

Role and Responsibilities of Vice President Academic Affairs

Position Summary

Habib University seeks an agile and pioneering academic leader to serve as its next Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA)—a forward-facing role working closely with the President and the Board to shape the University's academic direction in response to the complex challenges and opportunities of our time. As the chief academic officer, the VPAA will play a critical role in defining Habib's academic trajectory in its second decade. This work is guided by Habib's Strategic Framework — organized around four vectors (Emerging Technology, Poly-crises, Institutional Analysis, and Global Campus) and the values of Cognition, Community, and Climate — and by the University's integrated approach to weaving together its academic programs, shared pedagogy, and student support systems.

The VPAA will lead over 150 faculty, fellows, and staff across the School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS) and the Dhanani School of Science and Engineering (DSSE), including newly established units - Undergraduate Education (UGE), and Office of Research, Industrial Engagement and Applied Learning (ORIEAL) - created as part of Academic Affairs' recent restructuring, while also chairing the Board of Faculty. The VPAA will manage the office of academic affairs with the support of a team of Associate Deans and Directors to drive institutional initiatives that elevate teaching, research, and student learning outcomes. Under the President's leadership, the incumbent joins a senior leadership including the Vice President for Strategic Advancement and Institutional Development (OSAID), Vice President for Operations and Finance and Senior Director for Student Affairs.

Habib's Distinctive Approach to Higher Education

Habib University, Pakistan's first American-style liberal arts and sciences institution, embraces a reparative approach to education—redefining learning that is deeply rooted in local contexts while engaging meaningfully with global perspectives. Now in its second decade, Habib has moved beyond its pioneering phase into a period of sustained growth - backed by robust financial stewardship and a governance model that balances innovation with institutional resilience. Beyond its start-up phase, Habib now stands as a proven success, with a well-defined mission and the capacity to scale its impact.

At the heart of its academic experience is the Habib Liberal Core Curriculum, a signature requirement cultivating critical consciousness, civic responsibility, and intellectual rigor among all students. Habib's programs balance disciplinary depth with interdisciplinary insight, while a strong teaching-research integration ensures that scholarly work directly informs classroom learning. This model equips students to engage with pressing global challenges - from historical, social, and climate-conscious curricula perspectives to use of ethical technology, data literacy and global awareness.

Habib University' mission intentionally focuses on inducting a diverse student community that brings together talented young minds - especially graduates from local education system. Through our need-blind admissions and generous financial aid program, we ensure access to world-class liberal arts education for exceptional students regardless of their economic background. This diversity of perspectives and experiences is fundamental to our educational model, fostering the development of future leaders who are not only equipped with critical skills but also deeply invested in Pakistan's progress.

As higher education undergoes profound transformation, the VPAA will steer the University's academic evolution—advancing multiple priorities with equal rigor and vision:

- **Preparing students for a world of polycrises, uncertainty, and interconnected challenges** through interdisciplinary and globally conscious curricula;
- **Ethical Integration of AI and emerging technologies** in learning and pedagogy;
- **Embedding sustainability and climate action** across disciplines;
- **Developing programs attuned to the Global South**, while engaging academic networks inclusive of the Global North;
- **Harnessing data analytics** to inform teaching, learning, and institutional decision-making, while cultivating data fluency as a core student competency.
- **Redesigning Habib's academic majors** to build AI fluency, computational literacy, and polycrises readiness into every discipline.

Role Summary

The position of Vice President of Academic Affairs is a full-time, senior leadership role that reports directly to the President. This three-year contractual appointment is a pivotal opportunity for a dynamic academic leader to steer the next phase of Habib's intellectual and institutional growth. As the University charts its course for the next decade, guided by a newly conceptualized strategic plan, the VPAA will play a central role in translating that vision into academic reality. This includes shaping forward-looking programs, cultivating a robust and engaged faculty culture, and ensuring that Habib's distinctive liberal arts and sciences model remains innovative and relevant. Working closely with the President's senior leadership team and academic leadership, the VPAA will oversee the design, implementation, and continuous refinement of academic programs that prepare students to navigate complexity, uncertainty, and transformation. Key areas of responsibility include:

- **Academic Strategy and Innovation:** Leading the academic evolution of the University by integrating emerging tools like AI and data analytics into pedagogy, embedding sustainability and climate consciousness across disciplines, and fostering inquiry that responds to the realities of the Global South.
- **Faculty Stewardship and Academic Culture:** Supporting a dynamic and diverse faculty body through effective governance, development, and evaluation systems—ensuring excellence in teaching, research, creative practice, and service.
- **Academic Operations and Student Learning:** Overseeing core academic infrastructure including the Registrar, Library, and Academic Operations, while strengthening learning outcomes, curricular cohesion, and holistic student development.
- **Institutional Planning and Implementation:** Aligning academic priorities with the University's strategic direction, driving evidence-based planning through collaboration with the Office of Institutional Research, and ensuring that academic affairs contribute meaningfully to institutional resilience and innovation.

This role calls for an agile and pioneering academic leader—one who is committed to building future-ready institutions and reimagining the role of higher education in a region and era defined by complexity, transformation, and urgency.

Key responsibilities and duties

Academic Programs and Management

Habib University is an undergraduate institution, with a unique core curriculum, embedded in the Seven Forms of Thought and Action, providing students with a deep-rooted understanding of historical, social, philosophical, and scientific knowledge and context. The academic programs are designed based on historical and futuristic analysis of the country's needs, and in line with global standards. The Office of Undergraduate Education, led by an Associate Dean is responsible to continuously evolve and enrich academic programs, benchmarking them against world-class institutions of higher learning. The VPAA provides strategic oversight to the Office and:

1. Ensures that the vision for the academic programs is aligned well with the University's strategic plan and that academic programs offer distinctive curricula that are competitive in the national and regional markets;
2. Oversees the enhancement and evolution of the Habib Liberal Core (HLC) program, including chairing/ the newly established Board of Studies for HLC.;
3. Provides strategic oversight of the redesign and phased implementation of Habib's flagship undergraduate majors, ensuring each major integrates AI fluency, computational/data literacy, and poly-crisis engagement.
4. Oversees the University's provincial, national and international accreditation efforts;
5. Ensures that a rigorous culture of academic review and assessment is in-place and that comprehensive external review of all academic programs are held on a three-year cycle;
6. Collaborates with Senior Director Student Affairs to ensure a holistic student learning experience that integrates both academic and co-curricular aspects;
7. Chairs the Board of Faculty and serves on the Academic Council.

Faculty Management and Culture

Habib University has attracted scholars from across the globe, with diverse disciplinary knowledge, educational backgrounds, and nationalities. The institution has established itself as a leading employer in higher education in Pakistan. The academic community consists largely of young, enterprising scholars with a distinctive interest in exploring new areas of academic interest, teaching and responding to higher education needs of the country. Hence, the VPAA, with the Support of the Associate Dean for Academic Operations, is expected to create a positive and aspiring culture of enriching pedagogy, enhanced engagement of students in research, collaborating on interdisciplinary ideas, and respecting management frameworks that allow for academic and professional accountability and development. To support these efforts, the VPAA:

1. Oversees and strengthens mechanisms of shared governance at the University;
2. Institutionalizes a comprehensive faculty onboarding and development framework;
3. Chairs the monthly Faculty Meeting;
4. Oversees the faculty promotion process and annual faculty reviews;
5. Works directly and collaboratively with all the Associate Deans and Directors to support faculty in excelling at teaching, research, creative activities, and service;

Student Learning and Experience

Habib University is a student-centered institution, with continuous improvement and enrichment of student experience, both inside and outside the classroom, being the major goal of the University. Student experience is closely connected to academic learning, which delivers knowledge, skills and abilities while fostering reflection and a thoughtful approach towards the society and the world. Student experience is also tied to extensive engagement and mentorship by faculty, as advisors, club patrons, and course leads. The VPAA shall, therefore, collaborate with Senior Director Student Affairs to create an inspirational and at the same time rigorous academic experience, grounded in an active support towards ensuring student success. For this purpose, VPAA:

1. Works with the Office Student Affairs to create and implement strategies to promote student learning and success
2. Ensures a strong faculty commitment towards ensuring a world class educational experience for all our students.
3. Enables a system of supplemental academic help, individual student mentoring, participating in student success among all faculty members, in coordination with Office of Student Success.
4. Supports the Office of Student Affairs in strengthening student community through empowering the expression and consideration of diverse voices on campus, developing robust co-curricular experiences for students, and cultivating a deep understanding of shared values.
5. Ensures availability and analysis of data from across different sections of the University that guides student recruitment, assesses student academic success, measures faculty contributions to student learning and tracks graduate outcomes.

Academic Administration

The VPAA, leads a strong and experienced team of Associate Deans, and other senior staff in the Office of Academic Affairs. As a principal leader for the Office of Academic Affairs, VPAA:

1. Supervises the Office of Academic Operations, which is responsible for management of faculty, recruitment, onboarding and housing of faculty and the annual review of all academic personnel;
2. Leads special programs and initiatives for hiring and recruitment of faculty as needed;
3. Supervises faculty development efforts;
4. Provides opportunities and resources for faculty to participate in innovative, multidisciplinary educational, research, and service initiatives;
5. Works with the Associate Dean for Academic Operations to ensure implementation of all provisions of the Faculty Handbook and oversees the disciplining of faculty who violate faculty regulations;
6. Oversees formulation and implementation of all faculty and academic policies in collaboration with the Associate Dean for Academic Operations and Associate Dean for Academic Systems and University Registrar;
7. Works the Associate Dean for Research, Industrial Engagement and Applied Learning (ORIEL) to encourage faculty to access research funding, and develop meaningful ways of integrating classroom learning with practical real-world experiences;

8. Promotes a positive work environment and maintains effective relationships with university administrators, faculty, staff, and students;
9. Leads and serves on select University committees and task forces;
10. Facilitates a work environment that encourages knowledge of, respect for, and development of skills to engage with individuals from disparate cultures and backgrounds;
11. Ensures that projects related to academic affairs are completed in the best interest of the University by accepting and accomplishing those tasks which are delegated by the President.

Institutional Partnerships

Habib University's institutional partnerships with leading global academic centers have been instrumental in shaping a modern yet contextually grounded institution in Pakistan. These collaborations offer strategic support, facilitate knowledge exchange, and create transformative opportunities for students, faculty, and staff. By setting high academic and professional benchmarks, these alliances reinforce Habib's mission and vision. The Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) will work in close collaboration with the Office of Strategic Advancement and Institutional Development to harness these partnerships in service of the University's academic advancement. In this context, the VPAA will.

1. Enrich the academic quality of all majors and minors by integrating global expertise through co-designed courses, joint teaching initiatives, and periodic curricular reviews in collaboration with partner institutions;
2. Strengthen faculty excellence by facilitating access to global Centers for Teaching and Learning, academic residencies, and pedagogical mentorships that support continuous instructional improvement;
3. Expand collaborative learning experiences through initiatives like Classroom Connect, enabling real-time engagement and dialogue between Habib students and international peers;
4. Infuse global academic standards and innovation into Habib's ecosystem by cultivating partnerships that bring cutting-edge practices and disciplinary leadership into the classroom;
5. Institutionalize a culture of academic innovation, grounded in comparative learning and sustained collaboration, to ensure Habib's programs remain globally competitive and locally responsive.

About Karachi, Pakistan:

Karachi is one of the world's great unsung megalopolises—vast, dynamic, and deeply layered, defying easy definitions. As Pakistan's economic engine and cultural capital, it offers an experience that is both globally connected and uniquely local. For those considering a move to Karachi with their families, the city presents a compelling mix of opportunity, affordability, and adventure. Karachi is home to a wide range of excellent schools that follow international curricula, world-class hospitals and medical centers, and a cost of living that allows for a high quality of life. Whether you're looking for beachfront recreation, curated arts spaces, or quiet residential neighborhoods, the city offers multiple lifestyles within a single urban sprawl.

At the heart of this vibrant metropolis lies Habib University—an intellectual and cultural epicenter that reflects the best of what Karachi has to offer. The city's rich history is visible in its colonial-era

architecture, its diverse culinary scene, and the generosity and warmth of its people. Living in Karachi means immersing yourself in a city that rewards curiosity, from bustling markets and historic districts to thriving startup hubs and creative communities. Foreign faculty often find themselves welcomed not only into the university, but also into Karachi's wider ecosystem of professionals, artists, and thinkers. It's a city of stories, energy, and surprising moments—a place where life is full, vibrant, and deeply human.

Candidate Profile

The ideal candidate will possess:

- A distinguished academic record and a PhD, with qualifications meriting appointment at the level of Full Professor.
- Demonstrated leadership experience in higher education, preferably in North America or at an American-style institution abroad.
- A strong commitment to liberal arts education, student-centered learning, and climate-conscious pedagogy.
- Experience in faculty mentoring, curriculum innovation, and institutional strategy development.
- A collaborative leadership style rooted in shared governance, ethical decision-making, and cultural sensitivity.
- Proven ability to build consensus, communicate vision, and deliver results in dynamic academic settings.
- An appreciation for emerging challenges in higher education, including AI, sustainability, equity, and digital transformation.

Appointment Details and How to Apply

Applications should consist of a CV, ideally accompanied by a brief cover letter addressing the criteria outlined in the Personal Specifications noted above. These documents can be sent to Mr. Salman Khimani, Director Academic Operations at salman.khimani@habib.edu.pk. For additional questions, please feel free to reach out to the Chair of the Search Committee, Dr. Nigel Boyle (Nigel_Boyle@pitzer.edu).

The deadline for applications is September 15, 2026.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview with Habib University in October and November 2026 with an anticipated start date between January 1 and August 1, 2027 – depending on the candidate's availability.

This post is based in Karachi. Extensive local and international travel may be required.

An appointment will be made subject to receipt of satisfactory references. The appointed candidate will be offered a salary that is commensurate with their experience and appropriate to the seniority of this position.