



آغا خان یونیورسٹی
THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY



**Faculty of Health Sciences
PhD Programme**

**Admission Information
2019 - 2020 Academic Year**

THE UNIVERSITY

Chartered in 1983, the Aga Khan University (AKU) is an international private university that currently operates in South and Central Asia, East Africa and the United Kingdom.

AKU occupies a pivotal place in the Aga Khan Development Network, a group of development agencies working under the leadership of His Highness the Aga Khan, and contributes in major ways to social development. AKU prioritises higher education and research initiatives relevant to the problems of the societies in which it operates, generally in the developing world.

Through on-going partnerships with prestigious institutions worldwide, AKU brings international expertise to bear upon the establishment and enhancement of its current and future programmes and services. With a growing programme offering, in addition to our existing six campuses spread over three continents, we are planning three new faculties and seven graduate schools to deliver a range of educational choices in an environment that respects cultural diversity.

Our merit-based, transparent admissions process and needs-sensitive financial assistance programme attempts to ensure that a diversity of high calibre students are able to attend the programmes at AKU.

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 some common criteria include: fluency in English.

PHD PROGRAMME

A PhD programme is the backbone of meaningful and scholarly engagements in any university. It is also crucial for the development of new generations of researchers, teachers, and leaders. The PhD programme in the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) at AKU is central to its mission of producing research-based knowledge that is relevant to the developing world and which will have impact. With this aim in view, a graduate programme in Health Sciences was implemented at AKU in October 1999.

The University's PhD Programme in Health Sciences is accredited by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) in Pakistan.

The PhD programme is an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary programme in health sciences with four specialities/streams.

- Biological Sciences
- Clinical Sciences
- Nursing
- Population and Public Health

A brief description of these streams has been provided.

- **Biological Sciences:**

Research training within this discipline will include studies in the fields of Anatomy, Biochemistry, Cell Biology, Immunology, Microbiology, Pathology, Pharmacology and Physiology. Candidates will be expected to undertake a novel doctoral thesis project in one of the above-mentioned fields.

- **Clinical Sciences:**

Clinical research involves interactions with patients, diagnostic clinical materials or data, or populations in the following areas: (1) disease mechanisms (etiopathogenesis); (2) clinical knowledge, detection, diagnosis and natural history of disease; (3) therapeutic interventions including clinical trials of drugs, devices and instruments; (4) translational research; (5) behavioural research. This may also include health services research, including outcomes, and cost-effectiveness. Doctoral-level training in clinical sciences will strengthen candidate knowledge in a specific clinically important area with applications of research methodologies for conducting diverse clinical research.

- **Nursing:**

The focus of this stream is to provide candidates with a rigorous training in research that is offered through coursework and mentorship with the aim of developing clinical scholars and faculty members capable of scientific inquiry for innovative practice and knowledge development for human health caring. Candidates will be required to produce an original piece of research that is important for human health from the perspective of nursing.

- **Population and Public Health:**

The programme is designed for a wide variety of candidates, such as epidemiologists and biostatisticians, social and behavioural scientists, environmental scientists, health professionals and health administrators with an interest in population health. The principles of epidemiology, biostatistics, social and behavioural sciences, environmental health and health policy and management will form the core of this discipline. Through course work, students would acquire a broad knowledge of population and public health; they would be required to pursue an in-depth study in an area of specialization within the population health framework.

In each PhD application cycle, projects will be available within each of the above-mentioned streams. These will vary depending on the opportunities for research at the time of admission. Students are advised to check details of available projects on the AKU website <https://www.aku.edu/admissions/phd-hs/Pages/home.aspx> at the time of applying to the programme.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND DESIGN

The PhD programme will be 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 three to four years assigned for original research. Upon completion of the coursework, confirmation for PhD candidacy will be based on passing the comprehensive examination and successful defence of the research proposal.

The time lines and other details of the PhD programme for full-time students will be as follows:

Year 1 and Year 2

- Compulsory eight credit hours for Core Courses;
- Six credit hours for Stream-specific courses and 4 credit hours for Electives;
- Comprehensive exam (written + oral) after completion of 18 credit hours; for details please visit HEC website
https://hec.gov.pk/english/scholarshipsgrants/Documents/MPHIL_PhD_Criteria.pdf
- Thesis synopsis submission and its defence to progress to full PhD candidacy.

Year 3 and Year 4

- Completion of Research Work and Thesis, as per AKU policy.

Coursework

The coursework will comprise of:

- i) Compulsory Core Courses:* These will be essential for all students. These are Scientific writing, Biostatistics in Health Care and Ethics in Healthcare Research.
- ii) Stream-specific Courses:* These courses are essential for all students in the particular discipline and constitute six credits hours.
- iii) Elective courses:* Different elective courses will be available to students from which they can choose the ones related to their interest/specialty and constitute four credit hours.

Research Work

The student will be expected to work towards his/her research Thesis in parallel with coursework. At the time of admission the student will select a Principal Thesis Supervisor.

ADMISSION INFORMATION

The University will conduct two admission cycles during an academic year. The information in this brochure pertains to PhD admission Cycle II. Classes for the students selected during Cycle II are expected to commence in January 2020.

APPLICATION ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Candidates must have 18 years of education including a Masters or equivalent degree based on a minimum of 30 credits after 16 years of education. A minimum CGPA 3.0 (out of 4.0 in the Semester System) or First Division (in the Annual System) in MPhil / MS / FCPS / FRCP / equivalent degree is required.

<u>Discipline</u>	<u>Minimum Eligibility Requirement</u>
Biological Sciences	MS / MPhil / Equivalent
Clinical Sciences	FCPS / Equivalent
Nursing	MS / MScN/MPhil / Equivalent
Population and Public Health	MS / MPhil / Equivalent

Additional requirements include:

- A minimum of 70% score on the AKU Graduate Admission Test. This test comprises Subject-specific component and Quantitative Reasoning. The English Language component tests language competency.

IDENTIFICATION OF SUPERVISOR AND THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Each PhD applicant is expected to identify a potential research project and a PhD supervisor from the **list of available research projects for PhD applicants** available on the AKU website www.aku.edu/admissions/phd-hs depending on their research interests. Candidates are encouraged to interact with their potential faculty supervisors to know more about the relevant projects before completing their application forms. In addition, each student is required to submit a statement (500 words) which describes the reasons for the interest in the particular project and how the project meets with his/her career objectives.

PROGRAMME TIMELINES

The PhD in Health Sciences is offered as a full-time and as an “extended timeline PhD”. The extended timeline PhD is open to AKU faculty only.

All PhD students must be enrolled continuously until the defence of their thesis, unless approval of temporary withdrawal has been obtained from the FHS-PhD Committee.

Following are the timelines students are expected to follow:

	Full-Time	Extended timelines *
Expected time for completing the 18 credit coursework, comprehensive examination and synopsis defence	18 months	24 months
Expected time for completion	4 years	6 years

*AKU faculty only

SCHEDULE OF SEMESTERS

The programme will have two regular Semesters, each comprising of 17 weeks and an 8-week summer semester.

Semester 1	January 2020 – May 2020
Semester 2	July 2020 – November 2020

APPLICATION PROCESS

EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES

Candidates are evaluated in stages:

- Stage I: Applications are reviewed and candidates are invited to write the AKU PhD Admission Test.
- Stage II: Shortlisted candidates are interviewed by a panel of faculty. The candidate would be required to make a short PowerPoint presentation on the research project of his/her interest.
- Stage III: Final selection is made on the basis of applicant's complete dossier, strength of the supervisory team and availability of funds to support research of student.

APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION

- Applications for admission will be accepted from August 19, 2019 until September 13, 2019 only. Candidates must apply online by logging on to www.aku.edu/apply-online. In cases where this is not possible, candidates may request for a paper based application by e-mailing at postgrad.query@aku.edu
- To complete the online application, candidates are requested to read and follow the instructions provided. Before submitting the application, candidates must ensure that they have complied with the instructions given with the application form and information brochure. Incomplete applications will not be processed.
- The programme brochure and sample test paper may be downloaded from our website <https://www.aku.edu/admissions/phd-hs/Pages/home.aspx>.

ADMIT CARD

Candidates will be issued an admit card on their online portal as well as through e-mail which will allow them to write the Admission Test. Where admit card is not received before the date of the test; candidate must e-mail the Admission Office for the required

information and application details. Applicants are required to bring the following to the test centre:

- The hard copy of the Admit Card emailed to you;
- Your CNIC or Passport or appropriate Photo ID for identification.

Without a photo ID and the Admit Card, AKU reserves the right to disallow you from writing the test.

ADMISSION TEST

The Admission Test will be conducted on **Friday, September 27, 2019**.

The Admission Test comprises three components: English Language, Quantitative Reasoning and a Speciality 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 Speciality Specific Exam will assess basic knowledge related to the specific speciality.

The University does not provide any special 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. 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, knowledge of public health issues in developing nations and evidence of initiative and commitment to the programme.

Interviews are conducted in Pakistan. For all candidates who reside overseas, interviews are conducted over Skype.

VALIDITY OF TEST SCORES

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

DOCUMENTS TO BE ATTACHED WITH AN APPLICATION

Candidates must note that they are required to upload following documents with the application on the online portal. In case you are submitting a paper based application, you are required to submit hardcopy of these documents.

Document	File Size	File Format
1 Photograph – Coloured and taken one week prior to application; (<i>please refer to photograph specification section</i>);	1 MB	JPEG
2 Attested scan copy of CNIC / NICOP / relevant pages of the Passport (<i>passport is required for foreign nationals</i>);	1 MB	PDF
3 Curriculum Vitae and list of publications, if any;	1 MB	PDF
4 Educational Documents: Attested copies of the following educational documents must be uploaded individually and sequentially (marks sheet and certificate / degree). <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Secondary School Certificate / O Levels or equivalent (<i>attested from Grade 17 & above officer</i>);- Higher Secondary School Certificate / A Levels or equivalent (<i>attested from Grade 17 & above officer</i>);- Undergraduate qualification (E.g.: MBBS, BScN, BDS, BSc or equivalent). <i>Undergraduate degree and mark sheet should have been attested by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC).</i>- MS / M. Phil / Equivalent qualification. <i>Degree and mark sheet should have been attested by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC).</i>	1 MB	PDF
5 Identify a potential research project and principal investigator that match your research interest. Please download form from www.aku.edu/admissions/phd-hs ; see AKU website for list of projects;		
6 Application Fee: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Applying from AKU residential countries¹ is Rs. 6,300/-▪ Applying from AKU non-residential countries is US \$ 306/- <p>The application fee is non-refundable; candidates must ensure that they are eligible for the programme before applying. The fee should be paid only through the modes mentioned in the mode of payment section. Cash, money orders, postal orders, personal cheques, banker's cheques and local and foreign bank drafts are not acceptable.</p> <p>Please upload the receipt or evidence that the payment has been made.</p>	1 MB	PDF
7 Grade Card / Transcript or enrolment information of the courses completed at Aga Khan University in the past or currently in progress, if applicable; If you are currently enrolled in any other institution, please provide attested mark-sheets of recent examination taken or progress reports, as applicable.	1 MB	PDF
8 Attested copies of Work Experience Certificates (for all the experiences mentioned in the application form);	1 MB	PDF

- 9 Letters of recommendation: 3 letters of reference are required. 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 length. Please download reference form from www.aku.edu/admissions/phd-hs

These letters should be received in sealed envelopes or emailed directly by your referee to postgrad.query@aku.edu. The letters should be current or not more than one-year-old.

You must provide the name of your referees on the application form.

¹Afghanistan, Burundi, Kenya, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda

MODE OF PAYMENT

Candidates may use following options to make payment. The original receipt should be uploaded on the AKU portal. **Please do not upload the payment request slip.**

Candidates may pay their application fee through the following options:

1. Online Transfer or Deposit into University Account

Candidates may pay through online deposit to any branch of Habib Bank Limited or Soneri Bank Limited in the below accounts;

<i>Account Title</i>	The Aga Khan University	The Aga Khan University
<i>Bank Name</i>	Habib Bank Ltd.	Soneri Bank Ltd.
<i>Branch Name & Code</i>	Karsaz Branch 0896	Aga Khan University Branch 0024
<i>Account #</i>	0896-79006003-01	0024-20000014401
<i>NTN #</i>	1206240-5	1206240-5
<i>IBAN #</i>	PK27HABB00089679006003-01	PK93SONE0002420000014401

2. University's E-payment Facility

Candidates may choose to pay fee online through a credit / debit card. Please use this web link to pay <https://payonline.aku.edu>

Please notify the Finance Office by emailing at student.finance@aku.edu when making e-payments. Student name, address, application tracking ID, amount, payment reference number and the purpose of payment should be clearly stated in the notification. **The acknowledgement e-mail received against e-payment must be uploaded with the On-line Application Form.**

HOW TO SUBMIT THE APPLICATION

On the Online portal, the application must be completed and submitted no later than September 13, 2019. Applications received after the deadline are not accepted.

Graduate Programme Admission Office

Office of the Registrar

Aga Khan University
(School of Nursing and Midwifery Bldg.),
Stadium Road, Karachi 74800
Pakistan

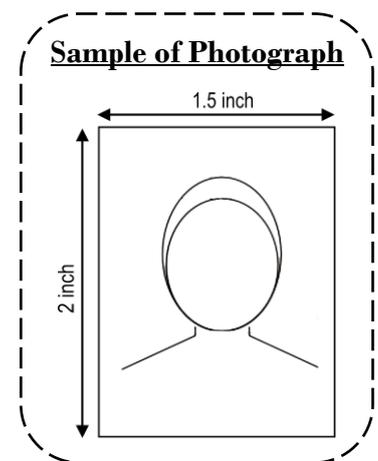
It remains the responsibility of the candidate to complete the application requirements according to the published instructions and time schedule. Once acknowledged, an application will not be returned. **Application will be considered incomplete if the required documents are not included with the applications.**

Aga Khan University reserves the right to admission; to revoke admission and registration if an application form 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.

PHOTOGRAPH SPECIFICATION

Your photograph is a vital part of your application. Please follow these instructions carefully. If photographs received do not meet these requirements your application will be considered incomplete.

- A colour photo is required;
- The background of the photograph should be plain white.
- The photo must measure: width: 1.5 inch, height: 2 inch
- Should have been taken within the last 1 week to reflect your current appearance.
- The photo should show a clear, front view, full face of the person. Side or angled views are **NOT** acceptable.
- Snapshots, magazine photos, low quality vending machine or mobile phone photos and full-length photographs are not acceptable.



If your photograph does not reflect your current appearance, even if it is not older than one week, the university will not allow you to write the Admission Test.

ADMISSION SCHEDULE 2019-2020 CYCLE II

Last date to receive applications	Friday, September 13, 2019
Admission Test	Friday, September 27, 2019 <u>Test Centres:</u> Karachi and Rawalpindi*
Duration for candidate-faculty supervisor interaction	October 2019
Interviews	October – November 2019
Announcement of Result	December 2019
Commencement of Classes	January 2020

* Confirmation of the Rawalpindi Test Centre is dependent on the required number of applications.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

AKU charges fees for all of its programmes. The tuition and fees structure and schedule for the 2019-20 academic year is available on our website <https://www.aku.edu/admissions/fees-and-funding/Pages/home.aspx>. Those responsible for a student's financial obligations should plan accordingly.

The Aga Khan University will provide sponsorship to students admitted into any stream of the PHD programme through tuition fee waivers. This opportunity will be 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 an Institution will be required to pay the tuition.

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

All students will receive a monthly stipend, and start up research funds. Details are available with the respective Stream Directors.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation may be available in hostels managed by the University. If and when available, this will be provided to the PhD students from outside Karachi. A fee is charged for all university accommodation. Meals are not included in this cost; however, these can be purchased from the University's cafeteria.

All students living in the hostels will be expected to conform to its rules and regulations. Residence will be conditional upon proper use and care of the property, considerate behaviour, and periodic re-appraisal of the student's need for such accommodation.

Disclaimer

This booklet contains information about the programme offered by Aga Khan University, Pakistan for the academic year 2019-20. 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 through University Admission Office.

THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

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Email: postgrad.query@aku.edu

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