INSTITUTE OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

Admissions Policy and Procedure

Academic Board Approved Policy

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Policy Benchmarking	University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) Southern Cross Institute Australia (SCI) University of New England Canterbury Institute of Management (CIOM)

1. Preamble

a. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy (the 'Policy') is to provide Richmond Institute of Higher Education (RIHE), a framework to ensure clarity, consistency and transparency regarding the admission requirements and processes.

b. Background

RIHE is affiliated with the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad (UAF) and has developed its admission criteria in accordance with the applicable requirements of the Higher Education Commission (HEC), UAF and relevant accreditation bodies. RIHE ensures that students admitted to its programs have the requisite academic skills, subject background and other skills required for successful participation in their enrolled program. RIHE maintains admission criteria that are transparent, consistent and aligned with the approved requirements of UAF and the applicable HEC framework, including the HEC Undergraduate Education Policy (V 1.1).

c. Definitions

For definitions, please refer to the '*Glossary of Terms.*'

2. Scope

This Policy is applicable to all prospective and admitted students and RIHE staff.

3. Policy Statement

RIHE is committed to ensuring that all admission processes are conducted in an open, transparent, consistent and equitable manner.

4. Principles

a. RIHE core principle of admissions is that academic merit is the basis for a student's admission to Richmond Institute of Higher Education's degree programs.

b. RIHE may also consider an assessed educational or socio-economic disadvantage for an applicant when making admission decisions, in accordance with the reserved seats and quotas approved by UAF and applicable government policy.

c. RIHE upholds the principle that all applicants seeking to enroll in its programs are assessed in an equitable process that considers and responds to educational disadvantage through reserved seats, quotas and appropriate support. To ensure that these principles are implemented, RIHE has open, fair and transparent procedures that are based on clearly defined entry criteria.

d. Academic merit is the primary basis for selection, subject to program-specific eligibility, approved admission categories, available seats, fee requirements and applicable regulatory requirements (document completion and other stated conditions of offer) as applicable by law or institutional policy.

5. Procedures

a. Applications for Admission

RIHE prospective students are required to follow the specified application process outlined on

the Richmond Institute of Higher Education website and as provided in this Policy. During the application process, applicants are provided with entry requirements, comprehensive program and fee information, enabling them to make an informed decision regarding their choice of program. The *Student Admission Application Form* (accessible at www.rihe.ri.edu.pk) is compulsory for all applicants and must be submitted together with the required supporting documents.

b. General admission requirements for Undergraduate Programs

i. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age at the time of program commencement (unless otherwise approved by the Principal).
ii. The maximum age for eligibility is 28 years (unless otherwise approved by the Principal or permitted under mature-age entry provisions approved by the Academic Board).
iii. Applicants must have completed Intermediate (HSSC/FSc/ICS), A-Level or an equivalent qualification recognized by IBCC/HEC, with the subject background and minimum marks specified for the program in the table below. Applicants with FSc (Pre-Medical) applying to BS Computer Science must study two deficiency courses of Mathematics offered in the 1st or 2nd semester.

Program	Required qualification	Minimum marks
BS Computer Science (BSCS)	FSc (Pre-Engineering), ICS, A-Level or equivalent, or any combination including Mathematics; FSc (Pre-Medical) with two Mathematics deficiency courses	50%
Bachelor of Fashion Design (BFD)	Intermediate (HSSC) or equivalent	45%
BS Biotechnology	FSc (Pre-Medical) or A-Level Pre-Medical equivalent	45%

The program-wise criteria above apply at the time of publication. Any change approved by the Academic Board and UAF will be published in the admission notice, which prevails.

iv. Applicants holding A-Level, O-Level, GED, foreign high-school or Deeni (Shahadat-ul-Saanviat-ul-Aama/Khasa) qualifications must submit an Equivalence Certificate issued by the Inter Boards Coordination Commission (IBCC) showing the equivalent marks and subject group. Applicants holding a degree-level or Deeni Asnad qualification (such as Shahadatul Alia/Almiyya) must submit the equivalence letter issued by HEC, where applicable. An equivalence certificate establishes the level of the qualification only; admission remains subject to the program criteria in this Policy.

c. Alternative Admission Arrangements

i. RIHE considers inclusivity, equity and access as important factors relevant to admission decision and provides alternative admission provisions for entry. In accordance with this principle, RIHE Academic Board may approve provisions for admissions for reasons such as:

- Providing access to educationally or socially disadvantaged applicants;

- Providing support for students with special needs or a disability;
- Reserved seats and categories, such as Hafiz-e-Quran, sports, co-curricular activity, disability, district/region and employee quotas and, where applicable, seats for minorities, overseas Pakistanis and foreign students, in accordance with HEC, UAF and applicable government policies.

ii. RIHE monitors academic progress and provides adequate support to students admitted under any conditions based on equity and access.

d. Eligibility Does Not Represent Selection

Eligibility for admission or alternative admission arrangements does not represent selection for admission and does not ensure a program offer.

e. Selection

i. Applicant selection into a program of study

- Only applicants who meet the specified entry criteria can be selected for an offer of a place in a program.
- The selection of candidates for an offer is based on merit and equality.
- Nevertheless, in selection decisions for admission to RIHE programs, the educational disadvantages encountered by an applicant may be taken into account.
- In accordance with this principle, applicants from rural and remote regions and other educationally disadvantaged communities may be considered under the reserved district/region seats or other provisions approved by the Academic Board, where applicable.
- Merit lists are prepared by the RIHE Admissions Office using the merit criteria approved by the Academic Board in line with UAF requirements. The merit formula, including the weightage given to Matriculation marks, Intermediate (or equivalent) marks and any admission test, is published in the admission notice.
- Where an entry test is prescribed by RIHE or UAF for a program, applicants must sit the test and obtain at least the minimum score stated in the admission notice.
- Applicants are selected in order of merit within the available seats of each program and approved category. Waiting lists, where used, follow the same merit order.

ii. Verification of claimed academic credentials

RIHE undertakes the following processes to check the academic qualifications of an applicant and the status of the institution awarding the claimed qualification:

- Verification of original documents against attested copies of certificates, degrees and academic transcripts (Matriculation, Intermediate or equivalent, and any prior degree), including verification with the relevant Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE), IBCC or HEC, as applicable; or

- If the authenticity of the educational qualifications and/or the status of the awarding institution is in doubt, RIHE will:
  - Contact the concerned institution to confirm that the applicant is that institution's graduate and that his/her educational transcripts are genuine; and/or
  - Contact the appropriate regulatory authority (such as HEC or the relevant Board) to check the institution's recognition status.
- Admission coordinator assesses and verifies all documents submitted by the students to ensure consistency with relevant legislation and with the RIHE admission requirements set out in this Policy.
- In cases where there is doubt about the authenticity of an applicant's credentials, RIHE may request further documentation to clarify eligibility.

f. Formal Admission Offer

Successful candidates receive an Admission Offer Letter via email from the RIHE Admissions Officer. Dates of expiry for offers are thirty (30) days from the date of issue, unless otherwise advised by RIHE in writing.

g. Tuition fee refunds

i. In accordance with applicable legislation, tuition fee refunds are assessed under RIHE *Refund Policy*. Circumstances in which a refund may be payable include, but are not limited to:

- the student withdraws from a program or course within the refund period specified in the Refund Policy;
- RIHE discontinues a program or course, or is unable to commence or continue delivering it, in which case RIHE will meet its obligations to the student, including an alternative place or a refund, in accordance with applicable legislation and the Refund Policy.

ii. Students seeking a tuition fee refund must follow the application process set out in the *Refund Policy* and complete the *Refund Application Form* available on the RIHE website. Students may seek assistance from the Student Support team on campus. Refund applications and approved payments are managed in accordance with the Refund Policy and applicable legislation.

iii. No tuition fee refund is payable in the following circumstances, except where otherwise required under applicable legislation or where compassionate or compelling circumstances are approved in accordance with the *Refund Policy*:

- The student voluntarily withdraws from a program or course after the refund period specified in the Refund Policy;
- RIHE cancels or refuses to continue the student's enrollment because of non-payment of fees or student misconduct;
- RIHE cancels the student's offer or enrollment because fraudulent or misleading documentation or information was provided during the admission process.

For more information, refer to the *Refund Policy* of Richmond Institute of Higher Education.

For voluntary withdrawal, the refund is calculated on tuition fees only, counted in calendar days from the official commencement of classes: 100% up to day 10 (less non-refundable fees), 80% from day 11 to 15, 60% from day 16 to 20, 50% from day 21 to 30, and no refund from day 31 onwards, subject to the exceptions in the Refund Policy.

h. Cancellation of an Offer

An admission offer may be withdrawn if:

i. the program available for admission has either filled its assigned student quota;

ii. it is found that the applicant supplied Richmond Institute of Higher Education with incorrect or misleading information with respect to their admission application;

iii. the applicant fails to fulfil any preconditions included in the Admission Offer Letter.

i. Acceptance of Admission offer

Upon receiving a formal offer of a place in a program at RIHE, an applicant may either:

i. accept the offer within 30 days;

ii. decline the offer;

iii. take no action, in which case the offer lapses after 30 days.

j. Applicants must comply with all instructions and deadlines to accept an offer, failing which the offer may be withdrawn. Applicants who defer admission should note that tuition fees may vary and any subsequent offer may be subject to revised entry requirements

k. Admission

The applicant is admitted to the program upon accepting an offer in accordance with RIHE admission requirements and within the specified timeframe. RIHE will notify the applicant in writing.

l. Enrollment

i. Enrollment in Courses

- The admitted student is required to enroll in Courses that are part of the program of study once admitted to a program.
- Enrollment is subject to the requirement that the student comply with all academic and other criteria for the courses and of their program.
- Enrollment is at the discretion of the Dean or designated representative where courses are electives. If that course has achieved its maximum capacity, a student may be refused enrollment in a course.
- Admitted students are allowed to enroll in courses that form a required part of their program, subject to having completed any required prerequisites.

ii. Admission/Enrollment Refusal

- Enrollment in a program may be denied to a student who has not registered within the defined time limit.

- Enrollment in a course may be denied to the student where it is considered to not be in the best interest of a student. An example is where a reduced study load is recommended or directed as part of an early intervention for improved academic performance.

iii. Payment of Tuition Fees

Students must pay tuition fees by the due dates specified in their Admission Offer Letter. Any action arising from non-payment will be managed in accordance with the written agreement, applicable RIHE policies and applicable legislation, including any required notice and appeal rights.

iv. Enrollment in courses that form part of the program

The student admitted to a program enrolls only in courses that meet the program requirements until and unless approved by the Dean or designated representative, i.e., courses that can be credited towards completion of the award.

v. Enrollment Withdrawal

- Students may withdraw from a course within the withdrawal period specified in the academic calendar, with any refund entitlement determined in accordance with the Refund Policy and applicable legislation.
- Students wanting to withdraw from all courses and intending to return to their study at a subsequent date must submit a Semester Freeze (Deferment) Application to maintain their right to re-enroll.
- Admission is not guaranteed to a student who withdraws their enrollment without an approved semester freeze.
- The academic progression of students accepted by RIHE is monitored in accordance with the relevant policies and guidelines..

6. Refusal of Admission

a. RIHE may refuse a request for admission from any applicant where there are reasonable and documented grounds relevant to the applicant's eligibility, the integrity of the admissions process, applicable legal requirements or a substantiated risk to health or safety, on any of the following basis:

i. The applicant supplied RIHE with incorrect or misleading information;

ii. The applicant was discovered guilty of severe misconduct as a student who had earlier registered with RIHE or another provider;

iii. The applicant may pose a risk to other students and/or employees;

iv. The applicant's presence at RIHE may be harmful to the well-being of other learners and/or employees, including but not limited to potential disruptive or harmful behaviour;

v. There is substantiated evidence that admission would create a material risk to health, safety, the integrity of the admissions process, or mandatory legal, professional accreditation, placement or program requirement, and the risk cannot reasonably be managed;

vi. Any other reasons that are stated in the *Student Code of Conduct.*

b. The nature of the concern and the length of time that has elapsed since any behaviour occurred giving rise to the concern is considered by Richmond Institute of Higher Education.

c. The applicant has the right to lodge an appeal against the refusal of admission judgment in all instances.

d. Where, after admission or enrollment, RIHE becomes aware of a student's criminal conviction that is relevant to a mandatory legal, professional accreditation, placement or program requirement, or gives rise to a substantiated risk to health or safety, RIHE may take appropriate action in accordance with applicable legislation and relevant RIHE policies.

e. Any decision to refuse admission will be reasonable, proportionate, based on relevant evidence and applied consistently. The applicant will be notified in writing of the decision, the reasons for the decision and their right to appeal.

7. Appeals

Prospective students may appeal a decision to refuse admission, decline an application, or withdraw or cancel an offer in accordance with the appeals process described in the *Student Grievance Management Policy and Procedure*.

8. Records Management

The decisions related to admissions are documented and recorded on the students' file in the RIHE database including applications, merit calculations, document-verification records, offer letters, acceptance records and appeal outcomes in accordance with the *Records Management Policy and Procedure.* RIHE shall maintain accurate records. Records shall be retained for the period required by applicable law, HEC/UAF requirements and RIHE records-retention schedule.

9. Privacy

All the student information remains confidential and private within RIHE premises databases. However, data gathered from students may be accessed and disclosed only for legitimate academic, regulatory, administrative or legal purposes.