Academic Policies

(Applicable to students admitted to the Four-Year Undergraduate Programme in August 2022 and August 2023)

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Please note: The policy sections relating to 'Good Academic Standing' and 'Internship Credits' will be updated shortly.

1. UG Minimum Credits per Semester

Ashoka recognizes three types of credits. Academic credits are credits from Foundation Courses, Major/Minor courses, Independent Study Modules (ISMs) and Teaching Practicums. Non-academic credits are from co-curricular courses (CCs), Internships, and Vocational Courses. Research credits are credits from the fourth-year research thesis/dissertation.

To remain in good academic standing, students are expected to complete a minimum number of credits in each regular academic semester. This policy governs what this number is in various circumstances.

- 1. The minimum expected credit count per semester is 16 credits (typically the equivalent of four 4-credit courses) from a combination of academic credits and research credits.
- 2. Students who require and have been granted special accommodations by the Office of Learning Support (OLS) due to, for instance, a relevant learning disability can go below the minimum credit count as per the approved accommodation.
- 3. Students who haven't been granted special accommodations can request a reduction to 12 credits in exceptional circumstances only. Such requests need to be well supported by documentation relating to the relevant exceptional circumstances and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. If approved, students will be asked to sign an undertaking that signals a) their acknowledgement of and full responsibility for the implications of going below 16 credits on their further trajectory at Ashoka and b) their commitment to graduating on time or as soon as possible thereafter.
- 4. Some of the implications alluded to in Article 3 may concern:
 - a. the overall duration of the student's UG studies,
 - b. the availability (or lack thereof) of pending courses in the semester in question that students may need, so as to complete some or several of their desired credentials.
- 5. Students in their graduating semester may request a reduction to 12 credits, provided they require no more credits to meet all their graduation requirements. Such students, too, will sign an undertaking signalling that they take full responsibility for the implications of going below 16 credits.
- 6. Late graduates, i.e., students beyond their graduating semester, may enroll for even less than 12 credits, provided they require no more credits to meet all their graduation requirements.

2. UG Maximum Credits per Semester Policy

(This policy is currently under review and may be updated shortly.)

- 1. In their *first semester*, students may take a maximum of 16 academic credits and up to 2 non-academic credits. These will be acquired through taking:
 - *a)* Foundation Courses (FCs), including the Introduction to Critical Thinking course (if assigned) [4 credits],
 - b) English Communications Course (if required) [4 credits], and/or
 - c) Calculus Enabler (if opted for) [4 credits].
 - d) a Co-Curricular course (CC) [2 credits]
- 2. In other semesters, students may take a maximum of 22 academic credits and up to 2 non-academic credits per semester. These will be acquired through taking:
 - a) FCs [4 credits each],
 - b) regular *Major/Minor courses* [typically 4 credits each], *Independent Study Modules* (ISMs) [2 or 4 credits each]. By default, students cannot take ISMs for more than 8 credits during their UG degree.
 - c) Teaching Practica/Assistantships [typically 2 or 4 credits],
 - d) a Co-Curricular course (CC) [2 credits],
 - e) Internship credits [2 credits]
 - f) Vocational courses [2 credits]
- a. There may be department-relative limits on how many credits a student can earn through Teaching Assistantships toward various credentials. Students are advised to inquire about the specifics with their respective home departments.
- b. In some departments, students pursuing Teaching Assistantships receive remuneration, not credits. For students pursuing such a Teaching Assistantship in their fifth semesters or beyond, the maximum credit count in that semester is 22 credits (in addition to their o-credit Teaching Assistantship).
- c.Research credits can be earned only in the seventh and eighth semesters. The restriction on maximum credits (academic or non-academic) does not apply to research credits.
- 3. The maximum course load in a **summer semester** is 8 academic credits and 4 non-academic credits. These may be acquired through a suitable combination of
 - a) FCs (where still required) [4 credits each],
 - b) taking regular *Major/Minor courses* [4 credits each],
 - c) pursuing ISMs [2 or 4 credits each],
 - d) taking a CC, if offered [2 credits],
 - e) pursuing a Teaching Assistantship [2 or 4 credits],
 - f) Internship [2 or 4 credits]

3. Course Adjustment

A student may add or drop or withdraw from a course in any semester, subject to certain deadlines and conditions or permissions.

Add Course		
Week 1	Add a course without permission	
Week 2-4	Add a course only if faculty agrees	
Drop Course		
Weeks 1-2	Self-drop without permission	
Weeks 3-4	Drop after informing faculty	
Withdraw from Course		
Weeks 5-8	Withdraw after informing faculty; a 'W' will show on the transcript	
Week 9 and later	Withdraw after informing faculty; a 'W' with F (a fail notation) or X (an exceptional circumstances notation) will show on the transcript	

Note that a student can only withdraw from a course if, by doing so, they do not drop below the minimum credit requirement per semester. Exceptions to this may only be requested from the second semester onwards and require approval from the Office of Academic Affairs. Note: the timeline during the summer semesters varies from the one given here and is communicated separately.

4. Examination and Grading Systems

Some (but not all) courses will have final examinations scheduled for examination week. The examination and its form are at the discretion of the professor.

Grading System

For every course, the student will receive a final letter grade. These grades are calibrated with GPA quality points. The grid below shows how letter grades and GPA Quality Points relate:

Letter Grade	GPA Quality Points
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3

В	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
С	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1.0
D-	0.7
F	0

5. Auditing courses

Students in their first semester cannot audit courses. In the summer, no course can be audited. Starting in the second semester, a student may audit up to two courses per semester. Auditing a course does not yield credits, but will show on the transcript and requires that the student submit work as determined by the concerned faculty. A student who wishes to audit a given course must submit an audit request to the faculty through the relevant AMS portal. Note that faculty members typically limit the number of auditing students that they allow in their classroom and that granting audit requests is at the discretion of individual faculty members only. Students may withdraw, without consequence, from a course that they audit by the end of Week 4. Those who drop an audit course after Week 4 will get a WAU on their transcript.

6. Audit-to-Credit conversion

After a student has been granted permission to audit a course, it may happen that they want to take the course for credit. It cannot be guaranteed that this will be possible. Note that students who have been on the waiting list to take the course for credit will be allowed to take the course for credit first. Only if there is no further student on the waiting list thereafter, or once the waiting list has been disabled, can a request for a change in course status from audit to credit be considered. A student who wants to change their status from audit to credit must send a request to the Office of Academic Affairs and will also need permission from the concerned faculty. In principle, no such requests will be granted past Week 4 of a regular semester.

7. Credit-to-Audit conversion

If, in the course of the semester, a student realises that they have taken on too much, wish to drop a course for credit, but still want to be part of the course and engage with it, they can request to have their course status converted from registration for credit to registration for audit. The deadline for doing this is tied to the deadline for opting for the Pass/Fail option (see below): the end of Week 8. A course status cannot be converted from credit to audit past that deadline, and a

course cannot be converted from credit to audit if, by doing so, the student falls below the minimum credits per semester requirement.

8. Pass/Fail Policy

- 1. Students can opt for P/F grading for their Major/Minor, FC (including ICT), and CTS courses, except for ISMs and Capstone/research related courses, at the time of registration. The default option is the usual letter grading system.
- 2. Students can change a course grading system from the letter grading system to the P/F system. The last date for doing so is the end of Week 8 in a regular semester, the end of Week 4 in the summer semester. After this date, choices cannot be modified.
- 3. UG students can exercise the P/F option for a maximum of 12 credits for the entire duration of the 4-year academic program. In addition, the P/F option cannot be exercised for more than 8 credits within the first three years. MLS students can exercise the P/F option for a maximum of 4 credits for the entire duration of the academic program. MA/M.Sc/PhD students are not eligible to opt for the P/F option for any of their credits.
- 4. Students can exercise this option only for one course in a semester. If the grade is P, the course cannot be retaken.
- 5. A course taken with letter grading may be retaken as a course with P/F grading (subject to the rules that allow for the repetition of courses). If the course is then passed, the P will count and not the previous grade.
- 6. Instructors will assign grades according to the letter grading system.
- 7. The grade of P in P/F represents the letter grades A to D—. The grade F in P/F represents the letter grade F. The letter grades assigned by faculty will be changed to P/F by the OAA.
- 8. A grade of P does not impact the GPA and is not counted in the calculation of the CGPA.
- 9. A course with a grade of P counts towards prerequisites and towards credit requirements.
- 10. In a semester in which a P grade has been awarded, the student is not eligible for the Dean's List.
- 11. Semesters in which a P grade has been taken will count towards the Latin Honours, but only courses that have both credit and regular letter grades associated with them count.

9. Dean's List

In every regular semester, undergraduate students who have completed at least 16 undergraduate academic credits in that semester, who have not taken a Pass/Fail

option in that semester, and whose GPA in that semester is \geq 3.65 make the Dean's List in that semester. Similarly, students in their ASP year who have completed 16 credits counting towards the ASP in a given semester, have not taken a Pass/Fail option in that semester, and whose GPA in that semester is \geq 3.65 make the Dean's List. The semesters in which a student makes the Dean's List will be marked on the transcript and students who make the Dean's List by the end of the regular semester will be notified about this by the Dean of Academic Affairs.

10. Latin Honours

Based on the CGPA calculated for your courses taken at Ashoka during your undergraduate studies, you may be awarded one of the following Honours upon graduation:

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CUM LAUDE (CGPA \geq 3.60)
MAGNA CUM LAUDE (CGPA \geq 3.75)
SUMMA CUM LAUDE (CGPA \geq 3.90)
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11. Incomplete Grade Policy

I. Default expectations

- 1. Ashoka University expects its students to complete all course requirements on schedule.
- 2. It is assumed that faculty are prudent in setting up their course requirements realistically and that faculty make these requirements clear to students early in the semester.
- 3. It is also assumed that students, in consultation with their faculty mentors or academic advisors, will undertake responsibilities commensurate with their abilities and commitments.

II. Purpose of the Incomplete Grade

- 4. Students should neither request nor receive an Incomplete (I) grade for a course simply because of failure to complete required assignments on time.
- 5. Incomplete grades should be granted by faculty only to students who have been working throughout the semester and only near the end face sudden illness or injury, family crises, or some other substantiated unforeseen circumstance beyond the control of the student that would make it impossible to complete all course requirements by the end of the semester. Students who are not deemed eligible may still request the OAA for a 'WF' grade and repeat the course at a later time.

III. Application for Incomplete and Duration of Incomplete

- 6. Students who believe that they can demonstrate a legitimate need for an Incomplete should:
 - 1. 6.1. request their faculty to grant them an Incomplete;
 - 2. 6.2. request their faculty to clearly specify the terms of the Incomplete.
- 7. The deadline for completing the process specified in Art. 6 is the last day of finals week.

- 8. Unless the instructor stipulates a shorter time period for the completion of the work, the terms of the Incomplete must be satisfied within six weeks of the beginning of the regular semester following the semester in which the Incomplete was granted. In exceptional cases (e.g., lengthy illnesses) the instructor (not the student) may petition the OAA to extend the period of the Incomplete.
- 9. Whether an Incomplete should be granted and if so, how much extra time the student will be given to complete their work, is determined solely by the concerned faculty, in light of their assessment of the circumstances and considerations of fairness.

IV. Implementation of Incomplete Grades and Grade Updates

- 10. To implement an Incomplete for the student, faculty assign an I grade instead of a regular grade when, at the end of the semester, they assign grades to their students on AMS.
- 11. Once the terms of the Incomplete have been fulfilled, faculty assign the final grade for the course, by entering the updated grade themselves on AMS if the window to update the grade is open at the time, or by alerting the OAA to the updated grade.
- 12. Incompletes from a previous semester will automatically convert to F grades at the end of Week 8 of the next regular semester (six weeks plus two weeks for grading), unless a request for an extension has been approved and implemented by the OAA.

V. Incompletes, Prerequisites, and Graduation

- 13. As long as an I grade remains on their record for a specific course, a student may not be enrolled for credit in any course which has that specific course as a stated prerequisite, unless they have requested and received a waiver from the faculty.
- 14. A student cannot graduate while an I grade remains on their record with the following exception: a student who otherwise meets all graduation requirements but continues to have an I grade will be marked as graduated and the course with the I grade will be assigned a W grade.

12. Course Repeat Policy

- (a) Students may repeat a course in which they receive the grade F.
- (b) Students may also repeat a course in which they receive a passing grade (Dorabove). However, this option can be exercised only three times during the 4-year UG Programme, of which no more than two repeats will be granted in the first three years. Note that this restriction does not apply to (a).

General

If, by the end of the stipulated period of the programme, a student has enough credits to graduate, the student will be marked as graduated. Students cannot defer graduation to retake a course.

Furthermore, if the student has opted for the P/F grading option and receives a grade of P, then the course cannot be repeated.

Among multiple course-retake attempts, the one with the best grade will be counted; the others will remain on the transcript, but will not count towards the student's CGPA.

13. Attendance Policy

Promptness and regular class attendance are expected of all students and the University expects each student to take full responsibility for their academic work and academic progress. Students can take up to three absences from a class without providing any documentation. If students exceed these three absences, the attendance policy of the respective instructor comes into force. Attendance policies will vary across departments and instructors. Some may not take attendance, others may require it and impose sanctions, including failure in the course, if a certain number of absences is exceeded. Students are thus advised to make sure they understand the various attendance requirements governing their various courses.

In case of exceptional circumstances having to do with family crises or mental-health concerns, students are advised to reach out to the Ashoka Center for Well-Being and, via Ashoka's Academic Management System (AMS), place a request to the Office of Academic Affairs, who will assist them and try to mediate in their communications with faculty where required.

Students who represent Ashoka in any capacity (e.g. as athletes or artists in competition or for extra-curricular and inter-university events on and off campus) must route their request for absences through the appropriate channels. Athletes write to sports@ashoka.edu.in; other students, groups, clubs, and societies send an email to the Office of Student Life, giving the details of the event with the date, the name of professor, and course details. Such requests must be submitted way ahead of the event, ideally about 2 weeks earlier. While they are encouraged to support students who represent Ashoka (maximally 4 absences) by excusing them, the final decision regarding the handling of such absences lies with the individual faculty members. Students are, in turn, advised to use their three excused absences for such events, wherever possible.

14. Leave of Absence Policy

Exceptional circumstances, such as health- or family-related difficulties, may arise in which a student takes their best option to be that of taking a Leave of Absence (LOA). The following regulations specify the procedure governing such requests followed by the Office of Academic Affairs.

- 1. Exceptions from this policy must be approved by the OAA. An LOA must always be requested and can only be granted for one full semester only.
 - 1.1 If the request for an LOA is received within eight weeks of the start of the semester and if the request is subsequently granted, the OAA will update the student's semester status to LOA and remove the student from all the

- courses they are enrolled in. As a result, the semester disappears from the student's transcript.
- 1.2 If the request for an LOA is received after eight weeks of the start of the semester and if the request is subsequently granted, the semester will not be removed from the student's transcript. The OAA will update the student's semester status to LOA and withdraw the student from all their courses with a WX grade.
- 1.3 If, before the point in time a request for an LOA is approved (or after, for instance, in case a decision on an alleged Academic Integrity Violation is pending) a final grade has been given to the student for a course in the semester for which the LOA is requested, then even if the LOA is granted, that final grade will stay on the transcript.
- 1.4 An LOA is usually not granted during the first semester.
- 1.5 An LOA must be requested no later than the last day of the semester for which it is being requested.
- 2. To request an LOA, the student must raise a request to the OAA on AMS to communicate their request and provide their reasons for seeking the LOA.
- 3. No more than four LoAs may be granted to a student during the 4-year UG programme. In addition, no more than three LOAs may be granted to a student during the first three years of the UG programme.
- 4. For students enrolled in one-year Master's programmes (e.g., MLS) no more than one LOA can be granted. For students enrolled in two-year Master's programmes and PhD students, no more than two LOAs can be granted.

For MLS, M.A/M.Sc, and PhD students, a request for an LOA should be supported by an email from their respective advisor(s).

15. Academic Integrity Policy

Writing that borrows from another person's work without appropriate acknowledgment challenges the academic integrity of a university community. Clear attribution and the acknowledgement of authorship and sources is a practice that Ashoka University seeks to inculcate in its students. Completing a workshop on academic integrity is mandatory for students in their first semester. Violating Academic Integrity is a serious offence, must be reported, may become a part of a student's permanent file, may show on the transcript, and is generally met with severe disciplinary action. A student may also be required to complete a refresher workshop on academic integrity. Note that a student cannot graduate if such a mandatory workshop is pending. (The detailed document for the Academic Integrity policy is uploaded on myashoka portal under the policies and documents section of Office of Academic Affairs.)

16. Graduation Policy

This policy briefly outlines the general requirements for students to graduate from Ashoka University, and also the specific requirements that are to be met to graduate on time. It then provides more specific regulations governing those students who graduate late because they either have pending work to complete or because they have to meet other graduation requirements, such as the defence or submission of a thesis or a research project or the completion of mandatory training in academic integrity.

I. General Graduation Requirements

As undergraduate (UG) students pursue their studies at Ashoka University, they need to earn credits to meet their various degree requirements. Specifics regarding the general degree requirements are detailed in the UG Handbook. Programme-specific requirements are made available by and can be obtained from the Heads or representatives of the individual departments and programmes.

- 1. The regular duration during which students are expected to complete their undergraduate degree at Ashoka University is three years for a 3-year degree, four years for a 4-year degree and four years for a four-year degree with research. That said, in accordance with UGC regulations, a student must graduate within five years for a 3-year degree and within 6 years for a 4-year degree. Only in exceptional cases, the Vice-Chancellor may approve an extension to an additional year in either case.
 - 1. Students must graduate in the semester in which they complete all their graduation requirements and they must be enrolled in that semester to graduate in it. Students cannot graduate before the minimum period of enrolment as decided by the UGC.
 - 2. The total time a student is enrolled at the University in a given programme must not exceed the maximum duration allowed for the completion of the graduation requirements associated with that programme as per UGC Guidelines.
 - 3. Graduation requirements include, first and foremost, the completion of pending coursework as per the programme requirements. They may also include:
 - 1. 3.1 the completion of work on a thesis or research project as per the programme requirements;
 - 2. 3.2 the defense of a thesis or research project as per the programme requirements;
 - 3. 3.3 the completion of a mandatory workshop concerning academic integrity as per the *Academic Integrity Policy*; and
 - 4. 3.4 meeting other mandatory requirements as per applicable University regulations.

4. The submission of semester fees does not constitute a right for a student to continue their studies.

II. Students graduating on time

- 5. To graduate on time in a given semester, a student must be enrolled in the semester and complete all graduation requirements by the relevant semester deadlines.
- 6. To ensure that faculty will have time to evaluate the student's work and then submit their grades by the grade submission deadline, the relevant semester deadlines for the presentation and submission of academic work will lie before the grade submission deadline of the semester in question, which is, in turn, set and communicated by the OAA.
- 7. Within the constraints set out in 5, the relevant semester deadline for the submission of work or defence of theses or research projects must be set in line with departmental regulations.
- 7. Where applicable, it is the student's responsibility to schedule a suitable date for their thesis defence or the presentation of their research project with the concerned faculty. It is expected that faculty will make reasonable accommodations to attend such a defence or presentation so as to enable timely graduation.
- 8. Where applicable, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that they complete requirements such as mandatory workshops or other requirements such as may derive from further University regulations by the deadline for the completion of such requirements set by the OAA. Students will not graduate unless and until they do meet these requirements, even if they have completed all their academic work.

III. Students graduating late

- 9. A student who fails to submit pending work, defend their thesis, or present their research project by the relevant deadline in a given semester may be granted an Incomplete grade on their work by the concerned faculty. If an Incomplete has been granted, then, at the time of submitting their semester grades, the relevant faculty will set the relevant student's grade(s) to Incomplete. Once such a student completes their requirements either in the same semester but past the original submission deadline or in the next regular semester, but before the Incomplete submission deadline, as laid out in Art. 10-3.8 above they will be graduating as late graduates.
- 10. Whether a student is permitted to submit pending work late, or defend a thesis late, or present their research project late and thus receive an Incomplete grade on their pending evaluation is an academic matter, is at the discretion of the faculty members who evaluate the student's work, and is a decision that, where applicable, will be taken in line with departmental regulations.

- 11. A student who, by the end of a particular semester, has yet to complete pending work or other requirements required for their graduation (as per Art. 3.3 or 3.4) must be enrolled in the next semester. Typically, the next semester will be the next regular semester, but if suitable arrangements can be made that allow the student to complete their work over the summer, it may also be the summer semester.
- 12. Students who enroll in a semester only for the purpose of completing pending work or of meeting other mandatory requirements as per Art. 3.3 and 3.4 are exempt from paying tuition fees.
 - 12.1. Other fees such as fees arising in the context of residing on campus will arise as usual.
 - 12.2. Students who only need to submit pending work or complete other requirements as per Art. 3 are not required to reside on campus. Students who can establish that for them, staying on campus is required to complete their requirements, must seek approval for remaining on campus from the Office of Student Affairs.
 - 12.3. Students may be required to return to campus temporarily to complete certain mandatory requirements, such as a mandatory workshop or a thesis defence.
- 13. Once an enrolled late graduate has completed all their pending work, the relevant faculty will adjust the student's Incomplete grade to the relevant letter grade.
- 14. Once a student has met both their academic and other relevant graduation requirements, the OAA will set the student's degree requirements to "Met." The student will be added to the list of late graduates and their graduation papers will be processed at the earliest possible time thereafter.