HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

Coordination Division

H-9, Islamabad (Pakistan)

15-54/Coord/2019/QAD/HEC/317 May 13, 2026

Notification

Subject: Mandatory Conduct of GRE/HAT General & Subject Test through HEC-Education Testing Council (ETC) for Admissions to Graduate Programs (Level 7 & 8) from Fall 2026

In pursuance of ensuring quality assurance, transparency, standardization, and merit-based admissions in graduate education, the Higher Education Commission (HEC) has reviewed the existing admission practices for Level 7 and Level 8 programs and observed the need for a uniform and credible assessment mechanism at the national level. Accordingly, the Competent Authority has been pleased to decide that, with effect from Fall 2026 admissions, all admissions to Level 7 (MS/MPhil or equivalent) and Level 8 (PhD or equivalent) programs in public and private sector Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) shall be based on the GRE/HAT General and relevant Subject Test conducted exclusively through the HEC's accredited third body i.e., Education Testing Council (ETC) of HEC.

02. Accordingly, all HEIs are hereby advised to ensure compliance with the following:

i. Admissions to Level 7 and Level 8 programs from Fall 2026 onwards shall only be processed on the basis of GRE/HAT General and relevant Subject Test conducted through HEC-ETC.

ii. Universities shall not conduct independent admission tests in lieu of GRE/HAT General for eligibility determination for Level 7 and Level 8 admissions.

03. Consequently, the following provisions of the Graduate Education Policy (GEP)-2023 stand withdrawn with immediate effect from the date of issuance of this Notification:

- "Conduct a rigorous admission test as an eligibility condition for admission to MS/MPhil/Equivalent programs, with a passing score of 50%."
- "Conduct the test equivalent to GRE/HAT General developed at the University, with the passing score of 60%."

04. This issues with the approval of the Competent Authority.

(Shahzaib Abbasi)
Director (Coordination)

Distribution:

i. The Vice Chancellors/Rectors/Heads of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)
ii. Executive Secretary to the Chairman, HEC
iii. Executive Secretary to the Executive Director, HEC
iv. All Divisions & Regional Centers of HEC

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Coordination Division
H-9, Islamabad (Pakistan)

15-54/Coord/2019/QAD/HEC/317

May 25, 2026

NOTIFICATION

In continuation of this office Notification of even number dated May 13, 2026, and based on the requests received from a no. of universities/DAIs seeking additional time to implement the decision to conduct GRE/HAT-General & GRE/HAT-Subject Test through Education Testing Council (ETC) for admissions to level 7 and 8 programs, respectively, the earlier notified decision has been deferred to take effect from Fall 2027 admissions instead of Fall 2026.

Shahzaib Abbasi
Director (Coordination)

Distribution:

i. The Vice Chancellors/Rectors/Heads of all Universities / DAIs
ii. P.S. to the Chairman, HEC
iii. P.S. to the Executive Director, HEC
iv. All Divisions & Regional Centers of HEC

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