



MOHAMED BIN ZAYED  
UNIVERSITY OF  
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

# Student Affairs

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## Student Affairs Policy Manual

MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0

Effective Date: 28/04/2022

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
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## Table of Contents

1. Document Control Information.....	3
2. Glossary of Terms.....	3
3. Introduction.....	5
4. Objective.....	5
5. Scope.....	5
6. Policies.....	6
6.1 Admission – Masters Programs .....	6
6.2 Admission – PhD Programs.....	7
6.3 Credit Transfer .....	9
6.4 Recognition of Prior Learning .....	9
6.5 Course Exemptions.....	9
6.6 Scholarships .....	10
6.7 Annual Leave.....	10
6.8 Student Housing.....	11
6.9 Course Registration .....	11
6.10 Attendance .....	11
6.11 Visiting Students.....	12
6.12 Class Size.....	12
6.13 Assessment and Examination .....	13
6.14 Grading.....	14
6.15 Academic Progress .....	15
6.16 Student Grievances.....	16
6.17 Student Records .....	17
6.18 Graduation and Commencement .....	17
6.19 Student Careers.....	18
6.20 Internship.....	18
6.21 Employer Engagement.....	19
6.22 Alumni .....	19
6. Related Documents.....	19
7. Version History.....	20

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs

## 1. Document Control Information

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Director of Student Affairs	Reem Al Orfali	1 February 2022
Provost	Prof. Fakhri Karray	8 February 2022
Legal Counsel	Richard Morton	15 February 2022
President	Prof Eric Xing	28 April 2022

## 2. Glossary of Terms

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Supervisor	The person who advises a student about course registration and also supervises the student's research.
Alumni	Graduate of MBZUAI.
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.
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 credit 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.

<b>Department</b>	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	<b>Approval Date</b>	28/04/2021
<b>Policy Number</b>	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	<b>Revision Date</b>	28/04/2021
<b>Policy</b>	Student Affairs Policy Manual	<b>Policy Owner</b>	Director of Student Affairs

Term	Definition
Employability	Development of knowledge, soft/hard skills and personal attributes to enable students or alumni to seek, gain and maintain employment. A range of transferable skills to make students and alumni employable.
Employer	The entity offering the internship.
EmSAT	The Emirates Standardized Test (EmSAT) is a national system of standardized computer-based tests, based on United Arab Emirates national standards.
Good Academic Standing	Academic designation applied to a graduate student who has achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher.
Grade Point	The numerical value associated with each grade.
Graduate Record Examination	The graduate record examination (GRE) is a standardized exam used to measure one's aptitude for abstract thinking in the areas of analytical writing, mathematics, and vocabulary.
IELTS	The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) measures the language proficiency of people who want to study or work where English is used as a language of communication.
Internship	<p>An experience which should be an extension of the classroom learning and/or research that the student is conducting.</p> <p>The experience is intended to provide the student with hands-on experience in the field of Artificial Intelligence, blending practical experience with academic learning. It aims to provide students with opportunities to apply and test AI concepts and theories in practical settings and improve learning.</p> <p>Participation allows the student to enhance their overall educational experience and continue to develop and grow knowledge, skills, and competencies.</p>
Personal Branding	Establishing and promoting a consistent brand image across formal and informal media platforms to aid job search and job application success.
Pre-requisite	A course required to be completed prior to registration in another course.
Probation	Status of any graduate student who has less than 3.0 cumulative GPA.
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	Is 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
Schedule	A list of courses offered during a semester that specifies the days, hours, locations of classes and the names of the instructors
Semester	Either of the two 16- week periods of instruction followed by an examination period into which the academic year is divided
SGPA	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.
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is a standardized test to measure the English language ability of non-native speakers wishing to enroll in English-speaking universities

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs

### 3. Introduction

This policy:

- Describes the requirements and principles governing admission to academic programs at MBZUAI.
- Describes the requirements and principles governing the academic progress of a student from initial course registration through to graduation.
- Describes the requirements and principles governing the Careers section under the Student Affairs Department, helping MBZUAI students and alumni succeed in their career and leverage their acquired knowledge to tackle AI academic and industry developments. In addition, employer engagement initiatives, ultimately leading to strong employability ranking for MBZUAI.

It shall support university staff and faculty who are involved in managing and executing the MBZUAI internship program. It is intended to ensure that MSc and PhD degree students who will be spending time as interns, in collaboration with an industry partner, are obtaining the optimal benefits from such an experience. This policy is designed to ensure good practice steps are followed for advertising, applying to and conducting internship placements. In addition, to describe all requirements of the internship fully and provide the relevant stakeholders with all the necessary information on reporting systems.

### 4. Objective

This policy aims to:

- Provide guidance to prospective students on the criteria for admission to programs at MBZUAI and information pertaining to scholarships.
- Facilitate the provision of residence accommodation for all eligible students.
- Provide guidance and clarity regarding registration, class size limit, and visiting students' requirements.
- Establish and communicate the requirements for students to maintain their scholarship, and the impact of their performance on their academic progress.
- 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.
- Empower students and alumni to access AI related learning and employment opportunities by offering a high-quality personalized service.
- Assist students in developing, evaluating, and implementing career, education and employment decisions and plans.
- Provide a formal means of planning to assist in the creation, implementation, and facilitation of comprehensive internships for MBZUAI students
- Create alignment and provide a common platform for all stakeholders involved in the planning and delivery of the internship program to ensure successful completion.
- Understand the policies, procedures and guidelines needed for the successful completion of the internship experience.
- Provide a framework under which employers, students and alumni may connect via a range of employer engagement activities.

### 5. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All credit-bearing graduate programs offered by MBZUAI
- All students, faculty and staff.
- The MBZUAI Student Careers team, students and alumni of MBZUAI, MBZUAI staff and employers hosting MBZUAI interns or recruiting MBZUAI students and alumni.

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs

## 6. Policies

### 6.1 Admission – Masters Programs

6.1.1 In order to be considered for admission to a Master of Science program at MBZUAI an applicant must provide evidence of the following:

6.1.2 A completed Bachelor's degree in a S.T.E.M field such as Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, Computer Engineering, Mathematics, Physics and other relevant Science and Engineering majors, from an accredited university or college recognized by the UAE Ministry of Education, without the need of prior work experience

#### OR

#### **Academically Distinguished Student Portfolio**

Bachelor's degree in a STEM field, plus each applicant must submit evidence including, but not limited to, the following

- Research Capability & Output
- Technical Skills
- Graduation from a highly ranked university
- Other factors

6.1.3 Applicants must provide their complete degree certificates and transcripts (in English) when submitting their application. Senior-level students can apply initially with a copy of their transcript and upon admission must submit official complete degree certificate/transcript. A degree attestation (for degrees from the UAE) or an equivalency certificate (for degrees acquired outside the UAE) should also be furnished within their first semester at the university.

6.1.4 Knowledge, skills & competencies in some of the following subjects:

- Programming skills such as Python, C, C++ or MatLab
- Math skills such as:
  - Data Structures and Algorithms
  - Linear Algebra
  - Probability and Statistics
  - Calculus

6.1.5 A minimum undergraduate CGPA of 3.2 (on a 4.0 scale) or equivalent or top 20% among students of the same class

6.1.6 An English Language Proficiency Certificate which must remain valid during the application process. Minimum requirements are:

- TOEFL iBT with a minimum total score of 90; or
- IELTS Academic with a minimum overall score of 6.5 or
- EmSAT English with a minimum total score of 1550
- TOEFL iBT, IELTS Academic and EmSAT English certificates should be valid during the application process.
- Waiver requests from applicants who undertook all their schooling (K-12) plus a Bachelor's degree in English in a reference English speaking country (e.g. UK, USA, Australia, New Zealand) may be processed in accordance with the Admission Procedure.

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs

- Applicants must submit notarized copies of their documents during the application stage and attested documents upon admission. Waiver decisions will be given within seven days after receiving all requirements.

6.1.7 A minimum of 2 letters of recommendations from mentors and supervisors or others with good knowledge of the applicant’s qualification are mandatory, at least one should be from a previous course instructor or faculty/research advisor and the other one from a current or previous work supervisor

6.1.8 A Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Score may be optionally submitted.

6.1.9 Statement of Purpose: In a 500 to 1,000 word essay, the applicant should present his/her motivation for applying to the university. It may include information regarding the applicant's personal and academic background as well as his/her chosen career path; goals as a prospective student; graduation plans; and other details that will support the application.

6.1.10 All applications for admission to Master of Science programs must be submitted online providing all required documentation.

Related: [Admission Procedure](#)

## 6.2 Admission – PhD Programs

- In order to be considered for admission to a PhD program at MBZUAI an applicant must provide evidence of the following:

- Completed Degree - either:

- Bachelor’s degree in a S.T.E.M field such as Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, Computer Engineering, Mathematics, Physics and other relevant Science and Engineering majors, from a university accredited or recognized by the UAE Ministry of Education (MoE) which demonstrates academic distinction in a discipline appropriate for the doctoral degree. Students should have a CGPA of at least 3.5 (on a 4.0 scale) or equivalent and valid Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores of at least 150 (Verbal Reasoning), 150 (Quantitative Reasoning) and 3 (Analytical Writing) is mandatory. However, the GRE can be waived if the applicant is an academically distinguished student as specified below.

OR

- Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in S.T.E.M fields such as Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, Computer Engineering, Mathematics, Physics and other relevant Science and Engineering majors, from a university accredited or recognized by the UAE Ministry of Education (MoE). Students should have a minimum CGPA of 3.2 (on a 4.0 scale) or equivalent or top 20% among students of the same class. The GRE submission is optional for applicants with both Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees although submitting a GRE will be considered a plus during the evaluation.

OR

### **Academically Distinguished Student Portfolio**

Bachelor’s degree in a STEM field, plus each applicant must submit evidence including, but not limited to, the following

- Research Capability & Output
- Technical Skills
- Graduation from a highly ranked university

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs

- Other factors

The GRE submission is optional for applications via the Academically Distinguished Student Portfolio pathway, although submitting a GRE will be considered a plus during the evaluation.

- Applicants must provide their complete degree certificates and transcripts (in English) when submitting their application. Senior students can apply initially with a copy of their transcript and upon admission must submit official complete degree certificate/transcript. A degree attestation (for degrees from the UAE) or an equivalency certificate (for degrees acquired outside the UAE) should also be furnished within their first semester at the university.
  - Knowledge & Competencies: Demonstrate evidence of skills acquired in some of the following subjects:
    - Programming skills such as Python or C or C++ or MatLab
    - Math skills such as:
      - Data Structures and Algorithms
      - Linear Algebra
      - Probability and Statistics
      - Calculus
    - Knowledge of basic machine learning algorithms such as linear regression, decision trees, Support Vector Machines, etc.
- English Language Proficiency Certificate (for applications submitted from Fall 2021 intake onwards). Minimum requirements are:
  - TOEFL iBT with a minimum total score of 90; or
  - IELTS Academic with a minimum overall score of 6.5 or
  - EmSAT English with a minimum total score of 1550
  - TOEFL iBT, IELTS Academic and EmSAT certificates should be valid during the application process.
  - Waiver requests from applicants who undertook all their schooling (K-12) plus a Bachelor's degree and/or a Master's degree, as applicable, in English in a reference English speaking country (e.g. UK, USA, Australia, New Zealand) may be processed in accordance with the Admission Procedure.
  - Applicants must submit notarized copies of their documents during the application stage and attested documents upon admission. Waiver decisions will be given within seven days after receiving all requirements.
- 3 letters of recommendations from mentors and supervisors or others with good knowledge of the applicant's qualification are mandatory. At least one letter should be from a previous course instructor or faculty/research advisor and the others from a current or previous work supervisor.
- Statement of Purpose: In a 500 to 1,000-word essay, the applicant should present his/her motivation for applying to the university. It may include information regarding the applicant's personal and academic background as well as his/her chosen career path; goals as a prospective student; graduation plans; and other details that will support the application.
- Research Statement: a 1-3 page document which provides a high-level overview of the applicant's past research experience and the research he/she is interested in working on,

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs



including his/her motivation for wanting to investigate this area. Note that applicants are expected to write a research statement completely independently. The admission committee will read an applicant's research statement and use it as one of the measures to determine if an applicant's interests and past experience make them a good fit for MBZUAI's research programs. MBZUAI faculty will NOT help applicants write a research statement for the purpose of the application. It is recommended that the statement contains few sections including introduction, literature review, problem definition, methods (optional), timeline, and a list of references.

- All applications for admission to PhD programs must be submitted online providing all required documentation.

### 6.3 Credit Transfer

6.3.1 Students applying for admission who wish to transfer credit from 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 must provide evidence, as outlined in the Admission Procedure, which will allow the Admission Committee to make a determination regarding the transfer.

- The limit for the number of transfer credits which may be accepted for a specific degree program is 25 % of total Credit Hours for MSc and PhD programs.
- Transfers will only be permitted for students who are in good academic standing and who are eligible to return to their current or former institution.
- MBZUAI will accept the transfer of credits only for courses relevant to the degree that provide equivalent learning outcomes and in which the student earned a grade of B (3.0 on a 4.0 scale) or better.
- The grade of the transfer credit course will be recorded as a "TC" on the transcript record. The approved transfer credits will be calculated towards the credit hours but not included in GPA calculation.
- The course transfer credits may not have been used previously in any graduate program to fulfil the requirement of any other graduate degree.
- The course credits must have been completed no more than a maximum of (2) years prior to the student's acceptance into the program of MBZUAI.

6.3.2 The MBZUAI Admission Committee will have the ultimate right to accept or reject the transfer requests for any student.

6.3.3 All applications for transfer credit to MSc or PhD programs must be submitted online providing all required documentation.

### 6.4 Recognition of Prior Learning

6.4.1 MBZUAI does not recognize prior learning and does not award credit for informal and non-formal learning that has taken place prior to admission into its academic programs, other than the credit specified in the admission policy and associated procedures.

6.4.2 Prior learning in the form of professional certification, training programs, credit bearing courses of non-accredited degrees, and other similar programs will not receive any credit towards academic degree programs.

### 6.5 Course Exemptions

6.5.1 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

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs

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. Course exemptions are usually only granted for mandatory courses or those which form a prerequisite for other courses.

- 6.5.2 The student must provide evidence, as outlined in the Admission Procedure, which will allow the Admission Committee to decide regarding the course exemption.
- 6.5.3 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.
- 6.5.4 The grade of the exempted course will be recorded as a “EX” on the transcript record. The exempted course will have no credit assigned and will not be used in the calculation of the CGPA.
- 6.5.5 The exempted course will not count towards the course requirements for a program.
- 6.5.6 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.
- 6.5.7 The MBZUAI Admission Committee will have the ultimate right to accept or reject the application for course exemption for any student.
- 6.5.8 All applications for transfer credit to master or PhD programs must be submitted online providing all required documentation.

## 6.6 Scholarships

- 6.6.1 All admitted students (on full time basis) are granted full scholarship upon acceptance.
- 6.6.2 The scholarship includes 100% tuition fees, accommodation, health insurance and a competitive monthly stipend and annual ticket to home country.
- 6.6.3 To retain a scholarship, students must meet the following criteria:
- Maintain a CGPA of 3.0 or above.
  - Complete their degree requirements within the allowed duration as set out in the Academic Progress Policy.
  - Maintain a clean deed record, and with no evidence of dishonest or unethical behavior.

Related: [Scholarship Procedure, Academic Progress Policy](#)

## 6.7 Annual Leave

- 6.7.1 Students are eligible for 30 calendar days of annual leave each year.
- For Fall 2022 intake onwards, students will be eligible for 20 working days of annual leave each year.
- Students are entitled to take their annual leave after seeking the supervisor’s approval.
- A student is eligible to receive one return ticket or equivalent amount in cash to his/her home country once every calendar year after successful completion of 2 consecutive semesters
- 6.7.2 Spring break/winter break are not considered as official holidays and students are required to work on campus during that time unless an approved leave request is submitted and there is an available leave balance.

Related: [Annual Leave Procedure](#)

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs

## 6.8 Student Housing

- 6.8.1 MBZUAI is committed to providing safe, comfortable, and clean on-campus residence accommodation for all their eligible students. The housing is gender segregated and follows strict rules of compliance which are outlined in the procedures/manual.
- 6.8.2 MBZUAI will try to accommodate the students' needs in terms of assigning rooms subject to availability as there are different types of rooms.
- 6.8.3 Resident students are:
- Expected to abide by all the rules and regulations associated with this policy.
  - Required to pay the deposit charges as outlined in the Student Housing manual.
  - Required to be enrolled in the university either as full-time or visiting students.
- 6.8.4 The university has the right to terminate a student's housing contract and to withdraw all associated housing rights if: a. If the student is dismissed or withdrawn from the university. b. Severe or repeated violations of the Student Code of Conduct policy are recorded.
- 6.8.5 A student has the right to appeal such a decision to the university administration.
- 6.8.6 Appeals and exceptions may be considered by the Provost upon the recommendations of the Student Affairs Director.

## 6.9 Course Registration

- 6.9.1 A student must be officially registered in a course to earn academic credit.
- 6.9.2 Students must meet with their supervisor during the announced registration period to agree on the courses to be registered.
- 6.9.3 Students must register during the designated registration period as published in the university calendar each semester until the degree has been formally awarded.
- 6.9.4 Students admitted to MBZUAI programs are required to maintain a full-time status by registering in a minimum of 11-12 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 the Provost.
- 6.9.5 Registration is not official until a student is listed on the class roster.
- 6.9.6 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 and the Registrar.

Related: [Registration Procedure](#)

## 6.10 Attendance

- 6.10.1 Class attendance is not mandatory unless specified as a requirement in the course syllabus. However, all MBZUAI students are strongly encouraged to attend in person or online synchronous class meetings as there is a correlation between attendance and academic achievement. If attendance is a course requirement, the instructor will keep track of attendance in his/her classroom.

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs

## 6.11 Visiting Students

- 6.11.1 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 institution in the UAE other than MBZUAI, or a foreign higher education institution based outside the UAE and accredited in its home country and recognized by UAE Ministry of Education.

Related: [Registration Procedure, Visiting Student Procedure](#)

## 6.12 Class Size

- 6.12.1 Class size maximum and minimum limits will be determined based on a number of considerations including:

- Best practices in learning and pedagogy which allow achieving 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.

- 6.12.2 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 subject taught in MBZUAI programs has been set as follows:

Minimum and Maximum Class Sizes		
Class Type	Minimum Enrollment	Maximum Enrollment
Lecture, Seminar	5	100
Laboratory	5	50

- 6.12.3 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.

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.

- 6.12.4 Faculty members teaching courses which 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.

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

- Thesis
- Research
- Student teaching supervision
- Honors seminars and key-note speakers lectures
- Internships
- Projects
- Independent/Directed Research

Related: [Class Size Procedure](#)

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs

### 6.13 Assessment and Examination

- 6.13.1 All courses must have an approved course assessment plan. It is the responsibility of the faculty teaching a course to include the course assessment plan in the course syllabus and communicate the same, including deadlines, to students at the beginning of the course.
- 6.13.2 Faculty members are free to assess students' performance in their classes by using a variety of appropriate assessment methods. Assessment methods include, but are not limited to, written examinations, papers, presentations and projects.
- 6.13.3 In-class examinations must be proctored by faculty teaching the course or their designees. In all assessments, students must strictly comply with the policies on academic integrity.
- 6.13.4 All course assessments will be graded as per the Grading policy (see 6.13, below).
- 6.13.5 Faculty members must keep complete records of student assessments for a minimum period of two (2) years to ensure the accurate calculation of student performance and as a reference in the event of an appeal.
- 6.13.6 In the event of late submission of coursework, the faculty member shall decide whether to accept the coursework, apply a penalty for late submission or reject it.
- 6.13.7 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 cause the student to receive a grade of "F" for the course. See also 6.13, below.
- 6.13.8 All final grades must be submitted by faculty members into the Student Information System within the deadlines specified by the Registrar. The chair of each program must approve the submitted grades prior to the announcement of final grades by the Registrar's Office.
- 6.13.9 A student may appeal a grade issued by MBZUAI. The students' ability to appeal a grade once submitted, is strictly controlled in the context of the Student Grievances and Appeals policy (see 6.15, below).

Related: [Assessment and Examination Procedure](#)

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs

## 6.14 Grading

6.14.1 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		

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

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs

- 6.14.2 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
S	Satisfactory in Internship/ thesis/research

#### 6.14.3 Term or Semester Grade Point Average (SGPA)

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.

#### 6.14.4 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.

- 6.14.5 At the end of each semester, student grade point averages are used in determining academic actions (Good Standing, probation, dismissal, etc.) and scholarship decisions.

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

Related: [Grading Procedure](#)

### 6.15 Academic Progress

#### 6.15.1 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.

- 6.15.1.1 For Spring 2021 & Fall 2021 intake: At the end of each semester, the academic standing of the students will be determined according to the following:

- a) If the student is registered in coursework:

Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA). To remain in good academic standing a student must maintain a CGPA of 3.0/4.0 or above

- b) If the student is registered in the Research Thesis:

To progress in the Research Thesis, students must achieve a minimum evaluation of Satisfactory by the supervisor(s) at the end of each semester.

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs

6.15.1.2 For Fall 2023 intakes onwards: At the end of each semester, the academic standing of the students will be determined according to the following:

- a) If the student is registered in Coursework:  
Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA). To remain in good academic standing a student must maintain a CGPA of 3.3/4.0 or above.
- b) If the student is registered in the Research Thesis:  
To progressing in the Research Thesis, students must achieve a minimum evaluation of Satisfactory by the supervisor(s) at the end of each semester.

6.15.1.3 Initial registration in the Research Thesis for PhD students is contingent upon:

- a) Successful completion of all coursework; and
- b) Successfully passing the Qualifying Exam (QE). Students will have two (2) attempts at passing the qualifying exam. If a student fails both attempts, they will be dismissed from the PhD Program. But those who have successfully completed their coursework will be allowed to continue on a Master’s track and apply to receive a Master degree instead.

Ongoing registration in the Research Thesis for PhD students is contingent upon:

- c) Successfully passing the Candidacy Exam (CE) at the end of the second thesis semester; and
- d) Achieving a minimum evaluation of Satisfactory by the student’s supervisor(s) at the end of each semester.

Related: [Academic Progress Procedure](#)

## 6.16 Student Grievances

6.16.1 MBZUAI supports a process where grievances of all types are resolved.

6.16.2 Grievances may take any of the following forms:

- Grievances against grading or evaluation of academic work.
- Grievances against dismissal, suspension, and withdrawal from a program.
- Grievances against withholding or termination of the scholarship.

6.16.3 Grievances must be handled within an appropriate time frame to ensure procedural fairness and to the specific requirements of different policy or procedures for managing such grievances.

6.16.4 All parties involved in a grievance must be treated with respect and impartiality, and any relevant issues put forward by the complainant, such as the existence of a disability or medical condition, will be taken into consideration.

6.16.5 Confidentiality must be observed by all participants and at all stages of the grievance process.

6.16.6 All participants must be informed of the progress, the outcome of the grievance and provided with reasons for the outcome reached.

6.16.7 A grievant may withdraw his/her grievance from further consideration at any time, by submitting a written request to the administrator with whom the grievance was originally filed. No reason needs to be given for such a request. Upon receipt of a request to withdraw the grievance, the administrator will notify all involved parties and administrators in writing that the grievance has been withdrawn and that the grievance process is terminated.

Related: [Grievances Procedure](#)

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs



## 6.17 Student Records

- 6.17.1 The Registrar is responsible for maintaining all students' personal and academic records, ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of these records, and ensuring compliance with the policies and regulations of MBZUAI. Electronic files will be secured with restricted access.
- 6.17.2 Students have the right to review their personal information, academic and educational records, and to update or change their personal data and contact details.
- 6.17.3 The Registrar's Office is the only unit who has the authority to print official transcripts.
- 6.17.4 Disclosure of information of educational records to anyone within or outside MBZUAI, except as indicated in this policy, requires the student's written consent.
- 6.17.5 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.
- 6.17.6 Educational records may be disclosed, with 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.
- 6.17.7 Information related to grades, finances and some personal information is considered to be private. MBZUAI is responsible for the appropriate protection of private information, and holds the individuals who enter, maintain and review this data accountable in this regard.
- 6.17.8 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.
- 6.17.9 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.

Related: [Student Records Procedure](#)

## 6.18 Graduation and Commencement

- 6.18.1 A student must successfully pass all program components (taught courses and thesis) within the allowed time and maintain an overall CGPA of 3.0/4.0 or better to qualify for graduation.
- 6.18.2 For Fall 2022 intake onwards, internship will be considered as a graduation requirement in addition to all program components (courses and thesis).
- 6.18.3 For Fall 2023 intake onwards, A student must successfully pass all program components (taught courses, internship and thesis) within the allowed time and maintain an overall CGPA of 3.3/4.0 or better in order to qualify for graduation
- 6.18.4 Master's Degree
- A Master's degree consists of 35 credit hours.
  - The normal time to complete for 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.
- 6.18.5 Doctoral Degree
- A PhD degree consists of 59 credit hours.

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs

- 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.

Related: [Graduation and Commencement Procedure](#)

## 6.19 Student Careers

- 6.19.1 The strategic objectives for the Student Careers team shall consider and align with the mission of MBZUAI and the UAE's AI strategy.
- 6.19.2 Students will be provided with a range of services and opportunities for career preparation and employment including the provision of the employability strategy developed for MBZUAI.
- 6.19.3 The Student Careers team shall provide students and alumni with accurate and relevant information on AI career pathways.
- 6.19.4 The Student Careers team shall provide support to and ensure that students are coached, prepared and acquire the techniques for attending interviews, job search strategies and can write appealing resumes and understand appropriate personal branding.
- 6.19.5 A database of internship and job opportunities will be maintained and managed by the Student Careers team to support students and alumni in obtaining appropriate internship and employment opportunities.
- 6.19.6 The Student Careers team will organize internship fairs, career fairs and employer related events, in addition to promoting external events.

Related: [MBZUAI Careers Charter](#), [MBZUAI Employability Strategy](#)

## 6.20 Internship

- 6.20.1 Internships are non-credit-bearing experiences which add considerable value to a student's overall educational experience. At least one (1) internship is mandatory for MSc & PhD students as a graduation requirement for 2022 intakes onwards.
- For MSc students, the internship should be conducted during the summer months, be 6 weeks in duration and align with the working hours of the host organization. While it is preferable to have the internship relate to the student's research area, it is not a necessary requirement.
- For PhD students, the internship is recommended to take place upon completion of the qualifying examination and all required courses. The duration of the internship should be 3-4 months during the summer and may also continue into the following semester (if in alignment with the student's MBZUAI Supervisor). The internship should directly relate to the student's research.
- 6.20.2 There must be clearly defined, and specific learning outcomes which shall be negotiated between the student, MBZUAI supervisor and employer.
- 6.20.3 The internship shall be conducted with the support of the Student Careers team, the MBZUAI the internship supervisor and employer.
- 6.20.4 Prior to undertaking an internship opportunity, students must have successfully completed a minimum of 22/23 credit hours in the study program (for MSc students 22 or 23 credit hours is dependent on whether the student has selected the thesis course and 23 credit hours for PhD students). Students are required to maintain a CGPA of 3.3 or higher.
- 6.20.5 This eligibility criteria may be waived by the Department Chair in certain circumstances.
- 6.20.6 Students must attend one of the Internship Orientation Workshops conducted by the Student Careers team. The student may either select an internship opportunity from the MBZUAI Student

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs

Careers Portal or discuss with the team if they have found their own opportunity with a different organization.

- 6.20.7 Regarding evaluation of the internship (for 2022 intakes onwards), the host organization shall complete an internship evaluation form, awarding a ranking for the internship. The student shall submit an internship report and deliver a presentation to the MBZUAI supervisor, upon which the MBZUAI supervisor shall award an evaluation for the internship.
- 6.20.8 Part-time internships shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis but should be for a minimum of 150 hours and be allowed for one term only, directly related to the student's research at MBZUAI.
- 6.20.9 International internships during term time shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis for PhD students only (taking into account existing requirements stipulated in point 6.20.1) and agreed in partnership with the student's MBZUAI Supervisor and the department Chair or Deputy Chair, as per feedback included from the University Registrar.
- 6.20.10 Internship requests from employers or MBZUAI students, which differ from the criteria listed above, shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis with all relevant internal stakeholders. In particular, this must be agreed in partnership with the student's MBZUAI supervisor, and the corresponding department Chair or Deputy Chair to ensure on-going priority is given to MBZUAI commitments and the necessary measures, if applicable, are put in place to ensure that course learning outcomes will be met, and all assessment tasks satisfactorily completed.

Related: [MBZUAI Employability Strategy](#), [Student Internship Guidelines](#), [MBZUAI Supervisor Guidelines](#), [Employer Internship Guidelines](#), [Employer Part-time Internship Guidelines](#)

## 6.21 Employer Engagement

- 6.21.1 The Student Careers team will establish and cultivate relationships in the regional community, government and private sectors to secure appropriate internships and vacancies for students and alumni according to their qualifications and career goals.
- 6.21.2 The Student Careers team's employability strategy will support students and alumni in pursuing professional careers.
- 6.21.3 The Student Careers team will organize opportunities for employers, students and alumni to connect for internship and employment purposes.

Related: [MBZUAI Employer Engagement Guidelines](#)

## 6.22 Alumni

- 6.22.1 Alumni shall be granted continued access to the MBZUAI Student Careers Portal, careers related resources and access to careers related activities to support job search activities.
- 6.22.2 Alumni shall be part of the MBZUAI alumni database and have the opportunity to share professional accomplishments with MBZUAI, as well as the capability to share up-to-date contact details to stay in touch with MBZUAI.
- 6.22.3 Alumni will be eligible to attend Student Careers related events to support gaining employment if not secured prior to graduation.

## 6. Related Documents

Section	Related Document(s)
6.1 and 6.2	<a href="#">Admission Procedure</a>

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs

6.3	<a href="#">Credit Transfer</a>
6.5	<a href="#">Course Exemptions</a>
6.6	<a href="#">Scholarship Procedure, Academic Progress Policy/Procedure</a>
6.7	<a href="#">Annual Leave Procedure</a>
6.9	<a href="#">Registration Procedure</a>
6.11	<a href="#">Registration Procedure, Visiting Student Procedure</a>
6.12	<a href="#">Class Size Procedure</a>
6.13	<a href="#">Assessment and Examination Procedure</a>
6.14	<a href="#">Grading Procedure</a>
6.15	<a href="#">Academic Progress Procedure</a>
6.16	<a href="#">Grievances Procedure</a>
6.17	<a href="#">Student Records Procedure</a>
6.18	<a href="#">Graduation and Commencement Procedure</a>
6.19	<a href="#">MBZUAI Careers Charter</a> <a href="#">MBZUAI Employability Strategy</a>
6.20	<a href="#">MBZUAI Employability Strategy</a> <a href="#">Student Internship Guidelines</a> <a href="#">MBZUAI Supervisor Guidelines</a> <a href="#">Employer Internship Guidelines</a> <a href="#">Employer Part-time Internship Guidelines</a>
6.21	<a href="#">MBZUAI Employer Engagement Guidelines</a>

## 7. Version History

Version number	Person responsible	Date of change	Comments
V1.0	Registrar	7/3/2021	<p>Amalgamation of the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Admission Policy MBZUAI-ARS-ADMISSION-POL-V1.0</li> <li>Housing Policy MBZUAI – SLS – HOUSING – POL – V1.0</li> <li>Academic Progress Policy MBZUAI-REG-ACPROGRESS-POL-V1.0</li> <li>Student Careers and Alumni Policy MBZUAI–SCA–CAREERS–POL–V1.0</li> </ul> <p>Admission policy amended to allow for direct entry from Bachelors to PhD (Approved by CAA on 11/2/21)</p> <p>Internship minimum hours increased from 125 to 150 hours.</p>

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI–SA–POL–V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs

Version number	Person responsible	Date of change	Comments
V2.0	Registrar	9/6/2021	Grading schema amended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate P/F grading for thesis/research.</li> <li>• Incorporate S/U grading for internships.</li> <li>• Clarify percentage ranges for letter grades.</li> </ul> Addition of Annual Leave policy Amendment of Academic Progression policy Amendment of Internship policy

Department	MBZUAI – Student Affairs	Approval Date	28/04/2021
Policy Number	MBZUAI-SA-POL-V2.0	Revision Date	28/04/2021
Policy	Student Affairs Policy Manual	Policy Owner	Director of Student Affairs