

# Frequently Asked Questions

### **1- What does the Orientation Week mean?**

The Orientation Week (OW) is a set of events organized by the Preparatory Year Dean-ship (PYD) during the first week of studies. Students attend the OW according to a specific schedule. The program aims at introducing the PYD's academic system and available services to the students, offering relevant advice and directions, as well as meeting the deans of targeted colleges operating under the preparatory year system. During the OW, the university ID is issued and the student account on the Students Information System (SIS) is activated.

### **2- Do students have to attend?**

Yes, students have to attend the OW. If they don't, they will be marked absent for this week. This period is included in the established absence proportion according to rules and regulations. Students can also see the Students' Supervisor of the track they are enrolled in.

### **3- When do students receive the university ID?**

Students can get their university ID during the OW after receiving a message with directions to collect it from the Safety and Security Administration (Building 40) on condition that an official personal photo of the student is provided.

### **4- What does English Placement Test mean? And is it included in GPA?**

It is a test prepared by the Department of English Language (before the OW) for the PYD students to determine their levels in English language skills. The main aim is to categorize students into levels that match their abilities in order to derive the expected benefits from the Intensive English Program. The Placement Test (PT) is neither included in the students' assessment system nor in GPA. All students must sit for the PT and absentees will take full responsibility for missing it.

### **5- Why is the English Placement Test important for students?**

Students are assigned to appropriate levels based on the Placement Test. Therefore, students should answer the questions carefully and seriously in order to be placed in the right levels that match their abilities.

### **6- What does the Math Placement Test mean? And is it included in GPA?**

It is a test prepared by the Department of Basic Sciences (before the OW) for the PYD students (Engineering and Science Tracks only) to determine their level in math skills and identify the areas that need to be improved more than others in order to derive the expected benefits from taking the math course. All students must sit for the test, and absentees will take full responsibility of missing it.

### **7- Do students who have an IELTS certificate get exempted from the English Language course?**

they get exempted for the General English course only provided that the original certificate is submitted within a week after the studies begin and the achieved grade must be

6 or higher. No other certificates are accepted.

**8- How do students register the classes they study at Prep Year?**

logging into their personal accounts at the university website and following the registration steps as shown in the Registration Manual to be received during the Orientation Week. Students will get a username and a password during the OW.

**9- What is the academic system at the Preparatory Year?**

Prep Year has an annual academic system in which students must complete all courses in two academic terms. A summer term is provided for students who fail in no more than (3) courses and achieve a GPA of 3 or higher.

**10- When do studies start at the Preparatory Year?**

class starts on the first day of the academic calendar as decided by the respected university council.

**11- Is the Preparatory Year the student's first university year?**

Yes, it is his first university year at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University (IAU), and all his recorded hours are included in the cumulative GPA.

**12- What is the cumulative GPA?**

It is the sum of the total number of points obtained by the student in all the courses he has taken since joining the university divided by the total number of units prescribed for those courses (see Section 3.6: Calculating the semester and cumulative GPA - Page 15 in the Student Guide).

**13- What are the academic tracks in the Preparatory Year at IAU?**

There are five academic tracks at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University under the supervision of the PYD, namely the Health Track 1 (College of Nursing, Public Health and Health Informatics), the Health Track 2 (College of Medicine, College of Dentistry, College of Applied Medical Sciences and College of Clinical Pharmacy), the Engineering Track (College of Architecture and Planning, College of Engineering and College of Design), the Science Track (College of Computer Science and Information Technology, College of Science, and College of Business Administration), and the Humanities Track (later included)

**14- Can a student switch from one track to another in the Preparatory Year?**

The student cannot switch from one path to another in the Preparatory Year.

**15- Is absenteeism calculated from the start of the academic year in the Preparatory Year?**

Yes, absence is counted starting from the first lecture on the first day of the studies until the last day before the final tests. The absence will be recorded electronically via the SIS.

**16- Whom should the student contact in case of absence for compelling excuses?**

If the student has a compelling excuse for missing a lecture, he must submit it according to the regulations and instructions of the Excuse Acceptance Committee to the Student Supervisor of the track. Supporting documents should be submitted to the concerned committee for examination and approval (see Question 28).

**17- Are the warning and excessive absence hours different in the general English course according to levels?**

Yes, they differ, as shown in the table below:

Course and Level		Early Warning 10%	Excessive Absenteeism More than 15%
ENG 101	Beginners	40 hours	60 hours
	Intermediate	35 hours	50 hours
	Advanced	25 hours	40 hours

Note: The warning and excessive absence hours are counted taking into consideration that the academic year lasts 30 weeks and ENG 101 is an annual course.

**18- When is the student denied entry to the final examinations in the Preparatory Year?**

The student is denied entry to the final exams if his absenteeism exceeds 15% without an acceptable excuse for the lectures and practical lessons specified for each course during the semester. His final score will be marked as DN.

**19- Are medical reports and documents issued by public hospitals accepted?**

They are accepted only once a semester and they are subject to approval by the General Department of Health (see Question 28).

**20- What are the accredited units and contact hours?**

- Accredited Units: This is a unit of measurement to determine the weight of each course in relation to the other courses. It refers also to the hours that are counted in the student's academic record.

- Contact Hours: The total of lectures and practical sessions attended by the student in the classroom each week to acquire the skills related to the course.

**21- Pass/Fail Conditions:**

A student passes the Preparatory Year course, if he/she receives a "D" (at least 60/100) as a final score.

In order to pass, the student must succeed in all courses and the cumulative GPA should not be less than three out of five by the end of the Preparatory Year course.

**22- When does the student retake the course(s) he failed?**

If the student fails one course, he may retake it during the summer term, taking into consideration the maximum number of hours allowed. However, if the course in which

the student failed in the first term is a prerequisite to study another course, the student registers for the first course in the second term and for the second course in the summer school. As for the general English course (ENG 101), it is an annual course and, therefore, cannot be taken in the summer school. The same is true for Physics, Chemistry, and Biology courses for the health track as they are annual courses.

### **23-What opportunities are there for students who are stuck in the preparatory year?**

If the student misses the opportunity to complete the Preparatory Year's courses in the two terms and the summer school or has an average of less than three (3/5), he may apply for transfer to any college that does not require the Preparatory Year at IAU according to the conditions determined by the college as well as IAU's inter-college transfer rules listed in the Studies and Examinations Chart and its implementation regulations. The most important condition is that the student should not have a GPA lower than 2 out of 5.

### **24- Is the grade of the course in which the student failed considered if he retakes it and passes?**

Yes, it is calculated in the student's GPA.

### **25- Does a student who has sat for the main test have the right to take an alternative test?**

According to the rules and the regulations of Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University, a student is not allowed to sit for an alternative test as long as he sat for the main one.

### **26- What is the procedure taken in case a student skips the Mid-term Test or Final Exam due to a compelling excuse?**

If the student misses the test/exam due to a compelling excuse, he can provide his excuse to the Students' Supervisor of his track within seven days from the date of absence. The excuse should be submitted by the student himself or, in case he is not able to make it, by his legal guardian or an authorized person. Excuses are electronically submitted to the Excuse Acceptance Committee. In case of acceptance, the student's IC score is monitored for the Final Exam and a Complementary Exam is set. As for the Mid-term Test, a Re-take Test is set within two weeks from the regular test. The student is informed of the test/exam timing and absence will not be accepted.

### **27- What are the excuses that can be accepted?**

**Overall, the excuses that can be accepted are listed below:**

A- Medical excuses issued by the medical authorities competent to grant sick leave after performing a medical examination, namely:

- Hospitals and health centers affiliated to the Ministry of Health.
- Specialized public hospitals.
- Private hospitals, clinics, and medical centers authorized by the Ministry of Health.

B- Traffic accidents:

- The excuse is accepted on the basis of an accident report issued by 'Najm' company and certified by the Traffic Department. The report should contain the student's

full name as well as the date and timing of the accident.

C- Death cases:

- Only first-degree kinship death excuses, namely for a father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, husband, wife, grandfather, and grandmother, are accepted. These excuses should be provided within three days. A death certificate, a burial permit, and a copy of the ID of the deceased are required.

**28- What is the procedure taken in the event of student objection to the Mid-term Test or Final Exam?**

The executive rules of Articles 31 to 41 of IAU's study and examination regulations stipulate that:

- The student must request a second correction from the dean or his deputy within two weeks after results announcement.
- The approval of the College Council or its authorized deputy is required.
- The Council shall determine the faculty who will be responsible for the second correction.
- Once the second correction is performed, the Council shall receive the result and announce its final decision.
- In case of error, the grade can be amended by the Deanship of Admissions and Registration before the second term final exam take place.

**29- Which body is responsible for selecting students' specialization after graduating from the Preparatory Year?**

The PYD is not responsible for selecting students' specialization. It is the Admissions and Registration Deanship that is responsible for the tracking and specialization of students in coordination with the target colleges.

**30- What are the necessary procedures to withdraw from studies at IAU?**

The student can withdraw from studies at IAU electronically by logging into his account in the Students Records System and submitting a clearance request. Then, to finalize the withdrawal procedures, the student should consult all concerned institutions, namely the College, the Security and Safety Department, The Deanship of Libraries, the Housing Department, the Students Affairs Deanship, and the Admissions and Registration Deanship.

**31- How can a student monitor his course attendance?**

The student can monitor his attendance and absenteeism through mobile applications that show the number and rate of course absence hours. In case the online information is lacking, the student can consult the Students Supervisor at the Deanship or the course teacher.

**32- How can a student know his grades at the Preparatory Year?**

Grades are instantaneously announced by the teacher on Blackboard at the IAU official website.

**33- How can a student get his textbooks at the Preparatory Year?**

The student has to have all the required textbooks in order to take his courses regularly.

**34- What is the Student Advisory Council?**

The Student Advisory Council (SAC) consists of a group of elected students and is chaired by the Dean of the Preparatory Year or his deputy. The SAC represents a link between the students and the deanship and aims to give the students the opportunity to provide comments and suggestions to the Dean about their fields of interest and potential problems.

**35- Are there any health services at the Preparatory Year?**

Yes. There is an on-campus health clinic (Building 50). This clinic is in charge of providing comprehensive medical

**36- What is E-learning?**

E-learning stands for a method of learning that uses modern communication techniques through the computer, its network, and its multimedia such as audio, video, and electronic libraries. This method aims to deliver information to the learner swiftly, effortlessly, and usefully. The Deanship offers two e-learning platforms, namely Blackboard (for all courses) and Oxford Learn (exclusively for ENG 101 and 102).

**37- What are the violations that entail a punishment at IAU?**

Violations can be classified as follows:

A) Academic violations:

- Exceeding the accepted absence rate, which is determined as 15%, without acceptable excuses.
- Obstructing lectures, laboratory sessions, or tests.
- All forms of cheating (or cheating attempts).
- Impersonating another student in one way or another in tests or in panel discussions.

B) Behavioral violations:

- All forms of defamation of religion, the nation, or the university.
- Verbal or physical assaults against any of the IAU or Preparatory Year staff members.
- Smoking on campus.
- Improper appearance such as wearing improper clothes, necklaces, and bracelets as well as having long hair.
- Misusing or tampering with appliances and equipment on campus.
- Theft or attempted thefts.
- All forms of tribal or racial intolerance against students or IAU staff members.
- Falsifying (or attempting to falsify) official university documents and using them for illegitimate purposes.

C) Traffic violations:

- Wrong parking or parking in reserved space.
- Contravention of security forces instructions.
- Tampering (or attempting to tamper) with other people's cars.

D) Regulatory violations:

- Organizing (or participating in) activities on campus, issuing (or distributing) publications, circulars, or posters, and raising funds, donations, or signatures without the consent of the official authorities at IAU.
- Violating the religious and social principles of the country; undermining national unity verbally or physically; advocating and promoting adherence to hostile organizations or political and regional ideologies that undermine the nation on campus.
- Any other violation that the IAU or PYD considers as a breach to its regulations, instructions, and decisions.

### **38- What are the disciplinary penalties at IAU?**

The IAU shall have the right to take appropriate disciplinary action students who violate the university's rules and regulations. Disciplinary penalties are classified as follows:

A) Essential Penalties:

- A warning is handed over to the student himself and sent to his guardian.
- Denying registration for a course (or courses) for one academic term.
- Denying sitting for the Final Exam or registration for all courses; announcing 'technical failure'.
- Dismissal from university for one academic term.
- Cancelling a student's result in one or more courses (a maximum of 3) and announcing his technical failure.
- Dismissal from university for one (or more) academic term(s).
- Final dismissal from IAU.
- The student shall bear the cost of the damages he incurred in addition to the repairs (including private rights).

B) Alternative Penalties:

They consist in denying access to one or all university service(s)/privilege(s) for one (or more) academic term(s). These services/privileges are stated below:

- Book borrowing from the library.
- Access to the university housing.
- Students' trips and visits.
- Representing the university in student delegations.

- Access to the university internet network.
- Receiving subsidies and loans from the Students Fund (possible denial for no more than two terms).
- Registration in Student Employment Programs (possible denial for no more than two terms).
- Having travel ticket reductions (possible denial for no more than two terms).
- Having restaurant ticket reductions (possible denial for no more than one term).
- Access to the university's sports and leisure facilities (possible denial for no more than two terms).

### **39- Can I have a monthly allowance? If yes, how?**

Yes, every student can receive a monthly allowance which is set as 850 SR for the Humanities Track and 1000 SR for the Science/Health Track. Ten riyals are deducted monthly to the Students Takaful Fund. The allowance is given according to the criteria listed below:

- Regular attendance.
- Saudi citizenship (or being a descendant of a Saudi mother).
- Not being an employee.
- Having a valid bank account and providing the e-services with the necessary details.

For further information, please contact the Allowance Section in the Admission and Registration Department via their official email address [register@iau.edu.sa](mailto:register@iau.edu.sa).