

HIGHER EDUCATION ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES DEPARTMENT

GOVERNMENT OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA



1st Ranking of

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

(2026)

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FOREWORD BY THE CHANCELLOR/CHIEF MINISTER

The **18th Constitutional Amendment** marked a significant milestone in Pakistan's governance framework by devolving greater responsibility for higher education to the provinces. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, this responsibility is entrusted to the Higher Education, Archives & Libraries Department (HED), which is mandated to regulate, supervise, and promote standards of higher education across both public and private sector Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of the Province. In fulfilling this mandate, the Department remains committed to ensuring that universities operate in accordance with the principles of good governance, academic excellence, transparency, accountability, and societal relevance.



Over the years, the higher education sector in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has witnessed substantial growth in terms of institutional diversity, student enrollment, academic programs, and research activities. While this expansion presents significant opportunities, it also underscores the need for robust mechanisms to assess institutional performance, ensure quality, and promote continuous improvement. It is therefore imperative to adopt an objective, evidence-based, and performance-driven framework that enables meaningful evaluation and benchmarking of universities.

In this context, **I am pleased to introduce the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities Ranking**, a comprehensive framework designed to assess and benchmark the performance of public and private sector universities across the province. The ranking system is intended not merely as a comparative exercise, but as a strategic tool for institutional development, informed decision-making, and quality enhancement.

Through a transparent and standardized methodology, the ranking system will help identify institutional strengths, highlight areas requiring improvement, and support universities in achieving higher standards of academic and administrative excellence. It will also encourage healthy competition, foster innovation, strengthen quality assurance practices, and promote a culture of accountability throughout the higher education sector.

I am confident that this initiative will contribute significantly to the advancement of higher education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, enabling our universities to better serve society, respond to emerging challenges, and enhance their standing at national and international levels. I commend all stakeholders involved in the development of this framework and look forward to its successful implementation for the benefit of our students, institutions, and the province as a whole.

Mr. Muhammad Sohail Afridi
(Chief Minister/Chancellor of KP Public Sector Universities)
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

FOREWORD OF PRO-CHANCELLOR/MINISTER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES DEPARTMENT.

It gives me immense pleasure to present the **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities Ranking**, a landmark initiative of the Higher Education Department aimed at strengthening quality, accountability, transparency, and excellence across our higher education institutions.



Higher education plays a pivotal role in shaping the intellectual, social, and economic future of our province. As we strive to build a knowledge-based society, it is essential that our universities continuously improve their academic standards, research productivity, governance practices, and student outcomes. The introduction of a comprehensive university ranking system represents an important step toward achieving these objectives.

This ranking framework has been developed to provide an evidence-based assessment of institutional performance and to encourage a culture of continuous improvement. By measuring key indicators related to teaching and learning, research and innovation, governance, community engagement, and institutional development, the system offers a transparent mechanism through which universities can evaluate their progress and identify areas for enhancement. The initiative is designed not merely to rank institutions, but to foster healthy competition, promote best practices, and support informed decision-making by students, parents, policymakers, and university leadership.

The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa remains committed to advancing the quality of higher education throughout the province. Through this ranking system, we seek to align our institutions with national and international standards while recognizing the unique challenges and opportunities within our regional context. The framework reflects our vision of creating universities that are academically vibrant, socially responsive, technologically advanced, and globally competitive.

I would like to acknowledge the contributions of academic experts, university leaders, quality assurance professionals, and all stakeholders whose valuable input has helped shape this initiative. Their dedication and commitment have been instrumental in developing a ranking system that is fair, credible, and reflective of institutional performance.

I am confident that this initiative will serve as a catalyst for excellence and innovation across the higher education sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Together, we can build stronger institutions, empower our students, and contribute meaningfully to the sustainable development and prosperity of our province and nation.

Mr. Meena Khan Afridi
(Minister for Higher Education/Pro-Chancellor of KP Public Sector Universities)
Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

FOREWORD OF SECRETARY, HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The Higher Education Department, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, is committed to fostering excellence, accountability, and innovation across the province's higher education sector. In pursuit of these objectives, I am pleased to present the **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa University Ranking**, an important initiative designed to assess institutional performance, promote quality enhancement, and strengthen the overall higher education ecosystem.

Universities serve as centers of knowledge creation, research, innovation, and human capital development. As the demands of the twenty-first century continue to evolve, higher education institutions must demonstrate not only academic excellence but also effective governance, impactful research, financial sustainability, community engagement, and meaningful contributions to socio-economic development. The ranking system provides a structured and objective framework to evaluate these dimensions and encourage continuous institutional improvement.

This initiative reflects the Department's commitment to evidence-based policymaking and performance-driven governance. By establishing transparent indicators and measurable benchmarks, the ranking system enables universities to assess their strengths, identify areas for development, and align their strategic priorities with provincial, national, and international quality standards. It also provides stakeholders, including students, parents, policymakers, and university leadership, with reliable information to support informed decision-making.

The development of this ranking framework has been guided by extensive consultations with academic leaders, quality assurance experts, policymakers, and other stakeholders. Their collective expertise has helped ensure that the methodology is comprehensive, credible, and responsive to the diverse missions and contexts of universities across the province.

The ranking should be viewed not merely as a comparative exercise but as a catalyst for institutional learning, innovation, and excellence. Its ultimate purpose is to support universities in their pursuit of higher standards of performance and greater contributions to society. Through constructive competition and a shared commitment to quality, we can collectively strengthen the higher education landscape of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

I extend my appreciation to all individuals and institutions who contributed to the development of this initiative. I am confident that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa University Ranking System will serve as a valuable tool for enhancing quality, promoting transparency, and advancing the strategic goals of higher education in the province.

Dr Amber Ali Khan
Secretary, Higher Education Department
Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Reforms in KP Higher Education:

KP Government has initiated various reforms in Higher Education which are:

- I. **KP Universities Act 2012 Revision** for good governance and academic management in KP Universities which include Revision of Criteria of V.C, Pro V.C, Registrar, Dean, Chairman with proper Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for all.
- II. **KP Task Force on Higher Education** for Strategic planning 2025-35 which covers all aspect of Higher Education. Its roadmap for KP Higher Education and set direction for next 10 years.
- III. **Curriculum Uniformity and Standardization of B.S & A.D** in KP Under HEC Islamabad Guidelines for 67 B.S program which will solve all issues of KP institutions in terms of curriculum, Assessment and internship etc. This exercise is done by all professional academician of KP along with HEC team.
- IV. **Quality Assurance in Universities & Colleges** of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is one of the success model of KP government where QEC are established in all KP colleges with proper SOPs like Universities QEC which follow HEC guidelines for Q.A. This Quality Assurance Cell not only bring Universities and colleges on same pages in terms of Academic and Quality assurance but also coordinate with HEC Islamabad and other provincial Higher Education of Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, AJK and Gilgit Baltistan. Same KP SOP on Q.A for colleges are recommended by HEC to all Pakistan.
- V. **Ranking of KP Universities and colleges** is one of the good initiatives which is never imitated so far by any Provincial government. This all show commitment of KP government for quality education in our institution.

Objectives of University Ranking

The Higher Education Department, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has designed the University Ranking System with the overarching aim of promoting excellence in higher education through the assessment of institutional performance, fostering healthy competition, and encouraging continuous quality enhancement among Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of the province.

The ranking system is designed to achieve the following objectives:

- To foster a culture of excellence and healthy competition among HEIs, encouraging them to enhance their performance and compete effectively at both national and international levels.
- To provide a comprehensive and objective framework for evaluating and comparing the performance of universities against established academic, research, governance, and institutional quality indicators.

- To promote continuous improvement in the quality of teaching, research, innovation, community engagement, and student support services through systematic performance assessment.
- To serve as a strategic self-assessment and benchmarking tool, enabling universities to identify their strengths, address areas requiring improvement, and formulate evidence-based development plans.
- To provide reliable and transparent information to students, parents, policymakers, funding agencies, and other stakeholders to support informed decision-making, policy formulation, and resource allocation.
- To strengthen institutional accountability, transparency, and good governance practices, while enhancing the national and international visibility and reputation of universities.
- To facilitate benchmarking, collaboration, and the exchange of best practices among HEIs, thereby contributing to the overall advancement of the higher education sector.

Introduction

Higher education plays a pivotal role in the socio-economic development of a nation by producing skilled human capital, advancing knowledge through research and innovation, and addressing emerging societal challenges. In an increasingly competitive and knowledge-driven global environment, the quality and performance of universities have become critical indicators of educational excellence and institutional effectiveness.

Recognizing the importance of continuous quality enhancement in the higher education sector, the Higher Education Department, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, has established the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa University Ranking System. The ranking framework is designed to provide a comprehensive, transparent, and evidence-based assessment of universities operating within the province. It evaluates institutional performance across key dimensions, including teaching and learning, research and innovation, governance and management, community engagement, financial sustainability, student support services, employability and other relevant indicators of academic excellence.

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa University Ranking System aims to foster a culture of quality, accountability, and healthy competition among Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). By benchmarking institutional performance against predefined standards and best practices, the ranking system encourages universities to identify areas for improvement, enhance their academic and administrative processes, and strengthen their contribution to regional and national development.

Furthermore, the ranking provides valuable information to students, parents, policymakers, funding agencies, and other stakeholders, supporting informed decision-making and promoting

transparency within the higher education sector. Through periodic assessment and performance monitoring, the ranking system seeks to drive continuous improvement and elevate the overall quality, competitiveness, and international standing of universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Methodology for University Ranking

✓ Overview

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa University Ranking System adopts a comprehensive, transparent, and evidence-based methodology to assess the performance of public and private sector universities. The ranking framework evaluates institutions across multiple dimensions of higher education performance, including governance, academic quality, research productivity, financial sustainability, student support, quality assurance, employability outcomes, and societal contribution.

The methodology is designed to promote accountability, continuous improvement, and institutional excellence while ensuring fair comparison among universities operating under diverse contexts and mandates.

✓ Structure of the Ranking Framework

The ranking system comprise:

- Twelve (12) Main Indicators covering governance, academics, research, finance, infrastructure, and societal impact;
- Sixty-Five (65) Sub-Indicators (KPIs) used for assessment under the respective main indicators;
- A cumulative scoring mechanism with an overall total of 100 marks. Weightages are assigned only to the main indicators. Sub-indicators have been assessed based on evidence, compliance, and performance benchmarks as notified by HED.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities Ranking 2026, Framework

S. No	Main Indicator	Weightage (%)
1	Governance	10%
2	Research & Development	20%
3	Finance & Fund Generation	15%
4	Student Support Services	5%
5	Academic Excellence	10%
6	Linkages with Industry / Foreign HEIs	5%
7	Library & Information Technology (IT)	5%
8	Emerging Skills Courses	5%

9	Annual Report	5%
10	Quality Assurance (QA) Implementation	10%
11	Social Cohesion	5%
12	Graduate Employability	5%
Total		100%

Major Indicator (Weightage)	Sub-Indicators
Governance (10%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic planning and policy compliance • Merit-based appointments of academic and administrative leadership • Transparency in administrative, academic, and financial operations • Faculty–student ratio • Recruitment, promotion, and tenure policies • Effectiveness and functionality of statutory bodies
Research & Development (20%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research publications in HEC recognized/indexed journals • Citation performance (per faculty and per article) • Patents, innovations, and prototypes • Organization and participation in academic conferences and workshops • Faculty and student fellowships • Research grants and funded projects
Finance & Fund Generation (15%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual budget utilization and financial sustainability • International research funding and grants • Industry-funded projects • Competitive research grants • Own-source revenue generation (excluding student fees) • Alumni donations and endowment funds
Student Support Services (5%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career services and counseling facilities • Scholarships and financial aid mechanisms • Mental health services and civic education initiatives • Student grievance redressal systems • Housing, accommodation, and transportation services
Academic Excellence (10%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty qualifications and academic credentials • Internationalization of faculty and student • Curriculum modernization and accreditation status • Program enrollment health • Teaching quality and student satisfaction • Awards and recognitions • Faculty development and training programs
Linkages with Industry & Foreign HEIs (5%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active institutional MoUs • Internships and graduate placements • Faculty exchange programs • Student exchange programs • Collaborative and joint degree programs
Library & Information Technology (5%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital and centralized library systems • Access to international e-journals and databases • IT and ICT infrastructure supporting

Emerging Skills Courses (5%)	teaching and research• Library usage and accessibility • Courses in emerging and future-oriented disciplines• Short-term skills and professional certification programs• Alignment of academic offerings with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
Annual Reporting (5%)	• Timely submission of annual reports to HED/HEC• Research and academic performance reporting• Financial audit and transparency disclosures• Public accessibility of statutory and regulatory documents
Quality Assurance Implementation (10%)	• Functionality of Quality Assurance Offices• Completion of academic program reviews• Accreditation status and compliance• Integration of student and faculty feedback mechanisms • HEIs Score by QAA HEC for last 3 year.
Social Cohesion (5%)	• Participation in national and community events• Student engagement in extracurricular activities• Availability of sports, cultural, and recreational facilities• Student satisfaction with campus life
Graduate Employability (5%)	• Graduate employment outcomes• Employer feedback and reputation• Alumni engagement, entrepreneurship, and startup initiatives• Performance of career placement offices

✓ **Data Collection and Verification**

The ranking process is based on quantitative and qualitative data submitted by universities through a standardized reporting template prescribed by the Higher Education Department (HED).

Data sources include:

- Institutional records and audited reports.
- Annual reports and strategic plans.
- Quality Assurance reports.
- Financial statements.
- Research databases and bibliometric sources.
- Graduate employment records.
- Industry and international collaboration records.
- On-site verification and third-party validation, where required.

A total of 45 Universities of the province including 34 public sector universities and 11 private sector universities have been asked to submit the data on prescribed template designed by the Higher Education Department (HED) and the universities have also been asked to provide the accuracy and authenticity certificates regarding the submitted information. HED reserves the

right to verify, validate, or audit any submitted data and may apply penalties or score adjustments in cases of misreporting or non-compliance.

✓ **Ranking Categories**

HED KP has Categorized Universities into 4 categories.

- i. General Universities (established upto 2010)
- ii. Professional/Technical Universities
- iii. Newly Emerging Universities (established after 2011)
- iv. Private Sector universities

✓ **Data Normalization, Scoring Framework and result**

Each university has been assessed against twelve major indicators. **The data has been normalized with the purpose to convert different types of institutional data into a common and comparable scale so that universities can be evaluated fairly, without bias from size or resource differences, and combined accurately to produce a reliable overall ranking based on all performance indicators.** Scores obtained under each indicator have been multiplied by the assigned weightage to determine the weighted score.

Universities have then ranked based on their relative weighted scores. The individual score of each indicator and the cumulative score of each university has been shared to the Vice chancellor/Focal person of the respective universities and asked for any reservation/correction. After addressing the genuine claims of the universities the final result has been given as;

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities Ranking 2026 (Over all Universities Ranking)

Rank	University	Relative Score
1	IMSciences Peshawar	100.00
2	Hazara University, Mansehra	95.02
3	Pak Austria Fachhochschule-IAST Haripur	91.28
4	University of Malakand	90.01
5	University of Engineering & Technology, Peshawar	89.89
6	GIKI Topi Swabi	89.23
7	Khyber Medical University, Peshawar	87.93
8	Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan	86.75
9	Kohat University of Science and Technology	84.23
10	University of Swat	82.38
11	Shuhada-e-APS University of Technology, Nowshera	81.84
12	University of Agriculture Peshawar	81.77
13	CECOS University of I.T & Emerging Sciences	81.62
14	University of Engineering & Technology Mardan	80.19
15	Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University, Peshawar	78.61
16	University of Peshawar	77.74
17	Qurtuba University of Science & IT, D.I. Khan	75.91
18	Islamia College University, Peshawar	74.18
19	Sarhad University Peshawar	74.14
20	University of Haripur	73.61
21	IQRA National University Peshawar	70.98
22	Abbottabad University of Science & Technology	70.13
23	University of Agriculture, Swat	68.09
24	Bacha Khan University, Charsadda	67.37
25	Khushal Khan Khattak University, Karak	66.63
26	City University of S&IT Peshawar	64.54
27	Abasyn University Peshawar	64.01
28	Gomal University D.I. Khan	63.75
29	Women University, Swabi	60.94
30	University of Swabi	57.90
31	University of Buner	57.59
32	University of Science and Technology, Bannu	57.44
33	Women University, Mardan	53.48
34	University of Lakki Marwat	51.58
35	University of Chitral	51.46
36	BRAINS Peshawar	46.44
37	Agriculture University of D.I. Khan	45.12
38	FATA University	45.04
39	University of Engineering and Applied Sciences, Swat	40.43
40	Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University, Sheringal	39.59
41	University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Swat	36.38
42	University of Shangla	8.61
43	Preston University Kohat	Data Not Submitted

44	Gandhara University Peshawar	Data Not Submitted
45	Northern University Nowshera	Data Not Submitted

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities Ranking 2026 (General Universities)

Rank	University	Relative Score
1	IMSciences Peshawar	100.00
2	Hazara University, Mansehra	95.02
3	University of Malakand	90.01
4	Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan	86.75
5	Kohat University of Science and Technology	84.23
6	University of Swat	82.38
7	Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University, Peshawar	78.61
8	University of Peshawar	77.74
9	Islamia College University, Peshawar	74.18
10	Gomal University D.I. Khan	63.75
11	University of Science and Technology, Bannu	57.44
12	Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University, Sheringal	39.59

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities Ranking 2026 (Professional/Technical Universities)

Rank	University	Relative Score
1	University of Engineering & Technology, Peshawar	100.00
2	Khyber Medical University, Peshawar	97.82
3	University of Agriculture Peshawar	90.97
4	University of Engineering & Technology Mardan	89.20
5	University of Agriculture, Swat	75.74
6	Agriculture University of D.I. Khan	50.20
7	University of Engineering and Applied Sciences, Swat	44.97
8	University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Swat	40.47

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities Ranking 2026 (Emerging Universities)

Rank	University	Relative Score
1	Pak Austria Fachhochschule–IAST Haripur	100.00
2	Shuhada-e-APS University of Technology, Nowshera	89.66
3	University of Haripur	80.65
4	Abbottabad University of Science & Technology	76.83
5	Bacha Khan University, Charsadda	73.81
6	Khushal Khan Khattak University, Karak	73.00
7	Women University, Swabi	66.77
8	University of Swabi	63.44
9	University of Buner	63.09
10	Women University, Mardan	58.59
11	University of Lakki Marwat	56.51
12	University of Chitral	56.38
13	FATA University	49.34
14	University of Shangla	9.43

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities Ranking 2026 (Private Sector Universities)

Rank	University	Relative Score
1	GIKI Topi, Swabi	100.00
2	CECOS University of I.T & Emerging Sciences	91.48
3	Qurtuba University of Science & IT, D.I. Khan	85.07
4	Sarhad University, Peshawar	83.09
5	IQRA National University, Peshawar	79.55
6	City University of Science & Information Technology, Peshawar	72.33
7	Abasyn University, Peshawar	71.74
8	BRAINS Institute, Peshawar	52.05
9	Preston University, Kohat	Data Not Submitted
10	Gandhara University, Peshawar	Data Not Submitted
11	Northern University, Nowshera	Data Not Submitted

Review and Continuous Improvement

The ranking methodology will be reviewed periodically by the Higher Education Department to ensure its continued relevance, fairness, and alignment with national and international best practices. Indicators, weightages, and assessment criteria may be revised in future in consultation with stakeholders to address emerging priorities in higher education. Ranking Committee of HED KP did excellent job in a professional way. For further improvement in future or any suggestion, feedback is welcome and can be submitted to Dr Imran Ullah Marwat, Director Quality Assurance HED KP/Convener of Ranking Committee via email at qached.kp@gmail.com or imranmarwat@gmail.com

**Higher Education Archives and Libraries Department
Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan**