



FOR ANNUAL EXAMINATION 2023 AND ONWARDS

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**Higher Secondary School Certificate  
Examination Syllabus**

**ETHICS  
GRADES XI-XII**

**This syllabus will be examined in both  
Annual and Re-sit Examination sessions from  
Annual Examinations 2023**

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### 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) 3682-7011

**Fax:** (92-21) 3682-7019

**E-mail:** [examination.board@aku.edu](mailto:examination.board@aku.edu)

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

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/akueb](http://www.facebook.com/akueb)

## 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 (SSC) and higher secondary (HSSC) school certifications. 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 which inculcate conceptual thinking and higher order learning and are aligned with National/ trans-provincial curricula and international standards. AKU-EB revises its syllabi periodically to support the needs of students, teachers and examiners.

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

- Ensure continued compatibility with the goals of the trans-provincial curricula 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 examiners.
- 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 syllabus is organised into topics and subtopics. Each subtopic is further divided into achievable student learning outcomes (SLOs). The SLOs of the cognitive domain are each assigned a cognitive level on which they have to be achieved. These cognitive levels are 'knowledge', 'understanding' and 'application', the latter also including other higher order skills. This is followed by the Exam Specification which gives clear guidance about the weightage of each topic and how the syllabus will be assessed.

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 Dr Sohail Qureshi for his very useful feedback on revising the syllabus review process, to Dr Naveed Yousuf for his continued guidance and support throughout the syllabus revision process and to Raabia Hirani for leading the syllabi revision. 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 endeavour possible by facilitating and encouraging their teachers 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 best international and trans-provincial standards 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 Shehzad Jeeva

Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Aga Khan University Examination Board

Associate Professor of Practice, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Aga Khan University

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## 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 subtopics and **student learning outcomes (SLOs)**. The subtopics and the SLOs define the depth and the breadth at which each topic 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. The examination questions are framed using the same command words or their connotations to elicit evidence of these competencies in students' responses.
4. The topics of the syllabi are grouped into themes derived from the National/ trans-provincial curricula. The connection between various themes and topics is highlighted in the '**concept map**' provided at the beginning of each syllabus. This ensures that students begin to understand the interconnectedness of knowledge, learn conceptually and think critically.
5. The SLOs are classified under three **cognitive levels**: knowledge (K), understanding (U) and application and other higher order skills (A) for effective planning during teaching and learning. Furthermore, it will help to derive multiple choice questions (MCQs), constructed response questions (CRQs) and extended response questions (ERQs) on a rational basis from the subject syllabi.
6. By focusing on the achievement of the SLOs, these syllabi aim to counter the culture of rote memorisation as the preferred method of examination preparation. While suggesting relevant, locally available textbooks for achieving these outcomes, AKU-EB recommends that teachers and students use multiple teaching and learning resources for achieving these outcomes.
7. The syllabi follow a uniform layout for all subjects to make them easier for students and teachers to follow. They act as a bridge between students, teachers and assessment specialists by providing a common framework of student learning outcomes and **exam specifications**.
8. On the whole, the AKU-EB syllabi for Secondary School Certificate (SSC) provide a framework that helps students to acquire conceptual understanding and learn to critically engage with it. This lays a solid foundation for HSSC and beyond.

## Subject Rationale of AKU-EB Ethics

### Why study AKU-EB 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 the society as well as comparison of different religions in terms of their approach towards ethical standards for the smooth running of the society.

Ethics as a discipline makes an individual aware of other religions being practiced around them and how their teachings are similar towards humanity. 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 the society.

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

Education is not only to achieve qualifications and degrees, it is also a medium which makes us differentiate between right and wrong, upholds other individuals integrity and live 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 a foundation stone.

### How to approach the syllabus?

The concept map of the syllabus gives an overview of the entire syllabus. The topics and the student learning outcomes (SLOs) guide regarding the details about what has to be achieve. And finally, the exam specification guides regarding what will be expected in the examination.

### **What is the concept map telling you?**

The struggle for man in life is to conduct oneself in such a manner that his actions are acceptable and justified in terms of ethical behaviour. This is depicted in the concept map as bridge, the person has to cross whenever he/ she is performing any action. The journey of the subject begins by the approach to link theology with that of philosophy as all of the tenets of ethical behaviours are evolved from these branches.

Moreover, theology is the basis of all of the major religions being practiced in Pakistan, the basic knowledge of these religions helps us understand human actions and behaviours and make one realise that the values practiced in a society though are evolved from different religions but are all the same.

These behaviours are adopted and manifested in lives of different personalities, who have left a deep-rooted impact by means of their dedication towards humanity. Learning about their work, lives and how they have changed the society they have lived in, gives an individual encouragement that following ethical values and principles may look tough but it yields a better result for not just an individual but for the society.

# ETHICS

MAN

PHILOSOPHY  
THEOLOGY &  
ETHICS

- Meta-Ethics
- Applied Ethics

RELIGIONS OF  
PAKISTAN

- Christianity
- Hinduism
- Sikhism
- Islam
- Zoroastrianism

VALUES

- Social Institutions
- Work Ethics

PERSONALITIES

- Nelson Mandela
- Mother Teresa
- Abdul Sattar Edhi
- Dr. Muhammad Younus
- Jamshed Nusserwanji Mehta

ACTION

Concept Map - HSSC I & II  
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# Student Learning Outcomes of AKU-EB HSSC Ethics Syllabus

## Grade XII

Topics	Student Learning Outcomes		Cognitive levels <sup>1</sup>		
			K	U	A
<b>1. Introduction to Ethics</b>	Students should be able to				
1.1 Meta-Ethics	1.1.1 describe meta-ethics; 1.1.2 describe moral relativism;		*	*	
1.2 Applied Ethics	1.2.1 define various types of Applied Ethics: bioethics, animal ethics, environmental ethics, business ethics; 1.2.2 analyse the ethical dilemma from the perspective of: a. Kantian's philosophy (good will and moral duty) b. Aristotle's moral philosophy c. Moral Relativism;	*		*	
1.3 Religion and Science	1.3.1 define the terms 'theology' and 'religion'; 1.3.2 describe Edward Burnett Tylor, James George Frazer, Rudolf Otto's views on religion; 1.3.3 elaborate the scientific process of research, i.e. observation, examination, experiment, testing, validation; 1.3.4 discuss different models of relationships between religion and science (conflict, discussion, interdependence, independence); 1.3.5 identify areas where scientific approach and religious approach could differ.	CA	*	*	*

*Note: Ethics will be taught in both Classes XI and XII, but the examination will be conducted at the end of Class XII.*  
(Note: Dates/years need to be taught only in order to create understanding of the context and linkages and would not be directly assessed.)

<sup>1</sup> K = Knowledge, U = Understanding, A= Application

Topic and Sub-topic	Student Learning Outcomes	Cognitive Level		
		K	U	A
<b>2. Religions of Pakistan:</b>	Students should be able to:			
2.1 Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism	2.1.1 trace the origins of Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism, Christianity and Zoroastrianism; 2.1.2 discuss the moral values preached and practiced by the founders and other prominent personalities of the given religions, i.e. a. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) b. Guru Nanak c. Shri Krishna d. Zarathustra e. Jesus Christ; 2.1.3 describe the following with respect to the teachings of the given religions mentioned in SLO 2.1.1: a. Universe and its creation b. Concept of worship c. Rituals of birth and death d. Concept of charity; 2.1.4 discuss different festivals celebrated in Pakistan with reference to the religions mentioned in SLO 2.1.1; 2.1.5 elaborate the teachings of the given religions about character building and knowledge enhancement of human beings;		*	
2.2 Values within Religions	2.2.1 discuss the common teachings in terms of values of the religions mentioned in SLO 2.1.1; 2.2.2 discuss the importance of inter-faith dialogue in today's society;		*	
2.3 Religion and Society	2.3.1 explain the interrelationship between religion and society; 2.3.3 suggest ways in which religious teachings can be applied in personal, social and public life.		*	*

Topic and Sub-topic	Student Learning Outcomes		Cognitive Level		
			K	U	A
<b>3. Values</b>	Students should be able to:				
3.1 Social Institutions	3.1.1	define the term ‘social institution’;	*		
	3.1.2	describe the five basic social institutions, i.e. family, religion, education, economy, and government;		*	
	3.1.3	discuss the essential characteristics and role of these institutions in the development of society: a. State institutions b. Religious institutions c. Economic institutions d. Educational institutions;		*	
3.2 Work Ethics	3.2.1	define work ethics;	*		
	3.2.2	exemplify desirable ethical work practices such as honesty and integrity, self-respect and self-discipline, responsibility and accountability, punctuality and respecting the rights of colleagues;		*	
	3.2.3	analyse the effects an organisations’ ethical environment have on the performance of individuals and organisations.			*

Topic and Sub-topic	Student Learning Outcomes	Cognitive Level		
		K	U	A
<b>4. Personalities:</b>	Students should be able to:			
4.1 Introduction and Contribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nelson Mandela</li> <li>• Mother Teresa</li> <li>• Abdul Sattar Edhi</li> <li>• Dr. Muhammad Younus</li> <li>• Jamshed Nusserwanji Mehta</li> </ul>	4.1.1 describe the life history of the give personalities; 4.1.2 discuss the contributions made by the given personalities towards the betterment of their societies; 4.1.3 discuss the moral values demonstrated by the given personalities; 4.1.4 suggest ways to practice the exemplary behaviour of the given personalities in the society; 4.1.5 discuss the social change brought about by the teachings and work of these personalities in the society; 4.1.6 evaluate the conditions of the societies before and after the intervention of these personalities.		CA *  *  *  *	   *  *

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## Scheme of Assessment

### Grade XII

**Table 1: Number of Student Learning Outcomes by Cognitive level**

Topic No.	Topic	No of Sub-Topics	SLOs			Total SLOs
			K	U	A	
1.	Introduction to Ethics	03	01	06	1	08
2.	Religions of Pakistan	03	00	07	01	08
3.	Values	02	02	02	02	06
4.	Personalities	01	00	03	02	05
<b>Total</b>		<b>09</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Percentage</b>			<b>11</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 2: Exam Specification**

Topic No.	Topics	Marks Distribution			Total Marks
		MCQs	CRQs	ERQs	
1.	Introduction to Ethics	8	Total 5 Marks (2 CRQs)		13
2.	Religions of Pakistan	11	Total 5 Marks (2 CRQs)		16
3.	Values	7	Total 2 Marks (1 CRQ)	6 Marks Choose any ONE from TWO	21
4.	Personalities	4	Total 2 Marks (1 CRQ)		
<b>Total</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>50</b>

- 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 indicates the number and nature of SLOs in each topic in grade XII. This will serve as a guide in the construction of the examination paper. It also indicates that more emphasis has been given to the understanding (66%) Application and higher order skills (23%) to discourage rote memorisation. Table 1, however, do not translate directly into marks.
- This subject is offered in grade XII.
- In each class, the theory paper will be in two parts: paper I and paper II. Both papers will be administrated within 2 hours.
- Paper I theory will consist of 30 compulsory, multiple choice items. These questions will involve four response options.
- Paper II theory will carry 20 marks and consist of a number of compulsory, structured questions and a number of extended response questions. Each extended response question will be presented in an either/or form.
- All constructed response questions will be in a booklet which will also serve as an answer script.

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- **Mohammad Zohaib Hanif**  
Specialist, Curriculum and Exam Development

Furthermore, we thank 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**  
Prof. SZABIST University

## In-house Team

- **Final Reviewer and Advisor: Dr Shehzad Jeeva**  
CEO, AKU-EB
- **Mentor and Guide for Syllabi Review: Dr Naveed Yousuf**  
Former Associate Director, Assessment
- **Syllabi Review Lead: Raabia Hirani**  
Manager, Curriculum Development
- **Syllabi Review Facilitators:**  
**Banazeer Yaqoob**, Former Associate, Curriculum Development  
**Dur Nasab**, Associate, Curriculum Development  
**Mahrukh Jiwa**, Specialist, Middle School Programme
- **Internal Reviewer: Zain-ul-Muluk**  
Manager, Examination Development
- **Lead Specialist Review: Munira Mohammad**  
Lead Specialist, Curriculum and Exam Development
- **Learning Resources Reviewers: Ali Bijani**  
Manager, Teacher Support and team
- **Administrative Support:**  
**Hanif Shariff**, Associate Director, Operations  
**Raheel Sadrudin**, Manager, Administration, and team
- **Syllabi Feedback Data Analysts:**  
**Tooba Farooqui**, Former Lead Specialist, Assessment  
**Muhammad Kashif**, Former Specialist, Assessment  
**Muhammad Faheem**, Lead Specialist, Assessment
- **Design Support: Hatim Yousuf**  
Specialist Communications

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