Admission Criteria of Master of Science (MSc) in Cybersecurity Engineering – MCSE

Ref: UC/ P 769/2025

As approved by University Council Decision No. UC/2583/11/2024-25 of meeting No. UC/11/2024-25 held on Tuesday the 15th of July 2025.

The admission criteria will take effect upon approval by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) for the commencement of admissions to the programme.

Admission Criteria
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN CYBERSECURITY ENGINEERING (MCSE)

Admission to Ahlia University (AU) is competitive and based on academic achievements. Applications are welcome from all students, regardless of race, colour, gender, religion, nationality, or physical or learning disability. Admission is purely based on merit.

General admission requirement:

1. Applicants for a postgraduate degree must have completed a bachelor's degree at an accredited institution of higher education.
2. An interview with a relevant specialised committee is required for admission to all postgraduate programmes.
3. The final decision of the applicant's admission to the relevant programme will be based on the merit list of the applicants.
4. The applicant must be medically fit for the academic programme they wish to enrol in.

Programme specific criteria:

In addition to the previously mentioned criteria, the following are specific criteria to each graduate programme and the student must meet those criteria to be eligible for such programme.

College	**Information Technology**
Programme	**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN CYBERSECURITY ENGINEERING (MCSE)**
Required Specialisation	A recognised and endorsed bachelor's degree or its equivalent in the following disciplines: Information technology (IT), Computer Science, management information system (MIS), Information Systems (IS), Informatic, any related engineering specialty (electrical, communication, computer, etc.), mathematical sciences, or any other IT related field. Applicants holding an endorsed bachelor's degree in disciplines other than those listed above may be required to take

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>foundation courses, based on recommendations of the interview committee.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) requirement</td><td>A minimum CGPA at the bachelor’s degree level of 2.5 or its equivalent.

Applicants with CGPA lower than 2.5 but ≥ 2.0 or its equivalent at the bachelor’s degree level may be considered for admission, based on recommendations of the interview committee.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Passing an Interview</td><td>All applicants must pass an interview. Applicants will be assessed based on the interview rubric and must score a minimum of 70% to be accepted.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Work Experience and Professional Courses/Certificates</td><td>Applicants who hold a recognised and endorsed bachelor’s degree in disciplines other than the ones mentioned above and have work experience of at least one year and/or have professional certificates related to the field of IT, Computer Science, Computing or Engineering, may be exempted from the foundation courses and accepted directly to the programme.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Transferred Students</td><td>Applicants transferring from other postgraduate programmes will be subject to the above admission criteria and may receive exemption from equivalent courses completed in their former programme in line with Ahlia University External Transfer Policy.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Language Requirements</td><td>Applicants who earned their bachelor’s degree from a programme where English is not the language of instruction must submit one of the following qualifications to meet AU English proficiency requirements:

<table>
<tr><th>Criteria</th><th>Score</th></tr>
<tr><td>TOEFL</td><td>≥ 550 or its equivalent</td></tr>
<tr><td>IELTS</td><td>≥ 6.0 or its equivalent</td></tr>
<tr><td>Pass Ahlia University English Placement Test</td><td>≥ 70%</td></tr>
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The Final admission will be based on the merit list of the applicants.

Interview Evaluation Rubrics
College of Information Technology
Master of Science in Cybersecurity Engineering (MCSE)

Name of Student		**Student ID**			
Name of Interviewer (Signature)		**Semester**			
			First		**Second**

Criteria	**Exceeds Expectations (Score: 10)**	**Meets Expectations (Score: 7)**	**Does Not Meet Expectations (Score: 5)**	**Score**
Communication Skills	Clearly articulates ideas with technical accuracy and confidence. Uses appropriate terminology and demonstrates strong clarity and engagement.	Communicates adequately with general clarity and basic use of terminology.	Lacks clarity, organization, or relevance in communication.	
Knowledge & Technical Readiness	Holds a relevant bachelor's degree (e.g., IT, CS, Engineering) with strong performance. Demonstrates solid understanding of cybersecurity fundamentals,	Shows general awareness of the field and foundational concepts. Holds a general IT-related degree or equivalent, with moderate alignment.	Limited understanding of cybersecurity topics or unclear knowledge. Background is unrelated or not clearly sufficient for the program's	

	tools, or principles. Able to relate prior knowledge to program topics.		academic requirements.	
Professional / Practical Experience	Has strong practical/ industry experience, or professional certifications in IT, cybersecurity, or related fields. Able to reflect on applied work and relate it to program goals.	Some relevant experience in IT or general computing environments. Able to describe responsibilities with basic connection to the program.	Lacks relevant experience or unable to connect experience to the field of cybersecurity.	
			Total Score (out of 30)	

Master of Science in Cybersecurity Engineering (MCSE)

Name of Student		**Semester**			
Student ID			**First**		**Second**
Undergraduate Program me		**CGPA**			

INTERVIEW EVALUATION RESULTS	**Interviewer 1**	**Interviewer 2**	**Interviewer 3**
Name of Interviewer			
Communications Skills Score Out of 10			
Knowledge & Technical Readiness Score Out of 10			
Professional/Practical Experience Score Out of 10			
Total Mark Communication Skills + Knowledge & Technical Readiness + Professional / Practical Experience	**T_1 =**	**T_2 =**	**T_3 =**
Signature of Interviewers			
Date			
Final Interview Score	**$(T_1 + T_2 + T_3) / 3$**		

* Minimum average score for passing the interview ≥ 21

Decision:

- ☐ Unconditional Acceptance
- ☐ Conditional Acceptance; taking the following foundation course(s):
  - ☐ ITFN 500
  - ☐ ITFN 502
- ☐ Rejected