

ABBOTTABAD UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY



COURSE CODING FRAMEWORK

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**Approved by the Academic Council
Abbottabad University of Science & Technology,
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.**

Standardized Course Coding Framework at Abbottabad University of Science & Technology

1. Background and Rationale

A standardized and transparent course coding system is a core requirement for effective academic governance, curriculum management, student mobility, transcript clarity, accreditation compliance, and digital academic systems. At present, variations in course coding across departments and affiliated colleges create ambiguity in course identification, equivalence, progression tracking, and inter-departmental coordination.

International and national best practices, including HEC's curriculum frameworks, encourage discipline-based alpha codes combined with level- and semester-sensitive numeric identifiers to ensure uniformity, clarity and scalability across undergraduate and postgraduate programs.

Accordingly, this working paper proposes a unified course coding framework for all undergraduate, MPhil/MS and PhD programs at AUST and its affiliated colleges.

2. Objectives of the Proposed Course Coding System

The proposed system aims to:

1. Ensure **uniformity and clarity** in course identification across departments and affiliated colleges.
2. Reflect **academic level, year, semester, and sequencing** directly within the course code.
3. Facilitate **centralized academic administration**, digitization, and transcript standardization.
4. Enable **interdisciplinary teaching, credit transfer, and equivalence mapping**.
5. Align with **HEC curriculum structures** and good practices adopted by leading Pakistani universities.

3. Structure of the Proposed Course Code

Each course code shall consist of **two components**:

3.1. Numeric Component (Three Digits)

Alphabetic Component (Subject Identifier)

- Three/Four-letter alphabetic code representing the **discipline or subject**, as recommended by the **Board of Studies (BoS)** of the concerned department.
- Examples:
 - Economics → **ECON**
 - Mathematics → **MATH**
 - Physics → **PHY**

- General Education → **GNE**

This ensures discipline ownership and academic accountability.

3.2. Numeric Component (Three Digits)

The three-digit numeric code shall be structured as follows:

Digit	Meaning
1st digit	Academic level / Year of study
2nd digit	Semester
3rd digit	Course sequence number

4. Undergraduate (BS) Course Coding

4.1 Academic Level Identifier

- Undergraduate (BS) programs shall use codes starting from **3**, reflecting **Level-3 qualification**.

4.2 Coding Pattern

Format: SUB/SUBJYSC

Where:

- **Y** = Year of study
- **S** = Semester
- **C** = Course number sequential

4.3 Examples (Economics)

First Semester (Year 1):

- ECON311
- ECON312

Second Semester (Year 1):

- ECON321
- ECON322
- ECON323

Seventh Semester:

- ECON671
- ECON672

For five-year undergraduate degree programs, the fourth and fifth years shall be coded under the undergraduate band '6'. Accordingly, the **ninth semester shall be coded as 69X and the tenth semester as 60X**. Postgraduate level identifiers (7 and 8) shall remain exclusively reserved for MPhil/MS and PhD programs.

6 9 9 → Final thesis/Capstone project

5/6 00 → Internship

This structure allows immediate identification of the course's academic position.

5. MPhil / MS Course Coding

5.1. Academic Level Identifier

- MPhil/MS programs shall use codes starting from **7**.

5.2. Coding Pattern

First Semester:

- ECON711
- ECON712

Second Semester:

- ECON721
- ECON722

5.3. Thesis Coding

- **ECON799** shall be reserved exclusively for **MPhil/MS Thesis**.

This ensures uniform recognition of research components across programs.

6. PhD Course Coding

6.1. Academic Level Identifier

- PhD programs shall use codes starting from **8**.

6.2. Coding Pattern

First Semester:

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- ECON811
- ECON812

Second Semester:

- ECON821
- ECON822

6.3.Dissertation Coding

- **ECON899** shall be reserved for **PhD Dissertation**.

7. General Education Course Coding

7.1.General Education Identifier

- All General Education courses shall use the subject code **GNED**.

7.2.Undergraduate General Education (BS)

A total of 15 General Education courses shall be offered during the first four semesters, applicable to all Undergrad programs where exit at Associate Degree level is allowed.

8. List of General Education Courses

The content and credit structure of General Education courses shall be centralized and uniformly implemented by the University and all affiliated colleges, based on HEC-approved curricula.

Table 1: List of General Education Courses

Course	Credit Hours	Course Code
Functional English	3	GNED301
Islamic Studies/Ethics	2	GNED302
Quantitative Reasoning (I)	3	GNED303
Applications of Information and Communication Technologies	3 (2+1)	GNED304
Expository Writing	3	GNED305
Ideology and Constitution of Pakistan	2	GNED306
Natural Sciences	3 (2+1)	GNED307
Fehm-e-Quran/Understanding of Holy Quran I (For Muslim students)*	1 (0+1)	GNED308
Pakistan Studies	2	GNED309
Quantitative Reasoning (II)	3	GNED310
Civics and Community Engagement	2	GNED311

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Course	Credit Hours	Course Code
Fehm-e-Quran/Understanding of Holy Quran -II (For Muslim students)*	1 (0+1)	GNED312
Entrepreneurship	2	GNED313
Arts & Humanities	2	GNED314
Social Sciences	2	GNED315

Departments shall adopt the sequence of general education courses as approved by concerned BoS.

Total Credit Hours: 34

* For Non-Muslim students' course of (2 Credit Hours) comparative religion shall be offered in lieu of Fehm-e-Quran courses.

9. Allied and Interdisciplinary Courses

- For **allied or interdisciplinary courses**, the **course code of the teaching department** shall be followed.
- The course shall retain the **original subject prefix**, regardless of the host department.

Example:

- A Principles of Management course taught to Economics students by Management Sciences Department → **MGT3xx**

10. Service Courses Taught Outside the Parent Department

In cases where a department **teaches courses to other departments but does not offer those courses in its own BS program**, the following mechanism shall apply:

- The teaching department shall:
 - Design course contents
 - Get approval from its **Board of Studies**
 - Assign **introductory-level codes**

Example (Economics Department):

- Introduction to Economics → **ECON301**
- Economy of Pakistan → **ECON302**

These codes shall be reserved for **service courses only**.