

- Could support staff (SS) manage academic tasks?
- Can Research Management tasks be empowered to PPs?

PGAM* is suggested from among support staff (SS) esp PP of group N41/44) and not from academic staff. Could a PP¹ manage PG academic matters?

1. Yes, PP (N41/44) could manage PG academic matters. They have been doing this very well at SPS and AMD
2. A key feature of the synergy transformation is to empower the support staff (SS). Empowering also includes training our SS especially for the operational academic matters, while DD Academic shall be the one to lead in strategic and policy matters . We have had many experiences especially at ODVCAI, SPS, AMD, SRAD and UTMI whereby SS were trained, empowered and trusted to do the job and the rose to the occasion. Until now the central units have a pool of SS who are well versed to manage academic matters, so long as we are willing to go thru the change management process. which include training, **empowerment and trust**.
3. Only by going through this process of training, empowerment and trust, we will start to have a pool of SS who are well trained and capable, to be rotated among faculties. Ultimately, this allow more freedom for academic staff to be involved in the core business of T&L and research.

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Could a PP manage PG academic matters?

4. Through this PP training-empowerment-trust process, we could start to gradually break free from depending on academic staff to manage ALL academic matters. SPS, which has successfully trained, guided and empowered many SSs at SPS, shall be doing the same for the faculty SSs.

5. Empowering a SS is a more sustainable solution as compared to depending on academic staff, because administrator from among academicians, apart from also needing to be trained, is a purely rotational position. On the other hand, a pool of trained SS (even through rotation across PTJs) can be sustained and empowered to perform the same task for as long as they serve UTM.

What PGAM Tasks could be empowered to a PP?

A PGAM is most crucial for operational tasks such as management of viva, that is divided into 3 main scope:

1. Procedures according to sop/kod amalan - technical part - can be monitored by n41/n44
2. Appointment of examiners, chair n also cases related to plagiarism, thesis not up to standard etc- need expert in the area - jka fac can look into this.
3. Communication with panel of examiners, chairs to set up the viva date, follow up on the viva report etc. - need assistant officer that has good communication skills etc - n29 or serious case - can be handle by n41/44

At SPS especially, PPs have done very well managing especially tasks 1 and 3.

We just need to learn to let go, start to train and empower our SSs to be better academic managers than academicians. Conduct training, provide guide, have respect and give trust. In shaa Allah, SS could do better than academic staff because many academicians face the same constraint. Not only does every new academic manager need to be trained, on top of that, they also need to focus on fulfilling their personal Research KAIs.

- Could support staff (SS) manage academic management tasks?
- Could Research Management tasks be empowered to PPs?

FAQ: Faculty needs effective Research Planning and Management to boost research outputs. Can a PP be a Research Manager?

1. UTM 3.0 only allocates 1TP and 1PP, even for a faculty as big as FKE which has 170+ staff and more than about 2500 students.
2. UTM 3.0 allocated an academic *Research Manager (RM)* to support TDPI plan as well as manage R&I functions. Most faculties are very used to this and believes that research could not be supported well unless UTM allocate academic staff (as opposed to a PP) as RM, to support TDPI.
3. UTM 4.0 has allocated 1 TP and at least 2 PPs. A faculty with an average of 200 staff, and allocated either 2 or 3 PPs has, in fact sufficient administrative staff in comparison to UTM 3.0. One of the PPs should therefore be able to replace the academic staff to assist in managing research. In UTM 4.0, the PP is recommended to be the RM, instead of the traditional practice of assigning an academicians as an RM.

FAQ: Can a PP be a better Research Manager?

A PP is the best fit as an RM. Allocating an academic RM to support TDPI (who is also an academician) is not only a huge source of redundancy, but a poor HR strategy and a waste of resource for two key reasons.

1. TDPI is meant to cover strategic and leadership aspect of R&D (planning research grand challenges, making strategic research decisions to win grants... etc), while an RM, by function is meant to complement TDPI (not duplicate) by covering the managerial/operational/execution and data management/analytics aspects. Managerial aspects could in fact, be more effectively covered by a PP instead of an academic staff.

When an academician is assigned as an RM, what typically happens is, the TDPI delegates his strategic duties to the academic research manager, who is a duplicate of his capability, and could do as well as him in strategic and planning matters pertaining to research (esp if the academic RM is an experienced researcher).

So, the academic RM ends up doing both strategic and managerial/operational functions of R&I, while his boss - TDPI - do other things even though R&I is a TDPI's key responsibility.

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2. One of the key goals of synergy 4.0 is empowering PPP. In the case of R&I, PPP make perfect support for R&I bcos they are well-versed and efficient in operational, but of course, a misfit in strategic matters (planning research grand challenges, making strategic research decisions to win grants). PP can do exceptionally well, and much better in managing research data and executing, managing plans/strategies because they are very focused (no other personal KPIs) and, with training on aspects of research management, could make very efficient RM - exemplary ones in R&I management are Mdm Punitha, Pn Azizah and many more.

The fact that the PP could not cater for strategic matters, so, TDPI could not delegate what is rightfully a TDPI's responsibility to lead research.

In conclusion, assigning an **academician as an RM** is a **poor strategy** n a **waste of resources**, simply because when we have two administrators, with more or less the same capability, covering the same function, then, be rest assured - one of them is redundant. The boss will naturally delegate. That is life.