Sultan Qaboos University

Research Regulations

Issued by Vice-Chancellor's Decision No. (722/2010) dated 3rd November, 2010
Sultan Qaboos University

Decision No. (722/2010)
Endorsing the University's Research Regulations

Based on Royal Decree No. (71/2006) promulgating Sultan Qaboos University Law and approving its organizational structure,
And the executive regulations of Sultan Qaboos University Law issued by Vice-Chancellor's Decision No. (233/2009),
And the University Council's approval in its 3rd meeting of the academic year 2009/2020 on 29/3/2010,
And in accordance with the public interest

It is decided that

Article (1)
The attached Research Regulations are hereby approved

Article (2)
This decision shall be enforced as of the day following its date of issue, and shall supersede all that contradicts it. All concerned parties shall implement this law each in their own respective jurisdiction.

Dr. Ali Saud Al-Bimani
Vice Chancellor

Issued on: 25 Thi al-Ka'ada 1431
3rd November 2010
1. Introduction

The Charter of Sultan Qaboos University promulgated by Royal Decree No. (71/2006) identifies three broad research objectives. These are to:

1) Conduct basic and applied research and studies for the benefit of society, in particular to seek scientific and practical solutions for economic and social problems.
2) Relate research and studies to the overall development plans and the future vision of the Omani society in general.
3) Prepare generations of Omani researchers, experts and scientists in various branches of science, arts and humanities, who are capable of systematic creative work.

These Regulations supersede the March 2001 “Guidelines for Research Grants, Contracts and Consulting”. They are intended to administer funded research and consultancy activities at Sultan Qaboos University, in line with the University’s Mission and its long-term Vision for Research and Community Services. Terms and responsibilities of the various stakeholders are clarified to avoid misinterpretation of the terminology and to ensure that the required processes of research and consultancy activities are properly defined. The Deputy Vice Chancellor for Postgraduate Studies & Research (DVC PSR) is responsible for the implementation of these regulations and procedures.

1.1 Vision

SQU aspires to be a regional research leader, recognised internationally.

1.2 Mission

The research mission of SQU is to develop a research culture and capacity, generate knowledge and find solutions for strategic issues in Oman.

1.3 Core Goals

The University houses the highest concentration of qualified people and the greatest diversity of advanced research facilities in the Sultanate. Promoting research activities at the University will develop local know-how that is most capable of addressing problems unique to the Sultanate or the Region. The policies and procedures stated in this document are to provide a framework for research projects in the University, while meeting the six core goals as defined in the University research strategy:

1) To develop a vibrant research culture at SQU by creating an enabling academic environment. Research will be strongly supported by flexible management and good infrastructure. Increased research funding from external sources, including contracts and consultancies
and a transparent and equitable system for distributing internal funds are essential.

2) **To build capacity** through training, postgraduate programs, development of research teams and exchange of visiting scholars. In this, strong PhD programs are essential as well as a commitment to staff development and international exchange.

3) **To encourage academic excellence** in the humanities and the basic and applied sciences, building on recognised strengths and expanding international links and cooperation. This will increase the pool of outstanding researchers and also invigorate undergraduate and postgraduate teaching.

4) **To address Oman's strategic needs** by focusing on key areas of national interest. In doing this, partnerships will be developed with the Research Council and relevant stakeholders to generate and apply knowledge.

5) **To pursue interdisciplinary research** that will develop holistic solutions to national and global challenges/problems. This will enable individuals to form teams to address problems that cross disciplinary boundaries. It will also enhance research networking and collaboration nationally and internationally.

6) **To promote innovation** by encouraging and protecting intellectual property development, effective technology and knowledge transfer and partnerships with the private and public sectors to fully harness the commercial potential of research at SQU.

2. **Research and Consultancy Funding Schemes**

Funding of research and consultancy is required to cover the costs of the resources that are needed to perform these activities. The funds may be derived from University resources and revenues (internal) or from external sources within and outside the country. In this document, research and consultancy activities are categorised by the main source of funding as follows:

2.1 **Internal Grants (IG)**

Internal grants are derived from the University’s annual budget and other internal resources, as well as unconditional research donations made to the University by outside bodies, without stipulating specific restrictions on the research topic. Internal grants are used to support academic research which is expected to yield original results or findings that generate new knowledge and to develop concepts consistent with the research and educational objectives of the University. Results obtained are also likely to generate interest in a subsequent research project of a broader scope to be considered from other funds.
2.2 Joint Grants (JG)
The University may allocate a budget to match funds from other institutions to form a Joint Grants Fund to jointly support a research program. This type of research grant is governed by a signed research agreement with the other institution.

2.3 His Majesty’s Trust Fund (HMTF) Grants
The generous funds donated by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos are used to support long-term multidisciplinary strategic research projects of importance to the Sultanate. The aim of such projects is to generate new knowledge and discoveries leading to substantial socio-economic benefits to Omani society in the long run. Researchers are expected to obtain major results and identify anticipated direct benefits to prospective users. This type of research is expected to help the University build an infrastructure for “centres of excellence” in vital areas, in addition to making a solid contribution to the advancement of University’s academic programs. This type of research should generally go along with the Sultanate’s long term planning goals.

2.4 The Research Council (TRC) Grants
Faculty are encouraged to seek funding from The Research Council. Under this scheme, projects may be funded through the *open research grants* or *strategic grants*. *Open research grants* are funds for academic research. They are considered a key driver of wealth and social progress and are instrumental in producing new knowledge leading to future applications, markets or social understanding. *Strategic grants* support strategic research activities and aim to gain or consolidate leadership in key areas. They must relate to themes identified by the Research Council as the most important fields of knowledge, where research capacity and excellence are particularly important to improve Oman’s ability to address the social, economic, public health and environmental challenges of the future.

2.5 External Grants (EG)
External grants are received from sponsors, such as national, regional and international agencies, industry, individuals and philanthropic organisations, to support academic research in certain specific fields. The Deanship of Research gathers information on such donations and disseminates it to Colleges and Research Centres, for circulation to researchers. In some cases the researcher may apply directly to the sponsor. However, the Deanship’s approval has to be obtained.

2.6 Consultancy Services (CS)
Industry and business from the private and public sectors stand to benefit from University’s know-how and technical facilities through consultancy activities sponsored by them. This typically involves applied research for problem solving and in some cases systematic development of new
knowledge for the benefit of the sponsor, to address current problems (threats), create new opportunities, or sometimes encounter unexpected discoveries. The experience gained contributes to the advancement of the University's research capabilities and academic programs, making them more relevant to addressing major social and economic problems of the Sultanate, while building stronger research ties with various sectors. It also creates an innovative and entrepreneurial environment at the University for generating intellectual property, with commercial potential that would promote a new knowledge-based industry, create local employment, and bring additional revenues to the University from licensing royalties. In addition, in some colleges these activities improve the prospect for future employment of research students by sponsoring organisations. Besides expertise, the nature of the project may also require the use of University facilities.

3. Criteria/Requirements for Research Proposals and Consultancy Services

The criteria and requirements for research proposals and consultancy requests vary, depending on the funding agency. There are generic criteria that guide investigators in the write-up of research proposals, and these are used by the University to prioritise Internal Grants proposals. Other University-administered research proposals (Joint Grants and HM Research Trust Funds proposals) will have additional criteria and requirements. Funding sources (External Grants, The Research Council, and Consultancy Services) may have their own criteria. The provisions of these regulations state the generic as well as the additional criteria.
Chapter One
Definitions and General Provisions

Name of the Statue and Date of Implementation

Article (1)
These regulations are hereby called "Sultan Qaboos University Research Regulations".

Article (2)
Each of the following words and phrases shall have the meaning hereby assigned to them unless the context otherwise requires.

1. **The University**: Sultan Qaboos University
2. **The Law**: The University Law
3. **The Executive Regulations**: The Executive Regulations of the University Law
4. **The Regulations**: The Research Regulations at the University
5. **Research**: the academic activity that is based on established scientific principles and is conducted individually or collaboratively or both.
6. **Vice-Chancellor**: The University's Vice-Chancellor
7. **Deputy Vice-Chancellor**: Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Postgraduate Studies and Research
8. **Dean**: Dean of Research
9. **Principal Investigator**: Faculty or equivalent who represents the team participating in the research project and is supervising the team.
10. **Co-investigator**: Faculty or equivalent who works in a team of researchers on a particular research project.
11. **The Centre**: The University's Research Centre and Language Centre
12. **The Research Council**: The Research Council in the Sultanate
**Abbreviations and Definitions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADPSR</td>
<td>Assistant Dean for Postgraduate Studies and Research in a College.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-I</td>
<td>Co-investigator</td>
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<td>Co-PI</td>
<td>Co-principal investigator</td>
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<td>CS</td>
<td>Consultancy service</td>
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<td>CRC</td>
<td>College Research Committee</td>
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<td>Dean</td>
<td>Dean of a College/Research</td>
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<td>Director</td>
<td>Director of a Research Centre</td>
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<td>DVCPSR</td>
<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Postgraduate Studies &amp; Research</td>
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<td>EG</td>
<td>External grant</td>
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<td>HoD</td>
<td>Head of a Department in a College</td>
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<td>IG</td>
<td>Internal grant</td>
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<td>IP</td>
<td>Intellectual property</td>
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<td>JG</td>
<td>Joint grant</td>
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<td>PI</td>
<td>Principal investigator</td>
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<td>Project</td>
<td>An approved research proposal or consultancy request</td>
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<td>PSR</td>
<td>Postgraduate Studies and Research</td>
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<td>TRC</td>
<td>The Research Council</td>
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<td>RCAC</td>
<td>Research Centre Administrative Committee</td>
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<td>Sponsor</td>
<td>An organisation or individual from the private or public sector inside or outside the Sultanate of Oman, which provides financial support for research or consultancy activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sponsor-Focal Point</td>
<td>The representative of the sponsor, who coordinates with SQU the initiation and management of research or consultancy activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>HMTF</td>
<td>His Majesty’s Trust Fund Grants</td>
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Chapter Two

Research and Consultancy Funding Schemes

Sources of Research Funding

Article (3)

Funding is provided for research projects that are expected to lead to original findings and innovative discoveries which in turn lead to generating new knowledge and developing new concepts in line with the research and teaching objectives of the University. Funding comes from the following sources:

1. Internal Grants: the grants that are derived from the University’s annual budget and other internal resources.
2. Joint Grants: the grants for which the University may allocate a budget to match funds from other institutions from inside or outside the Sultanate to form a Joint Grants Fund to jointly support a research program
3. His Majesty’s Trust Fund (HMTF) Grants
4. The Research Council (TRC) Grants
5. External Grants (EG): the grants that are received from sponsors, such as national, regional and international agencies, industry, individuals and philanthropic organisations, to support academic research in certain specific fields.
6. Consultancy Services (CS): contracts and consultancy services funded by government and private sector organizations from inside and outside the Sultanate.

Internal Funding

Article (4)

Internal funding shall follow the criteria below in addition to other criteria determined by the Board of Research.

1 General Criteria

a. **Scientific Merit**
   Contribution of the project to extending existing knowledge and anticipated benefits of such new knowledge.

b. **Methodology**
   Adequacy and efficiency of proposed research methodology for achieving the given objectives, and feasibility of implementation using existing facilities.
c. **Investigators’ Track Record**
   Educational background, research experience, past achievements and productivity of principal investigator and co-investigators.

d. **Roles of Investigators**
   Details of the individual contributions of investigators.

e. **External Collaboration/Co-investigators**
   Commitment from external organizations to collaborate and contribute resources to the project.

f. **Relevance to the Sultanate of Oman**
   Anticipated impact of the proposed work on issues of strategic importance to Oman or Omani society.

g. **Teamwork**
   Inter and intra-departmental collaboration, with the detailed role of each investigator.

h. **Mentoring Young Researchers (Research Assistants)**
   Involvement of junior faculty members, graduate and undergraduate students and the job description of each research assistant.

i. **Implementation Plan**
   The deliverables and timeframe.

j. **Budget Justification**
   Efficient use of existing University equipment and facilities.

k. **New Equipment**
   Importance or long term value of new resources to be acquired.

l. **Non-Disclosure Agreement**
   Signing of a non-disclosure agreement prior to commencement of the project in accordance with the provisions of the research contract or agreement.

2 **Additional Criteria**
   In addition to the aforementioned criteria, the following additional criteria are considered:

   a. **Joint Grants**
      1. There should be a Co-PI from the collaborating institution, which has an agreement with SQU.
      2. The roles of investigators at each institution should be detailed.

   b. **HM Trust Fund Grants**
      1. The project should be multidisciplinary and preferably involve inter-college collaboration.
      2. The project should make an important contribution to the socio-economic development of the Sultanate.
c. The Research Council Grants
The criteria will be set by the Research Council and formalized in a contract which may be formalised in a Research Agreement between the investigator(s) and The Research Council.

d. External Grants
The criteria will be set by the funding agency and formalized in a contract which may be formalised in a Research Agreement.

e. Consultancy Services
The criteria for performing a consultancy will depend on the nature of the service, the deliverables, timeframe, expertise and facilities required. These will all be agreed on with the sponsor.

Approval Procedures

Article (5)
The procedures below, in addition to any other procedures the Board of Research may decide, shall be followed for the approval of research proposals:

1) The Deanship of Research will announce the schedule of events leading to approval of Internal and Joint Grants proposals.

2) By signing the application form (F1), the investigators accept their respective responsibilities towards the proposed activity, respect the intellectual property rights of the University, and declare full compliance with the policies and procedures.

3) The principal and co-investigators shall each complete a Personal Data form F2, attached to these regulations.

4) The proposal shall be submitted to the HoD for endorsement and forwarding to the CRC. By signing, the HoD confirms that investigator's time, departmental space, and other necessary departmental facilities are available to support the proposed activity.

5) The ADPSR shall submit the recommendations of the CRC to the Dean of the College for endorsement and then to the Dean. The Director of the Centre shall endorse the Center’s Advisory or Administrative Board recommendation, whichever is applicable, and forward it to the Dean.

6) The Dean shall coordinate the review process with external reviewers.

7) For HM Trust Fund Grants, the University shall solicit reviews for the proposals from specialized reviewers. The principal investigator may be asked to make an oral presentation on the project.
8) For Joint Grant proposals (JG), the Dean shall follow the procedure agreed on with the other institution. The principal investigator may be asked to make an oral presentation.

9) The Dean shall forward the complete applications to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for approval.

10) Activity codes shall be assigned by the Deanship of Research to the approved projects. Rejected proposals will also be coded and archived in the Research Management System (RMS).

11) The Dean informs the principal investigator of the decision on their research project with a copy to the ADPSR in the relevant College or Centre.

12) For the Research Council Grants, the aforementioned procedures shall apply in addition to the decisions of the Research Council on approving research proposals to be funded by the Research Council.

13) After the Research Council's approval of the research projects submitted to it, an agreement shall be signed between TRC and SQU to administer the project's budget.

14) For consultancy services, the following shall be considered:
   a. The PI may discuss the consultancy activity informally with the sponsor.
   b. A contract with the agency requesting the service shall be signed prior to doing the service.
   c. Costs of SQU personnel offering the service shall be stated and these include the cost of consultancy services in lieu of the time spent by SQU personnel working on that activity, in addition to the University charges overhead for using its name, personnel and facilities in accordance with the provisions of these regulations. These costs do not include the use of specialized equipment that the service may require.
Chapter Three
Responsibilities

Article (6)
In addition to the responsibilities stated in the Law and its executive regulations and the decisions issued thereunder, each party shall be responsible for implementing the tasks assigned to them as follows:

1 Principal Investigator (PI)
The PI shall:
1) Initiate the research proposal/consultancy service, and show the importance of the research proposal/consultancy service after obtaining the approval of the HoD or Director of the Centre.
2) Manage the project on a daily basis, including expenditure and maintain an up-to-date record of receipts/invoices.
3) Exercise safety and quality control to ensure delivery of all required outcomes to the satisfaction of both sponsor and University, and to bring the project to a successful conclusion on time.
4) Ensure that any intellectual property arising from research projects is reported to the Deanship of Research.
5) Submit progress reports as required.
6) Submit a final report with a detailed expenditure account.

2 Co-investigator (Co-I)
The Co-I shall:
1) Participate in the initiation of the research proposal/consultancy request.
2) Agree with the PI on his/her role in the execution of the project.
3) Obtain endorsement of his/her HoD.
4) Conduct the tasks he/she committed himself/herself to.

3 Head of Department (HoD)
The Head of Department shall:
1) Review the research proposals/consultancy request submitted by departmental staff.
2) Ensure that optimum resources are available for the proposed research proposals/consultancy services.
3) Endorse the proposed research and consultancy services.
4) Ensure that approved projects are planned and performed in accordance with policies and procedures, while committing the required resources and personnel.
5) Ensure that researchers adhere to safety measures and regulations.
6) Encourage the participation of new academic staff in new research proposals.

4 Assistant Dean for Postgraduate Studies and Research (ADPSR)
The ADPSR in a college shall:
1) Represent the Dean of the College when requested.
2) Update the Dean on all matters related to research by regular reporting.
3) Coordinate research activities in the College.
4) Provide the communication link between the College and the Deanship of Research.
5) Provide leadership for the CRC.
6) Submit CRC recommendations to the College Board.
7) Ensure that all IG, JG and HMTF progress and final reports are reviewed by the CRC and approved by the College Board.
8) Keep an inventory of research facilities and activities in the College.

5 Dean of College
The Dean of the College shall:
1) Oversee the research activities at the College.
2) Endorse CRC recommendations for research proposals/consultancy services, following the College Board recommendation and forwarding these recommendation to the DVCPSR.
3) Provide administrative support for approved research projects.

6 Director of Research Centre
The Director of a Research Centre, upon advice from the Research Centre Administrative Committee, shall:
1) Oversee the research activities at the centre.
2) Endorse research proposals/consultancy services following the Centre's Advisory or Administrative Committee, whichever is applicable.
3) Recommend to the DVCPSR, participation of centre personnel in proposed research projects.
4) Ensure that approved research projects and consultancy services are planned and performed in accordance with these policies and procedures, while committing required personnel and resources.
5) Provide support for the implementation of approved research projects/consultancy services.
6) Upon departure of an investigator, consult with the principal investigator and sponsor to select a suitable substitute.
7) Ensure that the RCAC reviews all new research proposals.
8) Ensure that all new research applications are complete in accordance with the research regulations.
9) Be a communication link between the DVCPSR office and its units and the centre’s PIs and Co-Is.

10) Ensure that all research progress and final reports are reviewed by the RCAC.

11) Provide administrative support for approved research projects and, consultancy services, and coordinate with colleges and other research centres taking part in the same research project.

7 Dean of Research
The Dean of Research shall:

1) Assist the DVC-PSR to develop and implement strategies to enhance research productivity at SQU.
2) In consultation with colleges and centers, identify research priorities and enhance inter-disciplinary research efforts at SQU.
3) Encourage research leading to innovation and entrepreneurship.
4) Raise external funding to support research at the University.
5) Coordinate reviews of research proposals for financial support from internal and external grants, and HM’s fund for Strategic Research.
6) Facilitate negotiations of contracts between SQU personnel and external agencies.
7) Provide regular reports to the DVC-PSR on the overall research profile of the University, including key metrics for research performance of projects.
8) Maintain and update web-based resources for information related to research activity and achievements.
9) Chair sub-committees within the Deanship.
10) Coordinate a program for distinguished researchers to visit SQU.
11) Engage staff of the highest calibre appropriate to their role in supporting research and outreach.
12) Promote ethical research practices at SQU by increasing awareness of relevant codes of conduct such as Human Scientific Ethics and Animal Ethics.
13) Act as focal point at SQU for liaison with the Research Council.
14) Undertake other assigned activities.

8 Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Postgraduate Studies and Research (DVCPSR)
The DVCPSR shall:

1) Oversee research activities in the University.
2) Determine strategies for SQU research policy implementation.
3) Approve research projects and consultancy requests.
4) Report research related issues annually to the Vice-Chancellor.
5) Oversee the implementation of research regulations.
6) Issue necessary instructions related to the procedures of approving research projects and consultancy services.
9 Deanship of Research
The Deanship of Research has three departments that are relevant to these regulations: the Research Department, the Innovation Affairs Department and the Academic Publications and Outreach Department. The following is a description of the responsibilities of the Research Department and the Innovation Affairs Department:

9.1 The Research Department
This Department shall:
1) Coordinate the review of research proposals.
2) Review research agreements with sponsors and obtain approval of the DVCPSR
3) Maintain a database of research and consultancy activities.
4) Maintain an inventory of capital equipment acquired by research projects and contracts.
5) Acquire and disseminate information on external funding agencies.
6) Facilitate communication between researchers and sponsors of research.
7) Monitor the progress of research projects and consultancy services and submit reports, through the Dean, to the DVCPSR

9.2 Innovation Affairs Department
This Department shall:
1) Develop, implement and evaluate policies, procedures and practices of innovation.
2) Develop an intellectual property culture and awareness of the importance of innovation, patent registration, marketing and commercialization through proper licensing agreements.
3) Provide legal support for confidentiality and non-disclosure agreements.
4) Coordinate with external innovation organizations.
5) Coordinate the IP protection process and maintain an up-to-date database for all University IP.
6) Liaise with principal investigators to provide support on IP related matters.
7) Support student innovation initiatives based on recommendations from the Dean and the DVCPSR.

10 Board of Research
The Board of Research shall:
1) Formulate criteria to maintain the academic standards of research.
2) Set future plans for research.
3) Propose the periodic review of research regulations.
4) Look into and express views on the research funding system.
5) Review the budget estimate for research.
6) Review the annual report on research.
7) Set policies and regulations for innovation

11 College Research Committee
The CRC shall:
1) Review research proposals.
2) Prioritize proposals recommended for funding.
3) Monitor approved research projects until completion.
4) Recommend suspension or withdrawal of approval for projects which do not comply with the approved research protocol.
5) Keep a record of all rejected proposals.
6) Report its recommendations to the College Board to take necessary action.

12 Research Centre Administrative Committee
The RCAC shall:
1) Review all activities of the Research Centre at least once a year.
2) Review and endorse research proposals and requests for consultancy services.
3) Actively participate in and support all major activities of the Centre (i.e. conferences, seminars, workshops etc).
4) Review the Center's strategic plans and submit recommendations on them.
5) Review the annual budget proposal and recommend revisions as appropriate.
6) Review the draft annual report and provide positive feedback for improvement.
7) Help raise awareness of the Centre and its activities at national, regional and international levels.
Chapter Four
Budgeting

Budget Estimation

Article (7)
The PI shall identify which of the budget items listed below is applicable to the project. Normally, no additional funds are granted once the research proposal has been approved.

(a) Capital Equipment
The following shall be considered when requesting capital equipment:

1) In cases where the specified equipment is available at one of the colleges/research centres, the proposal shall justify the request for purchase of additional items.
2) Capital equipment items acquired for consultancy services and other projects shall become the property of the University.
3) The Deanship of Research shall enter the equipment into the inventory.
4) The equipment shall be put under the responsibility of the department or research centre that initiated the project, including responsibility for operation and maintenance.
5) The home department shall make equipment available for loan to other research centres or departments, but may charge service fees for usage to cover the costs of maintenance and replacement. The cost will depend on the type of equipment, consumables needed for its operation and other service charges. The costs shall be covered by the research or consultancy funds.

(b) Use of University Facilities
This is to compensate the department or research centre in charge of existing facilities and equipment for the cost of maintenance and replacement plus any expenses related to the use of the same.

(c) Recurrent Items
This includes all items to be purchased or consumed specifically for the project, such as consumable materials and disposable instruments.

(d) Computing costs
This includes specialised software and hardware purchases and online subscriptions to electronic databases.

(e) Printing, Publications & IP Protection
This includes the costs of printing study reports, scientific books, time-limited journal subscriptions, protecting any generated IP, and getting research results published.

(f) Insurance
This covers the cost of insuring personnel and material employed for the project.

(g) Miscellaneous
This includes items not belonging to any of the above cost categories.

(h) SQU Personnel Costs
The following shall be considered during the estimation process:

1) Personnel cost for manpower shall include university, college, centre and department overheads.
2) Personnel costs shall be agreed with the sponsor up-front.
3) Actual time spent shall be recorded on a weekly timesheet by each SQU staff member to form the basis for invoicing the sponsor on the SQU personnel costs, and calculating the portion to be paid to SQU personnel.
4) SQU personnel may not undertake paid consultancy work (including overtime) in excess of 10 hours per week. If this limit is to be exceeded approval must be obtained to use consultancy funds to cover replacement staff.
5) Consultancy work will be based on hourly minimum rates as indicated in Table 1 for various personnel categories, including overheads.
6) The University charges overhead for using its name, personnel and facilities. This does not include the use of specialized equipment.
7) Government organizations and other public organizations may be exempted from University overhead charges.
8) The sums are distributed among personnel working in the consultancy service, the Department and the College, the Centre and the University as indicated in Table 2.

(i) Consultancy Costs Administration
College and departmental shares of consultancy costs shall be administered by the College Board and the Department Board respectively.

(j) Cost of Contracted Personnel
All contracted personnel costs shall be included upfront; this shall be the responsibility of the PI. The following shall be maintained throughout the duration of the project:

1) Contracted personnel shall cover research assistants, post-doctoral fellows and other jobs required to provide support for the project.
2) Availability of funds in the project.
3) A contract agreement form shall be used for contracting any personnel.
4) If a non-Omani staff member needs to be contracted, the appropriate form shall give reasons for not hiring an Omani.
5) SQU students will be given priority when employing research assistants.
6) University non-academic staff and/or students may also be contracted for specific tasks on an ad hoc basis.

7) Personnel employment shall be in one of the following categories:
   a. Full time: shall work not less than seven (7) hrs/day and will be paid a monthly-fixed lump sum amount
   b. Part time: shall work defined hrs/day, or days/week, but less than full time and be paid a monthly-fixed lump sum amount.
   c. On-Request: shall work upon the request of the PI; unspecified hrs/day, or days /week. On-request research assistants can be contracted to do specific tasks and paid after performing the task.

8) For expatriates, the contract shall specify clearly whether the employee shall be granted housing, medical care, children’s school expenses or any other benefits.

9) Contracted personnel shall be granted access to University facilities as appropriate in accordance with the regulations.

10) Contracted personnel shall complete departure clearance procedures before final departure.

11) Expatriate contracts shall be signed after the administrative procedures have been finalized with the Personnel Affairs Department.

(k) Student Training

Scholarships should be an important component of research grants and consultancies.

(l) Training and Research Visits

Approval of such training and/or research visits shall be subject to the following:

1) Investigators may apply for funds in the project budget to travel or acquire training related to their project.

2) Travel expenses shall cover costs of transportation, registration, subsistence and per diem allowances.

3) Conference attendance shall not be included while budgeting for internal grant projects; instead this shall be obtained from the central conference budget.

(m) Consultants

When consultants and visiting researchers are needed for scientific advice, improved implementation of research, and technology transfer, the following conditions shall be maintained in hiring a consultant for a research project:

1) The proposal shall clearly indicate the consulting period.

2) Description of the consultant’s task shall be outlined in the proposal.

3) The allowable consultancy visit shall normally be one week; this can be extended only if it is deemed necessary, and for this extension a prior approval of the DVCPSR’s must be obtained.
4) Consultant and/or visiting researcher’s travel expenses (airfare and per diem) shall be covered by the project.

**(n) External Co-investigators/Collaborators**

New proposals can seek external collaborators, where appropriate. When visiting SQU, such co-investigators/collaborators shall:

1) Be entitled to 50% of the allowance paid to a consultant.
2) Duration of stay per visit will be determined by the needs of the project execution.

**(o) Contract Work**

1) Contracted work for any company or personnel shall be signed for using appropriate forms.
2) SQU contracting rules and regulations shall be observed.
3) The Deanship of Research shall obtain legal advice for any contract terms and conditions.

**(p) Research Project Construction**

1) Any construction made within the University’s vicinity for a research project shall be in accordance with the University construction specifications and standards.
2) Approval of the Technical Affairs Department shall be obtained for any research project construction within the University.
3) All project construction shall be the University property once the project is completed.

**Article (8) Budget Reallocation**

The following shall be implemented for reallocation applications:

1) The PI may apply to reallocate fund distribution from one item to another within an IG, JG and HMTF research project.
2) Reallocation requests for EG and RCG are made to the Deanship of Research and, where applicable, the sponsor.

**Article (9) Petty Cash**

1) Each year the DVCPSR shall determine the amount allocated to each research project and specifies an upper limit on the cost of a single purchase.
2) Research projects shall be granted a lump sum amount at the start of the financial year for use as petty cash to meet urgent research requirements.
3) The PI shall be responsible for petty cash expenditures and may obtain cash advances with the approval of the ADPSR, providing receipts for all purchases made under the project.
4) Periodically, the Deanship of Research shall reconcile against the petty cash expenses, by debiting the amounts spent from the respective
research project accounts, and then reimbursing the same amounts to the petty cash account.

5) At the end of the financial year any remaining petty cash shall be returned to the Deanship of Research under the project budget.

Article (10) Reporting

Principal investigators shall submit final reports for all funded research projects and consultancies. For multiyear projects, the release of the next year budget requires the approval of the progress report for the previous year. The procedure for the processing and approval of progress reports as well as final reports are summarized below.

1 Progress Reporting

1) Progress reports are due annually or as specified in the contract with the funding agency. Progress reports shall be in the format outlined on the Progress Report forms set by the Deanship of Research. Other formats may be agreed on with the funding agency. The reports shall include the following:
   a. Achievements over the previous year with respect to the stated goals and milestones.
   b. How the execution conforms to the proposed schedule.
   c. Deviations from original objectives and execution plan.
   d. Any difficulties and challenges encountered.
   e. Expenditure as per the approved budget.

2) Activation of the second and following annual budgets shall be subject to submission and acceptance of the annual progress reports.

3) The CRC/RCAC shall summarize the evaluation of the progress report using evaluation forms and shall submit its recommendations to the Deanship of Research.

4) Progress reports may be returned to the PI for revision.

5) The Deanship of Research shall submit a summary of progress reports to the DVCPSR to take appropriate action.

6) The DVCPSR may devise other or additional procedures for the approval of progress reports.

7) For external grants, Research Council grants or consultancy requests, the PI shall abide by the contract with the funding agencies and submit appropriate progress reports to the Deanship of Research through the ADPSR/Director, while honouring any confidentiality agreement.
2 Final Reports
1) Upon completion of a project, the PI shall submit a detailed final report using the Final Report form or any other format agreed on with the funding agency. The Final report shall cover the following:
   a. Project achievements against the approved goals.
   b. Deviations from approved objectives.
   c. Problems encountered during the project execution.
   d. Publications, and/or intellectual property resulting from the project.
   e. External support and collaboration.
   f. Actual versus planned expenditure.
2) A soft as well as a hard copy shall be submitted to the CRC/RCAC, which shall evaluate the report and submit its recommendation to the Deanship of Research.
3) The Deanship of Research shall submit a summary of final reports to the DVCPSR to take appropriate action.
4) The DVCPSR may devise a different procedure for the evaluation of final reports.
5) For external grants, Research Council grants or consultancy requests, the PI shall abide by the contract with the funding agencies and submit an appropriate copy of the final report to the Deanship of Research through the ADPSR/Director, while honouring any confidentiality agreement.
6) Failure to submit a final report may exclude the PI research from funding opportunities in the future.

Article (11) Release Time and Travel
A department may grant its staff involved in research/consultancy release time from their normal teaching duties to work on research projects. Such time may be used for study visit, training and conference attendance, under the following conditions:
1) Normal departmental duties shall be continued without conflict, as determined by the respective HoD.
2) Any fees, travel expenses and cost of substitute staff shall be paid from the project budget.
3) Applicable University rules and policies concerning travel for training, exchange visits, research leave or conference attendance shall be respected.
4) Upon return, the staff member shall submit a report, highlighting the main technical achievements and findings of the trip, with supporting information (e.g. conference proceedings, presented papers, etc.).
Article (12) IP and Publication

1) For consultancy requests, publication of any research results requires the sponsor's approval, unless the contract stipulates otherwise. Such approval shall be sought via the Innovation Affairs Department.

2) Publications shall acknowledge the support, financial and otherwise, received from the University and/or the sponsor.

3) In case the results contain intellectual property (IP), which is considered by the University and/or the sponsor to be of substantial commercial value, no publication clearance shall be granted before assessing the option of seeking IP protection through the Innovation Affairs Department.

4) The PI shall complete the “Confidential Invention Disclosure”. Absolute confidentiality is essential to safeguard future IP rights of the University and sponsor.

5) More information on IP policies and procedures can be obtained from the Deanship of Research.

Article (13) Equipment

All equipment purchased with research or consultancy funds is the property of the University. It should be labelled and inventoried as such at the time of purchase.
Chapter Five
Final Provisions

Code of Conduct

Article (14)
Investigators should be aware of and observe the well known universal code of conduct of research activities, and SQU guidelines on:
1) Research ethics
2) Bioethics
3) Animal care and use and
4) Medical ethics.

All proposals involving experimentation with laboratory animals and human subjects should obtain clearances from appropriate University ethics committees prior to experimentation.

Coding of Projects

Article (15)
Every project (approved research proposal or consultancy request) shall be assigned a unique SQU code by the Deanship of Research for administrative and finance purposes, as per the coding scheme given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Activity</th>
<th>College or DVC-PSR</th>
<th>Department or Research Centre</th>
<th>Starting Year</th>
<th>Serial Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aa /</td>
<td>ccc /</td>
<td>dddd /</td>
<td>Yy /</td>
<td>Nn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Article (16)
The two-character coding of the activity type (aa) is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Code</th>
<th>Activity Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HMTF</td>
<td>HM Research Trust Fund Grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRC</td>
<td>The Research Council Grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IG</td>
<td>Internal Grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG</td>
<td>External Grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JG</td>
<td>Joint Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>Consultancy Service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Article (17)
The Deanship of Research shall determine convenient codes for each college, research centre and department. The following example illustrates the coding process:

“HMTF/ENG/MIED/03/05” represents a research project from HM Research Trust Fund (HMTF); the principal investigator works at the College of ENGineering, Mechanical & Industrial Engineering Department; the project started in year 2003 and is the 5th project for that year in this category in that department.

Tables

Table 1: Normal rates for SQU personnel costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SQU Personnel Category</th>
<th>Hourly Rate (RO)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor or equivalent</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor or equivalent</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor or equivalent</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer or equivalent</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrator or equivalent</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Assistant/ Other support staff</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Partitioning of personnel charges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beneficiary</th>
<th>Allocations (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investigators</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College/DVCPSR</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department/Centre</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>