



SCHOLARSHIPS HANDBOOK

**Policies and Procedures on Awarding Scholarships at
Qatar University for Teaching Assistants and Employees**

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Produced by
Office of Vice President and Chief Academic Officer

Preface:

This Scholarships Handbook is designed to complement the Human Resources policies and procedures relevant to Qatar University Scholarship Program. This handbook explains the conditions that must be met by applicants to be awarded with a scholarship. It also clarifies their responsibilities during the period of their sponsorship.

As this handbook will be updated frequently, all Qatar University scholars are requested to check the availability of the most recent version of this document. This English version is the original and binding document of this handbook.

Important Notice:

This handbook is provided for the purpose of giving general information only, and should not be considered as a statement of contractual obligation. Therefore, Qatar University reserves the right to change or discontinue, without notice, any policy or condition set forth herein.

Disclaimer:

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1. Administrative Structure of Qatar University Scholarships System

The administrative structure of Qatar University scholarships system is composed of five major entities:

- 1.1 Human Resources Committee.
- 1.2 Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer.
- 1.3 Scholarships Unit at the Human Resources Department.
- 1.4 Academic units at colleges.
- 1.5 Academic Advisor at Qatar University.

1.1 Human Resources Committee

The Human Resources Committee at Qatar University consists of:

- 1.1.1 President of Qatar University.
- 1.1.2 Vice President and Chief Academic Officer.
- 1.1.3 Vice President and Chief Financial Officer.
- 1.1.4 Director of the Human Resources Department.
- 1.1.5 Legal Advisor.
- 1.1.6 Representatives of the unit, division, dean or department to which the scholar is affiliated (if necessary).

1.2 Role of Human Resources Committee

- 1.2.1 Approval of applications for scholarships.
- 1.2.2 Review of policies and procedures related to scholarships and recommending changes to the Executive Management Committee.
- 1.2.3 Approval of the strategic plan needed to define specializations and needs in coordination with colleges as well as academic departments and units and approval and periodic monitoring of their annual budgets.
- 1.2.4 Coordination, monitoring and communication with all stakeholders concerning scholarships within and outside Qatar University.
- 1.2.5 Approval of the decisions on scholarships concerning the following: requests to change scholarship specialization, scholarship elimination, scholarship extension, definition of the scholarships submitted to the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer.

1.3 Role of the Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer

The Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer undertakes the preparation of the scholarships strategic plan and its submission to the Human Resources Committee at Qatar University for approval. This is carried out in direct coordination with academic programs, departments and units as well as colleges and departments annually. In addition, the Scholarships Office specifically performs the following tasks:

- 1.3.1 Working out the annual scholarships plan guided by Qatar University strategic plan and submitting it to the Human Resources Committee.
- 1.3.2 Preparing the scholarships budget and submitting it to the Human Resources Committee for approval.
- 1.3.3 Reviewing the financial by-laws of the Scholarships Program once every three years and submitting the recommendations on proposed amendments to the Human Resources Committee.
- 1.3.4 Reviewing the annual scholarships list and submitting it to the Human Resources Committee.
- 1.3.5 Issuing letters of responsibility and sponsorship letters for scholarships.
- 1.3.6 Monitoring the scholar's relationship with his/her advisor at Qatar University.
- 1.3.7 Monitoring the scholar's general performance in coordination with various colleges and units at Qatar University as well as submitting proposals, when necessary, about the scholar's academic performance and maintaining periodic monitoring reports in the scholar's file.
- 1.3.8 Making decisions concerning requests made by the scholar.
- 1.3.9 Examining change occurrences with regard to the academic specialization, university or country where the scholar is studying and making recommendations to the Human Resources Committee.
- 1.3.10 Submitting proposals related to the scholar to the Human Resources Committee specifically in relation to the following: termination of the scholar's contract, transfer to another job at Qatar University, low academic level, etc. on the basis of the academic supervisor's reports.
- 1.3.11 Studying grievances and submitting them to the Human Resources Committee.
- 1.3.12 Monitoring the scholar's academic performance throughout the duration of his/her scholarship and making appropriate recommendations for each case to the Human Resources Committee concerning the annual allowance, financial incentives linked to academic performance, etc.
- 1.3.13 Studying how to improve the contracts and administrative procedures, financial by-laws, procedures of monitoring academic performance and professional conduct with the scholarships unit at the Human Resources Department, academic departments and units, colleges and departments.

1.4 Role of the Scholarships Unit at the Human Resources Department

The Scholarships Unit at the Human Resources Department undertakes the following functions:

- 1.4.1 Preparation of contracts and other required procedural processes related to scholarships to obtain the Master's degree or PhD degree or any other scholarship.
- 1.4.2 Payment of the financial dues to the scholar including the salary, allowances (social allowance, housing allowance, transportation allowance, books allowance, etc.) in accordance with the financial by-laws approved by Qatar University on the scholarships system and after reviewing the scholar's contract.
- 1.4.3 Monitoring and ensuring the implementation of any amendments in the scholar's financial allocations on the basis of his/her academic performance and social status and in accordance with Qatar University scholarships by-laws.
- 1.4.4 Performance of the role of "liaison center" to provide guidance and advice to the scholar and the academic unit concerning the scholar's administrative and financial affairs and the need to coordinate with the Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer.

1.5 Role of the Academic Department and Division to Which the Scholar is Affiliated

The academic department and division performs the following functions:

- 1.5.1 Verification of scholars' nominations according to the scholarships strategic plan at Qatar University/college/department.
- 1.5.2 Identification of academic needs related to scholarships such as the level of English language competency, attendance of courses in preparation for admission examinations such as GMAT or GRE, etc.
- 1.5.3 Selection of an academic advisor at the department level for each scholar and following up his/her reports about the scholar.
- 1.5.4 Periodic monitoring of the academic advisor's performance and replacing him/her if he/she lacks competence.
- 1.5.5 Periodic monitoring of the scholar's academic performance throughout the duration of his/her scholarship in coordination with the concerned advisor.
- 1.5.6 Submission of periodic reports on the scholars' academic performance to the Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer as well as submission of / making of recommendations related to each scholar.

1.6 Advisor's Responsibilities Concerning Qatar University Scholars

Qatar University's scholar's advisor performs the following tasks:

- 1.6.1 Provision of constant support to the scholar.
- 1.6.2 Maintenance of constant communication with the scholar throughout the duration of his/her study at least once every semester.
- 1.6.3 Maintenance of constant communication with the scholar's academic supervisor abroad according to a schedule prepared for this purpose.
- 1.6.4 Submission of periodic reports about the scholar to the head of department or academic unit, college or department to which the scholar is affiliated.
- 1.6.5 Provision of support to the scholar in obtaining acceptance at foreign universities and provision of appropriate guidance in obtaining the required scores in admission requirement tests such as: GRE, GMAT and TOEFL as well as in preparing applications according to a schedule designed for this purpose.

1.7 Scholar's Responsibilities

The scholar is fully responsible for regular attendance, proper conduct and compliance with the hosting university's by-laws during his/her study. He/she is also responsible for the following:

- 1.7.1 Exerting efforts and diligence to obtain the highest academic scores throughout his/her period of study abroad to ensure the continuation of his/her scholarship, as well as representing Qatar University honorably.
- 1.7.2 Signing the scholarship contract, which documents the scholar's commitment and acceptance of the scholarships' conditions at Qatar University and that entitles Qatar University to monitor his/her academic performance.
- 1.7.3 Commitment to the residency policies, procedures and laws in the country where the scholar studies.
- 1.7.4 Commitment to study the specific academic program he/she is sent to study and not to change the specialization or program without a prior approval of the Human Resources Committee to such change.
- 1.7.5 Participating, as necessary, in the meetings and procedures of monitoring performance held by the Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer or by the academic department or unit or department to which the scholar is affiliated.
- 1.7.6 Commitment to notify the Scholarships Unit at the Human Resources Department at Qatar University in the case that the scholar wishes to change his/her place of residence.

2. Scholarships Policies and Procedures

2.1 Conditions for Application to Scholarships

Following are the conditions to be met by applicants to scholarships. The Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer undertakes checking such applications before they are forwarded to the Human Resources Committee:

- 2.1.1 The program of study should be in a specialization defined by Qatar University according to the scholarships strategic plan.
- 2.1.2 The university where the scholar is to study should be on the list of universities approved by Qatar University.
- 2.1.3 The candidate should obtain unconditional acceptance from a foreign university to pursue his/her higher studies at that university which is listed as approved by Qatar University.
- 2.1.4 The cumulative average of the foreign university scholarship recipient should be 3. An average of less than 3 may be accepted in the event that a candidate obtains an unconditional acceptance from a university abroad, provided that the university is among the universities approved by Qatar University and upon a recommendation by the academic department or unit, college or department as well as the Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer and approval of the Human Resources Committee (scholarships).
- 2.1.5 Minimum English proficiency test score of 500 in TOEFL or 5.5 in IELTS
- 2.1.6 Nomination letter from the home department indicating the recommended specialization for the scholar. The letter must be endorsed by the college dean/ unit director to which he/she is affiliated.

2.2 Scholarship Duration

- 2.2.1 The student's scholarship duration shall be added to his/her years of service at Qatar University.
- 2.2.2 The scholar shall attend his/her studies as a full time student during academic semesters.
- 2.2.3 A Master's degree scholarship recipient may be given a one or two-year scholarship depending on the overseas program. The Human Resources Committee may extend the period for one year only upon a

recommendation from the Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer. In the event that the scholar needs a further extension, he/she shall be on an unpaid leave.

- 2.2.4 A PhD degree scholarship recipient shall be given a three-year scholarship. The Human Resources Committee may extend the period two more years upon a recommendation by the Scholarships Office at Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer. In the event that a scholar needs an extension beyond the five years, he/she shall be on unpaid leave.

2.3 Scholarship Suspension/Postponement Procedures

- 2.3.1 The scholar is entitled to postpone or suspend the scholarship for emergency reasons. Postponement means that the scholarship is awarded; however, due to reasonable justifications by the scholar, it can start after a period of time. On the other hand, suspension is freezing the scholarship for a specific period of time after starting it.
- 2.3.2 The scholar shall submit his/her request for suspension/postponement to the academic department to which he/she is affiliated together with a letter of no-objection by the foreign university of studies specifying the required period of postponement or suspension as well as the date of resuming study after the end of the postponement or suspension period.
- 2.3.3 The Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer shall take the appropriate decision upon the recommendations of the concerned department.
- 2.3.4 The scholar is not entitled to any scholarship payments during the suspension period.
- 2.3.5 The scholar shall report to duty at the concerned department during the suspension or postponement period for the purpose of retaining the entitlement to the job's salary.
- 2.3.6 The scholar shall resume his/her studies immediately after the postponement or suspension period. The Scholarships Office shall be notified by the concerned department immediately after the resumption of his/her studies.

2.4 The End of the Scholarship

- 2.4.1 In the Master's and PhD degrees, the date of passing the thesis defense shall be considered the date of obtaining the degree and the end of the scholarship, or in some Master's degree programs, it will be the date of passing the comprehensive examination. The scholar shall resume his/her job within one month of the date of the defense or

comprehensive examination. In some instances, the scholarship period may be extended for a maximum of six months in case of conditional graduation upon the completion of some amendments as well as upon a report written by the scholar's supervisor.

2.5 Monitoring the Scholar's Academic Performance

- 2.5.1 The academic department undertakes monitoring the scholar's academic performance and submitting a report on his/her status at least once per semester to the Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer.
- 2.5.2 The Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer may monitor the scholar's academic performance directly with the scholar's foreign university whenever this is necessary.

2.6 Rules of the Scholar's Promotion

- 2.6.1 After the scholar joins his/her Master's degree program, his/her academic rank shall be changed to "Teaching Assistant" with the entailed financial changes in accordance with Qatar University's by-laws.
- 2.6.2 After the scholar with a Master's degree (Teaching Assistant) starts his/her scholarship to study for the PhD degree program, his/her academic rank shall be changed to "Lecturer" with the entailed financial changes in accordance with Qatar University's by-laws.
- 2.6.3 After the scholar obtains the PhD degree he/she shall be promoted to the rank of "Assistant Professor" with the entailed financial changes in accordance with Qatar University's by-laws, and upon the decision of the Human Resources Committee.

3. Cancellation of a Scholarship

The Human Resources Committee may cancel the decision to award a scholarship in the following cases:

- 3.0.1 If the scholar fails by the quality standards of the foreign university.
- 3.0.2 If the scholar does not commence his/her studies in the foreign university, for no acceptable reason, within two months of his/her notification by the Human Resources Committee (Scholarship Unit) of its agreement to award him/her a scholarship.

- 3.0.3 If it has been proved that the scholar is no longer able to continue his/her studies for reasonable causes accepted by the Human Resources Committee (Scholarship Unit).
- 3.0.4 If the scholar loses his/her Qatari nationality for any reason.
- 3.0.5 If the scholar terminates his/her studies and leaves the place of his/her scholarship within three months of having travelled overseas to study and without an acceptable reason or a prior agreement with Qatar University.
- 3.0.6 If the scholar is terminated from the foreign university which he/she has joined because of low academic level, misconduct or any other cause.
- 3.0.7 If the scholar fails to continue his/her studies in the specialization selected for him/her and recorded in and within the framework of the scholarship contract and beyond the case stated in section 1.7.4.

3.1 Measures Pertaining to Scholarship Cancellation

- 3.1.1 The Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer requests the Human Resources Committee to cancel the scholarship.
- 3.1.2 The Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer undertakes the correspondence pertaining to the cancellation of the scholarship with the concerned department and the foreign university where the scholar has been enrolled.
- 3.1.3 The department, unit or concerned college at Qatar University shall be notified of the scholarship's cancellation.
- 3.1.4 In all cancellation cases, the Human Resources Committee's approval to cancel the scholarship should be obtained.

4. Grievances

- 4.1 In cases of scholarship cancellation, the scholar may submit a grievance to the Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer. The grievance shall be considered by a special committee upon a proposal by the Human Resources Committee. The Legal Advisor at Qatar University shall be a permanent member of this special committee.
- 4.2 This special committee shall submit its appropriate recommendations to the Human Resources Committee after examining the case.

5. Reimbursements and Allowances

- 5.1 The scholar is entitled to allowances for costs of reference and text books once per academic year during the scholarship period in accordance with Qatar University financial by-laws.
- 5.2 The scholar is entitled to allowances of expenses for typing and photocopying of the Master's and/or PhD's thesis once during any scholarship to obtain the Master's or PhD's degree, in accordance with Qatar University financial by-laws.
- 5.3 The scholar is entitled to one-time allowance per degree of costs of scientific equipment and instruments during his/her scholarship on the condition that an official document is provided by the university where he/she studies attesting to the need for such items..
- 5.4 The scholar is entitled to reimbursement of travel expenses once per academic semester to attend conferences through presentation of papers, on the condition that a recommendation by the concerned thesis supervisor is provided. Qatar University shall pay accommodation and travel expenses (to and from the place of study to the conference location) as well as subscription fees maximally once per semester on the condition of presentation of papers at this conference.
- 5.5 The scholar is entitled to travel tickets for himself/herself, the spouse/escort and at most three children once during the scholarship period to any country, including Qatar, for the purpose of conducting experiments provided that this request is confirmed by the scholarship's thesis supervisor.
- 5.6 When the scholar has obtained the required degree and upon departure from the place of study, he/she shall be given a luggage shipment allowance in accordance with Qatar University financial by-laws.
- 5.7 A female scholar shall be paid a family allowance for her Qatari escort equal to 60% of her monthly allocations as well as an annual return trip ticket by economy class for this escort provided that the escort proves his/her permanent presence in the foreign country during the scholarship period.
- 5.8 The scholar is allowed to return to Qatar during the summer vacation at the expense of Qatar University, which also bears the expenses of the travel of his/her spouse/escort and a maximum of three of his/her children. The scholarship allowances shall be paid to him/her in accordance with Qatar University financial by-laws.
- 5.9 The scholar shall be paid an allowance to get ready to travel, once, before departure to the foreign university for the start of studies.
- 5.10 The scholar is entitled to reimbursement of costs for field studies for a maximum of three months in accordance with Qatar University's by-laws.

6. General Academic and Administrative/Financial Provisions

6.1 Academic Provisions

- 6.1.1 A student or an employee may not be awarded a scholarship to study for a degree equivalent to or lower than the academic degree already held by him.
- 6.1.2 When a scholar transfers to an alternative foreign country/university, the period spent in the preceding country(ies) shall be included within the period set for obtaining the degree specified in the scholarship decision. Some cases may be excluded upon a decision by the Human Resources Committee at Qatar University.
- 6.1.3 Each scholar who finishes his/her QU scholarship successfully, and resumes work at QU must serve for at least the same number of years as his/her scholarship(s) period(s).
- 6.1.4 The degree to be obtained by the scholar as a result of study as well as its duration shall be specified in the scholarship contract. The scholar may not change the university, specialization or country where he/she studies unless he/she provides reasonable causes to justify the change. Additionally, the Human Resources Committee at Qatar University must approve this/these modifications of the scholarship contract.
- 6.1.5 The scholar's job position within his/her department must be reserved during his/her scholarship period.
- 6.1.6 A scholar who successfully completes his/her studies may not be appointed in a job lower than the one held before he/she was sent to pursue his/her studies.
- 6.1.7 If a scholar does not complete the program of study set for him/her for health or other legal reasons, he/she shall be returned to his/her original job before he/she was awarded the scholarship. The university is entitled to appoint him/her to another job which does not conflict with his/her health status.

6.2 Financial Provisions

- 6.2.1 Qatar University shall directly pay the scholar's tuition fees to the foreign university where he/she studies on the basis of the official documents issued by that university in this regard.
- 6.2.2 The new scholar's monthly allocation shall be paid from the date of the start of the scholarship. The scholar shall be responsible for the transfer of the monthly allocations to the place of study. The scholar shall be reimbursed for expenses (if any) related to banking transfers at the end of each semester.
- 6.2.3 The start date of the scholarship for purposes of determining its duration shall be the date of the commencement of the program of studies in the overseas university. If the scholar's study extends to part of a month, this part shall be considered a full month.
- 6.2.4 The scholar's monthly allowances continue to be paid throughout the year as long as his/her scholarship and studies continue.
- 6.2.5 The scholar's monthly allowances shall be stopped at the end of the scholarship. Refer to section 2.4.1.

- 6.2.6 If the scholar is paid amounts more than his/her dues and those amounts are not returned in time, they shall be recouped as follows:
 - 6.2.6.1 If the scholar is still carrying on his/her studies, the due amounts shall be deducted from his/her monthly allowances as scholar in monthly installments so that the due amounts are repaid in full before the end of the scholarship.
 - 6.2.6.2 If the scholarship ends for any reason, the due amounts shall be retrieved by deducting them in installments that do not exceed 25% of the basic monthly salary, in accordance with the principle of priority when there are several debts.
- 6.2.7 If the scholar is entitled to reimbursement of costs of travel tickets for the year during which he/she is studying or for the previous year only, he/she is reimbursed in cash when such tickets are purchased.
- 6.2.8 The scholar is entitled to annual travel tickets per Qatar Airways economy class rates.
- 6.2.9 In the event that the scholar has completed the studies and does not serve at Qatar University for an equivalent period to that of the study, the scholar must pay back all the expenses paid during the scholarship period. In the event of resignation or disciplinary dismissal, the scholar shall pay back the scholarship expenses for the remaining period only without having to pay for the served period. If the end of service is not due to either of these causes, the scholar is not obliged to pay back any amount.

7. Absence from Studies

- 7.1 If the scholar is absent from studies without an acceptable reason, he/she is not entitled to the monthly allowances. The period of absence shall be included within the scholarship period originally granted to obtain the degree. If the scholar's absence is for an acceptable reason, he/she is entitled to the monthly allowances as a scholar and the monthly salary. The period of absence shall not be included within the period set for him to obtain the degree.
- 7.2 A medical report may justify absence, if it is approved and authenticated by the concerned official entities in the State of Qatar and the concerned medical authorities at Qatari embassies abroad.
- 7.3 If the scholar's illness prevents him/her from conducting studies during his/her presence in Qatar, the medical reports approved by the official authorities concerned in Qatar shall be accepted.
- 7.4 The full monthly allowances shall be paid to the scholar for six months from the date he/she is absent from study. The monthly allowances shall be reduced by half during the following six months, if the inability to study is confirmed by a medical report which is officially approved. In such case, the scholar shall not be paid the allowances.
- 7.5 One year after the ill scholar's absence from study, and on the basis of medical reports officially approved by the concerned Qatari authorities, the Human Resources Committee (scholarships) shall decide the scholar's return to study or postponement of the scholarship until the scholar recovers. The period of absence from study shall not be included within the original period set to obtain the degree.

- 7.6 A scholar is allowed to be absent for not more than two weeks and to return to Qatar in the event of death of a parent, spouse, brother or son. In this case, the scholar shall be paid a return travel ticket (tourist class). His/her financial allowances shall continue for such period of absence, provided that the death is authenticated by an official certificate.
- 7.7 A female scholar is entitled to a two-month paid leave from the date she gives birth to a child. In this case, she is only entitled to her monthly allowances as scholar for these two months in addition to her salary as employee. She has to resume her studies directly after the end of the maternity leave, otherwise her scholarship shall be stopped as well as her financial allowances as a scholar and salary as an employee.

8. Scholars' Families

- 8.1 A married scholar accompanied by his/her spouse and children at the place of study is entitled to a monthly allowance for his/her spouse (the amount of which is in accordance with Qatar University's by-laws) in proportion to his/her monthly allowances, as well as a monthly allowance for each child (in accordance with Qatar University's financial by-laws) for a maximum of three children under eighteen according to the following conditions:
 - 8.1.1 Such financial allowances shall be paid throughout the period when the spouse and children are with the scholar.
- 8.2 No travel tickets shall be paid for the spouse or children to return to the country of study unless at least nine months have passed since the date of the last tickets for them have been paid.
- 8.3 A scholar sponsored by Qatar University is entitled to payment of tuition fees in accordance with Qatar University's academic by-laws.
- 8.4 The scholar shall be covered by the medical insurance system applied at Qatar University according to the scholar's abroad university. Qatar University shall assume the costs of insurance for the spouse/escort and any children up to a maximum of 3 children.

9. Graduates

- 9.1 The scholarship ends from the date the scholar successfully completes the requirements of graduation. Refer to section 2.4.1.
- 9.2 The graduate shall resume his/her job within one month of the date of graduation.

10. Annual Allowances, Incentives Based on Academic Performance

- 10.1 The scholar is entitled to an annual allowance, in addition to incentives for those who are considered outstanding scholars awarded upon the recommendations of the Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer, and accompanied by supporting evidence.
- 10.2 After the scholar has been awarded the Master's degree, he/she shall be interviewed by the Human Resources Committee. Upon a recommendation by the Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer, accompanied by supporting evidence confirming his/her success at the interview, he/she shall be paid a maximum of 10% increase to the basic salary.
- 10.3 Awarding the scholar a maximum increase in the basic salary depends on several factors, such as; the period spent to study for the Master's degree; the nature of the study for the Master's degree; field of specialization, etc; level of the postgraduate program attended by the scholar; the university where the scholar has studied; the scholar's ability to publish some research papers and take part in academic activities during the period of study such as the attendance of conferences and workshops.
- 10.4 After the scholar has been awarded the PhD degree, he/she shall be interviewed by the Human Resources Committee. Upon a recommendation by the Scholarships Office at the Office of the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer confirming his/her success at such interview, he/she shall be paid an increase of maximum 10% to his/her basic salary.