Academic Affairs and Research

Use of Graduate Assistants Procedure

MBZUAI–AAR–GRADASSIST-PRO–V1.0

Effective: 9/9/2021

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1. Document Control and Version History Information

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For Office Use – Keywords for search function	

2. Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Graduate Assistants	Graduate students [who]may support the faculty by aiding with class activities (such as practical sessions and tutorials), facilitating group discussions and team-based learning, and offering technical support. (2019 CAA Standards for Institutional Licensure and Program Accreditation, p. 50)

3. Introduction

This document provides information on the procedures pertaining to the use of graduate assistants under the academic program section. The use of graduate assistants will contribute to students' professional development through assisting faculty members in their work with different limited tasks.

4. Objective

This procedure aims to clarify:
1. The procedures for the selection, supervision, and evaluation of graduate assistants.
2. The assignments, terms and duration of engagement and remuneration of graduate assistants

5. Scope

This procedure applies to students and faculty members, as applicable, and those involved in decision-making with regard to graduate assistants.

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6. Use of Graduate Assistant Procedure

6.1. Graduate Assistant Selection and Engagement

6.1.1. Students are selected as graduate assistants based on their academic results during their studies and their soft skills and proficiency. Thus, to be eligible for the Graduate Assistantship program, students must fulfil the following criteria:

- Attain at least B+ in the course that the assistant will contribute to.
- Demonstrate proficiency in terms of soft skills (e.g., communication and social skills, character or personality traits). Students may be evaluated through an interview conducted by the concerned faculty member or through informal observation.
- Additional criteria set by the Provost and approved by the President such as previous experience in similar projects or courses, experience in carrying out literature searches, etc.

6.1.2. The selection of graduate assistants is made by the Provost, after recommendations from the Chair of the Academic Department and the concerned supervisor.

6.1.3. The supervisor will assign appropriate tasks to the graduate assistant in terms of research, teaching and administrative tasks.

6.1.4. Selected students will receive a financial compensation on an hourly basis, decided by the Provost

6.1.5. Graduate assistants are normally engaged for the duration of a regular semester, but the duration may be renewed after semester end, upon recommendations from the Chair of the concerned Academic Department based on feedback from the concerned supervisor, and the approval of the Provost.

6.1.6. To renew a student as a graduate assistant, he/she must demonstrate satisfactory performance and maintain the level or requirements as outlined in the terms of engagement

6.1.7. The Graduate Assistantship may be cancelled at any time if the student fails to demonstrate his/her dedication to tasks to which he/she is assigned. The cancelation will be based on feedback from the concerned supervisor, and after review of the Chair of the concerned Academic Department, and approval of the Provost.

6.1.8. The use of graduate assistants should not exceed 6 hours per week.

6.1.9. Every graduate assistant will be paid an hourly rate as determined from time to time.

6.1.10. Every graduate assistant will work under the supervision of the concerned faculty who will provide him/her guidance and oral and written feedback at the end of every semester that will be considered as a formal evaluation.

6.1.11. Prior to commencing duties and conducting assigned tasks, the graduate assistants must undergo graduate teaching assistant training to ensure the development of the necessary capabilities which would enable them to carry out their duties effectively.

6.1.12. The supervisor may assign different tasks to the Graduate Assistant that include, but not be limited to:

- Preparation of laboratory material.
- Marking of student assignments.
- Assistance with exam organization.
- Marking of exams.

6.1.13. Graduate Assistantship opportunities will be announced to students through the formal communication channels used by the university once they are available. Students who wish to apply

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should complete and submit the application form to the Chair of the concerned Academic Department.

6.2. Procedure for Awarding the Graduate Assistantship

The following procedure describes the steps of awarding a Graduate Assistantship:

6.2.1. The supervisor (faculty member) will send a request for a graduate assistant to his/her Academic Department Chair.

6.2.2. The Chair of the concerned Academic Department reviews the request and, if endorsed, forwards it to the Provost for approval.

6.2.3. The student, guided by his/her advisor, will complete an application form and submit it to the Chair of the concerned Academic Department. The student's advisor will ensure that applicants comply, at the minimum, to the criteria required by the Graduate Assistantship program and embeds his/her recommendations.

6.2.4. The Chair of the concerned Academic Department reviews applications received and sends eligible ones to the Provost for his selection and approval.

6.2.5. The Non-eligible applicants will be notified with reasons of the rejection of their application.

6.2.6. The Provost notifies the Chair of the concerned Academic Department about selected applicants.

6.2.7. The Chair will notify the selected applicants and allocate them to their supervisors.

6.2.8. The selected applicants will attend the graduate assistants training program workshops on topics that include grading, dealing with student problems, preparing and delivering effective class and lab sessions, and using instructional and course management technology. The program may include the following topics:

- Building a good relationship with the supervising instructor;
- Communication/presentation skills;
- Critical thinking;
- Measurement and evaluation;
- Foundation of teaching;
- Helping students in office hours;
- Proctoring and grading tests;
- Covering lectures;
- Identifying relevant resources (print, electronic, and human) for research/course topic.

6.2.9. To meet the different needs of all graduate assistants in a limited number of hours, the university will provide each of them with useful resources and handouts which offer guidance and tips addressing the different responsibilities they may assume during the period they are assigned as graduate assistants, which are largely self-explanatory.

6.2.10. Mentoring will be an ongoing process where the responsible faculty member will act as a supervisor who advises or guides the graduate assistant in matters relating to academic achievements, career development plans, creating an agenda for working toward his/her professional development goals and to provide the mentee with insights into the process of building successful teaching career.

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6.2.11. The Supervisor will assess the specific specialized needs of the graduate assistant and
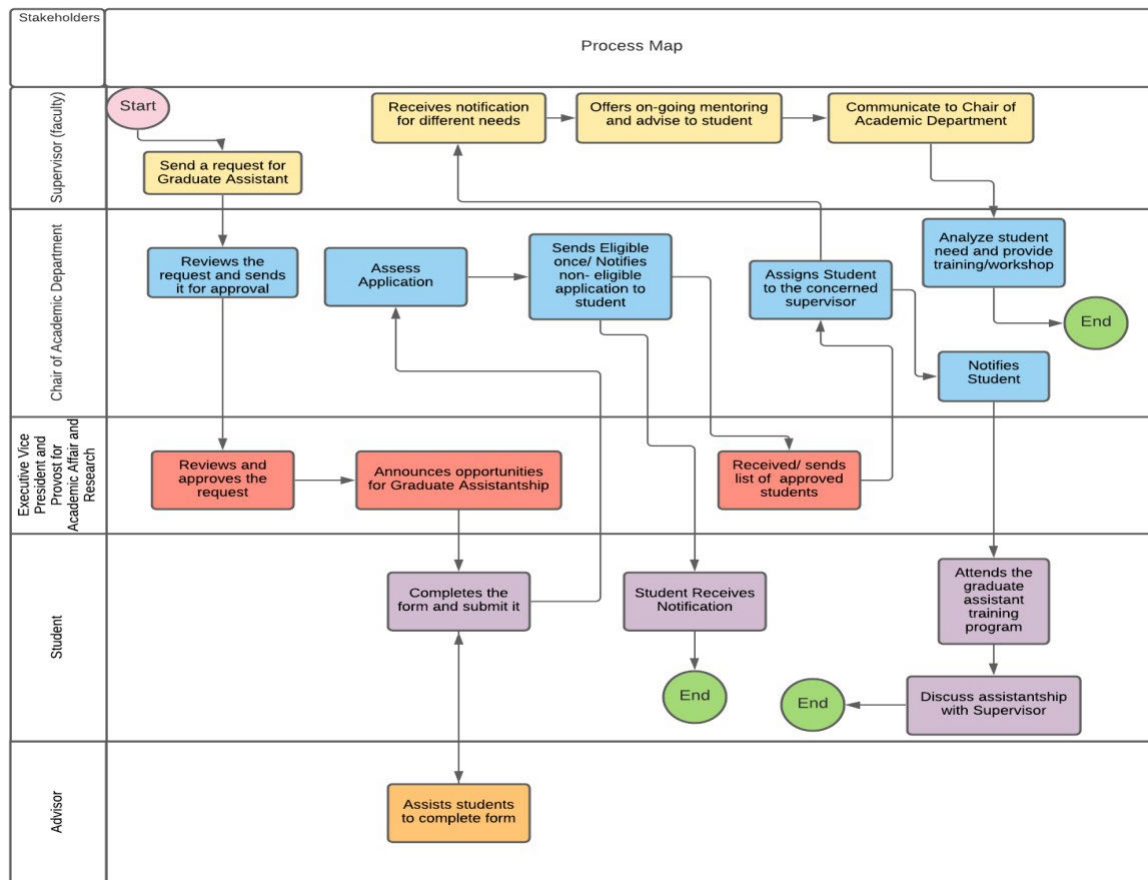
recommend to the Chair of the Department to allow the use of follow-up seminars or workshops to address those needs.

Remuneration

6.2.12. The student initiates the request identifying the number of hours served for a particular month, the amount is calculated automatically and appears in total amount field to be paid (time sheet may be uploaded).
   a. The respective faculty member approves.
   b. The respective Department Chair endorses.
   c. The Registrar creates a credit note in CNS under the code "GA". The amount will be paid to the students along with their monthly stipend; therefore, the cut-off date is 12th of each month.

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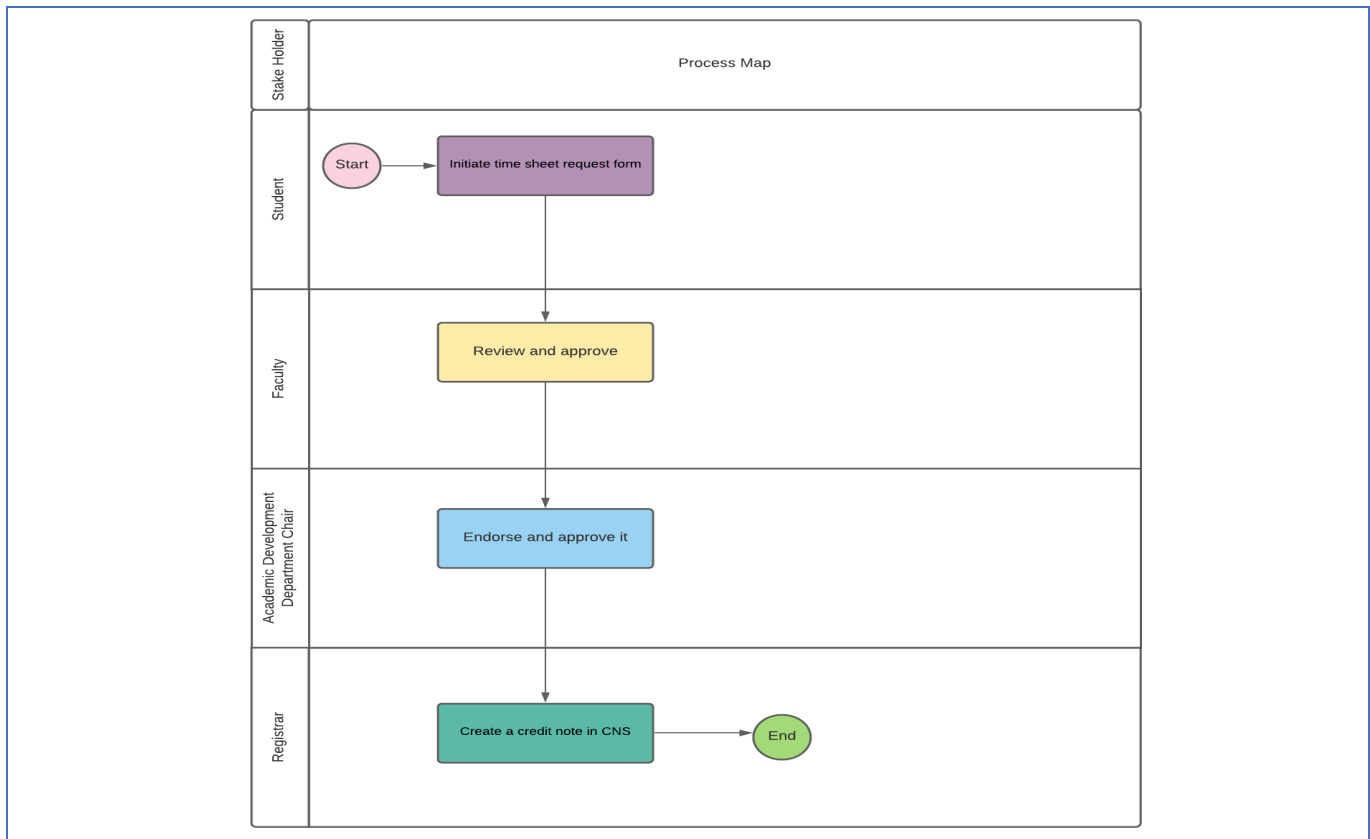
7. Related Documents

Section	Related Document(s)
9/8/2023	9/8/2023

8. Version History

Version number	Person responsible	Date of change	Comments
V1.0	Provost	9/9/2021	First approved version