


Guidelines Owner:	The Office of Vice President for Research			 جامعة حمد بن خليفة HAMAD BIN KHALIFA UNIVERSITY عضو في المؤسسة قطر Member of Qatar Foundation
Responsible Unit:	Sponsored Research Office			
Guidelines Name:	Graduate and Undergraduate Student Employment under Sponsored Research			
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GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT EMPLOYMENT UNDER SPONSORED RESEARCH GUIDELINES

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1. Record of Amendments

This is a record of approved changes made to these guidelines.

Rev.	Approval Date	GUD. Id Code	Type of Change	Description of Change
00	17/05/2022	OVPR-SRO-HR-GUD-001-000	Initial Release	
01	31/08/2025	OVPR-SRO-HR-GUD-001-001	Update/Revision	
02	18/02/2026	OVPR-SRO-HR-GUD-001-002	Update/Revision	


2. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to define and communicate clear guidelines for the participation of graduate and undergraduate students in sponsored research projects, in accordance with the internal and external sponsor requirements, applicable agreements, and HBKU policies. These guidelines apply to all students who are working under research grants through a Student Sponsored Research Agreement and are deemed to have read and accepted the provisions herein.

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3. Acronyms and Definitions

Abbreviation	Term
Academic Period	For the purposes of this guideline, the academic period shall run from September through May (9 months) of the applicable academic year.
Approved Budget	For the purposes of this document, the Approved Budget refers to the portion of funds allocated for personnel expenses, specifically Student Researchers, in line with the Project's governing agreements, Research Plan, and applicable policies and procedures.
College	Refers to any one of the constituent academic entities of HBKU
Dean	The Dean of the College in which a student researcher is enrolled.
Eligible Student	A student who meets the eligibility criteria under Section 5.1 of this document
Executive Director	The Executive Director of the research institute where the student is engaged in the research activities.
Full Time Student Employment	Employment arrangements under which a student's combined duties across HBKU amount to 20 hours per week during academic periods.
Good Academic Standing	Students engaged in grants must consistently meet HBKU's academic requirements. *The minimum grade or academic rating to be maintained is 3.0"
Governing Agreements	All agreements between HBKU and third parties that govern the conduct, funding, and administration of a research project, including any related or supplementary agreements.
HBKU	Hamad Bin Khalifa University, including its colleges, research entities, faculty members and researchers.
Hourly Compensation	Payment to a student based on approved hourly rates for time spent on authorized research activities, in accordance with this policy and sponsor requirements.
Lead Principal Investigator (LPI)	The HBKU faculty member or researcher responsible for the overall leadership and management of a sponsored research project.
Project / Research Grant	An internally or externally funded research project administered by HBKU and led by HBKU LPI. Including both internal grants (funded by the Office of the Vice-President for Research) and external grants (funded by sponsors outside HBKU).
QF	Qatar Foundation.
Research Activities	Work performed by a student in direct support of a sponsored research project under an SSRSA. This does not include academic coursework, theses, or dissertations, even if related to the project.
Research Assistant (RA-10)	Students working as research assistants (RAs) with their primary supervisors in their college for 10 hours per week.
Research Institute	Research institutes at HBKU are specialized centers that conduct advanced research including QEERI, QCRI and QBRI.
Student Employment Program (SEP)	The Student Employment Program provides HBKU students with part-time jobs (such as library assistant, event coordinator, volunteers etc.) on campus in order to gain work experience.

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Sponsor	An internal or external HBKU organization that provides funding for a sponsored research project.
Sponsored Research Projects	Research projects funded wholly or partially by external restricted funding and administered by HBKU.
SRO	Sponsored Research Office: The HBKU office responsible for the administration and oversight of sponsored research projects.
Stipend	The total monthly financial compensation paid to a student under an SSRSA, covering hourly compensation and/or tuition fee waiver and housing allowance depending on the budget availability and within the approved hourly rates.
Student Sponsored Research Service Agreement (SSRSA)	The agreement between HBKU and a student that authorizes the student hired under the grants, to perform research activities on a sponsored project and receive compensation.
Summer Period	For the purposes of this guideline, the summer period shall run from June to August (3 months) of the applicable academic year.
Teaching Assistant (TA)	A College-based teaching support role requiring up to 10 hours of work per week.
VPR	Vice President for Research
Working Professional	A student who is concurrently employed in a full-time position outside the scope of the SSRSA, including employment within HBKU or Qatar Foundation.
Unplanned Student Researchers	A student researcher position that was not included in the originally approved project budget and requires prior approval from SRO before engagement.


4. General Terms and Conditions

- 4.1 These Guidelines apply to all HBKU Colleges and research entities managing internal and external sponsored research projects, including sub-awards hosted at HBKU, unless otherwise restricted by the sponsor.
- 4.2 Student researchers may participate in sponsored research projects only under a valid and fully executed Student Sponsored Research Agreement (SSRSA). Research activities may commence only after the SSRSA has been executed by all required parties.
- 4.3 No payment shall be made for work performed outside an approved and executed SSRSA. Retroactive SSRSAs and retroactive payments for work performed without a valid SSRSA are not permitted.
- 4.4 Student researchers are required to comply with all applicable HBKU policies, sponsor requirements, terms and conditions outlined in the SSRSA and other governing agreements.

5. Student Eligibility, Employment and Compensation Rules

5.1 Scope and Eligibility

- 5.1.1 HBKU undergraduate and graduate students may participate in an internal or external sponsored research projects under a valid Student Sponsored Research Agreement (SSRSA), provided they comply with this document and applicable Scholarship Guidelines (<https://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/scholarship>) .

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- 5.1.2 To be eligible for paid research activities, a student must:
- be enrolled as a degree-seeking student at HBKU
 - be in good academic standing in accordance with applicable HBKU academic policies and shall be validated by the LPI prior to engaging in the project
 - comply with maximum allowable working hours
 - meet any additional requirements set by their college
 - free of any conflict of interest
- 5.1.3 Students must immediately inform the Lead Principal Investigator (LPI) and the Sponsored Research Office (SRO) of any change that may affect their eligibility. Failure to do so may result in termination of the SSRSA and recovery of payments made in error.

5.2 Permitted Working Hours and Employment Limits

- 5.2.1 During academic periods, students may work a maximum of 20 hours per week (80 hours per month) across all HBKU employment, regardless of the number of roles or projects.
- 5.2.2 During the summer period, students may work up to 40 hours per week, provided this is explicitly stated in the SSRSA and permitted by the sponsor.
- 5.2.3 Students holding College-based roles (e.g., RA or TA) may participate in sponsored research only within their remaining available hours.
- 5.2.4 Working professionals may participate in sponsored research for a maximum of 10 hours per week, subject to sponsor and institutional approval.
- 5.2.5 Working Professionals should obtain approval from their employer to participate and conduct the work and provide declaration through the SSRSA.
- 5.2.6 Maximum allowable hours apply across all HBKU engagements. Students must declare all active engagements (RA,TA,SEP etc.) at SSRSA initiation and upon any change. SRO may suspend payments or terminate the SSRSA if hour limits are exceeded or engagements are not declared.


5.3 Compensation and Payment

- 5.3.1 All paid research activities must be governed by a validly executed SSRSA. No payment shall be made for work performed outside an approved agreement.
- 5.3.1.1 Students shall be compensated on an hourly basis, within the minimum and maximum rates approved for their academic level.
- 5.3.2 The rate of payment for the students shall be as per the table below.

Amounts are reflected in QAR.

Student	Minimum rate/ hour	Minimum rate/ month	Maximum Rate			
			QRDI rate/hour	QRDI rate/month	Non-QRDI rate/hour	Non-QRDI rate/month
Undergraduate	40	3200	55	4400	55	4400
Master's	50	4000	106	8500	125	10000
PHD	75	6000	150	12000	175	14000

- 5.3.3 Students may not participate in sponsored research without compensation, unless their unpaid contribution is explicitly approved as part of cost-sharing arrangement approved by LPI and Dean.
- 5.3.4 Payments are processed monthly upon submission and approval of timesheets in accordance with SRO procedures.

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5.3.5 Tuition fees or housing costs not covered by the College scholarships remain the responsibility of the student and may be paid from the student's stipend.

5.4 Budget and Expenditure Controls

- 5.4.1 Expenditure on student researchers must not exceed the approved budget allocation for student personnel within the project.
- 5.4.2 Payments may only be made for work performed within the approved project period.
- 5.4.3 In the event of project suspension and termination, payments may continue subject to available funds and as per the sponsor's agreement.

5.5 Renewal and Extension of Student Agreements

- 5.5.1 SSRSAs may be renewed or extended only within the project duration and subject to budget availability.
- 5.5.2 Renewal requests must be submitted by the LPI to the SRO at least 10 business days before the agreement end date.
- 5.5.3 Renewals take effect only after the current agreement expires and all required documentation is approved.
- 5.5.4 Renewals cannot be processed beyond the period specified in the enrollment letter, therefore, an updated enrollment letter is required in such cases.

5.6 Roles and Responsibilities


- 5.6.1 LPIs are responsible for:
 - 5.6.1.1 ensuring compliance with hour limits and eligibility rules
 - 5.6.1.2 managing conflicts of interest
 - 5.6.1.3 notifying the SRO of any changes in student employment status.
- 5.6.2 ED/Dean's are responsible for: (Approval Workflow)
 - 5.6.2.1 approve the participation of the UG/GS in the project under the LPI within their respective entity.
 - 5.6.2.2 endorse and approve any corrective action (e.g; suspension or termination) initiated by the LPI concerning the student.
- 5.6.3 SRO is responsible for:
 - 5.6.3.1 review the student's hiring documents and provide budget availability
 - 5.6.3.2 process the GS/UG hiring
 - 5.6.3.3 review and approve the student's monthly timesheets
 - 5.6.3.4 process the monthly stipend payments

6. Administrative Process for Graduate Student Participation in Sponsored Research

This section describes the standard process for establishing a Student Sponsored Research Agreement (SSRSA).

6.1 Initiation and College Approval

- 6.1.1 The Lead Principal Investigator (LPI) initiates a request to engage a student researcher by submitting the request to the relevant College.
- 6.1.2 The College reviews the request to confirm:
 - student eligibility,
 - academic standing,
 - alignment with College policies.
- 6.1.3 Upon approval, the College endorses the draft SSRSA.

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6.2 Submission to Sponsored Research Office (SRO)

6.2.1 Following College approval, the LPI submits a hiring request through the SRO system, including:

- a draft SSRSA,
- required student documentation,
- confirmation of budget availability.

6.3 Review and Agreement Execution

6.3.1 The SRO reviews the submission to:

- verify completeness of documentation,
- confirm budget availability,
- ensure compliance with sponsor and institutional requirements.

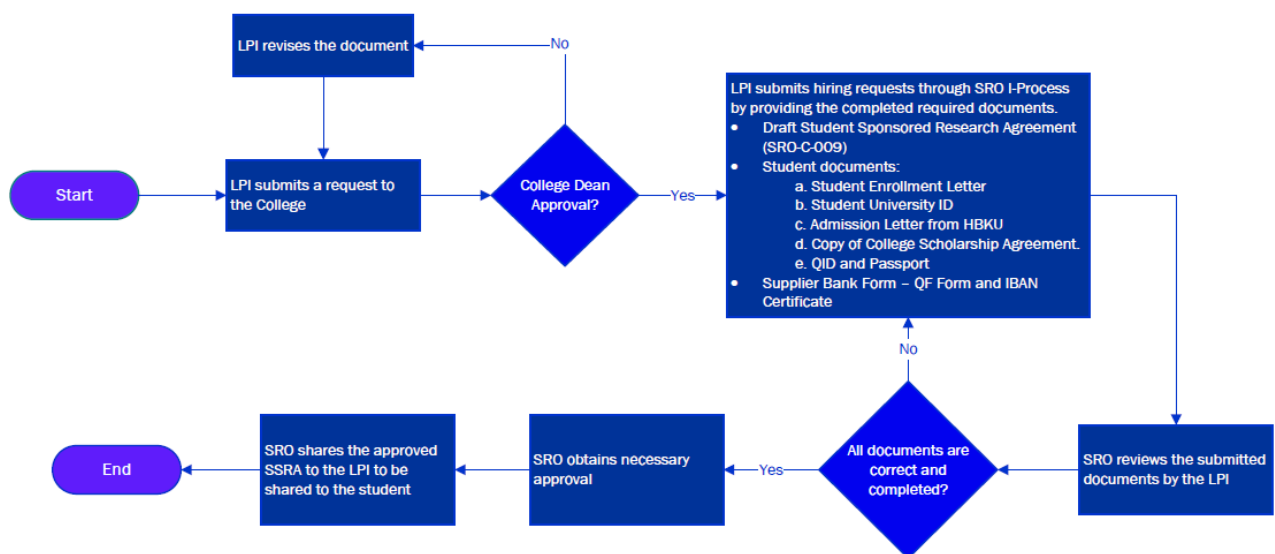
6.3.2 Hiring requests received between the 1st and 15th of the month will have an effective start date within the same month. Requests received from the 16th through the end of the month will have an effective start date in the following month.

6.3.2 Once approved, the SRO issues the finalized SSRSA to the LPI, who shares it with the student for signature.

6.3.3 Research activities may begin only after the SSRSA is fully executed.

The flowchart below sets forth the steps required from all relevant personnel in finalizing a Student Sponsored Research Agreement:

GS / UG HIRING PROCEDURE




7. Early Termination of Student Sponsored Research Agreements

This section applies only to early termination initiated by the LPI or SRO.

It does **not** apply to:

- student-initiated resignation,

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- natural expiration of the SSRSA,
- project completion or termination.

7.1 General Principles

- 7.1.1 Early termination of an SSRSA must be handled fairly, transparently, and with appropriate notice.
- 7.1.2 All terminations of an SSRSA must be communicated to the SRO.

7.2 Termination Initiated by the LPI


- 7.2.1 Before initiating termination for performance-related reasons, the LPI must develop a corrective action plan in consultation with the relevant Dean.
- 7.2.2 The corrective action period normally ranges from **two to six weeks**, depending on the nature of the issue.
- 7.2.3 If the student fails to meet the agreed expectations during this period, the LPI may proceed with termination.
- 7.2.4 Termination requires written approval from the Dean, confirming that corrective steps were taken. Approval should not be unreasonably withheld.
- 7.2.5 Once approved:
- the LPI submits a termination request to the SRO at least two weeks before the effective date;
 - the student receives written notice of termination, including the effective date.

7.3 Termination Initiated by the SRO

- 7.3.1 The SRO may terminate an SSRSA for cause (e.g., non-compliance, ineligibility, sponsor restrictions)
- 7.3.2 Such termination requires written approval from both the LPI and the Dean, which shall not be unreasonably withheld.

7.4 Effect of Termination

- 7.4.1 Upon termination, the student must immediately cease all research activities under the SSRSA.
- 7.4.2 Payment shall be made only for work performed up to the effective termination date, subject to approved timesheets.

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8. Appendices

Appendices provide guidance and illustrative examples only. They do not replace or override the policy provisions in Sections 1–6. In case of inconsistency, the main policy text shall prevail.

Appendix A – Working Hour Limits

Appendix A summarizes common employment scenarios to illustrate how working hour limits may be applied in practice. Actual arrangements must comply with Section 4.2 of this policy and sponsor requirements.


Student	Weekly Limit of Hours	Scenario-Based 20-Hour Distribution			
		RA-10	TA	SEP	SRO
Undergraduate (UG)	20	0	0	0	20
Master's/PHD	20	10	10	0	0
		10	0	0	10
		10	0	10	0
		0	10	0	10

Kindly visit the following link to check the tuition fees for all HBKU Colleges.

[Scholarship Guidelines for HBKU Graduate Programs | Hamad Bin Khalifa University](#)

Please visit the following website for HBKU research and Sponsored Research office:

- <https://research.hbku.edu.qa/>
- <https://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/research/sro>

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Appendix B - Compensation Rates

Appendix B provides the approved minimum and maximum hourly compensation ranges for student researchers.

Actual rates are determined by the LPI within these limits, subject to budget availability and SRO approval.

Allowable Working Hours	Academic Period	RATE CALCULATION:				
Allowable Hours/month	80	Program Type	Monthly Rate	Rate/hour	SRO - 10	SRO -20
		PHD - Minimum	6,000	75	3,000	6,000
		*PHD - Mid		0	-	-
		PHD - Maximum	14,000	175	7,000	14,000
		Master's - Minimum	4,000	50	2,000	4,000
		*Master's - Mid		0	-	-
		Master's - Maximum	10,000	125	5,000	10,000
		Undergraduate (UG) - Minimum	40	40	1,600	3,200
		*Undergraduate (UG) - Mid		0	-	-
		Undergraduate (UG) - Maximum	55	55	2,200	4,400

*** Please enter a value greater than the Minimum and lower than the Maximum rates.**

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Appendix C- Compensation Examples

The examples below are for planning purposes only and do not constitute policy. Actual compensation is determined by approved hours, rates, and project budget availability.

Program Category	PHD - Int'l			# of Hours / Week		# of Months				
		Academic Period	Sept - May	20	9					
SRO Stipend	PHD - Minimum			Summer Period	Jun - Aug	40	3			
Stipend (RA-10)	Top-Up									
	TA	SEP	SRO - Academic Period	SRO Monthly Stipend	Total Combined Monthly Hours	Total Monthly Income	SRO-Summer Period	SRO Monthly Stipend	Total Combined Monthly Hours	Total Monthly Income
	10	0	0	10	3,000	80	12,000	30	9,000	40

STIPEND RATES:			
Classification	RA - 10 Monthly Rate	TA - Hourly Rate	SEP - Hourly Rate
PHD - Qatari	11000	50	40
PHD - Int'l	9000	50	40
PHD - Local	5000	50	40
Master's - Qatari	9000	50	40
Master's - Int'l	7000	50	40
Master's - Local	4000	50	40

SRO ANNUAL STIPEND COVERAGE				
Academic Period	Summer Period	Total	Maximum -QRDI Rate	
27,000	27,000	54,000	146,000	\$ 40,000