



INTERNATIONAL  
OPEN UNIVERSITY

# 2023-2024 PROSPECTUS



## Table of Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Introduction .....                     | 1  |
| By the Numbers .....                   | 2  |
| Why Study at IOU .....                 | 3  |
| Accreditation .....                    | 5  |
| Headquarters .....                     | 7  |
| The Gambia .....                       | 8  |
| Message from the Chancellor .....      | 9  |
| Message from the Vice-Chancellor ..... | 10 |
| Governing Council .....                | 11 |
| Departments and Programs .....         | 13 |
| Academic Structure .....               | 14 |
| Islamic Studies .....                  | 15 |
| Arabic Language .....                  | 17 |
| Education .....                        | 19 |
| Psychology .....                       | 21 |
| Economics .....                        | 23 |
| Information Technology .....           | 25 |
| Business Administration .....          | 27 |
| Application Process .....              | 29 |
| Semester Fees .....                    | 31 |
| Scholarships .....                     | 32 |
| Testimonials .....                     | 33 |
| Student Life .....                     | 35 |
| Continuing Education .....             | 36 |
| Quran .....                            | 37 |
| Diploma .....                          | 39 |
| Short Courses .....                    | 41 |

# Introduction

The International Open University (IOU) is a pioneer in virtual education founded by the well-known Islamic scholar, Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips. It was first launched in 2001 as the Islamic Online University, and in 2010 became one of the world's first institutions to offer an English medium online Bachelor's degree in Islamic Studies. It is now an accredited university that offers a unique blend of programs in modern subjects from an Islamic perspective, at an affordable cost.

IOU aims to make high-quality undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate-level Islamic and Islamized programs available globally for all. The internet is a platform that can be utilized to disseminate beneficial knowledge around the world and facilitate the educational growth of the Muslim nation. Students no longer have to travel to seek knowledge, as has been the norm in the past, as knowledge delivered by contemporary scholars and experts is now accessible from the comfort of their homes.



# By the Numbers



**8**  
Academic  
Departments



**23**  
Certificates  
& Degrees  
(University)



**200+**  
Staff & Faculty in  
35 Countries



**30k+**  
Enrolled Students in  
173 Countries



**2.3k+**  
Graduates in  
92 Countries



**20**  
Representatives in  
16 countries



**78**  
Student  
Committees in  
50 Countries



**2.5k**  
Approved Exam  
Centers in  
146 Countries



**7+**  
Certificates  
& Diplomas  
(Non-University)

Semester  
Numbers  
(Spring 2023)

**6.5k+**  
Students in  
104 Countries

**32%**  
Students on  
Scholarship

**54%**  
Students are  
Female

# Why Study at IOU

At the International Open University, we believe that education should be accessible to everyone, regardless of their location or background. Our online programs allow students to not only pursue their academic and career goals in this life, but also equip them with religious knowledge that will benefit them in the afterlife. We are confident that we are the best choice for you. Here are some of the reasons why:



## We Put Islam First

IOU's Founder once said that there is a difference between a student who is Muslim and a Muslim who is a student. Our focus is to groom and develop Muslim students - those whose first and foremost priority is the pleasure of Allah the Almighty.



## We Share Authenticity

We firmly adhere to the teaching of the Quran and Sunnah as taught by the Prophet (pbuh). Our duty and pleasure is to spread correct Aqeedah (theology) and teachings of Islam that will bring benefit and blessings to everyone involved.



## We Have Quality

Our faculty members are renowned experts in their fields and participate in research while staying current in their industries. Our instructors bring a wealth of real-world experience, providing students with insight and skills for use in the future.



## We Offer A Unique Blend

One of the ways that set us apart is our unique approach to education. We have a blend of programs that combine authentic Islamic education and modern subjects, allowing students to learn their religion and prepare for their career.



## We Are Accredited

IOU is a licensed online university by the Ministry of Education in the West African nation of The Gambia. We are also pleased to have both institutional and program accreditation from the Gambian accreditation authority.



## We Are Affordable

Education doesn't have to be expensive - which is why we only charge a flat fee per semester, depending on which country you reside in. This ensures that students living in poorer countries also have the opportunity to gain knowledge.



## We Are Accessible

You can study online at home on your laptop or offline on the train using your tablet. We also offer part-time and full-time study plans, so you can go at your own pace and have an extended period of time to complete your program.



## We Support You

IOU has video and text resources to help guide you through online education, as well as a dedicated student affairs office working to help you complete your program. We also provide internships for those who qualify for selected programs.



## We Are Global

We have the most diverse student body of any university in the world. So you're sure to interact with students near you or from anywhere else. We also have IOU exam centers around the globe, where students can go and take their exams.



## We Support Equality

Education is a right of every individual. IOU supports the notion that every human being should have fair and equal access to knowledge free of discrimination, regardless of gender, social background, or religious affiliation. All are welcome at IOU.



## We Give Back

We offer deserving candidates full scholarships to make higher education available to those who cannot afford it. IOU also offers sacrifice services for Eid, so that all who may not know where to go or have the facility available can get the reward.

# Accreditation



The International Open University was given a license to officially operate as an online university in 2014 by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology in The Gambia. Subsequently, it was given full institutional and program accreditation by the National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority (NAQAA) as a degree-awarding institution.

Licensed by



The Ministry of Higher Education, the Gambia

Accredited by



National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority

## Affiliations, Memberships, and MoUs

IOU has memberships with various international and regional associations, councils of universities and educators, as well as quality assurance networks. It is also affiliated with the Gambian Ministry of Education, and has Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with universities and financial institutions based in Africa, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East.



Association of African Universities (AAU)



Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU)



International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education



International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE)



African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN)



International Council of Islamic Finance Educators (ICIFE)



Association of Quality Assurance Agencies of the Islamic World (IQA)



Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World (FUIW)



University of Tourism, Technology and Business Studies, Rwanda



The Registered Trustees of Bilal Trust, Malawi



National Muslim Council of Tanzania (BAKWATA), Tanzania



Islamic University of Kenya



New Generation University, Somalia



Riphah International University, Pakistan



Sterde, Ghana



Africa International Institute of Science and Technology, Liberia



Faith Consulting, Canada



Smart Technologies, The Gambia



The Grandeur Academy, United Arab Emirates



Learning Roots Ltd, United Kingdom



IMATT College, Sierra Leone



Quraany, Malaysia

## Headquarters



The International Open University (IOU) headquarters is located in the district of Kanifing South in the town of Kanifing, 13 kilometers west of the capital city of Banjul. It is located in the heart of Serrekunda, the largest urban center in The Gambia, and is visible to motorists who drive along the Banjul-Serrekunda highway. The landmark three-story building has an imposing appearance and can't be missed along the Iceman Junction.

IOU has made significant contributions to tertiary education in The Gambia, and is a notable institution that is unique as the only completely accredited online institution in the country. Through its Intensive English Course (IEC) initiative, it has assisted the Gambian government in providing Madrassah students access to conventional schools and other institutions. The headquarters houses the Vice Chancellor's office, supported by an administrative team, and an active student committee. It also has a scholarship learning center, library, and offers students free access to computers and wifi.

## The Gambia



The Gambia is a beautiful, peaceful country, and is the smallest nation in the African continent. It is located in West Africa and is surrounded by Senegal, except for its western coast with the Atlantic Ocean. It gained its independence in 1965 from the United Kingdom, and has an area of 11,300 square kilometers. Its population is approximately 2 million with a Muslim majority, and its capital city of Banjul and its greater area are the country's largest metropolitan area.

The Gambia is renowned for its diverse landscapes, which include the Gambia River that flows through its center and empties into the Atlantic Ocean. Not only does the river provide a picturesque natural setting, but it also functions as a major transportation corridor and a source of income for many Gambians. The economy is heavily reliant on agriculture, which accounts for 25% of GDP and employs 75% of the labor force.





## Message from the Chancellor

Welcome to the International Open University, where you will join a vibrant interactive international community of staff and students from over 230 different countries and territories, committed to providing and sharing educational opportunities to aspiring students across the globe. Our past as a pioneering online institution makes us confident in our present and hopeful about our collective future. IOU provides fully personalized and easily accessible support to students in their pursuit of academic and personal goals.

During the unprecedented academic challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, several educational institutions were forced to shut down and scramble to reinvent themselves on a virtual platform. However, IOU was well prepared, and although many adjustments had to be made, it was still able to remain functional, as it was already in existence for over 10 years.

In addition to this, our success as an online university is what makes IOU unique. It is not merely the courses that it teaches, but how these courses are taught. It is done in such a way that modern education, spiritual guidance, and Islamic education and ethics, are all integrated into the curricula of the various subjects being taught.

Today, more than ever, the world needs IOU's Islamic ethos and its commitment to community engagement and constructive participation in nation-building.

IOU's commitment to *'Change the Muslim nation and the world situation through appropriate Islamized education'* is required for positive transformation and healing of our global society, and our world. If this vision appeals to you, we welcome you to share its implementation with us in IOU's virtual halls and classrooms.

**Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips**  
Founder and Chancellor

## Message from the Vice-Chancellor

Choosing the right university is a major decision, and it is important that you choose the one that is right for you.

From its relaunch in 2007, IOU's consistent goal has been to provide education for the developing world irrespective of gender or background. It also offers scholarships to those who cannot otherwise afford it, so that they can have the opportunity to make a positive difference in the world.

IOU offers a highly supportive and personalized student experience that develops a global mindset and world-class skills in students without having to travel from their homes.

We strive to be a center of excellence with the expertise to provide education through technology that is accessible at the fingertips of students around the globe. No matter your location, we have brought the university to your doorstep, so that you can enlighten yourself with authentic, modern knowledge, and thus apply it in your daily lives. This means that together, we have the means to achieve our goal and help change the contemporary world.

I am honored to continue the IOU legacy of addressing contemporary challenges and to present educational opportunities to all.

**Dr. Cherno Omar Barry**  
Vice-Chancellor and President



# Governing Council

The Governing Council of IOU is the highest body that oversees its functions which include the formulation and review of policies, as well as general guidance on all matters that are crucial to the university's development and existence. It is concerned with the legal representation of IOU, managing monetary affairs, providing necessary facilities for student welfare and discipline, dealing with appointments for major positions within the administrative and academic hierarchy, and establishing committees that convene to make important decisions.



CHAIR

## PROFESSOR EMERITUS DR. BILAL BRADLEY PHILIPS

Doctor Philips holds a Bachelor's degree in Islamic Studies from the Islamic University of Madeenah, and a Doctoral degree in Islamic Theology from the University of Wales, UK. He taught Islamic Studies for several years in Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Qatar. He has authored, translated, and commented on over 50 published books, and presented Islamic programs on several radio and television channels. He is the Founder and Chancellor of IOU, and was listed in the annual Jordanian publication "The 500 Most Influential Muslims."



DEPUTY CHAIR

## PROFESSOR DR. ABOUBACAR ABDULLAH SENGHORE

Doctor Senghore completed his Bachelor's degree in Shariah and Law from the International Islamic University, Pakistan, and obtained his Doctoral degree from the International Islamic University, Malaysia. He has served ministerial tenures in The Gambia as Minister for Higher Education, Minister of Religious Affairs, and Minister of Foreign Affairs. He was formerly Dean of the Faculty of Law and Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of The Gambia.



## PROFESSOR DR. CHERNO OMAR BARRY

Doctor Barry holds a Master's degree and a Doctoral degree in Comparative Literature and Semiology from the University of Limoges, France. He has served for several years as a senior government official and Permanent Secretary in the Republic of The Gambia, and has taught in several educational institutions, including the University of The Gambia. In 2017, he briefly became the IOU Vice-Chancellor before his government called upon him to serve, but rejoined in the position permanently in 2020.



SECRETARY

## SR. SYEDA MADEEHA BOKHARI

Sister Bokhari holds a Bachelor's degree in Computer Engineering from North South University, Bangladesh, and a Master's degree in Tertiary Education Management from the University of Melbourne, Australia. She has worked at Grameenphone Limited, one of the largest multinational companies in Bangladesh, and is an alumnus of IOU's Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Islamic Studies. In 2014, she joined IOU as an Associate Registrar, and was promoted to Registrar in 2021.



## DR. ALIEU GIBBA

Doctor Gibba holds a Master's degree in Agricultural Economics from National Taiwan University, and received his Doctoral degree in Business Economics and Administration from Szent Istvan University, Hungary. He is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Economics and Finance at the University of The Gambia, and has served as the President of The University of The Gambia Staff Association. He also has widely lectured in several academic institutions, and is the Director-General of the Institute of Islamic Economics and Finance.



## MR. SEEDY KANYI

Mister Kanyi is currently serving as General Manager of Gambia Transport Service Company. He graduated in Economics from the Islamic Council University in Malaysia, and obtained his Master's degree from the Ghana Institute for Management and Public Administration. He has held several board memberships in various organizations, including the Gambia National Petroleum Company, National Roads Authority, and Chairperson of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.



## MR. KALIFA CEESAY (CO-OPTED MEMBER)

Mister Ceesay is the Chief Engineer and Head of the Engineering Department at the Gambia Transport Service Company (GTSC). His professional experience is linked to the automotive and mechanical industry, and his educational background is from The Gambia, UK, Spain and Ghana.

# DEPARTMENTS & PROGRAMS

## Academic Structure

The International Open University (IOU) offers certificate and degree programs in several disciplines. Its academic structure is as follows:



### Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies

One of IOU's guiding principles is the teaching of authentic knowledge from the Quran and Sunnah. On the importance of learning Islam, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, "Whoever takes a path upon which to obtain knowledge, Allah makes the path to Paradise easy for him" (Sunan Abu-Dawud). Actively pursuing studies for the attainment of *ilm* (knowledge) is a virtuous act which will enlighten the heart and fill it with understanding and purpose. For the Muslim, there is nothing that compares to reading the Quran with understanding and gaining insight into their religion, as knowledge increases *eemaan* (faith) and *taqwa* (God-consciousness).

- Department of Arabic Language
- Department of Islamic Studies
- Department of Quranic Studies (offering non-university programs)



### Faculty of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Employers are more interested in hiring graduates who possess a combination of professional qualifications and interpersonal skills. These include the ability to communicate ideas, do research, adapt to new technology and business trends, and problem-solving. Interdisciplinary study and the application of natural sciences, social sciences, as well as arts and humanities, give students opportunities to intellectually criticize and apply Islamic principles to contemporary disciplines. As Umar ibn al-Khattab said, "The foundation of a man is his intellect, his honor is in his religion, and his chivalry is in his character." (al-Dunya wal-Din 1/17)

- Department of Business Administration
- Department of Economics, Banking and Finance
- Department of Education
- Department of Information Technology
- Department of Psychology

# Islamic Studies



We are living in unprecedented times where the lines between right and wrong are being blurred and our children need more protection to hold on to their faith. Now, more than ever, we need to nurture the future scholars of Islam so that they learn from authentic sources and teach it to the next generation. The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Seeking knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim." Embark on the path of acquiring religious knowledge by equipping yourself with Islamic fundamentals including *Aqeedah* (Theology), *Fiqh* (Jurisprudence), *Seerah* (Prophetic Biography), *Tafseer* (Quranic Explanation), *Hadeeth* (Prophetic Narrations), Arabic language, and *Da'wah* (Propagation).

## Career Prospects

Successful graduates from this department will be equipped with a broad knowledge base and a variety of practical skills that will enable them to pursue several professions including:

- Teaching in mosques, halaqas, private circles, and schools
- Applying knowledge to various roles within other humanities
- Working for NGOs, government, or Islamic research agencies
- Working for companies doing business in Islamic countries

## Programs Offered

|       | Type        | Courses | Time             |
|-------|-------------|---------|------------------|
| BAIS  | Bachelor    | 40      | 4 to 9 years     |
| BMAIS | Certificate | 16      | 1.5 to 4.5 years |
| MAIS  | Master      | 17      | 2 to 4 years     |

## Bachelor of Arts in Islamic Studies (BAIS)

This four-year program was launched in 2010 and was the first degree offered by IOU. The curriculum is based on the baccalaureate program in *Usool ud-Deen* (Religious Foundations) of Madeenah University and other similar reputable Islamic institutions. It is available in English, Russian, and Bahasa Indonesia.

- **Entry Requirements:** An accredited secondary or high school certificate or diploma.
- **Completion Requirement:** 40 academic courses, including the thesis, and 216 hours of community service within 9 years.

## Postgraduate Certificate in Islamic Studies (BMAIS)

This year-and-a-half program is a bridge to the Master's degree (MAIS) program that is offered to students who already possess an undergraduate degree or its equivalent in another discipline. It contains courses in *Aqeedah*, *Fiqh*, *Tafseer*, *Seerah* and *Hadeeth* from the Bachelor's degree (BAIS) program. It is available in English and Bahasa Indonesia.

- **Entry Requirements:** Graduate or postgraduate degree in any field other than Islamic Studies
- **Completion Requirement:** 17 academic courses within 4.5 years.

## Master of Arts in Islamic Studies (MAIS)

This two-year program is a rigorous but rewarding program that provides an excellent opportunity for students interested in research training. It is a useful qualification for those who wish to progress to a doctorate and are aiming to achieve this highest level of scholarship in Islamic Studies. It is available in English and Bahasa Indonesia.

- **Entry Requirements (any one):**
  - » Bachelor's degree in Islamic Studies
  - » Bachelor's degree or higher in any discipline other than Islamic Studies along with IOU's Postgraduate Certificate (BMAIS)
  - » Bachelor's degree or higher in any discipline other than Islamic Studies, along with a minimum of 36 university-level credit hours of core Islamic Studies courses, as well as passing an admission and Arabic exemption tests.
- **Completion Requirement:** 16 academic courses, including the thesis, within 4 years.

# Arabic Language



Attaining a basic understanding of the Quran, *hadeeth* (narrations), and daily prayers without the need for translation or interpretation is not possible without taking the first step – learning Arabic. There is a beauty to the language that reveals itself when you study it. Which is why Allah (swt) chose it to convey His Final Message to humankind. Allah said, “We have certainly made the Quran easy for remembrance ...” (Surah al-Qamar (54):17). However, true contemplation is not achieved by merely memorizing it, but understanding it. Begin learning Arabic today and open the doors and your heart to new spiritual insights and knowledge.

## Career Prospects

Career paths for graduates of this department include:

- Arabic language teacher
- Researcher
- Writer
- Interpreter
- Translator

## Programs Offered

|        | Type        | Courses | Time         |
|--------|-------------|---------|--------------|
| IAP    | Certificate | 8       | 2 to 6 years |
| BA ALS | Bachelor    | 43      | 4 to 9 years |
| BM ARB | Certificate | 10      | 1 to 3 years |

## Intensive Arabic Program (IAP)

This two-year program consists of 8 classical Arabic program taught two per semester. Each year, the first semester focuses on reading, writing and listening, while the second semester covers basic conversational skills and grammar.

- **Entry Requirements:** Fluent in reading Quranic Arabic script or completion of an introductory Arabic course.
- **Completion Requirement:** 8 academic program and 72 hours of community service within 6 years.

## Bachelor’s Degree in Arabic Language Studies (BA ALS)

This four-year program was developed by more than 50 professors who teach non-Arabic speaking students. The program consists of courses similar to those taught at Imam Muhammad bin Saud University in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as well as courses taught to non-native speakers in other Arabic universities.

- **Entry Requirements:** An accredited secondary or high school certificate or diploma.
- **Completion Requirement:** 43 academic courses, including a thesis in Arabic, and 216 hours of community service within 9 years.

## Postgraduate Certificate in Arabic Language (BM ARB)

This one-year program is a bridge to the Master’s degree (MA ARB) program that is offered to students who already possess an undergraduate degree or higher in another discipline and a good background in the Arabic language. It contains 10 advanced Arabic courses from the Bachelor’s degree (BA ALS) program.

- **Entry Requirements:** Graduate or postgraduate degree in any field other than Arabic.
- **Completion Requirement:** 10 academic courses within 3 years.

**i** Credits from the Intensive Arabic Program can be transferred to the Bachelor of Arts in Islamic Studies (BAIS) program.

# Education



The vocation of teaching is held in the highest esteem in the religion of Islam, as imparting knowledge is the duty and obligation of every practicing Muslim. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was the greatest teacher and he encouraged us to share beneficial knowledge when he said, "Convey (my teachings) to the people, even if it were a single sentence" (Sahih al-Bukhari). Well-trained teachers will always be in demand and are indeed a necessity to the *Ummah* (nation). Students taking this course of study will enjoy a comprehensive curriculum that provides a range of academic, linguistic, and digital literacies.

## Career Prospects

Graduates from this department will have options for:

- Teaching at all levels
- Educational management roles
- Child care worker
- Educational counselor
- Librarian
- Social worker in schools

## Programs Offered

|      | Type        | Courses | Time         |
|------|-------------|---------|--------------|
| C.Ed | Certificate | 10      | 1 to 3 years |
| A.Ed | Associate   | 22      | 2 to 6 years |
| B.Ed | Bachelor    | 42      | 4 to 9 years |

## Certificate in Education (C.Ed)

This one-year program introduces students to the basic principles in the field of education. The program nurtures the knowledge of teaching and pedagogical skills of students based on the new trend in Education for sustainable development.

- **Entry Requirements:** An accredited secondary or high school certificate or diploma.
- **Completion Requirement:** 10 academic courses within 3 years.

## Associate Degree in Education (A.Ed)

This two-year program was designed to further develop and strengthen teaching skills in a student. It aims to give students the basic technical and academic knowledge and transferable skills for teaching and assessment in schools.

- **Entry Requirements:** An accredited secondary or high school certificate or diploma.
- **Completion Requirement:** 22 academic courses and 72 hours of community service within 6 years.

## Bachelor's Degree in Education (B.Ed)

This four-year program has subject specialization streams of English and Islamic Studies and its curriculum is based on courses taught at The Open University, United Kingdom, and Nelson Mandela University, South Africa. The program has been carefully formulated and developed to respond to national and global education needs and trends.

- **Entry Requirements:** An accredited secondary or high school certificate or diploma.
- **Completion Requirement:** 42 academic courses, including a thesis, and 216 hours of community service within 9 years.

**i** Course credits in the certificate and associate degree programs can be later used towards the associate and bachelor's degrees.

# Psychology



In today's social climate, it has become imperative to provide psycho-social support for Muslims. However, this support must be offered from a perspective that is compatible with religious principles. Islam teaches that the heart has an impact on the psyche and *nafs* (soul). Consequently, psychology taught from an Islamic perspective focuses on the Quranic view of controlling one's inward desires. As Allah (swt) stated, "And indeed We have created humankind and know what their *nafs* whispers to them ..." (Surah al-Qamar (50):16). Studying psychology from an Islamic point of view equips you to help others with diseases of the heart and soul.

## Career Prospects

Graduates from this department will be equipped with the knowledge-base and transferable skills for work in professional fields like:

- Public and private health care
- Mental health support
- Social welfare work
- Therapy and counseling
- Neuropsychiatry hospital
- Prisons or Correctional Centers
- Rehabilitation Centers

## Programs Offered

|         | Type        | Courses | Time         |
|---------|-------------|---------|--------------|
| C.Psy   | Certificate | 12      | 1 to 3 years |
| A.Psy   | Associate   | 24      | 2 to 6 years |
| BSc Psy | Bachelor    | 40      | 4 to 9 years |

## Certificate in Psychology (C.Psy)

This one-year program was designed to provide students with basic knowledge in Islamic Psychology that teaches fundamental issues on the heart and soul for the benefit of their spiritual well-being. It contains a variety of courses including abnormal psychology, mental health, and child psychology.

- **Entry Requirements:** An accredited secondary or high school certificate or diploma.
- **Completion Requirement:** 12 academic courses within 3 years.

## Associate Degree in Psychology (A.Psy)

This two-year program was designed to expose students to more in the field of Islamic psychology, including to understand the nature of the *nafs* (soul), *qalb* (heart), *fitrah* (natural state), *aql* (intellect), and *hawa* (animal self), and how they function within the human personality.

- **Entry Requirements:** An accredited secondary or high school certificate or diploma.
- **Completion Requirement:** 24 academic courses and 72 hours of community service within 6 years.

## Bachelor of Science in Psychology (BSc Psy)

This four-year program was designed to give students a full exposure to understanding psychology from an Islamic perspective. It combines classical Islamic science with contemporary academic understanding of humans, their psyche, and their nature.

- **Entry Requirements:** An accredited secondary or high school certificate or diploma.
- **Completion Requirement:** 40 academic courses, including a thesis, and 216 hours of community service within 9 years.

**i** Course credits in the certificate and associate degree programs can be later used towards the associate and bachelor's degrees.

# Economics



Economics has existed for centuries, and so has the study of this discipline. However, with the rise of industrialization, inflation, and other financial challenges, a superior alternative to the standard secular studies needs to be used. As a result, studying this field from an Islamic perspective has become increasingly relevant in modern society. It continues to increase in popularity as a significant area of study due to the crucial role of banking and finance. Financial transactions should be conducted in a *halal* (lawful) manner, as it is mentioned in verse 275 of Surah al-Baqarah, "Allah has permitted trade and forbidden interest."



## Career Prospects

Graduates from this department will be well-equipped for a career in various fields like:

- Consultancy
- Islamic banking
- Shariah advisory
- Regulatory agency

## Programs Offered

|                 | Type        | Courses | Time         |
|-----------------|-------------|---------|--------------|
| <b>CIBE</b>     | Certificate | 12      | 1 to 3 years |
| <b>AIBE</b>     | Associate   | 24      | 2 to 6 years |
| <b>BSc IEBF</b> | Bachelor    | 37      | 4 to 9 years |

### Certificate in Islamic Economics, Banking, and Finance (CIBE)

This one-year program gives students an understanding of basic concepts of economics and finance from an Islamic perspective. The courses taught highlight the important issues and challenges related to banking and finance.

- **Entry Requirements:** An accredited secondary or high school certificate or diploma.
- **Completion Requirement:** 12 academic courses within 3 years.

### Associate Degree in Islamic Economics, Banking, and Finance (AIBE)

This two-year program gives students an understanding of basic and advanced concepts of economics and finance from an Islamic perspective. It highlights the important issues and challenges related to banking and finance, and gives an idea of Islamic solutions/alternatives to the same.

- **Entry Requirements:** An accredited secondary or high school certificate or diploma.
- **Completion Requirement:** 24 academic courses and 72 hours of community service within 6 years.

### Bachelor's of Science in Islamic Economics, Banking, and Finance (BSc IEBF)

This four-year program is a blend of conventional economics and finance courses with Islamic courses, and includes all major focal areas of the field. The courses have selectively and strategically been included in the aim of providing students with thorough knowledge and skills in the financial sector.

- **Entry Requirements:** An accredited secondary or high school certificate or diploma.
- **Completion Requirement:** 37 academic courses, including a thesis, and 216 hours of community service within 9 years.

**i** Course credits in the certificate and associate degree programs can be later used towards the associate and bachelor's degrees.

# Information Technology



Information Technology (I.T.) is the application of computers and telecommunication systems to store, retrieve, and send information. Companies are always looking for talented individuals who can create, maintain and support their information systems. Pursuing a program that uniquely combines I.T. with Islam creates an opportunity for students to fulfill their religious duty of seeking and sharing knowledge, while also acquiring sought-after skills in this field. Become a high-value asset to employers while receiving rewards. As the Prophet (pbuh) said, "The best of people are those who are most beneficial to people." (Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat)

## Career Prospects

Graduates from this department will be able to pursue careers in a variety of sectors including:

- Education
- Manufacturing
- Business
- Government institutions
- Telecommunications

## Programs Offered

|        | Type        | Courses | Time         |
|--------|-------------|---------|--------------|
| CIT    | Certificate | 12      | 1 to 3 years |
| AIT    | Associate   | 24      | 2 to 6 years |
| BSc IT | Bachelor    | 48      | 4 to 9 years |

## Certificate in Information Technology (CIT)

This one-year program introduces a student to the Information Technology discipline. The focus of the program is on some basic I.T. concepts including system and application software, problem solving skills, calculus and discrete mathematics, and some basic object oriented programming skills.

- **Entry Requirements:** An accredited secondary or high school certificate or diploma.
- **Completion Requirement:** 12 academic courses within 3 years.

## Associate Degree in Information Technology (AIT)

This two-year program further develops a student's skills in the I.T. discipline. It covers several core themes including operating systems, computer networks, database management, software engineering, object oriented programming, data structures and algorithms.

- **Entry Requirements:** An accredited secondary or high school certificate or diploma.
- **Completion Requirement:** 24 academic courses and 72 hours of community service within 6 years.

## Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSc IT)

This four-year program features many carefully designed courses on the core and several advanced themes in Information Technology. This includes database management, software engineering, network administration, object oriented programming, web development, mobile phone application development, cloud computing, cyber security, and artificial intelligence.

- **Entry Requirements:** An accredited secondary or high school certificate or diploma.
- **Completion Requirement:** 48 academic courses, including a thesis, and 216 hours of community service within 9 years.

**i** Course credits in the certificate and associate degree programs can be later used towards the associate and bachelor's degrees.

# Business Administration



This discipline provides students with comprehensive knowledge of the basic functional areas of business. However, it is usually taught from a secular perspective. As a result, students remain unaware of the legacy of Islamic principles and ethics existing in the fields of accounting, management, and leadership. The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Every one of you is a shepherd, and is responsible for his flock. The leader of people is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects ..." (Sahih Bukhari). Blending Islamic principles with business management will produce a new generation of ethical leaders with uncompromising beliefs and ideals.



## Career Prospects

Graduates from this department will be able to pursue a range of career opportunities as:

- Managers in the sales or retail industry
- Management trainees
- Project assistants
- Office managers
- Technology-oriented business specialists

## Programs Offered

|            | Type        | Courses | Time         |
|------------|-------------|---------|--------------|
| <b>CBA</b> | Certificate | 12      | 1 to 3 years |
| <b>ABA</b> | Associate   | 24      | 2 to 6 years |
| <b>BBA</b> | Bachelor    | 38      | 4 to 9 years |

## Certificate in Business Administration (CBA)

This one-year program is designed to equip students with a broad understanding of the field's core principles and key concepts. By offering an overview of business administration, students can gain a foundational knowledge base that can be applied to various areas within the field.

- **Entry Requirements:** An accredited secondary or high school certificate or diploma.
- **Completion Requirement:** 12 academic courses within 3 years.

## Associate Degree in Business Administration (ABA)

This two-year program is designed to provide students with a basic understanding of the key principles in the field of business administration. The primary objective is to enhance students' communication abilities and decision-making skills while also emphasizing the importance of ethical reasoning in business contexts.

- **Entry Requirements:** An accredited secondary or high school certificate or diploma.
- **Completion Requirement:** 24 academic courses and 72 hours of community service within 6 years.

## Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)

This four-year program offers an innovative and comprehensive business administration curriculum, equipping students with essential management skills and knowledge. Students will be taught a range of subjects, including accounting, finance, marketing and management, and become prepared for the global business environment as professionals and ethical managers.

- **Entry Requirements:** An accredited secondary or high school certificate or diploma.
- **Completion Requirement:** 38 academic courses, including a thesis, and 216 hours of community service within 9 years.

**i** Course credits in the certificate and associate degree programs can be later used towards the associate and bachelor's degrees.



## Semester Fees



Studying at IOU is affordable, as affordability is one of the guiding principles of the university. We are an institution that seeks its reward from Allah (swt), and therefore does not charge high tuition fees, irrespective of which country the student lives in. Students pay a flat fee per semester depending on their study plan, their country of residence, and the program level.

### Study Plans

IOU offers three study plans to make learning more flexible and convenient, based on a student's dedicated time for their studies. For the best results, it is recommended to allocate 5 to 6 hours per course, per week.

|                                | Part-time     | Full-time      | Accelerated    |
|--------------------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Courses per Semester</b>    | 1 to 3        | 4 to 6         | 7 to 9         |
| <b>Commitment per Week</b>     | 6 to 18 hours | 24 to 36 hours | 42 to 54 hours |
| <b>Duration of a Bachelors</b> | 6 to 9 years  | 4 to 6 years   | 3 to 3.5 years |

### Fees

To make fees globally affordable, a sliding scale fee system has been developed based on the standard of living in each country, where countries are divided into 4 development levels: Low, Medium, High and Very High. Depending on the development level of the country a student resides in and which program they are pursuing, their fees are calculated.

|                                 | Part-time     | Full-time     | Accelerated     |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <b>Undergraduate</b>            | \$80 - \$280  | \$120 - \$450 | \$165 - \$560   |
| <b>Postgraduate Certificate</b> | \$160 - \$440 | \$230 - \$630 | \$300 - \$815   |
| <b>Masters</b>                  | \$225 - \$570 | \$330 - \$830 | \$440 - \$1,080 |
| <b>Intensive Arabic Program</b> |               | \$100 - \$410 |                 |

## Scholarships



The International Open University (IOU) attempts to make its programs affordable in all countries. However, there are those who are financially underprivileged and unable to afford tuition. As a result, IOU offers scholarships around the world. Potential candidates must be able to score suitable marks in two entry level Islamic Studies courses, and prove that they are suitable candidates for financial aid. When applying for a Bachelor's, they will also be required to have a high school diploma or its equivalent, and be articulate in the English language.

### General Scholarships

Since 2011, IOU has offered 30 to 40 undergraduate scholarships per semester to over 600 students from 35 countries on all 5 continents. Presently, scholarships are only available for Bachelor's degree programs, and the Intensive Arabic Program (IAP). The scholarship is not limited to new students, but is also available to current paying IOU students who have passed five out of six subjects in their last semester. IOU also offers 3 scholarships per semester for the Master's Degree in Islamic Studies (MAIS) program. In general, it will be given to students who had scholarships in the Bachelor's Degree in Islamic Studies (BAIS) or Bachelor's Degree in Arabic Language and obtained a grade A or B.

### African Scholarships

In order to improve access to higher education in the African continent and its diaspora, IOU initiated the **1 Million African Scholarship (1MAS) project**, with the support of donors from around the world. The project began in September 2017 in The Gambia and has today expanded to 21 countries and provided over 4 thousand scholarships. It is operating in Cameroon, Eswatini (Swaziland), Ethiopia, Fiji, Gambia, Ghana, Jamaica, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.



For more information, please visit [www.iou.edu.gm/scholarships](http://www.iou.edu.gm/scholarships) or email [bursary@iou.edu.gm](mailto:bursary@iou.edu.gm). To donate to the 1MAS project, visit [www.golf.org.my/1mas](http://www.golf.org.my/1mas).

# Testimonials



The International Open University (IOU) has tens of thousands of students all across the globe. When you join the IOU family, you can meet others from every county and territory, and make life-long friends. Let's hear what some of these current and former students have to say about their IOU experience.



*"The university academics infused with Islamic knowledge and perspectives resulted in a truly holistic learning experience."*

**Zaynab Jaber**  
BAIS Graduate, USA



*"IOU was a hub that brought enlightenment and nourishment in both my spiritual life and academic life."*

**Buthayna Abdulhalim Said**  
BSc IBE Graduate, Kenya



*"The psychology courses within the Education certificate especially, have helped me with both my professional and personal development by enhancing my academic and interpersonal skills."*

**Farielle Ahamed-Hosein**  
Certificate in Education, Trinidad & Tobago



*"The thing that I like the most about studying at IOU is that my professors explain secular concepts and frameworks with a correct Islamic filter, so I am confident in what I am learning, and trust the information that I am absorbing."*

**Khalid Abdul-Rahman**  
BSc Psychology, Canada



*"Studying at IOU was the best experience for me. It helped me to gain the knowledge I needed to follow Islam and increased my emaan (faith)."*

**Claire Mohamed**  
BAIS Graduate, Guyana



*"I really can recommend the IOU to all Muslims, because you gain knowledge which you'll not find easily online, and you can always count on the staff members for help and support. TabarakAllah."*

**Marha Madalova**  
BSc Psychology, Germany



*"IOU is unique with the combination of flexible and quality education, as well as an amazing student support system."*

**Azeez Olawale**  
BAIS Graduate, Nigeria



*"I feel proud that I was one of the BAIS students in 2017, and now I am a MAIS student in 2023. Alhamdulillah."*

**Indri Hendayanti**  
MAIS in Bahasa, Indonesia



*"I will never be able to adequately convey my sincere gratitude, love, and respect for IOU's dedication to greatness, and for assisting me in growing, changing my life, and determining my future."*

**Fatou Jallow**  
BSc Psychology, Gambia



*"Although I am a student of Islamic Banking and Economics, IOU has shown me that Islam can and should be incorporated into all aspects of life, and that is surely the greatest way to live."*

**Tasnim Chowdhury**  
BSc Islamic Economics, Bangladesh



*"It was a great experience to study in IOU for several years. The knowledge I gained from IOU is beneficial and very much essential for this worldly life as well as for the hereafter."*

**Nusrat Zahan**  
BSc Psy Graduate, Japan



*"Dr Bilal Philips and his fellow teachers in IOU taught insightful knowledge from authentic sources, where true [authentic] sources are vital in seeking knowledge of Islam."*

**Sabrina Suhaimi**  
BMAIS Graduate, Malaysia



*"Since joining the IOU, Islamic knowledge has become accessible to me in a way I could have only dreamed of before."*

**Fatimah Mohamed**  
BA Islamic Studies, United Kingdom



*"Alhamdulillah. It is through IOU that I understand the difference between mazhabs, and the reason for those differences."*

**Mohammed Suleiman Tarfa**  
BSc Info Tech, Nigeria



*"My beautiful journey of learning Arabic not only opened my mind to the vast knowledge of Arabic, but also introduced me to amazing professors, great friends, and most of all, a channel to receive authentic knowledge from the comforts of my home."*

**Zubaidha Nasreen**  
BA Arabic, India



*"Depression led me to wanting to end my life until one day, I watched a lecture by Dr Bilal Philips about dealing with depression Islamically. I know Dr Bilal Philips is the founder of IOU, so I decided to join. IOU has changed my life for the better. Alhamdulillah, I understand better, and have a good connection with my deen."*

**Lena Wati**  
BA Islamic Studies, Australia



*"IOU is unique, as it integrates knowledge of deen (religion) and dunya (world), and I got the chance to learn Islam in its moderate way."*

**Nuha Salim Elhaj**  
BMAIS Graduate, Oman



For more testimonials from our students, please visit [www.iou.edu.gm/testimonials](http://www.iou.edu.gm/testimonials).

## Student Life



### Discussion Forums

To facilitate the online interaction between students and faculty members, IOU offers a messaging board system to discuss ideas, questions and concerns related to their studies. Each program has separate forums for announcements, student discussions, teacher questions, and technical feedback. In addition to this, there is a general discussion forum wherein all students of the university can interact with each other.

### Community Service

To encourage the participation in voluntary work, students are required to perform 36 hours of community service per semester in order to be awarded their degrees. IOU's aim for its students is to not only acquire knowledge, but also to put their knowledge into action. Community service gives students the opportunity to analyze society critically, learn and reflect through meaningful tasks, and apply their knowledge in a way that benefits their local community and the *Ummah* (nation) at large.

### Student Committees

Student committees were first established in 2012 as a medium through which students could collaborate on various activities, as well as provide assistance to other enrolled students and assist with the promotion of IOU within their country or region. The goal is to eventually establish a student committee in every country where students reside. Student committee members consist of existing students, alumni and volunteers. One of the promotional events in which committees participate is the biannual [IOU Awareness Month](#).

### Exam Centers

The credibility of the examination process is an important component of online education and that is why semester midterm and final exams are conducted at IOU-approved exam centers. These exam centers are established in mosques, education institutions, or Islamic centers, with authorized proctors responsible for verifying students' photo identification prior to the exam. With over 2,500 exam centers in over 200 countries and territories, students can conveniently go to a center nearest to them or suggest the opening of a new center.

# CONTINUING EDUCATION



Established as a subsidiary of IOU in 2013, the Global Quran Memorization Center (GQMC) was mandated with the mission of developing the spiritual growth of its students through the words of Allah (swt). Students are placed in segregated classes according to their gender to protect sisters' modesty. GQMC has 22 qualified teachers and over 2,800 enrolled students.



## Memorization Programs

Quran memorization is an integral part of Islamic tradition. As the Prophet (pbuh) said, "The best amongst you are those who learn the Quran and teach it" (Bukhari). GQMC has over 100 graduates from its memorization programs, 8 of whom have become teachers at the center.

### Ayah a Day

This program is for those who want to memorize at a slow pace, where they will have three 30-minute or six 15-minute weekly individual one-on-one live sessions. A certificate is given for the completion of a *juz* (part).

### One-on-One

This program is focused on students who wish to memorize the Quran through individual one-on-one live sessions twice or thrice per week for a total of 90 minutes. A certificate is given for the completion of a *juz*.

### Groups

In order to cater to Muslims around the world, various groups are created for different time zones. Students can choose between the beginner level, where they memorize one or two pages per week, and the advanced level, where they will complete the Quran within four to five years. A certificate is given for the completion of the Quran.

### Ijaazah

This one-on-one memorization program is meant for students who want to master *Tajweed* and become expert Quran teachers. Students who complete the program will receive an *Ijaazah* (license authorizing) in memorization from someone who already possesses one, which has a *Sanad* (chain) linked back to the Prophet (pbuh).



## Tajweed Programs

Tajweed, which means to perfect or beautify, is a set of rules for the correct pronunciation of the Quran. As the Quran is Allah's Divine Speech, its correct recitation, similar to how it was recited by the Prophet (pbuh) is important to be preserved. Allah (swt) has said, "... this is an honored Quran [Inscribed] in a Preserved Slate" (Surat Al-Buruj (85):21-22).

### Starter

This basic 16-week program was designed for beginners with little or no prior knowledge of Tajweed rules. Live classes are held in small groups of 6 to 8 students twice per week, as well as 20 modules of recorded lessons.

### Intensive

This advanced six-month program is for students who want to improve on their existing, basic knowledge of Tajweed. It has 22 modules of video material, study tips and live group sessions to be covered in 5 and a half months and then 2 weeks of live practice classes.

|                       | Price (US\$)           | Age | Requirements  |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-----|---|
| Memorize (Groups)     | \$30 to \$65 (monthly) | 10+ | ability to recite with Tajweed                              |
| Memorize (One-on-One) | \$30 to \$65 (monthly) | 10+ | ability to recite with Tajweed                              |
| Memorize (Ayah a Day) | \$10 to \$25 (monthly) | 12+ | ability to recite with Tajweed                              |
| Memorize (Ijaazah)    | \$50 to \$80 (monthly) | 16+ | memorized the entire Quran, or a minimum of 15 juz          |
| Tajweed (Starter)     | \$60 (one-time)        | 12+ | ability to read Arabic words                                |
| Tajweed (Intensive)   | \$100 (one-time)       | 12+ | proficient in reading Arabic and understands Tajweed basics |

For more information, please visit the GQMC website at [www.iou-gqmc.com](http://www.iou-gqmc.com) or email [gqmc.helpdesk@iou.edu.gm](mailto:gqmc.helpdesk@iou.edu.gm).



## General Diploma in Islamic Studies

There are 38 courses within this General Diploma in Islamic Studies (GDIS) program which are divided across 6 levels of advancement. They cover various topics including Arabic, *Fiqh* (Jurisprudence), *Aqeedah* (Theology), *Hadeeth* (Prophetic Narrations), *Tafseer* (Qur'anic Explanation), *Seerah* (Prophetic Biography), Pillars of Islam, Pillars of Faith, Islamic Culture, Contemporary Issues, *Usool* (Foundations) *at-Tafseer*, *Uloom* (Knowledge) al-Qur'an, Qur'anic Arabic, *Usool al-Hadeeth*, Forty Hadith an-Nawawi, Principles of *Da'wah* (Propagation), *Usool us-Sunnah* (Prophetic Traditions), Funeral Rites, and *Qadr* (Divine Decree).

Students can pursue any course that interests them with no prerequisites, and are supported through student forums and email communication with the course facilitator. Courses are divided into modules that have tests at the end of each module. Students take a final exam at the end of each course, and those with a grade of 80% or more are given a course certificate. Students that pass 24 of these courses are eligible for a digital or printed GDIS certificate.

Course facilitators conduct weekly quizzes and winners receive badges which are displayed on student profiles, whereas the runners-up receive e-prizes in their personal inboxes. GDIS graduates are eligible to become course facilitators, so that they can continue their journey with us and transition from student to mentor.



## Reflection Upon the Quran

This course group offers the *tafseer* (Qur'anic explanation) of *Surah al-Faatiha* (The Opening Chapter), *Surah al-Baqara* (Chapter of the Cow), *Surah Ali Imran* (Chapter of the Family of Imran) and *Juz 'Amma* (Chapters 78 to 114). When we reflect on the meaning of the Quran, it encourages us to appreciate its beauty and gain knowledge of the commands of Allah (swt), so that we can become better Muslims.



## Special Workshops

The last offering of the diploma section is access to various recorded short workshops that provide participants with more in-depth knowledge of the Islamic faith, including topics like Prophetic advice on marriage, Muslim female empowerment, public speaking, lesson plan Islamization, and young leadership development.

**i** For more information, please visit the diploma section website at [www.ioudiploma.com](http://www.ioudiploma.com) or email [head-facilitator@diploma.iou.edu.gm](mailto:head-facilitator@diploma.iou.edu.gm).

Following its relaunch in 2007, IOU offered a variety of free short Islamic courses without any educational requirements. In 2010, they were incorporated into IOU's Diploma section in lieu with the launch of the university's degree programs. Currently, this section maintains an open policy, but now requires a nominal monthly fee ranging between US\$1 and \$12, which is determined based on the student's financial capacity. The purpose of the fee is to cover operational costs, and ensure the continued provision of the courses. This IOU subsidiary has produced over 350 graduates and gained over 278,000 registered students from over 252 countries and territories.



## New Muslim Courses

This course group was specially designed to cater to new reverts to Islam. Presented by Dr. Bilal Philips, it centers on the fundamental aspects of what should be learned during the initial days of embracing Islam. Divided into two levels, namely 'The First Day' and 'The First Week', the courses shed light on crucial points that are often overlooked by those who assisted in the conversion process. 'The First Day' emphasizes the most significant points that should be known from the start. On the other hand, 'The First Week' delves into the essential elements of Muslim life, including the importance of the *Salah* (prayer), dietary practices, appropriate attire, and the underlying moral principles that uphold the pillars of Islam and *Eeman* (faith).

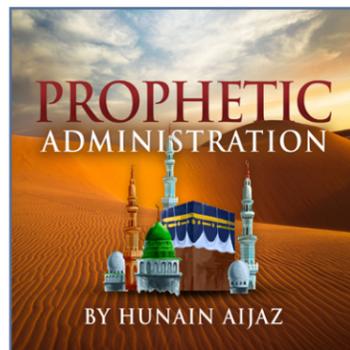
# Short Courses

The International Open University's most recent subsidiary is an educational resource launched in 2019, known as Ilm Institute. It was started in order to fulfill the need of providing easy access to a multitude of professional, Islamic and modern short courses taught by highly qualified instructors from across the globe, without the educational requirements and completion time limits in IOU's degree programs.



It aims to build a platform that bridges the teacher-student gap by making it accessible for Muslim educators of any specialization to smoothly upload their courses, as well as enable Muslim students to effortlessly browse through numerous courses available in various fields. What makes Ilm Institute stand apart from other online courses platforms is the fact that it combines Islamic ethics with modern education. While each course may not have an Islamic perspective to it, it stays clear of any statement contradictory to the *deen* (religion).

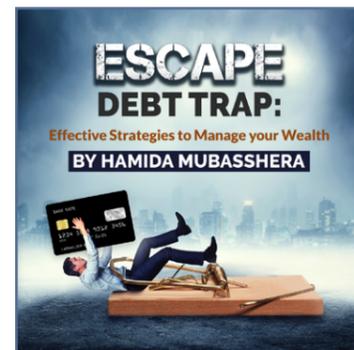
The fees for Ilm Institute's collection of courses range from free to US\$100 and topics covered include finance, psychology, health, *fiqh* and more. Some of the most popular courses are:



The Prophetic Administration



Tafseer Ayat Al-Kursi



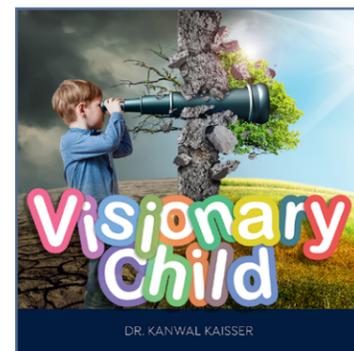
Escape Debt Trap



The Healthy Muslim Blueprint



Polygamy in Islam



Visionary Child

For more information, please visit the Ilm Institute website at [www.ilm institute.org](http://www.ilm institute.org) or email [info@ilm institute.org](mailto:info@ilm institute.org).



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