



آغا خان یونیورسٹی

THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

Institute for Educational Development

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Education

Admission Information 2024 - 2025

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THE UNIVERSITY

The Aga Khan University is a pioneering institution of higher education and research that works to improve the quality of life in the developing world and beyond. We educate leaders, generate life-saving knowledge and set an example that raises standards in the societies in which we work. We empower women and the disadvantaged, strengthen pluralism and partner with world-renowned institutions to address problems that affect millions of people.

A not-for-profit institution, AKU was founded in 1983 by His Highness the Aga Khan. As Pakistan's first private university, we paved the way for the growth of the country's private higher education sector. In the early 2000s, the University expanded to Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Afghanistan and the United Kingdom.

At AKU, students flourish in a supportive environment that embraces diversity, demands excellence and encourages leadership and direct engagement with real-world challenges. Our graduates go on to study and work at eminent universities and organizations around the world, and to make a difference in their home countries.

AKU is open to all, regardless of race, religion, gender or geographic origin. Two-thirds of students and half of the faculty members are women. Admission is based on merit, and our needs sensitive financial assistance programme ensures that individuals from lower-income backgrounds are able to attend.

We do not discriminate on faith, gender or national origin. Our selection process is rigorous and varies by academic programmes, but a common criterion includes fluency in English.

INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, PAKISTAN

Established in 1993, the Aga Khan University's Institute for Educational Development, Pakistan is a centre of distinction for:

- developing educators, education managers, researchers, policymakers and budding entrepreneurs as exemplary leaders to improve the quality and delivery of education.
- generating knowledge to transform educational practices and policies; and
- implementing innovative and contextually relevant school improvement programmes in the under-served and hard to access areas.

PROGRAMMES

The Institute offers the following programmes for in-service professionals in education:

- PhD in Education
- MPhil in Education

RESEARCH

Research is intrinsic to IED's work and its commitment to informing education policies and practices. It focuses on conducting and disseminating research on critical issues ranging from the core problems of classroom teaching and school leadership to concerns related to educational policy.

OUTREACH

The Professional Development Centres (PDCs) in Gilgit, Chitral and Karachi function as IED's extended arms. They reach out to under-served areas where teachers have very limited opportunities to further their education and schools lack the support and resources to improve their performance. Serving as regional hubs, the PDCs offer contextually relevant capacity building programmes for educational professionals and implement innovative school improvement projects. For more information visit www.aku.edu/iedpk.

PHD IN EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Our PhD in Education programme:

- is recognised by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan.
- is highly selective, critical and rigorous.
- has been designed in collaboration with experts from University of Toronto, Canada and Oxford University, UK.
- is offered in a vibrant research environment where national and international scholars share their research findings regularly and interact with students.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND DESIGN

The PhD Education programme is based on a total of 18 credits of coursework to be covered in the initial phase of the programme and followed by a period of two years assigned for original research. Upon completion of the coursework, confirmation for PhD candidacy is based on passing the comprehensive examination and successful defence of the research proposal.

The timeline and other details of the programme for full-time students are as follows:

Year 1 and Year 2

- Compulsory 18 credit Courses
- Coursework of 18 credit hours preferably in the first year is required to be completed and followed by a comprehensive examination (written and oral)/Resit examination and Synopsis defense for granting candidacy as a PhD researcher within 12 – 18 months.
- Preparation of the research proposal and its evaluation by the IED Committee.
- Oral presentation of the thesis synopsis and its defence in an open forum.
- Confirmation of PhD candidacy based on obtaining a minimum CGPA of 3.0 in the PhD coursework; passing the comprehensive exam; successful thesis synopsis defence.
- Thesis synopsis submission and its defence is required to progress to full PhD candidacy.

Year 3 - 4

- Publication of thesis research in a peer reviewed journal classified by the HEC in category Y or above
- Thesis writing
- Completion of research work and thesis, according to AKU policy.

COURSEWORK

Core courses (3 credit each)

- Advanced Quantitative Methods in Educational Research

- Advanced Qualitative Methods in Educational Research
- Issues and Challenges of Education & Development
- Studies in Educational Leadership

Elective Courses* (3 credit each)

(Students will have to choose four courses from the list below)

- Policy Studies for Education
- Gender in Education
- Early Childhood Education and Development
- Educational Assessment & Measurement
- Cross-cultural Study of Teacher Education
- Curriculum Studies
- Teaching and Learning with Technology

Note: students can take one elective course from other courses offered at doctoral level programmes at AKU.

**Courses will be offered based on the availability of the faculty.*

RESEARCH WORK

The basic research work for the thesis will proceed in parallel with the core and elective coursework. Hence, at the time of enrolment, the student will select a principal thesis supervisor and build on their initial research proposal during year 1/2.

Upon successful completion of coursework and comprehensive examination, the student will finalise the research synopsis for further review. The final proposal will be sent for review and approval by the AKU Ethical Review Committee for Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts.

SCHEDULE OF SEMESTERS

The programme will have two regular semesters, each comprising 16 weeks and an 8-week summer semester.

ADMISSION CRITERIA

Admission into the programme is based solely on merit and commitment to improving the quality of education. Merit will be evaluated through scholastic achievements and the performance of candidates in the AKU Admission Test. The commitment of the candidate will be assessed through an interview with a panel of senior faculty at AKU.

Candidates currently working in the public or private sectors in Pakistan and overseas may apply.

Eligibility Requirements:

Candidates who have at least two-years of full-time teaching/research/leadership / educational development experience and have 18 years of qualification in “Education” including a MS/MPhil or equivalent degree with the course and research work based on a minimum of 30 credits after 16 years of an undergraduate degree. A minimum CGPA 3.0 (out of 4.0 in the

Semester System) or First Division – 60% (in the Annual System) in MPhil in Education / MS in Education/Equivalent degree in Education discipline is required.

The University may request for additional documents to better understand and evaluate applicant’s eligibility as per University and regulatory body requirements.

Candidates applying with disciplines other than that of Education and with foreign qualifications are required to provide 18-years of equivalence in Education discipline from HEC.

For clarification, please refer to the Teacher Education Roadmap on next page (p.9).

Admission Test

NOTE: *The test will be conducted online onsite on computers.*

Candidates are required to write the AKU Admission Test.

The Test comprises three components:

- i. English Language: This component tests English language competency. It serves as a qualifier. The score for which will be determined by the University and may change each year.
- ii. Quantitative Reasoning and Subject specific component: A minimum 50% passing score is required in each component and a cumulative score of 60% is required to proceed further in the admission process.

Sample test paper for the Test is available on: www.aku.edu/admissions/phd-education

The University does not provide any special preparation for the Admission Test, nor does it authorise any publication or preparatory classes for this purpose.

IDENTIFICATION OF SUPERVISOR*:

A doctoral education is the pinnacle of academic achievement and is reserved for those with passion, love for ideas and desire to push the boundaries of thought and practice. The AKU-IED doctoral programme provides an opportunity to such individuals to advance their knowledge and practice in education. In the next academic year, we intend to have doctoral students in one of the following priority areas:

Research Concentration Areas for Doctoral Students	Potential Supervisor
Science and Mathematics Education: better teaching of science and mathematics remains a challenge in our context. The doctoral study in this area will give an opportunity to investigate one or more of the following in either science or mathematics education: a) curriculum design and implementation; b) innovative strategies for engaged learning; c) inclusive science and mathematics education; d) effective	Drs Tasneem Anwar, Nelofer Halai, Sadia Muzaffar Bhutta (<i>Science Education</i>)

teacher professional development programmes; e) assessment and evaluation practices; f) learning in emergencies; and; g) the use of rapidly emerging frontier technologies.	Dr Munira Amirali (<i>Mathematics Education</i>)
Environmental Education: Amidst the climatic crises and environmental challenges, resilience in curriculum, innovation in pedagogy, radical change in behaviour as well as systems has become essential. A researcher who is able and inspired to play their role in adaptation is suited for candidacy in this programme. Putting young people at the heart of policy and action for a sustainable future is the need of the hour and therefore a priority research area in education for AKU-IED.	Dr Fozia Parveen
Leadership & Policy in Education: conduct research on issues related to educational leadership & policy at different levels and contexts. Through your doctoral research project, you can navigate issues related to ethical dilemmas and opportunities in educational leadership, explore policy making and implementation processes and investigate effective practices for leading educational change. Current research in the area looks at the issues of teaching license policy, out of school children, learning losses, large scale learning and pedagogical evaluations, effectiveness of public private partnerships, inclusion of minorities in education etc..	Drs Sajid Ali, Takbir Ali & Farid Panjwani
Foundational numeracy and literacy, low-tech solutions, critical pedagogy, equity and inclusion in education particularly in early years education.	Drs Nasima Zainulabidin, Dilshad Ashraf

** Each applicant is expected to identify a potential research area mentioned above. Furthermore, they are also expected to select a PhD supervisor from the list of supervisors available with each research concentration area. Candidates are encouraged to interact with their potential faculty supervisors to know more about the relevant research area before entering this information into the application.*

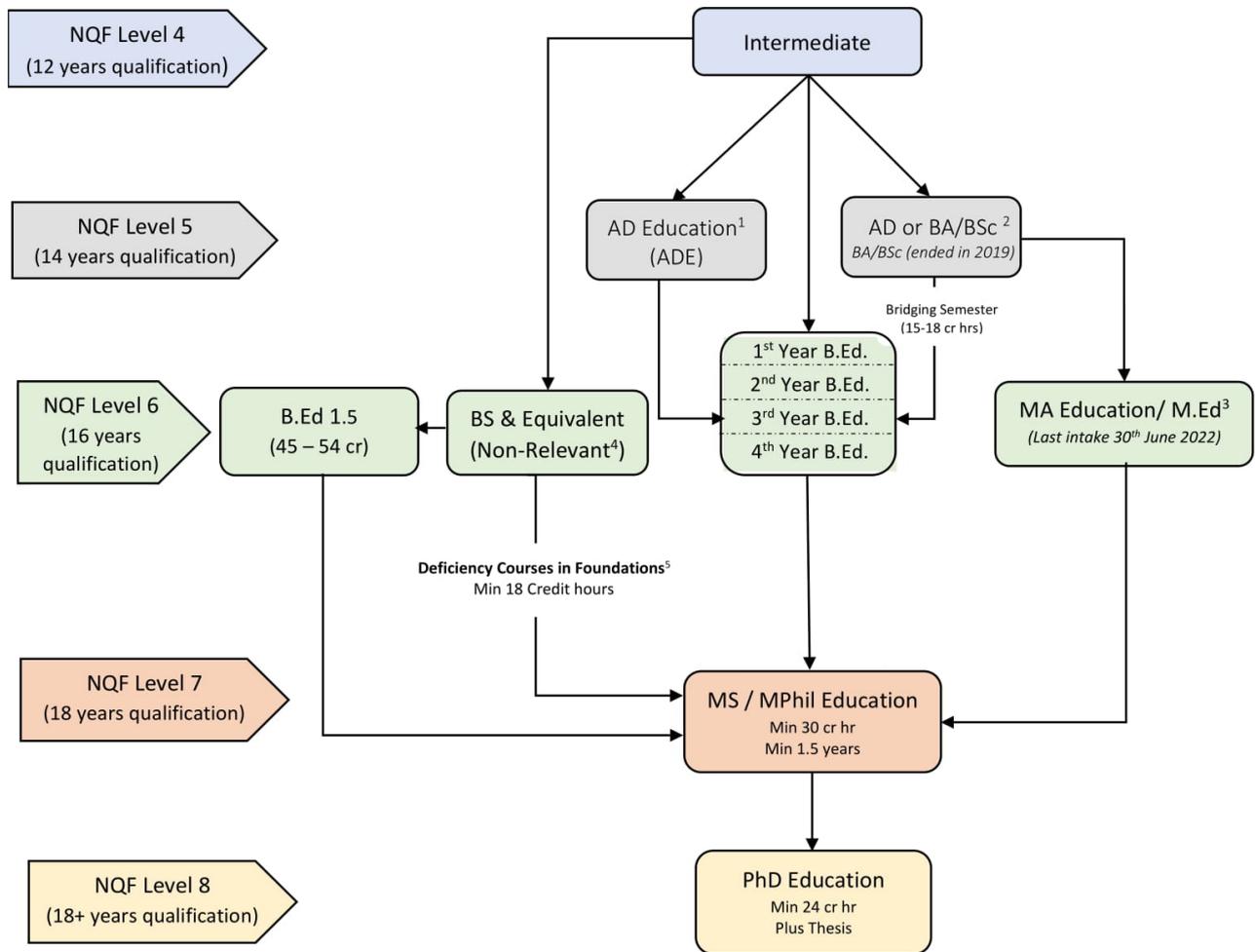
INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESEARCH INTENT

Your statement of intent has a direct impact on the overall strength of your application to study for a research degree. The following advice may help you to strengthen your statement of intent. This is an integral part of the application.

- Write the title of your potential project.
- Clearly articulate your current understanding of the field and your ideas for a potential area of research that you would like to study.
- Conduct some initial research about the field or discipline you would like to study.
- Think about the impact you would like to achieve by researching this area.
- Why do you want to do it? Who might benefit from your work? Why is it important?
- Demonstrate your passion and enthusiasm for the area of research!

- Your statement of intent may vary in length and detail, but it is expected to be approximately 500 - 700 words. We will use your statement of intent to assess your broad understanding of your area of research interest.

TEACHER EDUCATION ROADMAP



1. The candidates having Associate Degree in Education (ADE) are allowed to enroll in the 5th semester / third year of a four-year B.Ed. program.
2. The candidates having Associate Degree in disciplines other than that of Education or two-year erstwhile BA / BSc degrees (now defunct) shall be admitted in the 5th semester / third year of a four-year B.Ed. program after completing the deficiency courses (15-18 credit hours through a bridging semester) to be determined by the admitting university, on case to case basis.
3. **MA Education, M.Ed.** and **BS Education** are equivalent degrees to **B.Ed. 4 years / B.Ed. (Hons), B.Ed. 2.5** after 14 years qualification and **B.Ed. 1.5** after 16 years qualification for the purpose of employment and further education.
4. The graduates having sixteen (16) years or equivalent qualification in disciplines other than **Education** and desirous to acquire B.Ed. degree will be allowed for enrolment in B.Ed. 1.5 comprising of 45-54 credit hours course work.
5. The graduates having sixteen (16) years non-relevant qualification and desirous to acquire admission in MS/MPhil Education, shall be required to complete deficiency courses of minimum 18 credit hours as part of said degree program, to be determined by the admitting university, on case to case basis.
6. The nomenclature for Teacher Education Degrees shall only be “**Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.)**” from Fall 2023 onwards. The strands such as Early Childhood Education, Elementary and Secondary Education etc. and specializations like Curriculum, Assessment, Academic planning, Leadership, Guidance & Counseling, etc. shall be reflected on transcripts only and not on degrees.

HIDAYATULLAH KASI
Deputy Director

Higher Education Commission, Islamabad

Dated: December 30, 2022

ADMISSION PROCESS SUMMARY

Candidates are evaluated in stages:

Stage I	Online submission of application. Applications are reviewed and only eligible candidates are invited to write an AKU PhD Admission Test. The equivalence from HEC for 18 years of qualification and attested transcripts/mark sheets must be uploaded as part of the application.
Stage II	Candidates will be shortlisted based on the Admission Test as per the shortlisting criteria. Interviews will be conducted for those shortlisted candidates whose applications are complete in terms of all the required documents and the reference letters. Eligible candidates will be required to attend interviews with senior faculty members of the University. The candidate would be required to make a short PowerPoint presentation on the chosen research project.
Stage III	Final selection is based on an overall assessment of each candidate's dossier which is formally approved by the University's Admission Review Committee.

WWW.AKU.EDU/ADMISSIONS/DOCUMENTS/ADMISSION-PROCESS-SUMMARY.PDF

APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION

Applications for admission will be accepted between **January 14** and **March 14, 2024**. Candidates must apply online by logging on to www.aku.edu/apply-online

Applications must be submitted via online process. Applications will only be accepted if a candidate completes the following:

1. Submit the application form online. (*Candidate will receive a copy of the application form on their registered email as a confirmation when the application is submitted successfully*)
In the application form, please upload the following:
 - i. Upload the application fee on the online form.
 - ii. Upload the CNIC/NICOP both sides as one combined file or relevant Passport pages (for foreign nationals)
 - iii. Upload the Passport size coloured photograph with a plain white background; taken within the last 1 week to reflect your current appearance (*see photograph specification section*)
2. As a mandatory requirement:
 - a. Upload attested SSC / O Levels marksheet or equivalent qualification; Equivalence from IBCC, in case of foreign qualification.
 - b. Upload attested HSSC / A levels marksheet or equivalent qualification; Equivalence from IBCC, in case of foreign qualification.
 - c. HEC attested educational documents:
 - Undergraduate Degree & Transcript: Upload all sides of the degree as a single combined pdf file. Upload all sides of the transcripts as a single combined pdf file.

- Graduate Degree/s and Transcript/s: Upload all sides of the degree as a single combined pdf file. Upload all sides of the transcripts as a single combined pdf file.
 - For unattested documents, upload HEC receipt as evidence.
- d. 18-years of HEC equivalence, if applying with foreign degree or degree in disciplines other than that of Education.
 - e. Curriculum Vitae with list of publications (if any)
 - f. Research Intent as per the instructions given on page 8.
 - g. Upload Teaching /research /educational experience letter (minimum requirement 2 years)

Note: The photograph should be in JPEG format with 2 MB size and all other documents should be in PDF format with 5 MB file each.

Application Fee: - **Applying from AKU residential countries* is Rs. 7000/-**
 - **Applying from AKU non-residential countries is US \$ 150/-**
 - *(See mode of payment section for details)*

The application fee is non-refundable. Candidates must ensure eligibility before applying.

**Afghanistan, Burundi, Kenya, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda*

Incomplete applications or submission of applications after the deadline is not accepted.

REFERENCE LETTERS

Three letters of recommendations /references: Referees should be individuals who are well-acquainted with your previous academic work and professional experience. Two letters of references must be from individuals who are at arm's length². Please download reference form from <https://www.aku.edu/admissions/phd-education/Pages/home.aspx>. These letters should be emailed directly by your referee to ied.ro@aku.edu. The letters need to be from i) an academic referee from an institute where the individual has trained recently, ii) from a referee who is familiar with the work capacity of the candidate. should be current or not more than one-year-old.

The referees must not be close friends or family members, where there may be a conflict of interest.

NOTE FOR ALL CANDIDATES

Candidates are requested to ensure they meet application requirements before applying. These are listed in the programme brochure. Moreover, candidates are responsible to complete the application requirements according to the published instructions and time schedule.

Aga Khan University reserves the right to admission; to revoke admission and registration if an application is discovered to be inaccurate or incomplete, or if supporting documents are discovered to be fraudulent. Any candidate who presents a fraudulent document in support of an application for admission may be identified to other universities and colleges.

Candidates may apply for multiple programmes simultaneously. Candidates who are shortlisted for interviews in multiple programmes will be required to provide their order of preference. This information will remain confidential with the Admission Office, and the candidates must attend interviews for all shortlisted programmes. If the candidate is accepted in more than one programme, the preference order provided by the Candidate will be considered by the University, the University reserves the right in its absolute discretion to

offer the programme, which it determines to be the most suitable for the Candidate and the decision made by the University will be final.

ADMIT CARD

The admit card to allow you to write the test will be received by eligible candidates who apply online on their portal and/or through an email.

In cases where the admit card is not received 12 working days before the date of the test; candidates must email the Admission Office at ied.ro@aku.edu for the required information and application details.

If a candidate would like to write the test at a different test centre from the one originally noted in the application form, candidate must inform the admission office via email at least 72 hours before the test so that information can be sent to the Test Centre. Walk-in candidates are not encouraged. While every effort is made to conduct an admission test at a centre close to the candidate's residence, this is not guaranteed. Candidates must select a centre that is available on the application form.

Please Note: The University does not take responsibility to conduct the test for candidates who walk into a Test Centre without information.

Please note:

To be allowed into the Test Centre to write the Test, candidates must bring:

- A hard copy of the admit card issued by AKU AND
- A valid current photo ID card/original CNIC/college ID card/enrolment card for identification And
- Your COVID vaccination card

Without these documents, AKU reserves the right not to allow you to write the Test.

SHORT-LISTING AND INTERVIEWS

Candidates will be shortlisted based on the Admission Test as per the shortlisting criteria. Interviews will be conducted for those shortlisted candidates whose applications are completed in terms of all the required documents and reference letters. In addition to presenting the research intent, the purpose of the interview is to assess a variety of attributes, including integrity, motivation and interest in the programme, maturity, social and cultural awareness, and evidence of initiative and commitment to the programme.

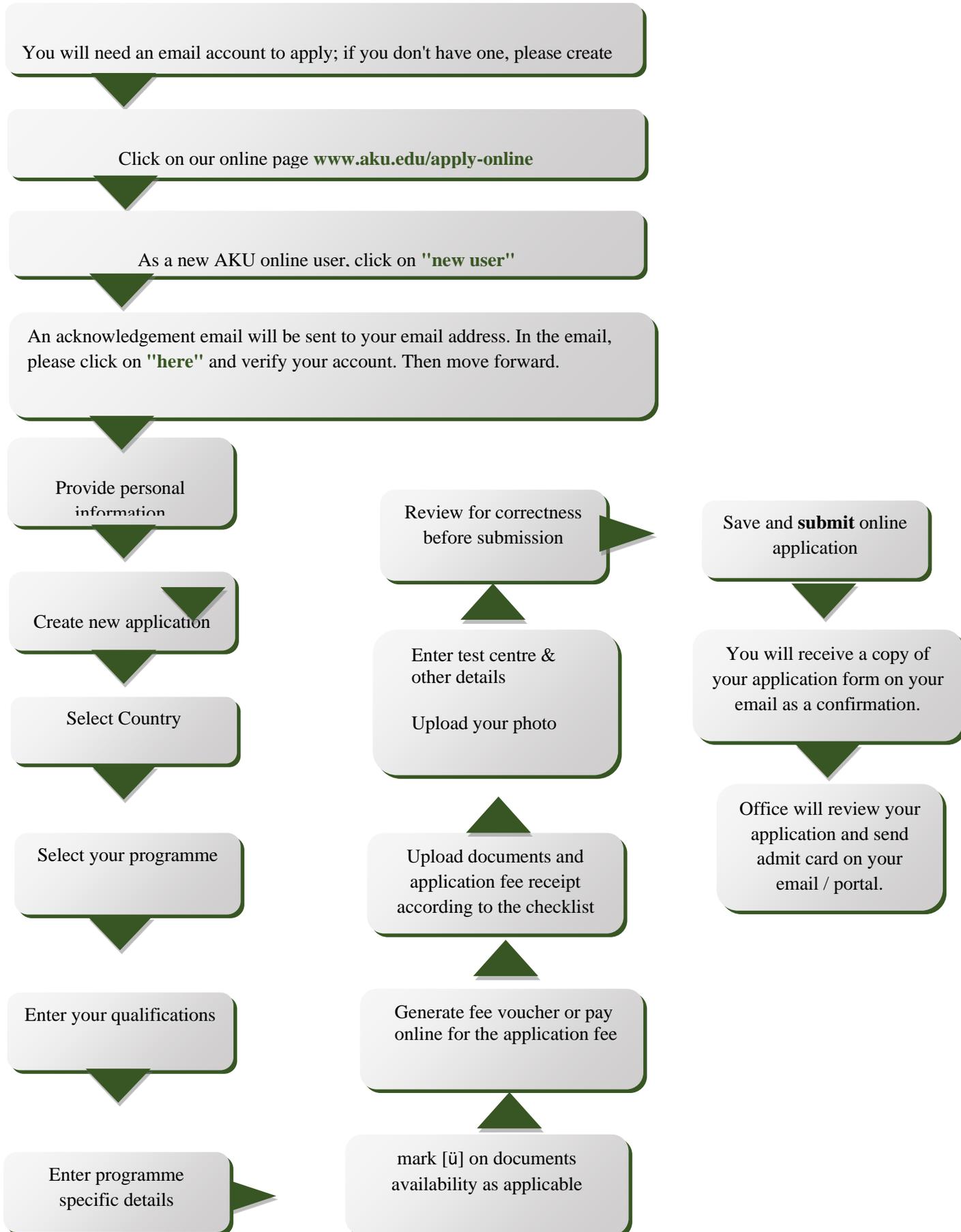
Interviews are conducted in Karachi. For all candidates who reside outstation, overseas, interviews are conducted over Zoom.

VALIDITY OF TEST SCORES

The AKU Admission Test scores are valid for a period of two years from the date the test is written.

APPLY ONLINE

Follow the steps below to apply for an academic programme online:



MODE OF PAYMENT

Candidates may pay the application fee through any of the following modes. ***When the fee is paid, please upload the receipt on the online admission portal to complete the application.***

- **FEE VOUCHER (FOR PAKISTANI CURRENCY ONLY)**

Please follow these steps to pay the application fee through fee voucher:

1. On the application home page, please click on “Application Fee Information”
2. For **payment options**, select “Fee Voucher”
3. Click “Yes” to generate the voucher (*make sure that your pop ups aren't blocked*)
4. Take the printed voucher to any branch of Habib Bank Ltd (HBL) and pay the fee. (***Please do not transfer online***)
5. Upload the paid voucher by clicking the “Upload Button” on the proof of fee payment section.

- **ONLINE PAYMENT THROUGH DEBIT/CREDIT CARD (PAKISTANI & US\$ CURRENCY)**

Follow these steps to pay application fee online through a debit / credit card:

1. On the application home page, please click on “Application Fee Information”
2. For **payment options**, select “Online Payment” and click yes (*make sure that your pop ups aren't blocked*)
3. Complete your payment details on online web portal: <https://payonline.aku.edu/>
4. Upload the payment acknowledgement email or screenshot by clicking the “Upload Button” on the proof of fee payment section.

In case you are unable to receive the payment acknowledgement, please notify the Finance Office by emailing your query along with tracking Id, name, and programme name at student.finance@aku.edu

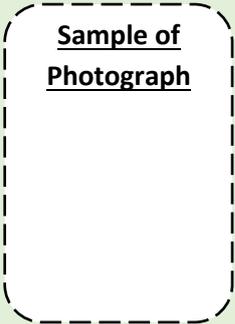
PHOTOGRAPH SPECIFICATION

Your photograph is a vital part of your application. Please follow these instructions carefully.

- Passport size coloured photograph with a plain background; taken within the last 1 week to reflect your current appearance.
- File size and format: 2 MB and JPEG format.
- The photo should show a clear front view, full face of the person.

If your photograph does not reflect your current appearance, the University will not allow you to write the Admission Test.

**Sample of
Photograph**



CURRICULUM VITAE (CV) SPECIFICATION

Your CV must include the following:

- qualifications with grades/percentage and passing year
- other Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses
- list of publications (if any)
- Work Experiences with job responsibilities and duration
- Any other additional information to support your application

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Admissions to all the academic programmes at Aga Khan University are based on merit and are needs blind, i.e. without considering the financial background of the student.

AKU charges fees for all of its programmes. For financial information including student's fee-paying status and fee structure, please visit: www.aku.edu/admissions/fees-and-funding

The Aga Khan University will provide sponsorship to up to four students each year admitted into each of the PhD programme streams through tuition fee waivers. The tuition waivers are **merit** based and these can be applied for upon meeting the PhD admissions shortlist. Tuition waivers consist of full tuition fees in addition to monthly stipends. *Accommodation costs are not provided as part of tuition support.*

Tuition waivers are available to students who are unable to find a sponsor to pay for the cost of education. Students who are sponsored or supported by an employer or other Institution will be required to pay the tuition and find monthly stipend support.

All students will be required to pay the other costs of education as provided in the tuition and fee schedule.

STUDENTS ON SPONSORSHIP FROM EXTERNAL AGENCIES

Students expecting to receive sponsorships or scholarships from external agencies to complete the programme are requested to submit the relevant documents and approval letter from external agency when accepting the offer of admission.

For more details, please contact Admission Office, Aga Khan University, Institute for Educational Development, Karimabad, Karachi 75950, Pakistan. Phone: +92 21 3634 7611-4, Ext: 8633.

ACCOMMODATION

There is limited hostel accommodation. When available, this is restricted to outstation students only and is arranged in hostels managed by the University. These are shared, non-air-conditioned, furnished accommodation.

A fee is charged for all accommodation. For accommodation charges, visit: www.aku.edu/admissions/fees-and-funding. Meals may be purchased separately from the University's cafeteria.

All students living in the university hostels are expected to conform to rules and regulations. Residence is conditional upon proper use and care of the property, considerate behaviour and periodic reappraisal of the student's need for such accommodation.

CONTESTED DECISIONS

In all matters pertaining to the selection of students, fees, grants, evaluation of scholastic performance, discipline and student affairs, the decision of the University shall be final. Appeals in matters of student selection will be considered within 15 days of the announcement of the new class only if the appeal cites circumstances suggesting that the University has violated provisions of its Charter or that there has been failure to comply with the admissions procedure as described in this document.

KEY DATES FOR 2024 - 25 ADMISSIONS

January 14 – Marc 14, 2024	Admission Open: Apply online via www.aku.edu/apply-online	
Sunday, May 12	AKU Admission Test -Pakistan	Test Centres Chitral, Gilgit, Karachi, Islamabad
Please note: Timings and address for the venue will be stated on the admit card. In case of a change, candidates will be notified through email.		
June/July	Interviews	
February 2025	Commencement of Academic Session	

DISCLAIMER

This booklet contains information about the programme offered by the Aga Khan University, Pakistan, for the academic year 2024 - 25. The information provided is subject to change over time. Candidates aiming to apply for programmes in any other academic year are requested to get updated information about minimum eligibility requirement, application, and admission process from the University Admission Office.

THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

1-5/B-VII Federal B. Area, Karimabad
P.O. Box: 13688, Karachi 75950, Pakistan
T: +92 21 3634 7611-4, Ext: 8633, F: +92 21 36347616
Email: ied.ro@aku.edu
Website: www.aku.edu/iedpk