MOHAMED BIN ZAYED
UNIVERSITY OF
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Registrar's Office

Policy Manual

PolicyManual_RO_POL_V02.00

June 2024

Table of Contents

1. Introduction....3
2. Objective....3
3. Scope....3
4. Policies....3
4.1 Course Exemptions....3
4.2 Course Substitution....4
4.3 Course Registration....4
4.4 Attendance....5
4.5 Visiting Students....6
4.6 Class Size....6
4.7 Grading....7
4.8 Student Progress Criteria and Academic Standing....10
4.9 Student Scholarships and Financial Entitlements....12
4.10 Scholarship Financial Penalties....13
4.11 Student Records....15
4.12 Graduation Requirements....16
4.13 Program Transfers....17
4.14 Leave of Absence....18
5. Definitions....19
6. References and Related Document(s)....21
7. Document Control Information....21

1. Introduction

The Registrar's Office (RO) Policy Manual describes the regulations and principles guiding students' academic advancement from initial course enrollment to graduation. As the primary administrative center for student enrollment, course registration, and academic documentation, the Registrar's Office at MBZUAI is dedicated to delivering efficient assistance to students, faculty, and staff, ~~guaranteeing precision~~, adherence to policies, and prompt resolution of inquiries.

The Registrar's Office manual serves as a vital component of the University's policies, intricately connected with the Code of Conduct, Admissions, Academic Programs, Library Services, Educational Affairs, Institutional Effectiveness, and Quality Assurance Policy Manuals.

2. Objective

This policy manual aims to:

- Provide guidance and clarity regarding registration, class size limit, and graduation requirements.
- Establish and communicate the requirements for students to maintain their scholarship, and the impact of their performance on their academic progress.
- Provide transparent regulations to change programs or obtain credits for previously recognized courses.
- Ensure that grading, student evaluation, and grievance processes are conducted in a manner that is consistent with the academic principles, standards, and expectations of the University.
- Preparation of the certificates, attestations, and the student's transcripts.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All credit-bearing graduate programs offered by MBZUAI.
- All alumni, students, faculty, and staff.

4. Policies

4.1 Course Exemptions

4.1.1 A student may be granted a course exemption, rather than credit if the student can provide evidence that a course previously studied at a federal or licensed institution in the UAE, or a foreign institution of higher learning based outside the UAE and accredited in its home country is equivalent to a course that forms part of the program for which the student is applying.

4.1.2 Course exemptions are usually only granted for mandatory courses and those that form a prerequisite for other courses.

4.1.3 Applications for course exemption must be sent to the Registrar's Office, who will coordinate with the Department Chair for any course exemption approval to be applied.

4.1.4 The Department Chair will have the ultimate right to accept or reject the application for course exemption for any student.

4.1.5 MBZUAI will consider applications for course exemption only for courses relevant to the degree that provide equivalent learning outcomes and in which the student earned a grade of B (3.3/4) or better.

4.1.6 The grade of the exempted course will be recorded as an "EX" on the transcript record. The exempted

course will have no credit assigned and will not be used in the calculation of the CGPA.

4.1.7 The exempted course will not count towards the course requirements for a program.

4.1.8 The previous study being used as evidence for the course exemption must have been completed no more than a maximum of (2) years prior to the student's acceptance into the program of MBZUAI.

4.1.9 All applications for course exemption to Master's or PhD programs must be submitted online, providing all required documentation(s).

4.2 Course Substitution

4.2.1 In exceptional circumstances, students submit a course substitution formal request to the Registrar's Office. Course substitution must be supported by the approval of the course coordinator and Department Chair.

4.2.2 Students must meet specific criteria to be eligible for course substitution, such as maintaining a minimum CGPA, and obtaining written approval from the course coordinator and the Department Chair.

4.2.3 The request should include justification for the substitution, such as overlapping content with previously completed courses, relevance to the student's academic or career goals, or documented extenuating circumstances.

4.2.4 All course substitutions must not exceed 25% of the total program credit hours.

4.2.5 The grade of the course substitution will be recorded as a "CS" on the transcript record.

4.2.6 All course substitutions must adhere to the guidelines and regulations set forth by the Ministry of Education and relevant accreditation bodies.

4.2.7 Approved course substitutions will be documented in the student's academic records, including details of the substituted course and the rationale for the substitution.

4.3 Course Registration

4.3.1 A student must be enrolled in the University prior to any course registration.

4.3.2 A student must be officially registered in a course to earn academic credit.

4.3.3 Students should meet with their supervisor during the announced registration period to agree on the courses to be registered as per their study plan.

4.3.4 Students must register during the designated registration period as published in the University calendar each semester.

4.3.5 Students admitted to MBZUAI programs are required to maintain full-time status by registering for a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester during the first year. In exceptional circumstances, a student may be approved to carry a reduced credit load upon the approval of the supervisor, Registrar, and Department Chair/Deputy.

4.3.6 Registration is not official until a student is listed on the class roster.

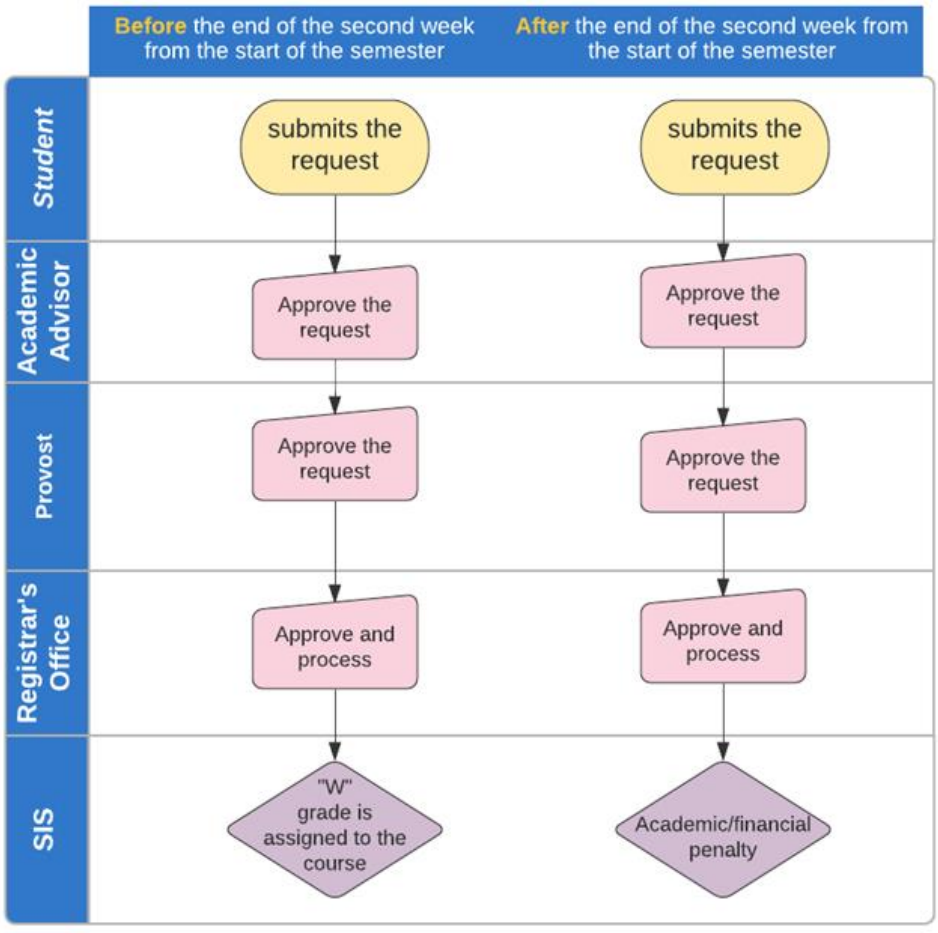
4.3.7 A student may only change his/her schedule during the add/drop period as designated in the University calendar. If the deadline has passed, a student cannot change their class schedule unless they provide evidence for extenuating circumstances and after the approval of the Supervisor, Department Chair/Deputy, and the Registrar. Approval of the Provost is required when financial implications apply.

4.3.8 During the first semester, students must provide their Emirates identification card to the Registrar's

Office. All relevant information will be uploaded to the Student Information System (SIS).

4.3A Course Withdrawal Procedure

1. A student who encounters unanticipated difficulty in a course may withdraw from the course up until the end of the second week from the start of the semester (as per the University calendar) through a "Course Withdrawal Request Form" approved by the student's Supervisor, Department Chair/Deputy, and the Registrar. In this circumstance, another course must be undertaken to maintain the minimum credit load required per semester in the first year.
2. Surpassing the second week of the semester and withdrawing from a course after the deadline will result in an academic/financial penalty and circumstances where the student will be underloaded (less than 12 credits). A "Course Withdrawal Request Form" must be submitted and is subject to Scholarship Financial penalties.
3. In all cases, this will require the approval of the Appeal Committee.
4. The below procedural flowchart should be utilized for the for the course withdrawal process:



4.4 Attendance

4.4.1 Attendance at MBZUAI is strongly encouraged but not mandatory; students are strongly encouraged to physically attend all lectures and lab sessions to foster a deeper understanding, promote interactive learning, and facilitate effective communication.

4.4.2 While attendance is not compulsory, particular courses may stipulate an attendance requirement, in which case this will be clearly stated in the course syllabus.

4.4.3 In recognition of the importance of engagement and participation, instructors have the discretion to include attendance as a factor in the overall course grade, at a level not exceeding 10% of the total course mark. Details regarding such evaluation will be provided in the course syllabus.

4.4.4 Students should be mindful of the need to balance external employment with their academic responsibilities. To ensure that students are not overwhelmed and can regularly attend classes, a limit of 20 hours per week is set for external work. This policy is aimed at prioritizing students' academic commitments and ensuring that work does not hinder their ability to actively participate in physical classes.

4.5 Visiting Students

4.5.1 MBZUAI will accept visiting student applications and register such students who have an academic background and credential level consistent with the courses and programs offered at MBZUAI, who are currently enrolled in a licensed and accredited higher education institution in the UAE, or a foreign higher education institution based outside the UAE with accreditation in its home country and recognized by UAE Ministry of Education.

4.5.2 Visiting students must meet the University's standard admissions and documentation requirements, have an active enrolment status, and be in good standing in their home institute with a CGPA ≥ 3.2 or equivalent in their home University.

4.5.3 Visiting students will be enrolled for the time specified in the initial invitation letter by MBZUAI.

4.5.4 Visiting students do not graduate from MBZUAI. Credit hours gained at the University may transfer back to the home institution and may contribute towards the student's final qualification at the discretion of their home institution.

4.5.5 Students will receive, at their request, an official transcript of courses taken at MBZUAI after their approved visiting period.

4.5.6 The student is responsible for any procedures involved in accrediting or transferring course credit taken at MBZUAI to their home University.

4.5.7 Visiting students are subject to all the University's regulations, policies, and codes of practice.

4.5.8 The tuition fee, accommodation, visa, and other applicable arrangements of visiting students are governed by the relevant University Memorandum of Understanding and/or Agreement between the higher education institutions.

4.6 Class Size

4.6.1 Class size maximum and minimum limits will be determined based on several considerations including:

- Best practices in learning and pedagogy that enable students to achieve high levels of student learning.
- The nature of specializations and levels of degrees/programs offered at the University.
- Instructional methods (format) and mode of delivery.
- Creation of a close student-faculty relationship.

4.6.2 Other factors such as limits set by accrediting bodies, health safety and environment policies, etc. The maximum and a minimum number of students to be allocated to a class in any course taught in MBZUAI programs has been set as follows:

Minimum and Maximum Class Sizes		
Class Type	**Minimum Enrollment**	**Maximum Enrollment**
Lecture, Seminar	5	150
Laboratory	5	30
Class	5	30

4.6.3 Under certain circumstances, it may be necessary to go above the maximum or below the minimum limits. Should an exception to this policy be necessary, a request from the Chair of the respective department should be submitted to, and approval secured from the Provost.

4.6.4 Courses may be offered below the minimum class size requirements when:

- The course is required for graduation and suitable substitutions cannot be made for students.
- First-time offering of the course and time is needed to assess its potential.

4.6.5 Faculty members teaching courses that are granted approval to be offered below the minimum class size requirements, must ensure that study plans are modified to accommodate a small group of students.

4.6.6 All classes are co-educational.

4.6.7 The following will be considered exceptions to the minimum class enrollment requirement:

- Thesis.
- Seminars.
- Internships.
- Projects.
- Independent/Directed Research.

4.7 Grading

4.7.1 The following grades and guidelines are used at MBZUAI:

Grade Letters, Points, Percentages and Descriptors			
Grade	Grade Points	Percentage	Grade Definition
A	4.0	95-100	Exceptional
A-	3.7	89-94.99	Excellent
B+	3.3	83-88.99	Very Good
B	3.0	77-82.99	Good
B-	2.7	71-76.99	Average
C+	2.3	65-70.99	Below Average
C	2.0	59-64.99	
C-	1.7	50-58.99	
F	Fail	Less than 50	Failing grade in coursework
U	Fail		Unsatisfactory in internship/ thesis/research
WF	Withdrawal after the add/drop week		

4.7.2 For Fall 2022 intake onwards, the following grades and guidelines will be used at MBZUAI.

Grade Letters, Points, Percentages and Descriptors			
Grade	Grade Points	Percentage	Definition
A+	4	97.0 – 100%	
A	3.7	92.0 – 96.99%	
A-	3.5	87.0 – 91.99%	
B+	3.3	80.0 – 86.99%	
B	3	75.0 – 79.99%	
B-	2.7	71.0 – 74.99%	
C+	2.3	67.0 – 70.99%	
C	2	64.0 – 66.99%	
C-	1.7	60.0 - 63.99%	
F	0	0.0 – 59.99%	Failing grade in coursework
U	0	0	Unsatisfactory in Internship/Thesis (Research)
WF	0	0	Withdrawal after the add/drop week

4.7.3 Additional letter grades are used to denote special cases. These letter grades do not have corresponding grade points, and hence are not used in calculating a student's grade point average.

Other Letter Grades	
Grade	Description
I	Incomplete
TC	Transfer
W	Withdrawn
EX	Course Exemption
CS	Course Substitution
S	Satisfactory in Internship/Thesis/Research Methods

4.7.4 Term Grade Point Average (TGPA). The grade point average for a term or semester is calculated by dividing the sum of the quality points earned in that term or semester by the number of credit hours attempted.

4.7.5 Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA). The cumulative grade point average is calculated by dividing the sum of the quality points earned in all terms and semesters by the credit hours attempted in all those terms and semesters. This average is used to assess the student's overall academic standing at the University.

4.7.6 Students are expected to complete their course(s) in the semester in which they are registered. In exceptional circumstances, a student may be allowed to complete a course in the following semester after securing permission from the course faculty member through an "incomplete grade request form". A grade of "I" (incomplete) will be assigned for the course. Students must complete the course requirements no later than the first week of the following semester. Failure to meet the deadline will result in the student receiving a grade of "F" for the course.

4.7.7 Research Thesis assigned grade will be determined by the final outcome of the 360-evaluation form.

4.7.8 At the end of each semester, student grade point averages are used in determining academic actions (Good Standing, Warning, Academic Probation, Special Probation, Dismissal) and scholarship decisions.

4.7.9 A grade of F received because of any academic integrity violation in breach of the Code of Conduct cannot be removed from the calculation of the GPA should the course in question be repeated.

4.7.10 Conversely, academic actions and scholarship decisions will be updated if a student's GPA is altered due to approved faculty grade changes.

4.7.11 Students shall have the opportunity to appeal against evaluation of academic work or any grading, and must follow the procedure described within 3 working days of being officially notified.

4.7.12 Academic departments must keep a record of the assessments, grading student performance and moderation(s), and other related materials using the course assessment files. All assessment materials/data used to determine students' qualifications must be kept on record with the academic department for a minimum of five years after completion of courses.

4.7.13 The grading should be provided to the Registrar's Office once the academic departments have completed due diligence to submit the student grading. All grading for each course must have approval from the Board of Examiners, the Department Chair(s) and endorsed by the Provost prior to submitting to the Registrar's Office.

4.7.14 Any changes to Grading for any reason require approval from the Board of Examiners, the Department Chair(s), and the Registrar. The changes should be reflected in the SIS and it will be the responsibility of the RO to enact the changes in a timely manner.

4.7.15 The RO shall conduct Grading self-audits on an annual basis in collaboration with the Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance (IEQA) department. Random sampling (minimum of 5%) or a full audit may be conducted based on an agreement between the Registrar's Office and the IEQA.

4.7A Procedure for Appealing Against Grading and/or Evaluation of Academic Work

1) A student must submit any appeal against grading/evaluation of academic work within three (3) working days of being officially notified. Submissions after the allocated time will not be accepted.

2) If a student suspects that an error has been made in recording a final grade, the initial recourse for the student should be to contact the faculty formally (via email). A student must be able to provide copies of graded assignments along with any other relevant documents to support the appeal. If an error is detected, faculty members should submit a "Grade Appeal Form" to the Registrar with justification copying the Department Chair within three working days from the date of posting the grade.

3) If a meeting and thorough discussions with the faculty member alone do not resolve the student's concern, the student should formally (via email) contact the Department Chair. The Department Chair will meet with the student and the faculty member, providing an independent review. If an error is detected, faculty members should submit a "Grade Appeal Form" to the Registrar with justification copying the department chair within five (5) working days from the date of posting the grade.

4) If after having completed both levels of communication, the dispute persists, a student wishing to challenge a final grade formally, must submit an Appeal Statement Form to the Appeal Committee, chaired by the Provost, within seven (7) working days of when the final grade was posted.

5) Students must evidence the following to support their appeal:
    a. Demonstrate having followed the above-required channels of communication with both the faculty member and the Department Chair.
    b. Demonstrate that communication with the faculty member regarding the grade was initiated

within three (3) working days of when the final grade was posted.

c. Provide copies of graded assignments along with any other relevant documents to support the appeal.
d. Describe in detail the conditions and factors that led to the perceived grievance and the actions taken during the resolution process.

4.8 Student Progress Criteria and Academic Standing

4.8.1 **Academic Standing:**

A student's academic standing at the end of a semester will determine the students' eligibility to continue their progress towards earning their degree at MBZUAI.

4.8.2 **Progress criteria for 2022 intakes:**

At the end of each semester, the academic standing of the students will be determined according to the following criteria:

1. Coursework:
   Students must remain in "good academic standing", by maintaining a CGPA of 3.3/4.0 or above.
2. Research Thesis:
   Students must achieve a minimum evaluation of "Satisfactory" by the supervisor(s) at the end of each semester.
3. Internship Requirements:
   Successfully complete the internship requirements as per the study plan.

4.8.3 **Academic Standing for 2022 intakes:**

At the end of each semester, the academic standing status of the students will be determined according to the following:

1. Good Standing:
   The student has successfully completed the above-listed criteria as per their intake study plan.
2. Academic Probation:
   Student failed to achieve at least one of the above-listed criteria as per their intake study plan.
3. Dismissal:
   A student who was on "Academic Probation" standing in the previous semester and failed to meet at least one of the above-listed criteria for the following semester.
4. Special Probation:
   Dismissed students who are granted an appeal, will be assigned special probation status.
   a) If the student has fulfilled the conditions stipulated by the Appeal Committee, they will then be permitted to continue their study, and their status will be considered as "Good Academic Standing".
   b) If the student fails to meet the conditions stipulated by the Appeal Committee within the following semester, then their status will be "Dismissal". No further appeals will be accepted.

4.8.4 **Progress Criteria for 2023/2024 intakes onwards:**

At the end of each semester, the academic standing of the students will be determined according to the following criteria:

1. Coursework:
   Students must remain in "Good Academic Standing", by maintaining a CGPA of 3.3/4.0 or above.
2. Research Methods:

Successfully completed the requirements of the Research methods course as per the study plan.

3. Research Thesis:
   Students must achieve a minimum evaluation of "Satisfactory" by the supervisor(s) at the end of each semester.
4. Internship Requirements:
   Successfully complete the internship requirements as per the study plan.

4.8.5 **Academic Standing for 2024 intakes:**

At the end of each semester, the academic standing of the students will be determined according to the following:

1. Good Standing:
   The student successfully completed the above-listed criteria as per their intake study plan.
2. Warning:
   The student will be assigned warning status if they fail to meet at least one of the above-listed criteria as per their intake study plan. If a student is assigned a warning status, then the student:
   a) Will receive a warning letter from the Registrar's Office.
   b) Must attend a department-level "at-risk interview" (as per Section 6.8.6).
   c) A mitigation plan will be put in place by the at-risk interview panel in consultation with the student.
   d) Financial penalties will not apply.
3. Academic Probation:
   A student who failed to meet at least one of the above-listed criteria as per their intake study plan. Students will be assigned a probation status if any of the following apply:
   a) They were on "warning" academic standing in the previous semester.
   b) They receive an "F" grade in a course.
   c) Their CGPA is less than 3.3 for 2 consecutive semesters.

   If a student is assigned a probation status, then the student:
   a) Will receive a probation letter from the Registrar's Office.
   b) Must attend a University-level "academic probation meeting", as detailed at the end of this document (as per Section 6.8.6).
   c) A mitigation plan will be put in place by the academic probation panel in consultation with the student.
   d) Financial penalties will apply as per the appeal committee's decision (i.e. the student may be required to pay the fees for credit hours that must be retaken)
4. Dismissal:
   A student is dismissed if they were on "Academic Probation" in the previous semester and fail to attain one or more of the conditions required for good standing.
   If a student is assigned "Dismissal" status, then their enrolment is terminated, and they receive a Dismissal Letter from the Registrar's Office.

5. Special Probation:
   Dismissed students who are granted an appeal, will be assigned special probation status.

a) The student's record will be reactivated, and they will be assigned "Special Probation" status.
b) The student must attend a University-level "academic probation meeting" (as per Section 6.8.6).
c) A mitigation plan will be put in place by the academic probation panel in consultation with the

student.

d) Financial penalties will apply as per the appeal committee's decision (i.e. the student may be required to pay the fees for credit hours that must be retaken). If a student with "Special probation" status fails to meet the requirements of the mitigation plan by the end of that semester, they will automatically be dismissed and will not be eligible for further appeals. Financial penalties will apply as per the appeal committee's decision.

e) If the student fulfills the conditions stipulated by the Appeal Committee, they will then be permitted to continue their study and their status will be "Good Academic Standing".

f) If the student fails to meet the conditions stipulated by the Appeal Committee within the following semester, then their status will be "Dismissal". No further appeals will be accepted.

4.8.6 At-Risk Interview / Academic Probation Meeting:

This is a mandatory one-time session where a student who is assigned the status of "Warning", "Academic Probation", or "Special Probation", academic standing is required to meet with faculty representatives to review their progress and agree on a mitigation plan.

a) The student is expected to engage openly about their academic experiences and challenges and share their insights on what factors may have impacted their academic performance and discuss any personal obstacles they have faced.

b) Faculty members should work with students to identify the challenges, set goals, and create practical plans. They are expected to provide continuous support and track the student's progress, helping to ensure they have what they need to succeed academically.

4.8.7 Conditions for 2024 intake onwards:

1. If the student receives a failing "F" grade in any semester throughout the study duration, they will be placed immediately on "Academic Probation" standing OR "Academic Dismissal" (if the student was on "Academic Probation" standing in the previous semester).
2. "Warning" academic standing is assigned only one time throughout the student's study duration. In cases where a warning was already issued, the student will be assigned academic probation status automatically.
3. "Academic Probation" standing is assigned only one time throughout the student's study duration. In cases where probation was already issued, the student will be assigned "Dismissal" status automatically.

4.8.8 Students are entitled to contest decisions with financial implications to the Appeals Committee through the Registrar's Office. The composition and scope of the Appeals Committee are under the remit of the Registrar. The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final and binding to all.

4.9 Student Scholarships and Financial Entitlements

4.9.1 Admitted students (on a full-time basis) are granted full scholarships based on their enrolment status.

4.9.2 The scholarship includes 100% tuition fees, accommodation, health insurance, a competitive monthly stipend, and an annual ticket to their home country unless stated otherwise.

4.9.3 To retain a scholarship, students must meet the following criteria:

a) Maintain the minimum required CGPA as per their intake year.

b) Complete their degree requirements within the allowed duration as per the study plan.

c) Maintain a clean deed record and abide by the Code of Conduct.

4.9.4 All active eligible students sponsored by MBZUAI may receive a monthly stipend, housing allowance

or University accommodation, and other benefits based on approval by the University management and their categories: PhD single UAE, PhD married UAE, All PhD international students, MSc single UAE, MSc married UAE, and All MSc international students.

4.9.5 UAE students may be eligible, reliant on approval by the University management, to receive the difference of stipend assigned to their category by the amount exceeding their employer's salary.

4.9.6 To maintain the scholarship, students must register with the minimum defined credit hours for their academic year. Exemptions may be granted under exceptional circumstances at the sole discretion of the University.

4.9.7 Entitlements may change based on the approvals required in the University delegation of authorities.

4.10 Scholarship Financial Penalties

Students are entitled to scholarships during their study at the University and entitlements are individualized for each student. Scholarships have a range of benefits which are defined based on the student's enrolment status and relevant policies.

4.10.1 Students who violate University policies or fail to meet specified criteria may face fines, sanctions, or loss of eligibility for benefits, potentially impacting one or more of the following benefits, either partially or entirely:

a) 100% paid tuition fees
b) Monthly stipend
c) Accommodation in University dorms/housing allowance (if applicable)
d) Health insurance for international students
e) Annual ticket allowance for international students.

4.10.2 <u>The complete withdrawal and dismissal from the University:</u>

The financial penalties are calculated according to the below and students are requested to settle the payment of:

a) Tuition fees for all registered credit hours.
b) All previously paid monthly stipends.
c) Accommodation allowance if any.
d) Cost of the health insurance incurred during tenure of study at MBZUAI.
e) Cost of the paid ticket allowance (excluding the onboarding ticket).
f) Any other costs associated with their study, as the University deems appropriate.

4.10.3 <u>Dropping a course after the deadline:</u>

If the student requests to drop a course after the announced deadline while continuing their studies, then the financial obligations are calculated according to the below and students are requested to settle the payment of:

a) The tuition fee payment of the dropped credit hours only.

4.10.4 <u>Leave of Absence</u>

If a student requests to suspend their studies for a semester, all the scholarship benefits will be withheld for the suspension duration. If the request is initiated within the announced deadline, no academic/financial penalties are due.

If the request is initiated after the announced deadline, the financial penalties are calculated according to the below, and students are requested to settle the payment of:

a) The fees of all the registered credit hours of that semester.
b) The paid monthly stipend for that semester if any.
c) Cost of health insurance for that semester.
d) Cost of the paid ticket allowance (excluding the onboarding ticket).

4.10.5 Retake of a course or program requirement due to failure

If a student fails any aspect of a course and/or related program requirements, they should repeat the requirement(s) in the following semester. The financial penalties are calculated according to the below and students are requested to settle the payment of:

a) ~~Repay the~~ Fees of the repeated credit hours.

4.10.6 Below is the students' financial penalty payment plan for the tuition fees against complete withdrawal, leave of absence, and dismissal after the deadline.

No obligations	**Within the deadline**
Payment of 25% of the tuition fees	After 1 week from the deadline
Payment of 50% of the tuition fees	After 2 weeks from the deadline
Payment of 75% of the tuition fees	After 2 weeks from the deadline
Payment of 100% of the tuition fees	After 4 weeks from the deadline

Program	**Fee per Credit Hour**
MSc	5,000 AED
PhD	6,600 AED

4.10.7 The student is entitled to appeal against the financial penalties pertaining to the above actions to the Appeal Committee.

4.10.8 The committee members discuss and agree to approve/reject the appeal and on the percentage of the waiver. The Registrar's Office communicates the final decision with the student, finance department, and all parties.

4.10.9 The committee members discuss and agree to approve/reject the appeal and on the percentage (%) of the waiver. The Registrar's Office communicates the final decision with the student, the finance department, and all parties.

4.10.10 The power to reduce or waive a due financial obligation pertaining to students' appeal against dropping a course, fees of a retake course, leave of absence, or complete withdrawal from the University is at the discretion of the Appeal Committee by unanimous decision. If the decision is not unanimous it should be escalated to the President, who can make the final decision.

4.10A Complete Withdrawal from University Procedure

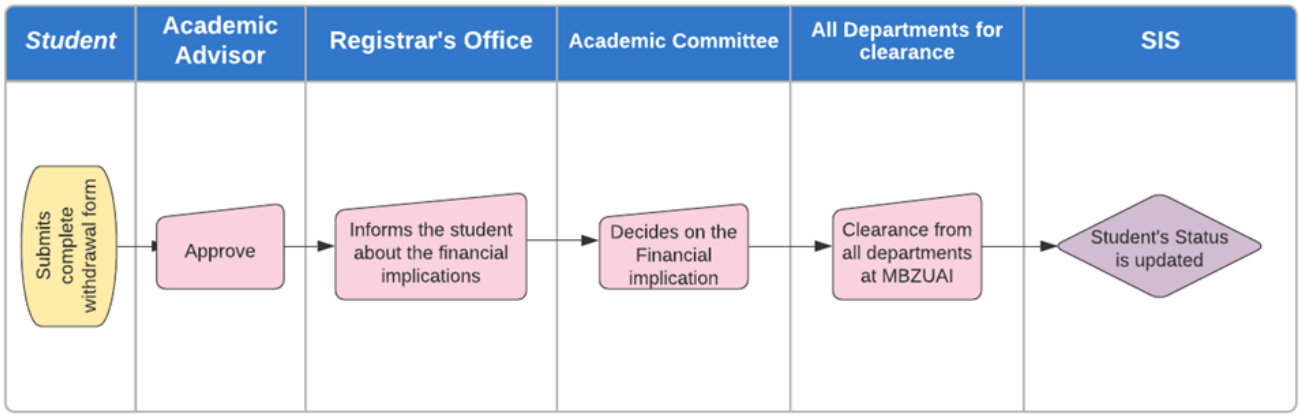
1) A student may voluntarily withdraw from the University after the approval of the Appeal Committee and subject to the policies of the University.
2) Students should be aware they shall pay to the University all expenses including tuition fees, monthly allowances, medical expenses, and any other expenses incurred by the University during the period of study.

3) If the student submits legitimate justification for withdrawal to the Appeal Committee, the University may, if it deems necessary, exempt the student from all or some of the obligations for receiving a scholarship and per Section 6.10.6.

4) The student should complete the clearance process, which can be initiated by submitting the Application for "Complete Withdrawal from University".

5) In cases where the University involuntarily withdraws the student, the Registrar's Office will initiate the process and assign a University-initiated withdrawal status.

6) The below procedural flowchart should be utilized for the complete withdrawal from the University process:



4.11 Student Records

4.11.1 The Registrar's Office (RO) is responsible for maintaining all students' personal and academic records, ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of their privacy, confidentiality, and adherence to MBZUAI policies and regulations. Electronic files will be securely stored on SIS on-site servers and backup servers at a separate location with restricted access, maintained for a minimum of 50 years.

4.11.2 All student records verified by the Admissions department shall also be verified by the Registrar's Office in certain applicable cases. The admissions and the Registrar's Office documentation constitutes the permanent student record, which shall be only accessible by the Registrar's Office personnel and provided to authorized University management when necessary.

4.11.3 To ensure the accuracy and authenticity of certificates and transcripts, the Registrar's Office is the only unit who has the authority to print official transcripts and/or degree certificates.

4.11.4 The Registrar's Office is responsible for the collection, maintenance, storage, and disposal of all official and original student records, ensuring secure storage for hard copies, safeguarding against fire and other catastrophic events.

4.11.5 Students have the right to review their personal information, academic and educational records, and to update or change their personal data and contact details.

4.11.6 MBZUAI may have access, without the student's prior consent and without a record being made, to specific student records in which they have a legitimate educational interest. For this purpose, University officials include both academic and administrative personnel. Only those University officials who need to obtain information about the student may have access to that information.

4.11.7 Educational records may be disclosed, with or without a student's prior consent, to officials of another educational institution in which the student seeks or intends to enroll, or in which the student is enrolled concurrently. Anonymized information may be released to government ministries and agencies for compliance or accreditation purposes.

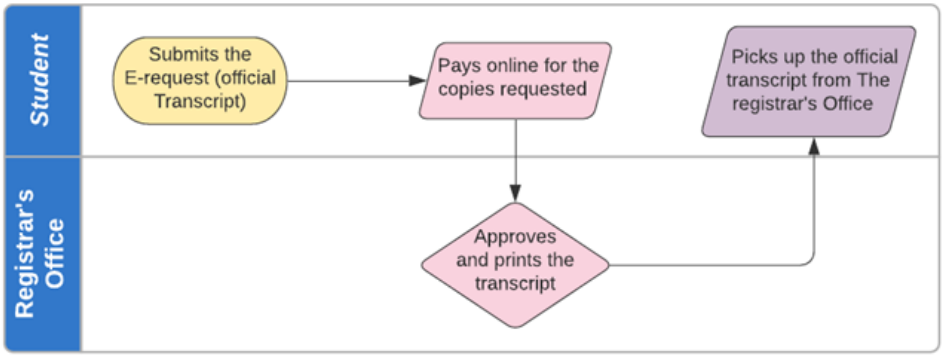
4.11.8 Information related to grades, finances, and some personal information is private. MBZUAI is responsible for the appropriate protection of private information.

4.11.9 Any document that contains non-public information about students or applicants, especially sensitive items such as admission applications, letters of recommendation, grades, or private addresses, should receive special handling when retention is no longer needed. It should either be shredded or destroyed in some way that maintains its confidentiality.

4.11.10 MBZUAI will comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and standards in the emirate of Abu Dhabi and the UAE, governing the privacy and integrity of student information.

4.11A Procedural Request for Official Transcript

1) Only the student may request their official transcript from the Registration Office.
2) Students can request an official transcript by submitting an "Official Transcript Request Form". They can also review and print unofficial copies of their academic records through the student portal.
3) The below procedural flowchart should be utilized for requesting official transcripts:



4.12 Graduation Requirements

4.12.1 For Fall 2022 intake onwards:

- A student must successfully pass all program components within the allowed time as per their study plan and maintain a good academic standing status.

i. Master's Degree

- A Master's degree consists of thirty-six (36) credit hours.
- The normal time to complete a Master's program is two (2) years, and the maximum time to complete is four (4) years, inclusive of any approved leave of absence.

ii. Doctoral Degree

- A PhD degree consists of sixty (60) credit hours.
- The normal time to complete a PhD program is four (4) years, and the maximum time to complete is six (6) years, inclusive of any approved leave of absence.

4.12A Graduation Clearance Procedure

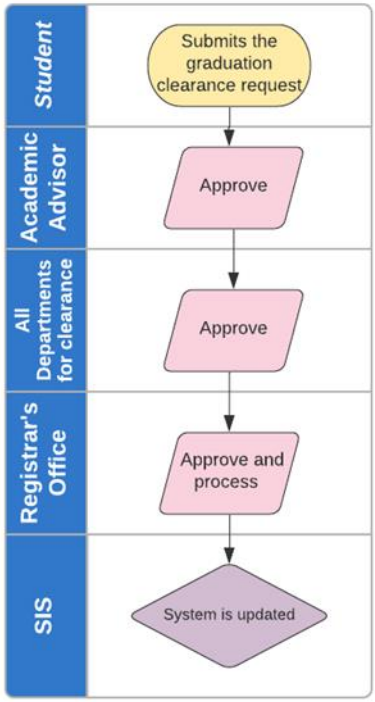
1) The Registrar's Office shall designate a person(s) to serve as auditors to verify conferring requirements are met and verified as per the set procedure below. Random sampling in collaboration with the IEQA will be conducted for each graduation year.

2) Upon completing all degree requirements at the end of the final semester, the graduate student must obtain clearances from various applicable units of the University, such as the supervisor and Department Chair, Library, Campus Life, Finance, etc., by completing a "Graduation Clearance Form" and securing all applicable signatures.

3) This procedure should commence once the student receives notification of successfully completing the graduating requirements.

4) Official Transcript and Diploma Certificate for their Degree: A graduate student can obtain an official academic transcript and the diploma certificate from the Registration Office.

5) The below procedural flowchart should be utilized for completing the graduation clearance:



4.13 Program Transfers

4.13.1 The student must meet all the admission requirements of the target program they seek to transfer into.

4.13.2 A transfer into the target program is contingent upon there being available space within that program, and a Primary Supervisor in the target program willing to take on the student.

4.13.3 The change must be approved through a formal process involving:

- The student's Primary Supervisor in the original program,
- The Department Chairs of both the original and target programs, and
- The Provost.

4.13.4 Upon approval of a program transfer, the student is required to meet all the coursework requirements of the new program. It is important to note that there is no guarantee that courses completed in the original program can be transferred as credit toward the new program. Each case will be assessed individually to ensure the integrity of the academic qualifications awarded.

4.13.5 Specific Conditions for PhD and MSc Programs:

i. PhD Program Transfers: This can occur only once and must take place before the student sits for

the Qualifying Examination. Following a program transfer, the student must complete the Qualifying Exam in the target program within 2 months of the original deadline to avoid undue delays in their academic progression.

ii. MSc Program Transfers: These are permitted only once and must be executed before the start of the second semester.

4.13.6 Any program transfer should not extend the allotted study duration.

4.13A Program Transfer Procedure

1) The student must submit a Program Change Request e-form to the Registrar Office, if they meet the criteria for a program transfer.
2) The e-form must have the following approvals prior to submission to the Registrar's Office:
    a. Current supervisor and Dept. Chair.
    b. Future supervisor and Dept. Chair.
3) The Registration Office will make the amendment to the Student Information System (SIS).

4.14 Leave of Absence

4.14.1 A student may request a leave of absence for a maximum of two (2) semesters during the period of study at MBZUAI for extenuating circumstances.

4.14.2 A "Leave of Absence Request Form" must be submitted to the Registrar's Office. The leave of absence must be approved by the Appeal Committee.

4.14.3 If the student exceeds the approved leave of absence duration without a formal notification, they will be considered withdrawn from the University and financial implications will apply.

4.14.4 A student who has been on a "Leave Of Absence" status for a semester or more and would like to resume their studies, must submit a "Resume Study Request Form" to the Registrar's Office and conform to the procedure.

5. Definitions

Term	Definition
Appeal Committee	The Appeal Committee (AP) serves as an impartial committee to which students can appeal decisions such as grade disputes, evaluation of academic work, academic misconduct cases, registration issues, financial scholarship compliance, financial penalties, and other matters within the purview of the registrar's office.
Board of Examiners	The Board of Examiners is a committee responsible for overseeing the University's assessment and evaluation processes and examinations.
CGPA	The Cumulative Grade Point Average is calculated by dividing the sum of the quality points earned in all terms and semesters by the credit hours attempted in all those terms and semesters. This average is used to assess the student's overall academic standing at the University.
Clean Deed Record	Maintain good academic, intellectual, behavior, and financial integrity.
Code of Conduct (CoC)	A set of rules, principles, and ethical guidelines to govern the behavior and actions of individuals. It outlines the expected standards of conduct, defines prohibited behaviors, and specifies potential consequences for violations. It serves as a framework to promote ethical behavior, integrity, and a positive culture, aligning members with the values and principles of the University.
Course	A unit of study that may utilize lecture, discussion, laboratory, recitation, seminar, workshop, studio, independent study, internship, or other similar teaching formats to facilitate learning for a student.
Credit	Number (#) of credits a student receives for attending a course which corresponds to the hours per week spent in that course.
Dismissal	The involuntary separation of a student from MBZUAI for unacceptable conduct or unsatisfactory academic achievement. A student is academically dismissed when he/she fails to achieve academic good standing in two consecutive semesters.
Good Academic Standing	The status for a student's satisfactory academic progress, is typically measured by maintaining a minimum GPA and fulfilling credit requirements toward degree completion. It is also inclusive of adherence to institutional academic standards, enabling students to continue enrollment, access financial aid, and engage in campus activities.
Grade Point	The numerical value associated with each grade.
Graduation	The fact of fulfilling all degree requirements.
Leave of Absence	The approved short period of time in which students may be away from their studies due to unforeseen circumstances.
Pre-requisite	A course required to be completed prior to registration in another course.

Term	Definition
Probation	Status of any graduate student who has less than a 3.0 cumulative GPA (Spring 2021/Fall 2021) or for students from fall 2022 onwards maintain a CGPA of 3.3 or above.
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	A process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning (informal and non-formal learning) to determine the credit outcomes of an individual application for credit.
Registration	The process of enrolling in classes.
RO	Registration / Registrar's Office.
Schedule	A list of courses offered during a semester that specifies the days, hours, locations of classes, and the names of the instructors.
Scholarship	A grant or payment made to support a student's education, is awarded based on academic achievement.
Semester	An academic semester refers to one of the two 16-week periods of instruction, each followed by an examination period, that divides the academic year. Either of the two 16-week periods of instruction is followed by an examination period into which the academic year is divided.
SIS	Student Information System (SIS) is a software platform used by the University to manage student data, including enrollment, grades, attendance, and academic progress.
Student Advisor	A staff member who advises students on different aspects of University engagement.
Supervisor	Members of faculty associated with mentoring, guiding, and encouraging students undertaking research as part of the curriculum.
Suspension	The involuntary separation of a student from the University for unacceptable conduct. Suspension extends from one semester to a maximum of one calendar year.
TGPA	The Grade Point Average for a term or semester is calculated by dividing the sum of the quality points earned in that term or semester by the number of credit hours attempted.
ToR or Committee Charter	Terms of Reference (ToR) is a document that outlines the objectives, scope, responsibilities, and procedures for a particular project, task, or committee. Also referred to as a Committee Charter.
Transcript	An official document issued by the registrar's office, detailing a student's courses, grades, GPA, and other pertinent academic information, serves as a comprehensive summary of their educational history.
Visiting Student	Any students who are registered on a degree program at another higher education institution (their home institution), from which they plan to ultimately graduate, who take courses and/or research at MBZUAI.

6. References and Related Document(s)

1. Admissions Policy Manual
2. Code of Conduct Policy Manual
3. Educational Affairs Policy Manual
4. Research Supervisor Guidelines
5. Student Advisor Guidelines
6. Appeals Committee ToR
7. Academic Programs Policy Manual
8. IEQA Policies Manual
9. Policy Framework and Guidelines

7. Document Control Information

Version number	File Name	Responsible Role	Comments	Date of change
V01.02	MBZUAI–AAD–RPM-POL–V1.02	Registrar	First issue.	Sept. 2023
v02.00	PolicyManual_RO_POL_v02.00	Registrar	Policy manual to meet requirements of internal audit, Ministry of Education inspection directorate, and the Commission of Academic Accreditation regulatory bodies. Policies and Procedures merged, file name was aligned with Records and Archives. Organizational alignment with relevant policy manuals.	May 2024

Approval List

Approval List: PolicyManual_RO_POL_V02.00				
Sequence Number	**Sequence Roles**	**Responsible Role**	**Comments**	**Date**
1	Policy Owner	Registrar	Initiator	2024-05-28
2	IEQA Review	Head of IEQA	Reviewed	2024-05-30
3	Legal Review	General Counsel	Reviewed	2024-07-11
4	Initiator	Provost	Reviewed and Endorsed	2024-06-17
5	Endorser	Director of Strategy and IEQA	Endorsed	2024-07-15
6	Approver	President	Approved by the president	2024-08-29