



**SINDH HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
GOVERNMENT OF SINDH**

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NOTIFICATION

Ref. No. CIEC-SHEC/FRAMEWORKS/2026/3864: In pursuance to the decision made in the 29th meeting of the Sindh Higher Education Commission held on 02nd May 2026, the approved Framework attached herewith is hereby notified for launching new Degree Programme(s) to be mandatorily implemented by all the public sector Institutions chartered by Government of Sindh, with immediate effect, before launching a new degree Programme.

**BY THE ORDERS OF
SINDH HIGHER EDUCATION
COMMISSION**

Ref. No. CIEC-SHEC/FRAMEWORKS/2026/3864:

Karachi Date: 13th July 2026

A copy is forwarded for information to:

- 1) All the Concerned Institutions in Sindh
- 2) P.S to the Chairperson, Sindh Higher Education Commission, Govt. of Sindh.
- 3) P.S to the Chairman, CIEC, Sindh Higher Education Commission, Govt. of Sindh.
- 4) P.S to the Secretary, Sindh Higher Education Commission, Govt. of Sindh.
- 5) P.S to the Secretary, Universities & Boards Department, Govt. of Sindh.


(SARFRAZ ALI SHAHANI)
(SUPERINTENDENT /
SECRETARY MIT)

FRAMEWORK FOR LAUNCHING NEW DEGREE PROGRAMME(S) BY A UNIVERSITY, DEGREE-AWARDING INSTITUTE, RELEVANT CAMPUSES OR AFFILIATED COLLEGES (DESIGN CRITERIA AND DOCUMENTATION STANDARDS)

1. Preliminary

1.1 This document is issued by the Sindh HEC (for Affiliation of Colleges by Universities and DAIs) Framework, 2026 (the "*Framework*"), and shall be read as part thereof for all purposes.

1.2 This framework sets out, in consolidated narrative form, the substantive criteria against which a proposed new degree programme shall be evaluated, and the documentation required for submission, supplementing the procedural sequence prescribed under **Annexure-A (Process and Documentation Requirements)**.

1.3 The objective of this Framework is to ensure academic relevance, regulatory compliance, financial sustainability, and societal impact in respect of every new degree programme established by an existing University, Degree-Awarding Institution ("*DAI*"), relevant Campus, or an affiliated college within the jurisdiction of the Sindh Higher Education Commission ("*Sindh HEC*").

2. Approval Process

An institution proposing a new degree programme shall, prior to filing an application for a No Objection Certificate ("*NOC*") with Sindh HEC, complete the following stages sequentially, in accordance with the detailed procedure and documentary requirements prescribed in **Annexure A**:

- **Concept Note** prepared by the concerned department.
- **Internal Review** by the Faculty Board and Academic Council.
- **Evaluation by the Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC)** for compliance with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and accreditation standards.
- **Approval by the University Syndicate/Senate**.
- **Submission to the Regulatory/Accrediting Body** (for example, HEC, PEC, or PMC).
- **Final Notification and Admission Launch**, which shall follow only upon receipt of the *NOC* from Sindh HEC.

3. Criteria for Establishment of a New Degree Programme

Every proposed degree programme shall be assessed against each of the following ten criteria. An application that fails to satisfy any criterion below, or fails to furnish the

corresponding evidence prescribed at **Clause 4**, shall not be processed further by **Sindh HEC**.

3.1 Strategic Relevance

- Alignment with the university's vision and national priorities.
- Avoidance of unnecessary duplication of programmes within the region.
- Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

3.2 Market Demand and Employability

- Evidence from market surveys, employer consultations, and tracer studies.
- Clear employability and entrepreneurship pathways for graduates.
- Endorsement by relevant industry or professional bodies.

3.3 Academic and Curricular Strength

- Defined Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) aligned with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).
- Curriculum benchmarking against leading international universities.
- A balanced structure comprising theory, practicals, research, and internships.
- Credit hours and assessment aligned with HEC/PEC Framework.

3.4 Faculty and Human Resources

- Minimum number of PhD faculty in the relevant field, as prescribed by the relevant accreditation council(s) and HEC/Sindh HEC.
- Student–faculty ratio within prescribed limits (typically not exceeding **1:20 for undergraduate and 1:10 for postgraduate programmes**).
- Evidence of continuous faculty development and training.

3.5 Infrastructure and Facilities

- Classrooms, laboratories, studios, and IT facilities proportionate to student intake.
- Adequate library resources and digital access.
- Specialized equipment, where applicable, with a maintenance plan.

3.6 Research and Innovation

- Research integration at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.
- Collaboration opportunities with industry and funding agencies.
- Establishment of innovation/entrepreneurship laboratories.

3.7 Financial Viability

- A business plan with projected revenues, costs, and break-even analysis.
- Identified sources of funding, including tuition fees, grants, endowments, and partnerships.

- Long-term sustainability without compromising academic quality.

3.8 Regulatory and Accreditation Compliance

- Adherence to the requirements of HEC, PEC, PMC, NCEAC, or the relevant accrediting authority, as applicable.
- Compliance with minimum credit-hour requirements, the curriculum framework, and faculty standards.
- A clear admission policy and student evaluation methodology.
- A documented student grievance mechanism and academic integrity policy, in compliance with **HEC and Sindh HEC guidelines**.

3.9 Quality Assurance

- Review by the Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC).
- A documented system for course and programme evaluation by students, alumni, and employers.
- Regular review cycles, not less frequently than once every **three (3) to five (5) years**, with mandatory mid-cycle progress review at **year 2.5**.

3.10 Social Impact and Inclusivity

- The programme is designed to benefit society and support regional development.
- An inclusive admission policy supporting underrepresented groups.
- Integration of sustainability, ethics, and social responsibility within the curriculum.

4. Documentation Required for Submission

An application for establishment of a new degree programme shall be accompanied by the following documents, each addressed to the satisfaction of the criteria at

Clause 3:

1. Concept note and justification.
2. Market demand and feasibility report.
3. Detailed curriculum with Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs), Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs), and assessment methods.
4. Faculty list with qualifications and curricula vitae (CVs).
5. Infrastructure and laboratory details.
6. Business/financial plan.
7. Endorsement by the Academic Council and the Syndicate/Senate.
8. Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) compliance report.

4.1 Sindh HEC shall not entertain an application that omits any document specified above, save where Sindh HEC, for reasons recorded in writing, permits submission of equivalent evidence in lieu of a specified document.

5. Post-Approval Monitoring

1. The first external review of the programme shall be conducted after two (2) years of launch.
2. The institution shall furnish annual reporting on intake, graduation, employability, and quality indicators.
3. Accreditation, where applicable, shall be renewed after the initial three (3) to five (5) year cycle, and at corresponding intervals thereafter.
4. The institution shall submit an **exit survey report** for graduating students, including feedback on curriculum relevance, faculty quality, and facility adequacy, to be reviewed by Sindh HEC.

6. General

6.1 Nothing in these Framework shall be construed to dispense with any requirement of the Higher Education Commission (Federal), the Pakistan Engineering Council, the Pakistan Medical Commission, the National Computing Education Accreditation Council, or any other statutory accrediting body having jurisdiction over the discipline concerned.

6.2 For the avoidance of doubt, a No Objection Certificate issued by the Federal Higher Education Commission shall not be treated as a mandatory pre-condition for the grant of provincial affiliation or approval under these Framework. *However, institutions are encouraged to seek Federal HEC NOC concurrently to ensure dual recognition and facilitate graduate mobility.*

6.3 These Framework shall be read together with **Annexure A (Process and Documentation Requirements)**, which prescribes the procedural sequence, stage-wise approvals, and tabulated documentary requirements corresponding to the criteria set out herein.

6.4 Sindh HEC may, from time to time, amend the criteria and documentation requirements prescribed under this Annexure by notification, without recourse to amendment of the body of the Framework. All amendments shall be published on the Sindh HEC website and communicated to all registered institutions at least thirty (30) days before coming into effect.

Process and Documentation Requirements for Launching New Degree Programmes(s) by a University, Degree- Awarding Institute, relevant Campus(es) or Affiliated Colleges

1. Preliminary

1.1 This Framework is issued as "Framework for launching new degree programme(s) by a chartered University / Degree Awarding Institute (DAI) or affiliated institutions", and shall be read as part thereof for all purposes.

1.2 This Framework prescribes the mandatory internal approval process, the supporting documentation, the program design and impact criteria, and the post-approval monitoring requirements applicable to the establishment of a new degree programme by an existing affiliated college, degree-awarding institution ("*DAI*"), or university within the jurisdiction of the Sindh Higher Education Commission ("*Sindh HEC*").

1.3 The objective of this Framework is to ensure that every new degree programme satisfies the tests of academic relevance, regulatory compliance, financial sustainability, and societal impact before a No Objection Certificate ("*NOC*") is issued by Sindh HEC and before admissions are launched.

1.4 Where this Framework is silent, the Charter Inspection and Evaluation Committee ("*CIEC*") may issue supplementary directions consistent with the Framework.

2. Internal Approval Process — Pre-requisite to NOC Application

An institution proposing to establish a new degree programme shall complete each stage set out in the table below, in sequence, and shall retain the corresponding documentary evidence for production to Sindh HEC/CIEC upon request or as part of the NOC application.

Cl.	Stage of Internal Approval Process (Pre-requisite to NOC Application)	Mandatory Supporting Documents
2.1	Concept Note. Preparation of a concept note by the concerned department, setting out the rationale for the proposed programme.	Concept note and justification.
2.2	Internal Review. Review of the concept note by the Faculty Board and the Academic Council of the institution.	Minutes of the meeting and approval letters/notifications from the Faculty Board and the Academic Council.
2.3	QEC Evaluation. Evaluation by the Quality Enhancement Cell (" <i>QEC</i> ") of the institution for compliance with the National Qualifications Framework (" <i>NQF</i> ") and applicable accreditation standards.	(i) Evaluation report of the QEC confirming compliance with the NQF and accreditation standards; (ii) Documented system for course and programme evaluation by students, alumni, and employers; and (iii) Confirmation of regular review cycles, to be conducted not less frequently than once

		every three (3) to five (5) years, with a mandatory mid-cycle progress review at year 2.5.
2.4	Approval by Syndicate/Senate. Formal approval of the programme by the University Syndicate or Senate, as applicable.	Minutes of the meeting and the approval letter issued by the University Syndicate/Senate, including quorum verification and voting record.
2.5	Submission to Regulatory/Accrediting Body. Submission of the approved proposal to the relevant regulatory or accrediting body (for example, HEC, PEC, PMC, or NCEAC, as applicable to the discipline).	(i) Evidence of adherence to the requirements of HEC, PEC, PMC, NCEAC, or the relevant accrediting authority, as applicable; (ii) Evidence of compliance with minimum credit-hour requirements, the prescribed curriculum framework, and faculty standards; (iii) A clear admission policy and student evaluation methodology; and (iv) A documented student grievance mechanism and academic integrity policy, in compliance with HEC and Sindh HEC guidelines.
2.6	Final Notification and Admission Launch. Issuance of final notification of the programme and launch of admissions, which shall occur only after the institution has obtained the NOC from Sindh HEC.	Admissions shall not be launched, and no notification shall be issued, prior to receipt of the NOC from Sindh HEC.

3. Mandatory Requirements for Establishment of a New Degree Programme

No application for a new degree programme shall be considered complete unless it is accompanied by documentary evidence satisfying each of the mandatory requirements set out below.

3.1 Need Assessment — Market Demand and Employability

Cl.	Mandatory Requirement	Required Documentary Evidence
3.1.1	Evidence from market surveys, employer consultations, and tracer studies.	(i) Market survey reports / tracer study reports covering a minimum period of three (3) years; and (ii) Industry feedback forms or surveys.
3.1.2	Clear employability and entrepreneurship pathways for graduates.	(i) Job placement reports; (ii) Entrepreneurship success stories, alumni testimonials, or success stories; and (iii) Industry partnerships or MOUs.
3.1.3	Endorsement by relevant industry or professional bodies.	(i) Letters of endorsement from industry associations or professional bodies; (ii) Membership certificates or proof of affiliation; and (iii) Industry expert feedback or validation.
3.1.4	Avoidance of unnecessary duplication of programmes within the region.	(i) Comparative analysis of existing programmes in the region; (ii) Justification for introducing the new programme; and (iii) Data on market demand for, and supply of, graduates in the region.

3.2 Financial Viability

Cl.	Mandatory Requirement	Required Documentary Evidence
3.2.1	A business plan with projected revenues, costs, and break-even analysis.	(i) Detailed business plan with financial projections for a period of five (5) to ten (10) years; (ii) Revenue and expense projections; (iii) Break-even analysis report; (iv) Cash flow statements; and (v) Sensitivity analysis demonstrating resilience under adverse conditions.
3.2.2	Identified sources of funding (tuition fees, grants, endowments, partnerships) and demonstrated long-term sustainability without compromising academic quality.	(i) Funding proposals or agreements; (ii) Grant award letters or contracts; (iii) Endowment agreements or MOUs; (iv) Partnership agreements or MOUs; (v) Tuition fee structure and justification; and (vi) Budget allocation for academic activities, including faculty development and research.

3.3 Faculty and Human Resources

Cl.	Mandatory Requirement	Required Documentary Evidence
3.3.1	Minimum number of PhD faculty in the relevant field, as prescribed by the relevant accreditation council(s) and HEC/Sindh HEC.	(i) Faculty list with qualifications and detailed curricula vitae (CVs); (ii) Faculty recruitment plan if current staffing is insufficient to meet prescribed minimums; and (iii) Verification of PhD degrees from HEC-recognized institutions.
3.3.2	Student-faculty ratio within prescribed limits (typically not exceeding 1:20 for undergraduate and 1:10 for postgraduate programmes).	(i) Student intake projections; (ii) Faculty strength documentation; and (iii) Ratio calculation worksheet.
3.3.3	Evidence of continuous faculty development and training.	(i) Faculty development plan; (ii) Training records and certificates; (iii) Conference attendance and research participation logs; and (iv) Budget allocation for faculty development activities.

3.4 Infrastructure and Facilities

Cl.	Mandatory Requirement	Required Documentary Evidence
3.4.1	Classrooms, laboratories, studios, and IT facilities proportionate to student intake.	(i) Infrastructure and laboratory details; (ii) Floor plans and capacity calculations; (iii) IT infrastructure specifications; and (iv) Equipment procurement timeline for planned expansions.
3.4.2	Adequate library resources and digital access.	(i) Library collection reports (books, journals, databases); (ii) Digital access plans (for example, online databases, e-books); (iii) Library budget allocation; and (iv) Subscription agreements for digital resources.
3.4.3	Specialized equipment, where applicable, with a maintenance plan.	(i) Inventory of specialized equipment; (ii) Maintenance contracts or service agreements;

	(iii) Calibration and certification records; and (iv) Replacement and upgrade schedule.
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4. Programme Design and Impact Criteria

In addition to the mandatory requirements at Clause 3, every proposed programme shall be assessed against the design and impact criteria set out below.

4.1 Strategic Relevance

Cl.	Programme Design and Impact Criterion	Required Documentary Evidence
4.1.1	Alignment with the university's strategic vision and national priorities.	University strategic plan or vision document, with explicit mapping of the proposed programme to institutional goals.
4.1.2	Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals ("SDGs").	SDG mapping document or report demonstrating how the programme addresses specific SDG targets.

4.2 Academic and Curricular Strength

Cl.	Programme Design and Impact Criterion	Required Documentary Evidence
4.2.1	Defined Programme Learning Outcomes ("PLOs") aligned with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).	Detailed curriculum with PLOs, Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs), assessment methods, and a mapping matrix showing PLO-CLO alignment with assessment rubrics.
4.2.2	Curriculum benchmarking against leading international universities.	Benchmarking report or comparative analysis document, including at least three (3) comparable international programmes.
4.2.3	A balanced structure comprising theory, practicals, research, and internships.	Curriculum structure document or programme outline, with credit hour distribution across theory, practical, research, and internship components.
4.2.4	Credit hours and assessment aligned with HEC and other applicable accreditation council regulations / policies.	Credit hour and assessment policy document, with cross-reference to applicable HEC/accreditation council guidelines.

4.3 Research and Innovation

Cl.	Programme Design and Impact Criterion	Required Documentary Evidence
4.3.1	Integration of research at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.	Research integration plan, including undergraduate research projects, capstone requirements, and postgraduate thesis/dissertation guidelines.
4.3.2	Collaboration opportunities with industry and funding agencies.	Industry partnership or collaboration agreement, and evidence of engagement with funding agencies (grant applications, award letters, or letters of intent).
4.3.3	Establishment of innovation/entrepreneurship laboratories.	Plan for innovation/entrepreneurship laboratory establishment, including budget, equipment list, and proposed industry partnerships.

4.4 Social Impact and Inclusivity

Cl.	Programme Design and Impact Criterion	Required Documentary Evidence
4.4.1	The programme is designed to benefit society and support regional development.	Programme impact assessment report, including stakeholder consultation records and regional development indicators.
4.4.2	An inclusive admission policy supporting underrepresented groups.	Admission policy document, including provisions for gender equity, disability access, and socioeconomic diversity.
4.4.3	Integration of sustainability, ethics, and social responsibility within the curriculum.	Course syllabus or module outline demonstrating such integration, with specific learning outcomes addressing sustainability and ethics.

5. Post-Approval Monitoring

Cl.	Post-Approval Monitoring Requirement
5.1	The first external review of the programme shall be conducted not later than two (2) years after the launch of the programme.
5.2	The institution shall submit annual reports on student intake, graduation rates, employability outcomes, and quality indicators.
5.3	Accreditation, where applicable, shall be renewed following the initial cycle of three (3) to five (5) years, and at corresponding intervals thereafter.
5.4	The institution shall submit an exit survey report for graduating students, including feedback on curriculum relevance, faculty quality, and facility adequacy, to be reviewed by Sindh HEC.

6. General

6.1 Nothing in this Framework shall be construed to dispense with any requirement of the Higher Education Commission (Federal), the Pakistan Engineering Council, the Pakistan Medical Commission, the National Computing Education Accreditation Council, or any other statutory accrediting body having jurisdiction over the discipline concerned.

6.2 For the avoidance of doubt, and consistent with the policy of the Framework, a No Objection Certificate issued by the Federal Higher Education Commission shall not be treated as a mandatory pre-condition for the grant of provincial affiliation or approval under this Framework. However, institutions are encouraged to seek Federal HEC NOC concurrently to ensure dual recognition and facilitate graduate mobility.

6.3 This Framework shall be read together with **Framework for Programme Design Criteria and Documentation Standards**, issued contemporaneously herewith, which sets out the substantive standards referenced in Clauses 3 and 4 above in consolidated narrative form.

6.4 Sindh HEC may, from time to time, amend the Forms and document lists prescribed under this Annexure by notification, without recourse to amendment of the body of the Framework. All amendments shall be published on the Sindh HEC website and communicated to all registered institutions at least thirty (30) days before coming into effect.