

STUDENT COUNSELLING & MENTORING POLICY



Khyber Medical College (KMC), Peshawar

MBBS Program (Year 1–5)

Aligned with HEC and PMDC standards

APPROVAL SHEET

Developed by

Director of DME: _____

Date: 27-06-2025

Approved by:

Dean, KMC: _____

Date: 27-06-2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This policy establishes a structured mentoring and counseling system at KMC and KTH that aligns with HEC and PMDC standards. It emphasizes academic support, student well-being, and early detection of at-risk students.

1. Background

Medical training is academically challenging and psychologically stressful. Well-organized mentoring and counseling systems are crucial for supporting students' academic success, professional growth, and mental health throughout the MBBS program.

2. Aim

To establish a structured, confidential, and student-centered system for academic mentoring and psychological counselling for MBBS students (Year 1–5).

3. Objectives

- Facilitate academic guidance and career planning
- Provide psychosocial support and early identification of distress
- Promote professionalism and ethical conduct
- Reduce dropout rates, burnout, and academic failure
- Develop resilience and coping strategies

4. Scope

Applies to:

- All MBBS students (Year 1–5)
- Faculty mentors
- Department of Medical Education
- Administrative leadership of KMC

5. Definitions

- Mentoring: Long-term academic and professional guidance by assigned faculty
- Counselling: Confidential support for psychological, emotional, or personal issues
- Mentor: Faculty member assigned to a group of students
- Mentee: MBBS student receiving mentoring support

6. Governance Structure

- Patron: Dean, KMC
- Supervision: Department of Medical Education
- Program Coordinator: Director/Chairperson of DME
- Mentors: Faculty members (trained)
- Student Representatives: Optional for feedback

7. Terms of Reference (TORs)

7.1 Department of Medical Education (DME)

- Develop and implement a mentoring policy
- Assign mentors to students (1 mentor: 10–15 students)
- Conduct faculty training workshops on mentoring and counselling
- Maintain centralized records (confidential)
- Monitor program effectiveness through feedback and audits
- Liaise with psychiatric/psychological services when required

7.2 Program Coordinator

- Oversee the day-to-day functioning of the mentoring system
- Ensure equitable mentor allocation across all years
- Schedule mentoring sessions (minimum monthly)
- Ensure documentation and reporting compliance
- Address complaints and escalate serious issues

7.3 Mentors (Faculty Members)

- Conduct regular mentoring sessions (at least 1 per month)
- Provide guidance on:
 - Academic progress
 - Study strategies
 - Career planning
 - Professional behavior
- Identify students at risk (academic or psychological)
- Maintain confidential mentoring logs
- Refer students to professional counselling when needed
- Maintain boundaries and professionalism

7.4 Students (Mentees)

- Actively participate in mentoring sessions
- Seek guidance when needed
- Maintain professional conduct
- Respect the confidentiality of discussions

7.5 Counselling Services

- Provide confidential psychological support
- Managed by a qualified:
 - Psychologist / Psychiatrist
- Accept referrals from:
 - Mentors
 - Self-referral
 - Administration (if necessary)
- Maintain strict confidentiality (except in risk situations)

8. Mentoring Framework

Component	Description
Allocation	10–15 students per mentor
Duration	Entire MBBS program (preferably same mentor continuity)
Meetings	At least monthly during the academic sessions
Format	Individual + group sessions
Documentation	Standard mentoring logbook

9. Counselling Framework

Component	Description
Access	Self or mentor referral
Mode	In-person / Online
Confidentiality	Strict
Emergency	Immediate referral to psychiatry
Records	Secure and restricted

10. Confidentiality Policy

- All mentoring and counselling interactions are strictly confidential
 - Exceptions:
 - Risk of harm to self or others
 - Legal obligations
- Records stored securely by DME

11. Referral System

Mentors must refer students when:

- Persistent academic failure
- Signs of depression, anxiety, and burnout

- Substance abuse concerns
- Behavioral or professionalism issues

Referral pathway:

Mentor → DME → Counsellor/Psychiatrist/others → Follow-up

12. Faculty Development

- Mandatory training workshops on:
 - Mentoring skills
 - Communication skills
 - Mental health awareness
- Annual refresher courses

13. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Annual program review by DME
- Student feedback surveys
- Mentor performance evaluation
- KPIs:
 - Student satisfaction
 - Academic performance trends
 - Reduction in dropout/failure rates

13A. Guidelines for Mentors (Faculty Training Component)

All mentors must undergo structured training under the Department of Medical Education before assignment.

Core Competencies

Mentors should be trained in:

- Effective communication and active listening
- Building trust and rapport
- Identifying academic and psychological red flags
- Providing constructive feedback
- Maintaining professional boundaries
- Cultural and gender sensitivity

Do's for Mentors

- Create a safe, non-judgmental environment
- Maintain confidentiality at all times
- Encourage open discussion
- Document sessions accurately
- Identify and support at-risk students early
- Refer appropriately when beyond scope

Don'ts for Mentors

- Do not impose personal beliefs or decisions
- Do not breach confidentiality (except safety concerns)
- Do not act as a therapist unless qualified
- Do not ignore warning signs (e.g., depression, burnout)

Red Flag Identification Training

Mentors must be able to recognize:

- Sudden decline in academic performance
- Social withdrawal
- Signs of anxiety, depression, and burnout
- Substance abuse indicators
- Suicidal ideation (URGENT referral)

Basic Intervention Skills

- Provide initial emotional support
- Use empathetic listening techniques
- Avoid giving clinical diagnoses
- Encourage professional help where needed

13B. Guidelines for Psychiatry/Psychology Department

Role in the Mentoring System

- Provide professional counselling services
- Support DME in training mentors
- Handle moderate to severe psychological cases

Training Responsibilities

The department will train mentors in:

- Basic mental health awareness
- Psychological first aid
- Crisis identification and response
- Referral protocols

Service Delivery Guidelines

- Ensure a confidential, stigma-free environment
- Provide timely appointments
- Maintain secure clinical records
- Offer:
 - Individual counselling
 - Stress management sessions
 - Crisis intervention

Emergency Protocol

In case of:

- Suicidal ideation
- Severe psychiatric illness

Action:

- Immediate escalation
- Possible hospitalization
- Inform the relevant authority (as per policy)

Ethical Principles

- Autonomy
- Beneficence
- Non-maleficence
- Confidentiality

14. Documentation

- Mentoring logs (standardized format)
- Attendance records
- Referral records
- Annual reports

15. Ethical Considerations

- Respect student autonomy
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Avoid conflicts of interest
- Ensure non-discrimination

16. Implementation Plan

Phase	Activity	Timeline	comments
Phase 1	Policy approval	Month 1	
Phase 2	Faculty training	Month 2	
Phase 3	Mentor allocation	Month 2	
Phase 4	Program launch	Month 3	Program already launched since 2018
Phase 5	Monitoring	Ongoing	

17. Review of Policy

- Reviewed every 3 years or as required by:
 - Higher Education Commission of Pakistan
 - Pakistan Medical and Dental Council

18. Annexures (Recommended)

- 1) Mentoring session log template
- 2) Student referral form
- 3) Confidentiality agreement form
- 4) Feedback questionnaire

ANNEXURES

1) Annexure I: Mentoring Template

Mentor Name	
Student Name	
Year	

Date	
Academic Status	
Issues	
Discussion	
Plan	
Referral	
Follow-up	

2) Annexure II: Referral Form

Student	
Reason	
Description	
Urgency	
Actions	
Referred To	
Date	
Signature	

3) Annexure III: Confidentiality Agreement Form

I, _____ (Student Name), understand that:

- All discussions with my mentor/counsellor will remain confidential
- Confidentiality may be breached ONLY if:
 - There is risk of harm to myself or others
 - Required by law

I agree to:

- Participate honestly in sessions
- Respect the mentoring process

I, _____ (Mentor/Counsellor Name), agree to:

- Maintain strict confidentiality
- Provide a safe and respectful environment

Signatures:

Student: _____

Mentor/Counsellor: _____

Date: _____

4) Annexure IV: Feedback Form by the students

Year	
Approachability	
Helpfulness	
Confidentiality	
Overall Rating	
Comments	

Developed by the Department of Medical Education in KMC/KTH in 2025