# Joint Collaborative Academic Program for Gaza Medical Students at Rawalpindi Medical University

### Farah Pervaiz<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Editor of Resident Journal of Rawalpindi Medical University, Rawalpindi, Pakistan.

### **Background:**

The ongoing conflict in Gaza disrupted the education of Al-Azhar University medical students, necessitating an academic collaboration between Rawalpindi Medical University (RMU) and Al-Azhar University to ensure their continued medical training. RMU provided a structured one-year academic integration program to facilitate their adaptation and academic progress. Medical examination psychological examination and previous academic assessment was carried out upon integration into RMU. One-week foundation module of basics sciences was conducted after initial assessments of basic sciences

## **Program objectives**

Enhanced academic skills	•Ensure seamless transition of Al Azhar University students into RMU's academic and clinical system
Skill development	Foster the development of clinical, academic and professional competencies
Psychological support	Address the psychological and emotional needs of Al Azhar     University students

#### **Program Structure:**

- The program includes lectures, clinical clerkships, research sessions, and mentorship to ensure a smooth transition.
- They have Internal Medicine and Surgery as major need and Cardiology, Orthopedics, urology Medical imaging, Dermatology, Community Medicine, ENT, Health Economics, Gynecology and Obstetrics, Vascular and Cardiothoracic Surgery, Pediatric Surgery, Endocrinology and Metabolic Disorders, Forensic Medicine, Neurology, Neurosurgery Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences
- Holy Family Hospital Rawalpindi is declared as hospital for clinical rotations in clinical sciences

**Student Demographics:** Initially there were 44 students whose names arrived for RMU. They were issued RMU registration numbers. However, 34 students actually joined RMU. There are currently under academic training

Category	Details
Total Students	38
Gender distribution	Male 17 Female 19
Age range	21-27 years
Year of study	4 <sup>th</sup> year
RMU registration numbers	Issued

**Committees & Faculty Involvement:** 

Patron-in-Chief Professor Dr Muhammad Umar

Vice Chancellor RMU

Guidance Professor Jahngair Sarwar Khan

Principal RMU

Academic oversight

Professor in charge Professor Dr Nasir Khan

Dean Diagnostics

Coordinator Dr Mehwish Riaz

Assistant Professor Community Medicine

DME coordinator Dr Omaima Asif

## Summary plan for Al Azhar -RMU students

Academic	Total	Teaching	Preparatory	Examinatio	End-of-	Dates of year 4
year	weeks	weeks	leave weeks	n leaves	year	(including
					leaves	examination and prep
						leaves)
4th year	41	31 weeks	4 weeks	4 weeks	2 weeks	11/11/2024 to
						13/9/2025
5th year	42	33 weeks	3 weeks	4 weeks	2 weeks	15/9/2025 to
						12/7/2026
6th year	27	20 weeks	3 weeks	4 weeks		13/7/2026 to
						24/1/2027

## 4th-year Academic Calendar

Courses		Start date	End date	Weeks per subject	Assessments	Total weeks
Community Medicine ENT		11/11/24	7/12/24	2 2	End-of-course End-of-year	4
M	edicine	9/12/24	15/2/25	10	End-of-course End-of-year	8
Medicine & Allied	Cardiology Radiology	17/2/25 3/3/25	28/2/25 15/3/25	1 2	End-of-course End-of-year	5
	Dermatology	17/3/25	21/3/2025	2		
Ramadan and Eid ul Fitar Holidays		24/3/25	2/4/25			
S	urgery	3/4/25	31/5/25	8	End-of-course End-of-year	8
Surgery & Allied	Orthopedics Urology Eid Ul Adha Break (6/6/25 to 9/6/25)	3/6/25 17/6/25	14/6/25 29/6/25	2 2	End-of-course End-of-year	4

Summer Course Health Economics Family Medicine	30/6/25	12/7/25	2	End-of-course End-of-year	2
Exam Preparation	14/7/25	2/8/25	4		4
Annual Professional Assessment	4/8/25	30/8/25	4	Written (to be conducted by Al Azhar University) OSCE (static & Dynamic to be conducted by RMU)	4
End of year break	31/8/2025	16 /9/2025	2		
Total weeks					41

## 5<sup>th</sup> year Academic Calendar

Courses	Start date	End date	Weeks per subject	Assessments	Total weeks
Gynae/Obstetrics	15/9/25	24/10/25	6	End-of-course End-of-year	6
Pediatrics	27/10/25	5/12/25	6	End-of-course End-of-year	6
Psychiatry & Behavior Disorders	8/12/25	2/1/26	4	End-of-course End-of-year	4
Neurology	5/1/26	23/1/26	3	End-of-course End-of-year	3
Neurosurgery	26/1/26	6/2/25	2	End-of-course End-of-year	2
Forensic Medicine & Toxicology	9/2/26	20/2/26	2	End-of-course End-of-year	2
Plastic surgery	23/3/26	6/3/26	2	End-of-course End-of-year	2
Vascular & Cardiothoracic Surgery	9/3/26	20/3/26	2	End-of-course End-of-year	2
Hematology & Oncology	23/2/26	3/4/26	2	End-of-course End-of-year	2
Endocrinology & Metabolic Disorders	6/4/26	17/4/26	2	End-of-course End-of-year	2
Ophthalmology	20/4/26	1/5/26	2	End-of-year End-of-course	2
Exam Preparation Time	4/5/26	29/5/26	4		3
Annual Professional Exam	1/6/26	26/6/26	4	Written (to be conducted by Al Azhar University) OSCE (static & Dynamic to be conducted by RMU)	4
End of year leaves	29/6/25	12/7/26	2	• /	
Total weeks					40

## 6<sup>th</sup> year Academic Calendar

Courses	Start date	End date	Weeks per subject	Assessments	Total weeks
Internal Medicine	13/7/26	7/8/26	4	End-of- course End-of-year	4
General Surgery	10/8/26	4/9/26	4	End-of-course End-of-year	4
Gynae/Obstetrics	7/9/26	2/10/26	4	End-of-course End-of-year	4
Pediatrics	5/10/26	30/10/26	4	End-of-course End-of-year	4
Anesthesia	2/11/26	13/11/26	2	End-of-course End-of-year	2
Emergency	16/11/26	27/11/26	2	End-of-course End-of-year	2
Exam Preparation	30/11/26	25/12/26	4		2
Annual Professional Assessment	26/12/26	24/1/27	4	Written (to be conducted by Al Azhar University) OSCE (static & Dynamic to be conducted by RMU)	4
Total weeks					26

#### **Extracurricular activities**

The extracurricular activities are arranged for Al Azhar University students joining Rawalpindi Medical University (RMU) every Saturday to support their overall well-being, offering a break from their academic responsibilities while encouraging physical health and teamwork. Joint extracurricular activities are planned for students from Gaza who have joined PIMS, FUSH, and STMU. The objectives of these activities are

- Physical Fitness: Encourage students to engage in regular physical exercise.
- Team Building: Foster teamwork and collaboration through group sports.
- Stress Relief: Provide an opportunity for students to unwind and reduce academic stress.
- Cultural Exchange: Encourage interaction among students from different backgrounds, fostering a sense of community.

## **Outcome & Conclusion:**

The RMU-Al Azhar collaboration successfully ensured academic continuity for displaced Gaza students, integrating them into RMU's curriculum while providing essential psychological and social support. The initiative demonstrates the power of global academic solidarity in times of crisis and sets a model for future educational collaborations.

