Self-Graduate Program Report (Self-GPR)

Muhammad Ali Jinnah University (MAJU), Karachi

Visit Date: April 25, 2025

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(Certified External Reviewer)

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Mohammad Ali Jinnah University (MAJU), chartered in 1998 and recognized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC), is a prominent private-sector institution in Karachi. It aspires to produce ethical professionals equipped with innovative skills to lead Pakistan into a technologically advanced and prosperous future. The university currently offers a range of undergraduate and graduate programs, supported by well-developed infrastructure and a growing culture of research and development.

This report evaluates the quality, strengths, and areas for improvement in MAJU's graduate-level (MS and PhD) programs, based on the briefing, Self-Assessment Reports (SARs), and findings from the on-site visit conducted on April 25, 2025.

At the invitation of Mohammad Ali Jinnah University (ref. letter no. MAJU/QEC/GPR/Notification/2025/03/01, dated March 10, 2025), a Graduate Program Review (GPR) Committee comprising both internal and external reviewers conducted the annual Graduate Program Review for the academic year 2024–2025 to evaluate the MS and PhD programs at MAJU. The GPR Committee comprised the following members:

1. Prof. Dr. Syed Imran Jami (Dean Academics)	Convener
2. Prof. Dr. Riaz Ahmed Shaikh	Certified External Reviewer
3. Muhammad Kashif Khan (Registrar Academics)	Internal Reviewer
4. Dr. Huma Jawed (Director QEC)	Internal Reviewer
5. Engr. Haris Ahmed (Manager QEC)	Secretary
6. Engr. Alina Aziz (Manager QEC)	Secretary
7. Sheeraz Ahmed (Assistant Manager QEC)	Deputy Secretary

Executive Summary:

The Graduate Program Review (GPR) visit at Mohammad Ali Jinnah University (MAJU), Karachi, was conducted on April 25, 2025, under the directive of the university's competent authority. The GPR committee comprised internal and external academic experts, including representation from the Office of the Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC), academic leadership, and a certified external reviewer.

The purpose of the visit was to conduct a comprehensive review of graduate programs (MS and PhD) being offered across various departments, ensuring alignment with the Higher Education Commission (HEC) quality assurance criteria and the university's own strategic vision for academic excellence and research advancement.

Scope of Review:

- Orientation and briefing by the QEC and academic leadership.
- Detailed review of program files for MS and PhD programs in disciplines such as Computer Science, Software Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Bioinformatics, Biotechnology, Management Sciences, and Project Management.
- Verification of compliance with HEC guidelines, including curriculum design, program learning outcomes, research supervision policies, and resource adequacy.
- On-site inspection of laboratories, classrooms, library, and offices, assessing physical and academic infrastructure.
- Closing and exit meeting summarizing key findings and preliminary recommendations.

Program Overview:

- MS in Management Sciences (MSMS)
- MS in Bioinformatics (MSBI)
- MS in Biotechnology
- MS in Computer Science (MSCS)
- MS in Software Engineering
- MS in Electrical Engineering
- MS in Project Management
- MS in Economics & Finance
- MBA
- PhD in Computer Science
- PhD in Management Sciences
- PhD in Electrical Engineering

These programs are designed to provide advanced knowledge, foster research capabilities, and prepare students for leadership roles, industry innovation, or further academic pursuits. All graduate programs follow HEC's minimum criteria for curriculum, supervision, credit hours, and research deliverables.

Meeting with Deans and Heads of the Departments (HoDs)

The Graduate Program Review Committee held a productive meeting with the Dean of the Faculty of Business Administration, Head of the Department of Management Sciences, and Head of the School of Business Administration. The academic leaders warmly welcomed the GPR initiative and reaffirmed their commitment to supporting MAJU's Self-Graduate Program Review process.

During the discussions, the academic leadership addressed critical queries regarding curriculum alignment with HEC standards, faculty research productivity, and graduate program learning outcomes, providing detailed explanations with supporting documentation. They further pledged to implement all review recommendations within specified timelines.

On-Site Evaluation with QEC Leadership

The external reviewer held a strategic session with the Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) leadership and conducted thorough visits to:

- Examine the institutional quality assurance framework
- Review compliance with HEC's graduate program standards
- Evaluate classrooms for teaching infrastructure, technology integration, and learning environments
- Assess laboratories for equipment maintenance, safety protocols, and research capabilities
- Review the Student Facility Center for support services, wellness provisions, and extracurricular resources
- Verify the Library/Learning Commons for digital resource accessibility and study spaces

Unfortunately, meetings with students and faculty members could not be held due to ongoing examinations. Nevertheless, the following commendations and recommendations are presented based on the available documentation and observations.

Commendations:

- All MS and PhD programs have clearly articulated Program Educational Objectives (PEOs) and Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) that are well-aligned with the respective departmental and institutional mission statements.

- All MS and PhD programs initiated post-2013 have received the requisite NOCs from the Higher Education Commission (HEC), reflecting regulatory compliance.

- The graduate curricula are regularly updated to incorporate emerging technologies, modern management practices, and cutting-edge research areas, ensuring relevance to both academic and industry trends.

- The programs are led by highly qualified PhD faculty, actively engaged in teaching, research supervision, and fostering academia-industry collaboration.

- The university offers a technologically advanced learning environment supported by smart classrooms, modern laboratories, access to reputed research journals, and a reliable IT infrastructure.

- The inclusion of industry experts as instructors, structured internship opportunities, and applied research projects enhances the practical orientation of graduate programs.

- The organization of annual academic conferences across various disciplines provides a platform for scholarly exchange and promotes a vibrant research culture.

- The publication of a W-category journal article by a PhD scholar, as a mandatory requirement by the university, is a notable achievement that reflects the institution's commitment to high-quality research.

- Separate gym facilities for male and female students and a well-equipped sports infrastructure support student health and well-being.

- The establishment of a One-Window Student Facilitation Center has streamlined academic and administrative services for students.

- All key feedback mechanisms, including the Alumni Survey, Employer Survey, and Graduate Student Survey, are conducted online, enhancing data collection and responsiveness.

- The presence of daycare and wellness centers demonstrates the university's commitment to providing a supportive and inclusive environment for students and staff.

- Students and faculty have access to a comprehensive digital library, facilitating research and learning across disciplines.

Findings and Recommendations:

- Faculty retention remains a concern, with a significant proportion of newly hired faculty, which may affect program continuity and mentoring quality.
  Recommendation:
  Implement faculty retention strategies, including mentorship for new hires, competitive incentives, and career development support.

- Only two PhD graduates have been produced so far, indicating low output from the doctoral programs.
  Recommendation:
  Enhance supervision support and research facilitation to improve PhD completion rates and program effectiveness.

- A considerable number of MS degrees have been awarded through course-based tracks (200 course-based vs. 67 research-based), which may limit the university's research output and academic rigor.
  Recommendation:
  Promote research-based MS degrees by enhancing thesis support, encouraging faculty-student collaboration, and aligning policies with research-intensive goals.

- The university currently lacks a centralized system to archive or track student-authored publications, conference papers, and innovation outcomes, which limits the visibility and institutional recognition of graduate research.

Recommendation:
Establish a centralized digital repository and tracking system to document and showcase all graduate research outputs.

- The faculty's publication output is relatively modest and does not fully reflect the research potential of the institution.
  Recommendation:
  Set departmental research output goals and offer institutional support, such as writing workshops, incentives, or reduced teaching loads to increase publication in recognized journals.

- There is no internal funding mechanism for MS students pursuing interdisciplinary or experimental thesis work, which may discourage research-intensive projects.
  Recommendation:
  Introduce internal mini-grants to financially support MS thesis research, particularly in innovative or cross-disciplinary domains.

- There are no formal alumni tracking system to monitor graduate employment, academic progression, or entrepreneurial outcomes, limiting the ability to assess program impact.
  Recommendation:
  Develop and implement a structured alumni tracking mechanism to gather data on employment, further studies, and professional achievements.

- Graduate research activities remain largely discipline-specific with limited interdisciplinary collaboration or international academic exposure.
  Recommendation:
  Encourage cross-disciplinary research initiatives and pursue international academic partnerships to facilitate joint supervision and student exchange.

- Limited internal funding exists to support faculty-initiated research projects, which may hinder scholarly activity and innovation.
  Recommendation:
  Allocate internal research grants or seed funding to encourage faculty research aligned with institutional and national priorities.

-----End of Report-----

Prof. Dr. Riaz Ahmed Shaikh