



# An Overview of the Education System and Authentication/Verification Procedures

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**Host: Jasmin Saidi-Kuehnert**

*President & CEO, ACEI*

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# ABOUT ACEI

## (ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS EVALUATION INSTITUTE, INC.)

- Founded 1994, incorporated in CA, offices in Los Angeles, CA & Austin, TX
- Endorsed Member of Association of International Credential Evaluators (AICE)
- FULL-SERVICE COMPANY
  - EVALUATION
  - TRANSLATION
  - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS
  - CONSULTANCY SERVICES HIGHER ED



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EVALUATION INSTITUTE, INC.®

# TODAY'S SPEAKER



## *Sara Ghaffarian*

**Sara** started working in the field of international credential evaluation in November 2019 with the Comparative Education Service at the University of Toronto, providing educational assessment for employment, education, and immigration purposes. Prior to joining the field, Sara held teaching, research, liaison and administrative positions in the education and diplomatic sectors with various organizations, such as the German Embassy in Tehran, Goethe-Institut Toronto, the University of Waterloo, the Universität Mannheim, the School of Continuing Studies at the University of Toronto. A multilingual speaker of German, Farsi, and English, Sara grew up in Germany and later moved to Iran where she did her Bachelor's and Master's degree at the University of Isfahan and Shahid Beheshti Tehran before moving to Canada to pursue her PhD at the University of Waterloo in Applied Linguistics with a focus on language education.

# About the Comparative Education Service (CES)

- Established by the University of Toronto in 1967, member of the Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services of Canada
- Canada's only university-based academic credential assessment agency
- CES' assessments are used for:
  - Immigration to Canada
  - Admission to colleges and other educational institutions
  - Employment purposes
  - Membership, licensure, or certification by professional organizations and regulatory bodies



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
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**COMPARATIVE EDUCATION  
SERVICE**

# OBJECTIVES

- Gain a general understanding of the country, latest reforms in Iran's education system and most common credentials
- Become more familiar with the country's established practices for obtaining official documents to set appropriate document requirements
- Have a clearer path in verifying authenticity and spotting discrepancies to meet thresholds for document acceptability

Iran beyond the  
Sound Bites – Myth  
or Truth?

Secondary  
Education System  
over the Years

Farsi 101: Calendar  
and Dates

Higher Education  
System

Official Documents  
– Established  
Practices

Helpful Tips -  
Samples and  
Authentication

# Iran beyond the Sound Bites



photo : Hamed Malekpour



The world is not divided between East and West. You are American, I am Iranian, we don't know each other, but we talk and we understand each other perfectly. The difference between you and your government is much bigger than the difference between you and me. And the difference between me and my government is much bigger than the difference between me and you. And our governments are very much the same.

- Marjane Satrapi, Iranian Graphic Novelist

# MYTH OR TRUTH?

The country's official name has been the Islamic Republic of Iran for centuries.

Enter your answer in chat



Islamic Republic  
of Iran since 1979

Persia until 1935

Iran until 1979

Post-Revolution: Islamic  
Republic of Iran





# MYTH OR TRUTH?

The official language of Iran is Arabic.

Enter your answer in chat

Alphabet										
ذ	د	خ	ح	چ	ج	ث	ت	پ	ب	ا
z	d	kh	h	ch	j	s	t	p	b	-
[z]	[d]	[x]	[h, Ø]	[tʃ]	[dʒ]	[s]	[t]	[p]	[b]	[ʔ, ʔ̰] [æ, Ø]
غ	ع	ظ	ط	ض	ص	ش	س	ژ	ز	ر
gh		z	t	z	s	ʃ	s	zh	z	r
[ɣ]	[ʔ, Ø]	[z]	[t]	[z]	[s]	[ʃ]	[s]	[ʒ]	[z]	[r]
[q, ɛ, x]										
ی	ه	و	ن	م	ل	گ	ک	ق	ف	
y	h	w	n	m	l	g	k	q	f	
[j, i, e]	[h, Ø]	[v, u]	[n]	[m]	[l]	[g]	[k]	[q, ɛ]	[f]	
		[e, æ]	[o, ow]							

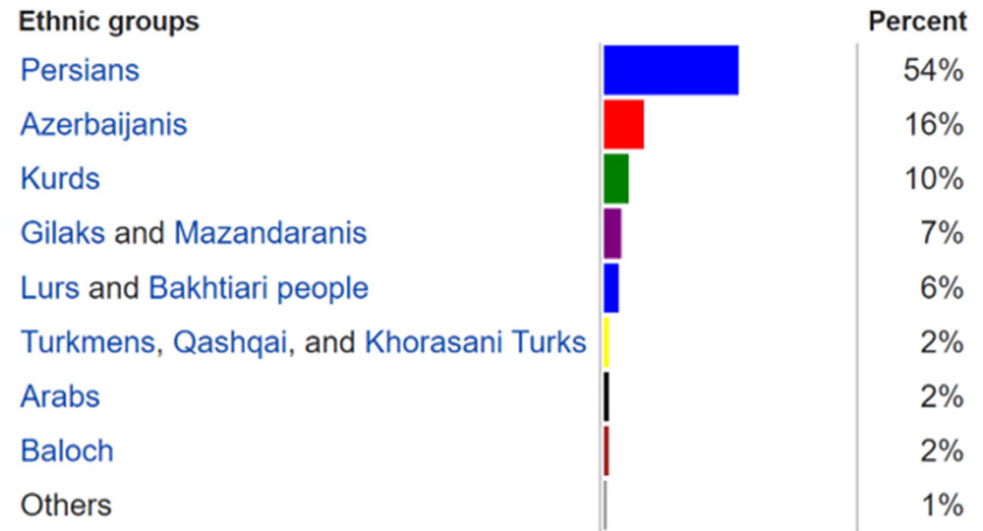
  

Numbers									
۱	۲	۳	۴	۵	۶	۷	۸	۹	۰
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0

The Persian script runs from right to left while the numbers run from left to right

# THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF IRAN IS

## FARSI / PERSIAN




Source: CIA World Factbook (2017)

# Transliteration of Arabic and Persian Script

Short Vowel Sign	◌ُ	◌َ	◌ِ
Example	O (O)ld	A (A)pple	E (E)lephant

Moham**ma**d مُحَمَّد

Moham**me**d مُحَمَّد



I have an applicant who indicated on their application that they attended Gilan University in Iran for their bachelor's degree. The translation however shows "Gilan University" on the transcript. Should I be concerned?

# MYTH OR TRUTH?

Women in Iran  
are allowed to  
drive or attend  
university.

Enter your answer in chat





# MYTH OR TRUTH?

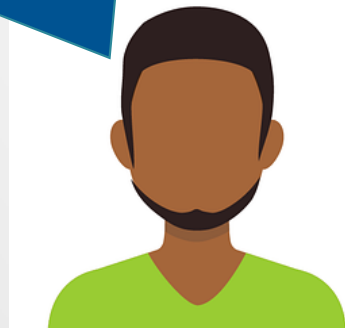
It's always hot in Iran as most of its landscape is desert.

Enter your answer in chat



# FAQ

I have a male applicant who graduated from a public university and has not completed his mandatory military service. His sealed degree has not been released; instead, a temporary degree certificate is issued that shows he has graduated from Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering and has completed all courses in good standing.



I have a situation where an international applicant from Iran is requesting to upload transcripts, rather than have them sent directly from the institution. The applicant cites sanctions as the reason mailing transcripts would be difficult. Does anybody have experience with obtaining transcripts recently from Iranian institutions?





## Some helpful information :

- Students admitted to Public University Day-Programs (excl. Payam-e Noor University) receive free education on the condition that they serve the state upon graduation. Their degrees are withheld until which time they complete the service (duration of service differs depending on various criteria) or reimburse the state the full amount of tuition for the "free" education received
- Upon graduation, students can apply for a temporary certificate – a document that confirms the fulfillment of all academic requirements. It is only valid for 6 months and is not valid for "official" translation. This document is meant to be used for employment and/or study purposes within Iran.
- Both female and male graduates\* have the option to pay off their commitment to release their official documents (also known as "translatable" documents), i.e. final award (Daneshnameh) and transcript (Reez-e Nomarat). (the release of documents involves the submission of requests via the MSRT-online portal (Sajjad))

\* Male graduates must declare their military service status (e.g. permanently/temporarily exempted, completed, etc.) to the University Graduate Office and the MSRT prior to being eligible to apply for a provisional certificate and/or buy-out their official documents. Specifically, they first require to apply for one of the documents below before proceeding with the release of their documents:

- Termination of military service-card (applicable to those who have completed military service)
- Permanent exemption of military service-card (e.g. for health reasons, sole breadwinner of the family)
- Valid temporary military exemption (e.g. for further studies - note: this would have to be a second temp. exemption for someone who would want to release their first degree)
- Letter issued by NAJA confirming that the person is ready to undertake military service
- [...]

The release of official documents is a lengthy process and involves various organizations and offices, including the NAJA (Iranian Law Enforcement Forces), MSRT, the respective University Graduate Office .

Context: Military service in Iran is mandatory for all men. The age of compulsory military service is 18. Those who wish to undertake tertiary studies have the option to defer their military service and apply for a "temporary exemption for studies". If a male graduate wishes to study abroad after completing their first degree, there is the option to obtain a second temporary exemption permit. As the next step and in order to be allowed to leave the country, men who were granted a temporary exemption, need to deposit a bond before traveling abroad that is retrievable upon return to Iran.

- Most Iranian students who wish to study abroad begin the process a year or more before they leave Iran
- Students who want to immigrate / study in the US or Canada have to visit embassies in Turkey or the UAE in order to apply for a visa
- In cases in where a student may already have left Iran, obtaining documents in sealed envelopes can be done via an authorized person (provided they have cleared their military status)
- Credit cards: Due to sanctions, Iranians residing in Iran cannot possess or use international credit cards for their payments. (alternative options: using intermediate companies that provide them with virtual credit cards, with a very high price and asking relatives or friends outside of the country)
- International Courier services are sanctioned. Most of the mail received from Iran was sent by Karapost and Aramex via neighboring countries

# Secondary Education System

## Key Information and Reforms

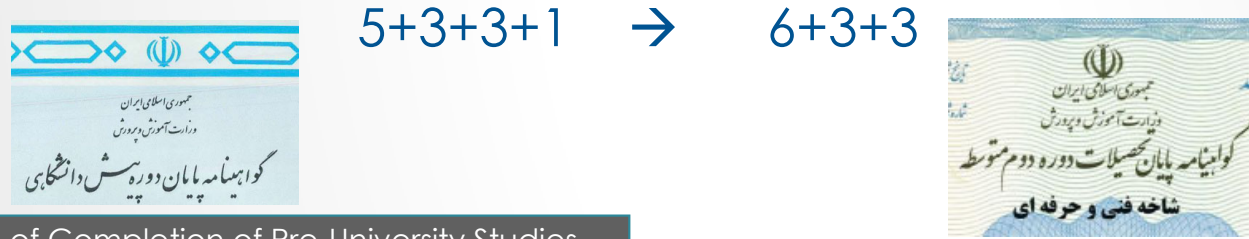
- Cultural Revolution and shutdown of universities for three years (1980–1983) to Islamize the education system
- Mandatory gender-segregation from primary to high school
- School system is under the jurisdiction of the **Ministry of Education and Training** (MEDU)
- List of previous Ministers of Education: <https://web.archive.org/web/20210921012709/https://www.medu.ir/fa/minister?ocode=100010876>
- Primary and Secondary Education Cycles have changed over the years from a 5+3+4 to a 5+3+3+1 and most recently to a 6+3+3 system
- Compulsory education has changed from 8 to lately 9 years
- Upper Secondary Education is divided into different streams:
  - Academic/Theoretical (Nazari) ,
  - Technical Vocational (Fanni Herfei),
  - Skill/Work-Knowledge (Kardanesh)
- Concours (Konkooor) is the national entrance examination. Previously separate Concours for Private and Public Higher Education Institutions that were only recently integrated; more changes to come. There are also higher education institutions and programs that do not require the Concours.
- **1999:** Upper secondary structure changed from a semester-based system to a year-/non-semester-system
- **2003:** Pre- University structure changed from a semester-based system to a year-/non-semester-system



# Changes in the Primary and Secondary Education Cycle

Time	Educational Cycle				Notes
Prior to 1967	Primary Cycle		Secondary Cycle		6 + 6
	Grade 1 - 6		Grade 6 -12		
1967 to 1990	Primary Cycle	Guidance/Middle Cycle	Upper Secondary		5+3+4
	Grade 1 - 5	Grade 6 - 8	Grade 9 - 12		
1991/92 to 1996/97	Transition phase				5+3+4 → 5+3+3+1 1990 Ministry of Education approved the 3-year upper secondary cycle. Gradual transition from the “old” system to the “new” system. Phasing out of 4 years-upper secondary was initially introduced as a <b>pilot</b> project
1997/98- to 2011	Primary Cycle	Guidance/Middle Cycle	Upper Secondary Cycle	Pre-University	<b>5+3+3+1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-University Year was phased in - a preparatory year for students who plan to take Iran’s standardized university entrance examinations, the Konkoor (or Concours), required for admission into higher education.</li> <li><b>Name Change of Upper Secondary Credential (awarded after grade 11):</b></li> <li>Prior to 2003 → گواهینامه پایان تحصیلات متوسطه <b>Certificate of Completion of Secondary Education</b></li> <li>Post-2003 → گواهینامه پایان تحصیلات دوره متوسطه <b>Certificate of Completion of Secondary Education Cycle</b></li> <li><b>Pre-University Credential (grade 12): Certificate of Completion of Pre-University Studies</b></li> </ul>
	Grade 1-5	Grade 6-8	Grade 9-11	Grade 12	
Since 2012/13	Primary Cycle	First Cycle / Lower Secondary	Second Cycle / Upper Secondary		<b>6+3+3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expansion of primary cycle → more focus placed on primary education (pre-primary year is added to compulsory primary education)</li> <li>2017/18 :Pre- University <b>phased out</b>; directly access Concours after upper secondary ed. [exceptions apply to Adult Learners/Distance Ed Learners of the 5+3+3+1 system]</li> <li><b>Upper Secondary Credential: Certificate of Completion of Secondary Education Cycle 2</b> awarded after grade 12</li> </ul>
	Grade 1 -6	Grade 7-9	Grade 10-12		

# Overview of the Latest Reform in Secondary Education:



5+3+3+1 → 6+3+3

SSD: Certificate of Completion of Pre-University Studies

Pre-University (1 year)

Certificate of Completion of Secondary Education (Cycle)

Upper Secondary Education  
(3 years)

\* selecting stream in 2<sup>nd</sup> year

Guidance/Middle School  
(3 years)

Primary Education  
(5 years)

2012/13

SSD: Certificate of Completion of Upper Secondary Cycle

Second Cycle / Upper Secondary  
(3 years)

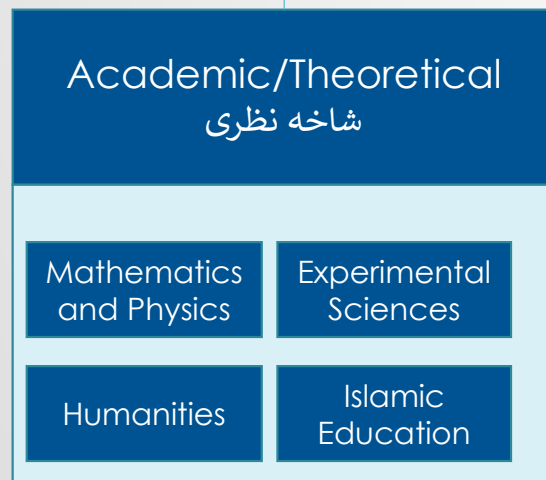
\*selecting stream in 1<sup>st</sup> year

First Cycle / Lower Secondary  
(3 years)

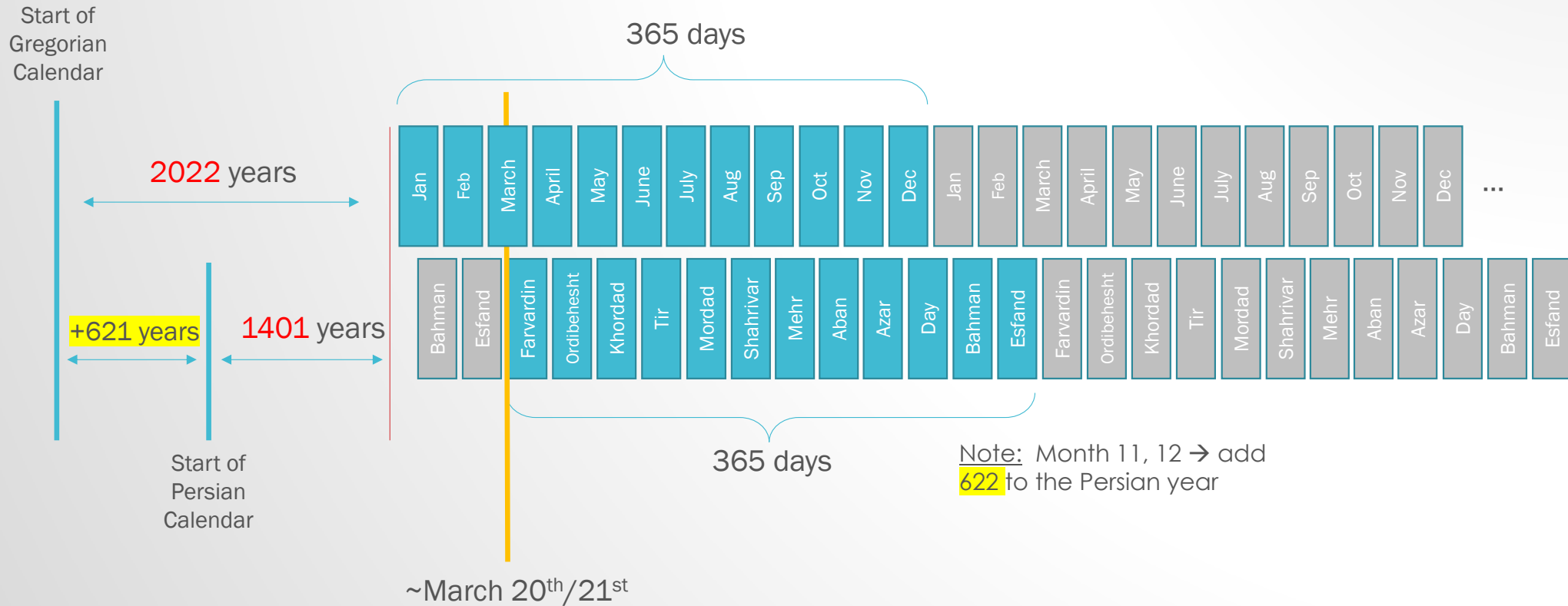
Primary Education  
(6 years)

# Upper Secondary Streams

Upper Secondary Branches  
and Streams starting  
Grade 10



# Persian vs. Gregorian Calendars



# 5+3+3+1 (Grade 11)

Post 2003  
Certificate of Completion of Secondary Education Cycle

Issuing Authority: جمهوری اسلامی ایران، وزارت آموزش پرورش

Name of Credential: کوابی نامید پایان تحصیلات دوره متوسطه

Academic Branch: رشته نظری

Stream: ریاضی و فیزیک

Year of issue: 1383

Year of studies: 82-83

Year of issue: 1382

Director of District Office, Ministry of Education

School Principal

Pre 2003  
Certificate of Completion of Secondary Education

Name of Credential: کوابی نامید پایان تحصیلات متوسطه (نظری و فنی و حرفه‌ای)

Year of studies: 74-75

Year of issue: 1382

School Principal

# 6+3+3 (Grade 12)





# Higher Education Institutions

## Accreditation

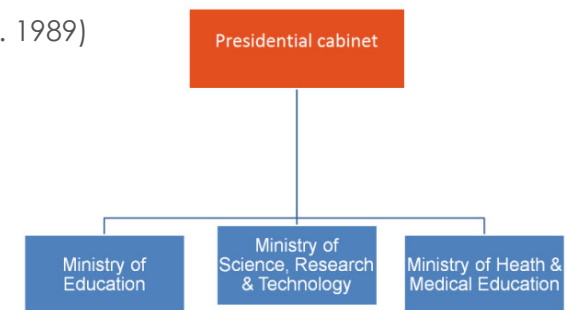
- **Ministry of Science, Research and Technology (MSRT)** is responsible for the supervision and accreditation of all higher education institutions; **except**
  - **Health-related Education** – under the auspices of the **Ministry of Health and Medical Education (MOHME)**, oversees the integration and the delivery of health services and medical education
  - **Islamic Azad University** – under the supervision of the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, the Iranian parliament approved its constitution. IAU degrees provide access to MSRT- institutions

## Types of Higher Education Institutions under supervision of MSRT:

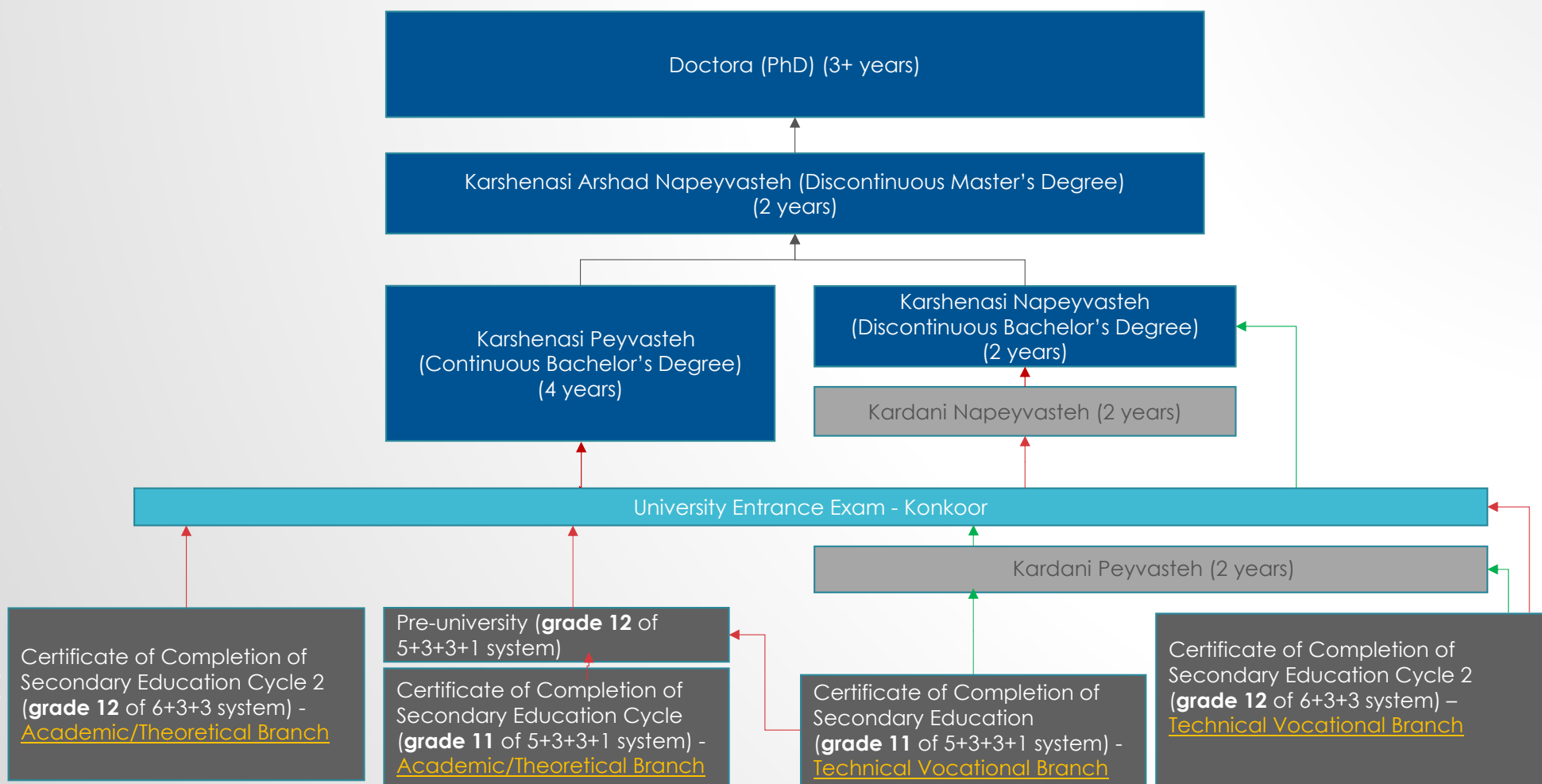
- Universities and Higher Education Centres (incl. Payam-e-Noor University Distance Learning, est. 1989)
- Non-Profit and Private Higher Education Universities and Institutions
- Distance Learning Non-Profit and Private Higher Education Institutions
- Open (Azad) Higher Education Institutions

## Admission Requirement to enter HEI:

- Holders of Completion of Upper Secondary Education or Completion of Pre-University Studies Certificates (depending on the time of studies) take the National Examination Entrance Exam, Concour (recently IAU Konkour and Public University Konkour were integrated)
- Secondary School Graduates can directly enter a **Kardani Peyvasteh** (Continuous Associate's degree) Via the vocational technical stream and after Grade 11/12 (depending on the time of studies),



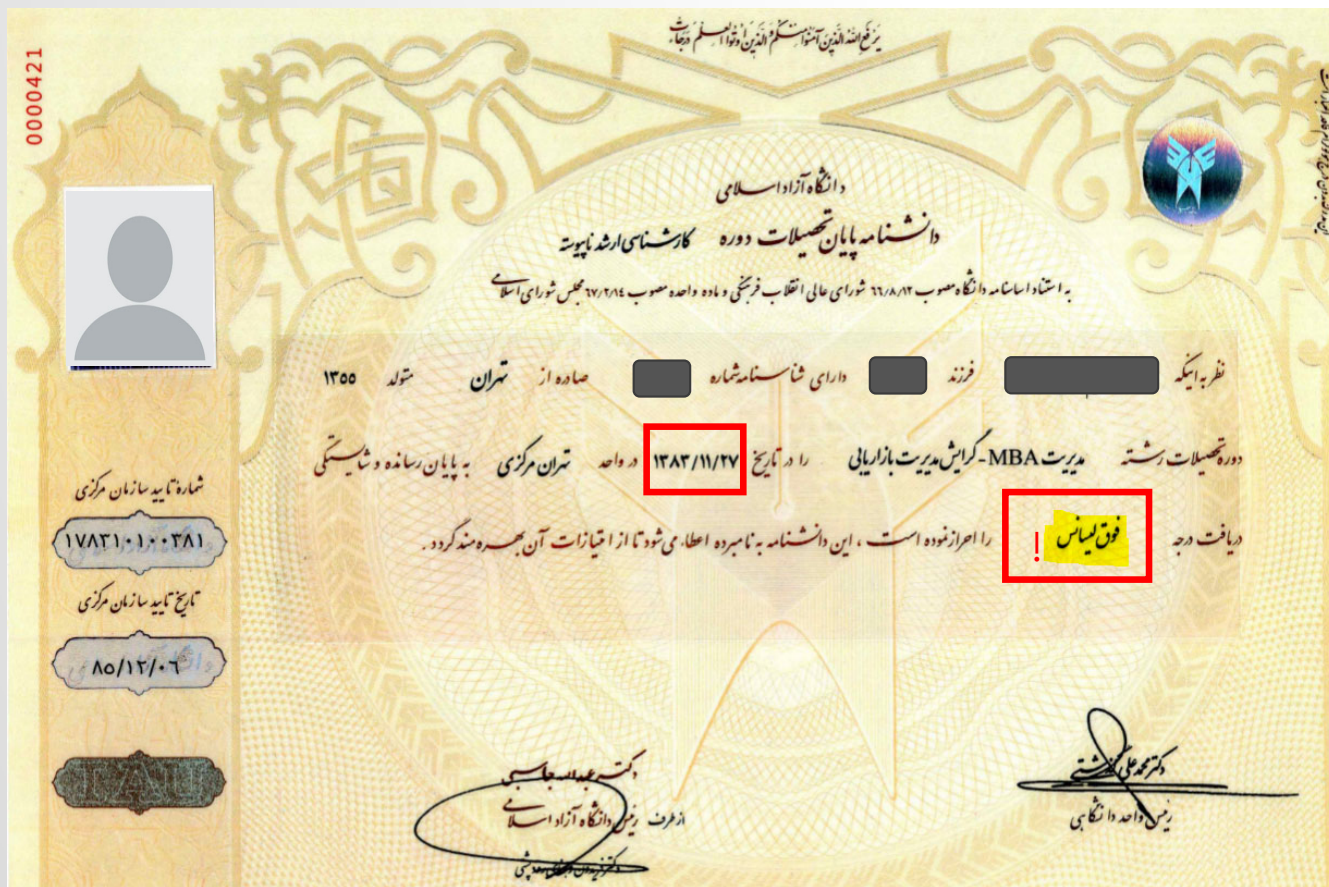
# Pathways to Higher Education



# Degree Nomenclature

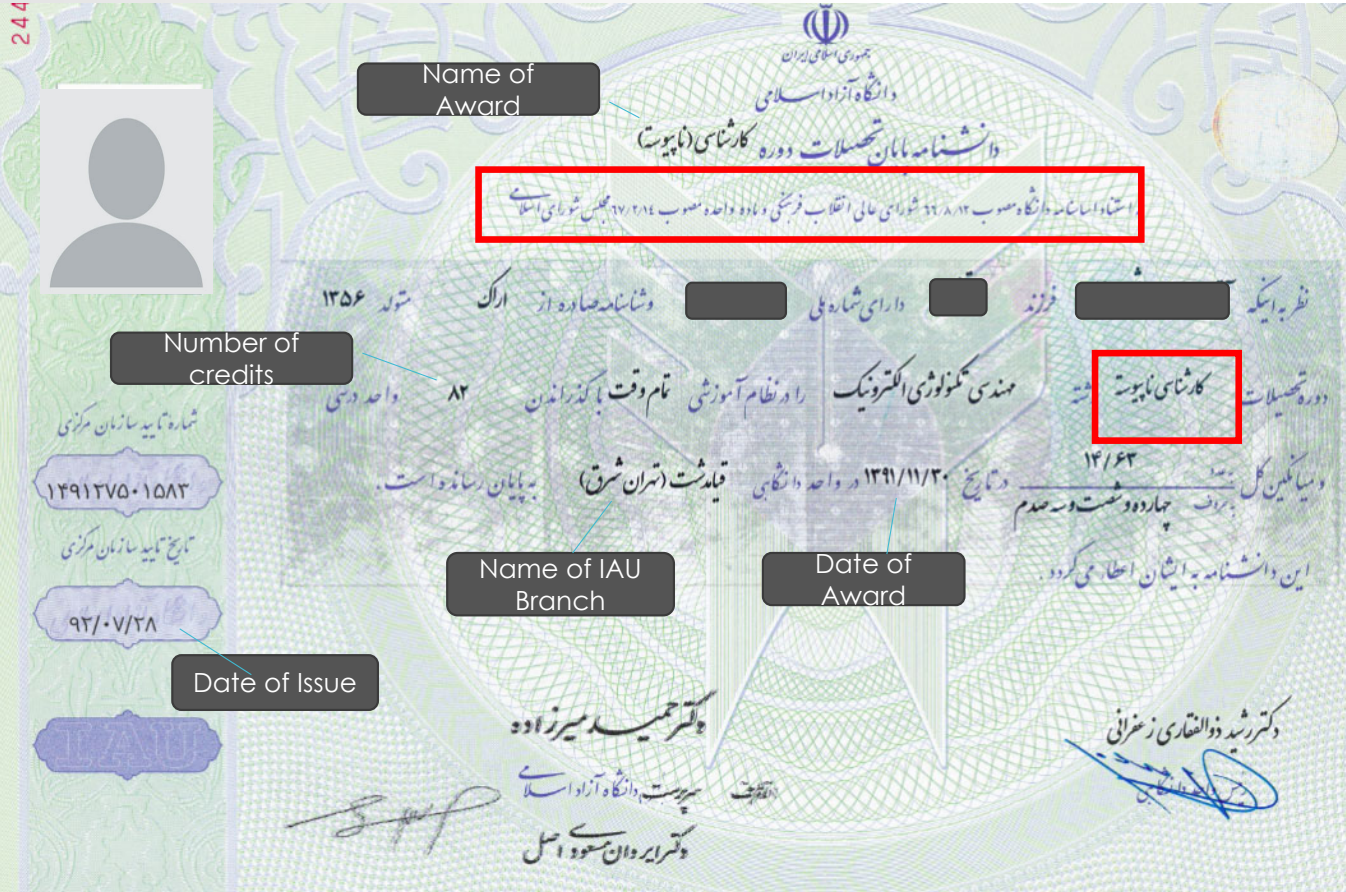
	Nomenclature Postsecondary Degrees Pre-Islamic Revolution		Nomenclature Postsecondary Degrees Post-Islamic Revolution	
<b>Associate Degree</b>	Fogh-e Diplom	فوق دیپلم	Kardani	کاردانی
<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	Licence	لیسانس	Karshenasi (Continuous / Discontinuous)	کارشناسی پیوسته/ناپیوسته
<b>Master's Degree</b>	Fogh-e Licence	فوق لیسانس	Karshenasi Arshad	کارشناسی ارشد
<b>Doctorate</b>	Doctora	دکتری	Doctora	دکتری

# IAU Sample 1:



Pre-Islamic Revolution		Post Islamic Revolution	
Fogh-e Diplom	فوق دیپلم	Kardani	کاردانی
Licence	لیانس	Karshenasi (Continuous / Discontinuous)	کارشناسی پیوسته/ناپیوسته
Fogh-e Licence	فوق لیانس	Karshenasi Arshad	کارشناسی ارشد
Doctora	دکتری	Doctora	دکتری

# IAU Sample 2: Discontinuous Karshenasi



Nomenclature Postsecondary Degrees Post-Islamic Revolution	
Kardani	کاردانی
Karshenasi (Continuous / Discontinuous)	کارشناسی پیوسته/ناپیوسته
Karshenasi Arshad	کارشناسی ارشد
Doctora	دکتری

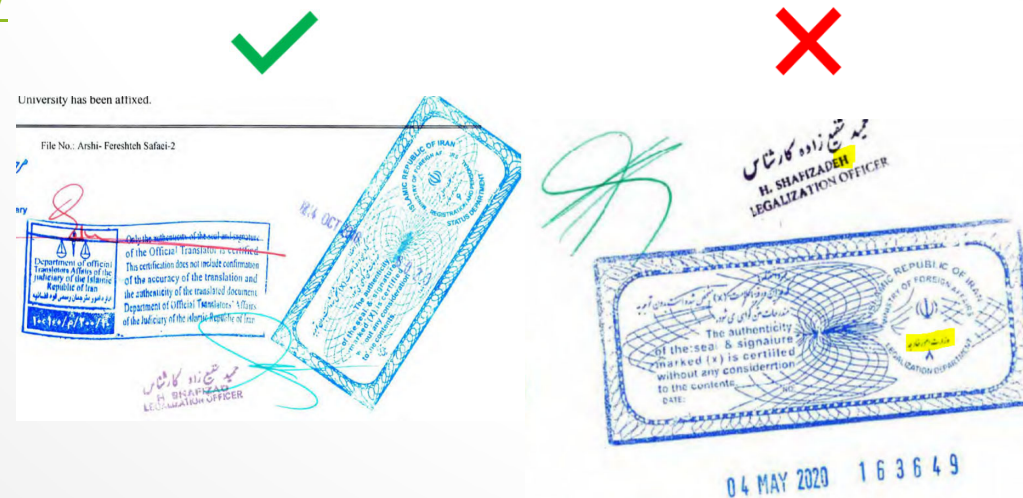
# Procedure – Obtaining Official Documents (incl. "Official" Translations)

I: Applicants with degrees from HEIs overseen by **MSRT** (e.g., Public, Payam-e Noor, Applied Science and Non-Profit Universities)

After the university releases the applicant's award:

1. Obtain verification from **MSRT** (since 2019 this process is online): <https://portal.saorg.ir/inquiry/>
2. Take the MSRT-verification code and original documents to the authorized **Translator** of the the Ministry of Justice for translation
3. Validate the translations by the **Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
4. **University** attests the documents and places official documents +translations in an institutional envelope

Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Attestation:



# MSRT-Online Verification via Applicant's Code-e Sehat (verification code) or QR-Code on Academic Documents

(1) <https://portal.saorg.ir/inquiry/>

(2) خدمات

(3) استعلام کد صحت

(4) 13991577197762953976

(5) dMDacEcG

(6) ارسال

(7) لطفا جهت دریافت فرم بر روی لینک کلیک نمایید

جمهوری اسلامی ایران  
وزارت علوم، تحقیقات و فناوری  
سازمان امور دانشجویان

مهر و امضا دانشگاه مورد تایید اداره کل امور دانشجویان داخل می باشد

نام و نام خانوادگی صاحب مدرک: [REDACTED]  
کد ملی: [REDACTED]

ریز نمرات تایید شده دانشگاه کارشناسی پیوسته

نوع مدرک و مقطع تحصیلی:

http://portal.saorg.ir/inquiry?code=13991577197762953976

Letter (online MSRT-verification)

# Procedure – Obtaining Official Documents (incl. "Official" Translations)

## II: Applicants with degrees from [Islamic Azad University](#)



### 1) Procedure of arranging for Physical Transcripts:

- Arrange for translations of degree certificate and transcripts by a Ministry of Justice approved translator
- Take the translations to the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Foreign Affairs for verification
- Take originals and translations to the Central IAU Office (in person) to file a request and pay the required fees
- IAU Central Office reviews the translations, stamps the documents and places them in an inst. envelope

### 2) Procedure of arranging for Electronic Transcripts:

- File a request at IAU Central Office and pay fees
- Submit an e-mail to [verifications@intl.iau.ir](mailto:verifications@intl.iau.ir)  
(Subject of e-mail: Applicant's Full Name and Name of receiving Institution; Content of E-mail:
- IAU Central Office submits the stamped ETRs along with the translations to CES within 20 business days; an automated e-mail is sent to the applicant after CES receives the ETR

(اینجانب ..... فارغ التحصیل مقطع ..... در رشته ..... از واحد دانشگاهی .....  
تقاضای ارسال فایل اسکن دانشنامه، ریزنمرات و ترجمه های آنها به موسسه / دانشگاه  
..... به آدرس ایمیل ..... را دارم .  
آدرس سایت رسمی موسسه/دانشگاه مقصد: .....  
آدرس ایمیل رسمی دانشگاه، / موسسه مقصد: .....) )

### \*For medical degrees from IAU:

Additional requirement: to have the documents attested by the Medical Sciences Unit of the IAU Central Office or by the Ministry of Health and Medical Education.



# IAU DEGREE CERTIFICATES

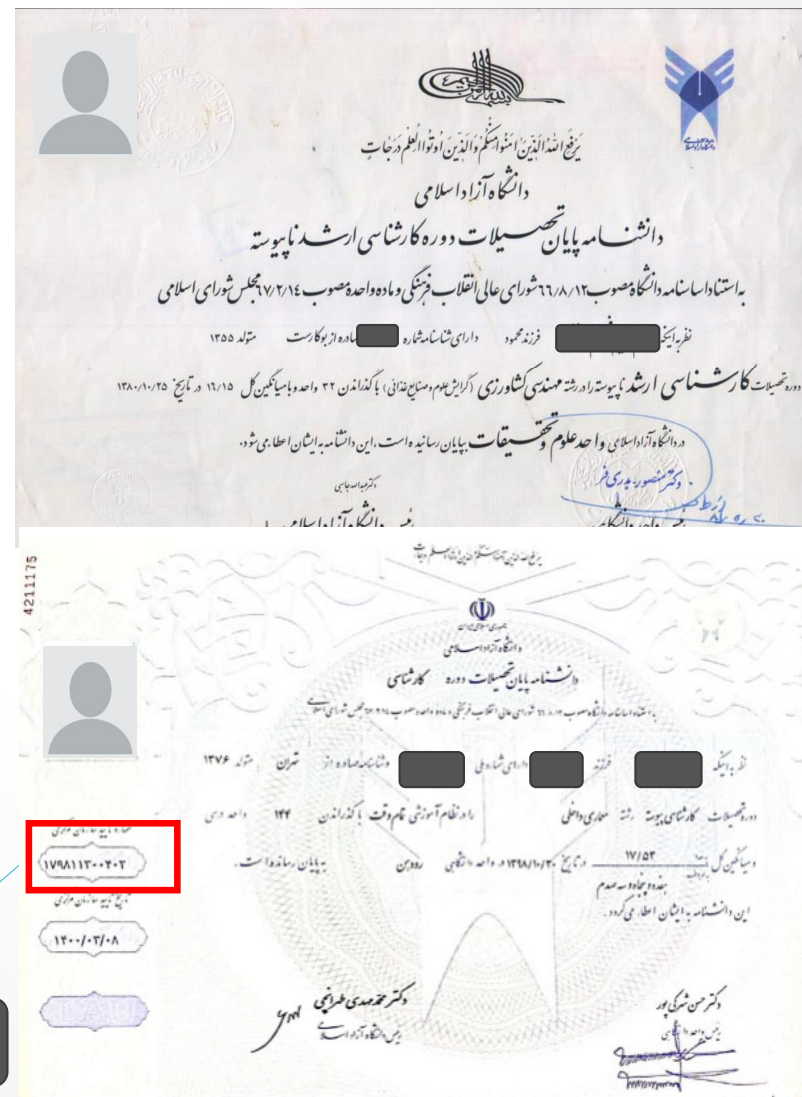
## Degree certificates issued before 11/01/2009

No official hologram of the Central Organization of the Azad University. In order to arrange for official translation, these graduates must first refer to the central organization of the Azad University, verify their degree and obtain the IAU Central Office Verification code and official seal and hologram of the Central Office. Only then can the document be “officially” translated.

## Degree certificates issued after 11/01/2009

Bear the hologram and seal of the Central Organization and a IAU Central Office- Verification Code. These degrees do not need to be approved by the Central Organization of IAU before being taken for official translation.

IAU Central Office  
Verification Code



# Official IAU- Stamp and Envelope seal since April 2022:



The IAU-Emirates office in Tehran has been attesting and mailing/e-mailing official documents since April 2022.

# Official IAU- Stamp prior to April 2022:



تاریخ: \_\_\_\_\_ نام به تعالی  
 شماره: \_\_\_\_\_ اعظموا العلم من المهد الى المهد  
 دانشگاه آزاد اسلامی واحد ارج  
 علیرضا  
 دارای کد ملی \_\_\_\_\_ فرزند \_\_\_\_\_  
 تربیت بدنی و علوم ورزشی - روانشناسی ورزشی  
 متولد سال ۱۳۶۹ در رشته  
 نام آموزشی تمام وقت در تاریخ ۱۳۹۵/۱۱/۲۶ دانش آموخته شده است و به دریافت درجه کارشناس ارشد ناپوسه از رشته مذکور رسیده است.  
 فهرست دروس و ریز نمرات نامبرده در طی دوره تحصیلی به شرح زیر می باشد. صفحه: ۱ از ۲

نیمسال تحصیلی	نام درس	مشخصات درس			ارزشیابی	
		نوع درس	تعداد واحد	نظری	نمره	امتیاز واحد
			عملی	به عدد	به حروف	
نیمسال اول ۹۳-۹۴	فیزیولوژی ورزش *	چهارشنبه	۲	۱۳	سهزده تمام	بدون تأثیر
نیمسال اول ۹۳-۹۴	آماتور صبی	چهارشنبه	۲	۱۲/۲۵	سیزده و بیست و پنج صدم	بدون تأثیر
نیمسال اول ۹۳-۹۴	مفاهیم در نظریه های شخصیت	پایه	۲	۱۵/۵۰	پانزده و پنجاه صدم	۳۱
نیمسال اول ۹۳-۹۴	روشن های انسانی پیشرفته	پایه	۲	۱۶	شانزده تمام	۳۲
نیمسال اول ۹۳-۹۴	پدگژی مهارتهای حرکتی	تخصصی	۲	۱۶	شانزده تمام	۳۲
نیمسال اول ۹۳-۹۴	زبان تخصصی	تخصصی	۲	۱۹	بدون تأثیر	بدون تأثیر
نیمسال دوم ۹۳-۹۴	روشن تحقیق در روانشناسی ورزشی	پایه	۲	۱۲	توازده تمام	۲۶
نیمسال دوم ۹۳-۹۴	اصول و فنون مشاوره روانی	تخصصی	۲	۱۳/۵۰	سیزده و پنجاه صدم	۲۷
نیمسال دوم ۹۳-۹۴	روان شناسی اجتماعی	پایه	۲	۱۵	پانزده تمام	۳۰
نیمسال دوم ۹۳-۹۴	روانشناسی ورزشی *	تخصصی	۲	۱۵	پانزده تمام	۳۰
نیمسال دوم ۹۳-۹۴	تاریخچه روانشناسی	چهارشنبه	۲	۱۶	بدون تأثیر	بدون تأثیر
نیمسال دوم ۹۳-۹۴	درسیات ۳	چهارشنبه	۲	۱۷	هفده تمام	بدون تأثیر
نیمسال دوم ۹۳-۹۴	دانشگاه	چهارشنبه	۲	۱۸	هجده تمام	بدون تأثیر
نیمسال اول ۹۴-۹۵	اسیب شناسی روانی	الکتهاری	۲	۱۶	شانزده تمام	۳۲
نیمسال اول ۹۴-۹۵	روانشناسی عمومی	چهارشنبه	۲	۱۷/۵۰	هفده و پنجاه صدم	بدون تأثیر
نیمسال اول ۹۴-۹۵	روان شناسی ورزشی *	تخصصی	۲	۱۷/۵۰	هفده و پنجاه صدم	۳۵
نیمسال اول ۹۴-۹۵	روان آزمایی	پایه	۲	۱۹	توزده تمام	۳۸
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نیمسال اول ۹۴-۹۵	اخلاق در ورزش	اختیاری	۲	۲۰	بیست تمام	۴۰
نیمسال دوم ۹۴-۹۵	مرخصی بدون احتساب					

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# Open (Azad) Higher Education Institution

(not to be mistaken with IslamicAzadUniversity or Payam-e Noor)



- Open (Azad) higher education institutions operate within the framework of the regulations of the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology and were established by the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution
- The Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution acts as the supreme authority for policy-making, policy decisions and coordination of cultural, educational, and research affairs of the country. Its decisions and approvals are binding. <https://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/100544>
- According to the Supreme Council regulations for Open (Azad) Higher Education Institutions <https://ngp.msrt.ir/file/download/regulation/1566017465-.pdf>, programs do not lead to equivalent university degrees. As such, terms that are associated with formal higher education, such as "Student", "semester/term", "credit" should be avoided for all programs.

=> Institution authorized to operate by the MSRT, they have an operating licence, courses offered are career-specific education certificates

QUESTIONS?



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