

HANDBOOK

OFFICE OF PEOPLE & CULTURE

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Preamble Foreword - Office of People and Culture Philosophy

We welcome you to the Habib University community on behalf of its governors, management, faculty, and staff. We share a commitment to sustaining and developing Habib University as a university preeminent in scholarship, research, and teaching. We dedicate our work lives to preparing students from diverse backgrounds for lives of service through the critical thinking, analytic power, communication, and ethics they will achieve through their hard work at Habib University. A deep, shared commitment to the dignity and worth of every member of the Habib University team grounds and empowers our pursuit of excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service, the principle of “Yohsin”, or “self-cultivation”.

As each member of the community strives for excellence, he or she has the full support of Habib University and our constant regard for the shared commitments and mutual responsibilities that bind us together as a community and team. Habib University will, in turn, thrive and its mission prosper through the dedication and passion of team members inspired by Yohsin’s ideals and their commitment to the highest levels of personal and professional achievement.

Thus, as we begin our journey together, we share with you the University’s pledge to honor the policies set forth in the manual, to work with you and guide you through your career at Habib University, and, in the spirit of Yohsin, to empower you to reach full realization of your talents, realize your potential, and develop personally.

Mutual commitment and shared responsibility bind us together:

What you can expect from Habib University

1. Consistent respect, support, and encouragement for every member of the Habib University community’s individual dignity and value (Yohsin).
2. A stimulating, enriching work environment within which individual achievement is recognized and personal fulfilment supported.
3. A safe workplace free of harassment, intolerance, and disrespect. Open communication, transparent process, and fair, consistent application of all University policies.
4. The highest ethical standards in accord with the spirit of Yohsin and the University’s mission and values.
5. We commit in all our efforts to support and serve the Habib University community, the communities in which we live, and the nation.

What Habib University expects from you

1. Respect for others’ rights and duties, and consistent support for and acknowledgment of every member of the Habib University community’s dignity and value (Yohsin).
2. Faithful observance of all terms of your employment contract and dedication to work of the highest standards which meet or exceeds the University’s established expectations as well as your personal goals.
3. Faithful observance of university policies and clear, honest communication.
4. The highest standards of personal and work ethics.
5. Demonstrated passion in furthering Habib University’s mission and commitment to its values, including service not only to the Habib University community but to the broader community and the nation.

The obligations of the university and its team members mirror and empower one another. As you grow in accomplishment and develop personally, so will Habib University thrive. Your work will be measured and your contribution to our mission valued not only by the important metrics of work goals met and reviews successfully completed, but also by your embrace of Yohsin, your service to society, your passion and commitment, respect for others, and appreciation for the beauty in our world.

Introduction to Staff Manual

This manual acquaints University staff with our employment policies, procedures, standards, and benefits. Employees will find in it answers to many questions about their employment at Habib University. The Staff Manual is not intended to address all cases or answer every question. If you need additional information or have questions after reading the Staff Manual, please consult your supervisor or contact a member of the Office of People and Culture (OPC) team.

This manual establishes official Habib University staff policies and procedures. Staff should refer to the scope applicability statement in each policy for clarification. Additional policies applying to non-staff members of the Habib University community can be found in other University manuals. The manual will be reviewed once in every three years by the Office of People and Culture. In case of any change in an existing policy, it will be in effect immediately.

How to use the Staff Manual

Each policy comprises the following sections. Policies may also contain additional information specific to that particular policy and procedure:

Policy: An introduction to each policy that describes its purpose.

Scope: Defines the area in which each policy applies.

Definitions: A statement of the exact meaning of a word in the context of this Manual.

Eligibility: Establishes the criteria for each policy's applicability to individual members of the Habib University community.

Process: The implementation process for each policy.

Limitation: Principles that define each policy's extent, conditions, and boundaries.

Responsibility: Establishes management responsibility.

Authority for the Office of People and Culture policies

The Vice President, Finance & Operations has approved the policies in this Staff Manual. Habib University's Office of People and Culture is responsible for maintaining these policies.

Distribution of the Staff Manual

The Staff Manual will be issued and maintained via the University's website. Copies of the manual may also be obtained through request by contacting the Office of People and Culture. It is the responsibility of faculty and staff members to familiarize themselves with the policies and provisions in the Staff Manual and stay current with amendments.

Policy Changes

The university's mission and values are expressed through the following policies. Policies may be amended or eliminated in the future to bring policies closer in alignment with the University's mission and values or as practical circumstances change. Employees should refer questions to their supervisor or a member of the Office of People and Culture for assistance with the interpretation of the policies in this Manual.

Editorial Revisions of Policy

The Office of People and Culture, without changing the meaning of any policy approved by the Vice President, Finance & Operations, may edit and revise the publication in the Staff Manual in the following manner:

1. Renumber sections and subparts of sections, chapters, and other subdivisions of the manual;
2. Change the wording of section or subsection headings, delete subsection headings, change and provide new headings for chapters and other subdivisions of the policy;
3. Change capitalization for the purpose of uniformity;
4. Correct typographical or clerical errors as well as errors of additions or omissions;
5. Rearrange sections, combine sections or parts of sections with other sections or parts of sections, divide long sections, and rearrange the order of sections to conform to a logical arrangement of subject matter.

Maintenance of Good Order

Consistent with University policies and regulations and the laws of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, all faculty, employees, and all persons associated with Habib University are required to comply with University policies, regulations, and procedures to maintain order within the University, avoid disruption of the University's operations, and to protect and preserve life and property.

Staff, management, and faculty can assist in keeping our human resources program up-to-date by notifying the University Office of People and Culture when problems arise or improvements can be made in the administration of our human resources policies.

1. Diversity and Equal Opportunity Employment

Policy

Habib University is committed to being a diverse and inclusive community and an equal opportunity employer. The University values and promotes diversity in all aspects of its operations and upholds the principles of fairness, dignity, and respect for all.

The University recognizes the following rights for all current and prospective members of its community:

- To be treated with respect and dignity.
- To be treated fairly in all procedures, evaluations, and decisions.
- To be supported and encouraged to reach their full potential.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- **Employment Context:** All applicants, employees, and individuals working for the University, including members of the Board of Governors and core committees. It covers decisions related to recruitment and selection, promotion, access to training, and employment terms and conditions.

Definitions

- **Diversity** refers to the presence and inclusion of underrepresented groups and individuals protected under civil rights laws. It includes, but is not limited to: age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious beliefs, physical abilities and characteristics, economic background, and lifestyle. *Valuing diversity* means appreciating differences and recognizing that each individual brings unique skills, experiences, and contributions.
- **Equal Opportunity** means eliminating unlawful and unfair direct or indirect discrimination, and ensuring equitable access, treatment, and outcomes by addressing individuals' specific needs.

Implementation and Process

To uphold this policy, all offices and departments of Habib University will endeavor to:

- Promote equality and diversity through internal and external communications.
- Ensure recruitment and selection processes are inclusive and free from discrimination.
- Provide training and development in equality, diversity, and inclusion for all staff and managers.
- Treat all applicants, employees, faculty, and students fairly and based on merit.
- Provide equitable access to the University facilities, and consider reasonable accommodations for diverse needs.
- Maintain a respectful environment free from provocative, offensive, or intimidating language, symbols, or behavior.
- Implement lawful affirmative or positive action where appropriate (e.g., inclusive language in job advertisements to encourage applicants from underrepresented groups).
- Require all contractors and service providers working on behalf of the University to adhere to this policy.

Responsibilities

The Board of Governors of the University has ultimate responsibility for the effective implementation of the Diversity and Equal Opportunity Policy.

The practical application of the policy rests with Senior Managers, including the President and Chancellor, the Registrar and Head of Operations, the Deans, Heads of School, and Directors.

The Director of Academic and Student Affairs is responsible for ensuring that student-related issues are effectively addressed.

The Head of Office of People and Culture is responsible for ensuring staff-related issues are effectively addressed.

2. Employment Categories

Regular Employees

Full-time regular employees: Staff and those employees who work at the University on a full-time basis for at least 52 weeks annually or an equivalent thereof. Full-time employees are eligible for benefits as per their entitlements.

Regular Full-time employees are not permitted to hold another office of profit (another employment), even if payable in kind.

Part-time Employees

Part-time employees are hired and compensated based on number of hours and committed work scope.

Student Employees

Student employees are hired through the Office of Career Services and Student Finance Office in accordance with the policies and procedures of those offices. Student employees are paid through the payroll system as a student employee and are compensated on an hourly basis.

Consultants and Independent Contractors

Services of consultants and independent contractors (non-employees) on a short-term, temporary, or part-time basis may be acquired by the University. A consultant or independent contractor is not an employee.

Grade Structure

The grade structure stated in Table 1 applies to all regular employees of Habib University.

Table 1: Habib University Grade Structure

M1	Officer
M2	Senior Officer
M3	Assistant Manager
M4	Deputy Manager
M5	Manager
M6	Senior Manager
M7	Assistant Director
M8	Director
M9	Senior Director
M10	Vice President

The above grading structure shall also be applicable for all Non-Faculty Management Staff positions assigned as support to the Academic Affairs /Research.

Technical staff (Management positions) assigned to laboratory, university's operating facilities etc. shall be part of this grading structure.

Job Description

Every regular staff position has a job description, prepared and approved by the supervisor and department head, describing the duties, responsibilities, and minimum qualifications for the position. Employees are given a copy of their job description during their orientation period to ensure they understand their job responsibilities.

3. Work Schedules

For Regular and Contractual Employees

The standard work schedule for full-time regular and contractual employees consists of a 40-hour workweek, structured as five 8-hour workdays from Monday to Friday. Additionally, the second Saturday of each month is designated as a working day, resulting in a 48-hour workweek during that particular week. Less than 4 hours a day will be considered as absent. Standard working hours are from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

Part-time regular employees follow a work schedule determined by their supervisor based on the operational needs of the department*. Any deviation from the standard workweek schedule requires prior approval from the employee's supervisor.

During the summer months, departments may adjust standard work hours at their discretion to accommodate seasonal considerations while ensuring continuity of operations.

Process

Late Arrival

A grace period of 15 minutes is allowed; any time in after 9:15 a.m. will be considered late. For employees on flexible working hours (e.g., 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.), arrivals after 8:15 a.m. are considered late.

Early Departure

Employees are expected to complete their full work hours. Time-outs between 3:31 p.m. and 4:45 p.m. (or 3:01 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. for flexi-hours) will be marked as early leave.

Half Day

Time-ins after 10:30 a.m. will be marked as a half-day. For employees on flexible hours, arriving more than one hour after their scheduled start time will also result in a half-day mark. As a general reference, the first half of the workday is from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and arriving between 10:31 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. will be considered a half-day. The second half runs from 1:01 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., and leaving before 3:30 p.m. will also be marked as a half-day.

Combinations

A combination of any three instances of late arrivals or early departures in a week (e.g., two late arrivals and one early departure) will also result in one earned leave deduction. However, up to two instances of late arrivals or early departures (or a mix of one each) are allowed per week without deduction.

* If any employee hours are flexible, the late/early/half-day time changes as a result.

4. Work From Home Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines the framework under which staff members may be permitted to work from home (WFH), with the aim of maintaining operational continuity while supporting employees during situations that may temporarily hinder their ability to be physically present on campus. It recognizes that, under certain circumstances—such as emergencies or medical needs—providing flexibility through remote work can help ensure that responsibilities are fulfilled without compromising individual well-being or team productivity.

This policy ensures a consistent and fair approach to WFH requests, while reinforcing the University's commitment to a supportive and responsive work environment.

Policy Guidelines

Work From Home is a temporary arrangement and may **only** be considered in specific, justified situations. The following scenarios may qualify for WFH:

1. **Emergency Situations:** Unexpected personal or family emergencies that prevent the employee from coming to campus.
2. **Medical Reasons (Long-Term Medical Leave):** If an employee is unable to commute due to a medical condition but is still able to perform work duties from home, WFH may be granted for a defined period. A valid medical certificate must be provided.
3. In case some employee is on leaves, and work requires attention.

Work From Home will **not** be approved for personal travel, recreational purposes, or other non-essential activities.

Approval Process

All WFH requests must be formally submitted and include:

- A written request by the employee
- Endorsement by the employee's Head of Department
- Final approval from the Head of People and Culture

Important Note

Work From Home is **not an entitlement**, but a flexible option granted by University, based on the nature of the request and operational feasibility.

5. Recruitment & Selection

Scope

Applies to all full-time and part-time staff (academic and non-academic).

Responsibilities:

Department Heads: Identify need and initiate SRF

OPC: Manage end-to-end recruitment

Line Managers / HODs: Conduct interviews and evaluations

Candidates: Submit complete applications

Final Selection: In line with the University's authority matrix.

Procedure

Staff Requisition:

Departments initiate hiring through the Staff Requisition Form (SRF):

<https://habibuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/Staff/Pages/Staff-Requisition-Form.aspx>

The SRF must include job details, budget confirmation, justification, and timeline.

No hiring may proceed without an approved SRF.

Approval: Department Head → OPC → Finance → Senior Management

Job Posting & Applications:

OPC posts approved roles on relevant platforms. Applications must be submitted through official channels only.

Screening:

OPC reviews applications between 7 to 14 working days based on qualifications and role fit.

Shortlisting is based strictly on role requirements.

Department provides final shortlist profiles ideally within 3 working days.

Interviews:

OPC coordinates interviews.

Stage 1: Line Manager + OPC (technical assessment)

Stage 2: HOD (fit and alignment)

Stage 3: Assessment (if any)

All interview evaluations are documented. If the candidate is not selected, a second round of shortlisting starts, followed by the same procedure. This may be affected if the parties involved in interviews are on leaves or unavailable due to unforeseen circumstances.

Reference Check:

Conducted for selected candidates. Any adverse findings may impact hiring decisions.

Selection & Offer:

Final selection is based on overall evaluation and role alignment.

Offer is issued within 3 to 5 working days.

Upon acceptance, candidate serves notice period before joining.

Records:

OPC maintains recruitment records as per institutional requirements.

Related Documents

SRF: <https://habibuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/Staff/Pages/Staff-Requisition-Form.aspx>
Interview Evaluation Form: <https://habibuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/Staff/Pages/Interview-Evaluation-Form.aspx>

Limitations

Employment of Family Members

- Related employees shall not be given work assignments that require one related employee to direct, review, or process the work of another, or that permit one to have access to the personal records of the other.
- Related employees cannot have influence over each other's employment, promotion, salary, and other related considerations.
- Similarly, if one employee marries another, both may retain their positions provided neither is in the supervisory/influential capacity for the other and they are not in the same department.

6. Probationary Period

All regular full-time employees from Grade M1 to M5 are required to serve a probationary period of three months (90 days), while employees in Grade M6 and above must complete a probationary period of six months (180 days).

During this period, the supervisor is responsible for closely evaluating the new employee's job performance and supporting their adjustment to the duties and responsibilities of the position. The supervisor should provide appropriate informal and formal feedback, as well as training and coaching, throughout the probationary period.

The probationary period may be extended by up to three months in cases of unsatisfactory performance, excessive absenteeism, or failure to submit the required documentation within the specified timeframe.

Upon satisfactory completion of the probationary period—and after the probationary form has been submitted by the Head of Department and approved by the Head of People & Culture—the employee shall receive a confirmation letter issued by the Office of People & Culture.

Employment during the probationary period may be terminated by either party with seven days' notice for employees in Grades M1 to M5, and fifteen days' notice for employees in Grade M6 and above.

7. Transfer Policy

Policy

This policy outlines the process and conditions under which Habib University staff may apply for internal job opportunities, ensuring transparency, fairness, and alignment with career development goals.

Eligibility Criteria

Staff members are eligible to apply for internal job opportunities after completing **at least one year** in their current role.

Application Process

1. **Approval from Head of Department (HoD):** Before applying, staff must inform their HoD and obtain formal approval.

2. **Submission of Application:** The HoD's approval must be submitted to the **Office of People and Culture (OPC)**. Once approved, staff may proceed to formally apply for the position through the internal job portal.
3. **Selection Process:** If shortlisted, the staff member will be required to go through all stages of the standard recruitment process.
4. **Offer and Transition:**
 - If selected, the offer will be extended by the Office of People and Culture.
 - Upon accepting the offer, the staff member must inform their current HoD and serve a **one-month notice period** within their current department before transitioning.

Post-Transfer Guidelines

Upon joining the new department, the staff member will be required to complete their **probationary period** as defined by their cadre.

In case of a transfer from a **contractual** to a **permanent** position, the staff member's **benefit entitlements will be updated** in accordance with the policies applicable to permanent employees. However, in the case of a transfer between **permanent positions**, the benefit entitlements will **remain unchanged**.

8. Rehiring Policy

Rehiring former employees at Habib University is guided by the following conditions:

- **Non-Regretted Separations:** Individuals who left the University under non-regretted circumstances (e.g., performance concerns, conduct issues) are not eligible for rehire, unless an exception is approved by Vice President Operations and Finance
- **Regretted Separations:** Former employees who resigned under positive or neutral circumstances (regretted separations) are eligible to reapply after a minimum period of 6 months from their last working day.

Payroll Processing

The University operates monthly pay cycles for both regular and part time employees.

Employee records of hours worked are recorded on the *Time Collection System* and compiled by the OPC for verification and processing. The OPC staff consolidates time in and time out data received, and reports of leaves availed during the month, and forwards the *payroll details* to the Finance department by the 20th of each month.

All employees are paid in the first week of the following month.

The Finance Department is responsible for disbursing salary according to the University's pay cycle time.

The direct deposit facility becomes effective after the employee's bank account opening has been processed. Direct deposits through electronic funds transfer are carried out by Finance for all regular employees.

Deductions

Employees are responsible for examining their pay slips. Any discrepancies should be reported immediately to the Finance department. Each paycheck slip will show deductions that apply to any benefit programs, as well as the following deductions:

- Income taxes EOBI
- Provident fund (if applicable)
- Other e.g., Advance salary, P.F. loan deduction, etc.

All regular employees may access their earnings statements/pay slips via their employee user accounts.

Establishing a Grading and Compensation Matrix

For all staff members, there exists a comprehensive Grading & Compensation Matrix. The OPC reviews and recommends compensation levels for different classifications/grades and minimum and maximum salary ranges for each grade. Vice President Operations and Finance establish the official pay ranges of each cadre on recommendation of Office of People and Culture.

Appraisal

Annual salary increases are based on the employee's performance evaluation and the overall performance criteria of the Performance Management System. Annual increments are normally payable on September 1st of the fiscal year.

9. Promotion Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines the eligibility criteria and guiding principles for the promotion of staff members at Habib University. It is designed to ensure a fair, merit-based, and transparent process that recognizes consistent performance, professional growth, and alignment with the University's values and strategic objectives.

Eligibility Criteria for Promotion

To be considered for promotion, staff must meet the following criteria:

- Minimum Years in Current Role:
 - **Officer to Senior Manager level:** Minimum of **2 years** in the current role/cadre.
 - **Senior Manager and above:** Minimum of **3 years** in the current role/cadre.
- Performance Standards:
 - A minimum performance rating of '3 – Meets Expectations' or higher in the last two consecutive annual evaluations.
- Disciplinary Record:
 - No active disciplinary sanctions in the **last one year**.
- Role Readiness:
 - Demonstrated fulfillment of **performance indicators** and **competency requirements** for the next level.
- Impact and Achievements:
 - Proven record of **outstanding achievements**, contributions, or initiatives that have positively impacted the University.

10. Separation Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines the notice period and related procedures for voluntary or involuntary separation from employment at Habib University, ensuring a smooth transition and proper handover of responsibilities.

Policy Guidelines

Probationary Employees

- Employment during the probationary period may be terminated by either party.
- The required notice period is 7 days, unless otherwise stated in the employment contract (e.g., 14 days if specified).

Regular Staff (Post-Probation)

- Grades M1 to M5: Subject to a 1-month notice period.
- Grades M6 and above: Subject to a 2-month notice period.

Contractual Employees

- Required to serve a 15-day notice period in case of resignation.

Early Release

In cases where an employee requests to be released before serving the full notice period, the unserved portion of the notice period will be deducted from the final settlement as a penalty unless exempted by Head of Department and Head of OPC.

11. Clearance Policy

Purpose

The clearance process ensures that all employees formally complete the required exit procedures, including the return of university property and the settlement of any dues or responsibilities, before their separation from the university.

Policy Guidelines

For Regular Employees:

Employees are required to submit a duly filled Clearance Form (<https://habib.edu.pk/intranet/content-types/clearance-form/>) signed by all relevant departments, along with the Zakat Declaration, on their last working day.

The Clearance Form must reflect proper handing over/taking over of responsibilities and university assets.

Upon submission, the Office of People and Culture (OPC) will initiate the clearance process. Final dues will be processed within 20 working days from the last working day.

The following payments (if applicable as per policy) will be made:

- Remaining salary up to the last working day.
- Leave Fare Assistance (LFA) up to the last working day.
- Leave Encashment for earned leaves, up to a maximum of 46 days, calculated in calendar days.
- Provident Fund:
 - Employee's contribution (full)
 - Employer's contribution (as per eligibility and policy)

Note: Employees who resign or are terminated during their probationary period will not be eligible for LFA, leave encashment, or the employer's contribution to the provident fund.

For Contractual Employees:

Contractual employees are also required to submit a duly filled Clearance Form, with all departmental sign-offs and proof of proper handing over/taking over, on their last working day.

12. Benefits Summary

This section provides an overview of Habib University's large portfolio of benefits, designed to meet the diverse needs of Habib University employees.

Habib University's comprehensive General Benefit programs include Leave Benefits, a Health Insurance Plan, a Life Insurance Plan, and a Provident Fund Program.

Detailed information about benefit plans is available at the Office of People & Culture for employee orientation. All employees are encouraged to seek advice or assistance concerning benefit procedures and eligibility.

When information on file in the Office of People and Culture varies from that contained in this handbook, the former will govern in all cases. The University reserves the right to add, change, or remove any of the benefit policies without notice.

a) Leave Benefits

Policy

All staff members are entitled to leave benefits as per their eligibility.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the term 'Leave Benefits' refers to the following:

- **Sick Leave:** Leaves which cover absences resulting from illness or injury of confirmed & designated employees.
- **Casual Leave:** Leave taken by an employee to attend **personal, urgent, or unforeseen matters** that do not fall under planned leave categories like annual/vacation leave or sick leave.
- **Earned Leave:** Leaves which cover absences for the purpose of rest, study, relaxation, family commitments, or vacation time of confirmed and designated employees, excluding academic staff.
- **Maternity Leave:** Paid leave of 4 months is available to all married female employees, which includes weekly days off and public holidays.
- **Paternity Leave: One week** Leaves available to married male employees and only confirmed employees after the birth of a child.
- **Unpaid Leave:** Leaves taken without pay, for studies and other emergencies.
- **Contractual Leaves:** Leaves that are entitled only to regular contractual staff.
- **Academic Leaves:** Leaves that are entitled only to academic staff, such as Research Assistants.

Process

An employee should formally report all leave absences using his/her employee user account by completing the Leave Request form.

The request will be approved by the concerned supervisor / Head of Department and sent to the Office of People & Culture for updating of employee leave record.

Sick/Casual Leaves

Employees are entitled to sick/casual leaves of 10 working days per annum and 05 working days for program-based contracts such as MT. Sick Leave may be availed for medical reasons and can be taken as either a full day or a half day, based on the situation. If the leave exceeds two (2) consecutive days, it must be supported by a medical certificate from a registered medical practitioner; otherwise, it will be considered Earned Leave. Sick Leave can be combined with Earned Leave upon the recommendation of the Department Head and approval of People & Culture, but it cannot be combined with Casual Leave.

There is no accumulation or encashment of Sick Leave—it will lapse at the end of each calendar year and cannot be used to offset any unserved notice period.

All Sick Leave must be applied for through TimeTrax and communicated promptly in case of unplanned illness.

Earned Leaves

Employees are entitled to earned leave of 23 working days per annum and 10 working days per annum for program-based contracts, commencing after the successful completion of their probation period. Leave is accrued monthly on a pro-rata basis from the date of confirmation.

Employees must inform their Department Head and Line Manager at least one month in advance for leave requests of 10 days or more, and at least 15 days in advance for shorter durations. All Leave must be

applied for through TimeTrax and promptly communicated for approval. Unauthorized absence is not permitted. Unclaimed Earned Leave can be carried forward for up to two years, with a maximum cap of 46 days; any balance exceeding this limit will lapse at the end of the leave year, that is August 31. Earned Leave cannot be availed during the notice period, even if the leave balance is available. Upon separation, accrued leave will be compensated based on calendar days; however, no leave encashment is applicable for employees who resign during probation.

b) Provident Fund Policy

Policy

Habib University is committed to supporting the long-term financial well-being of its employees through a contributory **Provident Fund**. This benefit is designed to encourage savings and provide financial security to employees during retirement or upon separation.

Eligibility

This policy is applicable to **all regular employees**, including:

- Staff
- Faculty
- Academic staff (including Research Associates)

Contribution Details

- The **employer** contributes **8.33% of the employee's basic salary** to the employee's Provident Fund Account.
- An equal amount (8.33%) is deducted from the employee's basic salary and deposited into the same account.
- These contributions are effective from the first day of joining, but the employer's contribution becomes applicable only after the employee's services are confirmed, and will be paid retrospectively from the date of joining.

c) **Leave Fare Assistance (LFA)**

Policy

Habib University provides **Leave Fare Assistance (LFA)** to support the personal travel needs of its eligible employees, encouraging rest and recreation for overall well-being.

Eligibility

- All **regular full-time staff (non-faculty)** of Habib University are eligible for LFA benefits.
- Eligibility begins after confirmation of services.

Definition

Leave Fare Assistance (LFA) refers to a benefit equivalent to **one gross monthly salary**, provided annually as financial support.

Disbursement Process

- LFA is paid in two equal installments:
 - First installment: June
 - Second installment: December

Special Conditions

- **New Joiners:** Employees who join during the fiscal year will receive a **pro-rated LFA** from the date of joining to June 30 of that year.
- **Separating Employees:** Upon resignation or separation, any **unpaid LFA amount** will be included in the **final settlement**, after adjusting for any outstanding dues (if applicable).
- The amount is **taxable** under the laws of the Government of Pakistan.

d) Health Insurance Plan

Policy

All full-time employees and their eligible dependents are entitled to inpatient medical care benefits, according to their eligibility (Table 2).

Scope

This policy applies to all full-time regular employees and faculty members, effective from their date of joining.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the term ‘hospitalization’ is limited to situations when a doctor recommends hospitalization for conducting clinical tests and treatment.

For the purpose of this policy, the term ‘Inpatient medical care’ refers to hospitalization or major illness expenses. It also includes daycare surgeries/procedures, as allowed in the agreed health insurance contract.

For the purpose of this policy, the term ‘Dependent’ refers to spouse and unmarried dependent children up to the age of 25.

‘Hospitalization Expenses’ include the cost of the entitled room, surgery, medicines, nursing care/supervision, and other related charges as specified in the health insurance contract. Hospitalization expenses do not include telephone charges, guest expenses, convenience items, or foods.

Eligibility

Health Insurance Plans	Eligible Employee Grade	Health Insurance Effective From
Plan A	Grade 7 & above	Date of Joining
Plan B	Grade 3 – 6	Date of Joining
Plan C	Grade 1 – 2	Date of Joining

Table 3: Faculty Eligibility Details for Health Insurance Benefit

Health Insurance Plans	Eligible Employee Grade	Health Insurance Effective From
Plan A	Provost/Dean/Associate Professor	Date of Joining
Plan B	Lecturer and Assistant Professor	Date of Joining

**Each plan has an individual room limit and an annual medical limit as per the terms and conditions agreed with the insurance company.*

Process

For all eligible employees, Habib University shall pay the annual insurance premium to provide inpatient coverage as per their entitlement, detailed in the *Health Insurance Coverage Plan*.

During the orientation period, new employees are required to fill out the *Family Health Questionnaire Form* (Urdu/English) available from the OPC and return it for further processing.

The Office of People and Culture will provide employees with the issued *health insurance card*, which contains the policy number, employee's name, dependents' names, identification number, validity period, etc. In case of theft/misplacement/expiry/alteration, the OPC should be contacted for revision/copy.

A list of designated hospitals where this card will be valid and a *list of covered medical procedures* will also be provided to employees.

Designated hospitals, which are mentioned in the list provided to employees, shall provide emergency medical services to employees and their eligible dependents when presented with their respective identification cards and health insurance cards.

Employees shall be reimbursed up to the maximum limit mentioned on their health insurance card, covering the admissible hospitalization expenses for self, spouse, and dependent unmarried children. The processing of due reimbursements shall be carried out through the Office of People and Culture.

Pre-Planned Medical Treatment

Eligible employee and their dependents are required to inform the health insurance provider of any pre-planned hospitalization/treatment at least 3 days in advance through the *Inpatient Form*. The form shall be obtained/submitted from/to the OPC, and forwarded to the Health Insurance Provider for approval. The concerned employee shall be informed of the approval status by the OPC within 2 days of submitting the form. For more information on pre-authorization, please refer to the *healthcare insurance booklet*. Failure to comply may result in the non-availability of the facility at the network hospitals.

This authorization is not required for treatment for emergencies/contingencies at designated hospitals. In case an employee approaches a non-designated hospital for treatment (hospitalization, emergencies), the reimbursement shall be at the discretion of the healthcare insurance provider, which can be claimed by submission of the Inpatient Claim Form along with original receipts.

Cosmetic treatments are out of the scope of the coverage. Similarly, for expenses incurred beyond the entitlement, they need to be borne by the employee.

Change in Status

In case of addition/deletion of dependents, the employee is required to inform the Office of People and Culture within 30 days of the change in status for updating records.

In case of a change in entitlement, status, or deletion due to separation, the OPC shall communicate the change to the healthcare insurance provider immediately upon the change for updating.

e) Maternity Benefit Plan

Maternity Benefit Plan details are provided below (table 4). This can only be availed by an employee twice during their association with Habib University.

Table 4: Maternity Benefit Plan* - Limits to be updated

Staff Grades	Faculty Grade	Limits (Normal Delivery/Miscarriage/ D&C)	Limits (Caesarean)
Full Time Contractual Staff (Contract duration 6 months or longer)	-	Rs 140,000/-	Rs 252,000/-
Support Staff (General Admin & Facilities Team)			
Cadres M1-M3			
Cadres M4-M9	Sr. Lecturer, Lecturer & Assistant Professors, Associate Professors & Professors	Rs 178,000/-	Rs 301,000/-

An employee shall submit original receipts attached to a claim form to the Office of People and Culture for reimbursement of maternity expenses. The OPC shall verify the claim and forward it to the Finance Department.

The reimbursement procedure may take up to 10 working days.

In cases where the entire entitlement amount is not used, the remaining amount can be used for pre-maternity and post-maternity expenses.

- Pre-maternity expenses within a time frame of 2 months before delivery can be covered up to a total amount of PKR 5,000.
- Post-maternity expenses incurred within a 1-month period following delivery can be covered up to a total amount of PKR 5,000.

f) Parental Insurance Policy

Confirmed employees who have completed a minimum of six months of service are eligible to enroll their parents in the University's group health insurance program.

Up to 75 years of age:

The **full insurance premium** for enrolled parents will be borne by the University.

Ages 76 to 78 years:

Coverage will be provided under a **cost-sharing arrangement**, with the employee responsible for the applicable portion of the premium as determined by the insurer and/or the University.

This benefit is **applicable within Pakistan only**, and all claims and treatments must comply with the terms, conditions, and network limitations of the approved group health insurance provider.

13.Travel Policy

Policy

Habib University provides traveling assistance to employees on official international or domestic business visits.

Scope

All regular employees and faculty are eligible for travel assistance while on business trips.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the term ‘Traveling Assistance’ refers to the facilities and benefits extended to employees traveling for the course of official business (Table A&B).

Eligibility

Table A: Staff Travel Assistance Entitlements

Facility/Grade	President	Divisional Head	Head of Department and Senior Manager	Manager, Deputy Manager, and Assistant Manager	Officer and Senior Officer
INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL					
Air Travel – Up to 4 hours	Business	Economy	Economy	Economy	Economy
Air Travel – More than 4 hours	Business	Business	Economy	Economy	Economy
Hotel Rating*	Five Star	Four Star	Three Star	Three Star	Two star
Daily Allowance**	USA/Europe – US\$200 Others – US\$150	USA/Europe – US\$100 Others – US\$75	USA/Europe – US\$75 Others – US\$60	USA/Europe – US\$60 Others – US\$50	USA/Europe – US\$50 Others – US\$40
DOMESTIC TRAVEL					
Air Travel	Business	Economy Plus	Economy	Economy	Economy
Hotel Rating*	Five Star/	Four Star /	Four/Three Star	Three Star/	Three Star/
Daily Allowance **	PKR 5000	PKR 3000	PKR 2500	PKR 2000	PKR 1500

Table B: Faculty Travel Assistance Entitlements

Faculty/Grade	Provost	Dean	Associate Dean Assistant Dean Professor	All Other Faculty
Air Travel – Up to 4 hours	Business	Economy	Economy	Economy
Air Travel – More than 4 hours	Business	Business	Economy	Economy
Hotel Rating*	Five Star	Four Star	Four/Three Star	Four/Three Star
Daily Allowance**	USA/Europe – US\$150 Others – US\$100	USA/Europe – US\$ 100 Others – US\$ 75	USA/Europe– US\$ 75 Others – US\$ 60	USA/Europe – US\$60 Others – US\$50
DOMESTIC TRAVEL				
Air Travel	Business	Economy	Economy	Economy
Hotel Rating	Five Star	Four Star	Four Star/ Three Star	Four Star/ Three Star
Daily Allowance **	PKR 4000	PKR 3000	PKR 2500	PKR 2000

*Night stay charges at actuals, on Standard Room Rates.

**Daily Allowance covers meals, tipping, personal telephone calls, laundry, and personal transportation

Process

When an employee is due for international or domestic air travel, he/she should fill in the approved *Request For Travel Booking (RTB) Form*, available at the Travel Desk, and submit it to the Travel Desk Manager.

In case of domestic air travel, the approved RTB should be submitted at least 5 working days prior to the intended travel date.

In case of international travel where visa processing is required, employees are encouraged to communicate the travel plan at the earliest, preferably 3-4 weeks in advance. If a visa is not required, the approved RTB should be submitted at least 10 working days prior to the intended travel date.

For the provost, deans, and faculty members, the approving authority for international travel shall be the President. For local travel, the respective Dean may approve the travel of the faculty member. A Dean

may plan for his / her local travel with the consent of the President / Provost. For all staff, domestic and international travel, the Approving Authority shall be the Head of Operations.

Request for Travel Booking

The staff member is to ensure that the approved RTB form is submitted well in advance and within the stipulated time period.

After receiving the RTB, the Travel Desk Manager will forward a copy of the RTB to the Finance department to ensure appropriate budget approvals with respect to the travel request. Also, to ensure arrangements for advance payments (if any), and other allowances for timely disbursement to the employee.

Based on the details provided on the approved RTB and as per entitlements specified in tables A & B, the Travel Desk Manager shall make arrangements for the tickets, visa (if required), and appropriate hotel accommodation.

The Travel Desk Manager shall make flight, hotel, and transport bookings on the most economical option available, taking the travel itinerary into account.

In case more than one employee is traveling to the same destination, each employee shall have arrangements made as per his/her entitlement.

The Travel Desk Manager shall keep the employee updated on his/her travel booking status till the completion of all travel-related documentation/formalities.

Upon completion and finalization of all travel arrangements, the Travel Desk Manager shall request the employee to collect his/her travel documents. The employee is to receive, verify, and confirm if all the travel documents are present and accurate by signing the RTB form. The employee is to then proceed to the Finance Department for advance payment (if any) and other allowances as per his/her entitlement. The Finance Department is to complete Form A and obtain acknowledgment from the employee. Employees can request an arrangement for a taxi or radio cab for trips to and from the airport in Karachi if official transport is not available. Such expenses shall be reimbursable at actuals. However, the Travel Desk should confirm the availability of official transport.

Roles and responsibilities

For a travel request made by the President/Head of Operations, the Executive Secretary shall directly coordinate with the Travel Desk and Finance Department and ensure the travel itinerary, travel documents, and advance payments (if any) are in order.

For a travel request made by the Provost / Deans, the Secretary assigned to the Deans and faculty shall directly coordinate with the Travel Desk and Finance Department to ensure the travel itinerary, travel documents, and advance payments (if any) are received on time.

For travel required by new faculty members, the faculty recruitment staff member is to initiate and submit the approved RTB to the Travel Desk. He/she shall coordinate with the Travel Desk and ensure the travel itinerary and documents are in order, and shall be the point of contact on behalf of Habib University.

For travel requests made by members of the Board of Governors or foreign visitors, the Executive Secretary shall directly coordinate with the Travel Desk on all travel matters and shall be the point of contact on behalf of Habib University for the person(s) due to travel.

It is the responsibility of the Office of People and Culture to ensure that all provisions of the Travel Policy and procedures are followed.

Travel Expense Report

Upon return from business travel, the employee is required to fill in the *Travel Expense Form*, available at the Travel Desk, and obtain signatures from his/her Department Head and the appropriate Approving Authority.

Employees are to submit the completed and approved *Travel Expense Form* to the Finance Department within 7 working days from their date of arrival to receive necessary reimbursements.

Non-reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to, sightseeing, non-business-related excess baggage, lost or stolen personal items during travel, traffic or parking violation fines, health & body care expenses, customs duty or excess baggage for personal purchases, alcoholic drinks, mini-bar, etc.

The President/ Head of Operations reserves the right to refuse any payment stated in the *Travel Expense Form* if regarded as inappropriate or non-relevant to the course of official business.

Expenses incurred by the employee in excess of his/her entitlement amount are not reimbursable unless approved by the President on a case-by-case basis.

Limitations

In case an employee does not possess a valid passport for international travel, the cost and responsibility of securing a new passport or passport renewal procedure shall be borne by the employee.

For travel related to an extended stay of staff/faculty exceeding 10 days, Daily Allowance entitlements shall be as specified in Table C.

Table C: Entitlement for Extended Travel

Travel Time	Entitlement (as % of daily allowance)
11 to 20 days	80%
20 days and above	60%

An employee who travels for business purposes but extends his/her stay for personal reasons, for such cases, prior approval of the Departmental Head, along with appropriate disclosure in the RTB Form, is mandatory. For any such extended stay, hotel charges shall be borne by the employee, and daily allowance entitlement shall not be applicable.

14.Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment Policy

Policy

Habib University strives to maintain a working environment that encourages mutual respect, promotes congenial relationships between employees, and is free from all forms of sexual or discriminatory harassment by speech or other expressions, by action, or by combination thereof.

The University expressly prohibits any form of discrimination and harassment on the basis of any recognized protected classification, including sex, race, color, age, religion, national or ethnic origin, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, marital status, medical condition, or disability in any decision regarding admissions, employment, and subsequent treatment of students and employees.

Habib University has a Zero Tolerance Policy against discrimination and harassment at all levels within the University. The University has a process to provide prompt and equitable resolution of employee complaints alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment. Staff and other members of the university who have relevant information are required to cooperate with the university's investigation of allegations of discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment.

Habib University recognizes that discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment need not be intentional. The intent of the person who is alleged to have behaved improperly is not relevant to determining whether a violation of Policy has occurred. The relevant determination is whether a reasonable person could have interpreted the alleged behavior to be discrimination, harassment, or sexual in nature. Failure to comply with this policy may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Scope

This policy applies to visitors, applicants for admission to or employment with the University, and students and employees of the University who allege discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, by University employees, students, visitors, or contractors.

Prohibited Behaviors

- **Discrimination**—Any unwelcome verbal, physical, or visual conduct relating to a protected classification, which has the unreasonable purpose or effect of severely and pervasively interfering with an individual's or a group of individuals' ability to participate in all and any aspect of academic, professional, or personal life.
- **Harassment**—Physical or verbal hostility, or any unwelcome or offensive conduct or communication, directed toward someone or toward a group of individuals.
- **Sexual harassment**—Unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or any other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature.

For the purpose of this policy, the term "sexual harassment" refers to any unwanted sexual attention that:

- Involves a stated or implicit threat to the victim's academic or employment status;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting that individual
- That affects or interferes with an individual's academic or work performance; and/or;

- Creates an intimidating, hostile, uncomfortable, or offensive working or educational environment.

Some specific examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Assaults, body contact or touching, impeding or blocking movement
- unwelcome verbal or physical advances
- persistent leers
- sexual innuendoes
- comments or jokes
- persistent use of irrelevant references or remarks to a person's gender
- sexist remarks about the target's clothing or body
- expressions using sex stereotypes, whether or not they were made about or directed to the grievant, and whether or not intended to insult or degrade
- manipulation of an authority relationship to coerce (not necessarily involving physical force) or influence a current or prospective student or employee to do something of a sexual nature that she/he would not otherwise do.
- unwelcome remarks about one's personality or appearance (might be interpreted as sexually suggestive)
- Suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or emails
- unwelcome propositions for dates
- inappropriate display of sexually explicit objects, pictures, cartoons, drawings, posters, computer screensavers, websites, or movies; sexual gestures

Process

Habib University will broadly disseminate this Policy, distribute a list of resources available to respond to concerns of discrimination, harassment, and related retaliation, and develop and present appropriate educational programs for students and employees.

The University encourages everyone to report all incidents of harassment and discrimination.

All individuals involved in the complaint, reporting, mediation, and/or investigation process must maintain the confidentiality of those proceedings.

Any member of the University community who believes she/he has been subjected to harassment or has observed harassment of others, or who feels that she/he has been discriminated against or has observed the discrimination of others, may submit a written complaint to the Discipline Committee.

The written complaint should identify the persons involved; describe the harassing or discriminatory behavior, including when and where it occurred; and identify by name or description any witnesses. Written complaints should be treated as confidential and should be provided directly to the Discipline Committee.

The said complaint will be addressed, investigated, and resolved as promptly and as practicable after it is made. Investigations will be concluded, and a decision will be taken no later than 90 days following the receipt of a complaint.

At the conclusion of an investigation, the committee shall determine whether this Policy has been violated, and take appropriate formal action against that individual if s/he was found to have violated this Policy or acted inappropriately or unprofessionally.

The complainant shall have the right to receive written notice of the complaint and decision, including a statement of the allegation.

If a complaint of discrimination, harassment, or sexual harassment is found to be substantiated, appropriate corrective action will follow, up to and including separation of the offending party from the University, consistent with University procedures.

Retaliation

A student, faculty, or staff member who retaliates in any way against an individual who has brought a complaint pursuant to this policy or participated in an investigation of such a complaint is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the University.

Documentation and Confidentiality

The University shall maintain all documents related to complaints under this policy. The Office of Academic Affairs shall be primarily responsible for records related to complaints against students. The Office of People and Culture shall be primarily responsible for records related to complaints against non-students.

The confidentiality of a complaint under this policy and all documents, correspondence, interviews, and discussions relating to the investigation of the information contained in a complaint will be maintained on a need-to-know basis.

Any person who knowingly and intentionally makes an unauthorized disclosure of confidential information contained in a complaint or otherwise relating to the investigation of a complaint under this policy is subject to disciplinary action.

Filing of False Complaints

Any person who knowingly and intentionally files a false complaint under this policy is subject to disciplinary action from the University.

15.Discipline Policy

Policy

Habib University requires all its employees to abide by the highest standards of work performance as per the established organizational policies, norms, and moral/ethical code of general conduct. Any misconduct in this respect will make the employees liable to disciplinary action. This policy provides the framework within which these standards can be achieved (or exceeded) and maintained by both employees and managers.

All disciplinary action taken by the University will be determined based on the seriousness and frequency of the offense, the employee's record, and the circumstances of the case.

Eligibility

This policy applies to all regular and casual employees of Habib University.

Scope

Any discipline that is imposed is intended to correct or modify an individual's conduct, to deter such conduct on the part of others, and to protect the rights of the University and everyone working or associated with the University.

For the purpose of this policy, the term 'Disciplinary Action' refers to one or more of the following measures, depending on the nature of the violation/offense:

- Verbal counseling and/or warning;
- Written warning;
- Suspension from work;
- Withholding of promotion and/or financial sanctions;
- Dismissal.

Misconduct

The following are examples of infractions of rules of major and minor conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. This is not an exhaustive list. Examples of Minor Misconduct:

- Excessive absenteeism or absence of three days or more without notice
- Late arrival to work
- Interference with the work performance of other employee(s);
- Improper dressing;
- Go-slow or failure to meet deadlines;
- Breach of IT security rules
- Intentional insubordination or refusal to obey any lawful or reasonable order of a superior;
- Abuse of facilities and privileges; and
- Misuse of official time and/or resources.

Examples of Major Misconduct:

- Theft or any unauthorized possession, fraud, dishonesty, or willful damage related to the University's business or property

- Accepting or giving a bribe or any illegal gratification;
- Unauthorized absence for more than 10 days;
- Willful damage to property or loss to the University's goods/property;
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential university information, serious breach of confidentiality;
- Frequent neglect of work;
- Striking work or inciting others to strike;
- Threatening, intimidating, or coercive behavior, abusive or vulgar language, or any other language or conduct that interferes with the performance of other employees;
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace;
- Disruptive activity in the workplace;
- Falsification of job application, resume, time sheet, or any other personnel document;
- Working under the influence of drugs or alcohol;
- Possession of a weapon, illegal drugs, or any other unauthorized item that could pose a risk to the safety of others;
- Discrimination or harassment on the basis of gender, race, religion, etc.;
- Abusing a position within the university to gain an advantage for oneself and or others
- Conflict of interest through engagement in other employment/business of a similar nature;
- Frequent minor offenses; and
- Unauthorized material movement outside university property.

Process

Disciplinary proceedings can result in a variety of outcomes, depending on the seriousness of the complaint or of other disciplinary actions already in an employee's file.

The nature and seriousness of employee misconduct should be determined by his/her supervisor as per the guidelines of this policy.

Informal Resolution

An informal meeting between the supervisor and employee to discuss the matter may be sufficient to improve the employee's conduct or performance. Employees should be advised of the standards of behavior or improvements expected with agreed actions and timescales for improvement. Regular sessions, meetings, and additional support, e.g., coaching, mentoring, or training, may also be suggested.

A colleague of the concerned employee's choice may accompany him/her for any meeting with the supervisor.

A copy of the correspondence/counseling session may be maintained in a separate confidential file. However, this is subject to the discretion of the supervisor.

Where informal action does not bring about an improvement, or the misconduct or unsatisfactory performance is considered to be more serious, the employee should be clearly advised that the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the formal procedure

Formal Resolution

The formal procedure shall be invoked in case of major misconduct or when the seriousness or persistence of the issue justifies action beyond that prescribed under the informal procedure.

Investigation: The Head of the respective Department, in consultation with the Office of People and Culture, may meet with the employee to investigate the situation. Investigation may also include interviewing witnesses and gathering documentary evidence.

According to the seriousness of the misconduct, the following stages shall be followed as disciplinary action:

- **Stage 1:** First written warning; Issuance of a show-cause letter
- **Stage 2:** Second written warning; Issuance of a show-cause letter

A show-cause letter allows the employee an opportunity to state his/her case within 72 hours. The written warning or notice will give details of the complaint, the findings of the inquiry, if applicable, the improvement(s) required, and the timescale for improvement. It shall specify what further disciplinary action will be considered if there is no satisfactory improvement.

If the employee denies the charges or the response provided is unsatisfactory, or if the employee does not respond, the Discipline Committee shall constitute an internal independent inquiry to investigate the charges.

The employee may be suspended from work while the inquiry is being conducted, if his/her responsibilities are not compromised. The employee shall be informed of the inquiry being conducted and shall be allowed to present before the inquiry officer his/her views regarding the charges.

If misconduct or unsatisfactory performance has been established, a penalty shall be imposed.

If the charges are not proved, the allegation shall be revoked, and in case of suspension, the employee shall be reinstated with immediate effect.

- **Stage 3:** If there is no change or improvement in performance or behavior, further disciplinary action may include suspension, financial sanctions, or dismissal, depending on the actual situation.

In case of serious misconduct, the management of the University reserves the right to take strict disciplinary action with immediate effect up to and including dismissal, subject to the discretion of the President.

The OPC shall act as an advisor/consultant for employee indiscipline in view of the legal sensitivities involved.

The concerned employee shall be informed of all proceedings at all stages. All correspondence shall be kept in a confidential file for record purposes.

Where criminal offenses have been committed or are suspected, disciplinary action shall be initiated by Habib University without waiting for the outcome of legal proceedings.

Appeal Against a Disciplinary Outcome

The purpose of an appeal is to consider new evidence, the reasonableness of the outcome, or procedural matters. The purpose is not to rehear the original matters nor to reconsider the decision taken by the management. The employee has the right to appeal to the Office of People and Culture. If deemed necessary, OPC will form an independent Appeal Committee to review and resolve the appeal case. Appeals will normally be limited to a review on the following grounds:

- that there is new relevant evidence available
- that there was a material procedural mistake or omission at any stage of the formal procedure
- that the penalty is not commensurate with the offense
- that there has been unreasonableness and unfairness in the investigation or disciplinary process.

16. Employee Grievance Policy

Policy

Habib University recognizes that, from time to time, individual employees may have concerns, problems or complaints in relation to their employment.

The purpose of the Grievance Policy is to resolve issues in the workplace in the most effective manner and at the lowest level possible. The framework provides a means of ensuring fair treatment for staff seeking to resolve work-related problems or conditions of employment believed to be unfair, inequitable, or a hindrance to effective job performance and allows for complaints to be resolved informally where possible, or through a formal grievance procedure where necessary.

The University wishes to ensure that grievances are discussed and resolved quickly. The University will deal objectively and constructively with all grievances, and employees who decide to use the procedure may do so with the assurance that the problem will be dealt with in confidence and a fair manner. However, it must be recognized that it is not always possible to resolve grievances to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Eligibility

This policy applies to all regular and casual employees.

Employees raising a grievance may only do so on their own behalf – grievances cannot be raised under this policy on behalf of another colleague. All such matters shall be addressed as per the University's Whistle-Blowing Policy.

Scope

For the purpose of this policy, the term "Grievance" refers to behavior or action of another member or members of staff, which has or is likely to have an unreasonable negative impact on the ability of a staff member to undertake their duties. The policy will be applicable for the settlement of all types of grievances except for the following:

- Complaints alleging discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of race, color, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, or veteran status;
- Complaints pertaining to general levels of salary, fringe benefits, increments, or other broad areas of financial management and staffing;
- Disputes that are personal in nature or do not involve the grievant's professional activities;
- A complaint, the resolution or remedy of which would conflict with a policy approved by the Board of Governors of the University, a policy of the university, federal or local law or regulation; and
- The content of approved policies of the Habib University.

Process

Informal Resolution

Any employee who has a grievance arising from their employment should initially aim to resolve the matter informally and directly with the person concerned e.g., their colleague or immediate manager. An informal meeting and open discussion may be sufficient to resolve the grievance quickly and effectively whilst maintaining good working relationships.

If the grievance cannot be resolved in this way, then the employee should follow the formal procedure.

Formal Resolution

To initiate a formal grievance, the grievance should be put in writing by the employee, by obtaining a grievance form from the Office of People and Culture, filling out the form, and submitting it to his or her Head of Department with a separate copy marked to the Office of People and Culture. If the grievance involves the Head of Department, then it should be submitted to a higher authority.

The written grievance should set out the nature of the grievance and the circumstances of any allegations. This should include brief supporting evidence and any relevant facts, dates, and names of individuals involved.

The Head of Department or the higher authority shall make every reasonable effort to provide a written response to the employee's grievance within five (5) working days of receiving the completed grievance form.

Where an investigation is appropriate, it will be thorough, impartial, and objective. It will be carried out with sensitivity and respect to both the member of staff and the person(s) against whom the grievance has been raised. Where the grievance involves other members of staff, these persons will be informed of the nature of the complaint. The investigation may include interviewing witnesses and/or gathering documentary evidence. All staff should cooperate fully and promptly with any investigation. The member of staff raising the grievance may at any time decide to withdraw their grievance. However, the University reserves the right to continue with the investigation in these circumstances and to take appropriate action following the investigation.

Appeal

Where the employee believes that the formal decision was unreasonable or believes that there were procedural irregularities, they may appeal to the OPC. The employee shall file a written appeal on the designated form specifying with particularity the reason(s) for the appeal. The employee shall file the appeal within five (5) working days of receiving the written response to his/her grievance.

The grievance case shall be taken up by a representative from the Office of People and Culture or any other person designated by him/her.

The representative shall make every effort to schedule a meeting with the employee for the purpose of resolving the grievance within fifteen (15) working days from the receipt of the appeal form. If he/she determines that additional time is needed to develop the factual record, the grievance may be put on hold for thirty (30) working days (or longer if by mutual written agreement) to allow time for investigation. He/she shall ensure the successful resolution of the grievance case.

For a resolution meeting, the employee shall have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague representative. The role of the companion is to accompany the employee; the companion may put forward and sum up their case if required by the employee. Companions should be given a reasonable amount of paid time off to fulfill their responsibilities. The employee must inform the OPC representative of the identity of the companion in advance of the meeting.

Protection against Retaliation

No retaliation of any kind shall be taken by an employee of Habib University against any party or other employee on account of his or her participation in a grievance proceeding filed pursuant to this policy.

Documentation

If there is any information and/or documents in support of the complaint that the employee would like to be considered, they must ensure that it is provided to the concerned person dealing with the grievance at the earliest possible opportunity or preferably 3 working days before any meeting. Both parties will then be provided with copies of the grievance documentation and the supporting information/documents in advance of the meeting.

Records should be kept of all meetings, including investigatory and discipline meetings, as well as details of the outcomes, any action taken, and the reasons for it, the outcome of any appeal, and any notes or other relevant documents compiled during the process.

17. Whistle-Blowing Policy

Policy

Habib University has a responsibility for the stewardship of its resources and the public and private support that enables it to pursue its mission. The University requires its faculty, staff, and students to adhere to high standards of professional and ethical conduct in carrying out their duties and complying with all institutional policies. Early identification and resolution of ethical issues that might arise are critical to maintaining sound business, including but not limited to financial practices.

In instances of improper, even illegal activity, a person who observes, first-hand, financial activities or practices that he or she believes in good faith to be against the law or University policy should report these activities to the University Ethics Committee. The University Ethics Committee shall promptly investigate these reports. Care will be taken to maintain appropriate confidentiality throughout the investigatory phase and for as long as possible.

Scope

This policy governs only the reporting and investigation of suspected violations of law, or University policy, or actions that constitute misconduct.

Whistle-blowers may be University employees (academic, student, or staff), applicants for employment, students, vendors, contractors, consultants, or those associated with the University.

This policy does not apply to students' disciplinary matters, such as plagiarism and misconduct. Such cases shall be dealt with separately under the Student Discipline Policy.

Definitions

Whistle-blower - A person or entity making a protected disclosure is commonly referred to as a whistle-blower. The whistleblower's role is as a reporting party. They are not investigators or finders of fact, nor do they determine the appropriate corrective or remedial action that may be warranted.

Discipline Committee – The Discipline Committee is responsible for reviewing, investigating, and making decisions on the proceedings of whistle-blower reports. The committee has the responsibility of overseeing this Policy and compliance by the University.

Baseless Allegations - Allegations not based on fact or sound evidence.

Improper Activities - The following constitute a non-exclusive list of improper activities:

- Fraudulent or Dishonest Conduct - A deliberate act or failure to act with the intention of obtaining an unauthorized benefit from the University
- Misappropriation or misuse of University resources, including funds, supplies, or other assets
- Breach of Confidentiality
- Violation of the University's Conflict of Interest Policy
- Violation of University Policy on Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, or workplace bullying
- Tampering with or destroying any University records
- Misrepresentations or false statements in the University's financial records;

- Any effort to mislead, deceive, manipulate, coerce, or fraudulently influence any internal or external auditor in connection with the preparation, examination, audit, or review of any financial statement or records of the Company;
- Unlawful civil or criminal offense;
- Forgery or unauthorized manipulation of any documents or electronic files, Breach of University Codes of Conduct / Ethics;
- Ill treatment or compromising service to students/parents/clients, etc.
- Personal relationships affecting professional integrity and/or performance;
- Inappropriate use of IT, including social media, e.g., Facebook, or use of a computer; and substantial and specific danger to the employee's or public's health and safety.

Protection from Retaliation

The University recognizes that a person suspecting malpractice or impropriety might be reluctant to take steps that might lead to action being taken against fellow members of the institution; similarly, it recognizes that individuals suspecting malpractice or impropriety might be deterred from reporting it by a fear that they themselves might be victimized.

The University will take steps to ensure that employees who make good faith reports of violations of law or University policy will be protected from retaliation in employment practices at Habib University. This protection is afforded to all employees who communicate information in good faith and through appropriate channels.

If an employee makes an allegation in good faith, but is not confirmed by subsequent investigations, no action will be taken against the employee. Hence, an individual should exercise due care and due diligence to ensure the accuracy of the information.

Confidentiality

Habib University will treat all such disclosures in a confidential and sensitive manner. Insofar as possible, the identity of the whistleblower will remain confidential. However, HU reserves the right to disclose the identity of the whistleblower if, in the University's absolute discretion, identity may have to be disclosed for the following reasons: to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with applicable laws and/or to provide accused individuals their legal rights of defense.

Process

Raising a Concern

A whistle-blower must take into consideration the following before making a disclosure:

- There must be sufficient reason to believe that there is serious misconduct;
- He/she must be raising the issue without malice or purposes of personal gain and in good faith;
- Statements or allegations should not be based on office gossip
- They need to be of the view that blowing the whistle will serve a good purpose and that appropriate action will be taken according to the investigation findings.

Complaints against an employee can be reported to the Discipline Committee through the submission of an online Disclosure Form, which will be accessible by members of the Committee.

While making a disclosure, the whistleblower must provide complete information available to him/her. Employees are encouraged to provide as much specific information as possible, including:

- Name and work address of the complainant;
- Name and title of Habib University's official(s) against whom the complaint is made;
- The specific type(s) of adverse employment action(s) taken;
- The specific date(s) on which the adverse employment action(s) were taken; and
- A clear and concise statement of the facts that form the basis of the complaint.

Investigation

It is the responsibility of the Discipline Committee to timely resolve all allegations reported.

Depending upon the severity or nature of the allegation, the Discipline Committee may decide to do one of the following:

- refer to an external body for consideration and investigation
- refer the matter to another University Office, in case the alleged improper action falls under an existing University Policy for which procedures are defined; or
- refer the matter to the Board Audit Committee.

The Discipline Committee shall ensure that the investigation covers the following aspects:

- Conducted in a fair, unbiased manner
- Ensure complete fact-finding
- Maintain strict confidentiality, wherever possible
- Decide on the outcome of the investigation, whether an improper practice has been committed and if so by whom.

Decision

Appropriate action, commensurate with findings, will be taken by the Discipline Committee. In case the investigation reveals truth to the allegations reported, the following process may be followed:

- **First Written Disciplinary Warning:** The warning notice must include specifics about the reason for the discipline and consequences if such activities are continued in the future. They should be informed how their actions affect other employees and those associated with the University.
- **Second Written Disciplinary Warning:** If alleged improper activities continue after the first disciplinary warning, the employee should be given a second written disciplinary warning and consequently informed that if such activities continue, he/she will receive a suspension.
- **Suspension:** In case the second warning is violated, the employee should be suspended for a week, and the notice to be served and put into the employee's personal file.
- **Termination:** On further violations, the employee should be terminated.

In case the magnitude of the complaint is severe and the same has also been established by the Discipline Committee, then an immediate termination action can be taken, rather than following the steps specified in the section above.

Documentation

An official, written record will be kept of each stage of the procedure and findings of the investigation by the Committee Secretary, reviewed by all members of the Committee, and maintained for the record.

The results of any investigation will be reported to the President, the whistleblower, and, when necessary, to the chair of the Board Audit Committee.

The President and/or the Chairman of the Board Audit Committee will review the summary report and the actions taken to resolve the issue, and may request further actions or require a further report to satisfy themselves that the matter has been fully resolved.

Sanctions for a False Report

A report made under this policy can have a considerable impact on the personal and professional lives of those charged both during the investigation and long term.

An employee shall not intentionally misuse the University's Whistle-blower Policy and procedures. Intentional misuse includes, but is not limited to, baseless allegations, attempts to treat a personal grievance or personnel dispute as an allegation of wrongdoing, lack of good faith in invoking the policy, or any known false, malicious, or misleading statements made at any time under the procedures of the policy.

In case it is determined by the Discipline Committee that knowingly baseless or reckless allegations were made, the whistle-blower may be separately disciplined. The Committee will report to the Head of the applicable office or department of the employee and the President, the identity of any employee who is believed to have intentionally misused the Whistle-blower Policy.

Related Policy

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of policies that support the ethical conduct of Habib University's academic, research, and business activities. All Habib University policies implicitly support such behavior.