



جامعة نِزْوَى
University of Nizwa

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UoN CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE POLICY

A blue ink signature, appearing to read 'Ahmed bin Khalfan AlRawahi', written over a horizontal line.

Professor Ahmed bin Khalfan AlRawahi
The University Chancellor

UoN CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE POLICY

Proposed by: Vice-Chancellor for Graduate Studies, Research and External Relations (VCGSRER) Office

Approved by: Professor Ahmed bin Khalfan Al Rawahi, The University Chancellor.

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I. INTRODUCTION/RATIONALE

Attendance and participation in conferences augment professional development of staff by providing them with valuable opportunities to present their research, debate their findings, get feedback on their research, interact with other researchers, draw inspirational research ideas, learn about latest research trends and enhance research networks and collaborations.

This policy is deals with conference participations only; other categories such as training, seminars, and professional development activities, external training by third parties are regulated by the Professional Development Policy.

II. OBJECTIVE

The main objective of the Conference Attendance Policy is to establish clear protocols on both the eligibility and support of faculty/researchers for conference attendance to ensure consistency in following best practices across all the units, departments and centers at UoN.

III. PURPOSE

The Conference Attendance Policy aims at:

1. Identifying various pathways to optimize faculty conference attendance
2. Diversifying support for faculty conference attendance
3. Encouraging scientific collaboration between faculty members and renowned international research institutes
4. Providing opportunities for faculty members to gain more knowledge & experience
5. Improving the ranking of UoN
6. Consolidating research output through conference attendance.

IV. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all University of Nizwa staff and students.

V. DEFINITIONS

In applying the provisions of this policy, the following words and phrases shall have the meaning assigned to each of them unless the context requires otherwise:

Applicant: Refers to the person who makes a formal conference application.

Conference: A meeting of scientists and researchers from various countries for consultation or exchange of information or discussion where scientists present their research results in their specific disciplines. The event should be organized by an academic or research institution.

Seminar: A formal academic meeting where scientists and experts discuss various topics in their respective discipline.

Scientific Meeting: A meeting of a group of advanced students studying under a professor with each doing original research and all exchanging results through reports and discussions.

Workshop: A meeting for intensive discussion or demonstration of methods of practical application of skills or training.

VI. RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

1. Professional Development Policy.

VII. POLICY STATEMENTS AND GENERAL PROVISIONS

There are two categories of conference applications:

Category A: Applications requesting financial support from UoN to attend a conference: financial support is offered to UoN staff to participate in conferences and present a scientific contribution.

Category B: Applications that do not require financial support from the UoN central budget: applicants receive paid leave only.

Eligibility Criteria for Category A Applications:

- The conference paper must have UoN affiliation
- The applicant must present oral presentations in the conference
- An acceptance letter is required
- Financial support shall be offered once per academic year
- Financial support is subject to the availability of budget
- Priority shall be given to international conferences
- Application should be submitted three months prior to the conference date
- The applicant must have completed a minimum of two years' service at UoN, and will continue to serve UoN for at least one more year after attending the conference, as it is evident from the applicant's active contract letter
- The conference attendance leave must not exceed 5 days in an academic year
- If more than one staff member is involved in the scientific work, either the author or a coauthor shall receive financial support
- An approved application may be granted full or partial financial support or paid leave depending on the availability of funds (nominated applicants may receive flight ticket/per diem allowances for travel as per the university regulations).

Eligibility Criteria for Category B Applications:

- The conference paper must have UoN affiliation
- Attendance is allowed once a year
- Priority shall be given to international conferences
- The application should be submitted at least one month before the scheduled conference date
- Approval of conference registration is required
- The conference attendance leave must not exceed 5 days throughout the academic year
- Applicant may be granted paid leave without financial support if requested.

Eligible faculty members must apply as soon as their participation is accepted along with the formal letter of acceptance and/or a copy of the conference schedule that lists the faculty's presentation.

The approved application for Category A may be granted (depending on the budget availability) an official paid leave, a return economy class ticket, registration fees and all allowances according to the existing practices of UoN.

If the conference organizers offer financial support, having allocated budget from funded project (either internal or external fund) the applicant must apply under category B and UoN will only grant official paid leave.

For Category A applications, a committee chaired by the Vice-Chancellor for Graduate Studies, Research and External Relations (VCGSRER), will scrutinize and decide on the applications for conference attendance financed from the central budget endorsed by the Chancellor. Further financial support will be offered once during the financial year including an economy return ticket on the shortest possible route.

The support will include the ticket fare (maximum of 600 OMR) and conference attendance allowance (maximum 400 OMR) and the official leave.

VIII. PROCEDURE/PROCESS

Application Process: The application process shall be through the e-research electronic system.

An Application for Conference Attendance, with the recommendation of the Head of Department (HoD), and Assistant Dean (AD) for Graduate Studies and Research at the college/center must be submitted to VCGSRER together with an abstract of the scientific contribution and a preliminary acceptance letter from the conference organizers.

Approval of requests to attend conferences and symposia will also require a recommendation of UEBGSRP and approval of the Chancellor (for category A only). See Figure 1 for Category A and Figure 2 for Category B.

Figure 1 Category A Application Flow

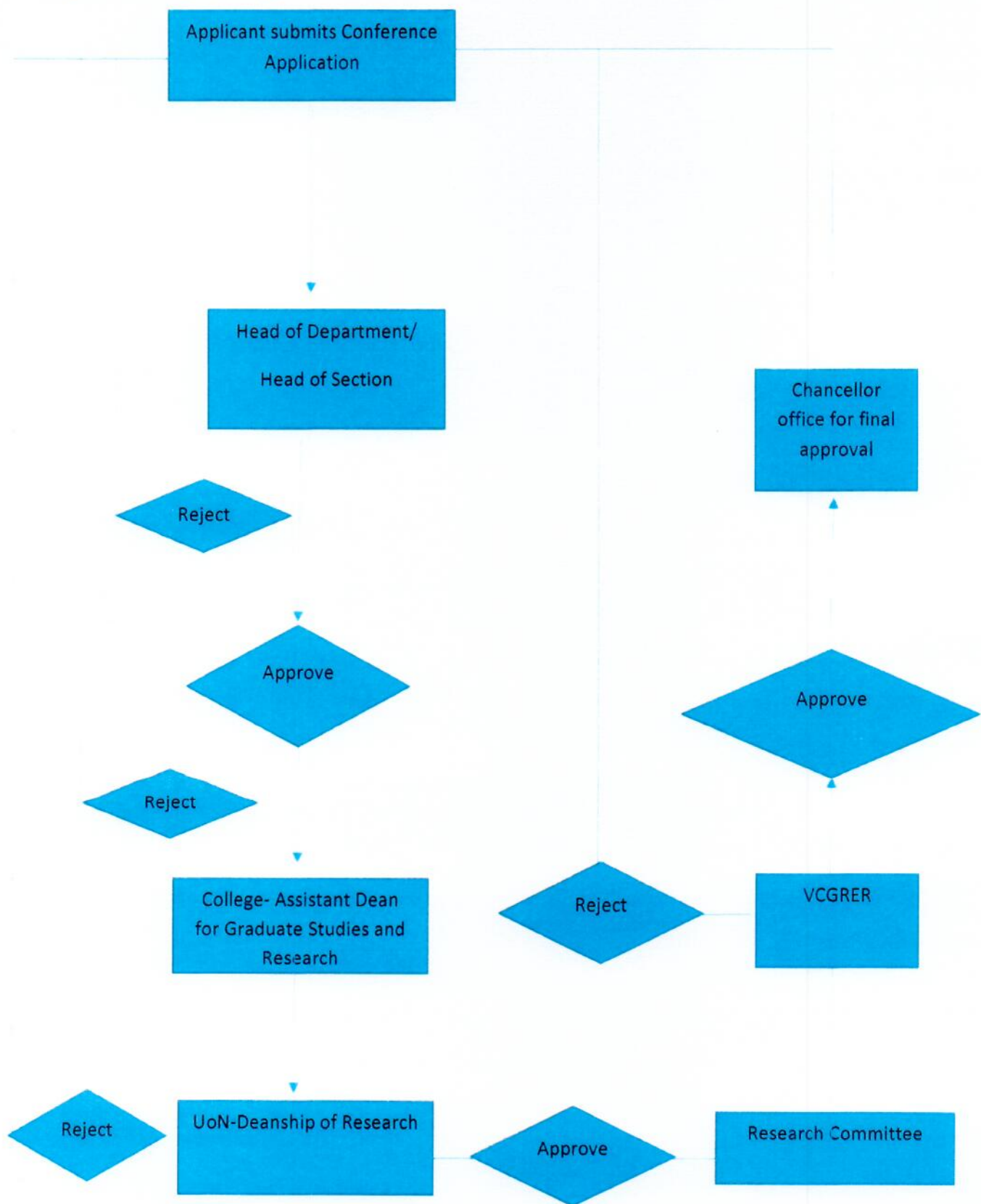
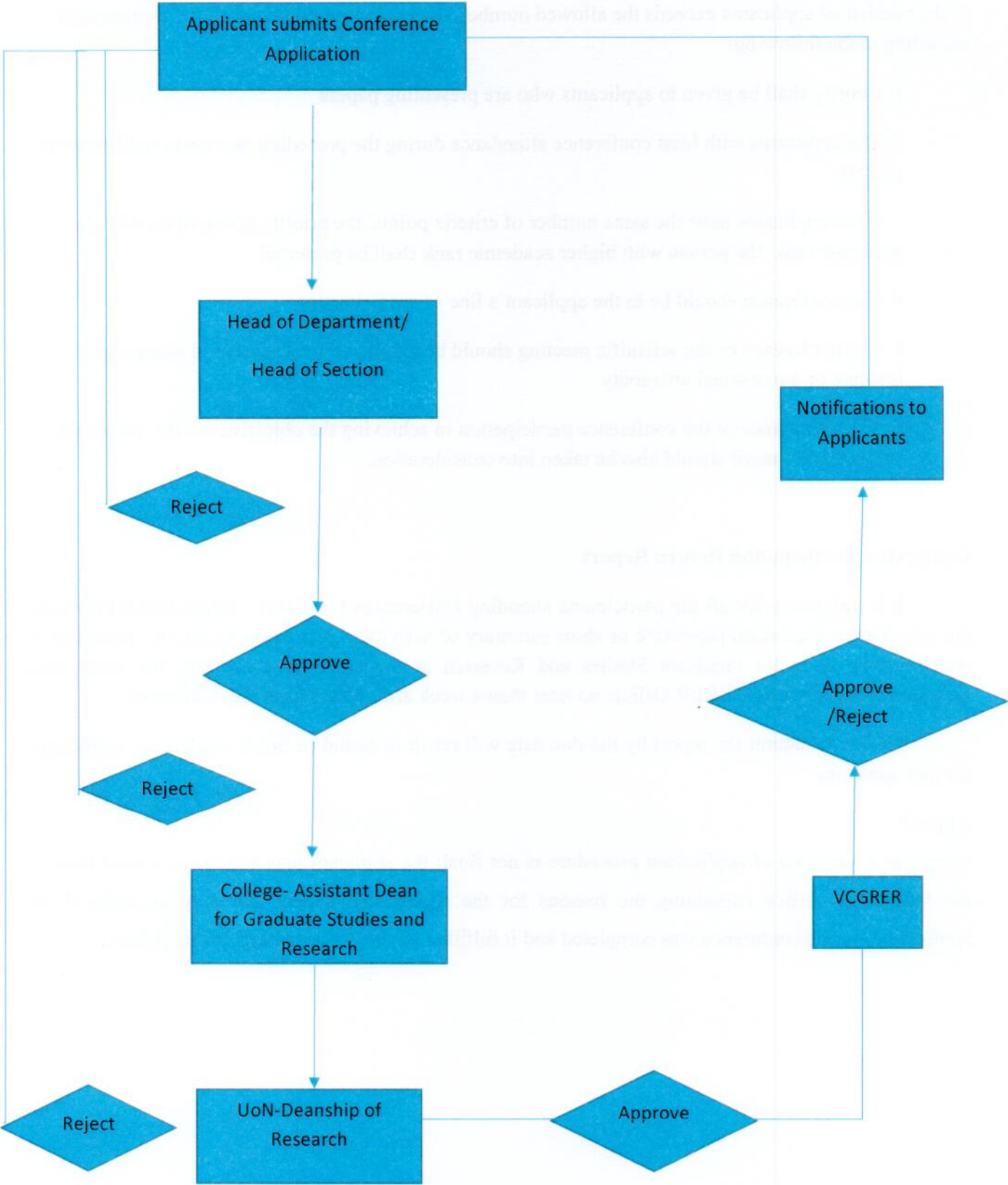


Figure 2: Category B Application Flow



If the number of applicants exceeds the allowed number, then selection criteria shall be implemented according to the following:

1. Priority shall be given to applicants who are presenting papers
2. The applicants with least conference attendance during the preceding two years shall be given priority
3. If the applicants have the same number of criteria points, the priority is determined by the academic rank: the person with higher academic rank shall be preferred
4. The conference should be in the applicant's line of specialization
5. The conference or the scientific meeting should be organized by a renowned international institute or a renowned university
6. The importance of the conference participation in achieving the objectives of the university and scientific merit should also be taken into consideration.

Conference Participation Return Report

It is obligatory for all the participants attending conferences to submit a return report indicating the activities, presentation/paper/talk or short summary of activities. The report should be submitted to the Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies and Research at the College/Center/Unit, the latter must forward the report to VCGSRER Office, no later than a week after return from the conference.

Failure to submit the report by the due date will result in denial of future conference application for that applicant.

Appeal

Rejection at any step of application procedure is not final; the applicant may submit an appeal letter to the VCGSRER office explaining the reasons for the appeal. An appeal can only be made if the application for the conference was completed and it fulfilled all the criteria stated in this policy.

IX. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Faculty:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fill in and submit the appropriate application form for the conference.• Ensure all the required documentations are complete, correct, up-to date and attached to the completed application form.
Head of Section/ Head of Department:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that absence of the faculty / researcher has no negative impact on his/her duties.• Proper arrangements are made to cover his/her responsibilities during their conference attendance period.
Assistant Dean for Research:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approve or reject application at college/ center/ unit level with proper written explanation.• Update the Dean about approval or rejection of an application• Oversee all the process.
Vice Chancellor for Graduate Studies, Research and External Relations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chair the conference committee meetings• Endorse the conference committee decisions
Chancellor:	Approve or reject applications under Category A.

X. HISTORICAL RECORDS

- This Policy was drafted by the Office of VCGSRER
- It was edited by Dr. Mohamed Ismail, Pro-VCAA
- It was approved by the UEB in Meeting 1/S2020, dated 18th February, 2020.