



## **Graduate Studies Programs**

### **1. Admission to Graduate Programs**

#### **Requirements:**

- a. The Graduate Studies Council determines the annual intake of graduate students based on recommendations from the concerned departmental and college councils.
- b. To be eligible for admission to a master's program, the applicant must:
  1. Hold a bachelor's degree from a recognized university.
  2. Have an undergraduate degree in a field relevant to the intended area of specialization.
  3. Submit two letters of recommendation from academic professors.
  4. Conduct interview.
- c. Admission to a master's program requires a minimum GPA of 3.00 out of 4.00 ("Good" standing) from Al Qasimia University or recognized university by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. Applicants with a GPA below 3.00 may be granted conditional admission, in accordance with the university's Graduate Studies Council and the directives of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. The Graduate Studies Council may, upon department and the College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research recommendation, impose additional admission criteria as necessary.
- d. Applicants must meet the specific admission requirements set by the relevant academic department.
- e. Admission to a doctoral program requires a master's GPA of no less than 3.60 out of 4.00 ("Very Good").
- f. A student may be admitted to a master's program outside their undergraduate specialization upon the recommendation of the respective department and college councils and with the approval of the Graduate Studies Council.
- g. The department may require students admitted to the master's or doctoral programs to complete prerequisite (remedial) courses (not more than 9 credit hours) within no more than two semesters and it will not count towards the CGPA.
- h. Admission is granted by a decision of the College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research based on a recommendation from the department's graduate studies committee and the Head of the academic department. The decision is communicated to the student, the department, the college, and the Admission and Registration Department for follow-up procedures.
- i. Students may not be enrolled in more than one graduate program at the university simultaneously.



j. Matters related to deferral, withdrawal, interruption, transfer, cancellation, or re-enrolment are regulated by the College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research upon recommendations from the department's graduate studies committee and the Head of the academic department.

## **2. Theses / Dissertations**

### **Preparation and Supervision of Theses:**

- a. Master's and doctoral theses may be written in Arabic, English, or French, as determined by the department, and must include summaries in both Arabic and English.
- b. Theses are supervised by professors or associate professors. In special cases approved by the Council, an assistant professor may supervise master's theses.
- c. Subject matter experts from outside the university may be appointed as supervisors, upon Council approval.
- d. A co-supervisor from within or outside the department may be assigned if necessary.
- e. Supervisory limits are as follows: four theses for a professor, three for an associate professor, and two for an assistant professor. The College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research and the Graduate Studies Council may approve higher limits when needed.
- f. A supervisor may be changed due to compelling circumstances following the same procedures used for their appointment.

### **Thesis Defense:**

- a. A defense committee is appointed, and its date scheduled, by the Dean of Graduate Studies and Scientific research based on the supervisor's recommendation, endorsement from the department's graduate studies committee, and approval from the Head of the academic department .
- b. The defense committee submits its recommendation to the Dean of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research through the department chair within one week of the defense.

### **Defense Honorarium:**

- a. An amount of one thousand dirhams (AED 1,000) shall be disbursed for the discussion of the master's thesis.



### **3. Transfer Guidelines**

#### **Graduate Student Transfers:**

- a. At the beginning of the program, each student is assigned an academic advisor to assist with course selection and thesis planning.
- b. A student may transfer from one master's program to another within the university, with the approval of the relevant academic department and the College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research, provided that:
  1. The student meets the admission requirements of the new program, including any additional criteria set by the department.
  2. The department's Graduate Studies Committee may recommend to the dean counting up to 12 credit hours of equivalent courses completed at the university toward the new GPA.
  3. The student has not been dismissed for any reason.
  4. The time spent in the previous program counts toward the maximum allowed time for degree completion, calculated at 9 credit hours per semester.
  5. Students are allowed to transfer programs only once within the degree period.
- c. A student may transfer from another university to a similar master's program at the university, subject to Graduate Studies Council approval and provided the student meets all admission requirements and has not been dismissed from their previous institution.
- d. The department's Graduate Studies Committee may recommend counting up to 9 credit hours of equivalent courses completed with a minimum grade of "Very Good" (B or 3.0/4.0 or equivalent).
- e. No more than four years may have passed since the completion of the transferred courses.

### **4. Graduation Requirements**

#### **Completion of Graduate Degree Requirements**

- a. The requirements for the Master's degree shall include no fewer than 33 credit hours, consisting of 24 credit hours of coursework and a thesis worth 9 credit hours, or in accordance with the instructions of the comprehensive track, if approved in the concern department.
- b. The Master's program consists of the following:
  1. Compulsory courses totaling 9–24 credit hours.
  2. Elective courses totaling 6–15 credit hours.



3. A thesis equivalent to 9 credit hours.

- c. Based on a recommendation from the relevant department's Graduate Studies Committee and the relevant college, the Council may require the student to complete up to 9 credit hours of remedial courses during the first academic year of enrollment in the program. These remedial courses are not counted towards the cumulative GPA or the specified graduation period.
- d. The duration for obtaining a Master's degree shall not be less than three semesters, and shall not exceed eight semesters from the date of commencement of study. Deferral or withdrawal from a semester is allowed for up to two additional semesters according to the regulations.
- e. The academic year is divided into two semesters, each lasting fifteen weeks, not including registration and examination periods.
- f. The academic load per semester ranges from 6 to 12 credit hours.

## **5. Academic Performance**

### **Attendance**

- a. If a student is absent for more than 25% of the total scheduled hours of any course without an excuse accepted by the course instructor and approved by the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research, the student shall be barred from sitting for the final exam, shall be assigned a grade of (F), and may withdraw from the course as per the regulations if the withdrawal period is still open.
- b. If a student is absent for more than 25% of the total scheduled hours of any course with an excuse accepted by the course instructor and approved by the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research, the student shall be considered withdrawn, and the word "Withdrawn" will be recorded in the student's academic record.
- c. The policies and procedures applicable to undergraduate students regarding medical excuses shall also apply to graduate students.
- d. If a student misses a scheduled final exam with an excuse accepted by the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research, the remark "Incomplete" shall be recorded. The decision to accept the excuse will be communicated to the course instructor, who shall administer a make-up exam no later than the end of the following semester—unless the following semester has been officially deferred, in which case the exam shall be held in the next regular semester.

## **6. Course Withdrawal**

- a. A student may withdraw from one or more courses during the first week of the semester without the courses being recorded in the academic record. A student may also withdraw from one or more courses during the first eight weeks of the semester with the approval of the Dean of the College of Graduate



Studies and Scientific Research and upon the recommendation of the course instructor, using a special form prepared by the College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research. The decision must be communicated in writing to the Registrar and the Department Head. The word "Withdrawn" shall be recorded in the student's academic record.

- b. Following withdrawal, the number of credit hours in which the student is enrolled may not fall below the minimum academic load permitted.
- c. A student who is absent with an excuse for more than 25% of the total scheduled hours of the semester's courses shall be considered withdrawn from that semester, and the remark "Withdrawn" shall be recorded. The semester shall be considered deferred.
- d. The Dean of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research may approve a student's withdrawal from all registered courses in a given semester, provided that the withdrawal request is submitted at least two weeks before the start of final exams. The semester shall be considered deferred.
- e. The Dean of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research may approve a student's final withdrawal from the program in which they were admitted, provided that the request is submitted at least two weeks before final exams. A student who withdraws with a cumulative GPA below 3.0 shall not be allowed to re-enrol in the same program.

### **Deferral**

- a. A student may defer their studies only after completing at least one semester in the program.
- b. A student who has completed at least one semester may request deferral for up to two semesters, whether consecutive or non-consecutive, subject to approval by the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research and recommendation from the relevant department's Graduate Studies Committee. The deferral must be requested during the first half of the semester.

### **Discontinuation**

- a. A student is considered to have discontinued studies if the semester begins and the student is not registered.
- b. If a student discontinues studies for two consecutive or non-consecutive semesters, they shall be considered withdrawn from the program and may only resume studies with the Council's approval.
- c. A student who lost the right to continue studies due to discontinuation or withdrawal may apply for re-admission. If the student meets the admission requirements for the same specialization, they may be readmitted through the regular process, retaining their full academic record and continuing the program based on the current curriculum, provided that the period of discontinuation does not exceed four years.

### **Academic Warning and Dismissal**

- a. A student shall receive an academic warning in the following cases:
  - 1. If the student does not achieve the minimum required cumulative GPA (3.0 out of 4.0) by the end of any semester for the courses taken up to that point.





2. If the supervisor determines that the student has neglected work on their master's or Ph.D thesis.
- b. A student shall be dismissed from the master's or Ph.D program in the following cases:
1. If the student fails to achieve the minimum passing grade in a required course more than once.
  2. If the student fails to achieve the minimum cumulative GPA (3.0 out of 4.0) by the end of the two semesters following the issuance of an academic warning (i.e., upon receiving a third warning).
  3. If the student exceeds the maximum allowed period for completing the degree.
  4. If the student commits a violation that warrants dismissal according to the university's applicable rules, regulations, and procedures.
  5. If the supervisor determines that the student has neglected work on their master's or Ph.D thesis after giving the first warning, and approval with the concered deparments/College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research.
- c. A student who has been dismissed due to a low GPA may be allowed to enroll in up to 9 credit hours for the purpose of raising their GPA. The student may be reinstated in the master's program upon achieving a GPA of 3.0, subject to the following conditions:
1. The student's GPA at the time of dismissal must not be lower than 2.5.
  2. The courses taken must be part of the approved study plan for the master's program in which the student was enrolled.
  3. The student must complete the required courses within the two semesters following the date of dismissal. These two semesters shall count toward the maximum time limit allowed for the degree.

## **7. Thesis Supervision and Defense**

- a. The College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research shall issue a decision to appoint the thesis supervisor based on the recommendation of the relevant department's council.
- b. The College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research shall approve the thesis title and project plan no later than the end of the fourth semester of the student's enrollment, based on the recommendation of the relevant department's council.
- c. The supervisor must be a Professor or Associate Professor.
- d. If necessary, a qualified Assistant Professor with at least two years of university teaching experience and two published or accepted research papers in the relevant specialization may serve as supervisor.
- e. If needed, a highly experienced and academically qualified individual from outside the university faculty may be appointed as a supervisor by the decision of the College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research, upon the recommendation of the department graduate studies committee and and



head of the academic department.

f. The maximum number of theses a supervisor may oversee at one time:

1. Four theses for a Professor.
2. Three theses for an Associate Professor.
3. Two theses for an Assistant Professor.

The College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research and Graduate Studies Council may increase this number upon the department's request.

g. The College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research may appoint a co-supervisor upon recommendation from the department and the primary supervisor, if needed.

h. A supervisor may be changed due to exceptional circumstances, following the same procedure as the original appointment.

i. With the approval of the College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research, a faculty member on sabbatical or unpaid leave, or one whose contract has ended, may continue supervising or co-supervising a student's thesis following the approval the academic department.

j. The supervisor shall submit a detailed progress report at the end of each semester to the Department Chair, with a copy sent to the Dean of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research.

k. Upon completion of the thesis, the supervisor shall submit a report to the Department Chair to initiate the procedures determined by the College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research.

l. Teaching load for graduate courses and thesis supervision shall be calculated in accordance with executive regulations issued by the university.

m. The thesis title and plan may be amended if research circumstances require, following the same approval procedure.

n. The thesis defense committee and its date shall be set by the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research, based on a recommendation from the supervisor, the relevant department's Graduate Studies Committee, and the Head of the academic department.

o. The thesis defense committee shall consist of at least three members (excluding a co-supervisor), one of whom must be from outside the department or university. All members must meet the criteria for thesis supervision. The supervisor chairs the committee. Decisions are made by majority (2/3, 3/4, or 4/5).

p. The thesis defense shall proceed as follows:

- The student presents a summary of the thesis.
- The chair conducts the discussion. Afterward, the committee deliberates and issues one of the following decisions, which is communicated to the student:
  1. Accept the thesis and recommend granting the degree.
  2. Accept the thesis and recommend granting the degree after incorporating the examiners' comments. The student is given one to three months from the defense date to make the revisions.



The examiners then submit individual reports confirming the revisions to the committee chair, who forwards them along with the committee report to the Department Chair for submission to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research.

3. Re-defend the thesis after substantial changes, within six months to one year from the date of defense.
4. Reject the thesis and document the reasons. The student will be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma.
5. If the student fails to submit the revised thesis within the time limits stated in (2) or (3), or does not incorporate the required revisions, the thesis is considered rejected and clause (4) shall apply.

q. The Master's degree is awarded by decision of the Board of Trustees, based on the recommendation of the Deans Council and the endorsement of the Graduate Studies Council, which is based on the decision of the thesis defense committee to approve the thesis.

r. The student shall authorize the university in writing to reproduce the thesis, in whole or in part, for research and academic exchange purposes.

s. The Deanship of College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research and the Admissions and Registration Department are responsible for implementing these policies and procedures.

## 8. Grades and Examinations

### Grades and Examinations for Graduate Students

a. Course grades are assigned using grade letters and grade points as follows:

Grade Points	Grade Letters	Percentage
4.0	A	90 to 100
3.5	B+	85 to less than 90
3.0	B	80 to less than 85
2.5	C+	75 to less than 80
2.0	C	70 to less than 75
0.0	F	Less than 70

b. A student is considered to have passed the master's degree based on the following grading scale:

GPA Range	Academic Standing
3.70 – 4.00	Excellent
3.00 – 3.69	Very Good





- c. The minimum passing grade for each course in the master's program is C+. For remedial courses, a passing grade at the same level is sufficient.
- d. The minimum cumulative GPA for successful completion is 3.0 out of 4.0.
- e. A student may repeat up to two courses during their period of study to improve their GPA.
- f. Not all course grades taken by the student according to their study plan are included in the GPA calculation, whether passed or failed.
- g. Grade distribution for graduate examinations is as follows:
  - 20% – 30% for the midterm exam
  - 30% – 40% for reports and research
  - 40% for the final exam
- h. In cases not covered by specific provisions, the policies and procedures applicable to bachelor's degrees shall apply to master's programs.
- i. The council is responsible for approving the thesis plan and appointing the supervisor.
- j. A student may not register for thesis credit hours until they have successfully completed 50% of the required coursework credit hours.

## **9. Relevant Departments and Approval of Study Plans**

### **Relevant Departments and Approval of Graduate Study Plans**

- a. A Deanship of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research shall be established at the university. It will oversee all graduate programs, coordinate among them, recommend their approval, and ensure their continuous review and evaluation.
- b. The Deanship of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research shall address all matters related to graduate studies and shall be authorized to make necessary decisions within its jurisdiction as defined by these policies and procedures. Its responsibilities include:
  - 1. Proposing or amending general policies for graduate studies, coordinating them across all university colleges and centers, and following up on their implementation after approval.
  - 2. Proposing internal policies and procedures in coordination with academic departments and relevant colleges for organizing graduate studies.
  - 3. Proposing and supervising admission standards for graduate studies.
  - 4. Recommending approval of new programs after evaluation and coordinating them with existing ones.
  - 5. Recommending approval of graduate courses and any modifications to the courses or programs.
  - 6. Recommending the names of graduate degrees in Arabic, English, and French, based on the recommendation of college councils.



7. Recommending the awarding of academic degrees.
8. Deciding on all student matters related to graduate students at the university.
9. Approving the formation of committees for supervising and examining graduate theses.
10. Setting the general framework for research plans and the rules for writing, formatting, printing, and submitting academic theses, as well as the templates for thesis evaluation and defense reports.
11. Periodically evaluating graduate programs through specialized committees or external/internal bodies.
12. Studying periodic reports on graduate studies submitted by academic departments.
13. Reviewing matters referred by the Deans Council, the Chancellor, or the Graduate Studies Council and offering advice.

b. A Graduate Studies Council shall be formed to decide on problematic issues arising from the application of these regulations. The Council of Graduate Studies is the reference for the interpretation of these regulations.

c. The Graduate Studies Council shall be composed as follows:

1. Dean of Graduate Studies (Chair)
2. Heads of graduate committees in colleges offering graduate programs, provided they are at least at the rank of Associate Professor, along with three faculty members holding the rank of Professor, nominated by the Dean of College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research and approved by the Chancellor for a one-year renewable term.

d. The Graduate Studies Council shall meet upon the invitation of its Chair. Meetings are valid only if two-thirds of the members are present. Decisions are made by a majority of the attending members. In case of a tie, the Chair's vote prevails. The Graduate Studies Council may form permanent or temporary committees from among its members or others to study assigned matters.

e. The Deans Council shall set the detailed criteria for approving graduate programs based on the recommendation of the Graduate Studies Council, considering the following:

1. The availability of a sufficient number of specialized faculty members (Professors or Associate Professors) in the program's field.
2. The availability of research facilities, such as libraries, laboratories, computing resources, and others, to ensure the program's success in teaching, supervision, and research.

f. The Deans Council shall recommend awarding the master's degree.

g. The academic department shall submit a detailed program proposal to the college council, including:

1. Program objectives and its relevance to the countries served by the university.



2. The program's nature in terms of academic and professional orientation and methodology.
  3. The importance of the program and the justification for its introduction, after reviewing similar offerings at other relevant departments and universities.
  4. Available or required resources in the department to deliver the program at a high academic and professional level, with special emphasis on the department's main research areas.
- h. The College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research and the Graduate Studies Council shall review the proposed program, coordinate its requirements with existing programs to avoid duplication, and then submit its recommendation to the Deans Council for a final decision.
- i. Changes to courses, program requirements, or admission criteria shall be made by the Deans Council based on the recommendation of the Graduate Studies Council and in coordination with the concerned departments.
- j. The university may offer joint graduate programs between two or more departments or colleges within the university, within the country, or with institutions abroad, in accordance with rules set by the University Council upon the recommendation of the College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research and the Graduate Studies Council in coordination with the concerned departments.
- k. The Deans Council shall decide on any proposals submitted by the College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research and Graduate Studies Council concerning cases not explicitly covered in these policies and procedures.