

New PhD Comprehensive Examination Policy

1. After completion of most course requirements, PhD students are required to take a written comprehensive examination, as one of the requirements for admission to PhD candidacy. This examination is to be taken by students by the end of their second year. However, the Department may recommend to the Deanship of Graduate Studies that this time requirement be relaxed if the student is part-time or has some deficiencies. For this purpose, a valid justification has to be provided by the student.
2. The comprehensive examination is intended to ensure that students have sufficient background in their subject area to undertake PhD research. The Department of Mathematics & Statistics offers the PhD program in the following subject areas:

Area 1: Applied Mathematics and Numerical Analysis
Area 2: Pure Mathematics

3. The examination is expected to cover topics from 4 to 6 graduate level courses. The duration of each component of the exam will be 2 to 3 hours. The examination will consist of 3 components:
 - a. Two components covering topics from the following core areas of the graduate program in Mathematics:
 - Algebra
 - Analysis
 - Differential Equations
 - Topology
 - b. One component covering topics from the student's declared area.

An updated list of topics and references will be made available to students for each component.

4. The comprehensive examination shall be administered by the Department Graduate Committee. Each of the components shall be prepared and graded by at least two examiners with expertise in the relevant component. The examiners are appointed by the Chairman of the Department upon recommendation of the Graduate Committee. They shall report the students' percentage scores to the Graduate Committee. The names of the examiners shall be kept confidential.
5. The minimum passing score for each component is 70%. Cases where the component score is between 60% and 69% will be discussed by the Graduate Committee for further oral or written assessment, if necessary, in order to reach Pass or Fail decision in that component. The Graduate Committee will award an overall grade of Pass in the comprehensive examination if the student has secured Pass in each component.
6. If a student fails the comprehensive examination, the Graduate Committee will advise the student to retake the examination for the component(s) failed in the first attempt. This will however be the final chance for the student to pass the comprehensive exam.