

**COMSATS University Islamabad**  
**Registrar Secretariat, Academic Unit (PS)**

No. CUI-Reg/Notif-769/24/803

March 26, 2024

**NOTIFICATION**

During its 38<sup>th</sup> meeting convened on January 09, 2024, the Academic Council, following the recommendations set forth in the 34<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board of Advanced Studies and Research (BASAR), formally approved the following Common Policies and Procedure and template Scheme of Studies for MS programs of CUI as per HEC Graduate Education Policy 2023 for implementation from Fall 2023 and subsequent admissions at CUI system:

Nomenclature of Degree: **Master of Science (MS) in.....** [Please specify the field]

- I. Minimum Duration: 02 Years      II. Minimum Semesters: 04  
III. Maximum Duration: 04 Years      IV. Maximum Semesters: 08

**No. of Courses and Credit Hours in MS:**

S #	Category	SAME / RELEVANT DISCIPLINE		INTRADISCIPLINARY	
		No. of Courses	No. of Credit Hours	No. of Courses	No. of Credit Hours
1.	Minimum Deficiency Courses of level 6	-	-	02-03	06-09
2.	Minimum Core Courses	02	06	02	06
3.	Elective Courses	06	18	06	18
4.	Research Thesis	01	06	01	06
5.	Flexible Course Structure: Adjusting Core and Elective Courses	If the number of core courses exceeds 2, the number of elective courses will decrease accordingly. For instance, a program with 3 core courses will have 5 elective courses to fulfill the required 24 credit hours of coursework.			
6.	Prerequisite	For regular admission to relevant degrees, only the General test with at least 50% is required		For intra-disciplinary admission, both General and Subject tests are required, with the GRE Subject Test with at least 50% as an additional criterion	
		The zero semester of an intradisciplinary MS candidate should not count towards the time limit for comprehensive exams, etc., or the maximum study duration.			
6.	Total (Minimum)	09	30	11-12	36-39
7.	Non-Thesis Option	Students may take minimum of two course of 06 credit hours of coursework in lieu of Research Thesis to complete MS degree.			



1. *Admission to MS and PhD programs at CUI will adhere to existing criteria, with relevance of prior degrees being crucial. If deemed necessary, additional courses may be required to rectify deficiencies. Approval for admission within the CUI System is contingent upon the relevance of the previous degree as per Notification No: CUI-Reg/Notif-458/23/493, dated February 28, 2023, stating that the decision made by the Board of Advanced Studies and Research (BASAR) during its meeting on November 30, 2022, stipulated that admission within the CUI System shall be contingent upon possession of a relevant prior degree. In instances where doubts regarding the relevance of a prior degree arise, the determination of relevance thereof shall be made by the respective Dean irrespective of title of the prior degree, based on recommendations put forth by the respective Campus Admission Committee, HoD, and Chairperson, on a case-by-case basis as required. The decision rendered by the Dean in such cases shall be documented within the student's personal file for record-keeping and reference purposes. The additional GRE-Subject test for MS and PhD programs won't be mandatory for such candidates.*
2. *Furthermore, if the Dean determines that the candidate does not possess the necessary relevant degree, the candidate shall be admitted under the Interdisciplinary category. Additionally, the candidate must undertake the additional GRE-Subject test for MS and PhD programs as a mandatory requirement. Such candidates are required to fulfill all mandatory requirements outlined under the Interdisciplinary clauses. However, if the Dean, by following the above procedure decides that the previous degree, irrespective of the title of the degree of the candidate does not fall under the Interdisciplinary category, the candidate shall not be admitted at CUI System.*
3. *MS students shall enroll for 09 to 12 credit hours per semester for coursework, with flexibility granted in exceptional cases such as force majeure incidents including inevitable accident, unavoidable casualty, vis major, type of calamity, cataclysm, catastrophe, disaster, tragedy, an event resulting in great loss and misfortune. The Dean may adjust credit hour requirements based on recommendations from the DAC, HoD, and Chairperson. Following coursework, students must register exclusively for a thesis of 06 credit hours each subsequent semester to ensure continuous enrollment throughout their study period.*
4. *During its 38<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Academic Council approved the Common Policies, Procedures, and Template of Scheme of Studies for MS and PhD Programs at CUI,*





*aligned with the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Graduate Education Policy (GEP) 2023, with the exception of the above-mentioned paragraphs.*

### **I.1 MINIMUM REQUIREMENT TO AWARD MS. DEGREE (LEVEL 7)**

**I.1.1** To align with the PhD. policy, intra-disciplinary admissions are permitted, contingent upon meeting the following criteria:

1. Attaining a score of at least 50% in the GRE Test in addition to HAT/GAT General/Equivalent.
2. Completing 6-9 credit hours of deficiency courses as required.
3. Obtaining approval from the admission committee.

**I.1.2** The above adjustments ensure that the admission process aligns with the PhD. policy and maintains the necessary academic standards for intra-disciplinary admissions.

### **I.2 ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SAME / RELEVANT DISCIPLINARY QUALIFICATIONS**

**I.2.1** Admission in the MS./Equivalent program requires sixteen years of schooling or 4-year education (minimum 120 credit hours) after HSSC/F.A./F. Sc/Grade 12 or Equivalent.

**I.2.2** Applicants must possess a 16-year degree in the relevant field from an accredited educational institution.

**I.2.3** The University may administer a comprehensive admission test as a prerequisite for admission to MS. or equivalent programs, with a passing score of 50%. Alternatively, candidates can submit GRE/HAT/GAT General/Equivalent test scores, with a minimum passing score of 50%.

**I.2.4** Candidates must possess a valid NTS GAT (General) score with a minimum of 50% marks at the time of admission. Alternatively, they can achieve a score of 50% in any other entry test recognized and adopted by the University in accordance with its regulations.

### **I.3 ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS WITH INTRADISCIPLINARY QUALIFICATIONS**

**I.3.1** In addition to the above requirements for admission on the basis of the relevant discipline, the admission with interdisciplinary qualifications is also permitted under the following conditions:

**I.3.1.1** If the respective department allows it, and the applicant expresses a strong interest

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in pursuing an MS. or equivalent degree in a different discipline.

1.3.1.2 The applicant has successfully passed the GRE-Subject with a minimum score of 50% in the discipline they seek admission to and has completed 6-9 credit hours of deficiency courses at level 6.

1.3.1.3 The department's admission committee must be satisfied that the applicant's knowledge in the primary area (level 6) is sufficient to undertake the coursework required for the MS. or equivalent program. In certain cases, additional courses may be prescribed after the commencement of the program to ensure the applicant's satisfactory preparation.

#### **I.4 COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS FOR MS. AND EQUIVALENT DEGREES**

**I.4.1** For the conferment of an MS. or equivalent degree, candidates must meet the following coursework prerequisites:

1.4.1.1 Completion of 30 credit hours of coursework or fulfillment of 24 credit hours from the relevant Scheme of Studies, in addition to a minimum of six (6) credit hours allocated to research work or thesis.

1.4.1.2 Academic Council also approved that for MS or equivalent degree, candidates shall either successfully complete 30 credit hours of coursework, or fulfill 24 credit hours of coursework, in addition to a minimum of six (6) credit hours dedicated to research work of thesis within the Departments / Faculties of CUI. The option of a non-thesis program is only available for specific Departments / Faculties of CUI approved by the Board of Advanced Studies and Research and the Academic Council from time to time.

1.4.1.3 If a candidate's previous coursework in the relevant field is deemed insufficient for the MS. program they are applying for, they may be required to address the deficiency by completing additional courses recommended by the Departmental Advisory Committee.

1.4.1.4 MS students are eligible to enroll for a minimum of 09 credit hours and a maximum of 12 credit hours per semester.

1.4.1.5 After completing a minimum of 12 credit hours of coursework, an MS. student can register for 6 credit hours of Thesis Research concurrently with their remaining coursework. However, the total credit hours for the semester should not exceed the maximum limit. It is obligatory for students to continue registering for Thesis Research in each subsequent semester following the completion of coursework to





ensure continuous enrollment throughout their study period.

## **I.5 TIMELINE FOR DEGREE COMPLETION**

- I.5.1** The awarding of an MS. degree shall occur not earlier than 1.5 years (three regular semesters) and no later than four years (eight regular semesters) from the start of the program. Exceptions to this timeline are elaborated upon as follows:
- I.5.2** In exceptional cases where a student cannot complete the MS. degree within the standard duration (3 years and 6 semesters), the Dean of the respective faculty is empowered to grant an extension of up to two semesters or one year beyond the three-year limit. This extension will be based on recommendations from the Departmental Advisory Committee (DAC). To request this extension, the student must formally apply using the prescribed form and provide a progress report from their most recently attended semester.
- I.5.3** If a student fails to complete the MS. degree within the stipulated timeframe (maximum four years) including extensions of two semesters or one year and requests an extension, the Dean of the respective faculty will evaluate the reasons for the delay. If the delay is due to force majeure (circumstances beyond the student's control), the Dean may extend the duration for awarding the MS. degree in accordance with relevant time limitations up to one semester more. Corrective operational measures, determined by the respective Dean, will also be taken if the delay is due to procedural or administrative factors and the same will be implemented by administration at the respective campus with the approval of the Rector on the recommendation of the Director. If the student did not complete his/her MS. degree within maximum 08 semesters or 09 semesters, if one semester is extended by Dean, from the date of registration in first semester at CUI, his/her admission shall stand cancelled without any notice.

## **I.6 RESEARCH PROPOSAL (SYNOPSIS)**

- I.6.1** The student is required to submit a synopsis or research proposal in consultation with their supervisor, based on the advice of the Departmental Advisory Committee.
- I.6.2** It is preferable for MS students to have their synopsis approved within the first four semesters from the date of their first registration. However, in exceptional circumstances, the respective Departmental Advisory Committee may grant a maximum of two-semester relaxation upon the recommendation of the supervisor or Supervisory Committee. In case of failure of Synopsis approval in maximum permissible time duration, the admission of student shall stand cancelled without any notice.



- I.6.3** The synopsis shall be approved by the respective Dean of the Faculty, using the prescribed proforma and based on the recommendations from the following:
- 1) The respective supervisor/ Supervisor committee.
  - 2) Departmental Advisory Committee.
- I.6.4** The Office of the Registrar shall issue a notification regarding the approval of the MS. synopsis, and it shall be presented to the Board of Advanced Studies and Research for information.
- I.6.5** If applicable, the area of specialization shall be notified along with the title of the MS. synopsis for the respective students. The area of specialization will be mentioned in the student's transcript only if it has been approved and mentioned in the notified Scheme of Studies for the respective MS. program.
- I.6.6** The Convener of the Departmental Advisory Committee (Head of Department) shall provide the "Turnitin Similarity Report" for the approval of the MS. synopsis. The respective Dean shall approve the synopsis based on the "Turnitin Similarity Report" to ensure the quality and prevent plagiarism in the research conducted at university. The similarity percentage shall be within the upper limit as per the HEC regulations.

**I.7 PLAGIARISM, SIMILARITY TEST, AND OPEN DEFENSE**

- I.7.1** The University's plagiarism regulations align with the guidelines provided by the Higher Education Commission (HEC). The policy is regularly updated in accordance with any amendments made by the HEC. Applicable to graduate students, the regulations aim to prevent and address cases of plagiarism, fostering a culture of academic honesty and originality. The regulations outline expectations for academic integrity, consequences of plagiarism, and procedures for investigating and addressing plagiarism allegations. Adherence to these regulations enhances a culture of integrity among graduate students.
- I.7.2** Plagiarism, ensuring academic integrity, and conducting defenses are key aspects of maintaining the quality and ethics of research. The following guidelines are established for addressing plagiarism, conducting similarity tests, and organizing open defenses:
- 1.7.2.1** Under no circumstances shall a dissertation/thesis based on plagiarized research be acceptable. Both researchers and their supervisors bear the primary responsibility for preventing plagiarism. Adhering to the provisions outlined in the document "Governing Research Supervision and Research Ethics" is crucial to avoid plagiarism.
  - 1.7.2.2** Plagiarism prevention must follow the guidelines set by the Committee on



Publication Ethics (COPE).

1.7.2.3 In the event of a dissertation/thesis being found plagiarized, it will be managed in accordance with the Anti-Plagiarism Policy issued by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan, which is subject to updates over time.

1.7.2.4 Before submitting the dissertation/thesis to external examiners, a similarity test must be conducted in alignment with HEC's Anti-Plagiarism Policy. This test helps identify any potential instances of plagiarism.

1.7.2.5 A defense of the dissertation/thesis is a crucial step after the dissertation/thesis receives positive evaluation by committee members. The following minimum principles and guidelines apply:

1.7.2.5.1 The defense details must be announced on the University website and other relevant communication platforms to enable interested individuals to participate.

1.7.2.5.2 The defense venue will be accessible to both University community members and external participants, such as community halls or other public venues.

1.7.2.5.3 A neutral chairperson, appointed by the concerned Dean oversees the defense to ensure fairness and compliance with regulations.

1.7.2.5.4 A committee is responsible for evaluating both the dissertation/thesis and the defense process.

1.7.2.5.5 The researcher presents their dissertation/thesis to the audience, highlighting its key aspects and findings.

1.7.2.5.6 A session for questions and answers follows the presentation, providing an opportunity for evaluators and the audience to engage in dialogue.

1.7.2.5.7 The evaluation is based on the quality of research presented and the researcher's ability to effectively defend their work.

1.7.2.5.8 The defense committee renders a final decision, which could include:

- I. *Pass*
- II. *Pass with minor amendments.*
- III. *Deferral for resubmission and re-defense*
- IV. *Fail (in exceptional circumstances, with reasons documented by the defense committee)*

## **I.8 FACULTY AND SUPERVISORY STAFF**

I.8.1 For launching an MS./Equivalent program, a department must have a minimum of two



(2) full-time faculty members holding PhD. degrees in the relevant field. If a PhD. program is also planned in the same discipline and department; this number can be increased to three (3).

**I.8.2** The appointment tenure for full-time faculty members must not be shorter than the duration of the intended degree program.

**I.8.3** The teacher-to-student ratio will be 1:12. A supervisor can oversee a maximum of twelve (12) MS./PhD. students concurrently, with no more than five (5) of these students being PhD. candidates.

## **I.9 FACULTY'S RELEVANCE TO SUBJECT/ DEGREE PROGRAM**

**I.9.1** Faculty members' subject and supervisory relevance shall be determined based on:

1.9.1.1 Qualifications, including bachelor, master's, and doctoral degrees.

1.9.1.2 Research output, including thesis /dissertations and published articles.

1.9.1.3 Teaching and administrative experience.

1.9.1.4 The Relevance Assessment Committee (RAC) is responsible for evaluating the suitability of faculty members for program and dissertation/thesis supervision. Comprising a minimum of five members, the committee includes the Dean of the Faculty, the Incharge of the Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) of the university, two external subject experts with a rank of at least professor or associate professor, and a member of the Program Team/Assessment Team who played a significant role in crafting the self-assessment report of the program.

## **I.10 CREDITS TRANSFER, EVALUATION AND GRADING**

1.10.1.1 COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI) facilitates student transfers from local or foreign educational institutions to university, as well as transfers among various University campuses. The migration process adheres to the University's regulations and guidelines, ensuring a systematic and thorough evaluation of each migration request. In extraordinary situations, upon recommendations from the Rector/Vice Chancellor/Campus Director of the respective institution, the Registrar's Office oversees approval cases under the authority of the Rector. The Rector holds the power to authorize student transfers within university or from reputable foreign/Pakistani universities, subject to specific conditions.

1.10.1.2 The Policy Guidelines set forth by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) for the Implementation of the Uniform Semester System extend to Level-7 and 8 programs. This extension encompasses various aspects, including the transfer of credits for coursework between universities, student assessments, grading





systems, and related matters. The transfer of research work is also permissible under specific conditions determined by the University. This allowance is contingent upon the host University's acceptance of the research conducted at the parent University before initiating the process of credit transfer.

- 1.10.1.3 Each department establishes a standing committee responsible for evaluating credit transfers from other universities. Credit hours are only transferrable between recognized Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and globally recognized universities to maintain credibility. Credit transfers into accredited programs are exclusively permitted from relevant accredited programs, in accordance with the regulations established by the relevant accreditation bodies.
- 1.10.1.4 Applicants become eligible to apply after successfully completing their first semester and must submit their applications at least four weeks before the upcoming semester's commencement. Applicants are required to maintain their enrollment status at their parent University throughout the application process.
- 1.10.1.5 Candidates must provide certificates such as SSC & HSSC/ equivalent, BA/BSc, MS., etc., demonstrating a minimum of 60% marks. The merit of applicants will match or surpass the merit criteria established for the University's respective batch admissions.
- 1.10.1.6 Students who previously participated in the University entry test but failed to secure admission due to low merit are not eligible for transfer.
- 1.10.1.7 Only courses with a minimum grade of B are transferable, and they must align with courses offered by the University or their equivalents at least 80% of same/similar course contents.
- 1.10.1.8 Transferred credits contribute to degree requirements and will be shown separately on transcript, but the CGPA/GPA of transferred credits does not affect the CGPA calculation at the University.
- 1.10.1.9 Candidates must complete at least 60% of the credit hours required for their degree program at the CUI.
- 1.10.1.10 The originating University/college/institute from which a student intends to migrate must be reputable, accredited where applicable, recognized by HEC, and holds a commendable standing/ranking.
- 1.10.1.11 Applicants from international institutions must ensure that their institute/University holds accreditation from the respective accreditation body and HEC.



- 1.10.1.12 Inter-institutional transfers within the University are permissible only once and are processed based on established procedures, periodically revised, and sanctioned by the RectorUniversity.
- 1.10.1.13 Transferred students are ineligible for Honors/Awards at the University.
- 1.10.1.14 Applications must be submitted at least four weeks before the commencement of a regular semester.
- 1.10.1.15 For accredited programs, recommended migration cases are reported to accrediting councils like PEC to obtain NOC before admission.
- 1.10.1.16 The Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) governing University Migration, as amended over time, apply to all migration cases.
- 1.10.1.17 Applicants need to submit the completed form along with essential documents to the relevant Campus Director. The application package includes official transcripts of semesters completed at the Parent University, photocopies of Matric and FSc/ equivalent, BA, MA, MS.,etc., examination mark sheets, detailed course outlines for completed courses, NOC from the Parent University, character certificate from the Parent University, and a bank draft payable tothe University as the migration processing fee. Migration/Transfer Fee (PKR): Migration from foreign universities: 250,000, Migration from local universities: 100,000, and Transfer withinUniversity: 10,000. Additionally, students at CUI have the flexibility to pay their fees in dollarsby using the conversion rate established by the State Bank of Pakistan on the date when the feevoucher is issued. The migration fee is subject to change without prior notice.
- 1.10.1.18 The University retains the right to reject any application without stating a reason, and such rejections cannot be contested in any court of law.
- 1.10.1.19 Migration of students from one campus to another is a privilege extended by COMSATS University Islamabad (University) to facilitate students, not a inherent student right.
- 1.10.1.20 Migration is granted only in special or unavoidable situations, such as medical/health difficulties or emergent/accidental circumstances. Applicants must provide substantial evidence with the application.
- 1.10.1.21 The migration process must be completed before the commencement of a semester. Students must apply at least four weeks in advance. Late applications may be considered for the subsequent semester if feasible.
- 1.10.1.22 Migration is not permitted during the first semester under any circumstances.





1.10.1.23 Only students with Good Academic Standing (GAS) status are eligible for migration.

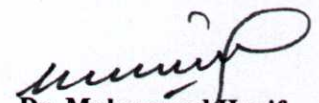
1.10.1.24 Upon receiving a migration request, the Head of Department (HoD) must obtain written consent from the current supervisor, co-supervisor, student supervisory committee, and departmental advisory committee.

This is issued in continuation of Notification No. CUI-Reg/Notif-1735/23/1823 dated August 18, 2023, and partially modifies the relevant clauses of the HEC Graduate Education Policy (GEP-2023) effective from Fall 2023 admissions within the CUI System.

Further, all graduate forms, templates, procedures, and process, etc., shall remain the same. The students admitted prior to and including Spring 2023 at CUI shall fulfill their degree requirements as stipulated in the CUI Graduate Handbook 2023.

All other graduate rules, regulations, statutes, and policies of the University shall remain applicable, subject to amendments as made from time to time.

This supersedes the notification No. CUI-Reg/Notif-588/24/606 dated March 05, 2024

  
Dr. Muhammad Hanif  
Deputy Registrar

**Distribution:**

1. All Campus Directors / Incharge Islamabad Campus, CUI
2. All Principal Officers of CUI/ All Deans of Faculties of CUI
3. All Chairpersons of the Academic Departments / All Head of Departments of CUI
4. Director of Planning & Development /HRD, CUI Principal Seat/ Controller Examination
5. All Incharge Academics/Examination/Registration/ Admission /Accounts of CUI Campuses/ Incharge HR/QEC/CUonline/ Sr. Manager (IT) ISB/Principal Seat, CUI/ GM, Rector Office, CUI
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1. SO to the Rector
2. PS to the Registrar