

**AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY**  
**Guidelines, Policies and Procedures**

<b>Policy Name</b>	Academic Administration of PhD Programme
<b>Policy Number</b>	045
<b>Approved by</b>	Academic Council (Senate)
<b>Date of Approval</b>	24 June 2021
<b>Date of Revisions</b>	NA
<b>Contact Office</b>	Office of the Registrar

**1.0 Purpose of the Policy**

To outline policies and procedures relating to the academic administration of PhD programme at the Aga Khan University and to align the admission and progression policies of the programme with the mission of the University.

**2.0 Applicability of the Policy**

Unless there are contrary regulatory body requirements in the countries where AKU offers a PhD programme, the admission and progression requirements as provided in this policy will be applicable. The minimum PhD requirements (as available on websites for AKUs country of operation is provided in Attachment 1.

**3.0 Definitions**

3.1 Implementation Committee: An Implementation Committee will be a subcommittee of the PhD programme Committee appointed by the Chair/Dean/Director of the Programme/Entity. The Committee will be Chaired by a Director appointed for the PhD Programme. The Committee will ensure the implementation of the PhD programme according to University policies and guidelines.

3.2 Programme Streams: Programme specialties.

3.3 PI: Principal Investigator

3.4 Synopsis Defense: Synopsis defense is to be taken after successful completion of the entire course work, including core and elective courses and the comprehensive examination. The purpose of synopsis defence is to assess the student's understanding of the research field including the breadth and depth of the selected topic and its method of inquiry. Upon successful defence of the synopsis, the student will advance to candidacy for the PhD degree.

3.5 RWG: The Registrar's Working Group

3.6 Residency Requirement: Full time study

3.7 Regular Classes: Classes that are taught on campus /hybrid mode by full- time faculty members of the University. Or through subject experts, visiting/part time faculty as may be appointed by the University.

## **4.0 Admissions**

### **4.1 Pre-Application**

- 4.1.1 Project availability for candidates: For programmes/streams where candidates are required to select a project prior to submitting an application, the relevant Implementation Committee (IC) will review the project and expertise available with the supervisory team; available funding to initiate the proposed work or a clear plan for securing additional funding for the work proposed. Care will be taken to ensure that the project can accommodate a PhD candidate.
- 4.1.2 The relevant IC will develop a mechanism to ensure the PI/Supervisor spends time with the candidate. Initially to help the candidate to understand the potential PhD project and if shortlisted to prepare the presentation to be given at the time of interview.
- 4.1.3 To remove any ambiguity in roles of responsibility, a structured Instruction guide detailing the expectations on the part of the supervisor and the candidate will be prepared and made available to the PI of the project.

### **4.2 Applications**

- 4.2.1 Applications with complete documents will be accepted for consideration and evaluation. This includes but not limited to documents meeting AKU/regulatory/statutory body requirements. Incomplete applications will not be acceptable.
- 4.2.2 In case a programme allows a candidate to apply with qualifications that are not in the relevant stream/discipline, stream/programme faculty will be required to ascertain the readiness of the candidate and identify any bridging courses – to be taken prior or after admitting the student to prepare the candidate for the relevant stream/discipline.
- 4.2.3 Student load (commitment to the programme i.e. part time/ full time) should be ascertained at application time to assess whether the student would be able to complete the programme within the stipulated scheduled time frame.

For applications from candidates internal to AKU, support (in writing) from the Departmental Chair/Head is required at the time of application. For external candidates who are taking long leave to undertake the PhD, support letters from their home institutions will need to be submitted upon acceptance of the offer to join the programme.

### **4.3 Admission Test**

- 4.3.1 There will be three components of the Admission Test.
- a) English: The standardized Test administered by the University, to serve as a qualifier. The score for which will be determined by the University and may change each year.
  - b) Quantitative Reasoning: developed by a committee comprising all stake holders, chaired by experts from the University, preferably from a neutral department for e.g. DED (Department for Educational Development).
  - c) Subject Specific Component: This component will be developed by a committee within the stream and reviewed by neutral experts e.g. the DED in Pakistan. Subject experts may be included in the Committee (from the AKU – Exam Board/ IED). A disclaimer for any conflict of interest should be provided at the beginning of the exercise. [The Programme/Stream Director responsible for finalizing decisions, may not be involved in the development of the subject specific component].
- 4.3.2 The subject specific component must be independently passed at 70%. For a candidate to move to the next stage of evaluation, a cumulative score of at least 70% will be required in section b and c.

#### 4.4 Interviews

- a) There will be a panel interview comprising three interviewers.
- b) The panel of three interviewers should include an individual (subject expert/ senior faculty) external to the stream, from another department at AKU within AKU.
- c) The Programme/stream director may be an interviewer only if he/she is not the PI/supervisor.
- d) The PI/supervisor must take responsibility to spend adequate time with the candidate interested in the project when shortlisted. The structured guide discussed in 4.1.3 above should be provided to the PI/supervisor by the Office of the Registrar and to the candidate with the letter informing him/her of the shortlisting decision.
- e) The candidate will be required to make a presentation on the project at the time of the interview.
- f) The PI/supervisor should be present during the interview to respond to any queries that the candidate is unable to respond to but should not be on the interview panel.

#### 4.5 Final Selection

- a) Recommendations from the relevant programme/Implementation Committee should be forwarded to a PhD Admissions Committee to be formed at the entity level. The Committee membership would be approved by the Provost.
- b) The Admissions Committee should be chaired by the Dean. The PhD Programme Director should be part of the Admissions Committee. Since the stream directors would have made recommendations, they should not be members.
- c) It is recommended that the Committee include a select group of 5-7 individuals to take the final decisions based on voting. 70% membership will constitute quorum.

##### Recommended members for the Committee

- i) Relevant Dean (chair)
  - ii) PhD Programme Director
  - iii) Two faculty representatives who have PhD including one from the programme concerned.
  - iv) Associate Vice Provost Research
  - v) One or two external members – educationists (Would be on a three/five-year tenure, extendable based on expertise)
  - vi) Graduate Office
  - vii) Member from the Registrar's Office- serve as the secretary of the committee will be a non-voting member.
- d) The recommendations of the Admissions Committee will be sent to the Registrar Working Group (RWG) for endorsement.
  - e) The Provost would be invited to the RWG for discussion to finalize decisions.

#### 4.6 Minimum Criteria for Admission: Unless contrary to criteria provided by the regulatory body in the country, following will be the minimum criteria for admissions:

- a) While the minimum criteria for application will be 16 years of education, the programme in question may decide on entry level education eligibility. However, in Pakistan, HEC requires that most recent degree obtained to be considered for application
- b) Minimum eligibility requirements may be set by the Programme keeping regulatory body requirements in mind. In Pakistan HEC requires a minimum of

3.0 CGPA (out of 4.0 in the semester system) or First division (in the annual system) or equivalent in the most recent degree obtained is required, as assessed by the home Institution.

- c) In cases where a candidate does not have a prior degree in the relevant field, bridging courses would need to be offered to prepare a candidate for the rigour in the relevant stream of the PhD programme. Programmes should have the course approved prior to these being offered following the AKU process of approvals.
- d) Candidates will be required to submit a statement of purpose/research intent, which shall form an integral part of the application. The Admissions Committee shall use the information provided to ascertain the preparedness and interest of the candidate in pursuing doctoral studies.

## **5.0 Requirements for Supervisors**

- 5.1 The requirements for a supervisor as stated in the Graduate Research Supervision Policy must be met. At the minimum, these should meet the requirements of the regulatory body in the country.

## **6.0 Minimum Requirements for award of a PhD Degree**

- 6.1 Coursework and Residency Requirement: The following requirements shall be fulfilled before the award of a PhD Degree:

- a) For students having prior qualification of BS or equivalent shall complete coursework of at least 48 credit hours of which the majority shall be fulfilled through regular classes.
- b) For students having prior qualification of MS/MPhil or equivalent, for which the regulatory body, e.g. HEC in Pakistan has granted equivalence of 18 years of education, will be required at the minimum to complete 24 credit hours of course work as required by the stream as regular classes.
- c) There shall be a full-time resident study requirement for a period of at least two years.

- 6.2 Comprehensive Examination. Following the completion of coursework, every PhD student shall be required to pass a comprehensive examination to be granted candidacy as PhD researcher.

- a) Where the student is unable to pass the comprehensive examination in the first attempt, the student will be allowed one more attempt to take the examination.
- b) The comprehensive examination/Resit examination and synopsis defense should be completed within twelve months of course work completion. In case of extenuating circumstances, an extension up to 6 months may be approved by the PhD committee of the faculty / entity. Any further extension would be through the AKU RWG / AC dependent upon the case.

## **6.3 Doctoral Dissertation**

- 6.3.1 Supervision and Examination Requirements. Subject to the regulatory body requirements for the programme in the country of operation, each PhD researcher shall be required to write a doctoral dissertation that meets the following minimum criteria:

- a) The PhD dissertation shall be supervised by a faculty member who holds a PhD (or equivalent) degree and in Pakistan should be an HEC approved supervisor. At the time of appointment as supervisor, unless allowed by the country's regulatory body, the faculty member (in Pakistan as per HEC requirements) shall be a full-

time faculty member of the University.

- b) The PhD dissertation must be evaluated by at least two International external experts. Additional reviewers would be a country -based distinguished National Professors, Meritorious Professors, or Tenure Track Professors and an AKU internal reviewer. In Pakistan, the international expert will be a PhD expert from an academically advanced country as approved by the regulatory body of the country e.g. HEC in Pakistan. At least 60% of the reviewers shall have a PhD or equivalent degree.
- c) The PhD candidate should have published his or her dissertation research in a peer reviewed journal. In Pakistan, the candidate must publish in a journal classified by the HEC in category Y or above. Details are available at: <https://hec.gov.pk/english/services/faculty/journals/Pages/default.aspx>
- d) A plagiarism test must be conducted on the dissertation before its submission to the internal, external and international experts. Antiplagiarism software's report should be less than 19% similarity index and any single source having similarity index more than 5% without citation is not accepted. In Pakistan the plagiarism test must meet the HEC policy. For plagiarism test the dissertation should be sent to the Registrar Office, who will arrange to have the test conducted.
- e) An open defense of the dissertation is required after positive evaluation of the dissertation. They would include at a minimum as voting members External examiner (1 National +1 International) and 1 Internal from AKU (all of whom who have reviewed the dissertation). Additional non-voting members would be Programme Director / Stream Director and representative of the Provost / Graduate office.

## **7.0 Reporting Requirements**

7.1 Regulatory bodies may have different reporting requirements which must be followed. In Pakistan, the following documents shall be submitted to the PhD Programme Office for sending to the regulatory authority following the completion of studies:

- a) A duly filled completion form: this is sent to the HEC signed by the University Registrar as the Controller of Examination. This notifies HEC that the PhD scholar has completed all the requirements for the award of the PhD degree
- b) A copy of PhD Dissertation for including in PhD Country Directory and for attestation of the PhD degree by the HEC.
- c) A duly filled Proforma for the PhD Country Directory, signed by the University Registrar as the Controller of Examination and the Regional Vice Provost.

## **8.0 Degree Completion Timeline**

- 8.1 The PhD degree shall be awarded after a minimum of three (3) years and not more than eight (8) years after admission into the programme.
- 8.2 The student who is unable to complete the programme within six years should make a request to the programme committee for an extension for up to a year. For any further extension, a request may be made to the Registrar's Working Group (RWG) to determine whether the delay was caused by circumstances beyond the student's control. If the extension is granted based on exceptional circumstances, the PhD degree must be completed within a maximum of ten (10) years after joining the programme.

8.3 The date of notification of the award of the PhD degree subsequent to the successful PhD defense shall be considered to be the date of the completion of PhD studies.

**9.0 Exit Strategy**

9.1 Award of MS/MPhil Degrees on the Basis of PhD Studies: In cases where a student completes the requirements of an MPhil/MS and is unable for extenuating circumstance to complete the requirements of the PhD, the University may allow an exit from the programme awarding an MPhil degree. For this to be applicable, the PhD programme must develop the requirements of the exit degree and have these approved at the appropriate forums including the Academic Council.

9.2 To be awarded, programme recommendations should be brought to the RWG for approval.

**PHD MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS IN EA, UK AND PAKISTAN**

COUNTRY	Requirements for launching a PHD program from regulatory body; to obtain an NOC what is required?	# of faculty (FT, PT and other category) required at the time of launch	Any requirement for student to be residence/full time, or is part time, online allowed? Any other.	Supervisor /supervision Requirements	Entry requirement? GPA requirement at entry; Status of prior degree; Can a student without a relevant background apply to any stream? What are the pre-requisites to apply to a non-relevant programme	Other application requirements: Admission Test? Statement of purpose; research proposal etc.?
KENYA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accreditation by the Commission for University Education (CUE).</li> <li>• Programme curriculum meeting CUE requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each academic programme shall be headed by a full-time appropriate and qualified Senior Lecturer and above with at least five (5) years university teaching experience, who has a doctorate degree in the relevant field of study.</li> <li>• Each academic programme shall be supported by at least two (2) other appropriate full-time academic staff members.</li> <li>• The ratio for full-time to part-time academic staff members for the support of any given programme shall be 2:1.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face-to-face (full-time, part-time);</li> <li>• Modular;</li> <li>• Open and distance;</li> <li>• E-learning modes; and</li> <li>• Blended</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommended full-time staff: student ratio are:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Applied Sciences - 1:10</li> <li>b) Arts and humanities - 1:15</li> <li>c) Medical and Allied Sciences - 1:7</li> <li>d) Pure and Natural Sciences - 1:10</li> <li>e) Social Sciences - 1:18</li> </ul> </li> <li>• An academic staff shall be assigned students to supervise on thesis/ dissertation based on a combination of his/her teaching load, administrative duties, and supervision experience and capacity.</li> </ul>	Relevant academic master's degree holders.	No other additional application requirements.

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KENYA		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The minimum academic qualifications for a doctorate programme is a relevant doctorate degree, with at least five (5) years of teaching experience, and evidence of research inclinations through individual research, supervision of research and theses and involvement in peer reviewed publications.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The maximum number of students an academic staff shall supervise in any given academic year shall be 3 students.</li> <li>The maximum lecturer workload shall be 40 hours per week and shall include teaching; preparation of examination papers; marking of examination scripts; tutorials; preparation of teaching; supervision of academic work; administrative work; laboratory and laboratory preparation; and research/research assignments.</li> </ul>		



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TANZANIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accreditation by the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU)</li> <li>• Programme curriculum meeting TCU requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 academic staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face-to-face contact (full-time and part-time);</li> <li>• Open and distance education (full-time and part-time);</li> <li>• E-learning;</li> <li>• Blended learning (dual mode).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A candidate at UQF Level 10 study programme shall be supervised by a minimum of two qualified and experienced supervisors who possess UQF Level 10 (PhD) qualifications and preferably at least one of them being at the rank of associate or full professor.</li> <li>• The maximum number of postgraduate students to be supervised by one supervisor at any particular time shall not exceed five (5) PhD candidates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A University shall admit into a doctorate degree programme a candidate who has a master degree (UQF level 9) in relevant discipline/area or equivalent with a minimum of GPA of 3.0 or B grade.</li> <li>• A University shall process provisional admission into a PhD degree programme of a candidate waiting for final results of his/her master's degree and has completed the degree requirements but is waiting for the results.</li> </ul>	

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TANZANIA					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before processing applications for admission into postgraduate programmes of applicants having foreign qualifications, every University shall vet the level of the foreign qualifications through comparison with the national equivalences;</li> <li>• Applicants who possess foreign qualifications shall be considered for admission into relevant postgraduate programmes after obtaining approval by the Commission.</li> </ul>	

COUNTRY	Requirements for launching a PHD program from regulatory body; to obtain an NOC what is required?	# of faculty (FT, PT and other category) required at the time of launch	Any requirement for student to be residence/full time, or is part time, online allowed? Any other.	Supervisor /supervision Requirements	Entry requirement? GPA requirement at entry; Status of prior degree; Can a student without a relevant background apply to any stream? What are the pre-requisites to apply to a non-relevant programme	Other application requirements: Admission Test? Statement of purpose; research proposal etc.?
UGANDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accreditation by the National Commission for Higher Education.</li> <li>• Programme curriculum meeting NCHE requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A university or tertiary institution shall maintain adequate academic and support staff for each approved programme of study.</li> <li>• 15-50% of staff is acceptable though the ideal number is 60% of academic staff to be PhD holders.</li> <li>• Full-time or part-time academic staff.</li> <li>• Acceptable staff: student ratio is 1:25 although the ideal is 1:15 but also depends on the discipline.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The programme document shall indicate modes of programme delivery including Full-Time, Part-time, On-line, Distance Learning, etc).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students of any curriculum shall be assessed on the basis of the following— (a) course work administered throughout the academic year or section of the academic year by way of tutorials, essays, tests, laboratory exercises or other mode acceptable to a university or tertiary institution; and (b) written examinations administered at intervals consistent with the mode of organisation of the academic year in a university or tertiary institution. Ratios:</li> <li>• 20 hours per week acceptable but the ideal is 10 hours per week.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A master's degree or its equivalent.</li> </ul>	

COUNTRY	Programme Credit requirements (1)	Comprehensive exam requirement; are re-sits allowed? (2)	Time allowed for completion (3)	Research publication requirement to graduate (4)	Exit strategy (5)
UK	<p>Taught doctoral degrees require at least 540 SCQF credits (270 ECTS), of which a minimum of 420 (210 ECTS) is at SCQF level 12 - see National Qualifications Framework. Research doctorates do not have an SCQF credit rating.</p>	<p>Examiners submit separate, independent written reports before the viva and a joint report after it. After the viva-voce examination, the examiners may agree to:</p> <p>Award the doctorate</p> <p>Ask the student to 'revise and resubmit' the thesis - identifying necessary (minor or major) amendments before it can be accepted</p> <p>Or, award a qualification different from the one for which the research student has been examined (e.g. downgrade to an MPhil)</p>	<p>The length of programmes vary across universities and types of programme. Doctoral programmes generally take three to four years full-time. It is possible to undertake doctoral studies on a part time basis, and this would generally take five to seven years to complete. Some 4-year programmes may, in effect, include a 1-year Masters programme as their first year. In the case of 3-year doctorates, most students have gained a Masters degree before achieving the doctorate and so have been involved in post-graduate study for a longer period.</p>	<p>Higher doctorates may be awarded in recognition of a substantial body of original research undertaken over the course of many years. Typically, a portfolio of work which has been previously published in a peer-refereed context is submitted for assessment. Most higher education awarding bodies restrict candidacy to graduates or academic staff of several years' standing.</p>	<p>See (2)</p> <p>Qualification titles for doctoral degrees include:</p> <p>Doctor of Philosophy, abbreviated to PhD or DPhil</p> <p>Doctor of Education, abbreviated to EdD</p> <p>Doctor of Clinical Psychology, abbreviated to DClinPsy</p> <p>Doctor of Engineering, abbreviated to EngD or DEng</p> <p>Doctor of Business Administration, abbreviated to DBA</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/chapter-b11_research-degrees.pdf">https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/chapter-b11_research-degrees.pdf</a></li> <li>○ <a href="https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/research-degrees">https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/research-degrees</a></li> <li>● <a href="https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/third-cycle-phd-programmes-93_en#:~:text=Taught%20doctoral%20degrees%20require%20at.have%20an%20SCQF%20credit%20rating.">https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/third-cycle-phd-programmes-93_en#:~:text=Taught%20doctoral%20degrees%20require%20at.have%20an%20SCQF%20credit%20rating.</a></li> <li>○</li> </ul>					

COUNTRY	Requirements for launching a PHD program from regulatory body; to obtain an NOC what is required?	# of faculty (FT, PT and other category) required at the time of launch	Any requirement for student to be residence /full time, or is part time, online allowed? Any other.	Supervisor /supervision Requirements	Entry requirement? GPA requirement at entry; Status of prior degree; Can a student without a relevant background apply to any stream? What are the pre-requisites to apply to a non-relevant programme	Other application requirements: Admission Test? Statement of purpose; research proposal etc.?
PAKISTAN	<p>Following are the requirements:</p> <p>a. The Act/Charter of the university allows for the offering of the program;</p> <p>b. Approval has been granted by the university's statutory body to start the program;</p> <p>c. The university shall not have violated HEC rules, regulations or polices in any material respect in the last two years, provided if the university has adequately and timely taken remedial measures to rectify the violation, the HEC may at its sole discretion grant a waiver in respect of this requirement;</p> <p>d. If applicable, any necessary approvals shall have been obtained by accreditation councils to launch the program;</p> <p>e. The curriculum of the program shall be consistent with any guidelines issued by the HEC;</p>	<p>At least three (3) full-time faculty members holding PhD degrees in the relevant field shall be appointed to the department that will be offering the new PhD program</p>	<p>The intended PhD program shall include a residence requirement for PhD students of at least two years</p>	<p>The PhD dissertation shall be supervised by a faculty member who holds a PhD (or equivalent) degree and is an HEC approved supervisor. At the time of appointment as supervisor, the faculty member shall be a full-time faculty member of the university in which the student is enrolled.</p>	<p>Principles and Purposes. The minimum requirement for admission to a PhD program shall be completion of the BS (or equivalent) degree. To avoid confusion, it is clarified that this and the remaining criteria in this section are only minimum requirements, and universities are free to establish their own admissions framework that may vary by discipline, provided it satisfies the minimum conditions set forth in this section. Keeping in view that doctoral studies are intended to be rigorous and demanding, universities need to ensure that entrants to doctoral programs are capable of handling the academic rigor required to complete a PhD degree. Further, in admitting students to PhD programs, this policy encourages admissions committees to take a substantive approach to ascertain (a) applicants' commitment (or level of interest) in pursuing the PhD program and (b) their preparedness in terms of previous academic training that will enable them to succeed in the program.</p>	<p>Testing Requirement. Applicants to PhD programs shall be required to fulfill the following testing requirements:</p> <p>a. All applicants to PhD programs shall be required to take one of the following non subject specific admissions test:</p> <p>i. The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) test administered by the Education Testing Service;</p> <p>ii. A graduate admission test administered by the Education Testing Council; or</p> <p>iii. With the permission of the HEC, an equivalent test developed by the university, or by another university, for admissions to graduate programs.</p> <p>b. Subject tests shall not be required for admission to most PhD programs, with the possible exception of certain science disciplines, at the discretion of the university.</p>

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PAKISTAN	<p>f. The admissions requirements of the new PhD program shall satisfy the HEC's minimum criteria for admission in PhD programs</p> <p>g. The program completion requirements of the new PhD program shall satisfy the HEC's minimum criteria for award of PhD degrees</p> <p>h. At least three (3) full-time faculty members holding PhD degrees in the relevant field shall be appointed to the department that will be offering the new PhD program;</p> <p>i. The intended PhD program shall include a residence requirement for PhD students of at least two years; and</p> <p>j. As a general matter, universities shall establish PhD programs in core disciplines in social sciences, humanities and natural sciences, as may be notified by HEC from time to time.</p>				<p>3.2. Completion of Prior Degree. Prior to entry into a PhD program, the student shall have been awarded his or her BS/MS/MPhil or equivalent degrees.</p> <p>3.3. Prior Degree in Different Discipline. Consistent with best practices internationally (including leading global universities), it shall generally not be a requirement for admission to a PhD program that the applicant shall have completed a prior degree in the same discipline. If the applicant has a strong interest in pursuing a PhD degree in a different discipline and, in accordance with the department's policy, the admissions committee is satisfied that the applicant's prior education has sufficiently prepared him or her to undertake the course of studies of the doctoral program (or, in the opinion of the admissions committee, the preparation can be deemed satisfactory by taking a few additional courses after starting the program), the applicant shall be considered for admissions notwithstanding their prior qualification in a different discipline.</p>	<p>3.6. Statement of Purpose. As part of the application for admission to PhD programs, applicants shall be required to submit a statement of purpose, which shall form an integral part of the application. The admissions committee shall use the information provided to ascertain the preparedness and interest of the candidate in pursuing doctoral studies, and whether the department has the requisite resources to train and supervise the doctoral candidate in the sub-specialty he or she is interested in.</p>

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PAKISTAN	In order to launch PhD degree programs with specialized titles, the university shall submit for the HEC's review a statement of purpose explaining the need and rationale for launching such a program; provided, however, that universities that have been in existence for less than ten (10) years shall only be allowed to launch PhD programs in core disciplines.				3.4. Minimum GPA Requirement. For admission in PhD programs, a minimum CGPA of 3.0 (out of 4.0 in the semester system) or First Division (in the annual system) in the most recent degree obtained is required, whether such was degree obtained from Pakistani or foreign universities.	