



Ehsaas Undergraduate Scholarships Program

- **What is the Ehsaas Undergraduate Scholarship Program?**
 - The Ehsaas undergraduate scholarships initiative was formally launched by the PM on Nov 4, 2019.
 - This is the largest ever needs-based undergraduate scholarship program in the history of Pakistan.
 - Under this program, every year, 50,000 students from low-income families will be awarded scholarships for 4 to 5-year undergraduate degree programs.
 - Over four years, 200,000 undergraduate scholarships will be awarded on need and merit basis
 - 50% of awardees will be girls
 - 2% of awardees will be differently abled
 - It is a four-year programme commenced in Nov 2019 for the academic year 2019-20.
 - Total budget over 4 years is Rs. 24 billion
- **What will the scholarship cover?**
 - Scholarships will cover 100% of the tuition fee and a living stipend of 4,000 per month. The geographical spread of the program covers all four provinces, AJK and GB.
- **Who is eligible for the Ehsaas scholarship programme?**
 - All students with family income less than 45,000, studying in any year of an undergraduate programme in any of the 119 public sector universities recognized by HEC are eligible to apply.
 - The **student's academic performance** will be monitored, and subject to satisfactory academic progress, scholarship recipients will continue to receive scholarship throughout their undergraduate programme
- **How are students selected?**
 - Selection is based on need as well as merit.
 - Students apply on an online portal:
<https://ehsaas.hec.gov.pk/hec-portal-web/auth/register.jsf>.
 - The university's Scholarship Award Committee, assisted by HEC teams, verifies the information on income and GPA of the applicants.
 - All eligible students, i.e., those whose family income is below Rs. 45,000, are ranked in order of merit (i.e., their GPAs).
 - The final award list is posted publicly at the university, and is also made available on the HEC website as well as the university's website.
 - Selected students have to open bank accounts, and stipends are deposited directly into the accounts.

- **What is the status of scholarships for the year 2019-20?**
 - For the current year (2019-20), students had applied online via HEC's online portal: <https://ehsaas.hec.gov.pk/hec-portal-web/auth/register.jsf>.
 - The deadline for applications was till Dec 24, 2019.
 - By the closing date, 132,192 undergraduate students (49,841 girls) applied for scholarships
 - Selection of students is ongoing and will be completed by 31 March 2020.

- **What is the status of scholarships for the year 2020/2021?**
 - The 2019-20 scholarships will be renewed automatically until the date of graduation of the recipients, provided they maintain a high GPA score.
 - New applications will be invited in June 2020 from students who will be applying for admission to universities.
 - Scholarship applications will have to be submitted on the same portal, i.e., <https://ehsaas.hec.gov.pk/hec-portal-web/auth/register.jsf>.
 - The scholarship applications will have to mention the universities to which they are applying.
 - Students who were admitted in December-January for the Spring 2020 semester will also be eligible to apply.
 - The scholarships will be announced together with the admissions announcements.

- **How is the project implemented?**
 - Higher Education Commission (HEC) is the lead implementing agency for the Ehsaas Undergraduate Scholarship Program.
 - The program will support eligible students for 4-5-year undergraduate degree programs offered at 119 public sector universities recognized by HEC across all four provinces, GB and AJK.
 - Students' academic performance will be monitored and subject to satisfactory academic progress, scholarship recipients will continue to receive scholarship throughout their undergraduate programme.
 - The tuition will be paid directly to the University whereas the living stipend will be paid in the bank account of the student after necessary verifications

- **How is this different from other Scholarship programmes running in the country:**
 - This programme represents three major paradigm shifts in the scholarship policy of the government. First, this is the largest-ever needs-based scholarship program. It is reserved for students from low-income families, in order to enable them to aspire for higher education. Only a very small percentage of previous scholarships given by the government/HEC were needs-based.
 - Second, it is the largest-ever national scholarship program. In the last 14 years, HEC has awarded a total of 30,000 undergraduate scholarships, while this scheme will give 50,000 scholarships, every year.
 - Third, this scholarship focuses on enhancing the earning potential of the recipients. Past scholarships were aimed at postgraduate programs, i.e., they assumed that students would pay for undergraduate education on their own. The Ehsaas scholarship funds undergraduate education, which is the surest way to enable people to rise out of poverty, and which contributes the most to income generating potential.

- **What is the tracking mechanism of the programme?**
 - The project is being overseen by the Ehsaas Scholarships Steering Committee, co-chaired by Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation, Dr. Sania Nishtar and Chairman HEC, Dr. Tariq Banuri. As part of this shared initiative, a joint monitoring and evaluation framework has been set up to ensure that the program is running in a transparent, equitable, and accountable manner. The monitoring and evaluation system reports directly to the Ehsaas Scholarship Steering Committee.

Appendix: Scholarship Schedule 2019-20

- **4 November 2019:** Announcement of scholarships.
- **24 December 2019:** Deadline for submission of applications (a total of 132, 192 students applied for the scholarships).
- **February-March 2020:** Announcement by different universities of the scholarship awards
- **31 March 2020:** Completion of the process for award of scholarships
- **2 March 2020:** Disbursement of scholarships to first batch of students by the Prime Minister.
- **1-5 April 2020:** Direct deposit of all arrears of stipends and reimbursements into bank accounts of scholarship recipients.
- **April-June 2020:** Monthly direct deposits of stipends into the bank accounts of scholarship recipients.
- **30 June 2020:** All payments to students as well as universities for academic year 2019-20 are completed.
- **15 June 2020:** Announcement of scholarships for academic year 2020-21.