



آغا خان یونیورسٹی ایگزامینیشن بورڈ
AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY EXAMINATION BOARD

Secondary School Certificate
Examination Syllabus

Ethics

Grades IX

(Based on National Curriculum 2007)

Published by
Aga Khan University Examination Board
Block - C, IED - PDC, 1-5/B-VII
Federal B. Area, Karimabad, Karachi, Pakistan

Latest revision: March 2025
(This syllabus has been periodically revised in 2012, 2018 and 2022)

© The Aga Khan University Examination Board, 2025

All rights and entitlements reserved.
This syllabus is developed by Aga Khan University Examination Board for distribution to all its affiliated schools only. No part of this syllabus may be copied, reproduced or used for any other purpose whatsoever without prior written permission of the Aga Khan University Examination Board.

**Secondary School Certificate
Examination Syllabus**

**ETHICS
GRADE IX**

**This syllabus will be examined in both Annual
and September Examination sessions from
Annual Examinations 2026 for Grade IX**

This Syllabus is an alternative to Islamiyat for
Non-Muslims students.

Table of Contents		Page No.
Preface		5
Understanding of AKU-EB Syllabi		7
Subject Rationale of AKU-EB Ethics		8
Student Learning Outcomes of AKU-EB SSC Ethics Syllabus		10
Scheme of Assessment		17
Acknowledgements		19

For queries and feedback

Address: Aga Khan University Examination Board
Block - C, IED - PDC, 1-5/B-VII
Federal B. Area, Karimabad, Karachi, Pakistan.

Phone: (92-21) 3682-7018

E-mail: examination.board@aku.edu

Website: <http://examinationboard.aku.edu>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/akueb

Linktree: <https://linktr.ee/akuexamboard>

Preface

Established in 2002 through the Pakistan government's ordinance, the Aga Khan University Examination Board (AKU-EB) is country's first private autonomous qualification awarding body for Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC). Its vision is to be a model of excellence and innovation in education in Pakistan and the developing world.

AKU-EB achieves its vision by developing examination syllabi that inculcate conceptual thinking and higher-order learning and is aligned with the National Curriculum and mapped with provincial curricula and international standards. AKU-EB revises its syllabi periodically to support the needs of students, teachers and society.

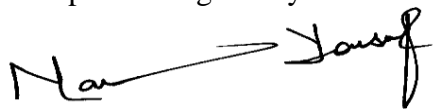
The aims of the syllabus review of SSC and HSSC are to:

- Ensure continued compatibility with the goals of the National Curriculum of Pakistan.
- Review the content for inclusion of new knowledge and deletion of obsolete knowledge.
- Review the content for clarity and relevance as per the changing needs of students, teachers and society.
- Enhance and strengthen continuation and progression of content both within and across grades IX - XII (SSC and HSSC).
- Ensure the readiness of students for higher education.

During the syllabus review, the needs of all the stakeholders were identified through a needs-assessment survey. Students and teachers of AKU-EB affiliated schools from across Pakistan participated in the survey. Thereafter, a revision panel, which consisted of examiners, teachers of affiliated and non-affiliated schools, teacher trainers and university academicians, reviewed and revised the syllabus following a planned, meticulous and standardised syllabi review process.

The development of the revised syllabus has been made possible by the creativity and relentless hard work of Curriculum and Examination Development unit and the constant support provided by all the other units of AKU-EB. We are particularly thankful to our Principal Syllabus Reviewers, Syllabus Revision Panellists and all other reviewers for their contribution. We are also thankful to all the students and teachers who took part in the needs-assessment survey and to the principals of AKU-EB affiliated schools who made this endeavor possible by facilitating and encouraging their teachers and students to be a part of the survey and the syllabus revision panel.

With your support and collective hard work, AKU-EB has been able to take the necessary steps to ensure effective implementation of the National Curriculum of Pakistan through this syllabus. We are confident that this syllabus will continue to provide the support that is needed by students to progress to the next level of education and we wish the very best to our students and teachers in implementing this syllabus.



Dr Naveed Yousuf
Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Aga Khan University Examination Board
Associate Professor of Practice, Educational Development, Faculty of Health Science,
Aga Khan University

FOR ANNUAL EXAMINATION 2026 AND ONWARDS

Understanding of AKU-EB Syllabi

1. The AKU-EB syllabi guide the students, teachers, parents and other stakeholders regarding the topics that will be taught and examined in each grade (IX, X, XI and XII). In each syllabus document, the content progresses from simple to complex, thereby, facilitating a gradual, conceptual learning of the content.
2. The topics of the syllabi are divided into sub-topics and **Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**. The SLOs define the depth and the breadth at which each topic or subtopic will be taught, learnt and examined. The syllabi also provide enabling SLOs where needed to scaffold student learning.
3. Each SLO starts with an achievable and assessable **command word** such as describe, relate, evaluate, etc. The purpose of the command words is to direct the attention of teachers and students to specific tasks that the students are expected to undertake in the course of their studies.
4. The SLOs are classified under the following **cognitive levels** of Bloom's Taxonomy: Remember (R), Understand (U), Apply and beyond [Apply (A), Analyse (An), Evaluate (E), Create (C)]. This is to facilitate effective planning for teaching, learning and assessment. In addition, some SLOs are identified as Formative Assessments (FA), where applicable.
5. The **Examination Specification** is provided which elucidates the weightage of each topic in the examinations determined on the basis of the content as well as the relevance of the topic.
6. To implement this syllabus, students and teachers can take support from additional material provided by the board to its affiliated schools including **Learning Resource Guides, Pacing Guides, Command Word Guide and Model Papers**.
7. The AKU-EB syllabi for Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC) are designed to foster not only conceptual understanding but also critical thinking and problem-solving skills. These syllabi ensure students develop the cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills essential for success at the university and beyond.

Subject Rationale of AKU-EB Ethics

Why study Ethics?

Ethics is the basis of everyday life, be it personal or professional. The core reason behind teaching ethics is to inculcate a conscious approach to critically think about the problems faced by society. Ethics as a discipline encourages students to reflect on the moral and ethical practices prevalent in society and compare different religions in terms of their approach toward ethical standards for the smooth running of society. This syllabus is offered as an alternative to Islamiyat for Non-Muslims students.

What will you learn in AKU-EB Ethics?

The syllabus of AKU-EB has been developed keeping the holistic vision of Ethics as a discipline in mind. Ethics shapes daily life, personally and professionally. Teaching Ethics fosters critical thinking about societal issues, encouraging students to reflect on moral practices and compare religious perspectives on ethical standards. This helps ensure a well-functioning society by promoting conscious decision-making and understanding diverse ethical frameworks. Moreover, it also helps in bringing to light the logic and reasoning behind different rituals and practices of different religions. This enables a person to develop a level of understanding and tolerance towards other religious groups, which is fundamental to the development of society.

Further, Ethics as a discipline not only caters to theories but also brings in live examples of personalities (social and religious) to convey a message that the practices (moral and ethical) are not impossible to accomplish, they can be adopted in one's life and this in turn makes an individual's life fulfilling.

Education is not only to achieve qualifications and degrees, but also a medium that makes us differentiate between right and wrong, upholds other individuals' integrity, and lives our lives in a manner that we are beneficial to the people, community, and society. Ethics as a discipline tries to achieve the said goal of education. Yet, if one wants to study comparative religions, the discipline of Ethics will act as a foundation stone.

How to approach the syllabus?

The AKU-EB syllabi are carefully designed with a reader-friendly approach to ensure that students and teachers can easily comprehend and make them functional for teaching, learning, and assessment purposes. The Ethics syllabus includes the following parts:

Subject Rationale	It is an introductory document for students of Ethics.
Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)	These guide regarding the details of what has to be achieved.
Exam Specification	It guides regarding what is expected in the examination.
Additional Resources:	
Pacing Guide	It ensures smooth transition and curricular continuity during a school's academic year. It also predicts the time and pace of syllabus implementation.
Resource Guide	It includes teaching and learning resources for students and teachers.
Model Paper	It guides exam patterns and types of questions.
Command Word Guide	It clarifies expectations regarding the cognitive levels and skills students should acquire, which are assessed in examinations.

Student Learning Outcomes of AKU-EB SSC Ethics Syllabus

(Grade IX)

Topic and Sub-topic		Student Learning Outcomes		Cognitive Level ¹		
				R	U	A and beyond
1. Introduction to Ethics		Students should be able to:				
1.1	Introduction and Branches of Ethics	1.1.1	define 'Ethics';	*		
		1.1.2	describe the three major branches of Ethics: Applied Ethics, Normative Ethics, and Meta-Ethics;		*	
1.2	Scope of Ethics	1.2.1	illustrate the importance of Ethics in the personality development of an individual;			A
		1.2.2	discuss the importance of Ethics in social relationships;			E
1.3	Normative Ethics	1.3.1	describe moral duties and their types, i.e., positive duties and negative duties;		*	
		1.3.2	describe the terms used in ethical theories, i.e., moral emotions and moral norms;		*	
		1.3.3	differentiate between secular and religious morality;		*	
		1.3.4	evaluate situations where secular and religious moralities play their role in an individual's life;			E
		1.3.5	describe normative ethical theories, i.e.,		*	
			a. Consequentialist Theory,			
			b. Deontological Theories (Divine Command Theory, Social Contract Theories and Kantianism),			
			c. Virtue Ethical Theory;			
		1.3.6	describe the key concepts of Al-Ghazali's Moral Philosophy;		*	
		1.3.7	describe the key concept of Kant's Moral Philosophy: 'duty based ethics' and 'good will';		*	
		1.3.8	describe the key components of Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics;		*	
		1.3.9	relate the concept of morality as explained by the philosophers to everyday life.		*	

¹R = Remember, U = Understand, A = Apply and beyond [Apply (A), Analyse (An), Evaluate (E), Create (C)]

Topic and Sub-topic	Student Learning Outcomes	Cognitive Level		
		R	U	A and beyond
2. Major Religions of the World	Students should be able to:			
2.1 Introduction to Theology	2.1.1 define ‘theology’ and ‘religion’; 2.1.2 discuss the reasons that lead to and support belief in the existence of God (cosmological argument); 2.1.3 differentiate between agnosticism and atheism;	*		E
2.2 Concept of God in Different Religions • Buddhism • Christianity • Hinduism • Sikhism • Islam • Zoroastrianism	2.2.1 compare the concepts of divinity, i.e., monotheism, polytheism, deism and dualism; 2.2.2 explain the concept of God and worship; 2.2.3 explain the transcendence and immanence of God; 2.2.4 describe the attributes of God, i.e., omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent and benevolent;		* * * *	
2.3 Purpose of Human Life	2.3.1 discuss the purpose of human life on earth; 2.3.2 suggest ways to make the world a better place to live in, through the preservation of life, conservation of energy and promoting respect for human beings; 2.3.3 describe the concept of salvation and liberation;			E E
2.4 Nature of Human Being	2.4.1 define ‘human nature’; 2.4.2 identify the elements responsible for making a human being good and bad;	*	*	
2.5 Human: a Multi-Dimensional Being	2.5.1 explain the multi-dimensional aspects of human life, i.e., spiritual, moral, intellectual, psychological, aesthetical, social and material; 2.5.2 suggest ways to create balance between different dimensions of human life;		*	E

Topic and Sub-topic	Student Learning Outcomes	Cognitive Level		
		R	U	A and beyond
Students should be able to:				
2.6 Human Freedom and Limitations	2.6.1 differentiate between the concepts of 'free will' and 'determinism'; 2.6.2 describe aspects of human life that are: a. predestined, b. subject to change; 2.6.3 differentiate between 'freedom' and 'licentiousness'; 2.6.4 discuss the importance of will to achieve the purpose of human life;		*	E
2.7 Life after Death	2.7.1 explain the concept of life after death, i.e., linear and cyclical views, resurrection and rebirth; 2.7.2 explain the concept of accountability; 2.7.3 analyse the everlasting impacts of human deeds on an individual and on society.		*	An

(Note: All SLOs of Topic 2 will be assessed from the perspective of religions mentioned in sub-topic 2.2 only).

Topic and Sub-topic	Student Learning Outcomes		Cognitive Level		
			R	U	A and beyond
3. Values and Etiquettes	Students should be able to:				
3.1 Nature of Values	3.1.1	define the terms ‘values’ and ‘morals’;	*		
	3.1.2	differentiate between values and morals;		*	
	3.1.3	differentiate between positive and negative values;		*	
	3.1.4	discuss the impact of positive values in the creation of a moral society;			E
	3.1.5	analyse the impact of negative values, i.e., prejudice, backbiting, cheating, bribery, and materialism, on the deterioration of a society;			An
3.2 Human Values	3.2.1	explain the meaning of self-respect;		*	
	3.2.2	relate respect for others with self-respect;		*	
	3.2.3	exemplify acts and behaviour that reflect sense of responsibility towards the life and property of others;		FA ²	
	3.2.4	explain that service to others is a basic human value;		*	
	3.2.5	illustrate ways to encourage philanthropy in the society;			A
3.3 Honesty	3.3.1	explain the meaning of honesty;		*	
	3.3.2	exemplify the significance of honesty under all circumstances in: a. personal life, b. public life;		*	
3.4 Dignity of Labour	3.4.1	explain the dignity of labour;		*	
	3.4.2	exemplify lawful and unlawful means of livelihood;		*	
3.5 Courtesy	3.5.1	explain the term ‘courtesy’;		*	
	3.5.2	suggest ways to practice courtesy in personal, social, and public life;			E
3.6 Love	3.6.1	explain love as a basic human value;		FA	
	3.6.2	explain the significance of love in relationship with one’s family, siblings, neighbours, country, nature and humanity as a whole;		FA	

²FA= Formative Assessment, not to be assessed under examination conditions

Topic and Sub-topic	Student Learning Outcomes		Cognitive Level		
			R	U	A and beyond
	Students should be able to:				
3.7 Tolerance	3.7.1	define ‘tolerance’;	*		
	3.7.2	discuss that tolerance is a pre-requisite for a peaceful society;			E
	3.7.3	exemplify the practice of tolerance with reference to beliefs, customs, traditions, habits, views, and ideas;		*	
	3.7.4	discuss the consequences of intolerant activities in a society;			E
3.8 Respecting Rights	3.8.1	define ‘human rights’;	*		
	3.8.2	evaluate the concept of rights in light of personal beliefs and practices;			E
	3.8.3	identify fundamental human rights with reference to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR);		*	
	3.8.4	relate rights with responsibilities;		*	
	3.8.5	discuss the effects of violation of fundamental human rights on an individual and society;			E
	3.8.6	identify situations where fundamental human rights are curbed;		*	
	3.8.7	suggest ways to prevent the abuse of rights in Pakistani society;			E
3.9 Respecting Laws	3.9.1	explain the concept of equality before the law;		*	
	3.9.2	suggest ways to show respect for the rights of everyone we interact within our daily life;			E
	3.9.3	describe an individual’s responsibilities towards society;		*	
3.10 Pluralism	3.10.1	identify ways to show respect for others in multi-religious and multi-cultural societies;		*	
	3.10.2	exemplify respect for other religious traditions in Pakistan;		*	
	3.10.3	describe the factors hindering the development of a pluralistic society, i.e., prejudice, nepotism, favouritism, and struggle for power;		*	
	3.10.4	suggest ways for a pluralistic society to function effectively;			E

Topic and Sub-topic	Student Learning Outcomes		Cognitive Level		
			R	U	A and beyond
Students should be able to:					
3.11 Etiquettes	3.11.1	describe the general etiquettes observed with reference to places, i.e., places of worship, offices, banks, railway stations, bus stands, airports, markets, streets, and residences;		*	
	3.11.2	discuss the significance of etiquette in personal and public life;			E
	3.11.3	analyse situations where proper etiquettes are not followed;			An
3.12 Justice	3.12.1	explain the meaning of 'justice';		*	
	3.12.2	suggest ways to apply justice in personal, social, and public life;			E
	3.12.3	exemplify behaviour that is law-abiding;		*	
	3.12.4	evaluate the damage caused to society and individuals as a result of disrespecting laws;			E
	3.12.5	analyse the concept of 'justice delayed is justice denied' in the context of Pakistan.			An

Topic and Sub-topic	Student Learning Outcomes		Cognitive Level		
			R	U	A and beyond
4. Personalities	Students should be able to:				
4.1 Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imam Ghazali • Florence Nightingale • Sri Aurobindo 	4.1.1	trace the life history of the personalities given in the sub-topic 4.1;		*	
	4.1.2	explain the reasons that led them to choose their particular field of interest;		*	
	4.1.3	identify the inspiring features from the lives of the personalities given in sub-topic 4.1;		*	
4.2 Contribution	4.2.1	describe the important aspects and inspirational features of the writings/ teachings of the personalities given in sub-topic 4.1;		*	
	4.2.2	explain ways through which these personalities have had a role in promoting humanism;		*	
	4.2.3	suggest ways to practice the teachings of these personalities;			E
	4.2.4	evaluate the impact of the interventions of these personalities on society;			E
	4.2.5	discuss the social change brought about by the teachings and work of these personalities in society.			E

FOR ANNUAL EXAMINATIONS AND ONLINE

Scheme of Assessment

Class IX

Table1: Exam Specification

Topic No.	Topics	Marks Distribution			Total Marks
		MCQs	CRQs	ERQs	
1.	Introduction to Ethics	13	Total 8 Marks (2 CRQs)	10 Marks Choose any ONE from TWO	53
2.	Major Religions of the World	12	Total 10 Marks (3 CRQs)		
3.	Values and Etiquette	18	Total 6 Marks (2 CRQs)	10 Marks Choose any ONE from TWO	47
4.	Personalities	07	Total 6 Marks (2 CRQs)		
Total		50	30	20	100

Note: The cognitive distribution of marks for Ethics SSC are as follows:

Remember: 0 to 15 %

Understand: 60 to 70 %

Apply and beyond: 20 to 30 %

Examination Structure for Grade IX

Theory

- Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) requires candidates to choose one best/ correct answer from four options for each question. Each MCQ carries ONE mark.
- Constructed Response Question (CRQ) requires students to respond with a short text (few phrases/ sentences), calculations or diagrams.
- Extended Response Question (ERQ) requires students to answer in a more descriptive form. The answer should be in paragraph form, with diagrams where needed, and address all parts of the question.
- Table 1 contains the mark distribution for each topic.
- There will be one examination at the end of grade IX only.
- The theory paper will be for 3 hours and will consist of two parts: paper I and paper II.
- Paper I theory will consist of 50 compulsory, multiple-choice items. These questions will involve four response options. The answer sheet for the paper I will be provided separately.
- Paper II theory will carry 50 marks and consist of Constructed Response Questions (CRQs) and Extended Response Questions (ERQs). Each extended response question will be presented in an either/ or form.
- The booklet for paper II will serve as an answer script.

Acknowledgments

Aga Khan University Examination Board (AKU-EB) would like to acknowledge the contributions of all those who played an important part in the revision of the AKU-EB SSC Ethics syllabus.

We would like to thank **Anita Saleem, Irfana Imran** and **Noor Akbar, Specialists in Humanities** AKU-EB, for taking the subject lead during the entire process of revising the SSC Ethics syllabus.

We are particularly thankful to the **syllabus revision panel** for their time, commitment and effort in revising the syllabus. The panel included:

- **Sandal Emran**
Panellist
Bai Virbaiji Soparivala Parsi High School, Karachi
- **Shahnaz Asghar**
Panellist
The Mama Parsi Girls Secondary School, Karachi
- **Muhammad Zubair**
Panellist
Aga Khan School, Kharadar, Karachi
- **Semeen Fatima**
Panellist
P.E.C.H.S, Girls' School, Karachi

Furthermore, we thank you for reviewing the syllabus for **Higher Education Preparedness**, ensuring that the syllabus includes adequate skills and content to effectively prepare students for the next level of education.

- **Dr Mohsin Hussain Naqvi**
Professor, SZABIST University

In-house Team

- **Mentor and Advisor:**
Dr Naveed Yousuf
CEO, AKU-EB
- **Operational Advisor:**
Hanif Shariff
Director, AKU-EB
- **Syllabi Review Lead:**
Raabia Hirani
Former Manager, Curriculum Development
- **Syllabi Review Facilitators:**
Dur Nasab, Associate, Curriculum Development
Mahrukh Jiwa, Specialist, Middle School Programme
- **Internal Reviewer:**
Zain-ul-Muluk, Manager, Examination Development
Dr Mohammad Zohaib Hanif, Lead Specialist, Curriculum and Exam Development
Uroosa Aslam, Specialist, Curriculum and Exam Development
- **Learning Resources Reviewer:**
Ali Bijani, Manager, Teacher Support, and team
- **Assessment Reviewer:**
Munira Muhammad, Lead Specialist, Assessment
- **Administrative Support:**
Raheel Sadruddin, Manager, Administration, and team
- **School Coordination Support:**
Danish Hussain, Senior Manager, Operations, and team
- **Syllabi Feedback Data Analysts:**
Muhammad Faheem, Lead Specialist, Assessment
Muhammad Kamran Afzal, Specialist, Assessment
- **Communications and Design Support:**
Shanoz Aqnazarbekova, Manager, Communications
Hatim Yousuf, Specialist, Communications
- **Quality Assurance:**
Malik Azam, Manager, Quality Assurance, and team
- **Data Compilation and Formatting:**
Shamsa Farzand Ali, Former Assistant, AKU-EB
Ali Jumani, Assistant, AKU-EB
Riyan Ali, Assistant, AKU-EB
Akber Hashmani, Specialist, Assessment AKU-EB

Aga Khan University Examination Board

Block-C, IED-PDC, 1-5/B-VII, Federal B Area,
Karimabad, Karachi, Pakistan - 75950

examinationboard.aku.edu



AKUEBOfficial

AKUEBOfficial



linkedin.com/school/akueb

akuexamboard



examination.board@aku.edu

AKUEBOfficial



+92 21 3682 7011-8