



The American University of Kurdistan Policy of Admission for Master's Degrees

Policy Number: AS046
Effective Date: December 3, 2024

- 1. Policy:** As an American-style institution, the American University of Kurdistan (AUK) bases its admission decisions on the merit of each applicant. Admission standards vary by program; however, the underlying principle for acceptance is the applicant's fulfillment of eligibility requirements and demonstrated potential to successfully complete the program and graduate from AUK. All admissions decisions are made collectively by the Master's Admissions Committee. AUK admits qualified individuals regardless of race, color, creed, age, marital status, gender, religion, national origin veteran status, or disability. The University is committed to fostering student success, timely degree completion, and balanced academic engagement to ensure student success at the graduate level. The policy will be communicated openly to the University community, published on the AUK website, and reviewed periodically to ensure continued relevance, academic integrity, and alignment with AUK's mission, institutional objectives, and curricular frameworks. All members of the AUK community are required to comply fully with policies approved by the AUK Board of Trustees (BoT).
 - a. Purpose:** This policy outlines the criteria for admitting students to master's degree programs, ensuring that applicants meet the necessary academic and professional standards.
 - b. Scope:** This policy applies to the Admission and Registration Department (ARD), applicants, College admission committees, Faculty and Programs at the graduate level.
- 2. Definition of Terms:**
 - Cumulative GPA (cGPA):** The overall grade point average across all courses taken at an institution.
 - Grade Point Average (GPA):** The average of grade points earned in a given semester, calculated by dividing total grade points by credit hours attempted for GPA purposes. Grades such as W, I, P, and IP are excluded from the calculation.
 - High School Diploma Equivalency:** An official document issued to a student by the Kurdistan Region Ministry of Education (MoE) that certifies the equivalency of a high school diploma issued either by: an international-system high school operating within the Kurdistan Region or Iraq, or any school system located outside Iraq.
 - IELTS:** International English Language Testing System: A standardized test designed to assess the English language proficiency of non-native speakers.
 - International Student:** A student who holds a non-Iraqi passport and is not recognized as an Iraqi citizen.
 - Master's Admissions Committee:** Chaired by the Department Chair of the hosting master's program, with participation from designated faculty and staff.
 - National Student:** A student who holds valid Iraqi nationality and possesses an official Iraqi national identification document, such as an Iraqi passport. Students granted refugee status are considered as national students for educational benefits within the KRG and Iraq.
 - Student Information System:** The centralized digital platform used by educational institutions to manage and track student data, including admissions, enrollment, academic records, grades, attendance, and other related information throughout the student lifecycle.
 - TOEFL:** Test of English as a Foreign language: A standardized test designed to assess the English language proficiency of non-native speakers.

3. Responsibilities:

- a. **Issuing Unit:** ARD holds primary responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy, ensuring compliance with established procedures, maintaining relevant records, and taking necessary actions in cases of noncompliance.
- b. **Other Stakeholders:** Graduate Programs, Department Chairs & College Deans and Office of Provost.

4. Procedures:

a. Admission Requirement for Entry to Master's Programs

- Certified copies of the bachelor's degree diploma, transcript, and high schools' grades. For students who have graduated from international institutions, a bachelor's degree equivalency is mandatory.
- Applicants must meet the minimum bachelor's degree GPA requirement, as specified in the Graduate Requirements published on the University website, to be eligible for admission to a master's degree program. (See Section 6: Related Documents)
- Proficiency in English language evidenced by a valid TOEFL or IELTS score or a bachelor's degree from a university whose instruction is exclusively in English. AUK requires a minimum TOEFL OTP score of 537+, TOEFL iBT score of 75+, or IELTS score of 6 (valid for two years). For Policy on English Language Proficiency, See Section 6: Related Documents
- Successful completion of an interview.
- Relevant professional experience and evidence of research/product development is preferred.

b. Transcripts

During the assessment of candidates for admission, the Department Chair and Dean will review the candidate's transcripts to ensure the expected competencies and disciplinary knowledge needed to begin the program's coursework (i.d., prerequisites) are satisfied. If the candidate comes from industry, he/she will be obliged to provide a letter of reference from their employer as proof of experience. Candidates may be required to take an assessment to evaluate their learning. If a candidate is determined to be deficient in any of the requisite skills/knowledge, he/she will be required to complete specified AUK undergraduate courses to attain such skills/knowledge. The students will be accepted conditionally; a contract will specify the courses and minimum grade thresholds. Students who are not satisfying these conditions will not move onto the master's courses. Undergraduate courses taken under a conditional contract will not count toward the master's degree requirement and credit count.

c. Transfer Credits

Applicants may request a review of transfer credits at the time of application. A maximum of six (6) credits, with a grade of "B" or higher, may be transferred from universities accredited or licensed by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of the KRI and from any U.S.-accredited institution, subject to the approval of the Department Chair and Dean. Credits for graduate projects or thesis courses cannot be transferred. The content of the transferred courses must match at least 70% of the corresponding courses in the AUK master's program. While grades from transferred courses do not impact the CGPA, the credits earned will count toward cumulative credits and graduation requirements.

d. Credit Transfer Processing

- The student provides the ARD with the following:
 - The official sealed transcript,
 - The official syllabi for courses to be considered for transfer, and
 - The official course descriptions for courses to be considered for transfer either printed from the university's website or with the respective university seal stamped on it.
- The ARD makes copies of the credit transfer documents cited above and forwards them to the appropriate academic departments along with the Credit Transfer Checklist Form.

- The Course Equivalency Committee in each department evaluates the credit transfer request of each students and completes the Tentative Credit Transfer Form
- The Department Chair reviews and approves/signs the report, obtains the Dean’s signature, and forwards the documents back to the ARD. (To be finalized within a week from receiving the file from the ARD.)
- The Admissions Office compiles all credit transfer recommendations from the departments into one report: The Credit Transfer Final Report.
- The Provost approves or rejects the recommendations and forward the file back to the ARD for processing.
- The ARD informs the student(s) of the decision(s) on transferable credits officially by email and proceeds with the processing.
- The ARD enters the transferred credits in the Student Information System and sends the documents to the Record Room for keeping in the student file.

5. Timeline and Communication/Implementation Plan:

6. Activity	Responsible Party	Timeline	Communication Channels	Details
Policy Revision Announcement	ARD	February – March, 2026	University website, email	Announce the revision of the policy, assessment metrics & objectives
Feedback Collection	ARD	July – August, 2026	Email, Surveys	Gather from AUK community on the policy’s effectiveness, challenges, & areas for improvement
Periodic Reviews and Updates	ARD	As necessary	Academic Council, website, email	Review the policy & its enforcement mechanisms & procedures annually or as necessary to ensure continued relevance & compliance.

6. Related Documents:

- [Credit Transfer Checklist Form](#)
- [Tentative Credit Transfer Form](#)
- [Credit Transfer Final Report](#)
- [Readmission Form](#)
- [Policy of English Language Proficiency](#)
- [Policy of Conflict of Interest and Commitment](#)
- [Graduate Requirements](#)

7. Ways to Measure Success:

- There are strong and multiple indications that students understand the system and procedures without any areas of confusion.
- There are strong and multiple indications that the programs, Department Chairs, and Deans understand the system and procedures without any areas of confusion.
- Each of the procedures is fully functional without ambiguity or a lack of clarity.

8. Policy History

- Approved by:** Board of Trustees
- Adopted:** December 3, 2024
- Revised:** January 18, 2026