RCC and Deanship of Research shall result in the following actions:

- **For Progress Reports:**
  - The following annual year's budgets of the project shall not be activated, and
  - The PI shall be excluded from future funding opportunities.

- **For the Final Report:**
  - The PI shall be excluded from future funding opportunities.