Frequently Asked Questions for Iranian Students

Graduate Studies at NTU

1. What are the differences between the MEng and MSc programmes?
   The MEng programmes are Masters programmes by research. Candidates reading for a higher degree by research pursue an independent but supervised research on an approved topic based on which a thesis must be submitted for examination. The award of the research degree is based solely on the thesis submitted. Candidates are also required to attend classes and pass the examinations in at least 3 to 6 subjects. Selection of subjects is made after consultation with the research supervisor.

   The MSc programmes are Masters programmes by coursework. Candidates reading for a higher degree by coursework and dissertation follow a prescribed course of study comprising several subjects and undertake a project on which a dissertation will be written. For most programmes, the dissertation can be replaced by a few extra subjects. The course of study involves formal classes, lectures, tutorials, seminars, laboratory work and written examinations.

2. I have already obtained my MEng in Iran. Can I apply for the A*STAR or NTU scholarship for a PhD?
   Yes, candidates who have obtained their MEng may apply for PhD studies at NTU and for financial support under the NTU Research Scholarship.

3. What are the terms and conditions for the NTU Research Scholarship?
   The University provides research scholarships to candidates with outstanding academic records to enable them to pursue higher degree studies by research on full-time basis. The Research Scholarship carries a monthly stipend in the range of $1,400 - $1,500 (Singapore dollars). The amount payable to each scholar is determined after taking into consideration the candidate's qualifications, experience, performance and other relevant factors. In addition to the monthly stipend, the scholarship award also covers the annual research fee and the annual computer fee.

   The Research Scholarship shall be tenable for one year in the first instance and renewable every 12 months, subject to the scholar's good progress. The maximum period of the scholarship is two years for a Master's degree candidate and three years for a PhD candidate.

4. Is the amount of stipend provided under the scholarship enough for living and studying in Singapore?
   Yes, the monthly stipend of S$1,500 is sufficient to cover the monthly living expenses of a single student.

   The estimated monthly expenses of an international student are as follows:
   
   Meals (university canteens & food centres)  S$250 - S$400
   Accommodation  S$175 - S$400
   Transport expenses (locally)  S$100 - S$150
   Other personal expenses (stationery, toiletries, laundry, recreation, etc)  S$300 - S$500
   
   Total  S$825 - S$1,450

   Students are advised that the living expenses will be higher if they are their bringing their spouses with them.
5 How are the research supervisors assigned? Can I choose my own supervisor?
Students can look up the Schools’ websites on the research areas available and the research interests of faculty staff. Students are encouraged to initiate contact via e-mail with the faculty staff to discuss about their chosen research area, and to request for supervision. Where necessary, the Schools will also help students in assigning suitable supervisors based on the chosen research area.

6 Can I register for more subjects if I am admitted to the programme?
Students in the MEng programmes are required to complete 3 coursework subjects and students in the PhD programmes are required to complete 6 coursework subjects. The supervisors will advise the students on the selection of appropriate subjects. Students may request to do more than the required number of subjects.

7 What are the differences between the IGS scholarship provided by A*STAR and the NTU Research Scholarship?
The A*STAR IGS supports Iranian students for the MEng programmes in the Biomedical Sciences, Physical Sciences and Engineering areas. The Scholarship award covers university-related fees and a monthly stipend, and includes provision for annual book allowance and air travel reimbursement.

The NTU Research Scholarship is open to students of all nationalities. It support students in the higher degree programmes by research (can be Masters or PhD programmes) and is open to all disciplines (including Communications and Information, Arts and Social Sciences, etc). The Scholarship covers the university-related fees and a monthly stipend, but does not provide for annual book allowance and air travel reimbursement.

Both scholarships do not require students to serve a bond.

8 Can students supported under the IGS continue their studies towards a PhD?
Yes, students who have excelled in their studies may request to proceed on to PhD studies. Students can submit their request through the Schools and the University will consider providing financial support for students through the NTU Research Scholarship.

9 Can IELTS be used to replace TOEFL?
Yes, the IELTS is acceptable in place of TOEFL. Students should preferably have a score of 6.5 and above.

10 I have registered to take the TOEFL and GRE. Can I apply for admission now and provide my results later?
Students are advised to provide their TOEFL and GRE scores with their application. The University would need to review the TOEFL and GRE scores before applications are considered for admission.

11 Are students allowed to work while studying as a full-time student?
Students who are on scholarship may not be on paid employment or accept paid employment or hold concurrently any other scholarship, fellowship, bursary or top-up allowance during the prescribed period of the award. However, the scholar may be required by the Dean concerned to assist the School in teaching duties for which he will be remunerated at such rates as may be determined by the University.
A*STAR International Graduate Scholarship (IGS)

12 What is the process for selection of candidates for IGS? / How does A*STAR shortlist IGS applicants?
Candidates must satisfy the IGS requirements as stated on the IGS website (www.a-star.edu.sg/astar/studentsandscholarships/action/scholarship_IGS.do - minimum GPA of 15, etc). Their applications must be supported by their Universities (Applications MUST be made through the International Affairs Office at your University). Short-listed candidates are required to attend a selection interview conducted jointly by A*STAR, NUS and NTU.

13 Are there quotas for every Iranian university for the IGS or are all students treated equally?
All applications for the IGS are considered based on merit and the chosen research area (whether there are qualified supervisors and resources to support).

14 Are there bonds or commitments for the scholarship?
There are no bonds attached for the IGS. However, students are required to return the amount of the award received in the event if they withdraw from the programme or fail to complete their higher degree.

15 Can married students apply for this scholarship and is the stipend enough for a couple?
The scholarship is reasonable to cover the living expenses of a single student only. Students are advised that the living expenses will be higher if they are their bringing their spouses with them.

16 Who will determine the destination university (NTU or NUS) for the students?
Applicants can indicate their preference to study at NUS or NTU. The allocation of students to each university is determined jointly by A*STAR, NTU and NUS. The following will be considered: the choice indicated by the student, which university will better support the research area chosen by the student.

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