

BAQAI MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

POLICY & SOP REGARDING RE-OPENING OF THE UNIVERSITY & ITS CONSTITUENT INSTITUTIONS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Version 2

September - 2020



Baqai Medical University

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Federal as well as Provincial Education Ministries in a joint meeting, later approved by the NCOC also, has decided to reopen the HEIs from 15th of September 2020 with implementation of detailed SOPs. The decision along with the directive was received by the University on 7th September 2020 from the CIE Committee, Sindh HEC, Government of Sindh along with “Health Guidelines for Education Institutions Reopening during Covid-19 Pandemic – Mitigation Strategies – Institutions of Higher Education” for compliance.

The reopening or otherwise of the universities will be decided by the Vice Chancellors through the governing boards keeping in mind the “Readiness” status of the university. However, this has to be a planned and gradual reopening under certain conditions / SOPs described in the Guidelines provided by Government of Sindh and Higher Education Commission, Pakistan in their Strategic document.

In view of the above, the Baqai Medical University (BMU), after a high-level meeting decided to submit this policy document to the Higher Education Commission and Government of Sindh through the channel advised by the CIEC.

2. PURPOSE

The main purpose of this policy document is to submit and communicate the process of reopening of the BMU with the objectives, plans, and SOP, the university will follow in letter and spirit, to save the precious time of the students that have already been affected due to COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the closure of the educational institutions. No doubt that the university is very affectively provided online education to its students through a well designed and powerful system but the importance and need for practical work could not be ignored. This policy has been drafted keeping in mind a safe environment for all including students, staff, faculty, and patients.

3. IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

This special policy and SOP shall be implemented immediately and will last till the eradication of the pandemic or approval of some other policy in this regard by the competent authorities.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

- 4.1. The BMU has planned for the gradual reopening of the university and its constituent institutions with well-defined objectives and SOPs following the HEC and CIEC COVID-19 recommendations.
- 4.2. The university, as a first step, will invite the essential faculty and staff to rejoin. Medically fit faculty and staff will be allowed only. Work that continues to be done from home could continue to be done from home.
- 4.3. All examinations of any of the constituent institutions of BMU shall be arranged as per the existing standard protocols of the Examinations Department and following the BMU POLICY & SOP ON EXAMINATIONS TO BE CONDUCTED DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC, Version 32020 and the COVID-19 SOP with proper invigilation.

- 4.4. The University will provide “blended learning” i.e. systematic approach to mix face-to-face teaching with online teaching. The theory will continue to be taught online while the practical/laboratory works to be performed at the campus with strict adherence to SOPs. Online teaching makes it more effective using recorded lectures, video demonstrations, team-based learning, discussion after recorded lectures, etc. The university is also planning to continue Online lectures even after the University resumes its academic activities. The students will be called in a small number of groups for Clinical Rotations, Practical and small group discussions maintaining the SOPs and safety guidelines for COVID 19.
- 4.5. The institutional heads will submit the complete plan including the number of students to be invited, their proper scheduling, the availability of the laboratory, spacing under the social distancing policy, etc. In all such cases, the COVID-19 SOP shall be followed strictly.
- 4.6. It is also the responsibility of the students to follow the procedures and directives issued by the university from time to time to keep themselves updated about the current conditions.
- 4.7. The university will provide transportation for the faculty, staff, and students from the selected points with adherence to the social distancing and BMU Transport SOPs under the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 4.8. The university shall take every possible measure of disinfecting the required premises before and after the examination.
- 4.9. Students need to follow the prescribed time tables as issued by the respective Principals/Directors. This will also help in reducing the number of students at the university premises at the same time.
- 4.10. Complete Instructions to each student shall be delivered via MS Teams or official WhatsApp group for compliance before rejoining the university. After rejoining awareness classes will be held by the respective HODs.
- 4.11. Each student shall provide an Affidavit countersigned by his/her parent or guardian as directed by HEC. The template of the Affidavit will be shared.
- 4.12. Hostel facility will be provided to the female students with strict adherence to the BMU Hostel Rules & Regulations and SOPs
- 4.13. All OPDs and laboratories will function under the recommended guidelines by the respective institutions.
- 4.14. The SOPs defined hereunder shall be followed to the maximum.

5. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

All faculty members, staff, and students shall follow the SOP given hereunder in the best interest of themselves and others at the campus.

- 5.1. Wear a mask at all times when in a public space on campus.

- 5.2. Maintain social/physical distancing of 6 feet in classrooms, laboratories, libraries, cafeterias, offices, corridors, and staircases.
- 5.3. Maintain good hygiene practices:
 - Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water or
 - Use a hand sanitizer
 - Use a tissue (and dispose of it properly) or
 - Use the crook of your elbow when coughing or sneezing
- 5.4. Proper information shall be provided to the students regarding social distancing, the use of sanitizers, masks, and gloves, seating arrangements, etc.
- 5.5. Use only the designated entrances and exits.
- 5.6. Review the latest updates and general guidance provided by the University on the web portal to be designed specifically for updating COVID-19 related information.
- 5.7. Use communal facilities, e.g., kitchens, canteens, meeting rooms, only in accordance with the designated protocols, as it may be necessary to stagger usage or to continue to hold remote meetings to maintain social distancing.
- 5.8. Students shall not be allowed to sit in the cafeteria only take away service shall be available following social distancing of at least 6 feet.
- 5.9. Obey all restrictions on the use of communal equipment such as printers and photocopiers.
- 5.10. Where biometric information systems have been installed, university prescribed instructions shall be followed.
- 5.11. Try not to move around the campus too much. Stick to your own space as much as possible.
- 5.12. Each classroom/area shall be used for the optimum number of students keeping the required sitting distance of at least 6 feet.