

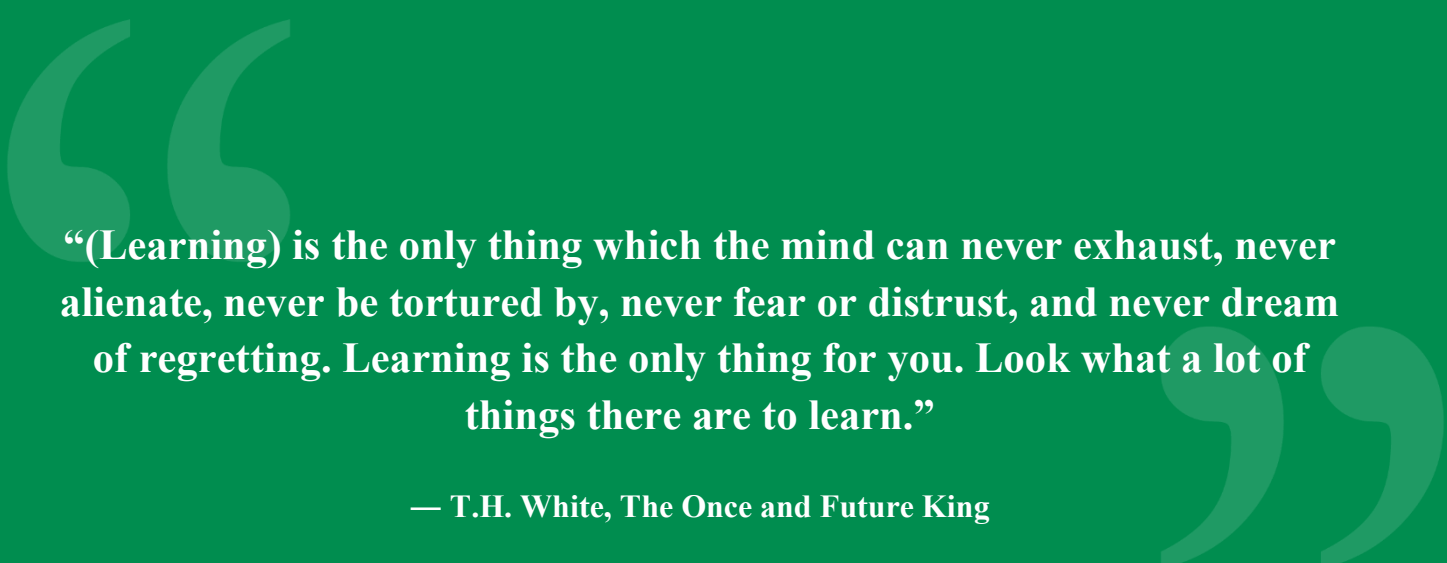


THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

Institute for Educational Development

# PROSPECTUS 2025-2026





**“(Learning) is the only thing which the mind can never exhaust, never alienate, never be tortured by, never fear or distrust, and never dream of regretting. Learning is the only thing for you. Look what a lot of things there are to learn.”**

— T.H. White, *The Once and Future King*

## MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



Thank you for your interest in the AKU-IED.

If you are in a position to consider applying to a university, you are already in a privileged position, particularly in our country. A university is a place where the power of logic trumps the logic of power, and, where questions, possibilities, and inquiries reign supreme. Studying at a university is an opportunity, among other things, to follow the dictates of reason, feel with empathy and integrity, converse with precision and develop capacities to ask and respond to questions and criticisms with equanimity. It is, in short, a privilege that brings with it responsibilities.

Nowhere else is this calibration of privilege and responsibility more essential than in the field of education which you have chosen to pursue. Education, in its broader sense, is an exercise of bringing out the best in a person, and contributing to a flourishing life, individually and collectively. It is simultaneously a visionary and a pragmatic field. As you work on your studies, I hope both these senses of education, practical and ideal, will remain with you.

During its 31 years of existence, the AKU-IED has worked with thousands of students through its teaching programmes – degrees, diplomas, and short courses. Every student has been important for us, and so will be you. By all means, we will give you opportunities to make your years with us fully worthwhile. In turn, we will expect dedication and joyful efforts on your part. As I encourage you to apply, I want to reiterate our vision of imparting quality education accessible to all those who deserve it.

In this prospectus, you will find information about the programmes we offer, the way you can apply and the financial support that will be available to you, should you need it to pursue your studies.

With best wishes!

**Dr Farid Panjwani**  
**Professor and Dean**

## Message From Director MPhil Programme



MPhil programme is the flagship programme of AKU-IED and is recognized for its high-quality, relevance and rigor both nationally and internationally. This programme aims at preparing you to provide leadership in education through rigorous scholarship, mindful practice and responsive research in collaboration with schools. This programme is designed for developing your capacity as a pedagogical leader who is a classroom practitioner cum researcher. The programme is geared towards enabling you to engage in intellectual, academic and professional dialogue for becoming effective members of our existing community of learners. You will find ample opportunities to engage in reflective practice and research activities for transformative experiences.

**Dr Munira Amirali,**

**Assistant Professor and Director MPhil Programme**

## MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR B.ED. PROGRAMME



We are delighted by your interest in joining a programme that is dedicated to preparing teachers. The B.Ed. Programme at AKU-IED offers a transformative journey for those aspiring to make a meaningful impact in the field of teaching and learning by becoming reflective practitioners.

At AKU-IED, the B.Ed. Programme is grounded in the philosophy of learning, unlearning, and relearning. We believe that education is a continuous journey, and this programme is designed to equip you with tools to reflect critically, question assumptions, and adapt to the evolving needs of your students and the wider educational landscape. Our mission is to bridge educational theory with practical application, enabling you to foster meaningful change in classrooms and beyond.

We also take pride in role-modelling the very practices we encourage you to adopt as educators. Collaboration, inquiry, and reflective learning form the cornerstone of our approach. Through rigorous academic study, field experiences, and professional dialogue, you will gain the knowledge and skills to navigate the challenges of contemporary education with confidence and creativity.

**Dr Rabia Nauman,**

**Assistant Professor and Director B.Ed. Programme**

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## THE UNIVERSITY



*“Instruct the wise and they will be wiser still; teach the righteous and they will add to their learning.”*

*-Proverbs 9:9*

The mission of the Aga Khan University (AKU) is to improve the quality of life in countries with developing economies and beyond through world-class teaching, research and health-care delivery. We are a private university with a public mindset of furthering the common good. We educate contributors in various fields, 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 like-minded institutions to address problems that affect millions of people.

A non-denominational and not-for-profit institution, AKU was founded in 1983 by His Highness the Aga Khan as Pakistan’s first private university. 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 those who need financial assistance to pursue their studies, get it. Individuals from lower-income backgrounds are able to attend.



## INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, PAKISTAN

Established in 1993, the Institute for Educational Development (AKU-IED), Pakistan, is an academic entity of the Aga Khan University. AKU-IED is mandated to make valuable and relevant contributions towards improving the quality of education in Pakistan and other developing contexts. Though we work in a range of educational areas, teacher and school leadership development have been the main foci of our work. Below you will find some details of our teaching, research, student life and much else that may be of interest to you.

### Over 31 years of quality interventions in Pakistan, we have:

Worked with more than



**11,000**  
schools

Developed capacity of



**54,000+**  
teachers &  
other educationists

Impacted over



**20 million**  
students

## DEGREE PROGRAMMES

*“We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.”*

*– T.S. Eliot*

Students and faculty are our reason for existence. Degree programmes are where they come together and create the magic of high-quality teaching and learning. We offer the following programmes for aspiring and in-service professionals.

- [Bachelor of Education \(B.Ed.\)](#)
- [Master of Philosophy in Education \(M.Phil.\)](#)
- [Doctor of Philosophy in Education \(PhD\)](#)

Further along in this document, you will find details about each of these programmes.

## RESEARCH

Research, at the AKU-IED, is not a technical exercise but a way of being. It is a mindset our faculty nurtures among themselves and the students. Its aim is to advance the understanding of core educational challenges and foster solutions with a focus on countries with the developing economies, particularly Pakistan. Our research active faculty members ensure that teaching is informed by the field and current scholarship.

To date, AKUIED researchers have completed over 160 research projects across a wide range of themes, contributing to significant educational reforms in Pakistan and informing the Institute’s policies, practices, and school improvement initiatives.

All degrees carry research as an essential part, as students both acquire research capacities and apply them in the areas of their interest. Many find this to be most exciting part of their journey.

***For more information about the research that we do, please visit:***

<https://www.aku.edu/iedpk/research/pages/home.aspx>

## DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

We design and implement contextualized educational development projects aimed at fostering quality reforms in schools and enhancing the capacity of governmental and private not-for-profit educational systems and networks. Over the past three decades, we have successfully executed a diverse range of projects, spanning one to six years in duration, across Pakistan and Afghanistan. These initiatives have primarily benefited underprivileged communities and marginalized groups, including women and



children, particularly in areas challenged by limited resources, social and cultural barriers, low literacy rates, and difficult geographical terrains.

Our projects focus on addressing these critical constraints by:

1. Ensuring that marginalized populations, especially women and children, have access to quality education.
2. Enhancing the capabilities of government and private educational institutions through capacity-building initiatives.
3. Introducing and sustaining educational reforms that improve teaching methodologies, curriculum standards, and administrative practice.
4. Developing innovative solutions to provide education in remote and resource-constrained areas, thereby bridging the gap between different social strata.

Through these efforts, we aim to create sustainable improvements in educational access and quality, ultimately contributing to the socio-economic development of the regions we serve. Our long-term commitment to educational excellence ensures that our projects not only address immediate challenges but also lay the foundation for enduring positive change in the educational landscape.

***For more information about our development projects, please visit***

***<https://www.aku.edu/iedpk/projects/Pages/home.aspx>***

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTRES**

Our Professional Development Centres, located in Karachi, North, and Chitral, are dedicated to rigorously addressing the diverse professional learning needs of educators across Pakistan. Through these, we offer a wide range of continuing professional courses designed to enhance professional expertise and foster educational excellence. These courses vary in duration, from short workshops spanning 1–3 days to extensive programmes lasting up to 16 weeks.





Our offerings include:

**Short Courses:** Focused programmes targeting specific skills or knowledge areas.

**Certificate Courses:** In-depth, structured learning opportunities designed for professional advancement.

**Customized, Need-Based Courses:** Tailored programmes developed to address the unique requirements of organizations or individuals.

*For more information about our professional development centres, please visit <https://www.aku.edu/iedpk/outreach/Pages/home.aspx>*

## LIFE IN KARACHI: A CITY LIKE NO OTHER



Karachi, often dubbed the *City of Lights*, is the embodiment of urban life in Pakistan. While the flickering of electricity and the shadow of political upheavals occasionally cast doubt on the city's vibrancy, there is an undeniable magic to Karachi that captivates those who call it home. For Karachiites, despite the fractured systems, the pothole-ridden roads, and the occasional chaos, this city holds a special place in their hearts—its charm is intrinsic, and its spirit, undeterred.

Nestled on the coastline of the Sindh province, Karachi serves as a haven for millions, offering shelter, livelihood, and a sense of belonging to a diverse population. People from all corners of Pakistan find solace here, making it a city where people from every imaginable background, culture, and social strata converge. Walk down any street, and you'll witness a melting pot of traditions, languages, and customs—an environment where acceptance is the norm, and diversity is celebrated. Whether you're in a bustling market, a quiet park, or a fast-paced business district, Karachi continuously surprises you with its blend of contrasts and harmonies.

There is much to be seen and absorbed in Karachi, from museums to historical sites and from art performances to innovative ways people juggle their lives. There is as much to learn from the city as from the classroom.

And then, of course, there's the food. Karachiites are notoriously passionate about their food, and it is, without a doubt, the heart of this city. Food in Karachi is more than just sustenance; it is a love language. From home-cooked meals that remind you of family to street-side stalls offering some of the most unique and flavourful cuisines in the world, Karachi's food scene is unparalleled.

In the end, Karachi is not just a city, it's an experience. It is a place where contradictions coexist, where chaos and harmony find a delicate balance, and where the warmth of its people makes even the most challenging days feel worthwhile.

# Life at the AKU-IED



*“Many times, I have heard people say, "I truly discovered the value of human connections after coming to AKU-IED." In our fast-paced lives, it’s easy to become so self-absorbed that the world around us fades into the background. The people we see daily, guards, receptionists, and support staff, often become invisible. Yet, something about AKU-IED changes that. When I first arrived here, I was curious why so many described this place as transformative. I asked students and colleagues to reflect, and a common thread emerged: they noticed how everyone, without hesitation, greeted and acknowledged others, regardless of their role. This simple act of kindness and recognition became second nature, instilled subtly and powerfully by the culture of AKU-IED.”*

Education, at its core, is not just about academic excellence or critical thinking. It is equally about fostering values that shape morally grounded, reflective individual, education is a holistic process that intertwines intellectual growth with the cultivation of empathy, respect, and humility.

None of this would be possible without the exceptional faculty at AKU-IED. Our educators not only embody these values but also strive to instil them in their students. With decades of experience, rich academic expertise, and a commitment to research-based teaching, AKU-IED faculty ensure that students are equipped to become leaders of change.

The environment here, both physical and emotional, plays a pivotal role in shaping its community. Surrounded by lush greenery and meticulously maintained gardens, the campus offers a serene and inspiring atmosphere that promotes both learning and well-being. The indoor courtyard and garden provide spaces where students can study, reflect, or simply unwind over a cup of tea.

At AKU-IED, we are committed to providing students with rich, memorable academic experiences that extend beyond the classroom. Our curriculum emphasizes real-world engagement, ensuring that students not only learn theories but also experience their practical implications. Through school visits, museum trips, and attendance at cultural events such as plays, students are encouraged to connect their learning to the contextual realities of the world around them. Additionally, we actively involve our students in research projects, offering them the opportunity to engage with pressing educational issues and develop a nuanced understanding of diverse perspectives. These hands-on experiences prepare them to re-enter the world with a sense of purpose, equipped with practical knowledge and real-life exposure. The saying, "You build the environment, and the environment builds you back," perfectly encapsulates life at AKU-IED.



# Bachelor of Education



## **BACHELOR OF EDUCATION**

### ***For aspiring and practicing teacher***

The first significant influence in a child's life, after their parents, is often their teachers. In classrooms around the world, teachers wear many hats, educators, mentors, counsellors, and role models. They nurture not just minds but also hearts, guiding children to grow into compassionate, capable, and contributing members of society.

The role of a teacher has evolved significantly over time. No longer confined to simply delivering a set curriculum, teachers today are at the forefront of innovation, shaping how knowledge is applied in real-world contexts. They go beyond academics, fostering critical thinking, creativity, and emotional intelligence in their students. Recognizing the transformative power of teachers, our Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programme is designed to prepare educators for this dynamic and impactful profession.

The B.Ed. degree is 1.5 years long for full-time students and up to 3 years for part-time students. Student teachers will be required to take fifteen (15) 3-credit courses in total, including a practicum and a research project. Students will choose one specialisation out of the five on offer: Mathematics, Science, English, Social Studies and Early Childhood Education and Development. Those with 16 years of education (usually equivalent to a four-year university degree) in any discipline will be eligible to apply to the programme.

## **AIM AND LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAMME**

The programme aims to nurture empathetic and socially responsible teachers who will have the knowledge, skills, values and dispositions required to teach well and to aspire for an increasingly just and sustainable society for our children.

After successful completion of all aspects of the programme, our graduate will be able to:

*Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of teaching and learning processes, including in-depth pedagogic and subject matter knowledge.*

*Practice active learning, incorporating technology where appropriate, to foster holistic child development, promoting responsible and pluralistic citizenship.*

*Reflect critically on one's own and others' teaching practices, thereby creating a community of reflective teachers, supporting each other's growth.*

*Be a mentor and support for their students, helping them negotiate ups and downs in life with confidence and emotional maturity.*

*Work with parents and community at large to provide a social environment to students which will help them lead flourishing lives.*

## PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND DESIGN

The B.Ed. degree programme sits within the HEC's National Qualification Framework (NQF) Level 6 and can be completed in a minimum of 18 months (3 semesters) and a maximum of 3 years. Student teachers (STs) will be required to take 15 courses in all, including a practicum and a research project.

Programme Duration: Min 1.5 – Max. 3 Year		
Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3
4 Courses	4 Courses	4 Courses
Practicum		
1 Course (seminar-based)		Action Research

## PART-TIME AND FULL-TIME OPTIONS

We offer two pathways to complete the B.Ed., catering to your professional and personal commitments:

### *Full-Time Programme (1.5 Years)*

- **Schedule:** Classes will be held throughout the week after 3:00 PM to accommodate your practicums during the day. Sessions may also be scheduled on Saturdays.
- **Practicums:** Students will complete their practicum sessions in the mornings, either at their own schools or at one of our partner schools.
- **Duration:** The programme is designed to be completed in 1.5 years.

### *Part-Time Programme (up to 3 Years)*

- **Schedule:** The schedule will remain the same as full-time students, but the learning pace can be customized since they can choose the number of courses they take each semester. Enrolling in one specialization course per semester is mandatory.
- **Practicum:** The practicums for part-time students will run parallel to those of full-time students.
- **Duration:** The programme spans 3 years, allowing greater flexibility for working professionals.



## CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

*"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character, that is the goal of true education."*

*- Martin Luther King Jr.*

There are 10 core courses, mandatory for all the student teachers (STs). Additionally, each ST will choose one specialisation out of the five on offer: Early Childhood Education and Development, Mathematics (secondary), Science (secondary), English (secondary) and Social Studies (secondary). Each specialisation comprises of three courses.

Type of Courses	Number of Courses
Core Courses	10 (3 credit each)
Specialisation	3 courses leading to a specialisation (9 credit)
Action Research	1 Course (3 credit)
Practicum	1 Course (3 credit)
<b>Total</b>	<b>15 courses (45 credits)</b>

## COURSEWORK

### CORE COURSES (3 CREDITS EACH)

#### *Knowledge and Curriculum*

Ideas about knowledge are central to how teaching and learning is understood and approached. This course explores conceptions of knowledge and their relationship with educational process, particularly curriculum structures.

#### *Pedagogy and Assessment*

Pedagogies are at the heart of teaching and learning. Strongly connected with the first course, this exploration will introduce participants to diverse pedagogies, helping them explore effective teaching methods for various learners in formal and non-formal settings. Rooted in the idea of assessment *for* and *as* learning, the course will also engage with the challenges and importance of making sound judgements.

#### *Learners, Learning and Learning Spaces*

This course will explore key educational themes, including the interplay between learning and motivation, effective space and behaviour management across various settings, and adaptive teaching for diverse learner needs. It will equip STs with strategies that enhance learning and teaching in both conventional and emerging educational contexts, particularly the digital spaces.

### ***Education in Society: Purposes, Perspectives and Histories***

The practice of education is within a context where it is related to other social practices such as economics and politics. In this course, STs will engage in philosophical explorations about the purpose of education, the role of institutions and the moral dimension of teaching. Familiarisation with historical trajectory of educational institutions will also be part of the course.

### ***Teaching, Learning and Assessment in a Digital World***

This course offers a critical, evidence-based exploration of technology's expanding role in education, equipping students with the knowledge and skills to navigate digital learning environments.

### ***Teachers' Professional Learning***

A good teacher is always a student. This course will help STs learn the ways to keep developing themselves through ongoing self-directed reflection and development.

### ***School Leadership and Management***

Classroom practices take place within the contexts of schools. It is thus helpful for teachers to have a good sense how the school is organised and how that shapes their work. This course introduces STs to the practices of school leadership and administration.

### ***Equity and Inclusion in Education***

This course will help STs develop an understanding of equity and inclusion in education, focusing on gender and ability/disability issues. It covers discrimination, policy analysis, and strategies for integrating inclusive practices in schools and classrooms.

### ***Research Methods***

This course aims to develop STs abilities to read and understand research and conduct their own classroom-based research. It introduces basic principles of classroom research and engages STs in planning, designing, and conducting practitioner inquiries to become effective reflective practitioners.

### ***Contemporary Issues and Trends in Education***

This seminar-based course explores current national and international educational issues, debates, and trends.

## **SPECIALISATIONS (3 CREDITS EACH)**

*(Students will choose one specialisation)*

### **1. ECED**

- a. Fundamentals of Early childhood education and development
- b. Curriculum, Teaching, Learning and Assessment in ECED - I
- c. Curriculum, Teaching, Learning and Assessment in ECED - II



## 2. MATHEMATICS (SECONDARY)

- Concepts and Processes for Teaching and Learning Mathematics (Numbers and Algebra)
- Concepts and Processes for Teaching and Learning Mathematics (Geometry, Measurement and Data Handling)
- Critical Issues in the Teaching and Learning of Mathematics

## 3. SCIENCE (SECONDARY)

- Teaching and Learning in Science Classroom
- Pedagogical Content Knowledge for Enhancing Professional Practice in Science
- Contemporary Issues in Teaching and Learning Science

## 4. ENGLISH (SECONDARY)

- Introduction to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
- Language acquisition and pedagogy in TESOL
- TESOL in context and practice

## 5. SOCIAL STUDIES (SECONDARY)

- Individual, Society and State
- Teaching and Learning in History & Geography
- Teaching and Learning in Sociology & Economics

## RESEARCH WORK

A 3-credit school-based research project has been integrated into the programme. From the outset, students are encouraged to be inquisitive and evidence-based practitioners and to think about research problems for their project. They also do a research methods course to become oriented about the theory and processes of educational research. Students are expected to design a systematic inquiry with the goals of gaining insights into teaching and learning, becoming more reflective practitioners, effecting change in the classroom or school, and improving the lives of children. The process culminates in a research report of 5000 words.

## PRACTICUM

A key feature of the programme is a school-based practicum

It consists of students spending 150 hours of fieldwork in schools, spread over three semesters. The STs spend on average, 10 hours per week for 4 weeks each semester in a school and spend 30 hours working on lesson plans, debrief sessions and interviews.

The practicum allows the students to apply the pedagogical skills, which they learn in their courses, in real life settings. With a strong element of practicum in the programme, we expect the



students to have a nuance understanding of the classroom, the school setting, and the needs of the students.

The B.Ed. programme offers two options for completing the practicum: in the student's own school or at one of AKU-IED partner schools. Students who are already teaching can complete the practicum in the schools where they currently work. For students who are not affiliated with a school, practicum opportunities are available in AKU-IED partner schools.

## ADMISSION CRITERIA

Admission to the programme is based solely on merit which entails academic abilities, passion for teaching and potential to improve the quality of education. The selection process involves an application form, admission test and interview.

### Eligibility Requirements:

**Minimum 16-years of qualification in any discipline.**

**NOTE:** The applicants are required to submit HEC attested educational documents and/or 16 years of equivalence, if applicable for their academic credentials from Higher Education Commission (HEC).

## ADMISSION TEST

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

The Admission Test comprises of two components: English Language and Constructive Response Questions:

- The English Language component evaluates a candidate's competency in the English language.
- The constructive response questions exam will assess candidates' critical thinking, analytical and writing skills.
- The sample test paper may be downloaded from our website:

<https://www.aku.edu/admissions/bed/Pages/home.aspx>

***For more information and to apply to our B.Ed. programme, [click here](#).***

*"I embark on the learning journey at AKU-IED with a passion for teaching and learning. Throughout this transformative experience, I gained an in-depth knowledge of theories, curriculum, practices, collaborative learning environment with fellow aspiring educators from different institutes, opportunities to develop innovative lesson plans, report writing, activities curriculum design. Today, I'm a confident and compassionate teacher, equipped to inspire and educate future generations."*

*-Madiha Arsalan, B.Ed. student, Cohort 2024*

# MPhil in Education



## M.PHIL. IN EDUCATION

*“AKU-IED’s scholarship and financial assistance options have been invaluable in my academic journey. They have enabled me to focus entirely on my studies and research without the burden of financial stress. AKU-IED’s commitment to empowering students from diverse backgrounds allowed me to pursue my educational goals with confidence.”*

*-Habiba Iqbal, MPhil in Education*

Though teacher-student interaction is at the heart of education, it is shaped and mediated by much else, from policies to technology and from exam systems to socioeconomics. To serve in education is thus not restricted to teaching and learning. Our MPhil programme helps students build strong intellectual foundations enabling them to inquire and work on critical issues such as improving classroom practice, judicious integration of technology, generating evidence through research, analysing and improving policies, leading small and large educational initiatives, and thinking about the very purpose of education.

By the time of graduation, students are able to work as independent researchers with a sound understanding of research ethics and with general and specialist skills in research methodologies, academic writing and presentation. Under the supervision of our accomplished faculty, students develop first-hand experience of creating usable knowledge to bridge the gap between theory, policy and practice and engaging with a wide range of stakeholders in the education sector.

Graduates of this programme are working as researcher, heads of educational institutions, teachers and instructors in secondary and higher secondary schools, faculty and academic advisors in teacher education colleges and institutions, and managers, project leaders and education consultants in development organisations. Several of our graduates have used the MPhil degree as a stepping stone to pursue their doctoral studies at AKU-IED and other renowned international universities to fulfil their aspirations for senior academic roles in higher education institutions.

### AIM AND LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAMME

The MPhil programme is designed to prepare you as a competent educational researcher and practitioner, ready to address the unique challenges of the developing economies. Through this programme, you will:

*Gain a deep understanding of educational issues in countries with developing economies and learn how to critically analyse and address them through research.*

*Build leadership skills to plan, implement, and share impactful research across various educational settings.*

*Specialize in areas like education and development, teaching and learning processes, or other fields that align with your interests.*

*Enhance your career prospects, as our graduates are highly sought after for top roles in educational institutions, universities, and NGOs.*

## PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND DESIGN

The MPhil degree is accredited by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan and can be completed in a 22 months or two years. The student teachers will be required to take 6 core courses and a research.

Programme Duration: 2 Years			
Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3	Semester 4
3 Core Courses 1 Elective	3 Core Courses 1 Elective	Research	Research

## COURSEWORK

### Core courses (3 credits each)

#### **Qualitative Methods in Educational Research**

This course explores the use of qualitative research methods to understand human behaviour within social contexts, addressing questions of "why" in the social world. It equips students with the skills to apply qualitative approaches, navigate ethical considerations, and comprehend the theoretical foundations of educational research.

#### ***Foundations of Education***

This course explores the foundational theories of education—philosophical, psychological, sociological, and political—enabling participants to critically analyse their implications for educational practices and policies.

#### ***Leadership in Education***

This course examines the multifaceted role of leadership in education, emphasising its interplay with curriculum, teaching, institutional capacity building, and policy in the context of developing countries. It explores the impact of leadership on educational change, quality teaching, and learning, while critically analysing its connection to broader socio-political, cultural, and historical contexts.

#### ***Quantitative Methods in Educational Research***

The Quantitative Methods in Educational Research course introduces participants to the principles and practices of quantitative research in education, emphasizing survey and experimental designs. It equips participants to design, conduct, and analyse quantitative research while exploring its theoretical and practical underpinnings in both national and international contexts.

### ***Education and Development: Theory and Practice***

This course introduces key concepts and theories linking education and development, offering participants a critical lens to examine historical and contemporary perspectives. It explores the intersection of culture, politics, and economics with education, encouraging the development of frameworks to analyse education systems and assess their status in developing countries.

### ***International and Comparative Education***

The International and Comparative Education course introduces participants to the study of education as a global issue, emphasizing the importance of an international perspective in the context of globalization and inequalities. Participants will explore key concepts such as globalization, policy borrowing, postcolonialism, and social justice, while gaining insight into comparative methods and intercultural considerations in research.

### **Elective Courses\* (3 credits each)**

*(Students will choose one course from each set)*

#### ***Set 1*** ---

##### ***Inclusive Education***

This course will help students develop an understanding of equity and inclusion in education, focusing on gender and ability/disability issues. It covers discrimination, policy analysis, and strategies for integrating inclusive practices in schools and classrooms.

##### ***Teaching and Learning with Technology***

This course empowers students to integrate ICT in education, focusing on teaching, learning, assessment, and management in developing contexts. Participants will explore ICT models, critique policies, design ICT-enhanced activities, address equitable access, and develop a personal framework for using ICT in education.

##### ***STEM Teaching and Learning***

This course explores the evolution, global trends, and pedagogies of STEM education, focusing on its integration into Pakistan's curriculum. Participants will analyse interdisciplinary teaching, learning, and policies, culminating in proposing a STEM roadmap for K-12 schools in Pakistan.

##### ***Early Childhood Education and Development***

This course explores early childhood development and education, emphasizing the critical role of nurturing care, quality environments, and active learning. Participants will gain theoretical insights and practical skills in child development, curriculum, assessment, and reflective practices to enhance early education outcomes.



## **Set 2**

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### ***Pedagogical Content Knowledge in Science***

This course aims to enhance participants' understanding of science content and pedagogy while fostering the integration of both to develop pedagogical content knowledge. Emphasizing lifelong learning, the course encourages reducing reliance on external "experts" and utilizing available school resources to improve teaching practices.

### ***Learning System in ELT***

This specialization prepares ELT teachers to analyse instructional challenges, develop contextual solutions, and design effective face-to-face and virtual learning environments. Participants will also integrate technology into language teaching and engage in reflective fieldwork.

### ***Learning to Teach Social Studies***

This course explores the interrelationship between school and society, fostering respect for diversity and promoting social justice. Participants will develop skills to integrate community service and pluralism into social studies, alongside pedagogical and assessment strategies like cooperative learning, inquiry, and performance assessment.

### ***Teaching, Learning and Assessment of Mathematic***

Teaching, Learning and Assessment in Mathematics offers participants hands-on experience in applying mathematical teaching strategies and theories within real classroom settings. Participants will plan, teach, and reflect critically on their practices while exploring diverse ways students learn mathematics and fostering mathematical thinking.

### ***Policy Studies for Education***

This course examines educational policy processes and their implications at global, national, and local levels, fostering evidence-based decision-making. Participants will analyse, design, and advocate for effective policies through theoretical insights and practical assignments.

***\*Courses will be offered based on the availability of faculty and subject to minimum number of enrolments***

## **Research Work**

- Research Proposal Development
- Field Work, and Writing of Dissertation Défense

## ADMISSION CRITERIA

Admission in the programme is based solely on merit and potential commitment to improve the quality of education. Merit will be evaluated through scholastic achievements and 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.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- Minimum 16-years of qualification in Education or any discipline.
- Minimum two years of work experience is required.
- Candidates applying with a degree in areas other than Education, and without a 1.5-year B.Ed. degree, shall be required to complete deficiency courses of minimum 18 credit hours at the University before the commencement of MPhil in Education programme.

**NOTE:** The applicants are required to submit HEC attested educational documents and/or 16 years of equivalence, if applicable for their academic credentials from Higher Education Commission (HEC).

For clarification, please refer to the [Teacher Education Roadmap](#).

## PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Bridging Semester (September 2025 to December 2025) will be offered online.

### Courses

*(3 credit each course)*

#### ***Learner, Learning and Learning Spaces***

For information regarding this course, [click here](#).

#### ***Sustainability Development***

This course addresses the need to rethink education, leadership, and sustainable development by bridging knowledge gaps to tackle poverty, weak social systems, and resistant practices. Participants will explore interdisciplinary approaches and frameworks to align higher education with global and national development goals for innovation and sustainability.

#### ***Knowledge and Curriculum***

For information regarding this course, [click here](#).

#### ***Pedagogy and Assessment***

For information regarding this course, [click here](#).

#### ***Teaching and Learning in the Digital Age***

For information regarding this course, [click here](#).

### ***Citizenship Education and Community Engagement***

This course will equip students with the necessary skills, values, theoretical background and practical strategies in the area of citizenship education and community engagement. Towards this end, the course will help course participants develop a critical awareness of the interplay among schools, classrooms and communities, within the changing context of Pakistan and the world.

### **ADMISSION TEST**

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

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

The sample test paper may be downloaded from our website

[www.aku.edu/admissions/Documents/sample-paper-MPhil-E.pdf](http://www.aku.edu/admissions/Documents/sample-paper-MPhil-E.pdf)

***For more information and to apply to our MPhil programme, [click here](#)***

# PhD in Education



## PHD IN EDUCATION

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 for such individuals to advance their knowledge and practice in education. Our PhD in Education programme, recognized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan, is highly selective, critical, and rigorous. Designed in collaboration with experts from the University of Toronto, Canada, and Oxford University, UK, it is offered in a vibrant research environment where national and international scholars regularly share their findings and engage with students.

### AIM AND LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAMME

The PhD in Education programme aims to cultivate top-tier educationists in research, teacher education, curriculum, policy studies, and developmental studies. This programme equips students to:

- *Carry out independent research and this contribute to research-based knowledge on education.*
- *Address educational challenges and research needs.*
- *Acquire the skills needed for leadership roles in planning, conducting, and disseminating research within or beyond academia.*
- *Build expertise in curriculum development, teaching, learning, and organizational management.*
- *Develop a critical, research-informed understanding of development education and the role of education in addressing the challenges faced by countries with developing economies.*

### 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 research project leading to an original contribution in the field of choice. 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:

#### Years 1 and 2

- Compulsory 18 credit Courses, followed by a comprehensive examination (written and oral) and proposal defence for granting candidacy as a PhD researcher.
- Preparation of the research proposal and its evaluation by the AKU-IED Committee.
- Oral presentation of the thesis proposal 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 proposal defence.

## **Years 3 and 4**

- Publication of thesis research in a peer reviewed journal classified by the HEC in category X or publication of two research papers in a category Y journal, for Social Science disciplines.
- Completion of data collection/desk research and thesis writing, according to AKU policy.
- Examination of thesis.

## **COURSEWORK**

### **Core courses (3 credit each)**

#### ***Advanced Quantitative Methods in Educational Research***

This course equips PhD students with advanced skills in quantitative research and data analysis. It explores the nature of quantitative inquiry, approaches, and theoretical foundations while contextualizing research at national and international levels.

#### ***Advanced Qualitative Methods in Educational Research***

This enhances skills in qualitative research to address educational challenges. Participants will explore theoretical foundations, master data collection and analysis methods, engage in diverse presentation techniques, and understand ethical considerations throughout the research process.

#### ***International and Comparative Education***

The International and Comparative Education course introduces participants to the study of education as a global issue, emphasizing the importance of an international perspective in the context of globalization and inequalities. Participants will explore key concepts such as globalization, policy borrowing, postcolonialism, and social justice, while gaining insight into comparative methods and intercultural considerations in research.

#### ***Studies in Educational Leadership***

This course provides students with in-depth insights into leadership in education, connecting it to curriculum, teaching, learning, research, policymaking, and educational governance. It encourages critical reflection on leadership theories and models and engages participants with issues affecting access, quality, and policy in education.

### **Elective Courses\* (3 credit each)**

*(Students will have to choose two elective courses from the list below)*

#### ***Policy Studies for Education***

This course focuses on the policy processes and politics that influence educational policy decisions, examining the implications of these policies at various levels (global, national, and local). Designed for educational governance professionals, it introduces the concept of governing through policy and emphasizes evidence-based decision-making.

### ***Gender in Education***

This course aims to raise awareness of gender issues in education and equip CPs with the skills to address them in local classrooms and schools. The course covers two main themes: understanding gender theory and perspectives in educational policies and practice, and developing skills for observing, analysing, planning, implementing, and evaluating gender-based interventions.

### ***Early Childhood Education and Development***

The Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) elective course focuses on both theory and practice, helping course participants develop an understanding of child development and effective teaching practices. Key outcomes include an improved understanding of child development, curriculum and assessment for early years, subject content knowledge, active learning techniques, and reflective practice.

### ***Educational Assessment & Measurement***

The Educational Assessment and Measurement elective course aims to deepen CPs' understanding of educational assessment theories and practices. It focuses on large-scale testing, addressing issues such as validity, reliability, and test bias. By the end, CPs will be able to critically analyse educational assessment systems, evaluate measurement credibility, and design, collect, and interpret assessment data effectively.

### ***Teaching and Learning with Technology***

The course aims to equip students with the skills and strategies necessary for integrating ICT into teaching, learning, assessment, and management, particularly in developing countries. Students will explore various models and approaches to ICT use in classrooms, critique relevant policies and practices, and identify barriers to ICT implementation.

### ***Education and Development: Theory and Practice***

This course introduces key concepts and theories linking education and development, offering participants a critical lens to examine historical and contemporary perspectives. It explores the intersection of culture, politics, and economics with education, encouraging the development of frameworks to analyse education systems and assess their status in developing countries.

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 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 proposal 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.

## 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/ MS in Education/Equivalent degree 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 from HEC.

For clarification, please refer to the [Teacher Education Roadmap](#).

## ADMISSION TEST

*Candidates are required to write the AKU Admission Test.*

### **The Test comprises three components:**

- **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.
- **Quantitative Reasoning and Subject specific component:** A minimum of 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](http://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.*



## 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.

### *Selection Process*

1. Applicants will be required to submit a statement of purpose/research intent that is an integral part of the application. Each applicant is expected to identify a potential research area mentioned in the table depending on their research interests. Furthermore, they are also expected to select a PhD supervisor from the list of supervisors available with each research concentration area. Prior to submission of PhD application, candidates **must** contact their potential supervisors to learn about the relevant projects prior to completing their application forms. Each candidate is required to submit a statement of purpose/research intent (500 – 700 words) which describes the reasons for the interest in the subject area and how the subject area meets with his/her career objectives. This is an integral part of the application.
2. The Admissions Committee shall use the information provided to ascertain the preparedness and interest of the candidate in pursuing doctoral studies. It will review applications and shortlist candidates based on Admission test scores, prior research experience, applicant dossier and the availability of PhD Supervisors selected by the candidate.
3. Candidates selected for interviews will be asked to present their proposed PhD research to a panel of assessors who will be able to make a recommendation for admission of the candidate.
4. Admission is finalized after the candidate is able to meet all requirements of the Programme including fees/fee-waiver if applicable, full commitment to the programme and feasibility of their proposed PhD study.

## VALIDITY OF TEST SCORES

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

## **IDENTIFICATION OF SUPERVISOR:**

In a PhD programme, selecting the right supervisor is crucial. Prospective candidates are strongly encouraged to review faculty profiles and identify a suitable supervisor aligned with their research interests before applying or beginning their research journey. We recommend reaching out to potential supervisors to discuss their research areas and gain insights into their work. This interaction will help you make an informed decision and provide the necessary information to include in your application. Find our faculty [here](#).

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRIMLARY RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

Your preliminary research proposal has a direct impact on the overall strength of your application to study at the doctorate level. 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.

*For more information and to apply to our PhD programme, [click here](#)*

## **FEES AND FUNDING**

All admissions to our academic programmes are based solely on merit, without consideration of a student's financial background. If a student is admitted and faces financial challenges in funding their education, they are encouraged to apply for financial assistance. Through a range of tools – grants, scholarships and student loans – we ensure that students have an opportunity to complete their studies.

For more information on fee structures, financial aid, and fee-paying status, please visit: [www.aku.edu/admissions/fees-and-funding](http://www.aku.edu/admissions/fees-and-funding). We are committed to supporting our students in every way possible to help them achieve their educational goals.

## APPLICATION PROCESS SUMMARY FOR B.ED. AND MPHIL

<b>Stage I</b>	Online submission of application.  Applications are reviewed and only eligible candidates are invited to write an AKU Admission Test  HEC attested Degrees/marksheets must be uploaded <b>or</b> 16-years of HEC equivalence (If applicable or applying with foreign qualification) <b>or</b> HEC attestation evidence that you have applied for it at the time of application.
<b>Stage II</b>	Candidates who are shortlisted based on the Admission Test will be required to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• submit relevant academic documents</li><li>• attend interviews with senior faculty members of the University.</li></ul>
<b>Stage III</b>	Final selection is based on an overall assessment of each candidate's dossier which is formally approved by the University's Admission Review Committee.

### SHORT-LISTING AND INTERVIEWS

Candidates will be shortlisted for the interviews based on the Admission Test. The purpose of the interview is to assess a variety of attributes, including motivation, maturity, social and cultural awareness, knowledge of educational issues in developing nations and evidence of interest, and commitment to the programme. Interviews will be conducted in Pakistan. For all candidates who reside overseas, interviews will be conducted virtually.

### VALIDITY OF TEST SCORES

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

[WWW.AKU.EDU/ADMISSIONS/DOCUMENTS/ADMISSION-PROCESS-SUMMARY.PDF](http://WWW.AKU.EDU/ADMISSIONS/DOCUMENTS/ADMISSION-PROCESS-SUMMARY.PDF)

## 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 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 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 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 [ied.ro@aku.edu](mailto: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.

### ***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
- 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 you to write the Test.

## **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**

Accommodation for outstation students is arranged in the hostels managed by the University. 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 2025-2026 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 2025-26 ADMISSIONS

<b>January 5, 2025 – March 06, 2025</b>	<b><u>Admission Open: Apply online via <a href="http://www.aku.edu/apply-online">www.aku.edu/apply-online</a></u></b>	
<b>Saturday, April 12, 2025</b>	<b><i>AKU Admission Test -Pakistan</i></b>	<b>Test Centres</b> Chitral, Gilgit, Karachi, Islamabad
	<b><i>AKU Admission Test - Overseas</i></b>	<i>Overseas centres will be confirmed if there are at least 10 candidates to write the test</i>
<b><i>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.</i></b>		
<b>Upon Shortlisting - May</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Consolidated Mark Sheet / Degree of Undergraduate Qualification / equivalent to 16 years of Education attested by (HEC)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>HEC equivalence* (if applicable)</i></li> </ul>	
<b>May</b>	Interviews	
<b>Bridging and B.Ed. Programmes Mid-August 2025</b>	Commencement of Classes	
<b>MPhil Programme Mid-January 2026</b>		

***\*HEC equivalence applicability: 16 years of HEC Equivalence (If applicable or applying with foreign qualification)***

## **CONTRIBUTORS**

Special thanks to Faryaal Khalid for her dedicated efforts in compiling the prospectus. Heartfelt gratitude to Waniya Chughtai and Faisal Ahmed for their exceptional work on the graphics. A sincere thank you to Dr Farid Panjwani for his invaluable support and thoughtful review throughout the process.



## **DISCLAIMER**

This booklet contains information about the programmes offered by Aga Khan University, Pakistan for the academic year 2025-26. 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 –  
INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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