آغا خان یونیورسٹی
THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

MEDICAL COLLEGE

Master of Bioethics (MBE)
Admission Information 2026 -2027

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The University	3
The Master of Bioethics (MBE)	3
Admission to the Programme & Eligibility Criteria	6
Admission Process Summary	6
Admission Test	7
Application for Admission	7
Apply Online	9
Fees and Funding	12
Key Dates for 2026-27 Admission Process	14

THE UNIVERSITY

The Aga Khan University (AKU) is a pioneering institution of higher education and research that works to improve 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 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.

While we do not discriminate on faith, gender or national origin, we are selective in the students we accept. Our selection process varies by academic programmes, but a common criterion includes fluency in English.

THE MASTER OF BIOETHICS (MBE)

The Master of Bioethics is offered to health professionals, researchers, pharmacists, physiotherapists, hospital administrators, in addition to health ministry officials and policy makers, lawyers, medical journalists, social scientists, philosophers among others. After completion, graduates are expected to become Bioethics champions, capable of establishing similar educational programs, along with providing bioethics and research ethics consultative services to public, private, and governmental organizations.

Bioethics is an evolving field in high-income countries (HICs), adapting to emerging ethical challenges in healthcare and across the broad spectrum of human experience. In contrast, low-middle income countries [LMICs], where health care is rife with issues pertaining to ethics of research, public health, and clinical practice, suffer from a dearth of trained Bioethics personnel. The Master of Bioethics (MBE) programme emphasizes and focuses on capacity building for Bioethics in Pakistan.

The MBE programme is recognised by the Higher Education Commission in Pakistan. The graduates will be able to:

- **Knowledge:** Apply knowledge and critical skills to solve ethical issues effectively.
- **Communication:** Appropriately communicate (verbally and in writing) ethical concepts, moral arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, within different groups.
- **Research:** Design and conduct high-quality research (quantitative and qualitative) to create evidence and knowledge in various domains of bioethics.
- **Collaboration and teamwork:** Work efficiently in teams and facilitate group interactions.
- **Professionalism:** Demonstrate integrity, empathy, and consistency in the timely completion of tasks. Exemplify evidence of critical self-reflection.

- **Social, cultural, and environmental awareness:** Analyse the social, cultural, and environmental aspects of the discipline, including interactions among the economic, social, and cultural realms, and the uncertainties while predicting such interactions in research.
- **Leadership and advocacy:** Demonstrate leadership attributes for advocating social justice and community benefits.

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Health professionals, researchers, pharmacists, physiotherapists, hospital administrators
- Health sector managers – public and private
- Health ministry officials and policymakers
- Health professionals working with NGOs and development agencies
- Lawyers, medical journalists, social scientists, philosophers, and aspiring students

OBJECTIVES

The overall objectives of the programme are to:

1. Develop professionals with an understanding of local contexts, strong foundation in bioethics, and an ability to discern ethical issues in research, clinical care, public health, and organizational functions.
2. Offer a solid bioethics conceptual base of key theme: ethics concepts, notably equity, rights, entitlement, power, discrimination, and how the issues pertaining to these pervade the society from micro levels to structural levels.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

This is a two-year programme comprising of 4 semesters involving coursework, and research thesis. Programme is aligned with the requirements of the High Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan. The diverse nature of the courses requires a variety of teaching and learning methods including self-study, interactive lectures, interactive tutorials, case-based discussions, small group discussions, seminars, workshops, reflexive diary writing, roleplay, mock exercises, and practicums.

It will require 32 credits for graduation, which will be distributed as follows.

1. Core courses 23 credits
2. Elective courses 3 credits
3. Dissertation 6 credits

Assessment of student's learning in all courses will be as follows:

1. Continuous assessment
2. Mid-term assessment
3. Final assessment

CLASS TIMINGS

Class timings for the programme have been carefully designed to accommodate the busy schedules of working professionals. The programme will be taught in a blended learning format. In-person classes will be held for a period of three weeks every semester, where attendance will be mandatory.

FULL-TIME PROGRAMME

The programme is full-time for two-year. The extensions allowed by HEC and AKU will be applicable.

CURRICULUM

The programme curriculum is a mix of core and elective courses and developed in line with the requirements of the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC).

COURSE WORK

Three courses will be offered each semester. These have been carefully chosen and designed to give students the best learning experience and equip them with the necessary skill sets.

The programme will offer the following courses:

Mandatory Courses: (i) Foundations in Bioethics (ii) Research Design and Methods (iii) Academic Writing and Bioethics Education (iv) Research Ethics (v) Clinical Ethics (vi) Ethics in Public Health (vii) Organizational Ethics
Elective Courses include: (i) Biostatistics (ii) Health & Human Rights (iii) Ethics, Genetics and Genomics (iv) Health Equity and Policy

THESIS

This involves developing a research question, designing a study, collecting data, and writing up their findings. Students will be supported by a supervisor who will provide guidance and feedback throughout the process.

PROGRAMME RESOURCES

The Master of Bioethics Programme is facilitated by a diverse and highly qualified team of faculty which includes full-time, part time, and visiting faculty from national and international organizations. Their expertise spans bioethical teaching and nurturing critical thinking in healthcare, research, and policymaking.

Students will have access to a computer laboratory, unlimited free internet hours, and access to AKU's considerable online library system. The students learn in the scholarly environment of AKU and freely access the various facilities provided by the University's Medical college to all students.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATES

The programme offers a breadth of knowledge and transferable skill in different areas of clinical, educational, and research ethics. Graduates of the programme may opt for public sectors at local, provincial, and federal level, national and international private and non-governmental organizations, academia, and research institutions. Careers include, but are not limited to administrative roles, field-based programmes, education, and research.

STUDENT EVALUATION AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The following are minimum requirements for progression and graduation:

- A Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of at least 2.50 is required at the end of each semester for progression.
- A Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least 2.50 in all course work is required for graduating from the programme.

- Successful completion and defence of the thesis.
- Achieve a minimum of 70% attendance in each course.
- Obtain a minimum of 60% of the passing score in each course.

Students should note that HEC requires a minimum cGPA of 3.0 out of 4.0 to make an application for a PhD programme.

ADMISSION TO THE MASTER OF BIOETHICS PROGRAMME

Admission to Master of Bioethics Programme is determined by academic merit, which will be assessed based on candidates' performance in the Aga Khan University Admission Test. Further evaluation will involve one-on-one and panel interviews, during which candidates will be assessed for various competencies and skills. Successful completion of these assessment tests will result in the award of admission. It's important to note that achieving a high score in one section of the assessment is not adequate for admission.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Candidates who hold at least one of the following degrees are eligible to apply:

- Sixteen years of schooling or 4-year education (124-136 credit hours) after HSSC/FA/FSc/Grade 12 equivalent" from an accredited/recognized university in sciences / health sciences / social sciences* / psychology / mathematics / statistics / business management* / including but not limited to a BSc (biology, biological sciences, physics, physical sciences), LLB, DPT, MBBS, BDS, BScN, DVM, D. Pharm, B Pharm (or equivalent).
- Work experience is not required.

***Social Sciences:** Economics / political science / public administration / psychology including clinical, industrial, developmental psychology / sociology / social work / rural development studies / demography and population studies / behavioral sciences / women & gender studies / journalism / mass communication / media studies / rural or urban studies / women studies.*
***Business Management:** Business administration studies / organization science / operations research & supply chain / marketing / administrative sciences / management information systems.*

ADMISSION PROCESS SUMMARY

Candidates are evaluated in stages:

Stage I	Online submission of application. candidates are invited to write the AKU Admission Test.
Stage II	Candidates who are shortlisted based on the Admission Test will be required to: • submit relevant academic documents and reference letters • attend interviews with senior faculty members of the University.
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.

https://www.aku.edu/admissions/Documents/admission-process-summary.pdf

ADMISSION TEST

The Admission Test comprises of three components: English Language, Quantitative Reasoning and a Subject Specific Exam.

- The English Language component evaluates a candidate's competency in the English language.
- The Quantitative Reasoning component is designed to assess problem solving and logical thinking ability.
- The Subject Specific Exam will assess basic knowledge related to the speciality.

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

Sample test paper for the admission test is available on our website on MBE programme page

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

SHORT-LISTING AND INTERVIEWS

Candidates will be shortlisted on the basis of the Admission Test. Interviews will be conducted for shortlisted candidates only. There will be two independent interviews with faculty members of the University. The purpose of the interview is to assess a variety of attributes, including motivation, maturity, social and cultural awareness, knowledge of public health issues in developing nations and evidence of interest, and commitment to the programme.

VALIDITY OF TEST SCORES

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

APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION

Applications for admission will be accepted between **December 21, 2025,** and **March 16, 2026**. Candidates must apply online by logging on to www.aku.edu/apply-online

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

1. Upload the application fee on the online form.
2. Upload CNIC/NICOP both sides as one file or relevant Passport pages (for foreign nationals)
3. HEC attested undergraduate mark sheet and degree (16 years) or receipt from HEC as evidence that an application has been made. Each document of front & back copy as one pdf file.
4. HEC equivalence for 16 years of education or receipt from HEC as evidence that an application has been made. In case applying with Post RN BScN or foreign qualification.
5. For unattested documents, upload HEC receipt as evidence. **This is a mandatory requirement.**
6. Upload Detailed curriculum vitae (see CV specification section)
7. Submit the application form online. *(Candidate will receive a copy of the application form on their registered email as confirmation when the application is submitted successfully)*

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

NOTE FOR ALL CANDIDATES

Candidates are requested to ensure they meet application eligibility requirements before applying. These are listed in the programme brochure. Moreover, candidates applying online are responsible to complete the application and other 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. 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 candidates who apply online on their portal and/or through an email.

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

If a candidate would like to take 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.
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.

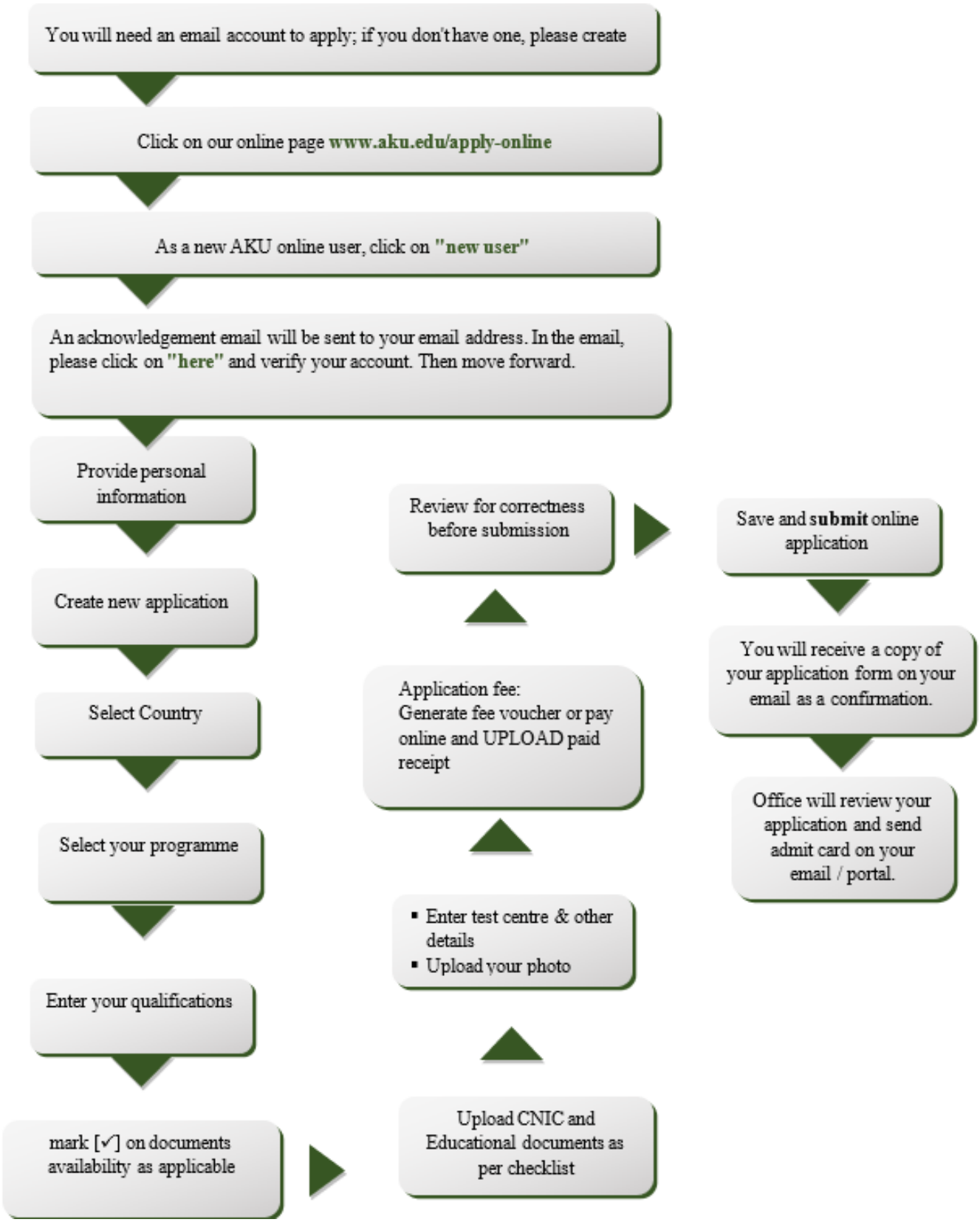
Without these documents, AKU reserves the right not to allow a candidate to write the Test.

DISABILITY

Candidates aspiring to apply to and attend the Aga Khan University must declare formally any disability (whether, mental, physical or otherwise) with all evidence to the University. This includes but is not limited to dyslexia, medical conditions and mental health problems. This allows the University to share with the candidate reasonable accommodation as mandated under the relevant and applicable policies.

APPLY ONLINE

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



PLEASE UPLOAD THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS WHEN APPLYING ONLINE

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.

1. Photograph ***(see photograph specification section)***
2. CNIC / NICOP *(front & back copy)* or *relevant Passport pages (for foreign nationals)*
3. Detailed curriculum vitae ***(see CV specification section)***
4. HEC attested undergraduate mark sheet and degree (16 years) or receipt from HEC as evidence that an application has been made. Each document of front & back copy as one pdf file.
5. HEC equivalence for 16 years of education or receipt from HEC as evidence that an application has been made. In case applying with Post RN BScN or foreign qualification.
6. For unattested documents, upload HEC receipt as evidence. **This is a mandatory requirement.**

Application Fee: **- Applying from AKU residential countries* is Rs. 9000/-**
- Applying from AKU non-residential countries is US $ 160/-
- (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

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED UPON SHORTLISTING

1. SSC / O Level / equivalent mark sheet or certificate.
2. HSSC / A Level / equivalent mark sheet or certificate.
3. Degree and consolidated mark sheet of undergraduate qualification / equivalent to 16 years - attested by the Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan as one Pdf file.
4. HEC equivalence for 16 years of education or receipt from HEC as evidence that an application has been made. In case applying with Post RN BScN or foreign qualification.
5. Degree of undergraduate qualification / equivalent to 16 years - attested by HEC.
6. HEC equivalence of 16 years for candidates applying with Post RN BScN or foreign degree.
7. Detailed curriculum vitae (CV) - *(see CV specification section)*
8. Transcript / enrolment information of all the courses undertaken or completed at AKU (if applicable)
9. Latest mark sheets / progress reports, if currently enrolled in any other institution (if applicable)

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 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 payment section.

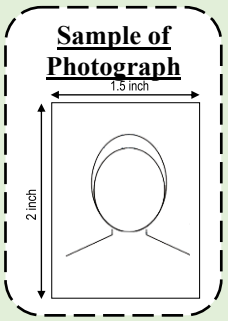
In case you are unable to receive the payment acknowledgement, please notify the Finance Office by emailing your query along with tracking Id, name, and programme name at student.finance@aku.edu

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.



CURRICULUM VITAE (CV) SPECIFICATION:

Your CV must include the following:

- Qualifications with grades/percentage and passing year
- Details of other Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses
- List of publications (if any)
- Other additional information to support your application.

FEES AND FUNDING

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.

Upon acceptance into an academic programme, a student who is unable to pay for the balance of payment, may apply for financial assistance.

The financial information including student's fee-paying status, fee structure for the 2026-2027 session, and financial assistance will be available on: www.aku.edu/admissions/fees-and-funding

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 Graduate Programme Admission Office, Aga Khan University, Stadium Road, Karachi 74800, Pakistan, Phone: +92-21 3486 4410 / 4412/ 5536.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation for outstation students is arranged in hostels managed by the University based on availability. These are shared, non-air-conditioned, furnished accommodation. Hostel space is restricted to students from outside Karachi only and is offered to graduate programme students, when available. Accommodation is limited.

A fee is charged for all accommodation. Accommodation charges for the 2026-2027 session is available online along with the fee structure. 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 2026-27 ADMISSIONS

<table>
<tr><td>December 21, 2025 – March 16, 2026</td><td colspan="2"><u>Admission Open:</u> Apply online via www.aku.edu/apply-online</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">May 16, 2026</td><td>AKU Admission Test -Pakistan</td><td>Test Centres

Karachi, Islamabad, Gilgit and Chitral</td></tr>
<tr><td>AKU Admission Test - Overseas</td><td>Dar es Salam, Kabul, Kampala, Khorog, London, Nairobi.

(Additional overseas centres will be confirmed if there are at least 10 candidates to write the test)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">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.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Upon Shortlisting</td><td colspan="2">▪ HEC attestation on 16 years of undergraduate transcript and degree
▪ HEC equivalence* (if applicable)</td></tr>
<tr><td>June / July 2026</td><td colspan="2">Interviews</td></tr>
<tr><td>Early January 2027</td><td colspan="2">Commencement of Classes</td></tr>
</table>

***HEC equivalence applicability**: In case of Post RN BScN and other foreign qualifications, equivalence letter from HEC must be submitted stating that the candidate has completed at least 16 years of education.*

DISCLAIMER

This booklet contains information about the programme offered by the Aga Khan University, Pakistan, for the academic year 2026-27. 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 requirements, application and admission process from the University Admission Office.

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