

[AS PASSED BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY]

A
BILL

to provide for the establishment of Horizon University

WHEREAS it is expedient to provide for the establishment of the Horizon University at Islamabad and for matters connected with and ancillary thereto;

It is hereby enacted as follows:-

CHAPTER I
PRELIMINARY

1. **Short title and commencement.**— (1) This Act may be called the Horizon University Act, 2023.

(2) It Act shall come into force at once.

2. **Definitions.**— In this Act, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context:

- i. "Academic Council" means the Academic Council of the University;
- ii. "Advisor" means Advisor to the Chairman;
- iii. "Authority" means any of the authorities of the University;
- iv. "Affiliated institution" means an educational institution authorized by the Board to conduct academic programmes, research and development projects as approved by the University;
- v. "Board of Directors" means Board of Directors of the MRK Education Systems LLP registered under section 7 of the Limited Liability Partnership Act (2017), Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan vide Registration No. 0221280 dated 24th January 2023;
- vi. "Board of Governors" shall mean the Board for the purposes of this Act and shall comprise of members of the Board of Governors;
- vii. "Chairman" means the Chairman of the Horizon University who shall also be the Chairman Board of Directors of MRK Education Systems LLP;
- viii. "College" means an educational institution, by whatever name described, maintained and administered by the University;
- ix. "Commission" means the Higher Education Commission set up under the Higher Education Commission Ordinance, 2002 (LIII 2002);
- x. "Controller" means head of the examination department of the University;
- xi. "Dean" means the head of a Faculty or the head of an academic body granted the status of a Faculty by this Act or by the Statutes or Regulations;
- xii. "Department" means a teaching department maintained and administered, or recognized by the University in the manner prescribed;
- xiii. "Director" means head of an academic institute established and managed by the University;

- xiv. "Executive Committee" means the Executive Committee of the University;
- xv. "Faculty" means an administrative and academic unit of the University consisting of one or more departments, as prescribed;
- xvi. "Government" means the Federal Government of Pakistan;
- xvii. "Officer" means an Officer of the University specified in section 7 of this Act;
- xviii. "Patron" means Patron of the University;
- xix. "Prescribed" means prescribed by Statutes, Regulations or Rules and made under this Act;
- xx. "Principal" means the head of a college or an academic unit of the University;
- xxi. "Pro-Rector" means Pro-Rector of the University;
- xxii. "Rector" means the Rector of the University;
- xxiii. "Registrar" means Registrar of the University;
- xxiv. "Search Committee" means the Search Committee set up by the Board of Governors under section 15;
- xxv. "Schedule" means a Schedule to this Act;
- xxvi. "School" means an educational unit by whatever name described, maintained and administered by the university;
- xxvii. "Sponsoring Body" means MRK Education Systems LLP;
- xxviii. "Statutes" "Regulations" and "Rules" mean respectively the Statutes, the Regulations and the Rules made under this Act and for the time being in force;
- xxix. "Teachers" include Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors, Lecturers, Tutors engaged on whole-time basis by the University or by a constituent College and such other persons as may be declared to be teachers by Regulations;
- xxx. "University" means the Horizon University established under this Act;
- xxxi. "University Teacher" means a whole-time teacher appointed and paid by the University, or recognized by the University as such; and
- xxxii. "Vice Chairman" means Vice Chairman of the University.

CHAPTER II THE UNIVERSITY

3. Establishment and Incorporation of the University.— (1) There shall be established a University to be called the "Horizon University" in the private sector having its principal seat in Islamabad.

(2) The University shall consist of the following, namely:-

- (a) the Patron, Chairman, Vice Chairman, the members Board of Governors, the members of Executive Committee, the Rector, the Deans and such other officers as may be prescribed;
- (b) the members of the authorities of the University established under this section 22;
- (c) all University teachers and persons recognized as students of the University in accordance with terms prescribed from to time; and

(d) all other full-time officers and members of the staff of the University:

Provided that the powers of the University shall be exercised by Board of Governors of the University.

(3) The University shall be a body corporate by the name of the Horizon University and shall have perpetual succession and a common seal, and may sue and be sued by the said name;

(4) The University will be a multi-campus university with its principal seat at Islamabad, and in addition, may set up any number of campuses, colleges and institutes any time after its establishment at such places as the board may determine.

(5) The University shall be competent to acquire and hold property, both movable and immovable, and to lease, sell or otherwise transfer any movable and immovable property which may have become vested in or been acquired by it and may use its properties for any purpose as it may deem fit;

(6) Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force, the University shall have academic, financial, and administrative autonomy, including the power to employ officers, teachers and other employees on such terms as may be prescribed, subject to the terms of this act and the Higher Education Commission Ordinance, 2002 (LIII of 2002). In particular, and without prejudice to the authority granted to the Commission by the law, the Government or an authority or auditor appointed by the Government shall have no power to question the policy underlying the allocation of resources approved by the Board of Governors in the annual budget of the University;

(7) All properties, rights, profits and interests of whatever kind, used, enjoyed, possessed, owned or vested in, or held in trust by the University or any of its departments, schools, colleges, institutes or other such academic units shall pass to the University established under this act.

4. Powers and Purposes of the University.— The University shall have the following powers, namely:

(i) to provide for education and scholarship in such branches of knowledge as it may deem fit, and to make provision for research, service to society and for the application, advancement and dissemination of knowledge in such manner as it may determine;

Provided that in case of medical, engineering, and other professional education, approval of the relevant Accreditation councils/forums shall be a pre-requisite.

(ii) to provide life-long learning, deliver courses, degree programmes, diplomas and certificates through virtual, online and distance learning and through such educational facilities to a large segment of the population at its designated campuses, study centres, places of work and residences through the integration of satellite, television, internet and intranets and emerging technology etc., or through conventional methods;

(iii) to prescribe courses of studies to be conducted by it through its departments, schools, institutes, colleges and other academic units;

- (iv) to hold examinations and to award and confer degrees, diplomas, certificates and other academic distinctions to and on persons who have been admitted to and have passed Its examinations under prescribed conditions;
- (v) to employ local or foreign persons as officers, teachers and other employees of the University and to lay down terms and conditions that may be different from those applicable to government servants in general;
- (vi) to enter into agreements and contracts with local or foreign organisations, institutions, universities, bodies and individuals and establish offices anywhere in Pakistan or in any foreign country to promote the functions and activities of the University including but not limited to collaborations and such arrangements as to facilitate offering of dual, joint and split-degree programmes with foreign Universities and authorities;
- (vii) to confer honorary degrees or other distinctions on persons of eminence in the manner prescribed;
- (viii) to provide for such instruction for persons not being students of the University as it may prescribe, and to grant certificates and diplomas to such persons;
- (ix) to establish programmes for the exchange of students and teachers between the University and other universities, educational institutions and research organisations, inside as well as outside Pakistan;
- (x) to provide career counselling and job search services to students and alumni;
- (xi) to maintain linkages with industry and alumni;
- (xii) to develop and implement fund-raising plans and programmes;
- (xiii) to provide and support the academic and professional development of the faculty and employees of the University;
- (xiv) to confer degrees on persons who have carried on independent research under prescribed conditions;
- (xv) to accept the examinations passed and the period of study spent by students of the University at other universities and places of learning recognized by the Commission, equivalent to such examinations and periods of study in the University, as it may prescribe, and to withdraw such acceptance;
- (xvi) to collaborate and sign agreements with other universities, public authorities or private organisations, inside as well as outside Pakistan, in such manner and for such purposes as it may deem fit;
- (xvii) to establish and lay down eligibility criteria for Professorships, Associate Professorships, Assistant Professorships and Lectureships and any other posts and to appoint foreign and local persons thereto;
- (xviii) to create posts for research, extension, administration, and other related purposes and to appoint any local or foreign persons thereto;
- (xix) to institute and award financial assistance to students in need, fellowships, scholarships, bursaries, medals and prizes under prescribed conditions;
- (xx) to establish teaching faculties, schools, departments, colleges, faculties and other academic units or centers of learning for the development of teaching and