



Quaid-I-Azam University Islamabad

Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs.) for Reopening of Quaid-I-Azam University for Fall 2020 during COVID-19 Pandemic

Introduction

In line with the Federal Government's Directives, Quaid-I-Azam University Islamabad was closed on March 16, 2020 due to COVID-19 Pandemic. However, QAU continued online teaching and learning during the interrupted Spring Semester 2020 and successfully completed it. The main objectives was to take care of the health and safety of all who study and work at Quaid-I-Azam University. Now, in line with the Federal Government's directives and HEC's guidelines, QAU plans to open to students at all levels for the fall 2020 semester.

The opening of QAU for teaching and research activities on campus is contingent upon the following clear and detailed Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs). These are developed in compliance to the federal government directives and HEC's guidelines. Nevertheless, we will continually improve and update these measures as we seek to take account of the concerns of academic and non-academic staff and of students, as well as changing government directives and guidelines. Deans of Faculties, Chairpersons and Directors of teaching departments and section heads/in-charges would be responsible for the implementation of these guidelines in true letter and spirit.

Campus Management

In order to reduce crowd on QAU's campus and reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection, it is important to ensure the following before allowing students back on campus:

- COVID-19 SoPs must be uploaded on the website.
- Posting gatekeepers on all entry points of the campus for complete prevention of outsiders.


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- Gatekeepers of teaching blocks need to be trained and advised to check students' identity card for allowing them to enter teaching blocks.
- Display health and safety protocols on all entry points and entry gates of teaching blocks.
- Every teaching department/school should designate a senior teacher/committee to ensure the implementation and observance of COVID-19 health and safety protocols
- A contact list for emergency response should be prepared and displayed at all gates of teaching departments and hostels gates.
- Symptomatic person (irrespective of academic & non-academic staff or students) should stay at home. S/he should seek medical consultancy and attention by email, WhatsApp, or text message.
- Temperature check should ensure at the teaching blocks, hostels and library gates.
- University cleaning regimes will be significantly enhanced, with regular cleaning of contact points such as door handles, banisters and bathrooms.
- Additional facilities will be in place for everyone to maintain good hygiene such as through regular hand washing with soap and water or hand sanitizer.
- All departments/sections are authorized to add rules and instructions for ensuring the observance of SoPs and COVID Protocol
- University's gym will remain closed during the pandemic. No indoor sport and recreation will be permitted in the university premises. Nevertheless, students will be encouraged to engage in outdoor sports, recreation by observing university's SoPs and COVID-19 protocols.
- Wearing face mask is compulsory for academic and non-academic staff, students and guests in the university premises.
- It is advised to avoid handshaking.
- Cafeteria/Canteen will strictly follow the standard SOPs and dining is not allowed there.
- Gathering of more than 6 people at the campus are not allowed except in a class room.

Teaching:

As per Federal Government directive, QAU will resume teaching and learning for all students from Fall 2020 Semester. In the prevailing circumstances "Blended or Hybrid Mode" of education is believed to be the best strategy during COVID-19. The blended/hybrid mode of education differs

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from university to university. Taking care of the health and safety of students and teachers, QAU's authorities agreed to operate with the following blended mode of education in fall 2020.

- Each Department and School has the liberty to determine its own approach of blended learning for each programme, class and labs to safeguard the health of students and teachers.
- All courses are important. However, courses that are deemed very important and essential be conducted on-campus.
- Face to face classes should be taught in larger rooms or in open spaces.
- Stagger classes throughout the day for reducing crowd in the teaching premises
- Every Department should prepare a need-based/merit based schedule for its research laboratory. Stagger the use of labs in the same way for the observance of COVID's SoPs.
- To minimize crowd on campus, teaching faculty may teach their online courses from home and face to face classes on campus.
- All Chairpersons/Directors of institutions are requested to prepare their respective departments' time table before September 15, 2020.
- Time table should vividly indicate online and face to face classes.
- Strict observance of SoPs (Masks and Physical distancing of 6 feet) must be ensure in face to face classroom interaction.
- Every head of Department/ Director/Incharge of Department/School/Center would ensure a mechanism of his/her respective department/institution/school for observance of SoPs / Protocols.
- Each Department's / School's students affair in-charge, with the consent and consultation of chairperson/director should ensure timely orientation sessions for all students.
- No co-curricular and extra- curricular activities/any kind of gathering will be allowed during the pandemic in the premises of the university.
- Students will submit their complaints to their respective chairpersons/Directors
- Standard SOPs (Face mask & social distance) should be compulsory in the Library. Chief Librarian along the staff will ensure the SOPs. The Library timings would be 8:00am-4:00 am


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Consent and Willingness of Students for Return

The health and safety of all who study and work at QAU is our top priority. Ensuring the health and safety of all students, students will be informed about what is expected of them to protect themselves and others.

- All students must submit a consent / willingness certificate for returning to campus for teaching and learning. Therefore, all students who are required to attend courses on-campus will be informed to submit consent / willingness on stamp paper before the start of classes. Students, if they choose to return, must write in their consent/willingness certificate that they will not hold the university liable if they contract the virus in spite of the safety protocols. Signatures of Parents/ Guardians is essential on certificate. University should ensure a standard format of certificate and must upload it on the university website.
- Students will be supposed to declare whether they encountered COVID-19 or not.

Response to Infected Persons

- Isolation rooms should be specified before September 15 for looking after/treatment of infected boarding students.
- Designated hospital for treating seriously infected employees (academic and non-academic staff) and students
- Name and contact of doctor(s) and premedical staff is to be shared with each teaching department and hostels management
- QAU should sign a MoU with NIH or any other COVID-19 testing agency for COVID testing so that all academic and non-academic staff and students of the University can have easy access to COVID-19 test if they think they have symptoms. The MoU should stress on a rapid turnaround of tests, with results available within 24 hours.
- In case of a positive result, concerned health Department of the government of Pakistan will maintain responsibility for treatment and tracing. As part of our service, however, we will interview those being tested to ensure that an up-to-date list of possible contacts is immediately available in the event of a positive test, and will take rapid proactive action, in collaboration with the government health department.
- University will complete the process of disinfection spray in campus before September 15, 2020.


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Transport

- All students, drivers and conductors must wear face mask when in bus.
- All employees who avail university transport must keep/display their service card at the time of travelling
- All students who avail university transport must keep/display their university identity card at the time of travelling
- Drivers and conductors will ensure regularly cleaning of seats and window of university transports
- Anyone (whether employee or student) who has signs and symptoms similar to COVID-19, will not be allowed to travel in busses.
- Conductors will ensure that social distancing as per COVID-19 protocols are maintained during traveling in university transport.
- Bus windows may be kept open during travelling in normal weather condition.
- Conductors will ensure that no unauthorized person travel in university buses

Hostels

- All students residing in the hostel will submit certificate on stamp paper, duly signed by the parents/guardians, that they will follow COVID-19 SoPs.
- All students residing in hostel shall wear face mask and must maintain social distancing by restricting themselves to their respective rooms.
- Students have to dine in their respective rooms. Dining hall will not be used for breakfast, lunch or dinner.
- Students will not be allowed to entertain guests in hostel during COVID-19 pandemic.
- In additions to these COVID-19 SoPs and protocols, hostels rules and regulations must be followed and observed as per the hostel management directions .

NOTE : These SOPs are issued on behalf of the Committee formulated by the Vice Chancellor in consultation with Deans and Chairpersons and may subject to revision/change from time to time.



Prof. Dr. Zahid Asghar

Registrar